

Is Business Creation the Mean or the End of Entrepreneurship Education? A Multiple Case Study Exploring Teaching Goals in Entrepreneurship Education²

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Abstract

Entrepreneurship education within higher education has experienced a remarkable expansion in the last 20 years (Green & Rice, 2007). However, entrepreneurship education is still in its infancy; professors propose diverse teaching goals and radically different teaching methods. This represents an obstacle to development of foundational and consistent curricula across the board (Cone, 2008). This study was designed to understand entrepreneurship instructor's teaching goals. Results suggest that the group of instructors studied pursued two types of profoundly different teaching goals. Some of them were trying to teach how to start a successfully business while another group was trying to develop entrepreneurial skills. Those two types of teaching goals have important implications in terms of pre selection of students, the mandatory or voluntary character of the curriculum, and type of teaching methods used. For instance, if the goal is to create business, students should be selected according to the potential of their ideas, the regimen should be voluntary (students legitimately may want to become great employees), and business plan as teaching methods should be understood a mean rather than an end.

Keywords: entrepreneurship education; teaching goals; teaching methods; entrepreneurial skills; potential.