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Social Impact Through Business: A Comparative Analysis of Undergraduate Course

Offerings and Perceptions of University Support

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Civic Engagement Capstone Project

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Introduction

Social impact education is a new and growing field. From mandatory ethics courses to entire concentrations in social entrepreneurship, the diversity and range of offerings in this field are vast. Based on my research of four university social impact programs at the undergraduate level, within business fields, there are an interesting smorgasburg of course offerings. However, as this paper suggests, learning more about the implications and current offerings of social impact programs can help universities understand the needs of undergraduate students, to better serve this population of students. It can also further progressive social movements through students that choose to pursue social impact after graduation.

Positionality

This topic is interesting to me because I am currently teaching a course in social impact through business at the undergraduate level. I have found that there are not many courses on this topic at UCLA. This lack of offerings motivated my research to further understand how other universities approach this educational area and work with their students to further their learning. Social responsibility education is expanding (Serao), but the offerings and processes at each university studied in the present paper are quite different (Appendix Table 1). This research provides suggestions to business school education in the social impact area for undergraduate students.

Research Question

How do undergraduate students and faculty across different universities perceive the respective social impact initiatives at their institutions and how do they think it could be improved?

Literature Review

Between universities, social impact programs range from a singular ethics course to integrated social impact curriculum. In a 2003 study published by the Aspen Institute, the researchers at the Aspen Institute found that there is a significant trend toward including socially minded coursework into required courses for MBA students¹. The Aspen Institute researchers surveyed 313 North American graduate business schools accredited by the International Association for Management Education (AACSB). 45% of the business schools surveyed required some form of a social impact course for their MBA programs (often through ethics or sustainability) and according to this report, this number was projected to rise. One of the driving factors to the integration of social impact education to business school curriculum is the presence of student clubs on campuses. Some popular clubs with a large, national presence, include clubs like Net Impact and 180 Degrees Consulting. In addition, the universities who had successful programs, tended to also have an institute dedicated to improving social impact education among its students.

The Aspen study highlighted nine schools who were on “the cutting edge” of these programs² - defined as having a significant infusion of social impact content into the core

¹ Chapple, Megan, et al. “Beyond Gray Pinstripes: Preparing MBAs for Social and Environmental Stewardship.” Aspen Institute, 2003.

² Nine schools listed were: Cornell University, George Washington University, Rensselaer Polytechnic University, Tulane University, University of Michigan Ann Arbor, University of North Carolina Chapel Hill, University of Pennsylvania, University of Texas - Austin, Vanderbilt University

courses, faculty research on the subject, and student-initiated activities and extracurriculars around the subject.

By focusing on what these schools are doing well in their programs, the results can be extrapolated to undergraduate degree programs. Schoenfeldt, McDonald, and Youngblood (1991) reported that 73% undergraduate business programs (certified through AACSB) had at least one ethics course in their required curriculum in their 1991 study; however, in the article by Nicholson and DeMoss, they found that in 2009, the status of socially responsible business practices education has not undergone a significant increase. This has not been studied further, as much of the research on this topic is clustered around the graduate level; however, it does provide interesting insight to the types of courses that are offered to students. Unfortunately, despite a growing call to action to include social impact programs in curriculum, “the status of these topics in business education has not undergone a significant increase [since 1991]” (Nicholson and DeMoss). This article was published in 2009; according to faculty and staff interviews conducted in the present study, their observations indicate that within the last 10 years interest in social impact education has increased. Learning how these course offerings have changed in the past 10 years is an important beginning to understanding how to make them stronger.

The 2011 paper by Moon and Orlitzky shows the differences between CSR education systems in the United States and Europe. Although there is “by no means consensus about what appropriate CSR education might look like,” (page 584) this article hopes to consolidate basic themes from the various courses and draw conclusions about how universities in different regions approach social impact education. In this article, they found that business schools

associated with higher prestige (measured by the Wall Street Journal), on both sides of the Atlantic, were more likely to have social impact programs in their curriculum. They did not, however, discuss if the prestige of an undergraduate program correlated with social impact offerings on campus.

