Starting this fall, students at RIT Croatia will be able to enroll in a special course of study in one of the most important and exciting trends in business today – digital business. A special program of five specialized courses will focus on the impact of new technologies on business practices, products and services, today, and in the future, as online social networks and mobile devices are dramatically changing consumer behaviors and business practices.

This minor allows all RIT Croatia students to enhance their major program of study with a focus on these new technologies and their application in business. Adding a “minor” area of study, both broadens a student’s college education and deepens it in an area outside the student’s major program.

**Building a Web Business**

This course gives students both a conceptual and hands-on understanding of the launching of web businesses. Students will study the full process of web business creation, including domain name registration, frameworks for application creation, hosting of web applications and search engine optimization. Students will apply their knowledge by designing and building a business website that can actually make money.

**Principles of Marketing**

An introduction to the field of marketing, stressing its role in the organization and society. Emphasis is on determining customer needs and wants and how the marketer can satisfy those needs through the controllable marketing variables of product, price, promotion and distribution.

**Internet Marketing**

Internet marketing is critical to an organization’s overall strategy. This course focuses on tactics and strategies that enable marketers to fully leverage the Internet. Topics include the overall Internet marketing landscape, technologies, customer segmenting and targeting, search, analytics and emerging Internet-marketing platforms.

**Search Engine Marketing and Analytics**

An examination of search engine marketing strategies to maximize site traffic, lower customer acquisition costs and boost conversion rates. Marketing frameworks provide the basis for the hands-on examination of search engine marketing and web analytics.

**Managing Innovation and Technology**

This course focuses on commercializing technology, and gives students the chance to work on real business projects involving new technology. Topics covered include assessing inventions for market readiness, drivers of innovation, technology-driven entrepreneurship and intrapreneurship, managing different types of innovation, and the construction of a technology strategy for a firm or business unit. Students learn how to understand both technology and business perspectives as well as how to formulate a profitable technology strategy. Projects focus on current situations in real companies, including, on occasion, student-owned startup companies.

The new Digital Business minor is open to students of all three degree programs offered at RIT Croatia. International Business (Zagreb), International Hospitality and Service Management (Dubrovnik), and Information Technology (Dubrovnik and Zagreb). It will be available for the students enrolling at RIT Croatia in the academic year 2014/2015; those who opt for it will be able to take the Digital Business courses starting in their sophomore year.
**A better way of teaching**

**DR. PETER SCHMIDT WINS GRANT TO PROMOTE “FLIPPED CLASSROOMS”**

How college supposedly is: The students sit controlled and quiet. The professor stands in front of the class. The students listen carefully, write down the information and learn it. This results in success in exams. Students are engaged in the process and value the experience.

How college really is: The students are thinking about social media, video games, movies, and music. They think financial accounting is boring. Many find it hard to sit for 50 minutes and listen to an instructor in the front of the room. Students may sit quietly, but this does not mean that any of the presented information necessarily enters their consciousness.

Is there a better way of teaching? Can more students be reached using a different approach? RIT Croatia professor Peter Schmidt believes there is. The key is to turn the traditional “classroom lecture” model around. Instead of traditional “lectures,” in which students are largely passive, class time is devoted to active practice, while students study the lecture material on their own, outside of class.

For several semesters, prof. Schmidt has delivered his “lectures” in the freshman financial accounting class via videos he prepared for this purpose. Students watch them out of class so they can rewind and watch as many times as they wish. Class time is used for hands-on practice, mostly in group work, and for discussion questions that arise from the lecture videos.

This “flipped” approach is becoming ever more popular with educators around the world, as research shows that students achieve better results. Prof. Schmidt has been the leader in promoting this innovative approach at RIT Croatia and was recently awarded a $5,000 Provost’s Learning Innovations Grant for “Promoting Flipped Classrooms at RIT’s European Campuses.”

He recently returned from a trip to the American University in Kosovo, where he trained interested faculty and presented the approach and its implementation to the full faculty. In May he will hold workshops for professors at both RIT Croatia campuses who are interested in experimenting with a new, innovative approach to helping students engage and achieve.

