

THE
ENTREPRENEURIAL
TEACHING
CORPS

GUIDE



next generation



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INTRODUCTION

The project *Next Generation* has brought together the three largest universities in Denmark in the effort to develop and embed entrepreneurial thinking and action in university curriculum.

The University of Copenhagen (UCPH), the Copenhagen Business School (CBS) and the Technical University of Denmark (DTU) have united in a joint mission to integrate practical elements of entrepreneurship in already established electives and courses – and by doing so combine practical entrepreneurial thinking and competences with a topic specific curriculum. By mobilizing university teachers who have not actively used teaching methods of practical entrepreneurship in their teaching, the *Next Generation* objective is to create on-going changes in the predominant teaching culture as well as in the practical teaching approach in order to increase the knowledge and employability of practical entrepreneurship in students.

Next Generation has run for four years – from January 2010 to December 2013 – and has been financially supported by the European Social Fund and *Væksthus Greater Copenhagen*.

Next Generation project activities have, among other things, included: *Summer Schools for students*, *Innovation Workshops for teaching staff* and the establishment of the *Entrepreneurial Teaching Corps*.

This pamphlet summarizes and presents our experience with planning and conducting teaching related initiatives – it presents the dos and don'ts of the four years. The objective is to inspire and assist others interested in planning and conducting entrepreneurial teaching activities.

ABOUT THE TEACHING CORPS

The Teaching Corps was an initiative in the *Next Generation* project targeted at making practical entrepreneurship an integrated part of university tuition by creating a corps of dedicated university teachers. It was developed, planned and conducted by Copenhagen School of Entrepreneurship, at CBS.

The Teaching Corps' objective was to link practical entrepreneurial thinking and competences with traditional university education - regardless of disciplinary area, to provide students across disciplines with the possibility of acquiring practical entrepreneurial competences regardless of their particular education.

To achieve this objective we have designed and facilitated a programme with different training sessions for university teachers from the project's partner organizations. Subsequently, the teachers were positioned to work as prime movers of development and implementation of entrepreneurial and innovative teaching at higher education.

The *Entrepreneurial Teaching Corps* course has been held annually in the years 2010-2013 and it has been based on Copenhagen Business School.

IN TOTAL , 33 TEACHERS HAVE BEEN FOLLOWING THE COURSE

2011 // 6

2012 // 9

2013 // 18

PARTICIPATING DEPARTMENTS - UCHP, DTU & CBS

Department of Organization; Department of Photonics Engineering, Optical Sensor Technology; Department of Management, Politics and Philosophy; Department of Food and Resource Economics, Production and Technology Unit; Department of Chemistry; Department of Basic Animal and Veterinary Sciences; Department of Pharmacy; Department of Operation Management; Department of Food Science; Department of Agriculture & Ecology, Crop Science; Department of Management Engineering, Innovation and Sustainability; Department of International Business Communication; Department of Informatics and Mathematical Modelling; Department of Computer Science; Department of Intercultural Communication and Management; DTU Food, National Food Institute; Centre for Businesses & innovation; Centre for Information Technology and Electronics, Building and Civil Engineering; Department of Biomedical Sciences, Endocrinology Research Section; Department of Pharmacy, Analytical Biosciences; Department of Basic Animal and Veterinary Sciences/Anatomy & Cell Biology; Department of Veterinary Disease Biology, Section of Microbiology; Department of Drug Design and Pharmacology; Department of Biomedical Sciences, Molecular Pathology Section; Department of Neuroscience and Pharmacology, Synaptic integration; Department of Computer Science; Dept. of Pharmacy, Pharmaceutical Design and Drug Delivery; Department of Food and Resource Economics; Department of Operations Management; Department of Marketing; Department of Innovation and Organizational Economics.

All teachers were accepted for the course on the basis of an application including a motivational and occupational reasoning for participating in the programme.

