

**The Integrative Business Experience (IBE):
An Intensive, Hands-on Foundation for Undergraduate Business Education**

Submitted by:

Larry K. Michaelson
Professor Emeritus of Management
The University of Central Missouri
Warrensburg, MO 64093
lmichaelson@ucmo.edu

Mary McCord
Professor of Management & Entrepreneurship
The University of Central Missouri
Dockery 405G
Warrensburg, MO 64093
mccord@ucmo.edu
(660) 864-4470

The Integrative Business Experience (IBE): Foundation for Undergraduate Business Education

The Integrative Business Experience (IBE) offers a special way of introducing students to the “Big Picture” of how businesses operate. It does this by having first-semester business majors co-enroll in 4 courses:

- Three required core courses: Marketing, Management, and Information Systems
- An IBE Practicum Course

The focus of the innovation described below is to ensure that our undergraduate business students develop the ability to: 1) view business organizations from an interdisciplinary perspective, 2) work and communicate effectively as a member of a decision-making team, 3) are able to solve unstructured problems. Traditionally, business schools have attempted to build these skills by having students get “real-world” exposure by having them work with problems of existing business organizations by analyzing cases and/or engaging in consulting projects. The Integrative Business Experience (IBE) takes exactly the opposite approach. Instead of having students focus on what is inevitably a limited exposure to someone else’s organization, we have them *create and operate two organizations of their own*. One is a start-up business (based on an actual bank loan of up to \$5,000). The other is focused on using the profit from their business to carry out a hands-on community service project.

Uniqueness of IBE Program

The “Practicum” is what makes this program so special. In the Practicum, students work in Companies of 20-30 students each. Each company must:

- Create and run a real, start-up business. This involves (a) developing an idea for a product or service they can sell, (b) applying for a real bank loan for up to \$5,000, (c) creating and implementing a plan to market their product or service, and (d) closing out the business – all within one term.
- In addition, each company must select a community organization for which the company members organize and carry out service activities and to which they contribute the profit from their company.

There are three very unique feature of the IBE approach. One is that promotes cross-discipline concept understanding because we require students to concurrently enroll in four courses: three junior-level, required core courses (i.e., Information Systems, Management and Marketing) and a practicum course in which they create and carry out the business plan for their start-up company and hands-on community service project. Students are immersed in a truly *real experience in which they have the opportunity to make choices and experience the consequences of their choices*. As a result, students are less focused on grades and more focused on truly understanding the material because they see it as a potential help in doing what they need to do to be successful in their business and service ventures.

Benefits of the IBE Program

IBE Benefits for students and learning:

1. Students make conceptual connections across disciplines as they *use* concepts and tools from all three core courses to guide their decisions in the business and service organizations;

2. They develop interpersonal and group-interaction skills in a work-like setting, and

3. They develop critical thinking skills through their experience in applying key business concepts and analytical tools to a wide range of unstructured, but real business problems.

Their business results have also been impressive. At the University of XX, a total of 1547 students participated in IBE between the first pilot in the spring semester of 2004 and the spring semester of 2016. These students formed and managed 62 remarkably successful companies. In these 12 years, IBE student businesses received \$133,781 in loans, have generated a total revenue of \$582,000 and a total net profit of \$338,000.

In addition, local community organizations have received:

- \$338,000 direct financial support from the profits of IBE student businesses, and
- 23,193 hours of community service from IBE student-organized activities and projects.

Benefits for Business School and University Administrators

- Results in little or no increase faculty workload (It does not require team teaching.)
- Does not require small classes. Thus, it is cost-effective.
- Results in improved student recruiting, increased private sector financial support, better internship and job placements, improved university-community relations, etc,

IBE Benefits for Faculty

Although the time and effort required to implement IBE is little different from stand-alone classes, the benefits for faculty are huge. IBE is the most rewarding teaching any of us have ever done. In part, that is because we are able to see students accomplish so much and learn and grow in so many ways. In addition, because students' choices have real consequences, they approach our courses with a very different attitude. The material isn't just theory to be learned for a test. Instead, the material and the teachers are potential resources for accomplishing what students need to *do* to make their business successful and/or successfully carry out their service project. IBE also helps faculty and their college interact with their community. IBE has ended up being the centerpiece of fundraising and community outreach efforts at every school in which it has been implemented.

