

## Global Consulting Practicum and Healthcare Course in India Expand Horizons for Wharton Executive MBA Student

June 15, 2011

Bruce Crocker, a legal advisor and trustee for the Hillman family in Pittsburgh, applied to Wharton's MBA for Executives Program in Philadelphia not only to enhance his understanding of the investment landscape, but also because he thought the rigorous academic program would be good for his "60-year-old brain." So far, he's gotten a lot more from the program than he originally planned, including a vast knowledge about India's healthcare system, new friends in India, and first-hand experience as a consultant.

By participating in Wharton's [Global Consulting Practicum](#) (GCP), an elective course in which full-time and executive MBA students work on real international consulting projects, Crocker and several of his classmates were assigned a



project about the potential market for biologic drugs in India. Teaming up with a group of students at the Indian School of Business (ISB) in Hyderabad, they began researching topics such as biologic drugs, India's healthcare system, and drug distribution systems in India. They also interviewed individuals in India, particularly oncologists regarding how they diagnose cancer and decide which drugs to use in treatment.

A highlight of the project involved a one-week trip to India in January to work with their counterparts at ISB as well as to attend a Wharton [modular course on healthcare in India](#) (one of several Wharton modular courses offered around the world). "All 10 students on

the project from Wharton and ISB along with our faculty advisors and a representative from the client company attended the course, which was taught at ISB by Wharton [Prof. Lawton Burns](#) who sprinkled in excellent speakers from the healthcare industry in India," says Crocker. "It was an incredible course about the state of the healthcare system in India and where it is going. And it was an awesome coincidence that the modular course was offered in India at the same time that we were there for the GCP project!"

He notes, "This project has been very challenging, pushing me outside of my comfort zone and into new areas of law like the regulatory aspects of FDA requirements – that has necessitated a whole new vocabulary -- and then working as a team despite our locations in India, Miami, Philadelphia and Pittsburgh. It's turned out to be very satisfying to learn an entirely new subject and to work remotely as a team. As for the trip to India, I may never have the chance to go there again so I really appreciated being able to experience the culture and learn so much about the country during that trip."

Crocker adds that one of the best parts of the project has been bonding with his own classmates and getting to know the ISB students. "Even though I'm almost twice everyone's age, I never think about it because no one ever treats me differently. The opportunity to spend so much time with the ISB students, learning about their family backgrounds, their career aspirations and the Indian culture, has been something that I always will treasure. And focusing purely on the business education aspect of the experience, the opportunity to work on a real project for a real client under the supervision of an experienced faculty advisor has been invaluable."