ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION: A MODEL CURRICULUM FOR THE STUDENT-CENTERED COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY IN WEST VIRGINIA

In 2007, the Higher Education Policy Commission of West Virginia issued *Charting the Future: A Master Plan for West Virginia Higher Education.* The plan offered its vision of the role of the state's colleges and universities as “an instrumental part in the cultural and economic health of our communities.”

Through the plan, the Commission challenged higher education to contribute to the state's “economic vitality” and further challenged each institution within the system to prepare more West Virginians for “successful work” and to “create more work opportunities for our citizens.” Specifically, the plan recommended that colleges and universities “expand programs and centers of entrepreneurship” noting that:

Entrepreneurship is a key to economic growth. A growing body of economic research argues that educational attainment constitutes a form of human capital innovation, which, together with the generation of new ideas, drives economic growth.

The Commission further recognized that “entrepreneurship develops all of our fields of research through problem-solving and critical thinking” and “involves a set of principles that can be applied across a wide range of human endeavors.” The plan further suggested that interdisciplinary studies as well as undergraduate and graduate research and innovative technology development programs all work towards “facilitating entrepreneurship.”

*Charting the Future* established a goal of “students prepared to transition from school to work.” Often, policy makers, opinion leaders and the public, in general, interpret such a goal as aspiring to create qualified “job candidates” who will go to work for others in ongoing enterprises. However, in these challenging economic times, it is important that colleges and universities provide programs and opportunities that ***prepare graduates to become “job creators” as well as “job candidates.”*** A key strategy in preparing students who may choose to graduate and begin a business of their own or work for others with the goal of starting their own business in the future is a comprehensive program of entrepreneurial education. In fact, a college or university should provide such an option should it aspire to characterize itself as a true, student-centered institution.

State policymakers recognize the role of higher education in advancing entrepreneurship as a means to promote the economic growth of a state or region. This paper (1) examines the contribution of a comprehensive entrepreneurship education to the “student-centered” university and (2) proposes a model entrepreneurship curriculum for colleges and universities in West Virginia that draws upon the approaches that have been used to best position such programs for advancing the state’s public policy agenda.

I. ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND THE STUDENT-CENTERED UNIVERSITY

All colleges and universities like to pride themselves as being “student-centered.” In fact, smaller institutions often promote as a primary selling point their ability to “care” for the student more than larger colleges and universities. In support of this assertion, they cite their lower student-to-faculty ratio and claim a higher degree of personal attention.

True, graduates of small colleges often credit their academic success to their decision to attend an institution in which they weren't “just a number.” However, a true “student-centered” university should also be evaluated in terms of its ability to deliver a high quality education and properly prepare its students for the future.

In terms of preparedness, a student obviously must maintain a certain degree of skillfulness in their field of study. But, there is more. A truly prepared student must also possess the ability to communicate effectively and think critically. They must have a broad background of knowledge that will enable them to participate as a member of a civil society. They must understand the legal, financial, cultural and societal aspects of the work environment in which they will function. In addition, in today's world, the student must be technologically proficient.

All of these attributes relate to one overriding objective: the ability to convert their education into an economically productive activity. In fact, in a survey conducted in 2007, prospective students overwhelmingly stated that their ability to get a good job upon graduation was the primary factor in their decision as to where to attend college. (RMS Strategies)

Unfortunately, the current culture often defines the economic prospects of a college graduate - or any individual for that matter – solely in terms of their ability to “get a job.” Political rhetoric and media attention constantly focus on the issue of jobs. State government provides tax credits and other taxpayer financed subsidies in pursuit of out-of-state investment. Government officials at both the state and local level dedicate increasing amounts of the public treasury to promoting the attributes of their region in hopes of attracting employers.

All of these efforts are based upon the presumption that the only way job opportunities and economic activity can be produced is through an outside firm coming into a state or region and providing work.