The Nicholls and Hair 2013 article discusses CSR initiatives at the undergraduate level, but it notes that there is no consistent definition of what this entails at each individual university. Interestingly, the “The importance of ethics, CSR, and sustainability education is articulated by AACSB International,” (page 131) the accrediting body of many business programs, but according to the authors, there is no comprehensive study as to how the topics are represented in business school curriculum. In their study, they found that the extent to which CSR programs were implemented at the undergraduate level schools they surveyed was correlated with the integration of these programs at the graduate schools surveyed. Based on the schools polled, these programs were included, “7% of the time in freshman-level courses and 20% during the sophomore year. In contrast, they are included 46% and 28% during the junior and senior years, respectively.” This study provides interesting insight to the types and frequency of course offerings on the subject and gives the present study a powerful launching point to being assessing programs at the undergraduate level.

In *The Effect of a Business and Society Course on Business Student Attitudes Toward Corporate Social Responsibility*, the authors³ describe the results that can come from teaching on social impact initiatives. They found that students who participated in social impact courses were

³ Denise Kleinrichert, Jennifer Tosti-Kharas, Michael Albert & Jamie P. Eng (2013) The Effect of a Business and Society Course on Business Student Attitudes Toward Corporate Social Responsibility, *Journal of Education for Business*, 88:4, 230-237

more likely to believe that “creating value for the local community was a company's primary responsibility.” Though the long-term effects of taking this class were not studied, learning about the immediate takeaways from the course can provide insight to the benefits these courses may be.

Studying social impact programs within business schools has been a relatively recent occurrence, because most social impact programs were developed during this century. Therefore, there are many improvements and gaps in the literature that can and should be filled. Many of the contributions are focused on either only one university or only on MBA programs, but there is little research that has been done examining these programs at the undergraduate level. This is an important research question, because many students do not go back to school for a second degree, and as a result, the only time they will have access to educational programs uniting social impact and business is during the undergraduate degree program. Therefore, integrating these educational experiences to the undergraduate level is an important place to start.

Researching the educational programs at undergraduate institutions will be an important next step in the literature to learn more about the gaps between these program’s education and the MBA-level integration of social impact and business. By applying the strengths of the business school’s social impact educational program to our undergraduate programs, schools can foster greater social responsibility at a younger age. In addition, according to Helms, many high schools require service hours, and in 1992 Maryland became the first state to mandate volunteer requirements for their high school students (2013). Pajo and Lee reaffirm the importance of employee-volunteering programs (2010). These two studies indicate a trend in supporting service and volunteerism on either side of the college experience, high school and the workforce, yet

many undergraduate programs do not have service learning elements to make this volunteerism a continuous arc throughout one's educational path.

Methodology

The goal of this paper is to address the research question, of how undergraduate students and staff across different universities perceive the respective social impact initiatives at their institutions and how they think it could be improved by learning more about the institutional supports for social impact education at both UCLA and select universities across the United States. In addition, this report summarizes the various student-led organizations available to undergraduates, and events at schools that relate to the topic. In addition, interviews will be conducted with students at both schools to learn more about their experiences in social impact related courses to help determine the demand for these courses.

This project was conducted using a semi-structured interviews to gain a preliminary understanding of how social impact education is currently being enacted in a few universities around the country. Bernard⁴ wrote that semi-structured interviews can be most helpful during early and late stages of exploring the research domain (2000). Clearly, this approach is being used in the early stage to ensure that a relevant research question is being proposed. I used snowball sampling, recommended by Earl Babbie⁵ in "The Basics of Social Research" to get connected to the best people to talk to in this subject (2011). This method was especially helpful to help me get connected with leaders of social impact departments at various universities, because they often knew one another and were able to make introductions. A list of questions asked can be found in the appendix of this paper.

⁴ Russel Bernard, *Social Research Methods: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*, Sage Publications, 2000

⁵ Earl Babbie, *The Basics of Social Research*, 2011

Relation to Civic Engagement

According to the New York Times, “Civic engagement means working to make a difference in the civic life of our communities and developing the combination of knowledge, skills, values and motivation to make that difference. It means promoting the quality of life in a community, through both political and non-political processes” (Ehrlich, 2000). Therefore, Integrating all aspects of the community in its development is an important part of civic engagement. According to a study by Maimunah Ismail, Businesses carry significant community development potential, providing jobs and creating revenue for communities; understanding the social impact implications of these corporate initiatives will be an important aspect to sustainable community growth (2009).

