Evolution of a Business Sustainability Program: Lessons & Insights

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Overview

• Program Evolution *(Global Social Sustainable Enterprise, GSSE, MBA)*
  o Concept
  o Design
  o Preparation
  o Impact
  o Transformation
  o Lessons

• Questions/Discussion
Vision: Establish the CSU College of Business as a national leader in advancing business to address the social, environmental and economic challenges of the 21st century.

1. Provide access to an exceptional business education
2. Pursue excellence in publishing research that contributes to our understanding of business and its role in society
3. Leverage the power of business to make the world a better place

Mission:
We are in the business of transforming lives. Through business education, scholarly research, and community engagement, we make our world a better place.
Program Concept

• Recognition that:
  o Governments are either incapable or unwilling to lead sustainable development efforts
  o Private sector model will need updating to address challenges

• A rigorous program that trains graduates to offer entrepreneurial solutions to address global, social and sustainable challenges … GSSE MBA

• Alignment with College mission
1. Students select global challenges for further investigation.

2. Students and faculty select most compelling global challenges and form venture teams by mid October.

3. Venture teams develop business plans.

4. Teams conduct 40 days of field work to test assumptions and form partnerships.

5. Teams adjust plans and graduate with feasible ventures that can apply to the Institute for Entrepreneurship for additional support and incubation services.

EXIT TO THE INSTITUTE FOR ENTREPRENEURSHIP
Program Design

- Global Social and Sustainable Enterprise MBA
  - 41 Credits, residential program, cohort-model, 3 semesters
  - All credits in the College of Business
  - Focus on entrepreneurship and solving global challenges
  - Summer venture practicum
Program Preparation

• Campus support
  o Establish Faculty Advisory Council
  o Develop curriculum for academic approval
  o Gain university support to establish a world-class program
  o Define program objectives and learning outcomes

• External support
  o Establish program advisory board
  o Build partnerships – USAID, Fulbright, Peace Corp

• Operational support
  o Invest in marketing, recruitment & enrollment efforts
  o Establish program advising & administrative structure
Program Impact

• Student Profile
  o 50% International; 50% Women
  o Fulbright Scholars, Peace Corps Coverdell Fellowships World Learning Scholars, Military
  o 4+ years work experience
  o Cohort size: 25-30 students

• Recognition
  o Net Impact rankings (#3, 2016)
  o MBA Roundtable Innovative Award (2019) finalist
Program Impact

• Student Success
  o 25-30% students launch business post-graduation
  o Start-up areas include:
    ▪ Clean energy and water (Power Mundo, Peru)
    ▪ Maternity health (Ayzh, India)
    ▪ Sustainable tourism (Saraii Village, Sri Lanka)
    ▪ Sustainable farming and land management (Noya Fibers, Mongolia)
    ▪ Green food management (Fargreen, Vietnam)
    ▪ Sustainable investing and Ag Tech (Axios Impact Investing, Peru)
  o Placements include: Amazon, Ashoka, Ernst & Young, Google, OtterBox, Tesla …
Program Transformation

- **Impact MBA**: Expansion of program footprint to include both ‘venture creation’ and ‘corporate sustainability’ (Fall 2020)

- Interdisciplinary coursework
  - Greenhouse gas management
  - Carbon accounting
  - Environmental policy
  - Impact investing
  - Ethics and sustainability
  - Climate Change

- Corporate fellowship program to dovetail Venture Creation experience
Program Lessons

- Vision and direction
- Continuously iterate
- Engaged faculty and staff
- Financial support and sustainability
- Leverage the power of partnerships
Questions/Discussion

• What’s the next phase of business sustainability education?
  o Contributions to the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)
  o Transformative student experiences
  o Measurement of program success and impact

• How can we foster greater cross-border program collaborations?