It is certainly true that most people work for other people. Moreover, most college graduates will begin their professional lives working for someone else.

However, there is an alternative – starting and running your own business - either upon graduation or several years later after you've worked for an employer, gained a measure of expertise, and, then, decided to go out on your own.

Unfortunately, most colleges and universities do not provide the student with the skill set to transform their substantive knowledge into a self-generated and productive economic activity. Instead, the student graduates with a certain level of knowledge in a particular area and for the most part must pursue employment with an existing firm in order to make a living. If successful, they have fulfilled the level of expectation that often exists in today's culture.

Nevertheless, colleges and universities are truly remiss in their duty to prepare their students for the future if they do not expose their students to the alternative to working for someone else. Furthermore, public institutions owe a duty to the people of their state to develop the employers of future. Both of these obligations can be addressed through the creation and implementation of a comprehensive entrepreneurship program.

A Historical Perspective

Traditionally, most institutions of higher education offer a traditional business school curriculum through its college or department of business. Historically, university business schools have offered classes in the principles of business, economics, marketing, accounting and management. Studies have claimed that this approach has tended to “*teach students how to become proficient employees instead of successful business persons”*( Solomon, 1989).

Historically, colleges and universities are perceived to be slow to change. This is particularly true regarding public institutions, which incorporate public service into their mission. (Dressel, 1987) Many have criticized public institutions for the failure to consider the needs of society in constructing their programs. Some critics suggested a renewal of academic participation in society similar to the movement that produced the Morrill Act of 1862. (Dimancescu and Botkin, 1986)

In the 1990s, colleges and universities began to introduce programs in entrepreneurship. This movement was more in response to the desire to commercialize research venture than the result of a sudden surge of public responsibility.

In any event, these early programs consisted of courses that were constructed in a manner similar to other business courses, but concentrated on providing students with the skills to develop and operate their own companies instead of entering the corporate world in line or staff positions.

These programs were not considered in competition with the traditional business school curriculum, but viewed as complimentary to the customary fields of study. In general, these new entrepreneurship programs primarily focused on three approaches:

* Orientation and awareness that offered general information aboutentrepreneurship and encouraged participants to think in terms of entrepreneurship as a career;
* New enterprise creation designed to develop competences which would lead to self-employment, economic self-sufficiency or employment generation; and
* Small business survival and growth. (Interman, 1991)

In other words, these initial programs educated students “about” entrepreneurship without focusing on preparing students “for” entrepreneurship. (Kirby, 2002) True, classroom training can provide students with practical knowledge about the entrepreneurial process in such areas as opportunity recognition, entry strategies, market opportunities and marketing, creating a successful business plan, financial projections, venture capital, debt and other forms of financing, external assistance for start-ups and small business, legal and tax issues, intellectual property, franchising, and entrepreneurship economics.

However, further studies regarding entrepreneurship education assert that the successful entrepreneur possesses a set of personal skills, attributes and behavior that goes beyond merely the ability to set up and run your own business. (Kirby, 2002) In this regard, it is important that the course content and learning process include methods to develop these entrepreneurial abilities.

Course Content and the Learning Process

The traditional business school curriculum focuses on developing business skills and understanding in a particular area, e.g. accounting, management, marketing and finance. While developing these skills are important, creating an effective entrepreneurship curriculum requires further development in such areas as creative problem solving, need assessment, leadership, negotiation, social networking, social entrepreneurship, time-allocation, creating competitive advantages, new venture feasibility and ethics.

Traditional business schools teach subjects such as accounting, marketing, management and finance in a manner that requires students to think critically. Critical thinking requires a student to start with a problem that has a wide range of potential solutions and exercise reasoning to reduce the number of alternatives down to one single, correct solution. In terms of entrepreneurship education, such an approach may be adaptable to the teaching of practical concepts and skills.