A steering committee, representing the universities involved, assessed the applications and selected teachers according to criteria such as the motivation expressed, the seniority and experience of the teacher and his/her ability to influence the academia context, education, department etc.

PLANNING OF THE COURSE

Previous to the first Teaching Corps course, a course programme was developed including concrete learning objectives. This pre-teaching process was carried out by CSE together with a group of teachers invited from the three universities. Their input and good advice formed an excellent shared foundation that helped *the Next Generation Teaching Corps* gain teaching legitimacy and grounding.

THE COURSE MODEL

The course design has throughout the years continually been subject to formative evaluations that have indicated the development and effects of the programme, identifying areas needing improvement. Hence, the course model has been adapted from year to year, but all three courses have been centred round three general activities: A three days seminar; a study tour; and facilitation and support of the teacher's own development of courses and network activities.

In general, this course model turned out to be useful and valuable to the teachers. However, the testing of different versions of the course model has given rise to the following recommendations:

// The network creating activities among teachers, especially the study tour, are crucial to the learning process, and should be introduced early in the course.

// The teachers can benefit immensely from individual coaching and they can even coach each other as a supplement if a well-functioning network has been established.

// Prioritizing knowledge supply and inspiration on entrepreneurial methods and approaches is important to ensure that the partici-

pants obtain the qualifications necessary to continue their own work with entrepreneurial teaching and learning.

A STRONG ACADEMIC STEERING COMMITTEE

The Teaching Corps had its own interdisciplinary organization and steering committee with a strong academic profile and decision-making authority. The steering committee was from day one included in the planning of the programme, and decided on proposed changes. They were responsible for the recruitment of teachers and the anchoring of the Next Generation Teaching Corps at the three universities.

This organizational model has given rise to the following recommendations :

// A strong academic steering committee ensures high academic standards.

// The steering committee also plays an important role in the anchoring, the knowledge-sharing and in the dissemination of teaching corps.

// It is crucial that the role and function of the steering committee are clearly formulated and communicated from day one. This makes the organisational structure clear and directs debate to the right forum.



RECRUITMENT FOR THE TEACHING CORPS

From the beginning, *Next Generation* was aware that it takes time for a new initiative like the Teaching Corps to be properly adopted into a university setting. Therefore, it was important to recruit forward-looking senior teachers capable of absorbing new trends and act as first movers. To locate and recruit teachers with these capabilities *Next Generation* prepared an interesting and well-described course programme with clear learning objectives which, when possible, included an academic draw that helped motivate teachers and decision-makers. The recruitment process has given rise to the following recommendations :

RECRUITMENT COMMUNICATION

// The recruiting materials must address the teachers' universe, and visualize the course's value as well as the progression.

// The university teachers want concrete and factual description of how they can benefit from the course and of the new knowledge they will acquire.

// The teachers request an actual course programme and it is a good idea to comply with this request, however, the programme needs to be flexible, making room for each participant's individual adjustments.

RECRUITMENT CHANNELS

The recruitment of the Teaching Corps took place at the three universities. The first year, an information pamphlet was produced. In 2013, the pamphlet was reduced to an information-packed A4 page.

// To attract senior teachers, it is crucial that the institute managements feel joint ownership of the programme and make an effort to help recruitment – directly, by appointing the participants or indirectly, by speaking favourably of the initiative.

// Meetings with department managements and interested teachers are a good way to recruit participants, however, this approach is very time consuming – both in relation to setting up as well as having the meetings.

THE CLASSES

Participant number has increased every year. Each class has included academic staff from all three universities and from various departments. It was necessary to begin with a small number of participants, partly because of few applicants, but more importantly due to the fact that the exercise of embedding entrepreneurship and innovation into other subject areas was a fairly new approach, and methods and experience had to be harnessed in close collaboration with the participating teachers. The composition and size of the class and the model used have given rise to the following advice :

// To obtain the necessary dynamic and avoid that cancellations due to illness or other reasons or drop-outs affect the whole group, more than six participants are needed in one class. It is possible to have ten or more participants, especially if they are asked to coach each other.

