

Transcript from the February 7, 2008 UNC's Kenan-Flagler Business School Global Supply Chain Management Chat

**Andrew\_KFBS09:** Hello everybody, my name is Andrew Spencer, and I am a first year student at Kenan-Flagler. With me are 4 second year students focusing on supply chain management, a representative from our Career Management Center, and a faculty representative. Please hold your questions until each has written a brief introduction. Thanks!

**Matt\_KFBS08:** Hello everyone. My name is Matt; I am second year MBA student and a GSCM concentrator. I have previously worked as a project manager for a pharmaceutical company.

**Sandy\_CMC:** Good afternoon. I'm Sandy Gerow from the MBA Career Management Center. The person who works with supply chain is unable to be here today, but I'll be happy to try to answer your questions as best I can.

**Sophia\_KFBS08:** I am 2nd-year international student, concentrating on GSCM. I am also the VP of GSCM Club and currently pursue career in supply chain field.

**Pack\_KFBS08:** My name is Pack, a Thai 2nd year MBA student. I am a president of the Supply Chain Management Club at school. I earlier worked in transportation/ logistics industry.

**Brian\_KFBS\_faculty:** Hi. I am Brian Tomlin, a professor here at UNC Kenan-Flagler. I teach the first-year operations management core course (as well as a project management elective course.)

**Michael\_KFBS08:** Hi I'm Michael Peach, a 2nd year MBA student at KFBS. I'm completing the Global Supply Chain concentration, and am going into product management in the software industry.

**Andrew\_KFBS09:** Feel free to ask your questions everyone

Indrajeet G.: Hello Brian, How would you explain "Supply Chain management" to a layman?

**Brian\_KFBS\_faculty:** Hi Indrajeet. I'll do my best to give a brief answer. Every business creates a product or a service. SCM involves the management of all resources and activities involved in the design, creation, and delivery of the product or service. In many cases this involves collaboration across multiple companies.

Indrajeet G.: Thanks Brian.

Rod: What background sets the stage for a career in Supply Chain Management?

**Pack\_KFBS08:** Hi Rod, I can try to answer that one. I don't think that direct operation background is required but more of general management and project management skills would be good to have too

santosh m.: Hi frds,

tao z.: Hi Professor Tomlin, I am not sure I correctly understand the operational management concentration of MBA, does that specifically mean to supply chain or broadly mean to any operational

management for any industry, like banking or manufacturing...

Bhushan: Hello Mat. I am interested in leadership position in Operations as long term goal but before that I intend to acquire some consulting experience in the Operations and Technology management field. Can you tell if it makes sense to graduate with general management degree or focus on 2 concentrations of management consulting and GSCM during my MBA? I am thinking about the second option

**Matt\_KFBS08** Hi Bhushan, I am concentrating in Finance and GSCM. All candidates concentrate in General Management as a default. I would suggest that you structure your curriculum to address both your short and long term goals.

Bhushan: Thanks Mat

**Brian\_KFBS\_faculty:** Operations Management is one of the core course here in KFBS, along with Finance, Marketing, Strategy etc. The goal of the course is to introduce operations mgt to all students and to keep it relevant to all industries.

Indrajeet G.: Thanks Brian

tao z.: Thanks, Brian, you also solve my questions.

Indrajeet G.: I see Pack saying that he worked in the transportation/logistics industry before. What kind of previous experience is needed/expected to major in Supply Chain mgmt?

**Pack\_KFBS08:** there are certain required classes such as operations and project management but it is not that you need to have a certain background to have SCM concentration

**Pack\_KFBS08:** at the same time, it's very common for students to have double concentrations here

Indrajeet G. : Thanks Pack, that was helpful

sanjay j.: Hi, This is Sanjay Jaiswal and I am project manager for CRM project at AT&T. When we are talking about SCM, does it also include demand forecasting?

**Sophia\_KFBS08:** The operations class would touch a little on demand forecasting. For demand side, there will have marketing class touches on it too.

**Brian\_KFBS\_faculty:** Sanjay, Operations Mgt is one course. The supply chain concentration has many courses, e.g. supply chain mgt, retail operations, operations analysis, etc.