Transferability of IBE

The best evidence of the transferability of IBE is the fact that it is already happening. To date, programs patterned after IBE are already functioning at six+ other US schools and one school each in Indonesia, Australia and New Zealand. Other schools are in the process of gearing up to start during the next academic year.

There are several features of the structure that contribute to both the effectiveness and the transferability of IBE. One is that it is very simple in that it utilizes existing core courses and the integration occurs because the teachers *individually* sequence the topic coverage in their course to support students' business and service ventures. As a result, IBE does *not* require, team teaching, close cross-class coordination, or custom course materials. Practicum course materials have been compiled into a manual that is available at no cost to any institution adopting IBE.



The Integrative Business Experience: A Comprehensive, Hands-on Solution

During the first semester of their junior year, IBE students are required to concurrently enroll in three junior-level core business courses (Marketing—MKT 3405, Management—MGT 3315, and Information Systems—CIS 3630) along with an Entrepreneurship and Community Service Practicum course. Second, the content coverage and many of the assignments in the core courses are specifically sequenced to support students in organizing and managing their business and service ventures. Students are able to make the conceptual connections across disciplines because, on an ongoing basis, they are *using concepts and tools from all three core courses* to guide their decisions in the business and service organizations.

IBE Program Elements

- 1) Students must simultaneously enroll in and be responsible for mastering the concepts of three required junior-level core business courses—Management, Marketing, and Information Systems (Marketing—MKT 3405, Management—MGT 3315, and Information Systems—CIS 3630) plus a three-hour Entrepreneurship and Community Service Practicum (MGT 3385, MKT 3485 or CIS 3685).
- 2) Students learn in classes in which the instruction is delivered using Team-Based Learning. Thus, instead of listening to lectures, most of their in-class time is spent working in a 5 to 7-member learning team that remains stable across the core courses for the entire semester.
- 3) Students work as an "employee" of a 20 to 35-member company that becomes a "laboratory" in which they apply concepts from the core business disciplines as they engage in two ventures—a start-up business and a service project on behalf of a non-profit community organization.
- 4) Students spend the first 7 weeks developing a business plan for a start-up company whose profits are used to finance a hands-on community service project. The plan is then presented to a loan review committee (First Community Bank officers and local entrepreneurs) to obtain the capital (real money up to \$5,000) needed to implement their plan.
- 5) Students implement their business plan (i.e., they have 6-7 weeks to do enough business to pay off their loan and expenses and generate enough profit to finance their service work).
- 6) Students create a program portfolio that contains reflections on their experience and includes a set of "artifacts" that will enable them to communicate their learnings to potential employers.

IBE Program Outcomes

At the University of Central Missouri, a total of 1547 students participated in IBE between the first pilot in the spring semester of 2004 and the spring semester of 2016. These students have donated \$338,007 and 23,193 service hours to local charities.

