



## Case Study: Business

Partnership in active classes

# Students as partners for active and collaborative learning in undergraduate business courses

In undergraduate business courses with 45-50 students per class, I partnered with recent alumni and current students with practical work experience to connect university and the workplace. Partnering with these students to develop curriculum and assessment has opened the door to more authentic learning experiences for all students. Instead of assigning research tasks or set questions, we created “Client Memos” based on workplace experiences that prompted students to “Advise the client” or “Prepare a report to the Board”. As would be required in the workplace, students were not given the opportunity of taking this work out of the classroom. Rather, they were given a set amount of time (usually no more than an hour) within the class to prepare their advice/submission. Student groups would decide how to rearrange the room, creating mock boardrooms, office settings or meeting spaces. Two to three recent alumni or employers would attend these “Client Memos” classes as advisors for student groups. While the students largely directed their own learning journey, the visiting alumni/employers steered students and projects in the right direction. Groups would report back (e.g. orally or written in ePortfolio or Wiki). I found that although a key outcome of this student partnership has been greater engagement from students both with their learning and with their peers, I also found that the partnership between students and alumni and students and employers increased networking potential for current students and in some cases, led to the offer of employment and internship opportunities.

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