**Brian\_KFBS\_faculty:** Sanjay, yes supply chain as a broad topic area would certainly include demand forecasting. Of course, demand forecasting is also relevant in marketing.

sanjay j.: Thanks Brian

Henry: Hi Brian, Which are the main subject in Operation Management?

Jen: Hello - what types of positions are you looking for after graduating? SCM can be a broad category.

**Michael\_KFBS08: Hi Jen, I'm actually going into marketing, but I felt that SCM is an important area to study especially since I'm going into the IT industry.**

**Matt\_KFBS08: Jen, I will be working in finance, but I feel that the understanding of GSCM and manufacturing and distributing operations will be valuable**

Jen: Thanks Matt and Michael

Bhushan: As a matter of fact my background has been in Production and Engineering, both of which are related to Operations closely. What kind of career opportunities are available and what companies recruit at KFBS in this area?

**Brian\_KFBS\_faculty: Bhushan: A number of different companies - from Fortune 500 companies to Consulting companies. For example Johnson and Johnson from the Fortune 500, and Deloitte and Touche for the Consulting industry.**

Bhushan: Thank you Brian.

Francois: Is there much focus on infrastructure, or is the focus mainly on creating value through transparency and efficiency?

**Michael\_KFBS08: Francois, both areas are important and are addressed in coursework in the SCM area - different courses have a different focus.**

Francois: Thanks Michael

Indrajeet G.: What kind of a work profile would candidates who major in Supply Chain Mgmt have after b-school? What are the kind of companies that come looking for such candidates?

**Pack\_KFBS08: to indrajeet's question again... a lot go to strategy & ops consulting, supply chain function of manufacturing companies and transportation industry such as airline and logistic company such as DHL and FedEx**

Indrajeet G. : Thanks Pack

Rod: During your summer internships did anyone get exposure to Supply Chain Mgmt? If so, could you briefly describe your projects?

**Matt\_KFBS08: Hi Rod, I worked as finance intern working with project managers to develop a cost benefit analysis for clinical trials in biotech**

**Sophia\_KFBS08:** Rod, I worked more related to project management for the summer, but I heard from some marketing folks who worked on supply chain project. For example, one in J&J did process improvement to manage suppliers.

**Matt\_KFBS08** Rod, the internship underscored the value of understanding the operations of the industry and the relationship between the operations and the greater business model

**Brian\_KFBS\_faculty:** Rod, some students SCM related internships. For example, one of our 1st years (who is not here today) will be at Intel this summer.

Henry: Q for Brian: As you all are saying SC is a multicultural topic, is it easy to do an exchange semester while studying in Kenan? If yes, if its in France which University can you choose? or other countries in Europe?

**Brian\_KFBS\_faculty:** Henry: Quite a few students (regardless of concentration) go study abroad. In France, HEC and ESSEC are the two schools.

Henry: thank you

sanjay j.: Can someone explain more about Kenan Institute?

**Pack\_KFBS08:** to sanjay's point, Kenan Institute is a research centre which throughout the year there are lots of activities that students can participate in. The relevant one is Center for Logistic at Kenan Institute .

**Sandy\_CMC:** Sanjay: The Kenan Institute has many facets, the most relevant to Kenan-Flagler are the Centers such as the Center for Logistics and Digital Strategy. These consist of faculty members and research associates. The interaction with students depends on the Center, but students often work on projects and the Center staff and faculty are frequently helpful to students in their career searches.

Bhushan: As I was browsing through the KFBS website I came across the OTIM academic area. How does KFBS integrate these three disciplines of Operations , Technology and Innovation? What special experiences can students have regarding learning to integrate these? Do students get a chance to try hands on latest technology in area of Operations and SCM? and how is the course work structured to focus on innovation?

Bhushan: sorry for long question though

**Brian\_KFBS\_faculty:** Bhushan: The faculty is organized into different areas, e.g., OTIM. There are course on operations, on innovation and on technology management.

