



COLUMBIA | SIPA

International Finance and Economic Policy

IFEP Team

Richard Robb - Concentration Director  
Andrea Bubula - Concentration Executive Director  
Ariel Yelen - Concentration Manager  
Johann Kerhousse, Wentao Ma - Program Assistants

Fall 2019

# IFEP NEWSLETTER





# Annual Fall Retreat

# Fall Retreat



This year's IFEP retreat saw 38 students get away to Camp Kinder Ring in the Hudson Valley under the guidance of our program leaders, Johann and Marvin, and Professor Bubula. The weekend began with some fun games to get to know each other followed by lunch next to the lake. We had a relaxing afternoon playing football and beach volleyball, and a few brave souls even ventured into the lake to retrieve the volleyball when it went astray. The evening was spent by the fire with many students learning the art of making s'mores. Overall it was an excellent getaway and a great way to get to know everyone.



—Rachel Karen Adeney



# Sustainable Finance Markets Discussion

—Wentao Ma

Markets Discussions are fantastic student-led events and opportunities for students to discuss trendy topics related to finance and economics. Randolph Bourne, a writer and Columbia alumni states, “a good discussion increases the dimensions of everyone who takes part.” One of the markets discussions this semester was focused on sustainable finance. The students who participated in the discussion had different backgrounds regarding the topic, and several students had relevant work experience. The event presented students who were less familiar with sustainable finance a great opportunity to learn from their peers and exchange ideas on the topic.



# IMF's WEO Report Markets Discussion



As a first-year student at SIPA coming straight from receiving my undergraduate degree, having fruitful discussions about pressing topics with more experienced colleagues is something I covet. The conversation was lively and comfortable. The topic of the China-US trade war and the USMCA were ones of particular interest to most students present and we had an enriching conversation about how we saw things evolving. While I was expecting everyone present to see the report one specific way, I was happily surprised to see how based on each of our own experiences, we had come up with alternative explanations to those argued in the report. I believe that events like these strongly benefit the IFEP community at SIPA. I'm very happy to have had the opportunity to meet new people, and learn from the other bright minds that walk the halls of the International Affairs Building every day.

— Alex Frias Vazquez

# Internship Panel

The internship panel provided me with the opportunity to learn about what current second-year students did for their summer internship. It was very informative and helped me feel better prepared to search for jobs and internships. Students shared what their experience was like with interviews, what advantages their different skill-sets had at their internship, and gave general career advice, which overall gave me a better understanding of how to identify my own personal strengths, develop industry expertise, and build strong networks with alumni.

—Xintong Wang

Internship Panel





# Meet Your Professor Speaker Series

with Professor Benjamin R. Mandel

Inspired by an event hosted by the Latin American Student Association (LASA), I proposed a “Meet Your Professor Speaker Series” for IFEP. This first one featured Professor Benjamin Mandel. Professor Mandel is a global strategist in the Multi-Asset Solutions group at J.P. Morgan Asset Management and teaches International Trade at SIPA. He shared his story—transitioning from the private sector to academia, and then back to working as an economist in both the public and private sector. He then engaged with students in a lively discussion about global trade tensions. I can’t wait for the next one of these “Meet your Professor” events.

## IFEP Happy Hours at Amity Hall



I attended both of the IFEP happy hours this past semester—they were both enjoyable and informative. It was great to converse with my classmates in an informal environment. What I have found is that after two beers, IFEP students will finally stop talking about classes and due dates, and express some semblance of a personality. All jokes aside, IFEP happy hours are a great way to make friends within your concentration. These friends may even one day make useful study buddies or partners for group projects. I highly suggest everyone attend the happy hours this next semester. If not enough people attend, there are too many drink tickets remaining which is just wasteful and not Pareto efficient.

—Gabriel Shores



—Aitana Myohl



# Sixteenth Annual IFEP Gala

Johannes Magnus Hallermeier

In early December, IFEP hosted its annual year-end gala at the prestigious Lotos Club in New York City, generously sponsored by Christofferson, Robb & Co. The club, where Nobel laureates, politicians and businessmen alike mingle, opened its doors for many generations of IFEP students, alumni, and professors. Over live jazz music and delicious food and drink, the attendees had a chance to get to know each other, make personal as well as professional connections, and recharge during one of the busier seasons of the year. Many attendees stayed at the gala until the very end. IFEP students are grateful for the support and cherish the wonderful event that has, by now, become a much-anticipated tradition.



# Academics

## Committee Meetings

Monthly IFEP Committee meetings were held throughout the semester, which allowed students to share their feedback or concerns regarding the academic curriculum at SIPA. During committee meetings, students had the opportunity to talk with IFEP Program Assistants, Johann Kerhousse and Marvin Wentao, as well as the Concentration Manager Ariel Yelen, to share ideas and plan future events, such as Markets Discussions, the Meet Your Professor Speaker Series, and a Peer Review of IFEP Resumes. Moreover, Ken Lawson, Director of Student Relations at SIPA Office of Career Services (OCS), regularly attended meetings in order to work with IFEP students to discuss what professional development opportunities IFEP students would be interested in, such as Behavioral Interviewing workshops and networking events.

 —Vato Gogsadze

## Accounting

Accounting for International and Public Affairs lays a solid foundation for students to assess corporate operations. We learned basic concepts of bookkeeping in the first half of the semester, and after the mid-term, we started analyzing companies' performances more professionally. I used to think that accounting would be boring and hard to learn, but the charming and knowledgeable professor, Norman J. Bartczak, makes the class fascinating. His unique teaching style brings so much fun to the class, and meanwhile he fills the course with insightful comments. I fell in love with accounting and now I can independently assess the performance of a specific company.

 —Aihan Ni

## Microeconomic Analysis

This class provides students with the tools to analyze how economics and policy interact. Professor Gerratana presents students with theoretical knowledge highly integrated with practice. In addition to learning about economic models, the class materials and readings all originate from research papers, recent policy analyses, and insightful articles from the news. The problem sets done in groups are especially creative and inspiring and give students real-world cases to apply the tools learned in class. For example, in the study of the non-competitive markets, we used the Cournot model to analyze price fixing allegations in the pharmaceutical industry.

 —Xin Zhang



# See you in the Spring!

