

Strategic, Integrated Entrepreneurship Education Model

This workshop outlines the strategic, integrated entrepreneurship education model developed over the past 10+ years at Acadia University in Nova Scotia. In this session you will learn the elements of success for Acadia and the new initiative to use the model in the community college system throughout Nova Scotia.

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Equipment needed: data unit and remote; flipchart and markers or whiteboard and markers. I will use my own laptop if that is appropriate (please advise).

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It is difficult to review university calendars without stumbling upon entrepreneurship courses. The impact of such courses is hit and miss at best. Usually courses are based around a small number of professors, often housed in the school of business. Although this is often where entrepreneurship takes root within the university environment, it is simply not enough to create an entrepreneurial culture – an entrepreneurial graduates.

In this workshop you will learn about a strategic integrated approach to entrepreneurship education being practiced at Acadia University in Nova Scotia, Canada. Developed by the Acadia Centre for Social and Business Entrepreneurship this model will outline a strategy for integration that focuses on a radiant, rather than magnet, model. The model includes a broad definition of entrepreneurship with includes three types, an entrepreneurial decision making model, a educational continuum, identified factors that increase the likelihood of student's and faculty's entrepreneurial orientation and a tool to benchmark and measure impact.

Led by Lisa Lowthers and Chris Pelham, of ACSBE, this session will outline the elements in the Acadia model and discuss efforts to introduce it to other educational institutions. This presentation is complimentary to an academic paper. The two pieces when considered together, provide linkages between policies of the institutions, the practice of entrepreneurial education, and research, the themes of the conference.

Link to Conference Theme

ACSBE, located at Acadia University in Nova Scotia, has been involved in entrepreneurship education since 1989. Previously focusing on entrepreneurship research in Atlantic Canada, they moved to offer business and community development services to the Nova Scotian community. In the mid 1990's work with faculty and students began conducting consulting work for community clients. This seemingly simple effort to educate students as to the realities of small business has grown over the past ten years to a strategic, integrated approach to entrepreneurship education.

This effort started by connecting students with local business and not-for-profits in an effort to provide applied research. ACSBE, in an effort to provide counselling support to its community clients, created a model through which the clients processed in order to make informed decisions about their lives. From an educational perspective, ACSBE adopted a three step continuum that introduced entrepreneurship education in three stages – attitude/perception, skill development and finally actualization. Programming was then built around this continuum in order to assist students to use the ACSBE entre cycle and programming to make informed decisions about their own lives. This model was then applied to a boarder definition of entrepreneurship – one that encompassed personal, social, business entrepreneurship and innovation.

ACSBE's development of the counselors programming, which teaches counselors how to assist clients through the ACSBE entrepreneurship cycle, has impacted policy making here in Canada from the adopted of a SIC code to the creation of a standardized of the APEC-IBIZ CBC certification. ACSBE continues to travel to other countries in the world assisting other APEC (and non APEC) countries train their counselors and develop their national standards. This certification program is now being developed into a course to be offered at Acadia – bringing the process full circle.

Three research studies has been conduct on the success of the application of the model by Academics. One study focused on ACSBE clients and their success, another on the psychological factors of entrepreneurship, and ACSBE was a key component of an Atlantic wide study on Entrepreneurship in the University Environment through ACOA in 2004. ACSBE has also re-administered the larger study on the Acadia campus so that the benchmark can be used to fine tune programming and ensure measures of success. Finally, ACSBE is now involved in the development of another academic study which will feature a link between the ACSBE client model and a link to emotional intelligence. This is the topic of an academic paper submitted to this conference for consideration.

This workshop outlines the strategic, integrated entrepreneurship education model now in place at Acadia, the various factors that influenced its developments, and plan for application of this model in other educational institutions. This session will identify the links between research and practice as the model developed - and potential impacts on policy making.