Elom A.: Hello

**Matt\_KFBS08:** Hello Elom

Elom A.: Hi Matt

Indrajeet G.: I believe General Management concentration that KF offers encompasses Finance, Marketing, Operations mgmt...Please correct me if this is a misconception. If not, then how is SCM different from General Mgmt. Because, it seems to cover a wide range of subjects/topics like General Mgmt?

**Matt\_KFBS08: Indrajeet, General Management does incorporate all disciplines, including GSCM. Concentrators choose to take a series of required courses to fulfill the concentration**

**Brian\_KFBS\_faculty: Indrajeet: There is some overlap between concentrations in terms of courses/content because certain topics are relevant to all concentrations.**

Indrajeet G.: Thank you Brian and Matt. Your inputs were very insightful.

Bhushan: Brian, in the field of Operations and SCM there is lot of scope of certifications and learning methodologies like Six Sigma, Lean etc. Does KFBS help students prepare for these or the course work at KFBS involve teaching such methodologies?

**Brian\_KFBS\_faculty: Bhushan: We cover topics like Six Sigma and Lean. However, we do not teach people specifically to take certification exams.**

Bhushan: Thanks Brian.

Rich D.: I take it we're all consultants here. Probably at least a few IBMers

**Andrew\_KFBS09: For people who have just joined the chat, I am Andrew Spencer, a first year MBA student at Kenan-Flagler. With me are 4 second year students focusing on supply chain management, a representative from our Career Management Center, and one of our core faculty members who teaches our core operations course. Please feel free to ask any questions you have**

Elom A.: I would like to know if the SCM option delves deeply into the air express industry

**Michael\_KFBS08: Elom, SCM coursework allows students to study logistics and operations in many different industries through case studies.**

Elom A.: Thanks Matt

Rongguo W.: What is the most different between domestic SCM and Global SCM? Is international trading a part of GSCM?

**Pack\_KFBS08: for rongguo's point, global SCM definitely relates with international trading, transporting , procuring, managing outsourcing process**

Rich D.: Can someone provide an example of a common job for someone just out of KFBS with a SCM concentration?

**Brian\_KFBS\_faculty: Rich D: Here are some recent grad job examples: (i) strategic procurement role in J&J; (ii) operations role in Bank of America; (iii) consultant**

Rich D.: nice

Rich D.: thanks brian

Rich D.: J&J?

**Sophia\_KFBS08: J&J is Johnson and Johnson**

Rich D.: ah, ok

Rod: Students, When did you realize the desire to pursue Supply Chain Mgmt? Was it something you always wanted to do, the challenge, the opportunity?

**Matt\_KFBS08: Rod, I think that SCM relates to all industries, but my interest was piqued during the core operations course**

Elom A.: Does KFBS differentiate between SCM and procurement?

**Sophia\_KFBS08: Elom, procurement management is included in supply chain management class**

**Brian\_KFBS\_faculty: Elom: Procurement is one facet of SCM. In KFBS we tend to focus on SCM from a strategic end-to-end perspective rather than a detailed tactical perspective as is some schools. Procurement is discussed in various courses but we do not offer a specific procurement-only course.**

**Brian\_KFBS\_faculty: Software and tools are discussed as part of some of the SCM courses.**

Elom A.: Thanks, Sophia and Brian for your clarification

**Pack\_KFBS08: In terms of supply chain club's activities, throughout we usually have different speaker sessions and we also co-host different activities with the SCM professionals in the area e.g. plant/ site tour and networking events**

Jen: I have an undergraduate degree in SCM and have worked in the industry for about 7 years. I would like to stay in the field but was thinking that I would concentrate in marketing or finance to become better rounded. Will I be able to take any electives in GSCM if I do not declare it as my concentration?

**Michael\_KFBS08: Jen, yes you can take courses in any area or pick up multiple concentrations. In fact you do not have to concentrate at all. Students can take whatever interests them.**

Indrajeet G.: Does the school arrange international trips for students who study GSCM or SCM ? If yes, what kind of companies/countries do they visit?