Critical Framework

By utilizing Critical theory, I will be aiming to learn more about the ways that universities teach their students about social impact and how it relates to many disciplines. According to Douglas Kelley from UCLA, Critical Theory aims to critique society, social structures, and systems of power in an effort to foster egalitarian social change (1990). If universities, especially public universities, are designed to foster social impact and community growth, then how do their course offerings and the ways they interact with this subject impact and work towards their overall goal?

The first universities in the United States, the colonial colleges, such as Harvard, William and Mary, and Yale, were established to provide training for those going into ministry, but soon after the American Revolution, the goals of higher education in the United States expanded to provide education for medicine and law, and eventually additional subjects like engineering and

agriculture (*History of Higher Education in the U.S*). Though these universities have changed over time, their overall goal of improving society has not changed. For example, UCLA's primary mission as a public research university is the "creation, dissemination, preservation and application of knowledge for the betterment of our global society" (*UCLA Mission & Values*)⁶. This mission is broad enough to encapsulate the diversity of research and course offerings on campus, but how does this broad missional structure influence the courses taught and the way the university interacts with students? Using the Critical Theory lense, I will assess how the goals of UCLA as a research institution intersects with its goal to further social impact while comparing UCLA to other universities.

Student Perspectives: UCLA

I wanted to gain insight from students on how they perceived social impact education offerings on their campuses. I was able to interview students from UCLA and UC Berkeley to learn how these different campuses impact how students understand social impact educational opportunities at their schools. Each student interviewed had some leadership role in social impact work on their campuses.

At UCLA, I was able to interview four students who had started or led social impact consulting clubs on campus: Ana Carolina Scalero, founder of Clean Consulting, Frances Lai from the founding team of Net Impact Undergraduate Chapter, and Kyler Gilbert from the executive board of 180 Degrees Consulting. All of these clubs have stated missions of wanting to increase student knowledge of intersections of social impact and the business world and they all actively work to facilitate these interactions.⁷

⁶ "UCLA Mission & Values." UCLA, www.ucla.edu/about/mission-and-values.

⁷ A full list of all club's mission statements can be found in the appendix

One of the common comments from these social impact leaders was the lack of accessibility to social impact and social entrepreneurship classes for undergraduate students. As Scalero commented, “I wish that UCLA had more courses [in social impact].” Her perception was that she knows there are courses offered, but she finds them hard to get into and hard to access. In terms of student interest in social impact education, Scalero pointed out that though it is difficult to get into courses on the subject, there are a lot of student clubs geared towards the area. She stated that “the turnouts for Clean Consulting are proof of that [student interest in social impact].” As just a one-year old club, Clean Consulting has had “substantial turnout” and interest in their events. It was started after she noticed “there is this niche of business and sustainability that we can tackle.” It was an opportunity that “we could join two things that seemed mutually exclusive.” When asked how UCLA could better support social impact education at the undergraduate level, Scalero was mostly complimentary of her experience. She said that UCLA staff has been helpful with Clean Consulting projects and that “if you are going to do something good, no one is going to say no.” Unfortunately, she said she “does not see UCLA as much with the classes and academic stuff [for social impact classes]” but she sees that “[UCLA] has such a big structure to make tangible social impact.”

Frances Lai, one of the founders and a past president of Net Impact reflected some of Ana Scalero’s sentiments around increasing social impact education; however, Lai wanted UCLA to place “emphasis on education on how you can do social impact.” In addition, she wanted to increase publicity of events like Impact Week or Impact Hack because “a lot of clubs don’t have social impact at the forefront of their mind and it is a side product...but as social

impact becomes more salient and people start realizing they could base their career decisions on.”

In terms of student influences of social impact on campus, Lai noted that “many clubs” (if it is not a social club or a professional club) “have some sort of social mission: volunteering, mentoring, or whatever.” She was inspired by the fact that “students have a huge influence on social impact” but also commented that “it is not really deliberate.” She noted that UCLA sponsored social impact courses were growing and noted that “I actually think it is becoming a lot bigger now,” and cited SEA (Social Enterprise Academy), and Social Entrepreneurship as examples. “The reason I wanted to start Net Impact was because there wasn’t really anything like this at UCLA...The [social impact] classes [at UCLA] are pretty small but it has a lot of room to grow.”

