Melissa Beran Samuelson

Clinical Professor

About Thunderbird:

Thunderbird is the world's No. 1-ranked school of international business with more than 65 years of experience in developing leaders with the global mindset, business skills and social responsibility necessary to create real, sustainable value for their organizations, communities and the world. Dedicated to preparing students to be global leaders and committed global citizens, Thunderbird was the first graduate business school to adopt an official Professional Oath of Honor. Thunderbird's global network of alumni numbers 40,000 graduates in 147 nations worldwide. The school is sought out by graduate students, working professionals and companies seeking to gain the skills necessary for success in today's global economy.

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Areas of Expertise:

Gender and development, Microfinance, South Asia and the Middle East, Gender in post-conflict reconstruction

Courses:

Ethics & Governance, Microfinance in India

Melissa Beran Samuelson is a clinical professor at Thunderbird School of Global Management. She is currently finishing her Ph.D. at the University of Nebraska where her political science concentration is women and gender studies. Ms. Samuelson has earned an enviable reputation for her extensive experience helping women from diverse national and regional origins, including the Middle East, Afghanistan and Nepal, improve their standing, learn important trades and establish businesses.

Her areas of expertise include gender and development, focusing on regional issues in South Asia and the Middle East. Among the notable groups she has assisted in international development is the Afghanistan Relief Organization, collaborating with the country's Ministry of Health to implement a midwife training program. Additionally, Ms. Samuelson has provided her expertise to Ray of Hope in Nepal, working with women victims of sex trafficking. She also has assisted Catholic Social Services as a cultural adjustment volunteer, working with Afghan, Iranian and Iraqi refugees.

Ms. Samuelson is a frequent contributor and presenter at a variety of national and international conferences, including the Women's Peacemaker Conference, Institute for Peace and Justice, Princeton Institute of International and Regional Studies, and the Microfinance Summit of Nepal. She also has presented at the Women's Islamic Initiative in Spirituality and Equality Conference in Malaysia.

Her responsibilities at Thunderbird have included the academic direction and training for women business owners and entrepreneurs in Jordan. Her professional background includes the management and direction of a grant from the U.S. Agency for International Development focused on education in rural Algeria. She also has served as a committee member for the Goldman Sachs 10,000 Women initiative at American University in Kabul, Afghanistan. The program, launched in 2008, expands the entrepreneurial talent and managerial pool in developing and emerging economies, especially among women.

She is a member of Phi Beta Delta, an international honor society, and was inducted into Pi Sigma Alpha, the national political science honor society. She was a National Merit Scholar during her undergraduate career at the University of Nebraska.

Prior to joining the faculty at Thunderbird, she earned her political science MA in human rights and diversity at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. She has a graduate certificate with honors in gender issues and economic development from the University of Melbourne in Australia, and received her BA in political science and international studies at Nebraska.