

International Economics

Two Mount Union professors add international flavor to their curriculum through their travels to Japan and Mexico

Horning Studies Macropolicy in Japanese Industry

A Mount Union College professor got the opportunity to test the theory "learning from watching others" during a fall semester sabbatical leave in Japan.

Dr. Martin Horning, associate professor of economics at the College, conducted his study on Japanese macropolicy -- methods of boosting business investment, production, and growth. Much of his research touched upon the same topics of debate addressed at the recent Clinton/Gore economic conference.

"Japanese businesses and policy makers seem to have come up with some of the solutions to many of the biggest problems faced by American industry," Horning said. "We should not, nor could we, remake ourselves completely in the image of the Japanese system, but there are some lessons to be learned.

"Part of my sabbatical was spent observing a number of Japanese companies and identifying characteristics which could be transferrable to businesses in the

United States -- particularly in the area of labor relations."

The Hikone plant of the Bridgestone Corporation was one of the Japanese facilities Horning observed. "At Bridgestone, I had the chance to talk with management and labor officials about the state of labor relations within the Hikone plant in an attempt to better understand their system of lifetime employment, seniority, wages, promotions, semi-annual bonuses, and contract negotiations," he said.

In addition to observing industrial plants, Horning spent much of his time conducting study and research at Japanese university libraries. "My library research helped me identify sources which could be useful for our faculty and students interested in studying further about the Japanese economic system. It also provided me with a Japanese perspective on business, which I could then compare to American perspectives," Horning said. "This comparison helped to highlight the benefits which could be gained from reforming U.S. business practices."

As the final part of his sabbatical, Horning was able to compare his knowledge of Japanese

businesses to several factories in the United States. He toured the American-run Saturn plant in Springhill, Tenn., as well as several Japanese-owned American plants.

Horning was accompanied during his trip to Japan by his son, Matthew, a sophomore at Alliance High School. Their stay in Japan was coordinated by Baika Women's College in Osaka. "Baika College played an instrumental part in my study," said Horning. "The College set up contacts with companies and enabled me to gain access into university libraries for my research. Those at Baika were a tremendous help."

Mount Union students can expect to benefit from the knowledge Horning has gained from his studies in Japan through a number of spring semester courses he will be teaching, including a seminar in labor relations and a course in comparative economic systems.

Horning earned his bachelor's degree from Mount Union College in 1971, his master's degree from Bowling Green State University, and his Ph.D. degree from Rutgers State University.

-- Written by Joann Hentsch,
a junior English major from Canton.

Free Trade Focus of Botzman's Trips to Mexico City

A faculty member's trip to Mexico City has resulted in new insight for several of the classes he teaches at Mount Union College.

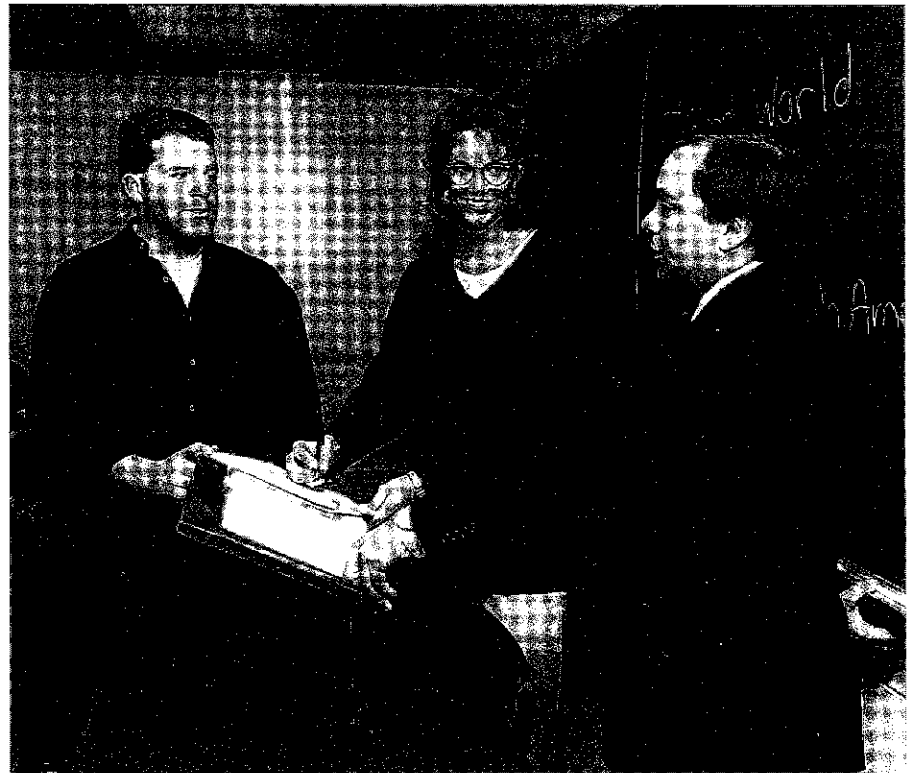
In 1991 Dr. Thomas Botzman, assistant professor of business administration, and six other Mount Union faculty members traveled to Mexico City and the University of the Americas. The trip was sponsored by a grant from the Cleveland Foundation and Mount Union College. The grant was aimed at adding international content to the curriculum at Mount Union, in order to acquaint students with trends in the global market.

Botzman returned to the University of the Americas last summer to teach a class in the department of management sciences. The focus of the class was on free trade, particularly between the United States, Canada and Mexico. His graduate level course, Seminar in International Business, covered the economic, political, environmental, labor and marketing issues facing the North American continent. The course also looked at the recent history of several key industries and their future with free trade.

Botzman's experiences in Mexico have led to many important developments in the classes he teaches at Mount Union.

"The Mexico trips have brought new insight into my classrooms," he said. "My experiences have also given my students exposure to the global market.

"Mexico is a very dynamic and



Through his recent travels to Mexico, Dr. Thomas Botzman (above) has brought insight of that country's business practices to the classes he teaches at Mount Union.

exciting country -- quite different from our vision of small, sleepy towns. During my visit, I came to appreciate the talent and ambition of the Mexican people. I hope we will all gain from our new relationships with our neighbors."

Plans are being made now for a third trip to Mexico this summer. Botzman hopes that several Mount Union students will accompany him, gaining an opportunity to study in another country and get valuable international experience. "This trip will be a very important experience to students who are interested in pursuing a career field in business -- especially international experience," he said.

Botzman received his bachelor of science degree in 1981 from Case Western Reserve University and his master of arts degree in 1985

from Kent State University. He also holds a Ph.D. in business administration, also from Kent State.

Botzman currently teaches classes in economics, marketing and international business at Mount Union. Before joining Mount Union's faculty in 1989, he worked in tire compound science and technology for the Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company, where he received numerous awards including several Technical Achievement Awards. He also holds 11 U.S. patents and several more are pending. He is a member of Research and Innovation for Scientific Knowledge (RISK).

-- Written by Todd Bartley, a freshman communications major from East Rochester, Ohio.