Kyler Gilbert, President of 180 Degrees Consulting at UCLA, expressed his thoughts on social impact education initiatives at UCLA. 180 Degrees Consulting is a consulting organization that consults with local nonprofits in the Los Angeles area. He noted the impressive number of clubs on campus that are related to social impact; however, he also mentioned the difficulties students can have in navigating this space. He shared that, “With UCLA in general they are less likely to tell you what is available,” but if you have a genuine interest in the space you can go out and find a lot of clubs related to social impact. In addition, Gilbert mentioned that there aren’t too many classes on the topic, but that students can find secondary sources to learn more about social impact through student-run clubs and events. One way Gilbert mentioned UCLA could do a stronger job in supporting social impact initiatives would be to offer more

classes and open them up to more majors. This would be a way to “show that they [UCLA] are really committed.”

Student Perspectives: UC Berkeley

From UC Berkeley, I was able to interview Lindsay Saldebar, one of the 2018-2019 Presidents of Net Impact. Their Net Impact Club is similar to Net Impact at UCLA in that both run consulting projects for local nonprofits and social enterprises. She said that “whether we are working with a nonprofit or social enterprise, every project we work on has an aspect of social good.” She was complimentary of the ways Berkeley supports social impact through the Haas Institute of Business and Social Impact which “offers a lot of classes.” She was able to take some courses offered by the institute, including the Leading Nonprofits class. In addition, Saldebar mentioned many clubs that work to improve social impact. She said that “there are a lot of different ways that people find a way to make Berkeley a better community.”

Her overall opinion was that “I think Berkeley is pretty proactive on things [related to social impact education] in general;” however, she did mention that “the entire school needs to do a better job of incorporating these things [social impact] into the conversation. Integrate it into finance, accounting, and other classes.” In addition, she thought that “Haas needs to host different forums about how business and social impact is not limited to environmental or a nonprofit.” It is also important to “introduce into the conversation that social impact is not something that is just separate.” Saldebar mentioned that Berkeley could do a better job of sharing how social impact could be incorporated into any career.

Arthi Bobbala is a member of BEACN at UC Berkeley. This organization provides “socially responsible and sustainable business strategies to our clients.” Her views of the social

impact climate at Berkeley reflected those of Lindsay, that “Berkeley is such a hub for social-impact minded people, students tend to be very proactive and involved in social impact initiatives.” One of her noted areas of improvement for Berkeley centered around communication of social impact opportunities, a common theme from the student interviews. As she puts it, “I think that the school can do a better job of advertising social impact opportunities to students.” With more communication both between departments and among students, the initiatives that many schools already have in place can be magnified in impact. It was also interesting that Arthi noted that Berkeley has, “many social impact career fairs.” However, Lindsay mentioned that having a social impact career fair would be a helpful initiative for Berkeley to put on. Lindsay said, “There’s always a banking and consulting career fair but it would be nice to see the university pushing a career fair on jobs focused on sustainability and impact and on public policy.”

This discrepancy between two students highly involved in the social impact spaces of their campus highlights the lack of communication and advertisement of various impact initiatives. In addition, Arthi mentioned that, “we don't necessarily have a department dedicated to social impact,” whereas Lindsay mentioned the Institute of Business and Social Impact (IBSI) provides significant support to students in this area. These discrepancies could be a result from the student’s varying definitions of “social impact,” the different departments the students take classes in, or they could speak to a larger challenge of communication and advertisement of these initiatives.

Staff Perspectives: UCLA

UCLA staff expressed similar sentiments surrounding how UCLA interacts with social impact education. Betsy Densmore, a professor for UCLA's Social Enterprise Academy expressed it in this way, "Certainly there is enough student demand [for social impact courses]. This course typically has 200 - 250 applicants for the 50 seats that get provided to students." Her ideas for improvement centered around increased funding for courses like these. The UCLA Social Enterprise Academy⁸ is an application-based course that runs for two consecutive quarters with the same cohort of students. A small team of students is paired with a local nonprofit to develop a sustainable business plan and pitch the business venture for grant money. They were inspired to start the class because, "It would be a benefit to the nonprofits and to the students because they would be doing real work."