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**English language for real life**

**NEW HIGH SCHOOL TEXTBOOK FROM PROF. REBECCA CHARRY**

English professor Rebecca Charry has been a familiar face to generations of students at RIT Croatia’s Dubrovnik campus, where she coaches them in mastering reading and writing in academic English. Now she hopes to help even more students throughout Croatia improve their English skills, as co-author of several new textbooks recently published by Profil publishers in Zagreb. The textbook series, titled Tune Up, will be used by students in Croatia’s most challenging academic high schools (gimnazije) starting this fall.

“In writing the textbooks, I used the same approach that I use in my classes at RIT Croatia,” she said. “I try to get students interested in the idea of communicating with others and expressing themselves in professional style English. The whole purpose of grammar and vocabulary is to help us enjoy communicating in real life.”

“In 12 years of teaching English in Dubrovnik, I’ve learned so much about how students learn – what helps them, and what doesn’t,” she continued. “Students learn best from authentic texts like popular songs, current newspaper articles, even online videos, which are included in the new textbooks. Writing is much easier if students find something that they really want to talk about, something that is truly important to them. Grammar is only a small part of learning any language, and if it is done right, it doesn’t have to be painful – sometimes, it can even be fun.”
TRUE QUALITIES OF LEADERSHIP
New book by Professor Jasminka Samardžija examines life stories of 100 Croatian leaders

RIT Croatia’s professor of economics Jasminka Samardžija wanted to know, what makes a leader? To find out, she interviewed 100 Croatian leaders in a wide variety of fields, whose life stories shed light on the influences, encouragement, and skills true leaders need to succeed in life. Her results were recently published in a book titled, 100 Croatian Leaders.

Her result showed that while luck and beneficial circumstances played a role in all of their successes, the influence of education, childhood environment, family and friends was much more important.

From an early age, it is important to discover what you are good at and what you enjoy doing the most and then spend time talking and listening to experienced older people in field of your interest, she concluded. From this comes the determination to learn and improve. Her research revealed a remarkably strong influence of professors on leaders’ choice of career path. Those influences start in primary school, extending through secondary education and then even intensify at college or university.

Each leader’s life story included some crossroads, or moment of big decision, often connected to a change of environment, moving to another city, losing a job, starting a business on their own, sometimes leaving the formal education system, shifting from one field of interest to another, exiting or entering a new market. Those “initiation moments” continued all the way through their careers. Leaders were tested by circumstances, and had to be ready to take risks to achieve personal growth.

Leaders are those who persist and prevail, even if they sometimes had to take a step back, because they believed in themselves and had a vision of their own development or the development of their brand or organization. Leaders are characterized by passion toward their work, which creates vision, team spirit and empathy, persistence and willingness to take risks. They are calm and brave and have a solution or find a solution for each situation. Leaders take responsibility for their vision and constantly think “out of the box”, which makes them somehow different from most other people.

As leaders say, the magic comes when you realize that failure is there to make you stronger next time and to strengthen your personality. You cannot predict everything, but luck and positive circumstances are always there waiting for those who believe in their vision.

Ambassador Merten visits campuses

US Ambassador Kenneth Merten recently visited Rochester Institute of Technology campuses in Croatia. He spoke to our students in Zagreb on March 21st and in Dubrovnik on April 3. Following a brief introduction on the roles of the embassy and the ambassador, he held a very interesting question and answer session with the students. A number of students took part in the discussion on a variety of topics – from business opportunities between the US and Croatia, to studying abroad, to the current political and economic situation. We thank Ambassador Merten for visiting us and look forward to similar opportunities in the future!

