

McCombs alumni equips UT students with information on global business regulation

Cutting-edge technology alone does not guarantee success in global business, according to a McCombs School of Business alumni who spoke on Sept. 7 at the University of Texas at Austin.

“Your business objectives within the context of the specific work you are completing is challenging at times, but with the right skills in mind you can succeed globally,” said Mike Kelly, director of American business development at SeekOps Inc., an Austin, Texas-based energy equipment and solutions company.

The Global Sustainability Leadership Institute at McCombs sponsored the speech: “Navigating the Global Regulatory Market: How Companies Handle Compliance.” Meeta Kothare, managing director of GSLI who moderated the meeting, gave Kelly the chance to relay his climate technology experience and answer questions from students about developing skills for international business.

With the ever-changing climate and global warming on the rise, business professionals are developing new ways to combat the challenges that impact the environment.

“We developed a drone-based sensor that can be deployed around various sites on the globe and take measurements of methane emissions. We integrate the information gathered with weather conditions on the sites and submit it to a team of environmental data scientists. We then integrate that data and produce a report that shows an operator where they are leaking methane emissions,” said Kelly.

Kelly gave students a glimpse into what is done at his company, SeekOps Inc., which is an Austin, Texas-based energy equipment company that specializes in precision leak detection and quantification services for global clients.

A plethora of students from various majors attended the event and had lots of thoughts on the topic. “I appreciated the thought behind the ideas shared by Kelly. I especially valued how he went in-depth on what his company’s technology truly does and how it can benefit the environment on a larger scale,” said Karla Fernandez, an international relations student at UT after the event.

With the use of drones, reducing emissions through the levels found in the air around clients’ locations, such as refineries, is possible.

Many professionals in the business industry have input on the way global warming has an impact on the environment, including faculty members at UT.

“We worry about the contribution of upstream emissions to global warming, so being able to detect where those emissions are happening is important,” said David Spence, professor of business, government and society at the McCombs School of Law.

Business students often times go into work at corporations that perform on an international level. Increasing to 43.0 million workers in 2018 from 42.4 million in 2017, the worldwide employment by U.S multinational enterprises grew, according to the Bureau of Economic Analysis.

McCombs students in attendance at the event heard information on navigating the global market field and how to prepare for a job in international business.

“Hearing from someone in the career sector that I wish to go into is an incredible opportunity. I am able to learn firsthand what is needed to become a successful individual in international business,” said Fernandez.

Being a professional in global business comes with challenges. Kelly said some ways of how he handles international relations through a cultural-appreciative lens through his business ventures.

“I always make an effort to remember that I am a guest in their country,” Kelly said. “And it is my responsibility to understand the cultural norms.”

The topic of cultural insight and consideration is not just a thought in Kelly’s mind. Other professionals in global business have thoughts to share on how important it is to be well-versed in another country’s culture.

A professional at UT in this realm had some knowledge to share on the topic. “Anybody can be culturally understanding. Anybody can read about a country’s history, values and norms,” said Deirdre Mendez, director of the McCombs Center for Global Business.

To increase awareness of global warming and the effects of methane emissions on the environment, sustainable tracking technology is vital, said Kelly.

The importance of skill-building, in addition to sustainability efforts, cultural appreciation, and other subjects in the global business realm, was emphasized at the event.

“With a solid skillset developed early on in one’s career, there is much to be accomplished in terms of sustainability and relationship-building on a global scale,” Kelly.