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### **Business Schools**

#### **New USC Program to Fill Supply Chain Talent Gap**

Posted by: Francesca Di Meglio on April 10, 2013

<http://www.businessweek.com/articles/2013-04-10/new-usc-program-to-fill-supply-chain-talent-gap>

With thousands of supply chain jobs going unfilled, the USC [Marshall School of Business](#) is launching an online masters degree program in global supply chain management this fall for students in India, China, Korea, and parts of the U.S. outside Los Angeles.

Over the next five to 10 years, about 200,000 supply chain management jobs will go unfilled because of a lack of trained professionals, says Ravi Kumar, academic director of the new program. Also, rapidly growing markets such as the ones in India and China need to learn quickly to be more efficient and thrifty, he says.

“We saw a gap,” says Kumar. “There are no brand-name players offering this type of program in Asia, and we thought this was a great opportunity for us, thanks to our location and superior faculty in the area of supply-chain management.”

Aiming to enroll about 40 students, the school is relying on human resource managers at various companies in the countries in question to help it recruit. Potential students will have to complete an application that demonstrates they have earned good grades and a degree from a rigorous undergraduate program, have good references, a minimum of two years of work experience, and leadership qualities. Although they will not have to take the GMAT or TOEFL to enroll, they will have to demonstrate their communication skills in an admissions interview.

Because there is such demand for qualified employees with supply chain management training, the Marshall School is hoping employers will sponsor students participating in the 15-month program, which costs \$40,000. The tab includes travel to experiential, face-to-face learning experiences in Singapore and on the Marshall campus.

Students will access the program through an online platform that lets them participate in the same classes offered to USC graduate students on campus for years. The lectures and discussions will be taped, so students can access them whenever, no matter where they are, Kumar says. Students can ask questions of faculty via Skype or e-mail. They’ll work in teams with their classmates in other countries throughout the course.

At the end of the first semester, students will travel to Singapore to see how well a country can streamline supply chain management. Students also can earn a certificate in Lean Six Sigma, which is specialized training in how to be more profitable and efficient. They will work on a project to improve processes or products for their company.

“We think we’re unique for the entire platform we offer—experiential, face-to-face, and distance-learning opportunities,” he says. “We want to move more courses onto this platform in the future.”

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