

The first virtual HWR Berlin Summer School kicked off

The HWR Berlin Summer School has just kicked off to an unusual start. Participants attended the first ever virtual Welcome Day in the seventeen-year history of summer programmes at HWR Berlin.

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Vice President Prof. Dr. Hartmut Aden welcomed the group via the video conference tool BigBlueButton: "Of course, we wish you could be here with us in Berlin, but joining this online summer school is still a fantastic way to connect with other students across the globe."

Participants join online from Australia, India, Switzerland, France, Portugal, the US and Mexico. The majority of them are from HWR Berlin's partner universities: Curtin and RMIT, Symbiosis, ZHAW, EDHEC, Baruch and UCF, as well as Tec de Monterrey. Time differences for such an international group are a challenge: While the summer school takes place during lunch time at Berlin and other European cities, students from the US and Mexico have to get up very early and follow live sessions with a big mug of coffee, Indian students enjoy their afternoon tea, and Australian students are about to finish their day with a beer. Breakout rooms served as icebreakers as students got to know each other by finding three things that they have in common.

Two short and intensive courses will take place this summer from June 28 to July 23. The first one, „How Europe Works: Institutions & Law in the EU“, co-taught by Prof. Hartmut Aden and Prof. Dr. Peter Ries, takes 15 students on a journey of the political and legal functions of the European Union. Students will learn about the attempts made by the EU to harmonise national corporate laws and the effects of the Brexit on Corporate Law. Additionally, the course provides insight into legal measures to enhance Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). Prof. Ries will take students on a virtual court house visit, explaining the court's workings and links to aspects of German history.

The second course, „Sustainable Economics and Corporate Responsibility“ takes place immediately after the first course ends, so that some students participate in both courses, thus receiving more ECTS credits. This course, co-taught by Dr. Katharina Gapp-Schmeling and Dr. Therese Kirsch of UAS7 partner university FH Münster, provides insights into how companies can contribute to the sustainability of the economy. 13 students will explore the question of growth vs. the sustainability paradigm, the effects of governmental instruments and programmes, and a methodology to evaluate sustainability within a specific economy. Corporate social responsibility issues will also be addressed, here with a focus on the role of businesses within sustainable development.

Even though the programs are entirely online, participants will get a small glimpse of life in Berlin through the eyes of two German students. They will offer virtual hangout sessions and vlogs to show their personal view of Berlin. In one video for instance student Felicia takes participants along to the famous Tempelhofer Feld for some culture and conversation. Student Paul who is just finishing up his Bachelor thesis, will discuss the once divided city and how this still shapes today's culture in

Berlin and even its night life.

In addition to the Summer School, the HWR Berlin also offers a Winter School every year.