

# IE in the UK

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**Oxford (2/2/2010)**



**Manchester (10/1/2010)**

These are detailed notes from two seminar/workshops on IE presented in the United Kingdom\*. At each of these programs, IE was invited as an “international perspective” because it is a singular, highly successful example of 1) using entrepreneurial principles to expand the impact and value of higher education in society and 2) using entrepreneurship across disciplines, colleges, and schools at a world-class academic institution to improve students’ academic, professional, and personal capabilities.

## **Why We Need Entrepreneurship in Universities—Now**

We currently face unprecedented challenges that require new ways of thinking, and the cultivation of new capacities for innovation and problem solving. We have to revamp our entire education system from K through continuing education for adults, re-orienting it to educate people who have to think and act in a world that is more fluid and

unpredictable than ever before. Beyond job retraining, we have to cultivate (to blend Daniel Pink and Howard Gardner) *whole new minds for the future*.

The challenge is how to do this, especially in Universities, which benefit from *and* are hindered by having been in the business of cultivating minds for a long time. Universities are in very real ways trapped by the sheer intellectual momentum of their own traditions, even as those traditions provide the grounds for innovation. Of course, the seeds of radical change are always growing within our Universities, manifested in many ways. For example, Universities have understood that knowledge becomes most relevant when it can be applied to real world challenges, yielding new understanding and ways to engage pressing challenges. Towards this end, Universities have been the sites of pedagogical innovations like experiential learning, project based learning, internships, and mentoring, community engagement, and student leadership programs, all designed to enhance a student's education by providing "real world" application and experience. Similarly, many new forms of University-Industry partnership have emerged, focused especially on the commercialization of university-based technology or the incubation of university-based businesses.

Along with these powerful pedagogical innovations we must now focus even more directly on cultivating *individuals with the knowledge, commitment, and courage to innovate, on their own and with others*. In other words, now more than ever it is imperative for Universities to foster and cultivate intellectual entrepreneurship. And, perhaps the most successful example of a university responding to this challenge is a program at the University of Texas at Austin that takes this imperative as its very name—the *Intellectual Entrepreneurship Consortium* (IE).

Since its creation in 1997, IE has been guided by a concept of entrepreneurship that is expansive and innovative. First, entrepreneurship transcends the creation of new businesses or ventures. While new venture creation is one of the most powerful expressions of an entrepreneur, at their core entrepreneurs are cultural innovators. Entrepreneurs are tuned in to the deeper cultural currents from which new meanings and imperatives emerge. They are able to create new space within which those meanings and imperatives can be articulated and engaged. Second, entrepreneurs have the courage to act first, before they know the answers, or even all the questions. They are comfortable with ambiguity, and while they are oriented to solving problems, they recognize that one problem's solution lays the ground for an entirely new set of problems. Third, despite the cultural myth of the entrepreneur as lone ranger, entrepreneurs are profoundly connected and collaborative. They always have a double mission—engaging opportunities as they emerge *and* sustaining a living web of relationships that makes innovation and valuable change possible. Finally, entrepreneurs see through the cult of creativity, the belief that only certain people are creative or can be the source of profound and valuable change. Entrepreneurs understand that we are all creative, all capable of engaging our own situations for the better, and all capable of continually building this capacity.

## **IE Profile**

Cross-Disciplinary consortium involving all schools/colleges on campus

Since 1997, directly engaged 6000+ students on and off campus

Has become a national model:

1) IE has won national acclaim--including recognition by the Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation, Fast Company Magazine, the Council of Graduate Schools (CGS), Fortune Magazine, Excelencia in Education, and the New England Resource Center for Higher Education.

<https://webspace.utexas.edu/cherwitz/www/ie/honors.html>

(2) IE has been the focus of over one hundred and fifty newspaper, magazine, and scholarly articles.

[https://webspace.utexas.edu/cherwitz/www/ie/selected\\_pubs.html](https://webspace.utexas.edu/cherwitz/www/ie/selected_pubs.html)

(3) IE has widened the educational pool, having had a significant impact on first generation and underrepresented students.

