



The Lasting Legacy of Phillip Grub

GWSB at the forefront
of international business
education

Eduardo Stern, MBA '84, grew up in two countries—Mexico and the United States—and today directs a Florida real estate development company that markets to investors around the world. But as a student, he had no concept of international business. That is, until he met Phillip Grub.

“I was at Georgetown [University] and a friend invited me to a George Washington event where Phil Grub was speaking about international business,” said Mr. Stern, managing director of Landstar Development Group and a member of the School of Business Board of Advisors. “It was my first exposure to the idea of international business.”

So impressed was Mr. Stern by the presentation that he enrolled in GW’s MBA program while still at Georgetown.

By **Mary A. Dempsey**

Mr. Stern is among the alumni who credit the late Dr. Grub, MBA '60 and DBA '64, for not only putting them on successful career tracks but for also positioning the George Washington University to be a leader in international business education. Dr. Grub did this by designing a pioneering program, recruiting talented faculty and creating a high-profile alumni network—long before anyone spoke of globalization.

Dr. Grub, who died in 2008 at age 76, started the university's first stand-alone international business program in the School of Government and Business Administration, a predecessor to the School of Business. Robert Weiner, chairman of the Department of International Business, said that act was a bold one. Even today few business schools have a separate department focused on international business.

For GW, the move paid off. The international business program has consistently received high accolades. GWSB is known worldwide for international business; in its recent 2015 Best Colleges issues, *U.S. News & World Report* ranked it No. 10 in the nation.

"Our success is a combination of getting a head start and also our location. We're right next to the World Bank and the IMF and the Federal Reserve and the embassies," said Dr. Weiner.

Professor of International Marketing Fernando Robles joined GWSB in 1984 and worked closely with Dr. Grub for nearly a decade. He said his colleague saw international business as more than import and export operations. Dr. Grub planted the seeds of a movement that expanded the study of international business to encompass the management of international operations, foreign investment and the role of business in nation-building, especially for countries moving from commu-



nism to market-oriented economies.

"Phil was a big person in terms of his personality and character. If he walked into a room, he commanded a presence," said Dr. Robles. "And he was very knowledgeable, which is why he was so notable in his field, nationally and internationally.

"This was a time when the discipline of international business wasn't even recognized. Phil made GW visible in the academic world," he said.

Among other things, Dr. Grub was a fellow of the Academy of International Business and also served in the mid 1970s as its president.

FORGING ALUMNI CONNECTIONS

Dr. Grub did something else that was uncommon at the time. He built a strong alumni network.

Today with social media and the Internet, it's easy, but Phil Grub had to create a database with a fax machine and a copy machine—and he was working with a group that was dispersed worldwide.

"He created a connection among our students, and he would publish an alumni directory every year. It was quite impressive, filled with the names of CEOs and even presidents of countries, all of whom looked at Phil as a mentor," said Dr. Robles.

Within that effort, Dr. Grub was instrumental in developing alumni chapters in Japan, Korea, Taiwan, Thailand, Indonesia, France and Germany.

Din Merican, MBA '70, said Dr. Grub changed his life. Mr. Merican was working at the Bank Negara Malaysia, his country's central bank, when a senior colleague who received a PhD in economics from GW encouraged him to pursue a graduate degree in business.

"He said I would get a good education at GW because it is located in the nation's capital. Both the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund were in the neighborhood and the White House was only a few blocks away," Mr. Merican said. "I was also told by my friends at the U.S. Embassy in Malaysia that I would enjoy Washington because it

The Consulting Abroad Program and other international study programs bring GWSB students to every corner of the world

India



Argentina



was an exciting place, a very international city.”

That central bank colleague, Rais Saniman, made introductions to Dr. Grub, who guided Mr. Merican through the admission process.

“I had not met Dr. Grub but when I came to Washington, he received me...with warmth and we became friends,” Mr. Merican said. “He made me feel at home from Day One and guided me in my studies. And he introduced me to a lot of his students—from France,

Ireland, Korea, Iran, the United States—and his academic colleagues and his business associates.”

Dr. Grub’s students said cross-cultural understanding was an important part of his vision, and they speak fondly of dinners and regular get-togethers he organized, not only with fellow students and other faculty members but also with his colleagues and friends from international development agencies, the World Bank and the IMF.

Henry Yu, MBA ’93, has powerful memories of a traditional Thanksgiving dinner—complete with an oversized turkey—to which Dr. Grub invited eight or 10 students from China, Indonesia and Thailand.

“He cared about the international students,” said Mr. Yu, adding that Dr. Grub helped prepare him for his first professional job identifying Chinese investment projects for a brokerage house in Stamford, Connecticut.

In 1990, Mr. Yu was studying at Emporia State University in Kansas. It was a time when Chinese families like his could not afford the tuition at U.S. universities, so he worked during the summer and on vacations to stay in school. A family friend who graduated from GW encouraged him to meet Dr. Grub.

“I flew from Kansas to D.C. in the summer of 1990 and had lunch with Dr. Grub. I was nervous but he was very nice as he asked me questions,” Mr. Yu recalled. “I think that what impressed him was how I supported myself in the United States, sometimes working two jobs, while keeping up with my academic work.

“I think he was also impressed to learn that I had organized students and was the chairman of the Chinese Student Association at Emporia State University,” he added.

Mr. Yu not only was accepted into the graduate business program, but he received a scholarship to make move possible. He said the GW program gave him exposure to international business in a way that would have not been possible at Emporia State.

In 1995 Mr. Yu returned to China, where he owns two entrepreneurial companies. One is focused on health care management and the other is an environmental protection business. He said he has tapped the international business lessons he took from Dr. Grub for both operations.

“Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia just entered its

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first joint venture in Beijing and my management firm initiated the deal," he said. "We're also working with Mount Sinai Hospital in Manhattan. We run a major program to train hospital administrators. Inova Health System in Virginia does some of the teaching."

Mr. Stern concurred that the cross-cultural awareness forged by Dr. Grub was instrumental in his career.

"Phil Grub basically had the ability to put together a group of international students that he felt were going to be successful in the future because of their background and international exposure," Mr. Stern said. "He mentored these students personally. I was lucky enough to be one of them."

Mr. Stern said Dr. Grub counseled the students on the courses they should take, introduced them to resources at the university and hosted social events that forged friendships. He urged them to reach out to newly arriving students from abroad, spent a lot of time talking to them about international business and "even got jobs for a few of us."

ADDING DEPTH AND BREADTH

Today international business knowledge is such a core part of GWSB programs that Global MBA students are required to undertake consulting projects in other countries. Study abroad and foreign exchange programs are common, international students are welcomed on campus and innovative cross-border programs have appeared, such as the Master's in Finance degree for Chinese students, jointly offered by GWSB and Renmin University of China International College.

GWSB's Global and Experiential Education Office provides services and supports for students seeking these international experiences.

Many of the ideas championed by Dr. Grub are an integral part of both the School of Business and the

university as a whole. Indeed, "globalization" is one of the four themes spotlighted in the university's strategic plan, *Vision 2021*.

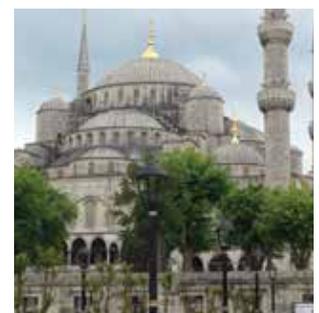
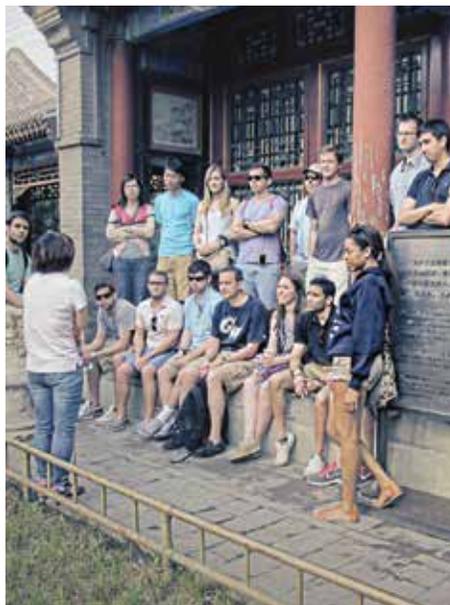
GWSB's reputation in this arena did not go unnoticed when Linda Livingstone accepted the position of dean.

"I was impressed by the international focus of the school," she said. "The mix of domestic and international students makes us really representative of the world and

Rwanda



China



Turkey



Argentina

brings different perspectives to the classroom, allowing students to learn from one another.

“The experience we provide students to study abroad and to engage some of the international organizations here in D.C.—whether it’s the World Bank or the IMF or some of the leading NGOs in the world—is also key to GWSB’s well-deserved reputation as a truly international academic institution,” she added.

Dr. Grub’s career took him around the globe. He was named the Aryamehr Chair in Multinational Management, established by the late Shah of Iran in 1974. He served as honorary professor at the University of International Business and Economics in Beijing. He also held numerous visiting professorships in the United States, Europe and Asia.

Nowadays, reputation in the international business field entails attracting top scholars. The Phillip D. Grub Professorial Fellowship in International Business was created by gifts from alumni and corporations when Dr. Grub retired from the GWSB faculty in 1994. GWSB hopes to secure additional funds to establish a fully endowed professorship in honor of Dr. Grub.

Anupama Phene has been the Phillip Grub Professorial Fellow since 2008. Like Dr. Grub, she is beloved by her students, who nominated her for the Trachtenberg teaching prize for best instructor at the university. She

Please see page 36 for information on how you can support the Phillip D. Grub Professorial Fellowship or contribute to the creation of a fully endowed professorship in Dr. Grub’s honor.

won last year, the second winner from the business school in the prize’s 25-year history.

Dr. Phene said the fellowship has allowed her to pursue research that explores innovation, knowledge transfer and the success of international firms. One of her studies evaluated whether countries embedded in an intergovernmental organizational network are more successful at innovation. Another examined whether a firm’s innovation benefits if an overseas R&D network is aligned with science strengths in a home country. And another of her projects looks at subsidiaries of large multinational firms to see what stimuli they respond to around new technology development.

Most recently she has looked at how firms are organized and whether the geographic location of their R&D divisions affects innovation.

“The culture of R&D is different in different countries,” said Dr. Phene, who teaches international business at GWSB. “If you want your R&D to be successful, you have to embed your R&D in the countries where you are operating.”

There are several elements of that research that no doubt would have appealed to Dr. Grub, not least of all the element of international collaboration. Dr. Phene worked with a colleague in Singapore on her most recent project.

Dr. Grub advised heads of state and used his sabbaticals to help the private sector and foreign governments on economic development and foreign investment issues. He was credited with introducing South Korean construction firms to markets in Iran, with turning around the first joint venture bank in Vietnam and with taking the first billion-dollar investment into China.

Din Merican said he was deeply saddened when he learned of Dr. Grub’s death.

“It was my privilege and distinct honor that he agreed to be my academic adviser, my professor and my mentor. He was a visionary man and believed in free market competition and was optimistic about U.S. multinationals.

“He was a global man, long before globalization,” Mr. Merican added. **GW**