

## Report from AISAM 2004

Students were unanimous in their praise for the AISAM 2004 program held in Penang, Malaysia, July 5-16.

AISAM (the Asian Intensive School for Advanced Management) has now been offered nine times. Forty-four MBA students from the six Australian universities in the ANBS consortium participated in the AISAM 2004 program. This number also included five students from the University of Calgary in Canada.

Students agreed that a highlight of the two week program were the group visits to one of the high-tech companies in the Penang Free Industrial Zone:

- Eng Teknologi (precision engineering and automation equipment);
- Osram Opto Semiconductor (LED displays);
- Penang Seagate Industries (tape heads and parts); and
- BCM Electronics (walkie talkies and microphone assemblies).

During these visits students received briefings from senior staff, engaged in question and answer sessions and undertook a guided plant tour.

The academic program required participants to complete the compulsory unit, *Business in Asia* during the first week and chose one of three electives in the second week. Electives this year included *International Supply Chain Management*, *Knowledge Management: the Asia-Pacific Perspective* and *Strategic Negotiation for International Business*. These three new electives proved enormously popular with students and each achieved a very high grading on the Student Evaluation Questionnaire.

As well as studying two units for credit towards their MBA degrees, students were also addressed by two Penang State Ministers and an economic advisor to the Malaysian Prime Minister.

As well as living at the luxurious Hotel Equatorial Penang and enjoying the 'Welcome' and 'Farewell' dinners, students were also guests at a State Dinner organised by the Penang Tourism Authority. On the middle weekend, students had the opportunity of visiting Penang's famous night market at Batu Ferrengi as well the options of going on a fishing trip, a scooter ride around Penang or just laying by the pool! The group also enjoyed the chance of a cultural tour of old Georgetown, (the capital of Penang).

While all agreed that the AISAM program was tough, requiring '....burning the midnight oil', they equally agreed that the AISAM experience was a highlight in their MBA studies.

The ANBS Board of Directors has agreed that students will again be offered an AISAM program in Penang in 2005. So speak to your course adviser and ascertain whether AISAM 2005, and July in Penang, is for you!