However, as the noted author and entrepreneur D. M. Rae has noted, “the skills traditionally taught in business schools are essential but not sufficient to make a successful entrepreneur.“

In contrast, developing the skills and abilities attributable to the entrepreneur requires unleashing an individual's creative, intuitive, emotional and spatial functions that often produce directions that are seemingly unconventional, unsystematic and unstructured. (Sperry, 1968) (Ornstein, 1975)

The following diagram illustrates the differences.

CRITICAL THINKING CREATIVE THINKING

(Vertical) (Lateral)

Answer

Problem Answers

Problem

In this respect, entrepreneurship is taught more like art or music than other areas of study that employ a more traditional problem-solving approach. Such an approach requires the entrepreneur to utilize a process in which he seeks a better solution; challenges custom, routine and tradition; engages in reflection and deep thought; participates in mental games in which a problem is viewed from a different perspective; concludes that there is more than one answer; recognizes that mistakes and failure may delay ultimate success; applies seemingly unrelated ideas to a problem that may generate a solution; and seeks to understand an issue from a broader perspective while maintaining a focus on the are in need of change. (Lewis, 1987)

Entrepreneurship Education Models

Historically, entrepreneurship programs can be categorized as either a “focused” or a “university-wide” program. A program is “focused” if the faculty, staff and students are located exclusively in the school of business or, in larger institutions, the combined areas of business and engineering. In the early years of entrepreneurship education, college and university programs usually reflected this approach since courses in entrepreneurship, in general, first developed in schools of business and engineering.

However, today, there are only a few notable programs that still maintain “focused” programs. Instead, a “university-wide” approach has evolved that targets students in other fields. This approach recognizes a desire to extend entrepreneurship education to those who wish to concentrate on areas of study other than business and engineering, yet maintain a desire to commercialize that interest upon entering the workforce.

“University-wide” programs can be further distinguished by considering course location. Under the “magnet model,” all classes are offered by a single academic unit - usually the school of business - but attended by students from all fields of study. By comparison, entrepreneurship programs following the “radiant model” offer classes in various academic units throughout the institution. These courses are discipline-specific and expose the student to a unique application of the principles of entrepreneurship.

A Culture of Entrepreneurship

In order to develop entrepreneurial aptitudes and capabilities that can flourish in concert with conventional business training, there is one important prerequisite: *an academic culture that is not only receptive, but promotes entrepreneurship as a vocational alternative*. Creating such a culture involves including and promoting the concept of entrepreneurship in all aspects of the campus as well as establishing processes, programs and approaches (such as experiential training) that will allow for the development of those skills and abilities that are common among entrepreneurs.

In particular, the curriculum must expose the students to the virtues of entrepreneurship in order to impress upon them the potential for such an alternative. Such an approach would include testimonial presentations by noted entrepreneurs in the area.

A Student-Centered Program

There are many colleges and universities that do an outstanding job of providing a high quality education in a number of fields. They each make a tremendous effort to assure that when their students graduate they have achieved a high level of proficiency in their chosen field of study in order that they are prepared to continue their education at the graduate level or enter the work force.

However, institutions often fall short in regard to providing their students with an understanding of the process by which proficiency becomes profit. For example:

* They teach English – but do not teach the business of being an author.
* They teach drama – but do not teach the business of being an actor.
* They teach political science – but do not teach the business of being a campaign manager or owning a consulting firm.
* They teach social work – but do not teach the business of running a non-profit agency.
* They teach education – but do not teach the business of owning a day care center or operating an online tutoring service.
* They teach accounting – but do not teach the business of running an accounting firm.

And the list goes on.

Often, students matriculate to a college or university with a certain passion or talent. However, in a number of instances, these students are confined to a certain career path that includes their passion or talent, but does not specifically prepare that student to pursue their passion or utilize their talent in an economically productive manner.

For example, once I had a conversation with a student who had a passion for art and was quite talented. When I asked her about her field of study, she said teacher education. I asked her if she had a choice and both choices would allow her to make a living, would she choose to be an artist or a teacher? She quickly responded that she would rather be an artist. She added, though, that she chose teacher education because it would allow her to keep active in art while making a living.

