

LEPE 2021: The Future of Action Learning

Post Session Outcomes:
Funding Experiential
Learning Programs Post-
Pandemic



Terri C. Albert, Ph.D.

Fresh Set of Eyes

Discovering New Opportunities → Driving Outcomes

**This session was an
open discussion
format**

**Format facilitated participants
sharing their experiences within
pandemic conditions. Lessons
learned, best practices and
resources were final session
outcomes.**

SCHOOL/UNIVERSITY PROGRAM OVERVIEW AND REFLECTIONS

NOTE: This section presents the LEPE session attendees who provided a detailed description of their programs, funding and other characteristics. Other schools were represented at the session; providing confirmation and asking clarifying questions, e.g., Sloan, UNC, UW-Madison, Emory, UC-Berkeley.

Overview and Reflections

**Carnegie Mellon University
Tepper School of Business
Heinz College of Information
Systems Management and
Public Policy**

Session participant has worked in the business school, information systems and public policy.

- 104 capstone-level, master's level projects last year
- Client must agree/align with CMU's student IP and educational project agreement
 - Final deliverables are designated no monetary value; educational value (graduation requirement). Sponsors indemnify students. Sponsors/clients are given royalty-free, non-exclusive license to the students work. Sponsors readily accepted this ROI.
- Solicited gifts in lieu of 'normal' project fees
- Advance notice that client 'ask' would be \$10,000.00
 - Positioned as expressing appreciation for the student teams' work
 - Funds go directly to their industry partners scholarship fund
- Project recruitment targets 33% new participants (require more "hand-holding") and 67% returning.
- Piloting a capstone phase two defined by a sponsored research agreement with faculty.
 - Occurs post-phase one capstone experience with a goal to generate more revenue thus relieving some of the pressure on fees.

Overview and Reflections

**UCLA
Anderson School of
Management**

Assistant Dean of faculty programs was the session participant
Implemented a major restructuring of all capstones last year; full-time MBAs, FEMBA (fully-employed MBAs), EMBA, G-EMBA (Global) and Business Creation Option (BCO; starting own business)

Fees were collected as prior years (with a slight increase).

- International companies \$20,000.00
- Companies over 50M, \$17,500.00
- Companies under 50M, \$15,000.00
- Non-profits \$7,500.00
- NGOs \$5,000.00 (subsidized)

Program was fully subscribed. Fewer MBA applicants; fewer teams as a result. Reported no impact

Funds primarily for faculty research (65%), student travel (domestic during pandemic) and other admin costs (35%).

Fees are not considered tax-deductible gifts for sponsors/clients

Overview and Reflections

**University of Arizona
Eller College
of Management**

Session participant is executive director of Business Consulting.

- **Programs served are: Full-time MBA, part time/evening MBA, MIS, and Business Analytics**
- **25-30 projects each academic year**
- **\$15,000 sponsorship fee for fulltime programs**
- **\$2,000 for evening/part time (typically non-profits as sponsoring organizations)**
- **Lower enrollments last year (international student composition) translated to fewer teams; thus some sponsors turned away**
- **Recruit one year in advance (spring); pandemic impact shortened the recruitment cycle for this year**
- **Sponsorship fees cover the business consulting department's costs; it is a standalone unit in Eller**
- **A percentage of the fees are allocated to the administration's sponsored accounts funds.**

University policy restricts classifying project-based course fees as donations unless the company receives nothing of monetary value in exchange. Thus, no tax-deductible gift is granted in the Eller lab programs.

Overview and Reflections

University of Minnesota
Carlson School of
Management,

Session participant leads the Business Analytics' Lab Enterprise.

- Each program has its own standalone unit in charge of project-based learning.
 - In contrast to Eller's standalone unit which serves their entire college.
- **Pandemic had impact on enrollments because of the international student composition.**
 - Students deferred to this year
- **"Normal" charge is \$30,000.00**
 - Lowered fee somewhat for the seven projects
 - Twenty necessary to break-even
 - Several repeat sponsors couldn't afford to participate last year (hospitality, in particular)
 - Expanded into new industries: tech, supply chain that has added to their project sponsor portfolio
- **Other lab enterprises and school financially helped the Business Analytics Enterprise**
- **Tracking for 23 this year**
- **Interested in pursuing gift/donation option**

Overview and Reflections

University of Michigan
Ross School of Business

Session participant is associate director of Student Experience.

- Project experience is embedded in a course; tuition dollars available to cover expenses except travel.
- During pandemic, all projects were virtual with a flat fee of \$5,000.00.
- Post-pandemic projects are virtual (with \$5K flat fee) or traditional. Traditional requires a travel component with a fee structure (one week per team):
 - Costs for travel/expenses/administration are \$25,000.00 for higher cost-of-living locations and \$18,000.00 for lower CoL locations
- Funding assistance for small businesses, non-profits, local (SBDC grant money helped to fund—see slide 11)



PROJECT-BASED LEARNING DIMENSIONS

RESOURCES

**Three PBL funding models were identified during HBP's global educator's webinar (February 2021—video link slide 12).
LEPE session participants' experiences validated and enhanced the classification structure to include a travel specific one.**

This classification structure is the foundation for further research and publication. Please contact Terri Albert for additional information.

For profit/Cost plus – fees calculated based on incremental course expenses + travel + faculty research + administrative costs

Break-even – the total incremental course costs are allocated and charged to participating organizations (e.g., data collection, database and/or publication licenses, project coach stipends, program staff, etc.)

The above funding models may grant organizations tax-deductible/gift status for fees. This is determined by each institutional gifting policies.

Philosophical over-ride – will not charge as organizations are participants in the learning experience. Well resourced schools and/or PBL curriculum that have no incremental expenses to the academic units are able to offer PBL; meeting philosophical and financial requirements.

Travel – project sponsor pays and makes all arrangements (except local); school admin responsible for arrangements and sponsor pays a flat fee covering travel and internal costs that is included in the overall project fee

Pandemic impact on organizational participation

Organizational articulation was expected to be challenging; proactive, creative solutions designed and launched.

Overall impact was not dramatic; some experienced new opportunities with industries not previously project sponsors.

Recurring sponsorship was predominant; small numbers could not participate because of budgetary constraints (anticipated returning the next year)

Discovered building a relationship with the SBDC (Small Business Development Centers) for local businesses, substantial funding and project mentors <https://www.sba.gov/local-assistance/resource-partners/small-business-development-centers-sbdc>

SCORE as a source for mentors. They have a formal program. <https://www.score.org/>

Project-Based Learning Resources

February 2021 global educator's webinar; follow up podcast:

<https://hbsp.harvard.edu/inspiring-minds/readying-students-for-their-careers-through-project-based-learning>

Illustrative example of PBL course module:

<https://hbsp.harvard.edu/course-explorer/modules/project-based-consulting-lab>

PBL resources available from session speaker:

terrialbert7@gmail.com:

- *Sample syllabi, course planning schedule
- *Student project management tools/templates
- *Community Engagement PBL programs
- *Digital Health PBL course module
- *LEPE "Funding Experiential Learning Programs Post-Pandemic" session, full video



Terri C. Albert, Ph.D.
Educator and CEO
terri@freshsetofeyesllc.com
terrialbert7@gmail.com