For more information, contact Mary McCord at mccord@ucmo.edu

Company Information				Business Activities				Service Activities	
Term	Year	Company Name	# Members	Product or Service	Loan Amount	Gross Revenue	Net Profit*	Community Service Recipients	Service Hours
Spring	2016	Cozy Mo	25	UCM Blanket	\$3,330	\$10,196	\$2,410	Survival Adult Abuse Center	200
Spring	2016	Coasting	26	UCM coasters	\$1,500	\$6,696	\$2,375	Warrensburg Animal Shelter	403
Spring	2016	Central Sound	25	UCM Speaker	\$1,400	\$8,717	\$4,052	Johnson County Food Center	300
Fall	2015	Central Thrive	26	UCM water bottle	\$0	?	\$6,068	UCM Thrive	323
Fall	2015	Woof Pack	26	Old Drum T-shirt	\$1,200	\$8,458	\$3,266	Wrnsb Dog Park	555
Fall	2015	Freedom Flags	26	Mule Patriotic flag	\$500	\$14,786	\$7,619	Veterans Home	436
Spring	2015	Coasters 4 Cause	9	coasters	\$0	\$4,947	\$2,911	Juvenile Diabetes Research	370
Spring	2015	Legacy Mugs	31	Mule logos mug	\$0	11,891.80	\$9,154	Whitworth Memorial Fund	509
Spring	2015	Charge for Autism	31	UCM Phone charger	\$1,005	\$6,512	\$5,500	Paws 4 Autism	284
Fall	2014	H2MO	26	UCM Filtered Bottle	\$2,185	\$14,670	\$6,152	Thirst Project	421
Fall	2014	Tees For Tots	26	Snout Out T-shirt	\$3,143	4,644.71	\$4,780	Toys For Tots	184
Fall	2014	Frosty Paws	28	UCM Coolers	\$0**	\$4,816	\$4,817	CARR No-Kill Animal Shelter	294
Spring	2014	Shirts 4 Shelter	26	Mule T-shirt	\$0**	\$12,364	\$6,656	Destiny House	104
Spring	2014	Operation Beachfront	28	UCM Beach Towel	\$1,147	\$10,443	\$5,147	Operation Homefront	423
Spring	2014	Paws March for a	8	4K Dog Walk/Run	\$0**	\$8,808	\$5,952	Wayside Waifs/Longview Farm	384
Fall	2013	G.I. MO	25	Patriotic Mule t-shirt	\$1,911	\$14,225	\$7,115	Wounded Warriors Project	285
Fall	2013	Central Time	25	Muleticker (desk	\$1,057	\$9,394	\$2,500	Early Childhood Hunger	538
Fall	2013	Jars for Juniors	25	Mason jar mug	\$1,861	\$6,185	\$4,062	Big Brothers Big Sisters	175
Spring	2013	Melodies for Miracles	27	UCM ear buds	\$2,818	\$7,966	\$4,651	Survival Adult Abuse Center	300
Spring	2013	Coasters 5000	26	UCM coasters	\$700	\$9,394	\$5,501	Wsbg Youth Scholarships	732
Spring	2013	Carts & Cards	7	Golf tourney & Cards	\$0**	\$5,358	\$3,463	Ronald McDonald House	175
Fall	2012	MO Info	26	MO thumb Drive	\$2,300	\$6,700	\$3,000	Wsbg Youth Scholarships	302
Fall	2012	Blankets for Bigs	26	Stadium blanked	\$4,000	\$9,581	\$5,375	Big Brothers Big Sisters	340
Fall	2012	LiveRed	26	Insulated bag	\$1,900	\$3,240	\$2,345	E ²	260
Spring	2012	IBEASt	29	UCM shaker mug	\$0**	\$11,482	\$6,317	Survival Adult Abuse Center	374
Spring	2012	Epic Muletime	29	Mule T-shirt	\$1,350	\$6,745	\$2,356	Early Childhood Hunger Op.	403
Spring	2012	IBEBBQn	11	BBQ discount card	\$0**	\$1,740	\$1,555	Community Assistance Council	248
Fall	2011	I B stickE	29	UCM sticky notes	\$1,624	\$5,878	\$4,646	Joplin recovery/W.I.L.S.	524
Fall	2011	Mulethreads	29	Mule collage T-shirt	\$0**	\$11,482	\$6,317	Survival Adult Abuse Center	515
Fall	2011	Selum Enterprises	27	UCM sunglasses	\$1,860	\$6,798	\$4,115	Neamiah Feeding Project	870
Spring	2011	MO on the Go	23	UCM Travel Mug	\$2,800	\$8,188	\$4,227	Survival Adult Abuse Center	436
Spring	2011	Cups of Hope	20	UCM Tumbler w/straw	\$2,020	\$6,157	\$3,125	Early Childhood Hunger Op.	463
Spring	2011	The Green Machine	7	Assorted Tumblers	\$500	\$6,363	\$3,099	Bridging the Gap	175
Fall	2010	Survival Sweats	26	UCM Sweat Pants	\$2,500	\$9,489	\$3,819	Survival Adult Abuse Center	402
Fall	2010	MO Active	26	UCM Water Bottles	\$1,635	\$6,761	\$5,103	WBG Parks and Recreation	433
