Teaching international business entrepreneurship

FDIE program: Courses in international business differ

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The Institute for International Business hosted a development program for faculty in international entrepreneurship (FDIE) in June 2007 in Denver, Colorado. Jointly sponsored by the Centers for International Business Education and Research (CIBERs) at the University of Colorado at Denver and Health Sciences Center, and the Kelley School of Business at Indiana University, the FDIE is the first faculty development program specializing in international entrepreneurship among the CIBER schools.

The program was facilitated by two leading scholars in the field – Dr. Patricia McDougall (Kelley School of Business) and Dr. Walter Kuemmerle (formerly of the Harvard Business School).

Intersection between international business and entrepreneurship

During the program, we addressed the intersection between the two fields of international business and entrepreneurship, and its relation to other business functions such as marketing, finance, management, and strategy. The four-day program focused on addressing best approaches to teaching, research, and practice of international entrepreneurship.

The twenty-six faculty participants, the majority of whom were from US schools, were in strong agreement about the growing need to teach international business from an entrepreneurial perspective as well as to add global dimensions to the entrepreneurship course.

The growing interest in international entrepreneurship reflects two key developments.

First, an increasing number of new ventures and start-ups are faced with internationalization opportunities much earlier in their entrepreneurial life cycles.

Second, even among established firms, their leaders are finding that they have to think and act more entrepreneurially in order to seize emerging international business opportunities.

Nuts and bolts of international business operations

Faculty noted that a course in international entrepreneurship provides students with knowledge, skills, and abilities related to the “nuts and bolts of international business operations” that will help them lead these entrepreneurial organizations.

The discussion during the program covered a broad array of topics. Professor Kuemmerle addressed the “E-entrepreneurship” in the international entrepreneurship course. He talked about cross-border entrepreneurship, frameworks for international expansion among entrepreneurial firms, international entrepreneurship finance, and the use of cases in teaching international entrepreneurship.
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Emerging research topics, methodologies

Professor McDougall traced the development of the field and identified emerging research topics and methodological issues in conducting international entrepreneurship research.

My session focused on teaching international business from an entrepreneurial perspective. Together with Jim Beach of Georgia State University, and other faculty participants in the program, we examined how the international entrepreneurship course differed from the traditional international business course. We also identified and reviewed various teaching resources including books, articles, websites, course outlines, and other references.

Colorado-based companies featured A major highlight was business case presentations by executives from four Colorado-based companies. Wheelabrator, Re/Max International, ProLogis, and Larabar are successful entrepreneurial companies with superb business models.

These companies come from different industries and are at different stages of their entrepreneurial life cycles.

Wheelabrator, ProLogis, and Re/Max International represent interesting cases of corporate entrepreneurship in an international context.

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**CIBER at CU Denver and Health Sciences Center**

The Institute for International Business (IIB), home of CU CIBER, was established in 1988 by the University of Colorado’s Board of Regents. The Institute for International Business Advisory Council was established in 1992. The Center for International Business Education and Research (CIBER) is part of the Institute for International Business (IIB) at the University of Colorado at Denver and Health Sciences Center (UCDHSC).

The Colorado CIBER is one of 31 universities located throughout the United States that are recognized by the US Department of Education as centers of excellence in international business education and charged to increase American competitiveness in the global marketplace.

The CU CIBER and the Institute for International Business exist to

- increase international business expertise and awareness in those they serve - students, faculty, public policy makers, American business people and the general public;
- expand the knowledge base of international businesses and the foreign cultures in which they operate;
- serve as a focal point and catalyst for international business teaching, research and outreach at the University of Colorado at Denver and Health Sciences Center as well as for the University of Colorado Statewide System; and
- deliver faculty development programs for the Rocky Mountain Region and other schools throughout the US.
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For example, Wheelabrator is a 100+ year old company that found itself having to think and act more entrepreneurially following its acquisition by an Eastern European private equity concern and the shift of its customer base from North America and Europe to Asia.

In contrast, Larabar’s story is about a Denver-based company that grew into the leading brand in the power/health bar market with annual sales of more than $20 million and numerous opportunities for international expansion.

In this special issue of The Global Executive Forum Report, we highlight the business case presentations of the above mentioned companies. All four companies shed light on the opportunities and challenges of international entrepreneurship and why it has become more important to teach and learn international business from an entrepreneurial perspective.

Faculty contributions recognized The Global Executive Forum Report also features other key IIB initiatives and the contributions of faculty to our work at CIBER (Center for International Business Education and Research.)

In May, the IIB and the Business School cosponsored the Robert Reynolds Distinguished Lecture in International Business. Our speaker was Dr. Rafiq Dossani of Stanford University. Dr. Dossani’s lecture, “India Arriving,” examined the rise of India in the global economy, and the opportunities and challenges facing the country as it competes in the global marketplace. Nearly 70 people from the business community, faculty, and students attended the lecture.

During the past year, the IIB also sponsored several international executive roundtables (IERs), applied research, and course development projects focusing on the overarching themes of our CIBER’s current grant period:

- international entrepreneurship, n globalization of knowledge work and services, and
- exploiting new markets—the awakening giants of China and India.

The presentations by Barbara Bauer, Peggy McMahon, and the contributions of Dr. Wayne Cascio and Dr. Stephen Thomas are also featured in this report.

14 years

The past academic year marks the 14th year of the IIB at UCDHSC’s designation as a Center for International Business Education and Research. UCDHSC received this prestigious designation from the US Department of Education in 1993 and won renewal four times in ’96, ’99, 2002, and 2006.

The IIB and CIBER have enjoyed stable leadership during the past 15 years. Two of my colleagues and leaders of the IIB, Managing Director Dr. Donald Stevens and Associate Director Dr. William Murray, retired from the IIB this year. We acknowledge with gratitude their many contributions to the IIB and CIBER, and wish them the very best in their retirement.

Finally, the IIB and CIBER have greatly benefited from the support of UCDHSC’s Provost Mark Heckler, the faculty and students of various schools and colleges at the University of Colorado, particularly the Business School at UCDHSC; and the members of our Global Advisory Board and CIBER Advisory Council. We are grateful for their support and look forward to continuing to play a leadership role in the internationalization efforts at the University of Colorado.