<https://webspace.utexas.edu/cherwitz/www/ie/diversity.html>

(4) IE's success as an educational model for community engagement is noted by college and university presidents, as well as leaders in academic and non-academic arenas.

[https://webspace.utexas.edu/cherwitz/www/ie/what\\_is\\_said.html](https://webspace.utexas.edu/cherwitz/www/ie/what_is_said.html)

(5) The IE platform has been implemented by other educational institutions.

[https://webspace.utexas.edu/cherwitz/www/ie/ie\\_influence.html](https://webspace.utexas.edu/cherwitz/www/ie/ie_influence.html)

(6) The most powerful indication of IE's effectiveness is revealed by the testimony of students.

<https://webspace.utexas.edu/cherwitz/www/ie/kern.html>

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Austin-TX/Intellectual-Entrepreneurship-Consortium/105692732795632?ref=ts>

## **The IE Philosophy**

*Entrepreneurship goes well beyond business creation.* While business is perhaps the most ubiquitous expression of entrepreneurship, for IE entrepreneurship is ultimately concerned with “cultural innovation.” That is, the entrepreneur is the one who recognizes deeper needs and realities of culture and society and is able to both articulate those needs and realities and create ways to effectively engage them. For example, the true entrepreneurial aspect of cell phones is not creating a particular product. It is recognizing the deep need of people to have immediate and regular communication and to provide a means for that to happen.

*Entrepreneurship is inherently collaborative and cross-disciplinary*--Despite the stereotype of the entrepreneur as the rugged individual, the reality is that entrepreneurship requires partnership and collaboration. The challenges that entrepreneurship engages and by virtue of which it provides values in the world are far too complex and ambiguous to be taken on by single entities. Entrepreneurs know how to leverage and motivate entire networks on people and resources to bring positive change.

*Entrepreneurship mobilizes the deep personal passions and commitments of individuals*—The life-blood of entrepreneurship is personal passion and commitment. This is how entrepreneurs sustain themselves in the face of uncertainty and ambiguity. This is why so much a part of the IE platform is discovery of personal goals and passions. But, IE also believes that passions only become meaningful when they engage real-world problems and motivate an individual to promote positive change.

*Students are better in the classroom, the lab, the library, and workplace by virtue of being Entrepreneurial.* IE is not an add-on or a remediation for students who cannot figure out what else to do with themselves. Nor is it a path away from the academy for frustrated or failed intellectuals. IE recognizes that society needs both—the rich depth of intellectual/scholarly activity and the power of personal initiative and aspiration. Very often it is by virtue of working on entrepreneurial project that students discover why they are researchers and students in the first place. Their engagement with real world challenges and opportunities very often invigorates and focuses their academic energy.

## **IE Objectives**

Individual IE courses and projects each have their own specific objectives, depending on what they are trying to accomplish. In general, however, IE is guided by the following objectives:

*Identify and understand opportunities and challenges*

The essence of entrepreneurship is being able to recognize what is happening in a given situation, assess the challenges, and identify the opportunities. In practice this means holding students accountable to a rigorous process of research and discovery to fully understand the situation they want to engage. This is also part of the process where students most fully realize the value of their academic discipline and the analytic tools their discipline provides them. IE fully recognize the necessity of “going deep” in a discipline, and seeks to leverage that depth by putting it to work on real problems.

*Develop the know-how and skills to be adaptive and responsive to changing situations, to develop ideas, and to execute on them*

This is best expressed in the range of courses and workshops offered to students on the IE platform. Along with skills like entrepreneurial planning, innovation, communication,

building collaboration, etc., the most important capability that IE promotes in its participants is being resilient and adaptive. Without resilience, none of the rest matters.

*Have the courage, sense of agency, and responsibility to act*

This is perhaps the most abstract but also the most important objective. The defining moment for an entrepreneur is the moment of stepping up and taking on a challenge. Imagine someone walking into a room and urgently announcing a serious problem or huge opportunity emerging at that moment. They tell folks in the room that they do not even know all the details of the problem/opportunity, let alone how it will play out, or even where to begin. Before they can even ask for volunteers to help, the true entrepreneur has already raised her hand and announced, **“I’m in.”**

### **The IE Platform**

The IE Platform is a configuration of activities and programs that individually and together put students, working with other students, faculty and community partners, to discover their values and aspirations and act on them for the betterment of themselves as individuals, for the betterment of the university, and the for the betterment of society in general.

