BUILDING MISSION DRIVEN CURRICULA THROUGH INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS – *CASE STUDY: IBAB(ASEBUSS) & KENNESAW STATE UNIVERSITY*

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Structure of the presentation

- Introduction
- The two EMBA Programs and the International partnership;
- The International Joint Project
- Metodology: The Process questions
- The Results presentation
- SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The Institute for Business Administration in Bucharest (ASEBUSS)'s mission

- The entire activity was mission driven having as mail pillars:
- *"…to create a class of competitive leaders able to do business with peers from all over the world, who will be equipped with mindset, skills and understanding required in an increasingly dynamic global business environment".*

The goal of the paper

Globalization and collaboration require a necessary skill set for employees

- to provide insight into how business schools can better prepare the managers for a collaborative virtual international work environment.
- to provide insight into how certain knowledge, skills and attitudes may be built and continuously improved in the curricula using the international partnership as key vehicle.

The two EMBA programs

- ***ASEBUSS***
- The Institute of Business Administration's (ASEBUSS) Romanian-American School of Business was founded in 1993.
- 20-month EMBA Program launched annually;
- Alumni in excess of 1000.
- Entire EMBA Program taught in English.

- ***Coles College of Business*** */KSW university, Georgia, Atlanta, US*
- EMBA Program offered since 1993.
- 19-month Program launched annually
- Alumni in excess of 1,400.

About the IBAB/Coles College Partnership

- ✓ First collaboration activities in 2002.
- ✓ Limited collaboration in joint student activities initiated in 2003-2004.
- ✓ Formal cooperation agreement in place (coordination of curricula and class schedules ,faculty exchange, joint appointments,)
- ✓ Joint Student International Project introduced in 2004-2005,
  - focused on contrasting business practices in both mature *and* emerging market economies.
- ✓ Joint faculty research conference held in 2008, 2009 and 2010 with proceedings published in English and Romanian

The Joint International Program

Designing concept

- was designed to give consistency to the global dimension of the Institute's mission,
- it was one of the driving forces of the permanent improvement of the curriculum, => the quality of the program to be in line with international standards;
- to cover the pedagogical processes for multiple learning goals and multiple layers of activity: curriculum development, research between the partners, faculty exchanges, preparing common projects, case studies

The learning objectives of the International Project

1. Gain knowledge of common business practices in alternative economies.
2. Develop „decision-based” analysis and presentation skills in an international business management setting.
3. Experience learning in a „virtual” and collaborative work environment.
4. Establish an international personal peer network.
5. Apply state-of-the-art collaboration, application of diff. technologies as a user.

Schedule of Activities

- *Begin with …* U.S. residency in Romania (September)
  - Form joint project teams
  - Joint classroom lectures
  - F-2-F team meetings
  - Project selection and planning
  - Local introduction of U.S. students to Romanian business and cultural environment
- *followed by …* Virtual team project work (September – April)
- *ending with …* Romanian residency in Atlanta (April)
  - Project presentations
  - Program evaluation and peer assessment
  - Local introduction of Romanian students to U.S. business and cultural environment

Thank You!
Questions?
ASEBLISS
Thank You!
Questions?
EXIT
Jo Ann
Milholen

The project research and analysis

- The focus is on business ***practices;***
- (a) the unique collection of companies represented by the employers of the team members,
- (b) common among a single industry or sector in each respective country,
- (c) those which broadly apply to all businesses in the U.S. and Romania.

In some cases, the project addresses business practices in the context of a specific company (or set of companies) problem, opportunity, or circumstance.

The grading process

- Based on a combination of:
- (a) **individual grades** given by their assigned team faculty member (ASEBUSS-IBAB or KSU faculty;
- (b) **an overall** team participation and result grade given by their assigned team faculty member; and
- (c) **individual peer evaluation** (a component determined by their teammates).
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Methodology: Process questions

- Electronically administered survey
- at the end of the April component after all work was complete.
- 2010 => 125 students enrolled in both programs; 108 respondents; response rate of 86 %.
- The responses are subjective, free form statements of the respondents

The questions

1. Assume your company is considering the use of virtual or distance project management, what Lessons Learned and Dos and Don'ts would you recommend?
2. What are the three most important attributes of your team's behavior that contributed to the success of your team's achievements and assignments?
3. What are the three most important attributes of your team's behavior that detracted from the success of your team's achievements and assignments?
4. What technologies did you use and find most helpful? What alternative technologies would you suggest to enhance team performance?
5. What are your two most important recommendations for the Joint International Project that would improve the learning experience?