Entrepreneurship education needs to provide those types of students with the opportunity to pursue their passion and ***turn their passion into profit***. The coursework and programs that comprise the program connect the classroom with the real world.

The coursework offered is even beneficial for students who wish to work for an existing firm upon graduation. Studies have shown that employers are more likely to hire individuals who have a broad understanding of entrepreneurship.

Institutions of higher education should focus on establishing a campus-wide entrepreneurial spirit and providing students the opportunity to develop and exercise the skills and abilities that are characteristic of an entrepreneur. Colleges and universities have not done their job fully preparing our students for the future if they fail to promote entrepreneurship as an option.

II. ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION: A MODEL COURSE CURRICULUM

At many colleges and universities, entrepreneurship is confined to the business school or in the engineering school where the focus of the program is the commercialization of technology. Instead, a model course curriculum should reflect the “university-wide radiant model” in which entrepreneurship training is coordinated by the by an academic center or college but available in multiple fields of study in order to provide all students the opportunity to acquire the skill set necessary to be a “job creator.”

Undergraduate Curriculum

The model undergraduate curriculum contains courses that provide: (1) entrepreneurship appreciation; (2) practical classroom instruction; (3) interdisciplinary classes that apply practical entrepreneurial concepts to specific fields of study; and (4) upper division electives.

*Entrepreneurship Appreciation*

The model curriculum includes three entrepreneurship appreciation courses that are designed to introduce entrepreneurial concepts and seek to inspire and motivate students to consider entrepreneurship as a vocational alternative. Moreover, it is important that all students acquire at least a measure of knowledge and comprehension of these principles in order to appreciate and understand the critical role of both for-profit and nonprofit entrepreneurship and its impact on society. The entrepreneurship appreciation courses would include:

1. **First Year Experience** – Presentations and discussions offered during the current first year experience classes that highlight the significant contributions made to our region and our State by various notable entrepreneurs.
2. **Entrepreneurship Appreciation** – Students are exposed to an appreciation and understanding of entrepreneurship and learn its application to their own career choice.
3. **Entrepreneurship Speaker Series** – Seminars and guest lecturers by faculty and real-world entrepreneurs.

*Practical Classroom Instruction*

The purpose of the practical classroom instruction or foundation courses is to convey a set of skills that applies to all areas of interest. This curriculum centers on the entrepreneurial principles that are necessary to create and operate both for-profit and nonprofit enterprises. Courses in the model curriculum would include:

1. **Creative Problem-Solving** – This introductory course focuses on creative problem solving from an entrepreneurial perspective. Course content introduces students to the concepts of creative problem solving, social entrepreneurship, entrepreneurship, generating innovative ideas, creating entrepreneurial ventures and the role entrepreneurship plays in society. The course presents the entrepreneur or social entrepreneur as the agent of change in a free market economy and highlights practical aspects of opportunity recognition and new venture creation.
2. **Entrepreneurial Promotions** – This course presents the entrepreneur with the fundamental theories of marketing and selling a product or service. Content will introduce students to the concepts of research, product planning, product communication, sales implementation and after sale services applied to the entrepreneur's vision.
3. **Ethics and Entrepreneurship** – This course presents theories and principles of ethics in two contexts. First, ethics is studied to determine virtue, lawfulness and inspiration. Second, ethics is studied to fashion strategies for entrepreneurial success. The course also examines the ethical standards that exist in creating competitive advantages, attracting and maintaining customers and motivating the will to be successful.

*Interdisciplinary Courses*

The purpose of an entrepreneurship program is to provide students the opportunity to turn their interests into a sustainable and satisfying enterprise. Therefore, it is necessary to offer courses that connect their practical classroom instruction with their particular fields of interest.

