The University of Sydney Business School Curriculum Renewal Report

Community-engaged learning and teaching achieved through embedding Work Integrated Learning, the Business School’s Industry Placement Program

The University of Sydney Business School is committed to academic excellence with a strong focus on industry relationship and relevance. Both our undergraduate and postgraduate programs embed corporate and wider community engagement within the curriculum in order to provide students with the opportunity to gain ‘hands on’ business experience as part of their university studies.

To facilitate this opportunity the Business School has established a highly successful Work Integrated Learning program called the Industry Placement Program (IPP). IPP consists of both work and study, which allows our students to work in a profit or not-for-profit organisations while gaining credit towards their degree.

1. The processes used to achieve curriculum renewal in the faculty:

The decision to introduce the IPP within the Business School’s curriculum was driven by the desire to provide students with ‘hands on’ business experience as part of their university studies to assist them in linking the theory of the classroom with the practice of the work environment.

IPP was piloted in 2010 when 10 undergraduate students from one Discipline were placed in 4 organisations located in the CBD. Using the positive feedback from students and the organisations’ supervisors, all Disciplines were approached and agreed to list the IPP unit as an elective in their undergraduate major. Program Directors of the School’s postgraduate degrees were likewise approached and agreed to include IPP as an elective. Accordingly, students from all undergraduate programs (Bachelor of Commerce, Bachelor of Commerce combined degrees, and Bachelor of Commerce-Liberal Studies) and postgraduate programs (Masters of Commerce & Masters of Commerce combined degrees; the Masters of HR & IR; the Masters of Professional Accounting; the Masters of Logistics Management and the Masters of Transport Management) are eligible to apply to IPP.

By the end of 2013, IPP will have placed an additional 384 students, including undergraduates and postgraduates from all Disciplines and degree programs. In 2014, we expect to reach our target of placing 350+ students per annum across our range of IPP locations, both on-shore (including local and regional) and off-shore (in China, Europe, and the United States).

2. How the curriculum renewal process engaged staff and students in the faculty

This success of IPP is due to a number of factors including an integrated and rigorous work and study program embedded with both undergraduate and postgraduate degree programs; pre-placement preparation provided by the Business School’s Careers and Employer Relations Office and the academics coordinating the assessment component of the program; and design of assessment tasks aimed at engaged enquiry that draws connections between theory and practice thus developing both business knowledge and employability skills.

The development of IPP involved academics partnering with professional staff with the Business School’s Careers and Employer Relations Office (CEO) to meet with prospective industry hosts to
explain the nature of the WIL program and its objectives for both students and employers. Please see pages 4-5 below, which captures the flyer designed to provide information on IPP for prospective hosts.

Building on the success of Industry Placement Program, the Business School will launch in December 2013 a new Community Placement Program, which will allow small teams of students to work in community-based programs aimed at providing business solutions to help address community needs. Students will learn how to develop sustainable business models for social enterprise and how to measure and monitor social return on investment. They will complete a research project drawing on their community experience, which will be made available to the community stakeholder/s upon completion.

3. **What data the curriculum renewal process has drawn on**

The success of the program is reflected in the exponential increase in the number of student applications and industry hosts, both on-shore and off-shore. Indeed, the Business School now finds itself in the enviable position of having more internship positions than students selected to fill them.

The table below provides high level data on the growth in student numbers participating in the program as well as the growth in industry partners.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Timing</th>
<th>Total number of places</th>
<th>PG</th>
<th>UG</th>
<th>Regional (Broken Hill &amp; Port Macquarie) &amp; International (China, Europe (Paris), and the US (Los Angeles and Washington DC))</th>
<th>Disciplines/ Specialisations</th>
<th>Host Organisations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Totals for 2010</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals for 2011</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>24</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals for 2012</td>
<td>151</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>57</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer 2012-13</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>China (4), Washington &amp; LA (40), Regional (5)</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>25 + Washington &amp; LA hosts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sem 1 2013</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winter 2013</td>
<td>24</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Paris &amp; Broken Hill</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sem 2 2013</td>
<td>70</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals for 2013</td>
<td>209</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer 2013-14</td>
<td>105 TBC</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>China, Washington, LA, Regional</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4. **How Engaged Enquiry using Work Integrated Learning (CELT) is embedded in the curriculum and co-curriculum to foster the development of graduate attributes**

In order to ensure that the content taught and experience gained within the program was aimed at developing business knowledge and employability skills sought by prospective employers, the curriculum was designed in consultation with industry partners while drawing on relevant academic literature. Whilst technical skills were among the top ten attributes sought by employers, so, too, were communication skills, critical thinking and problem solving, and effective team work skills.