The results

- Responses from all five questions were reviewed => established a classification scheme for summarizing individual responses.

- The responses were classified as relating to:

(1) teamwork,(2) technology, (3)project work, (4)individual team member behavior, (5)culture.

(1)Teamwork

Teamwork category	Envisaged improvement	Skills, knowledge, operational elements to be revised
Participant interests should be aligned	✓ The management of the team is responsible for assigning the right targets to a project; ✓ Both schools should ensure the same motivation for the students to be involved in the IP	• Task allocation in an organization • Motivating teams • Communication
Team member knowledge should be leveraged	✓ More time allocated to startup activities: getting to know each other and sharing individual skill, knowledge, and experience sets.	• Building teams • Consolidation teams • Process management
Face-to-Face (F2F) meetings should be used to start the project	✓ Reinforced need for this approach to starting virtual work.	• Process management
Clear assignation of roles and responsibilities in the team.	✓ Reinforcement of the Statement of Work.	• Project management (start-up) • Communication

(2) Technology

Technology category	Envisaged improvement	Skills, knowledge, operational elements to be revised
Do not rely on just one tool	✓ A communication plan must be adopted from the beginning ✓ Multiple tools should be adopted (videoconference, e-mails, share point, Skype, telephone). ✓ When a tool fails, then a team can find themselves without a back up or alternative solution	• Project management-communication • Communication tool selection • Contingency management • Process management –team leader
Not all team member technology skills are equal	✓ Organize a dedicated session ✓ Use the technology for regular courses	• Collaborative technology skills
Use the technology provided.	✓ Adapt the specific tools to be used to the dynamic of the international group	• Process management – faculty

(3) **Project Work**

Project Work category	**Envisaged improvement**	**Skills, knowledge, operational elements to be revised**
Have clearly defined deliverables	✓ Clearly defined content, importance and the due date of deliverables	• Project management- deliverables and milestones • Process management – team leader, faculty
Monitor and report progress	✓ More consistent monitoring needed to provide periodic feed-back that allow team members to manage their progress	• Process management – faculty
Follow the published or agreed schedule	✓ The leader's and mentor's effort should be made to follow the schedule.	• Project management- scheduling • Process management – faculty

(4) Individual Team Member Behavior

Individual Team Member Behavior category	Envisaged improvement	Skills, knowledge, operational elements to be revised
Deadlines should not be missed Team members should be held accountable for their actions. Team members should check in periodically Lack of timely responses Some team members could hide.	✓ Permanent communication of the team leader and team mentor with all members of the team and a clear view on the progress in realization of tasks. ✓ Involvement of team leader and mentor to detect the causes of misconducts. The longer the behavior is allowed to go unchecked the more difficult the issue will be to resolve ✓ Enforcement of rules of grading ✓ Contingency plan should be prepared.	• Project management • Communication • Mentoring • Process management-faculty and team leader

(5) Culture

Culture category	Envisaged improvement	Skills, knowledge, operational elements to be revised
Learn the culture of the individual team members.	✓ Insist on cultural differences: help explain some team member behaviors	• Management of international team work
Do not bias one group of team members against another.	✓ Special sessions to help team members understand each other done prior to the teams meeting F2F for the first time.	• Management of international team work • Process management-faculty

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

- The use of F2F meeting to start or kick off the project or the team is most effective way to coagulate the multicultural teams of managers.
- The distance communication must be channeled by the communication tools accepted by all team members, beforehand prepared to use them.
- The communication has been detected as the most important skill for the success of the team work.
- Even when the language skills are good the team member culture will make a difference if not addressed properly.
- The motivations of all teams' members to participate in the work suppose to align the individual rewards and project goals.