**Pack\_KFBS08: indrajeet: we currently don't have that**

Indrajeet G.: Ok

**Matt\_KFBS08: Indrajeet, the international trips tend to focus on industries and incorporate exposure to companies and business abroad, but these trips are not usually focused on one concentration**

**Andrew\_KFBS09: Indrajeet: To add to Pack's comment, we do have Global Immersion Electives where we spend about 2 weeks in a specific country or region learning about the culture and visiting companies. However, these are not typically focused on a specific concentration**

Indrajeet G.: Ok, so Matt and Brian, it's not just students in SCM who have the privilege to get international exposure. Someone with a concentration like Corporate Finance could also avail this opportunity?

**Matt\_KFBS08: Indrajeet, yes any student may participate**

sanjay j.: I believe there are many SCM tools (software), at Kenan Flagler what kind of tools are being used

Rich D. : I'm going to throw out a scenario: you want to be in Bus. Dev. for a large transportation and construction company, and ultimately run your own company in this space. In terms of relevant curriculum, I'm thinking SBC, Strategy, and Mgmt. Thoughts?

**Brian\_KFBS\_faculty: Rich: For bus de, mktg, finance and strategy all make sense. If the business is transportation then ops also makes sense.**

Rich D.: OK great

Rod: What opportunities/functions are there in the non profit sectors, public service or government for Supply Chain Mgmt?

**Brian\_KFBS\_faculty: Rod: SCM is very relevant to Sustainability and Humanitarian Relief programs and these can be a focus of certain non-profits. Some students have gone into consulting companies that focus on public sector/government,**

Rich D.: Any notable guest SBC speakers lately?

**Pack\_KFBS08: Rich: SBC=SCM, right?**

Rich D.: right sorry

**Pack\_KFBS08: Rich: we have VP Logistics from Boeing and J&J Procurement prog. We have Lenovo coming up.**

Rich D.: Boeing, really.. excellent.

Elom A.: What would be your recommendation in terms of courses for someone who has a transport, logistics and procurement background and I would like to move into transport and logistics consulting after BS?

santosh m.: Hi Andrew, I am working as a SAP SCM and MM consultant in soft firm. I have 4yrs of experience. I like SCM field can I change my sector from soft field manufacturing or energy sectors. In soft industry we usually have implementation exp of SAP in SCM.

**Michael\_KFBS08: Santosh, many people change industries after business school. It's not difficult to transition into a different industry, especially if you have a relevant skill set.**

santosh m.: Thanks Michael

sanjay j.: What is your recommendation about concentrations for making a career in retail management?

**Brian\_KFBS\_faculty: Sanjay: Maybe a joint marketing and SCM concentration. We will be offering a retail operations course this coming year.**

sanjay j.: Thanks Brian

Jen: How long has GSCM been a concentration at UNC?

**Brian\_KFBS\_faculty: Jen, there has been a SCM concentration since we introduced concentrations here at KFBS.**

Rich D.: How flexible are these concentrations? I feel like I'm going to want to create a hybrid

Rich D.: again, in terms of curriculum

**Matt\_KFBS08: Rich, if you chose to concentrate, the courses do not prevent you from pursuing a well balanced course load. Also, you are not required to declare a concentration and may structure your courses as you see fit to meet the credit hour requirement**

Rich D.: I love it

**Matt\_KFBS08: Rich, I like your enthusiasm**

Rod: What is your recommendation about concentrations for making a career in nonprofit/public service/government?

**Sandy\_CMC: Rod: Depending on what functional area you want to focus on in that sector, you could either concentrate in that area or not concentrate at all (which would allow you to structure a curriculum in general management). We have an enrichment concentration in sustainable enterprise which would be helpful as well.**

Henry: Thank you all for the great opportunity, Bye

Jen: To add to Rich's question - how do you explain a hybrid concentration to a recruiter? Do they ask about specific course work during an interview for an internship / full time position?