These interdisciplinary courses are offered through the cooperation of the center or college coordinating the entrepreneurship program and each individual discipline. These courses would include:

1. **Internship** – Students participate in an advanced internship with an ongoing enterprise in their field of interest. This experience will provide the students the opportunity to observe the application of entrepreneurial concepts.
2. **New Project Feasibility** – The coordinating unit and each participating discipline jointly offer a New Venture Feasibility course in each field of study. This course helps students determine whether their own previously identified opportunities are suitable for the marketplace. Students apply feasibility concepts to the wide range of challenges encountered when launching commercial and non-profit ventures in their area of interest. Through experiential learning opportunities, students apply these concepts to the development of a comprehensive business plan for their new venture.

*Upper Division Electives*

In response to demand and dependent upon the availability of quality faculty, model entrepreneurship curriculum would include specialized upper division courses that focus on various specific skills or aspects of entrepreneurship. The classes may offer practical knowledge that expands the concepts contained within the foundation courses. In the alternative, classes and seminars may focus on developing the innovative, creative or problem-solving process involved in entrepreneurship. In particular, coursework may include: negotiations, human resource management, small business management, evaluating and selling a business, venture planning, organizational leadership, facilities planning and market research.

Real Life Experience

The undergraduate entrepreneurship program culminates with the students implementing their business plans and launching their own business. This experiential-based coursework offers the students the opportunity to combine their creative and intuitive thought processes with practical classroom concepts.

This co-curriculum activity is embodied in the following two-semester course:

1. **New Project Creation I** – Students receive real-life experience by operating either a for-profit or nonprofit enterprise under the supervision and guidance of a mentor who is proficient in the student's chosen field. In this course, the student is immersed in the entrepreneurial process serving as a creator, manager and owner of his or her own business.
2. **New Project Creation II** – This course is a continuation of the student's operation of his or her business and Part 2 of a two-semester sequence.

In these two courses, the institution would provide financial resources, office and workspace, mentoring and other support for the student's entrepreneurial initiatives.

III. PROGRAM ORGANIZATION

Undergraduate Recognition

The purpose of the entrepreneurship education is to prepare students to convert the substantive knowledge obtained through their traditional college curriculum into a profitable enterprise. Thus, students are free to proceed through the entrepreneurship curriculum and garner such skills in the same way they enhance other basic or soft skills such as critical thinking or teamwork skills, respectively.

However, an institution may wish to apply a traditional approach to recognizing a student’s achievement in mastering a particular curriculum. In this regard, the institution may establish an “entrepreneurship minor” which a student would claim by completing four required courses and one or two elective courses as determined by the college in which the student is enrolled.

The four required courses would include Creative Problem Solving, New Project Feasibility and New Project Creation I and II. Approved elective courses could include Ethics and Entrepreneurship and Entrepreneurial Promotions. (At many institutions, this curriculum could replace the ineffective entrepreneurship minor, which previously consisted merely of a bundle of traditional business school principles courses.)

In addition, each college would also offer approved electives that are tailored to the career options sought by the student. For example, a class in “Artrepreneurship” gives the students the tools, techniques and resources to turn their passion for art into a potential career. More specifically, the course would offer instruction in both traditional marketing opportunities such as galleries, festivals, public venues and retail, as well the emerging opportunities such as online direct sales, business-to-business and online galleries and representation.

Each student completing the entrepreneurship minor would receives a notation on their diploma and could receive a Certificate in Entrepreneurship which affirms their successful achievement of this area of expertise.

Graduate Instruction

In response to the rapid growth of the global marketplace, institutions offering an M.B.A. could offer an entrepreneurship specialization. This program would provide the students an enhanced opportunity to develop and utilize their innovative and creative thought processes through real life experience.

