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Cultivating an international mind-set

2008 saw the start of what has since developed into one of the closest collaborations between the HWR Berlin and a US institution of higher education: our exchange with Baruch College.

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Dr Richard Mitten, Director of Study Abroad at Baruch College, was in Berlin recently. We decided to ask him what he values in the partnership:

Baruch College and the HWR Berlin have been collaborating for 11 years now. How did this partnership develop, both for the institutions and you personally?

The cooperation between the Berlin School of Economics and Law (BSEL) and Baruch College has broadened and deepened in ways we had hoped when we signed the agreement, but which in fact have exceeded all my expectations. We have established a successful student exchange, but the collaboration between faculty members of both institutions has significantly increased in the past few years. The BSEL and Baruch have become partners in programs (Erasmus+ and ISAP) that have provided funds to promote this cooperation. Such cooperation between partner universities is nothing new to universities in Europe, but at Baruch this is rare.

The most rewarding part of our exchange for me personally has been the enduring friendships I have developed with many people at the BSEL over the years that resulted from the work we have done on our common project to promote the cooperation between our institutions.

What was your favourite experience resulting from this collaboration with the HWR?

One of the high points of the partnership between the BSEL and Baruch College was the workshop held in February 2015 at the Weissman Center for International Business at Baruch College under the auspices of the Partnership for International Education (Internationale Studien- und Ausbildungspartnerschaften, or ISAP). The seven members of the BSEL met with over 20 colleagues from various departments at Baruch College, where they exchanged views on issues specific to their respective disciplines, but were also involved in discussions about the concept of "curriculum integration," and how our institutions could collaborate on this initiative. But the main reason this workshop stands out is that the members of the delegation from HWR-Berlin all participated in the Baruch College Study Abroad Fair. It is not every day that the Deputy President, two Deans, three Professors and the Director of the International Office at one of our partner institutions will all participate in our Study Abroad Fair.

Baruch College and the HWR Berlin have much in common. What makes a

semester at Baruch College so attractive for HWR students?

My guess is that what makes a semester at Baruch College most attractive is the fact that we are located in Manhattan, New York, and not Manhattan, Kansas. All joking aside, from my experience students from HWR-Berlin come to Baruch to take advantage of every opportunity offered them to explore and get to know a city that is an important center of world finance, of art and of culture. Studying at Baruch College offers them a perfect complement to living life in a city that many of its inhabitants consider (and not ironically) consider the “capital of the world.”

We have declared this year to be dedicated to “international spirit @ hwr-berlin”. How would you characterize the international spirit at Baruch?

I don't have much to add about the international spirit at Baruch that I haven't already said. The foundation and the principal driver of the international spirit at Baruch are our international student exchanges. Students at Baruch speak more than 110 different languages at home, resulting in a nearly unequalled level of demographic and cultural diversity. We believe that our most important task is to help transform these purely demographic facts into a cosmopolitan perspective on the world.

What do you always bring with you to Berlin?

When preparing for this trip I did pack (metaphorically) a degree of curiosity to discover the paths trodden by Gereon Rath and Charlotte Ritter in the series Babylon Berlin.

Baruch College

Like the HWR Berlin, Baruch College is a state-funded university specializing in Business Administration with a highly diverse student body. Located close to the famous Wall Street District in the heart of New York, the college has access to a range of data resources usually not available to a German university, and is equipped with its own authentic security trading floor in its “Subotnick Financial Center”. Exchange students at Baruch can access a range of internships in prestigious financial institutions.

HWR students interested in an exchange semester at Baruch College should contact the International Office: [goabroad\(at\)hwr-berlin.de](mailto:goabroad(at)hwr-berlin.de)