Rich D.: Jen, I think creating your own concentration shows initiative thought about your interests and relevant coursework

Rich D.: initiative and though, excuse me

Jen: I definitely agree - just wondering about the interview process

**Michael\_KFBS08: Jen, recruiters are interested in how you are developing your skills - particularly those related to the job you're pursuing. They typically won't ask about concentrations - it's up to you to bring up what you think is relevant.**

Jen: thanks

Bhushan: I am sorry if this question has been asked before. What is that the recruiters look for in KFBS students while hiring for jobs in areas of SCM and Operations? Does prior work experience play a role in the successful placement of the student in this area?

**Pack\_KFBS08: bhushan: that's not necessary**

**Sandy\_CMC : Bhushan: Recruiters would be looking for the necessary skill set rather than specific experience in supply chain. Prior work experience might be helpful, but it's certainly not necessary. We have a lot of students who are career changers.**

Bhushan : Thanks Pack and Sandy for your inputs.

Rod: How many courses are required to complete the SCM program?

**Matt\_KFBS08: Rod, I believe that you are required to take 6 courses from 4 sections**

Indrajeet G.: Sandy, What kind of qualities must one have to major in Supply Chain mgmt? What kind of prior knowledge (not experience) is required?

**Brian\_KFBS\_faculty: Indrajeet: We not require any specific background to concentrate in the SCM (or any other) concentration.**

**Julie W.: For those of you who joined us late or if you would like to view the transcript for today's chat, the transcript will be posted within two weeks to the following link: <http://www.kenan-flagler.unc.edu/Programs/...>**

Rich D.: Alright I need to go. You all have been very helpful. I appreciate you giving your time.

**Andrew\_KFBS09: Everybody: We will be concluding the chat in 15 minutes so please feel free to ask your questions**

Rod : Students and Faculty: Do you feel it would be a difficult transition from the non profit/government to the corporate world?

**Andrew\_KFBS09: Rod: We have many classmates who were in non-profit or government prior to coming to KFBS and are planning to switch to the corporate world. Many of the skills you have learned will translate into the corporate world and recruiters know that. Career switching is very common here, and you will be fine**

Rich D.: Rod: I'm not a student or faculty, but I'm involved in both an NGO as well as a "corporate" firm. People in the non-profit field are nicer. Prepare for bottom-line thinking if you're planning on transitioning.

Rod: Rich D.: What is your function?

Bhushan: Can you explain the 'GLOBAL' in the GSCM concentration? How is the Global factor addressed?

**Brian\_KFBS\_faculty: Bhushan: Because SCM often cuts across many countries/continents, it is important to understand global issues/risks etc. when managing a supply chain.**

**Brian\_KFBS\_faculty: Bhushan: To follow up - the global aspect is weaved into the various courses.**

Bhushan: Thanks Brian. So do students also get some hands on experience in 'global' projects in this area? I guess the focus might be mainly in Asian and Eastern European areas for addressing low cost operations?

**Brian\_KFBS\_faculty: Bhushan: There are some opportunities for global project but we also have practicums with local companies.**

Bhushan: Thanks for answering my questions, Brian.

Elom A.: In which countries apart from the US have KFBS students taken up positions in the last 2 years?

Indrajeet G.: So Brian, for a student sans relevant experience in a particular concentration, what would you suggest him/her to do (for eg. take certain certifications ?) to show to the admissions committee how keen he is to pursue a particular concentration at the school?

**Julie W.: Indrajeet, this is Julie Wiley in Admissions. Because we expect some students to be career switchers, you do not necessarily have to have work experience or knowledge in that particular field. However, it would be important for you to mention why you want to career switch and to demonstrate strong quantitative skills, as well as leadership and management experience if possible.**

Indrajeet G.: Thank you very much Julie.

sanjay j.: A general question - typically what is the percentage of MBA students with family and kids and what kind of activities are there for family

**Michael\_KFBS08:** Sanjay, I would guess that about 30% of students have families. There are a number of activities for families - sponsored through the Kenan Connection (partner association) and family club.

**KANE\_KFBS2008:** Hi, sanjay j: Just add to Michael's comment, the chat for family life at KFBS is scheduled on 2/12. Please check the following site. <http://www.kenan-flagler.unc.edu/Programs/...>

sanjay j.: Thanks Michael and Kane

Elom A.: In which countries apart from the US have KFBS SCM students taken up positions in the last 2 years?

