The Foresight in Business & Society Course at the University of Notre Dame

Business for the Future

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Presented at the National Undergraduate Business Symposium 2011, Williamsburg VA (April 8, 2011)
The Foresight Course at Notre Dame

- The Course
  - History/Development
    - Objectives
    - Content, Structure & Pedagogy

- Stakeholder Responses
  - Perceptions of Value
  - Support & Buy-In

- Outcomes & Future Directions

April 8, 2011
National Undergraduate Business Symposium 2011, Williamsburg VA
Video:  “The Future Is…”
http://business.nd.edu/Current_Students/Undergraduate_Students/
(at the bottom of the page)
The Course: Design & Development

- Dean Woo’s Vision
- Tom Frecka’s Direction
  - Design (Margot Cleveland)
- Pilot Classes (Tom, Margo & Jay McIntosh)
  - Added to Required Curriculum
  - Build Team
- Implement
  - Learn & Further Develop
Overview of Course

- **Objectives**
  - Broad Perspectives & Knowledge about the World
  - Develop Analytical Skills (critical, systems & creative thinking)

- **Modules to Achieve the Course Objectives**
  - Trends & Issues in Business & Society
    - MDGs & Global Challenges
    - Sustainability
  - Foresight (Research) Tools & Methods
    - Futures Studies Approach to Research
    - Business Research Methods

- **Deliverables**
  - Team Research Projects & Poster Presentations
UN Millennium Development Goals
B.H.A.G. vs S.M.O.T.

In the epic battle for students’ hearts and minds, what will win?
Student Reaction/Evolution

- Pilot Phase
  - Optional elective
  - Two sections of 27 sophomores
- Year One
  - New requirement for all juniors
  - Encouraged participation in Scholars Conference
- Year Two
  - Reworked curriculum
  - Added Poster Presentation
April 8, 2011

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I feel that the goals of this course should be simplified and focused; it was a bit too broad, and I felt overwhelmed by the sheer amount of content at certain times. Sometimes it seemed the course was focused on forecasting business trends, sometimes it seemed like a class about environmentalism. Neither is bad, it's just both at once was a lot to handle.

Being a finance major, I loved the topics that pointed out how just using the bottom line at times by executives led to faulty decisions and ignoring potential risks to people not even involved. Made me realize the impact of actions beyond the scope of the business itself and how to ensure that each member of society is kept in mind while making decisions.
I enjoyed being able to look at the world today and observe what is going on. Being able to apply our business classes to the real world was practical. As a double theo/ITM major, I am passionate about theology and this class was able to unite business with the morals and ethics that I learn in other classes.

This class has definitely been a big help in interviews. Interviewers seem genuinely interested in the approach and purpose of the class, as well as the learning and experiences that come out of it.

At first, I didn’t understand why this course would really be relevant to business. But as the semester went on, it hit me how much I didn't know about these issues, and how business is completely related to all of them. This class is a lot of hard work, but when it's done, it is a great feeling of achievement and understanding.
Outcomes & Success Stories

- Value of Research Skills and Research Paper
  - Research paper prepared for internship in Ghana
  - Research paper ideas to CEO of fortune 250 company
  - Research Skills Critical to Competitive Case in McCloskey Social Venture Competition 2010

- Value of Sustainability
  - Student Internship at cell phone company summer 2010

- Thinking Skills of High Value to Corporations
  - The T-Shaped Employee (breadth & depth)
  - It’s not what they think, but how they think that matters...
CLEAND Water

Jordan Hyde  Sonia Menon
“Foresight for a Smarter Planet: Toward the City Sustainable”
Corporate Partnerships
  ▪ Providing corporate mentors to work with student teams
  ▪ Utilizing case studies, white papers and other content from our partners, highlighting the real world opportunities and tools

Foresight for the Future
  ▪ Documentation of Course
  ▪ Research, Writing & Presenting
Misbehavioral Economics
How to Reduce Congestion by Satisfying Demand and Anticipating Opportunity in Chicago

Jackie Kinney, Amanda Meza, Joe Mezyk, Eugene Staples
Who has the first question?

Thank you!

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