Faculty scholarship

- RIT Croatia President and Dean Don Hudspeth spoke as a guest panelist at several regional conferences, including the “Perfection of Innovative Service” panel at the Adria Hotel Forum, “VIP Roundtable – Regional Youth Employment Initiative” at the HR Arena, “Strategic Management & Leadership – How to Develop a New Market Entry Strategy” at the Leaders for Leaders Conference, and “Young Talents” at the American Chamber of Commerce in Zagreb.
- Professors Rebecca Charry Roje and Zrinka Friganović Sain presented lectures at the 22nd annual conference of the Croatian Association of Teachers of English (HUPE) in Opatija in April. Professor Friganović Sain gave a talk entitled “How to Foster Discussion in a Foreign Language Classroom.” Professor Charry Roje presented “We Love Literature: Poems in English for Teaching and Enjoyment.”
- Dr. Peter Schmidt recently held a lecture at Zagreb University’s Financijski klub on “Croatia and the Value Added Tax: The heyday of the early 1990s”. Student Josip Lucić facilitated the event.
Students with talents, hobbies, and promising careers

Students at RIT Croatia do much more than just study. When they are not busy with projects and papers, many students are out in the world, developing their talents, creating artistic works, and helping others. Some students have even had the opportunity to make those hobbies part of a bigger dream for the future.

Mia Kun: ballet dancer

Student Mia Kun has been dancing since she was six years old, competing since she was ten, and dancing pre-professionally since she was 14. A winner of numerous national and European competitions, she has performed in productions of Peter Pan, the Nutcracker and Chicago.

“For me, dancing is like breathing,” Mia said. “I simply can’t imagine my life without it. People say dancing with your feet is one thing, but dancing with your heart is another. It’s true, because when you put your emotions in it, you just can’t get it wrong.”

She enrolled at RIT Croatia with the aspiration to study small business, and eventually open her own dance studio.

“I spent my first semester in Dubrovnik without dancing, and my body started to remember all the bad things I did to it -- how many times I twisted my ankle, hit my spine, or rotated my knee. Suddenly my whole body was in pain from doing nothing. It was my body telling me: okay, I understand you started college, but I want to dance. So as always, I listened to my body, because it simply knows better what I need, than my brain.”

She started dancing again at the Dubrovnik Ballet School and was recently featured in Dubrovnik Vjesnik along with her fellow dancers.

“Now I feel like the luckiest person on Earth, because I don’t have to give up my life. I can go to college and still dance.”

Nikola Vrlazić: mountain cyclist

Graduating senior Nikola Vrlazić lives to cycle. Over the past seven years he has participated in National Cross Country, Croatian Cup, National Marathon, and the Slavonian Mountain Biking League, and won second place in the National Championship for the under 19 age group.

“I like biking because it is different. You are independent, there is no teamwork, and you need to be headstrong. You never know what is harder: to drive to get on top, or to go as fast as you can downhill. You are in the forest in fresh air, you get an adrenaline rush and every ride is a new experience. You can ride every day on the same track, but everything is still different because the forest changes every day. “For me, biking more than a hobby, it’s an obsession. I have met a lot of new people all over the world. It’s incredible.” Among his most impressive achievements is biking from Slavonski Brod to Zadar and back again –- not once, but twice.

Toni Paskojević: JUG water polo team

Freshman Toni Paskojević has played water polo for 12 years and is now a junior for Dubrovnik’s famous JUG water polo team. He has played games all around Croatia and the region.

“My biggest win was at the State Championship Final in Dubrovnik back in 2012. We were extremely excited, and very proud!” he said.
Mijo Jurčić: mountain rescuer

RIT Croatia student Mijo Jurčić is a licensed volunteer rescuer with HGSS (Croatian Mountain Rescue Service), where he works with his Belgian shepherd, Yagus, rescuing lost and stranded travellers throughout Croatia.

“You have to love it, the whole thing with nature, and at some point to love the adrenaline in dangerous situations,” Mijo said.

He has been mountain climbing and mountaineering since the age of 13, and after years of rigorous training, and experience in the field, Mijo earned his license and is recognized internationally as a trainer rescuer and dog guide.

“In search and rescue missions we are always in a race with time for human lives,” Mijo said.

