The challenge of creating a platform for responsible management education: Reflections from South Africa

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Context

• About the **African Continent**
  – Access to quality education is key to reducing poverty and accelerating long-term economic growth
  – Management education in the corporate and public sector in particular will face unprecedented challenges due to Chinese and other country influences leading to increased corruption prevalence

• About the **University of Pretoria**
  – at the forefront of tertiary education on the continent
  – leading research university in South Africa
  – Gordon Institute of Business Science (MBA ranked 40th globally – FT)

• About the **Centre for Responsible Leadership (CRL)**
  – research & teaching unit established to develop the next generation of responsible leaders committed to social and environmental justice
  – Teaches undergraduate Business Management, GIBS MBA and MPhil in Responsible Leadership
  – I / We / Us
Governing Assumptions

– Review and critique existing leadership theories, in the light of current sustainability challenges
– Challenge individual assumptions and foster social learning through interdisciplinarity;
– Foster awareness and application of systems thinking and critical thinking, and evaluating and promoting the reflective capacity of managers;
– Expose students to perspectives from philosophy and its implications for practice;
– Utilise real, and complex problems (problem-centred learning) as a vehicle for facilitating the emotional and experiential need for cultivating required competencies
Cornerstone Qualities (emerging)

- Reflection
- Inclusivity
- Courage
- Wisdom

Context
Overview of typical RL module

Global Challenges & Leadership Responses

“The world we live in”

Institutional Leadership

Individual Leadership
Session 1
Learning Outcomes:
• To develop a critical awareness of humanity’s greatest challenges
• To develop an understanding and reflect critically on the global response mechanisms

Session 2
Learning Outcomes:
• To develop a critical understanding of Business Ethics
• To develop a critical awareness of Corporate Responsibility
• To appreciate the theory and implications of strategy for Sustainability

Session 3
Learning Outcomes:
• Obtain an overview of classical leadership theory
• Develop a critical understanding of the emerging field of individual responsible leadership
In conclusion...

Some lessons learnt...

• Institutional readiness
• Student relevance versus student readiness
• Reality view – personal and institutional – philosophy and systems thinking
• Going beyond “green”
• Too little too late
• Alignment of MBA programme outcomes

We’re investigating...

• Creating demand for ‘responsible MBAs’…
• Delivery of responsible leadership education within the dominant current paradigm
• Dealing with MBA student assumptions
• The “Blue Sky” Business School
Thank you

www.up.ac.za/crl