// Application and admission procedures ensure more motivated participants.

// Teachers with a strong academic profile, experience, permanent employment and who teaches fixed courses should be prioritized in the selection of participants for an initiative as the Teaching Corps.

RUNNING OF THE TEACHING CORPS

The continuous evaluation and development of each course has resulted in adjustments of the programme and the timing of the different activities, but the principles and the content have been definite from the beginning. It has been a priority to build on top of this established framework, maintaining flexibility to modulate and change the sequence of the sessions and modules. Below you will find considerations raised by the evaluations of the three courses.

PRE-COURSE ACTIVITIES

The purpose of the activities in the initial phase has been to prepare the participants for the course and uncover their motivation and prior knowledge of entrepreneurship. Some good advice concerning pre-course activities :

// A personal conversation or interview goes into details with the participant's application and gives the developers a look into the challenges experienced and goals set by each participant – and contributes to creating a sense of inclusion in the process.

// As academic solidity is important to the university teachers, a common understanding of entrepreneurship as an academic field must be established on the first day of the course, a good idea would be to include well-esteemed peer or more experienced researchers in the course programme.

// At the beginning of the course, time should be set aside for social events or exercises and for the participants to get to know each other. This will prepare the ground for the rest of the course.

WORKSHOP AND SEMINARS

The Teaching Corps has included seminars and workshops running for one day or over several days, at the universities and at other locations away from the home ground of the participants. Each workshop has had well-defined learning objectives and a planned progression from knowledge build-up to integration and anchoring :

// Make the progression and the interaction between the different elements visible.

// Experience based learning gives the participants the qualifications to continue entrepreneurship on their own and the variation between briefing, exercise and debriefing, making the participants reflect on their experience AND how they can instigate similar initiatives within their own academic subject is therefore necessary.

// It is very important to be audient to each teacher and let their needs, context, discourse and life-world be driver of the actual entrepreneurship teaching initiative. The participants have been appreciative of the fact that they have been guided in, and not told, how to complete this task.

// Providing the teachers with a proper understanding of the diversity of the approaches towards entrepreneurship teaching is significant in respect to the degree and type of integration.

// Early clarification of the student's competence profile, related to entrepreneurship, is a strong driver of the pedagogics and methods the teachers adopt.

// Effectuation methodology (Sarasvathy, 2001, 2008) is a good theory based pivotal point for a course like the Teaching Corps as it contributes to the creation of a common language across academic fields.

// As the teachers are busy and have very little time between seminars to follow-up on the subject, it is very important that the workshops include hands-on exercises and practical training, and hereby increases the value of the outcome. Do not expect the participants to prepare much between seminars.

STUDY TOUR

A study tour to a European country has been arranged on all Teaching Corps courses. The study tour has included a busy programme, visiting companies, universities and business schools, where entrepreneurship experts have shared their teaching practices and experience. The recommendations concerning the study tour element of the Teaching Corps are :

// The combination of theory and reflection with the actual examples provided by a visit to a company or a study tour, inspires and gives the participants confidence in their own abilities.

// The coordination of a value adding study tour is extremely time-consuming. All lecturers must be informed about the group and the Teaching Corps' objective, so they can adapt the content of their lecture accordingly.

// Socially and in respect to networking, it adds an extra – and crucial - element to the course that the participants go away together for a longer period of time.

CUSTOMIZED VERSUS STANDARDIZED

The Next Generation Teaching Corps has been well-funded. It has therefore been possible to allocate many resources to the individual adjustments of the course content to the participants needs. However, if extensive funding is not possible:

// It is important to find the balance between the standardized and the customized course elements.

// The balance must ensure that participants feel they have liberty of action, and that variations in participant results are accepted. This is crucial if the participants are to use the outcome of the course in their own teaching.

