



## Student Info Booklet

Students Project of the University of Applied Sciences Northwestern  
Switzerland

Recommended by



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## 1. The Project

### 1.1 What is connectUS?

The project connectUS 2012 (formerly NWNV) is organized by three students from the School of Business. It is offered to students in their final year of study from the Schools of Life Sciences, Engineering, Information Technology, Applied Psychology, Social Work and Business. The connectUS student project:

- focuses on business innovation created through people connecting within a network of interdisciplinary fields
- explores international business co-operations of Switzerland and the USA, enhancing students' understanding of intercultural networking and communication skills
- aims to increase social and interpersonal skills of participants
- offers insights and inputs from experts from diverse industries
- is supervised by Prof. Dr. Anita Graf, lecturer and project leader of Human Resources Management at the FHNW Olten
- consists of two parts:
  - Preparatory seminar in Olten (a one-week academic seminar held with speakers from different business fields related to innovation and networking)
  - On-site trip to the United States (two weeks of seminars: visiting companies, institutions and universities in several metropolitan cities on the East Coast)

### 1.2 Who are we?

#### Core Project Team:

- Evelyn Bürkli - Business Administration, School of Business Olten
- Gabriela Stefanini - International Management, School of Business Olten
- Olivia Jeup - International Management, School of Business Olten

#### PR Team:

- Rhea Senn - International Management, School of Business Olten
- Robel Ghebressilasie - International Management, School of Business Olten
- Romano Rohrbach - Business Information Systems, School of Business Olten

#### Project Supervisor:

- Prof. Dr. Anita Graf - Lecturer and Project Manager Human Resource Management, FHNW Olten

### 1.3 Core Concept of connectUS

- Annual project abroad organized by students for students
- Knowledge transfer and communication exchange among students from business, engineering, life sciences, IT and psychology studies

## 1.4 How can you benefit from connectUS?

- Meet companies and experts from different fields to gain a competitive advantage through building networks and being aware of innovation strategies
- Understand the importance of networking for your personal development and professional career
- Learn to increase your own effectiveness through networking
- Understand and convey how innovation contributes to a company's growth and learn how to contribute by innovating within your present and future employment
- Improve your English language skills and learn to communicate successfully within international corporate fields
- Make new acquaintances, friendships or build up business relationships with students from other study fields of the FHNW

## 1.5 Why the United States?

- The United States is the birthplace of modern networking inventions
- Some of the most innovative companies, such as Google, Facebook, Apple etc., have their headquarters in the United States
- Several well-known and highly academic American universities are an attractive destination for Swiss graduates for exchange semesters, masters programs and continuing studies
- Experiences and contacts in the United States can provide you with a competitive advantage when applying for jobs
- Experience the cultural, economic, and social impressions of the East Coast and enjoy an exciting, academic and versatile study trip around metropolises like New York, Boston, etc.

## 1.6 Project Structure

### Preparatory Seminar:

- Know the most important aspects of professional networking strategies and learn how to set up your personal network strategy
- Learn about innovation in business and how creative ideas can be used as a competitive advantage to guarantee success
- Gain knowledge and insights into other fields such as politics, social networking, IT and entrepreneurship and how they are related to business innovation and networking
- Learn about conducting business in the United States and about the American culture

### On-Site Study Seminar:

- Visit exclusive companies, academic and political institutions
- Benefit from knowledge-transfers, business cooperation and insights into companies and use the opportunity to set up your own network
- Experience the cultural, economic and social advantages such as challenges of the United States and further understand differences to Switzerland
- Feel and live the *American way of life!*

→ Detailed Plan follows in December 2011

## 2. Participation Requirements & Conditions

### 2.1 Who can apply?

Students who:

- are studying Business Administration, International Management, Business Information Technology, Life Science, Applied Psychology, Social Work or International Business Management at the faculties in Brugg, Olten, Muttenz and Basel
- are in their last year of their Bachelor studies at the FHNW
- have good German and English skills
- are interested in improving their interpersonal and intercultural skills (personal and professional networking, socializing, cultural understanding, etiquette)
- care to set up a successful networking strategy and improve their communication skills
- are interested in business innovation, networking, meeting new people, the American culture and knowledge transfer
- would like to learn more about business relationships in the United States and Switzerland
- desire to travel to the East Coast of the United States (New York, Boston, etc.)

### 2.2 Requirements

Students are required to:

- Participate in all activities of the Preparatory and On-site Seminars (100% attendance) - check for passports, visas etc.
- Prepare for and show interactive and supportive participation in workshops and group works
- Write summaries of assigned talks / lectures (400 words) during the Preparatory Seminar
- Write a briefing paper (1000 words) to prepare for the On-Site Seminar
- Write a reflective essay (2000 words) after the On-Site Seminar

## 3. Academic Compensation

*For students from the degree programs of the School of Business: Business Administration (BOEK), International Management (IM) and Business Information Systems (WI) the following applies:*

- 1 ECTS for the seminar the Preparatory Seminar on Networking and Innovation
- 3 ECTS for the On-Site Seminar in the USA

*For students of OTHER degree programs:*

- Please ask your respective Dean for further information

## 4. Costs of Project

- Preparatory Seminar is free of cost
- **On-Site Seminar personal contribution** will be approximately 2'500 CHF (max. 2'800 CHF)
  - This cost consists of: flight, accommodation, costs of travel and transport, shared activities and meals

→ Please note that the total cost for students are dependent on many factors. These factors are, among others, the sponsoring contributions, currency rate, oil price and living expenses in the US. The project team aims to keep the student costs to a minimum without the project's quality suffering from this.

## 5. Application

To apply for a position in the delegation of connectUS 2012, please follow these instructions:

- Download and fill in the application form (available online at [www.connectUS.ch/applications](http://www.connectUS.ch/applications))
- Send an email to [applications@connectus.ch](mailto:applications@connectus.ch) (Subject: Application connectUS - <Your name>), **and include:**
  - completed application form (in .doc or .pdf)
  - a short motivational letter
  - your current CV
  - a recent photo (for the website)

→ Please send in your application by 4pm, 14 November 2011

Successful participants will be selected by the Steering Committee of the University of Applied Sciences (FHNW).

## 6. Important Dates and Deadlines

- Deadline Applications: by 4pm on 14 November 2011
- Announcement of participants: 2 December 2011
- Preparatory Seminar: 13 to 17 February 2012
- On-Site Seminar: 29 March to 15 April 2012 (approximately)
- Final presentations: May 2012

## 7. Contact and Info

- For further information please check our website at [www.connectUS.ch](http://www.connectUS.ch)
  - (Searches for [www.nwny.ch](http://www.nwny.ch) will be redirected)
- If you have any questions please contact us on [info@connectus.ch](mailto:info@connectus.ch)

## Connecting people



**... for business innovation!**

**We're looking forward to your application!**

[www.connectUS.ch](http://www.connectUS.ch)