

## FACULTY PROFILE: ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF BUSINESS GREGORY KIVENZOR

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Having done business with corporations all over the world, Associate Professor of Business **Greg Kivenzor** knows firsthand about the international business climate. In more than three decades in the fields of marketing and business development, he has seen how business has changed in recent years, especially in the technology sector. For the last three years as a business administration professor, he has brought the realities of the modern business world home to his students so that they can be the promising corporate leaders of tomorrow. “My business experience helps me to share with my

students an understanding of contemporary business issues,” he says. “I do my best to have my students prepared to successful careers in competitive global environment.”

Kivenzor worked in the field of high-tech product development, specifically with nanotechnology, “long before it became a household word,” he says. He worked in the semiconductor industry, serving clients such as Intel, IBM, Samsung, Hyundai, and Texas Instruments. During his corporate career, he traveled to 35 countries and earned 15 patents for innovations such as precise measurements of the positions of objects in a nanoscale, and applications of semiconductor lasers in preprint processes for color printing. In addition to being a full-time professor, he is also a part of the international business community, running his own consulting company. Bi-Focal Strategies, LLC helps clients achieve business growth and development. Specifically, the company, which serves clients as far away as Austria, Russia and China, focuses the environmentally-friendly products and alternative energy industries.

While working with multinational corporations, he began teaching at the college level, first as an adjunct and eventually as a full-time professor. “At a certain point, I decided it would be interesting to go back to school and teach full time,” Kivenzor says. “My personal philosophy is that we are meant to teach, to pass on our knowledge and expertise to future generations,” he says. “If we did not share our knowledge with those around us, we would still be in the caves.”

Prior to joining the Rivier faculty, Kivenzor was an Associate Professor at Oregon State University. He had what he says (laughing) was “a very long commute,” flying from his home in New Hampshire to Portland, OR and then driving nearly 90 miles to the university. Teaching hybrid courses, he made such a trip a few times per semester to teach graduate students in person.

Then, about five years ago, he met then-President Dr. William Farrell at the dedication of the newly-built Regina Library. “I liked the environment,” he says. “I had a positive view of Rivier.” When he learned that the Division of Business Administration had an opening for a professor, he decided to apply. “The warm welcome I received here as a first-year faculty member was just incredible,” Kivenzor

says. “There is such a strong climate of support and mutual goodwill. I have received a lot of help and good advice from my colleagues. People are always willing to lend a hand and it counts.”

He teaches both graduate and undergraduate students, engaging them in hands-on projects that expose them to the realities of the business world. Among the many job related skills he teaches in his Senior Business Seminar (BUS449) is dining etiquette by hosting a business luncheon for his students. “Nowadays, job candidates are taken to breakfast or lunch as part of the vetting process,” he notes. “Many times, they don’t realize this is an interview. But their behavior is noticed by the people interviewing them.” In his Marketing and New Product Development (BUS523) graduate level course, students develop and defend marketing plans for a new products targeting different audiences and applications.

Students in his capstone Strategic Management of Innovations (BUS779) class are exposed to the realities of conducting business overseas by dividing themselves into teams and managing competing enterprises in the LINKS business simulation. Students run fictitious companies managing realistic budgets, product development, manufacturing and sales in the US, Europe, and Asia-Pacific, which is quite a learning experience. In addition, they provide customer service “hiring” and “firing” employees. “Teams compete in the same marketplace,” he says. “They may succeed and they may not. They try to gauge their competition, seeing how their competitors are doing and if they can outdo them. They learn from hurdles.” He wants his students to enjoy his classes, saying they learn more when they are involved in the material. “In my classes, I tell them they should have fun. If they find the class dry and dull, there is very little learning,” he says. His MBA graduate, who took this class, was recently promoted to manage South American markets of her company. She wrote: “I seem to have my hands in many buckets now - R&D, Sourcing, manufacturing, customer service, forecasting, and marketing. All of which we did in LINKS! I will have to look at it from this perspective! Yes, I do have a great education from Riv:!)!”

In addition to market savvy, Kivenzor also makes sure his students are aware of the business ethics that should guide their decisions. He notes the fact that, as a Catholic school, Rivier has an opportunity to emphasize ethical behavior in the professional arena. “It is in line with our mission and vision, and the Catholic intellectual tradition,” he says.

Kivenzor’s research interests lie in the international business sector, notably marketing and product development in the BRICS markets—Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa—which are the “largest and fastest growing economies in the world. ” In July, he took part in the World Marketing Congress in Reims, France, chairing a session examining marketing approaches in those countries, and presenting a paper entitled “The Luxury of Belonging to the Middle Class.”

This past summer, he also composed and edited a new textbook, *Marketing and New Product Development*, for his course that bears the same name. The book contains relevant chapters from two existing advanced textbooks, in addition to a chapter called “New Ideas, New Products, and New Ways to Market Them,” which Kivenzor wrote specifically for this purpose. Most recently, he was invited to participate in the International Week in Plekhanov Russian Economic University – the oldest business school in Russia. During this week in October he will teach a condensed course to English-speaking graduate business students coming from Russia, Germany and other European countries. The course will be focused on Marketing of Innovation. ■