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Transformative Business Education: Heart, Hands, Head – All In!

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ABSTRACT

This paper emerges from a pedagogical philosophy that business students should experience real-world problem solving that allow them to demonstrate evidence of learning and its application to the world of business. This paper builds the case that business education must lead the student toward a professional outcome where he or she can apply the knowledge and skills gained during the college journey so that he or she is prepared for all that is expected of the student as a business professional.

Keywords

Business education, social responsibility, pedagogical philosophy, pedagogy, capstone

1 SHIFT IN EDUCATION

There are many who believe formal education cannot replace professional experience. We suggest that education can accelerate experience when it is constructed with a strong goal in mind. Access to college emerged after WWII with the GI Bill. Access to education allowed a broader population to gain the credentials that would allow them to rise in positions of leadership that, perhaps in the past, were limited to more affluent families who could afford college (Bound & Turner, 2002; Stanley, 2003; Boyer, 1985).

The rise of community colleges further made higher education accessible and affordable (Karabel, 1972). The number of individuals who now had a college education was larger than ever before (Thayer, 2000). As the need for college increased, managers who had not earned the first undergraduate degree criticized the value of an education as limited to “book learning.” The need for dedicated and balanced individuals that attain their business education should develop an ‘engaging’ managing style where it encourages practicing managers to learn from their own experience, insight, and analysis thereby building on the art of management through management education (Mintzberg, 2004).

2 PEDAGOGICAL PHILOSOPHY

The educational journey for a Molloy College student provides not only preparation for a professional path, but also for participation as an educated citizen of the world. The result is a level of expertise in the student’s chosen profession. The curriculum is about depth. The outcome is an individual who is professionally self-sufficient, yet has a yearning for continuous learning. A needed, yet independent, relationship between educational institutions and business institutions is a meaningful input and outcome (Eurlich, 1985; Godfrey et al., 2005).

3 THE MAYOR’S CHALLENGE

The Bloomberg Philanthropies’ Mayors Challenge is an initiative created by Mayor Michael Bloomberg to aid today’s U.S. city leaders to develop innovative ideas to confront and mitigate today’s toughest problems with community expertise (Bloomberg Philanthropies, 2017).

4 DEVELOPING CAPSTONE EXPERIENCE

Initially clients were identified that mirrored the process established by Mayor Michael Bloomberg in 2012 when the “Mayor’s Challenge” was created. Mayors of Long Island villages offered the students the opportunity to work on a problem that ‘fit’ into the Mayor’s Challenge design of: Vision, Implementation, Impact, and Replicability. After a number of semesters, the need to expand the client-base allowed government agencies and ultimately not-for-profit organizations to become clients. These past five years have allowed the Molloy Division of Business to create a capstone experience that meets the overall learning objectives of both the undergraduate and graduate business programs.

The students in the Capstone Class are divided into two-three consulting teams. Each team was provided with a real-world client and a real-world consulting problem. The outcome of the consulting experience is a professional presentation to the client and its board of trustees. Also, the students build a detailed turnkey package that allows the client to execute the recommendations made by the student consultants.

5 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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