“This summer we had a very hard mission in a mountain hut, which is one of the toughest mountains in Croatia because of the terrain and the unpredictable and intense weather changes.

“At the end of August we had a missing tourist mountain climber from the Czech Republic. The helicopter took us to the top of the mountain where the tourist had sent his last message. From there, we went searching down the mountain to a village in the valley. As time was running out and the temperature got higher with every minute, Yagus and I were in danger of dehydrating because we were much faster than our group and some of my water reserves were with them. It’s a rocky terrain and when it gets hot as the sun rises, it slowly becomes an oven. Even though the helicopter dropped us at 5:30 am, time flies and you don’t want to find yourself with a dog at noon in exposed sunlight temperatures over 40 degrees Celsius, and stone under your feet so hot that you could bake an egg on it.

I saw the village and we finally arrived exhausted with the last atom of energy in our bodies. I got in a garden of a private house and found a shower there and just lifted my dog in my arms and we stayed under the cold shower. I stayed in my working uniform because I couldn’t even stop to take it off. When the owners came to us and recognized who we were, they were very friendly and gave us to eat and drink. It was one of my happiest moments in my life and I will remember that cold shower my whole life.

Afterwards I was informed that the area that Yagus and I searched was clean and the person was found on another part of the mountain, so I was very happy. In mountain rescue, it is a success not only to find a person, it’s a success also to clear an area, and confirm that the lost person is not there. That’s the philosophy we use in the mountain rescue.

In the future, my plan is to launch my own business, and of course I plan to work in the HGSS as I developed ambitions to become an instructor for dog guides.

Diana Heraković: professional singer

Diana Heraković started singing at the age of five, when her mother enrolled her in the children’s choir, “Zagrebački malšani.” Now, she has been singing professionally for almost 9 years. Funk, soul, and rock are her favorite genres, “but basically, I just like music,” she said.

Inspired by stars such as Aretha Franklin and Croatian diva Josipa Lisac, Dyanna’s musical talents have taken her to the famous “Dora” competition for Eurovision in 2011, where she performed “Like the first day” (“Kao prvi dan”), and then signed a contract with Croatia Records.

“At Dora, I met so many nice people who taught me about singing, dancing and dealing with the music world. It was not easy to have Jacques Houdek as my competitor because he is definitely one of the most talented performers in Croatia, and of course, no one of us could actually compare ourselves to him.

“I have many plans for the future, and those are not connected just with singing, but also with my business career. I am planning to finish my MBA, and to start my own business in event management, and connect singing to my future company. There will probably be a lot of downfalls, especially in the music world, but if you believe enough in your talent, goals and wishes, you will achieve them.”

Tino Herljević: inventor

Tino Herljević recently finished his first year at RIT Croatia’s Zagreb campus. He is the creator of numerous inventions, and his creative mind has earned him three Nikola Tesla awards for young inventors.

“I sketched my first “invention” when I was 6 years old. Our neighborhood has a lot of cats that were doing nasty things in our backyard. Unfortunately my mom and I are allergic to cats, but as cats are afraid of water, I made a simple system consisting of a sensor, an electromagnetic-valve and a sprinkler. When a cat enters our backyard, this sensor gives the signal and the valve opens releasing the water, sprinkling all over the place. After few treatments with water, we didn’t have problems with cats anymore.

Of all my inventions, my favorites are “Transferring data with laser” which connects two or more computers and transfers data at speed of nearly 2.5 GB/s. There is also a replica of “Stirling engine” which uses temperature difference to start spinning and produce electricity. You can put it on a lit candle and you can charge your mobile phone.

I try to make all my inventions useful and practical, in order to help people with their everyday tasks. That is my motto. When designing innovation, I always care about the ease of use and the final price for the user. Why should we call something “an invention” if it is expensive and not useful?

I’m very proud of my ‘Mobile radio station with telephone hybrid’. Every time you hear a news reporter giving report live from the scene, they use an automobile with a lot of equipment to get there and start transmitting. I managed to put all their equipment, including audio mixer, microphones, song player, transmitter and other stuff in a suitcase not bigger than a backpack.