**Andrew\_KFBS09:** Elom: Students really go to too many countries to list. There are many international opportunities

Elom A.: Thanks Andrew

Rod: Is most of your recruiting local or regional? What are the new trends for the upcoming years?

**Matt\_KFBS08:** Rod, there is a strong local and regional recruiting presence from RTP and the southeast. There are also many programs for internship and full time searches in the northeast and on the west coast

Rod: Matt: RTP?

Indrajeet G.: Research Triangle Park :-)

**Brian\_KFBS\_faculty:** RTP = Research Triangle Park - an area here in NC.

Rod: Sorry, I am from the Big Apple...

**Matt\_KFBS08:** Rod, I am not in the Career Management Center, but the stated trends would indicate increasing our recruiting presence regionally and across the country by leveraging our alumni network and increasing the CMC support

Compass: what is the kenan institute? and what does it have to do with the MBA program?

**KANE\_KFBS2008:** Hi, Compass, The Kenan Institute is a center of business, academic and governmental collaboration for market-based economic development worldwide. Many KFBS students are taking an advantage of it. Please check out the following site about Kenan Institute. <http://www.kenan-flagler.unc.edu/KI/>

Rongguo W.: One question for Julie, what I still need to do after interview?

**Julie W.:** Rongguo, can you clarify your question?

Rongguo W.: I am applicant for 2010. I completed interview last month. How do I continue following up my application process?

**Julie W. :** Rongguo, if you have had your interview, all you need to do now is complete the second part of your application, which includes submitting your essays, transcripts, test scores and recommendations by the particular deadline date. If you have done this already, just hang tight until the decisions for your particular application deadline are released. Applicants who applied by the Jan. 4th deadline will be notified of decisions on March 17.

Rongguo W. : Thank you Julie

**Andrew\_KFBS09:** 5 Minutes left to ask questions everybody, please feel free to ask your questions now

Jason: How will KFBS do to help students change careers?

**Matt\_KFBS08:** Jason, career changers have the opportunity to use a number of CMC resources to help to leverage the skills developed in school and better communicate them to recruiters

**Matt\_KFBS08:** Jason, most everyone is a career changer in some form or another and these resources help prepare you to not only get the position, but perform while in it

Jason: thank you, matt

Rongguo W.: Is OEM ( original Equipment Mft.) process belongs to the scope of GSCM?

Brian\_KFBS\_faculty: OEMs are discussed during the supply chain course.

Rongguo W.: Thanks Brian, but no special class for OEMs?

**Brian\_KFBS\_faculty:** Rongguo: No. But maybe I am misunderstanding the intent of your question.

Rod: Students: Did you have to travel a lot during your internships?

**Matt\_KFBS08:** Rod, it depends on the internship, but most students are relatively stationary considering that internships only last for 3 months or so

Rod: Matt: Even in the consulting industry?

**Matt\_KFBS08:** Rod, it depends on the company, but many were stationed either at the home office, or mainly at the client site, there were a couple of trips to and from, but not weekly travel

Rod: Thanks Matt

Elom A.: I've really learnt a lot from this chat, thanks a lot KFBS team

**Julie W.:** Again, here is the link for the chat transcript: <http://www.kenan-flagler.unc.edu/Programs/....>

Indrajeet G.: Everyone at KFBS is so helpful. Thank you, students, faculty and Admissions committee for answering our questions patiently.

Rod: Thanks Everyone...

Jen: Thanks everyone for your time - these chats KFBS offers are great.

Jason: Thanks for everyone from KFBS

sanjay j. : Thanks Everyone.....

**Julie W.: Thank you all for joining us today, good luck!**

**Andrew\_KFBS09: Thanks everybody for your great questions! We will be concluding the chat at this time. Please email [mba\\_info@unc.edu](mailto:mba_info@unc.edu) if you have any further questions or concerns. Thanks again!**

**KANE\_KFBS2008: Thank you for your time today. Wishing you good luck!!**