Fall	2010	MOlympians	25	UCM Sweat Bands	\$2,730	\$4,670	\$2,197	Special Olympics & W.I.L.S.	267
Spring	2010	I Be Mo' Dry	34	UCM Beach Towel	\$4,200	\$10,456	\$5,565	Big Brothers Big Sisters	470
Spring	2010	Mules With Hearts	34	UCM Playing Cards	\$2,210	\$7,632	\$4,069	State Park/Connected Hearts	790
Spring	2010	Central MO	12	Golf discount card	\$1,500	\$9,988	\$6,010	Kansas City Autism Alliance	196
Fall	2009	MULEstrong	29	LS Mule T-shirt	\$1,400	\$7,456	\$4,783	Show-Me Youth Home	704
Fall	2009	Habitat Hoodies	29	UCM Hoodie	\$3,210	\$12,632	\$7,169	Habitat for Humanity/Veterans	385
Fall	2009	FrostPint	27	UCM frosted glasses	\$2,500	\$7,988	\$5,223	Big Brothers Big Sisters	340
Spring	2009	Thirsty Mules	25	UCM Water bottle	\$0**	\$9,142	\$5,714	Show-Me Youth Home	414
Spring	2009	Mo' Gear	29	Mule T-shirt	\$2,875	\$13,925	\$5,182	Big Brothers Big Sisters	433
Spring	2009	I Be Savin	13	Super Saver card	\$800	\$4,191	\$3,158	Boy Scouts of America	100
Fall	2008	Happy Hooves	24	UCM slippers	\$5,000	\$12,295	\$5,267	West-Central Ind. Living	652
Fall	2008	Mo' Time	26	Calendar '09	\$3,200	\$10,380	\$6,693	Survival Adult Abuse Center	668
Fall	2008	Warming Way	24	UCM Mule Blanket	\$0**	\$14,846	\$7,608	Red Cross	357
Spring	2008	Good Directions Signs	24	UCM & Pine St. signs	\$3,000	\$11,890	\$8,507	Big Brothers Big Sisters	453
Spring	2008	Dry Up Hunger	23	UCM Beach Towel	\$4,300	\$14,628	\$7,780	Food Pantry/WBG Veterans	300
Spring	2008	Penticast	5	USB Drives	\$4,200	\$9,110	\$4,318	KC Downs Syndrome Guild	32
Fall	2007	Central Time	27	UCM Historical Poster	\$500	\$10,516	\$7,672	Habitat for Humanity	368
Fall	2007	MO' UnderCover	28	UCM Umbrellas	\$5,000	\$10,222	\$5,442	Animal Shelter & Middle	222
Fall	2007	Chairs That Care	28	UCM Folding Chair	\$5,000	\$35,004	\$25,929	Adult Abuse Center/WBG	438
Spring	2007	Glass with Class	8	UCM Glasses	\$1,200	\$6,868	\$3,776	March of Dimes	40
Spring	2007	Keepin' It Kool	20	UCM Coolers	\$1,988	\$11,941	\$6,871	Youth Home/Knob Noster Park	170
Spring	2007	Raise Mo' Money	21	MO Bobbleheads	\$3,343	\$12,050	\$4,096	WBG Veterans/Knob Noster	228
Fall	2006	Get Your Lid on	24	UCM Baseball hats	\$2,851	\$8,082	\$4,416	Salvation Army	310
Fall	2006	Central Warmth	24	UCM metal travel	\$2,800	\$12,330	\$6,117	Project Warmth	337
Spring	2006	I Be Photography	4	Photography sittings	\$2,950	\$1,743	\$1,314	Wayside Waifs, PTA	400
Spring	2006	I Be Baggin'	18	CMSU drawstring bag	\$2,605	\$7,828	\$3,460	Muscular Dystrophy Assoc	183
Spring	2006	Central Tendency	17	"the Burg 55" t-shirt	\$2,504	\$5,215	\$1,866	Veterans Home/Adult Abuse	163
Fall	2005	IBE KickBack	16	"KickBack" t-shirt	\$2,289	\$4,785	\$2,225	Camp Quality	121
Fall	2005	Not Another Shirt Co.	16	Mule Poster	\$1,992	\$4,949	\$3,100	Red Cross Hurricane Relief	106
Spring	2005	IBE Wild Card	20	"Burg" t-shirt	\$2,350	\$9,190	\$3,682	American Cancer Society	105
Fall	2004	IBE Solutions	18	"Pine St" T-shirt	\$2,469	\$5,733	\$2,197	Habitat for Humanity	101
Fall	2004	Slap Happy	18	"Burg"	\$2,596	\$3,554	\$1,672	YES/ Warrensburg Recreation	100
Spring	2004	Just Scrub It	21	CMSU Medical Scrubs	\$3,975	\$5,957	\$882	Red Cross/Big Brothers &	100
Total Students:			1,547	Financial Totals:	\$133,781	\$581,731	\$338,007	Service Hour Totals:	23,193

*Includes direct and matching cash donations and the value of material donations.

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**Students were granted a line of credit but, did not need to use it.