

Meeting summary “How professionalizing Student-Business Challenges contributes to a sustainable and competitive Europe” (Zoom)

Date: November 15th, 2024

Participants: Albenä Björck, Alisa Fluhrer, Allan Rennie, Andrea Brose, Anna Longueville, Anne Seela, Betz, Bram Kuijken, Frans Stel, Herbert Mapfaira, Herbert Mapfaira, Ida Hindarsah, Ineke ten Dam, Isabelle Golz, Karl Eldebo, Klaus Fichter, Kristoffer Darsow, Lea Neill, Nina Heiting, Olof Hjelm, Percy Hlangothi, Peter Gustafsson, Siska Simon.

Quick recap

The workshop focused on the organization and implementation of Challenge-Based Learning (CBL) programs. Topics covered: the importance of 21st-century skills, challenges and benefits of implementing of CBL, the potential of CBL to enhance student engagement and learning outcomes, internationalization in education, the need to understand the expectations of external stakeholders, and the possibility of promoting these approaches to colleagues and other universities.

Next steps

- Frans to share slides and handouts with participants.
- Frans to send link to meeting recording to participants.
- C4I team to provide support to participants interested in implementing challenge-based learning.
- Bram to share details of his team formation tool with interested participants.
- Karl and Olof to send out final version of their handbook on internationalization.
- All participants to consider how to better align university education with societal/industry needs.
- All participants to explore ways to incorporate more international elements into their curricula.
- All participants to investigate potential support services needed for scaling challenge-based learning.
- C4I team to consider creating a forum for ongoing discussion of challenge-based learning approaches.
- All participants to explore ways to better prepare students for lifelong learning.
- Ida as Dean of Entrepreneurship to follow up with Frans for more information on implementing challenge-based learning.

Summary

Workshop Organization and Breakout Rooms

The meeting focuses on sharing experiences and learning from each other regarding challenge-based learning. The meeting involved 23 participants from 10 countries, including Germany, UK, Indonesia, South Africa, Sweden and the Netherlands. The main topics of discussion were challenge-based learning, business model innovation, and teaching sustainable entrepreneurship in turbulent times.

Challenge-Based Learning and Co-Innovation

In the meeting, Klaus discussed the relevance of challenge-based learning and co-innovation in the context of sustainable development in Europe. He referenced a report by Mario Draghi, which highlighted an innovation gap in Europe and the need for more top-level higher education institutions. He also mentioned the European Institute of Innovation and Technology's initiative to boost innovation and entrepreneurship capacity in higher education. Klaus then introduced the "Challenge for Impact" project, which aims to create a European network and platform for implementing challenge-based learning and student business challenges. The project also focuses on supporting the development of skills, increasing the quality of teaching, and measuring the impact of these approaches.

21st-Century Skills and Game-Based Learning

Frans discussed the importance of 21st-century skills, particularly the 4Cs: Collaboration, Creativity, Communication, and Critical thinking. He highlighted the need for a balance in the educational curriculum, focusing on ABC: Attitude, Behavioral skills and Cognition. Frans also discussed experiences of games designed to train 21 century skills, such as a creativity game using lego Serious Play on team creativity through shared story telling, negotiation games aimed at improving awareness of negotiation processes, and a cross-cultural competencies game. To ensure long lasting effects on personal development, he emphasized the importance of follow-up and coaching in these games, as well as the need for facilitators to be active and professional. Frans

also mentioned his experiences regarding the use of AI in games and the importance of involving real-life situations to enhance learning.

Implementing Complex International Virtual CBL Programs

Frans presented his experiences, challenges and benefits of implementing complex educational programs, particularly the "Future of Healthcare Challenge". He highlighted the importance of clear phases, each with its educational aims and deliverables and the role of coaches in the program's success. Frans also noted the complexities of maintaining such programs due to financial or time constraints at universities, the need for entrepreneurial students with a tolerance for ambiguous, complex and uncertain problems and the availability of academic staff with an open attitude towards new teaching formats. He concluded by emphasizing the importance of long-term collaboration with companies and support services. In addition, formalized support from universities is indispensable.

Virtual Exchange Programs in existing modules

Anne and Karl discussed the challenges they faced when trying to integrate an international virtual exchange program into their existing schedules at the University of Oldenburg and Lindköping University. They initially considered integrating an exchange program into their existing modules, but ultimately decided against it due to different time schedules in Germany and Sweden. Instead, they decided to test a new formula of exchanging views in a separate workshop, focusing on impact forecasting. They found this format to be successful, with lively discussions and students seeming to enjoy discussing with students from other backgrounds and nationalities. They also learned the importance of strict time management for facilitators and the need to inform students beforehand about the purpose of these short online events.

Discussion on CBL teaching methods and internationalization

The potential for challenge-based learning to enhance student engagement and learning outcomes was discussed as well as the importance of training coaches and teachers how to lead skills training in transdisciplinary teams. Scaling challenge-based learning has many advantages, but implies several challenges. It is still difficult to give CBL a substantial role in curricula. The group also touched on the topic of internationalization in education, noting that it is a relatively new concept. C4I raised the question of how to promote these approaches to colleagues and other universities, suggesting the possibility of a forum or exclusive group. The group also discussed the need to understand the expectations of external stakeholders, such as employers, and how universities can better prepare students for the real world. Bram Kuijken introduced a tool used to configure teams for international challenges. The conversation ended with a call for continued collaboration and support among the participants.