*All IE activities are initiated by and guided by a student’s interests and values. This means not only empowering students to follow personal vision but also holding them responsible for their commitments and obligations to others. **IE holds participants accountable to their own best ideas.***



## Internship/Mentorships

The *IE Pre-Graduate School Internship* connects undergraduates with faculty and veteran graduate students in their field of study to explore and understand the many aspects of graduate study (e.g., conducting research, writing for scholarly audiences, participating in seminars, serving as teaching and research assistants, publishing articles in professional journals, becoming members of scholarly organizations and learned societies, preparing for an academic or professional career, etc.). The goal is to expose students to graduate study so that it becomes a viable option for them. In most cases the intern will work primarily with the graduate mentor and secondarily with a faculty supervisor.

The *Academic-Community Mentorship* expands on the Pre-Grad Internship, connecting students to grad student mentors *and* community liaisons to work on real-time, real-world problems. This experience enables students to both have an impact on a problem they care about and *by virtue* of that experience articulate their own values and build an entrepreneurial plan for their education and professional lives. The course provides a rigorous framework of projects and reflection and a set of skills and tools for actively engaging the world.

## Community Engagement

Through a series of courses and stand-alone projects, IE is a boundary spanner between the University and its local community, leveraging the intellectual resources of the university to directly engage the community's challenges and opportunities. An essential element of the IE model is that students will best discover their own values and aspirations by engaging others. This emerges from both from the value of service to others and the pragmatic realization that students best learn the value of their education and their discipline by making it directly relevant to issues they care about. For many IE students, IE provides the only opportunity they have to do something of direct value to society.

## IE Courses and Workshops

IE has a rich curriculum of courses and workshops, all dedicated to promoting and developing the "whole student." These courses developed organically over time, emerging from an evolving appreciation of the capabilities and experiences students need in order to be leaders and innovators. There are two broad tracks of courses and workshops. One track prepares them for lives as professional researchers and academics, covering topics such as writing/publication, professional presentations, communication, teaching methods, and grant writing. The other track prepares them for lives of impact and value in the broader marketplace, covering topics such as entrepreneurship, innovation, consulting, leadership, ethics, and community engagement. A key feature of the IE curriculum is the independent study. For many students, the independent study provides them with an in depth opportunity to pursue projects of deep personal and

professional importance. In all courses, students work on projects that pursue personal interests *and* enhance their abilities as academics and researchers.

### Action Seminars

The Action Seminar takes the best of the academic way of configuring people to solve problems and applies it to real world problems. The key feature of the Action Seminar is that it blends individuals from arenas that would not usually come together to solve a problem. Each seminar focuses on a specific real world problem, and then brings students, grad-students, faculty, community members, members of NPs, business people, members of the companies, and any one else who is relevant to the problem at hand. IE then facilitates the process of defining a problem, investigating the problem, and developing set of recommendations for solving the problem. Action seminars are very often tied to courses or research projects within the university.

## **\*Details about the Events**

*Entrepreneurial University Leadership Program (EULP)  
Oxford University, 2/2/2010.*

The EULP is a yearlong program sponsored by the National Council for Graduate Entrepreneurship, Nottingham University, and Oxford University. It provides senior administrators from universities across the UK and the EU with frameworks and training to help 1) bring entrepreneurship to their campuses in innovative ways and 2) help their institutions operate in a more entrepreneurial way.

*The University of Manchester Enterprise and Entrepreneurship Event  
The University of Manchester, 10/1/2010*

This two-day seminar was designed to develop a plan for the University of Manchester to expand entrepreneurship education across the university and to expand and connect its many entrepreneurial initiatives that serve its local community, the UK, and its global partners. Key University partners in the event were the Manchester Enterprise Centre and the Manchester Leadership Program.

*A heart-felt Thank You to Pegram Harrison and Kristine Chadwick at Oxford, and Tim Westlake and Sarah Hartley at Manchester for their warmth and hospitality and for making my trips smooth, enjoyable, and first-class in every respect.*