One thing that is difficult for courses like these to run is the funding. Densmore mentioned that there is enough student demand, and that "if the funding wasn't so hard to find we might have expanded it." In addition, Densmore shared that it is difficult to get professors to champion courses like these. She mentioned that she thinks very highly of the "rare few professors who are willing to [teach integrated courses like SEA]" because "there is not a lot of incentive for it" from the professor's standpoint. Taking the extra time and energy required to facilitate these hands-on impact courses is difficult, and it does not come into play when professors are applying for tenure.

Doug Barrera, from the Civic Engagement Minor and the Center for Community Learning, expressed similar sentiments around how UCLA values professors and who they promote. Changing how UCLA allocates tenure promotions would be a "watershed moment"

⁸ <https://partnership.ucla.edu/social-enterprise-academy/>

according to Barrera. “Realistically, faculty have a lot of pressure on them to do various things, and if it is not recognized in the tenure process then you are really asking a lot of them to do these things.” Another area of improvement Barrera noted in the UCLA community was communication between different groups on campus. He put it best by saying, “We are a public university and that means ...everything we do is meant to have a direct or indirect public benefit. The way in which that then plays out is really going to be different depending on the department you are in, the culture of that field, how people decide they want to go about it.” It is difficult to have university-wide goals and implementation of social impact initiatives among all departments. He did also mention that the fact that UCLA has departments for centers like the Center for Community Learning and the Volunteer Center indicates a willingness from UCLA to promote community based initiatives.

Staff Perspectives: Outside UCLA

Jill Erbland from UC Berkeley works at the Center for Social Sector Leadership primarily managing the Global Social Venture Competition. She also works to support other student-facing activities, like the impact investing club, impact investing network, and the Net Impact clubs at the MBA and undergraduate levels.

She mentioned that much of the social impact goals at Berkeley have “bubbled up through student interests.” In regards to funding for social impact goals, she shared that the academics are covered, like the courses offered, but everything else they do at the center is self supported. The center provides some money for the clubs and for impact investing, but most of the student clubs raise money for what they want to do. There are no certificates for social impact work at the undergraduate level, so students have to self-select into these courses. She

shared that they don't have a lot of tenured faculty in the space, but that most of the teachers are lecturers and not on the tenure track.

For some areas of improvement, Erbland mentioned that they strive to do a better job of linking students who are looking to go into social impact as a career to resources helping them out with this post-grad.

Chetan Chowdhry, the director of Student Programs at UC Berkeley's Blum Center for Developing Economies (Blum Center) was able to share some of his insights related to Berkeley's social impact initiatives. When speaking about students' dedication, Chowdhry believes that "students came to the university with the goal of wanting to make a difference in the world." He notes that there was an "opportunity to provide some structure to allow students to critically reflect" on current issues like poverty, inequality, water, sanitation, and education. This is so students aren't approaching these issues with good, but uninformed intentions, leading to limitations of their impact and unintended negative consequences. The Global Poverty and Practice minor at Berkeley was created with the idea that students shouldn't only have access to this type of education if they are majoring in development studies, but they can come from diverse places on campus and still engage in this work. It was intentionally created as a minor so students can still get expertise and learnings from their various major fields. Chowdhry echoed a comment made by many staff members, that the social impact education goals of the university as a whole are quite decentralized. He has seen a lot of new initiatives related to social impact come up on campus, but they are not always connected and a lot are embedded within a certain department. There is, however, an American Cultures course that all Berkeley students are required to take, which is intended to help provide students an "understanding of equity and

diversity within the United States.” He mentioned that the plethora of opportunities in social impact make them accessible for students who are seeking them out but that now, the university as a whole is going through a process to make these experiences and courses more readily available. He mentioned the Big Ideas program as one way to engage students from many disciplines to come together in a social innovation challenge.

Chowdhry further noted that “students really do drive a lot of the energy in terms of social impact” and he has seen more and more clubs being formed centered around impact. Some of the areas of improvement that he noted included a desire to incorporate more mentorship focused on social impact for Berkeley students. Even if students do not have the opportunity to take the minor, Chowdhry noted the importance of having someone able to reflect and learn more about one's impact experiences. Funding was also an area of improvement for the university. He mentioned that students should be able to take an impact-related summer job or internship even if it pays less because there should be more support from the school. Students should feel supported in pursuing these impact-related goals.