Of all my inventions, I had the most success with ‘STS-1’. It is basically a solar tracking system. It consists of two parts, motorized construction for mounting photovoltaic panels and the “smarter” part with microprocessors and electronic circuits. It is used to calculate the position of the sun and rotates photovoltaic modules to gain maximum power. Systems like mine already exist on the market, but as far as I know, mine is the cheapest one.”
Global Student Governments members meet in Dubai

RIT Croatia Student Government representatives Mislav Peček, Josip Lučić, Nikolina Lazarević, and Marina Caleta traveled to Dubai in March along with Administrative Services Coordinator Marija Sušak for the second RIT Student Government Global Consortium, where they met and worked with students from RIT’s global campuses to create a more cohesive and responsive global Student Government.

The purpose was to bring together representatives from all of RIT’s global campuses in a joint effort to promote idea sharing and ultimately improve student life. In addition to the main RIT campus in Rochester, New York, global programs have been operating for many years in Dubrovnik and Zagreb (Croatia), Prishtina (Kosovo), and Dubai (UAE).

In addition to meeting with their fellow students from around the world RIT Croatia SG representatives met with some of the administrative leaders from the Rochester campus, including Dr. James Watters, RIT Senior Vice President, Finance and Administration.

They also attended an alumni reception Intercontinental Hotel, overlooking the great skyline of Dubai. with over 40 graduates from all of RIT’s campuses to learn more about how an RIT education has helped them in their career paths.

“One of the lessons we learned is that the picture of the business world is constantly changing and it is us students who will have the power to change it again,” said Dubrovnik campus SG president Nikolina Lazarević. “It was a great opportunity to network, and to realize the importance of the opportunities that come out of gatherings like these.”

The purpose of the consortium is to exchange experiences and talk about enhancing the overall quality of Student Government as a student body, to bring together RIT’s three campuses from all over the world: Rochester, Croatia, and Dubai.

It is also very helpful in deciding about global events and activities which can take place on all campuses. In the end, every student leaves with greater insight to the work of other campuses and makes new friends.

DUBAI DIARY: WOW!

Of course, along with the brainstorming sessions and meetings, we got to explore Dubai in its full light and beauty. From the 124th floor of the tallest building in the world, Burj Khalifa, to the 24th floor of the tallest building in the world, Dubai Mall, we got to experience Dubai in all of its light and beauty.

Dubai Fountain is the largest choreographed fountain in the world, synchronizing the light and music, with “performances” every night from 7 p.m. to midnight. Chills, disbelief, and pure enjoyment are what millions of people get to experience, just like we did.

Other “wow” moments included as the Festival of Lights, projections of various themes on buildings and sights within a walking distance, making it a real celebration of lights, music and stories. We saw bright shining chandelier in the middle of Dubai Mall, the floating “Water Dragon” shimmering in bright reddish colors, “Stars Gate” over the entrance to the iconic Palace Hotel. At the end, we were greeted by “The Signal”, two bright lasers like lights from the very top of the breath taking Burj Khalifa, which can be a home to approximately 35,000 people. (Yes, please do read that number once again.)

The Desert Safari took us far away from the city center, with its cars and traffic jams, and gave us the opportunity to admire nature. For the first time, we grabbed a whole hand of desert sand! Fresh wind flowing around our hair and scarves which we bought from a local shop, we sat on the top of the sand dune, watching the sun go down, with no words.

Afterwards, we got to experience camel rides, henna skin painting and impressive female and male dancers the desert camp. Topped off with a cup of warm black tea and tasty local dishes, we really can say we enjoyed a true Arabic night.

We saw that traditions really nurture the pride of the people, and they are engaged in trying to preserve them. The similar thing can be said for the RIT campuses, and we spent the week-end discussing various college traditions, and preserving school spirit.

