

## **SOCIAL ENTERPRISE: CREATING INDUSTRY CONNECTIONS AND STUDENT ENGAGEMENT**

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### **Abstract**

Social entrepreneurship and social enterprise have received a lot of attention in academia. According to Schlee, Curren, and Harich (2009) 51% of the business schools in their sample encouraged students to consider social ventures. According to their research the traditional marketing curriculum needs adaptation to fully address the curricular needs of students interested in social enterprise. Schibrowski et al. (2002) proposed a curriculum focus of development of skills specifically for this field. Often the students in social enterprise areas come from academic fields outside of business so the challenge for courses is to include students with no prior business knowledge (Schlee et al.2009).

### **Course Development Experience**

#### **Creating Industry Connections: Michelle Nelson, Professor, Linfield College**

The initial process and the challenges of establishing industry connections is discussed and explained. Industry representatives are sometimes not used to the interaction with a university; many do not have business degrees and may even be leery of the motivation of a business department approaching them. Strategies are discussed to overcome these challenges and establish long lasting relationships that are fruitful for both sides.

#### **View from the Industry: Craig Ostbo, Principal of Koopman Ostbo Marketing Communications, Portland, Oregon**

Discussion of how Craig entered the field and his interactions with many social entrepreneurs. One of Craig's main clients is Bob Moore from Bob's Red Mill and Craig will discuss and introduce his work. Discussion of potential problems with definitions and understanding of terms in social enterprise as an example of potential problems will follow. The industry connections are extremely important to make this field come alive for students and for the educational institution. Many social entrepreneurs did not study business and therefore do not have an established relationship with the business area of an educational institution; this presents both challenges and opportunities.

### **View from the Student Side: Kathie Byers, Student at Linfield College**

Kathie Byers, one of the students in the initial course on social entrepreneurship, will reflect on her motivation to join the course and her learning experiences throughout. What worked for her and what did not? How did this course change her outlook and relationship to the business department? How did she view the participation of students from areas outside of business?

### **Specific Service-Learning Application: Gregory S. Black, Associate Professor, Metropolitan State University of Denver**

Service learning is significant because it demonstrates reciprocity between the campus and the community, it represents an opportunity to provide students with specific academic learning experiences, and provides students with an opportunity to obtain and/or hone specific real-world skills (Holtzman, Stewart, and Barr 2008). Greg Black will discuss a specific project that is now in its tenth year. This project engages students in a project that not only requires that they apply marketing concepts they have learned in the classroom, but also will help a specific part of society that needs much public support.

### **Panel Discussion and Audience Engagement**

Craig Ostbo, longtime principal and founder of Koopman Ostbo Marketing Communications, an agency in Portland, Oregon, that specializes in work with the natural food industry. The wealth of knowledge of the history and development of this area makes Craig a favorite guest speaker. With a wide range of personal and professional experience he will provide a solid understanding of the industry perspective from his clients as well as from his point of view.

Kathie Byers, student at Linfield College and founder of a local nonprofit organization. Kathie has personal experience in the nonprofit field and will represent the value this course and courses like it have for students.

Michelle Nelson, Ph. D., Professor of Marketing at Linfield College, Moderator, has been involved in nonprofit management and marketing for decades. Her research and personal interest motivated her to develop this course for students of all fields to contribute to the understanding of social enterprise.

Gregory S. Black, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Marketing at Metropolitan State University of Denver, has been involved in integrating service learning into various marketing courses. The

primary project to be discussed in this panel is the project to help the homeless in Denver, Colorado.

This part of the panel opens it up to the audience to discuss approaches to incorporate social enterprise in the marketing curriculum. How this has increased cooperation with other non-business fields within Linfield College and how it has contributed to making many industry connections for students, including jobs and internships.

References Available Upon Request