Faculty member invited to White House briefing on trade

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Knud Berthelsen (MBA ’09), adjunct lecturer in management, was invited to the White House in November to attend a briefing on the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) and The President’s Trade Agenda.



Knud Berthelsen, right, was one of about 50 business leaders and export professionals invited to the White House for a briefing on the Trans-Pacific Partnership. Also pictured is Paul Aucoin, left, executive director of the Port of South Louisiana, and Diane Doukas, director of the White House Business Council.

The event was chaired by Diane Doukas, director of the White House Business Council, and guests included Fred Hochberg, president and chairman of the U.S. Export-Import Bank; Drew Quinn, deputy chief negotiator for TPP; and Jason Miller, deputy director of the National Economic Council.

“The White House Business Council invited business leaders and export professionals to discuss the details of this very complicated trade agreement and answer any questions that we might have,” says Berthelsen, CEO of Connect + Trade, a consulting firm that assists clients with finding and entering new markets. “The agreement will remove roughly 18,000 tariffs, so a lot of American companies will be able to enter markets and do things they couldn’t do before. It’s not perfect, but it’s significantly better than the current situation.”

Berthelsen teaches three international trade oriented courses at the Freeman School. Economic Environment of Global Business is a course in the Master of Management in Business (MMG) program that provides an overview of global business and includes a class trip to India, while Asia-Global Leadership IV, which Berthelsen teaches in both the MBA and PMBA programs, takes a more in-depth look at business in Asia with an emphasis on international marketing and export management. The MBA section of the course also include a class trip to China.

“All three classes provide students with the knowledge and skills they need to do business in and with Asia, and that’s very important right now,” says Berthelsen. “For the MBAs in particular, the Trans-Pacific Partnership is going to be the big news story when I’m teaching the class this spring, so we’ll be spending a lot of time in class discussing the agreement and what it means for them as business professionals.”