

# PRACTICES EXCHANGE

## NEWSLETTER

October 2017

<https://www.yeswemustcoalition.org>

Issue 7

### Institutional Resources/Practices

#### Curricular Content and Schedule Restructuring

At the **College of Saint Elizabeth** (NJ), the Department of Psychology and the Department of Business and Health Administration are working together to develop courses for which their students can cross-register and which integrate liberal arts learning and business topics. This initiative was recently piloted by combining business and psychology students in a Research Methods and Statistics class. The students were tasked with developing a research question, a hypothesis, and conducting a literature review on their chosen topic. Not surprisingly, the psychology students chose topics related to their interests in mental health, while the business students chose topics related to management, aligning closely with the field of Industrial/Organizational Psychology. Although the projects were individual, the course was designed in such a way that the class sessions revolved around group discussions where students learned about each other's topics and offered feedback and insights. This approach provided students with the opportunity to learn from peers who they were unlikely to meet in other classes, especially since they had begun to focus on the courses in their majors. Student course evaluations were positive, as was the case with the student who commented, "I felt the class was beneficial for me as a Business Major because it included small group work assignments providing the opportunity to collaborate and collect data via a group setting." The success of this course has encouraged the two departments to continue working together to find ways to integrate liberal arts and business learning and curricula. For additional information, please contact Chloe Bland, Chair and Assistant Professor of Psychology, [cbland@cse.edu](mailto:cbland@cse.edu); Wendy Hahn, Assistant Professor of Business and Director of UG Business Programs, [whahn@cse.edu](mailto:whahn@cse.edu); or Regina Riccioni, Chair of Business and Health Administration, [rriccioni@cse.edu](mailto:rriccioni@cse.edu).

**Coker College** (SC) was featured in a recent issue of *Inside Higher Ed* for its efforts to restructure the way the curriculum is delivered in order to encourage innovation in teaching strategies and promote more opportunities for student engagement. For example, the traditional M,W,F schedule has been altered so that at least some courses are scheduled for an hour every Monday and Wednesday, and then for two hours every other Friday. Faculty and students were skeptical at first, but are becoming increasingly positive about the opportunities the new schedule offers for more experiential learning activities. Faculty who have chosen to teach in the new structure say that it affords them better options for classroom demonstrations, in-class time for students to work on group projects, and scheduling local field trips. For the full article, which describes additional plans at Coker to implement strategies aimed at fostering collaboration and innovation in teaching, go to: <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2017/10/05/coker-college-lets-faculty-deviate-standard-monday-wednesday-friday-teaching-routine>, or contact Tracy Parkinson, Vice President for Strategic Partnerships & Special Assistant to the President, [tparkinson@coker.edu](mailto:tparkinson@coker.edu).

## Experiential Learning

**Robert Morris University** (IL) has formed a strategic partnership with the National Society for Experiential Education (NSEE.org) as part of the university's continued efforts to be a leader in the field of experiential education. Robert Morris University offers professional, career-focused education in a collegiate setting to diverse communities, and experiential teaching and learning is at the heart of the university's academic model to help students achieve personal, academic, and professional success. NSEE is a nonprofit membership organization composed of experiential educators, businesses, and community leaders. Founded in 1971, NSEE also serves as a national resource center for the development and improvement of experiential education programs nationwide. To provide professional development opportunities for experiential educators, RMU will begin hosting the NSEE's Experiential Education Academy (EEA), with the first public course offerings available on March 2–3, 2018, at RMU's Chicago campus. Additionally, RMU and NSEE will co-host an annual Experience-based Learning (EbL) Institute Conference in Chicago starting in August 2019 that will be open to all experiential educators including higher ed, k–12, nonprofit, and professional. The conference will provide opportunities to share scholarship and best practices, build community, and engage in experiential activities.

For information and questions regarding EbL at RMU, including details of the NSEE partnership and interest in the upcoming EEA courses, please contact RMU's Dean of Academic Engagement Paul Gaszak at [pgaszak@robertmorris.edu](mailto:pgaszak@robertmorris.edu) or 312-935-6214.

## Submissions for Future Issues

YWM members are encouraged to submit examples of practices and/or resources to share with your YWM colleagues. We are particularly interested in examples of teaching and learning strategies you have found to be effective in promoting student success. Send brief descriptions and any accompanying materials to Chester, YWM Program Manager, [niachester@gmail.com](mailto:niachester@gmail.com).