The social impact programs at NYU Stern are well integrated into the business student curriculum. Mara van Loggerenberg, the Associate Director of Social Impact at NYU, shared that all business students go through a Social Impact Core Curriculum at the undergraduate level. These courses include a Business and Society course, Organizational Communication, Business and Law, and a Personal Ethics course. Van Loggerenberg indicated that the first year course, Business and Society, integrates the Sustainable Development Goals into the curriculum and they are working to incorporate the SDGs⁹ into the other core curriculum.

⁹ 17 Sustainable Development Goals: <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdgs>

In addition to the courses offered, NYU Stern just started the Social Impact Fellows program. It has been given a soft-launch this spring and will be rolled out more fully in the fall, but this program allows students to get more hands on learning in the space. It does not count for course credit, but it gives students access to talks by professors, nonprofit tours and a way for students to get to know more about careers in the field. There has been a lot of student demand at Stern for courses in social impact. For example, Mara van Loggerenberg noted that they just recently hired a professor to teach a sustainable investing course because of this need from the students.

Some of the areas van Loggerenberg noted for improvement within Stern were how they “outreach to other departments, thinking about how people from other departments can integrate business and society into their course.” In addition, she sees a positive future in reaching more outside their department, and even to different schools at NYU. She explained that, “It can sometimes be hard to break down the silos across different schools;” there are so many opportunities for wonderful interdisciplinary collaboration, but it is more difficult than you might think to co-create a course with another department. In addition, building up the alumni network of graduates who work in or are passionate about social impact would provide students interested in the field a tangible way to see how these careers play out after graduation.

Logan Schuerman from Indiana University is the assistant director of social impact at the Kelley School of Business. Her department primarily works with undergraduate business students, but the programs are open to all students at the university. They also support six different student organizations centered around the intersection of business and impact, including a 180 Degrees Consulting chapter and a Net Impact chapter.

IU, like many of the other schools interviewed, recently launched social impact programming for their students. This spring they started the first case competition for students focused on a social issue in their local community. They are planning on continuing this case competition in future years and will provide funding for the winning student teams to implement their ideas during the next year. Interestingly, IU does not offer a social impact minor or major, but they do have a co-major in sustainable business, something that Schuerman described as halfway between a major and a minor. They have a new course recently developed called business and poverty that was spearheaded by a passionate faculty member with input by students. One of the things that Schuerman was most proud of in regards to their social impact programming was their collaboration with students and their willingness to incorporate student voices. She mentioned a program where the presidents of the six clubs under their department meet a few times each month to discuss different initiatives and look at areas of collaboration. “The student voice is something that we really value.”

One area of improvement for IU that was echoed across many institutions was the desire to further develop the career opportunities and connections for students interested in going into this field as a career. She mentioned that they offer a lot of opportunities like site visits and will bring in speakers, but they want to learn how to better support students in the job search for social impact careers. In addition, she resonated with another common theme of institutions which was that their programs are very siloed in the social impact department. They are able to outreach to students within the business school, but spreading their programs and getting interest from students from other colleges is very difficult due to the size of the university.

Analysis

From student and staff interviews, some of the main themes echoed across these four universities were the high student demand for these types of courses, a need for stronger communication, and a shift in how universities allocate tenure to align with their social impact goals.

Students and staff alike noted that in recent years there is increasing club activity in the space and student enrollment in social impact related courses. All of the staff interviewed mentioned that much of their work is centered around student demand. They work to create courses and initiatives that help students achieve their goals. Students across institutions see room for improvement, especially in areas like career guidance for those wishing to make social impact into a career. In addition, students often mentioned that the clubs that they are part of have gained more interest in recent years, or were just started recently to meet a growing demand. Student voices are the ones that start a change, and students seem to be voicing a loud opinion on the topic of social impact.

Many staff members also reiterated that their centers and much of what the school implements is driven by student voices and student input. Learning more about effective ways of communication and collaboration with students would be helpful for these organizations. If there can be more formal ways for students to suggest courses and interact with faculty there could be even more student input to their own educational services. Learning about effective models of faculty/student communication relationships would be helpful. Though most of the Universities did not explicitly state how they received student input to their centers, Logan Schuerman, from Indiana University, mentioned holding a monthly roundtable of student club leaders. The presidents of the six clubs they oversee get together to discuss collaborations, issues, and ideas

that they have heard from their members so the IU staff are aware of and can help with these issues. This model of communication is working well for the IU team, and may be an interesting model to replicate.