EVALUATION

The Teaching Corps course is very much a development process and satisfaction with the course is therefore not measurable right after end of course. The satisfaction with the Teaching Corps course was not immediately visible, but after the participants have had the opportunity to use what they have learned and they have experienced new opportunities as a result of their participation in the Teaching Corps, the level of satisfaction has been high.

// Accept that participants might feel frustrated right after the course – the positive results and effects can still turn up.

// Stay in contact with the participants and make the positive effects a part of the story.



CROSS - DISCIPLINARY AND CROSS - UNIVERSITY COOPERATION

In the initial project application, the Next Generation Teaching Corps was designed as a cross-university cooperation. In reality, CSE at CBS has been lead partner in the planning and management of the Teaching Corps, and the other partners have contributed to activities and realisation of the plans. Cross-university cooperation is not without obstacles. Below are some recommendations on how dissemination and the meeting of cultures can be accommodated.

DISSEMINATION

The developers of the Teaching Corps have included the dissemination of knowledge of the course and of the value of entrepreneurship in teaching in various ways. The following approaches had a positive effect and can be recommended :

// The final course workshop included training in pitching tools, making the participants able to facilitate the message and pass on their new knowledge to their department colleagues as well as to a wider circle of people. This element is crucial to the individual teacher in order to become an active agent of change.

// On the last day of the course, an open house event was held, where the participants presented a topic and were encouraged to invite colleagues and other interested parties.

// The project managers should also invite guests to the open house event, extending the circle of people knowing about the

initiative. Furthermore, it is important to invite the established resource and support units at the universities, e.g. the student incubators and the innovation milieus.

MEETING OF CULTURES

The Teaching Corps has succeeded in reaching many different disciplines and join them in three classes. However, not only the academic subjects are different – socially the participants are also very different and they experience the process of getting to know each other and find a common platform exiting but also difficult.

// Time must be invested in reaching the core of the differences letting the participants discover what they have in common, and this should be facilitated with examples and exercises – it will not just happen of its own accord.

// It is a good idea to support the participants in the dissemination of knowledge to their colleagues, as this is perceived as an important obstacle when trying to reach the group of colleagues who finds it unnecessary to work with activities not connected to their academic specialty.

WHY DO IT ?

Why should universities allocate resources to the creation of a faculty-training programme like the Next Generation Teaching Corps? The value can be found on a personal level for the participant, as well as on departmental and strategic levels.

// Insight into a new academic area and knowledge and experience of how to implement it into their own teaching as well as the support from other participants and coaches have given the participants a large personal academic benefit.

// Several of the Teaching Corps participants have been given new entrepreneurial roles at their institute, e.g. being responsible for disseminating innovation and entrepreneurship at departmental, faculty and/or university level, and this contributes to their personal development and career.

// Personal and academic networks have been created; even new companies have been established.

// The Teaching Corps has given the departments access to a larger network at their own university and across universities.

// The departments have been able, by their Teaching Corps participant, to achieve some of the objectives set by the top management about increased focus on and activities within entrepreneurship.

// More than 1000 students have been in contact with entrepreneurial teaching, because it was embedded into their subject specific curriculum. They would not otherwise have had this opportunity.

// A faculty-training initiative like the Teaching Corps can by its focus on inter-disciplinarity ensure that the universities reach their strategic goals, have interesting results to show, and it can be used for profiling in the increasing competition.

LINKS

In case you are interested in reading more about the Next Generation project, go to the project's website :

www.nxtgen.dk/en/

You can find more information about the Teaching Corps at :

http://cse.cbs.dk/cse_offer/participants-in-the-teaching-corps/ -

or contact :

Project Manager,
Lucía Velasco,
Copenhagen School of Entrepreneurship, CBS,
lv.ino@cbs.dk.

Or watch a video about the Teaching Corps here :

<https://vimeo.com/59717854>

Next Generation has produced a large amount of material that can be downloaded if you would like to work with the strengthening of innovation and entrepreneurship in the teaching at university level :

<http://innovation.blogs.ku.dk/>



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