Graduate students pursuing this area of specialization would be required to take 30 hours of core M.B.A. courses and 15 hours of entrepreneurship specialization courses which would include:

* Entrepreneurship Field Study (Capstone course)
* Developing a Successful Business Plan
* Short Term Financial Management
* Growing, Managing and Sustaining an Entrepreneurial Firm
* Legal and Accounting Aspects of an Entrepreneurial Enterprise.

Professional Certificate in Entrepreneurship

Public institutions in West Virginia have a responsibility to offer entrepreneurship programs and opportunities to members of the community who are not seeking academic training through the conventional degree-targeted approach. In this regard, these institutions would offer a professional certificate program for nontraditional students. This program would focus on instructing its participants in a broad range of entrepreneurial skills.

Students seeking this training and recognition would receive special admission to the college or university and receive their Professional Certificate in Entrepreneurship upon completing the program required of undergraduates to receive the academic Certificate in Entrepreneurship.

Professional Certificate in Nonprofit Leadership and Administration

As an alternative, entrepreneurship programs could offer a community-based program that addresses the unique entrepreneurial and management skills needed to administer and lead a non-profit organization. Students who complete both the required and minimum number of elective courses would receive the Professional Certificate in Nonprofit Administration. Other students may choose to take one or more courses that would provide skill development in a particular area. These areas of study may include:

* Financial Management for Nonprofit Organizations
* Human Resource Management
* Leadership and Ethics in the Nonprofit Sector
* Fundraising and Resource Development
* Strategic Management in Nonprofit Organizations
* Results-Oriented Program Management
* The Nonprofit Legal Environment
* Effective Governance of Nonprofit Organizations
* Effective Supervision
* Strategic Planning
* Managing Volunteer Effectiveness
* Marketing for Nonprofits
* Board Governance

IV. SUPPORT PROGRAMS

In advancing entrepreneurship on their campuses, college and universities should establish a campus-wide initiative that extends beyond the academic training provided through the entrepreneurship program. In this regard, colleges and universities should consider support programs that would be conducted by other administrative and academic units that advance entrepreneurship in terms of our students and the campus community in general.

Center for Entrepreneurship

A “Center for Entrepreneurship” in the school’s college or department of business could coordinate all of the campus activities that relate to the advancement of entrepreneurship. A Director of the center would perform all executive duties and responsibilities associated with the conduct of the center. Initially, the Dean of the College of Business or Chair of the Business Department would serve as the Director. Depending upon the growth of the program, the Center may employ a separate Director who would report to the Dean or Chair.

Entrepreneurship Leadership Academy

A comprehensive entrepreneurship program would include an Entrepreneurial Leadership Academy that would consist of academic administrators and faculty who would meet monthly in a series of workshops, lunches, dinners and meetings to network and discuss the University's entrepreneurship curricula and activities. The academy would also develop and propose policies and procedures for the operation and administration of each entrepreneurship program and project.

The Director of the Center for Entrepreneurship would serve as the Chair of the Academy. The academy would consist of the deans and selected faculty members from each college. The President, Provost and other academic leaders would serve as ex officio members of the academy. The University should provide an honorarium for each member of the academy.

Entrepreneurship Grant Program

An institution’s support program should include a competitive grant process to provide financial resources for students who propose highly promising enterprises for their New Venture Creation courses. The students may apply the grant proceeds to any cost or expense associated with their enterprise including compensation to themselves.

In particular, the following grants could be available:

