

# **The role of multidisciplinary, international studies and extra curricular activities for a student's forestry education - a personal report**

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In an increasingly globalized world, students are challenged to meet the requirements they face in the professional marketplace and in society. Not only are they expected to possess a firm grasp on the theoretical knowledge which forms the basis of their field, which is traditionally provided by Universities, but they are also expected to be able to give presentations and display strong communication, negotiation and leadership skills. Additionally, graduates are expected to possess an understanding of other fields of studies, speak foreign languages and be able to adapt to and respect other cultures.

To achieve the requisite skills, a complement to traditional university studies is necessary. Based on my experiences as a Brazilian graduate student in Economics, and as I continue to pursue a Master of Sciences in Sustainable Forestry and Land Use Management at the Faculty of Forestry and Environmental Sciences in Freiburg, Germany, and as president of the International Forestry Students Association (IFSA), I will highlight in this text, first, how multidisciplinary studies provide a broader understanding about related fields such as economy and forestry and the disadvantage of multidisciplinary studies, such as avoiding the deepening of specialized knowledge in the fields. Secondly, I will explain the academic systems in Brazil and in Germany. Specifically I will discuss how the Brazilian state academic system's focus on written exam performances does not prepare students to present, speak and converse as adequately as the German system does, and the consequences of these differences. Finally, I will explain how extra curricular activities may enhance students' formal education by providing some of the so-called "soft-skills", such as communication, negotiation and leadership.

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