

2-5D Learning in Practice: Managing stakeholder expectations and the value of experiential learning approaches

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Entrepreneurial Ventures, Management and Practice is an applied experiential learning course offered to senior honours year students as part of the MA Business and Management Honours Programme. It is an elective course designed to provide students with a learning opportunity to apply their knowledge and skills beyond the classroom on a project for a small to medium sized enterprise. The project is focussed on an aspect of business growth and development and is value additive to the host organisation. This course has been designed to enable the academic and practitioner environments to intertwine and synergistically provide students with a deep learning environment. As academics we are faced with how best to balance the challenges of applying theory and practice in a meaningful setting to prepare our students for a future career. Moreover, this type of approach to facilitating learning combines a number of tensions including: managing the expectations of an external organisation, the anxieties of students whose lack of appreciation for their own applied business skills requires careful management and coordination within the tri-partite relationship between institution, students and small business. The presentation will draw on learning and reflections from all stakeholders: academic staff, students and participant external organisations. It will elaborate on the opportunities and challenges of adopting such a pedagogical approach. It will also discuss the value added through engagement in this type of applied learning to all the stakeholders and offer insights as to how such an approach might be considered in other contexts and disciplines. The presentation will feature video soundbites from prior students and graduates.

References

Jones, C. (2011), *Teaching Entrepreneurship to Undergraduates*, Edward Elgar, Cheltenham.

Neck, H; Brush, C and Green, P (2014). *Teaching Entrepreneurship: A Practice-Based Approach*. Edward Elgar.