According, an undergraduate and postgraduate Unit of Study was designed in which students would enrol to gain credit for their work placement. The key learning objectives embedded within content and assessment are: the development of business acumen and a commercial mindset (commerciality), an understanding of what makes a good leader, critical thinking and problem solving skills, communication (written and oral), and effective teamwork.

During the summer a student would work full-time for six weeks while during semester they would work 3 days a week for 9 weeks. From the perspective of our industry partner, IPP provides an excellent opportunity to ‘test our talent’ by seeing how students perform in the workplace as potential graduate recruits.

5. **Any recommendations for curriculum development in the faculty that have resulted:**

None
The Business School Industry Placement Program

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the Industry Placement Program (IPP)?
The IPP gives our top-performing students the opportunity to earn credit points towards their degree by working for a host organisation. Students work on real-life projects based on the needs of the organisation.

When do placements occur?
Placements can take place for 10 weeks part-time during both semesters 1 & 2, as well as during the summer vacation periods. During the vacation periods students are available to work fulltime for 6 weeks. The table below outlines the timeline for the application and placement process for 2013.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Host organisations confirm participation</th>
<th>Students Submit Applications</th>
<th>Assessment Centres</th>
<th>Placement Duration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Summer Vacation 2012-13</td>
<td>Closed</td>
<td>10 September to 28 September</td>
<td>15 October to 2 November</td>
<td>14 Jan to 22 Feb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semester 1, 2013</td>
<td>Closed</td>
<td>10 September to 28 September</td>
<td>15 October to 2 November</td>
<td>25 Mar to 31 May</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semester 2, 2013</td>
<td>By mid-April</td>
<td>25 March to 12 April</td>
<td>13 to 31 May</td>
<td>19 August to 25 Oct</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer Vacation 2014</td>
<td>By mid-Sept</td>
<td>9 September to 27 September</td>
<td>14 October to 1 November</td>
<td>Mid Jan 2014 to end of Feb 2014</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What level of skills will students possess and what kind of work will they do?
The program is open to competitively selected undergraduate and postgraduate students from the Business School. The students will be in their final/penultimate semester or year. They will work on projects assigned by the host organisation and their skills will be matched to suit the specified project.

Do the interns need any special skills?
Students from a diverse range of specialisations/majors can apply. The range of specialisations include: Accounting, Finance, Business Information Systems, Business Law, HR, Marketing, Banking, Project Management, Strategy & Innovation, Quantitative Business Analysis, Quantitative Finance, Logistics & Supply Chain Management & International Business. Depending on the project your organisation can request a student/s from any of the above areas of specialisation.

Are the students paid?
Students earn credit points towards their degree for participating in this program, they do not expect to be paid or to be guaranteed a job after the placement.
What about insurance?
Students are covered by the University of Sydney’s public liability and professional indemnity insurance. We would expect that your organisation provides a safe working environment in accordance with workplace Occupational Health and Safety requirements.

Is there much paper work?
No. We ask that you provide a description of the project/s that you expect the student to work on including any specific skills required. The student is required to draft a learning contract which defines the learning outcomes for their placement and they should review this with you but it is their responsibility to manage against it.

Will there be a lot of work in looking after an intern?
Students who successfully enrol in the program will be at a level where they are capable of working on projects either autonomously or within a team with minimal daily supervision. We expect that they will be able to add real value in terms of their knowledge and skills. They will be supported by an academic adviser and a program coordinator from the University.

What support can I expect?
Each placement is supported by an academic adviser and a program coordinator from the University. In addition the Careers Office within the Business School is the first point of contact for employers/host organisations.

What is the advantage in participating in the internship?
There is no cost to your organisation for having the additional resource that comes to you through participating in this program. There is also no assessment responsibility on your part. Students can be dedicated to a specific project or shared across multiple projects within an organisation. It is an opportunity to raise brand awareness and to highlight the benefits of working for your firm.

How do you get involved?
If you would like to discuss the program further please contact the Careers & Employer Relations Office. See details below:

Contacts:

For more information contact:

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