

Beginning the Campus Dialogue:

Laying the Foundation for Campus Action



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The context: Babson College

- Small private college outside of Boston, Massachusetts focused on business education.
- Approximately 1800 undergraduates and 1500 graduate students.
- Strong existing focus on issues around sustainability, social entrepreneurship and global responsibility.
- Curriculum developed, implemented and overseen by the faculty.
- Residential college with strong focus on the overall student experience that is linked to and integrated with the curriculum.

Implementation of the Principles

Choices regarding implementation:

- Can be adopted at the top – simply requires a letter of support by the college president. The dialogue occurs primarily *after* adoption.

OR

- Can be adopted as a result of a grassroots effort – call for institutional endorsement by faculty, staff and students. The dialogue begins *before* adoption.

Babson's approach: Laying the foundation

- Principle 6 calls for “dialogue and debate among educators... on critical issues related to global social responsibility and sustainability.”
- Engaging campus stakeholders from the very beginning creates awareness of the PRME, helps identify existing practices consistent with PRME, and accelerates the progression to higher levels of action.
- High levels of engagement created through dialogues and conversations in various faculty, staff and student forums.
- The goal: quickly engrain the ideals and the language of PRME into the campus culture.

The result: A strong campus commitment

- Key constituents are aware of and understand the initiative from the minute it is adopted by the president.
- Early conversations ensure that campus champions are identified and more faculty are engaged from the beginning.
- Ownership exists within the faculty and other key constituents: the call to action is not a push to action.
- Concurrent and subsequent conversations on curriculum, scholarly activities and organizational practices have many voices using the PRME as a guiding institutional framework.

Next steps: Building on the foundation

- Create formal structures and informal opportunities for dialogue on PRME among and between constituent groups.
- Leverage PRME adoption and implementation to build an inventory of existing activities that relate to the Principles.
- Develop reporting mechanisms for both internal and external audiences that focus on measuring and sharing progress and effectiveness.
- Build assessment tools for PRME-related activities that become part of normal institutional evaluation and accreditation activities.
- Seek ways to extend the dialogue beyond the campus.