Twenty-four students, faculty, and staff from the Richards College of Business participated in the Department of Marketing and Real Estate’s fourth annual China Study Abroad Program, March 15-25, 2012.

The program is designed to provide undergraduate and graduate students with a valuable academic and cultural experience focused on how China does business in comparison with U.S. business practices.

“China is an up and coming global power and it’s important for our students to be encouraged to think beyond our borders and to begin fostering international relationships,” said Ms. Mimi Rickard, Lecturer in Marketing and the group’s leader.

The ten day stay covered the provinces of Beijing and Shanghai and included visits to international business firms, universities, and historical sites. The group met with executives from Yanjing Beer Factory in Beijing, Microsoft Beijing, Kodak Shanghai, and the Shanghai Automotive Factory.

Cultural visits included Tian’anmen Square, the Forbidden City, the Summer Palace, the Great Wall, the Lama Temple, Olympic Park, the Temple of Heaven, the Jade Buddha Temple, and the Yuyuan Garden. Students were also able to partake in a traditional tea ceremony.

“Each year the trip is different; and every student comes back with a different perspective. It’s a humbling experience to be part of a large group being served dinner by a family living in only 300 sq. ft. with no private bathroom,” said Rickard.

She added that one of the greatest lessons students can learn from this trip is appreciation for the freedoms and lifestyles they enjoy. “We hope our students learn curiosity and to look at cultural differences with honor and respect,” Rickard said.

The Department of Marketing and Real Estate looks forward to hosting the trip again in Spring 2013.