Some of the upcoming events of which we talked about are the opening of the hockey arena at the Henrietta campus in Rochester, and making it possible for the students around the world to watch the game simultaneously. Freshman orientation is also a time for enhancing global ties. Our colleague Josip Lučić suggested that Orientation could possibly have a common global theme. (We gave you hints, and we’re not revealing anything else).

Dubai really is a melting pot of cultures and it provided us with a great cultural insight. Touched by the people and especially by all of our hosts, their stories, the culture and enormous beauty of every sight to see, we really understood why it is called the jewel of the desert. Shukran for everything, Dubai!
Zagreb campus students Daren Perinčić and Dominik Benger have a vision of the future – in the year 2050, people will be able to change and style their hair through a smartphone app. Daren and Dominik’s ambitious product, called H Design, won them first prize at the 7th Innovation Challenge competition held in Dusseldorf in February – tickets for 10,000 Euro worth of travel around the world. Daren and Dominik’s innovative idea beat out strong competition from 20 other teams, representing 30 different countries. Two other teams from RIT Croatia also made it to the national Croatian finals of the competition. The assignment was to apply the slogan “make, learn, perfect” to the development of the innovative product or technology for one of the Henkel’s production areas.

“Participating in this challenge was truly an inspiring experience, not only because we’ve got an opportunity to present our own idea and to listen ideas of other students, but because we learnt about the process of innovation, from idea to prototype,” said Lidija Lovrić, who created an idea of specialised slots in shower cabins, with her partner Ana Bačani.

Students Mislav Mesek and Adrian Tkalčec presented a concept they called Perasil Repel -- a product that keeps delicate clothes from getting dirty, wet or smelly. “It was challenging and satisfying at the same time. The only limit was our imagination. The best thing was the feeling of success and joy.”

Outstanding Undergraduate Scholars
Graduating seniors Kristijan Bjelopera, Darko Ganić, Lucija Marinov, Alojz Paver, and Anna Ratković were recently named Outstanding Undergraduate Scholars. This prestigious award is given to only a select few students at RIT, based on their cumulative GPA, extra-curricular activities, and service to the community. These students receive special medallions to wear at commencement, and are honored with a reception at the Rochester, New York, campus.

Valedictorian 2014
Graduating senior Anna Ratković was selected to be the Valedictorian of the 2014 graduating class at RIT-Croatia. She will give a speech at the commencement ceremony in Dubrovnik, and will attend commencement ceremonies at the Rochester campus as a representative of RIT Croatia. In four years of study, as she completed a B.S. in International Hospitality and Service Management, Anna has achieved a nearly perfect GPA.

Puttin’ on the RITz
First year IHSM student Andela Petra Cvitanović visited the Rochester campus for a week in April as the RIT Croatia representative to the 29th Annual “Puttin’ on the RITz” Dinner event. She was selected based on her academic achievement and service to the community.

During the visit students take part in a variety of activities; actively participating in the planning of the RITz charity dinner event (with other Rochester based IHSM students), attending classes and meeting RIT professors and students.

Imagine RIT
Students Dora Petrović, Nevenka Krzelj and Dzivo Jelić were selected to visit the Rochester campus for a week in May, as representatives of RIT Croatia at the Imagine RIT Festival. This annual event showcases innovative creations, projects, inventions and activities from all departments and colleges at RIT and its global campuses. As part of the visit, Dzivo operated a robot at the Dubrovnik campus, using remote controls in Rochester. The project was designed by Dzivo, along with fellow students Ivan Brčić and Andrej Sarić.

International Dinner Winners
The annual International Dinner celebrates the cuisines and cultures of languages studied at RIT Croatia. Each year students prepare and serve a variety of delicious dishes, and then vote for the most original and best dishes. This year’s winners at the Dubrovnik campus were nachos con salsa de avocado y sangria, by Mirna Sorajić for most original dish and tiramisu by Arta Cungu for best dish. In Zagreb, Lucija Kuvacic and Iva Surač won most original dish for their calzone cesenatico, while Tihana Elezović, Andela Ivoš and Mia Raičković won best dish for their nachos machos.