* *Innovator Grants* would be presented to a student or student group whose proposed business plan emphasizes a new product or service, production method, market or more efficient and effective form of organization. Grant recipients would be required to retain a faculty member or an approved member of the business community as a mentor.
* *Community Changemaker Grants* would be presented to a student or student group whose proposed nonprofit business plan addresses a unique or emerging community need or an existing need in a new and innovative manner. Grant recipients should be required to retain a faculty member or an approved member of the nonprofit community as a mentor.
* *Explorer Grants* would be to a student or student group whose proposal addresses an idea possessing great potential in terms of commercialization, but needs significant research before a business plan can be produced. Grant recipients would be required to retain a faculty member or an approved member of the business community as a mentor.
* *Entrepreneur Fellowships* would be presented to undergraduate or graduate students who wish to have an additional opportunity to refine and operate an ongoing enterprise. Successful candidates shall (1) have completed 104 hours of undergraduate work or have been admitted to the institution’s MBA program; (2) maintain an ongoing enterprise developed in conjunction with the school’s entrepreneurial program; and (3) register for six to twelve credit hours of either undergraduate or graduate entrepreneurship classes. Fellowships would consist of (1) scholarships for tuition and fees; (2) a grant for further enterprise development or expansion; and (3) continued use of university resources.

Main Street Program

The Main Street program would provide students and faculty with space and other support for the entrepreneurial enterprises. The Dean of Students would assist in providing the space on campus. In addition, the institution’s advancement office could assist in locating local businesses that are willing to provide off-campus space in exchange for tax benefits. While the Main Street program would be targeted at students who are grant recipients or are enrolled in the New Venture Creation courses, any student or student group meeting predetermined qualifications could take advantage of the space and resources provided by the University.

Entrepreneur Network

The institution’s advancement office and alumni office often maintains a network of entrepreneurs who agree to serve as mentors on which students may call upon for advice and direction. These mentors could include alumni, supporters of the University and other members of the community who will provide students with time and the value of their experience.

Small Enterprise Connection

The entrepreneurship program should utilize the school’s advancement and alumni offices to establish and maintain an online connection between small businesses and non-profit organizations and students interested in providing services and assistance in exchange for the opportunity to learn about particular types of enterprises.

University Management Program

Institutions can help students become independent and innovative risk-takers by integrating the principles of entrepreneurship into the operation and management of the institution. Students who encounter entrepreneurial behavior and adherence to entrepreneurial concepts are more likely to develop and assimilate into such culture.

Thus, in order to support the fostering of a campus-wide culture of entrepreneurship, colleges and universities should develop academic and administrative policies and programs that promote the integration of entrepreneurial concepts and behaviors into the operation of the institution.

In addition, one characteristic of entrepreneurship is promoting, implementing and rewarding innovation. Thus, the institution could develop an award program for innovations suggested by the faculty and staff that are implemented and result in more effective and efficient institutional administration.

Often, entrepreneurship is cast solely in terms of commercial enterprises. Obviously, the mission of an institution of higher education is rooted in the social sector. However, entrepreneurship and its focus on devising and implementing new ideas and practices and improving existing operations are clearly adaptable to those organizations and institutions whose missions are different from traditional commercial enterprises.

V. THE FUTURE OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN WEST VIRGINIA

In advancing entrepreneurship academically, we examined a number of existing programs at institutions throughout the country. Many of these programs consist of associations between the business school and the engineering school with a focus on commercializing intellectual property. A number of programs also center on research conducted in their respective graduate schools. While larger institutions such as West Virginia University and Marshall University are positioned for such an approach, most regional college and universities in West Virginia are not prepared to align its program with those types of efforts.

Even if they were, those types of programs are not particularly suited for the students served by the regional college and university. True, most regional institutions certainly value, support and promote the research activities of their faculty and our students. Moreover, as graduate programs are expanded, many may evolve into institutions in which research becomes a more defining component.

However, at this point in time, the primary focus of the regional college is offering the practical classroom and experiential-based entrepreneurship instruction necessary to prepare them to pursue a career as an entrepreneur should they choose to do so.

In this manner, the program and model curriculum we propose is unique. True, it includes facets of other programs. But, in its totality, the proposed entrepreneurship program is specifically tailored to meet the needs of the students, our communities and our state.

In institutions of higher education in West Virginia, entrepreneurship is in its infancy. Obviously changes will have to be made as we move forward. As we proceed, however, we believe that the model curriculum we present will enhance entrepreneurship on the campus and in general and better prepare our students for the future.

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