In addition, many staff members resonated with the notion that communication between departments should be improved in order to better serve wider social impact goals. The participants that I interviewed were from large universities, and most of the individual schools within these universities are siloed and mostly separate from one another. Integrating social impact initiatives across disciplines can show students across campus how they can integrate social impact into their lives and future careers, and can help catalyze interdisciplinary change. This theme highlights the importance of working with one another, sharing skills and learning from different groups.

One of the most interesting findings from learning about various approaches to Social Impact Education was how the promotion and tenure review boards at universities valued this coursework. Three of the staff interviewed mentioned the tenure process when discussing social impact initiatives and its impact on the faculty and professor support for these courses. According to the Carnegie Classifications of Higher Education, UCLA is classified as a “Doctoral Universities: Very High Research Activity” as well as the Community Engagement Classification and they were “Classified or reclassified in 2010 or 2015 through the New England Resource Center for Higher Education.” NYU has the same qualification as UCLA: Very High Research activity and a Community Engagement qualification. UC Berkeley has the same classification of “Doctoral Universities: Very High Research Activity,” but does not have a Community Engagement Classification. These classifications indicate what the University

values and promotes. Very high research activity means that these universities place pressure and value on faculty to publish. Many faculty do research in areas of impact, like public health, nursing, and education; however, this does not always translate to project based learning in their classrooms.

The Community Engagement Classification is an “evidence-based documentation of institutional practice” to help provide insight on community engagement of a university. The community engagement emphasizes the collaboration of institutions of higher education with their wider community. This could include private and public sectors working together and with the university to “address critical societal issues; and contribute to the public good” (*Exploring Brown University, Carnegie Classification*). Another component of this qualification is working together to “research and creative activity, and enhance curriculum” (*Exploring Brown University, Carnegie Classification*).

Universities have to apply and reapply to have the Community Engagement Classification, recommitting to this notion of community-minded learning. Interestingly, the universities that I spoke with who are designated as Community Engagement schools did not have a strong process in place that rewards tenure-track faculty for pursuing these types of classes¹⁰; however, staff from these universities were not asked their perceptions on the likelihood of being rewarded for research in areas of social impact work. If a university is willing to reward tenure-track professors for teaching socially and community minded courses at their institution universities, this could have significantly more buy-in from these faculty to initiate courses. As I learned from this research, teaching community oriented social impact courses is

¹⁰ It was unclear if the tenure process at NYU took these courses into consideration

much more work for the professor, and if they are not incentivised through the tenure program to pursue these initiatives, it is less likely they will contribute.

Implications and Future Research

The next steps for research on social impact education in the undergraduate space should come from the lens of the Carnegie Classification system: how universities interact with the classifications and how they implement initiatives based on their classification status. It would be interesting to do a comparative analysis of all the universities with the Community Engagement Classification¹¹ to learn how they implement this across disciplines at their school. Many of the staff I talked with mentioned difficulties of communicating common social impact goals across departments; looking closely at how these Community Engagement schools deal with this communication challenge would be an interesting next step.

In addition, it would be interesting to learn more about how these universities award faculty for teaching socially minded curriculum. If they have some status in their tenure process that involves socially courses, how has that impacted the courses offered to students and the amount of faculty engagement in this process? If they do not offer a status to their tenure-track professors, how do they work with lecturers and adjunct faculty to help fulfill a need for their students?

It would also be interesting to learn more about communication within these large universities. A common theme echoed by the staff was that they felt that they were doing important work in social impact, but that it was difficult to share impact related initiatives outside of their own department or college; this means that, by extension, students outside of

¹¹ 119 Universities held this classification as of 2008

their department often were unaware of these initiatives also. This study looked mainly to large universities, but doing a comparative analysis on how small colleges tackled this challenge could be an interesting juxtaposition to this work.

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Appendix

Student Questionnaire (Semi-Structured Interview)

How are you involved in Social Impact on campus?

In what ways does your school support social impact? (Courses, programs etc)

In what ways have students supported social impact? (Clubs, events etc)

In what ways (if any) could your school better support social impact education at the undergraduate level?

Faculty Questionnaire (Semi-Structured Interview)

How are you involved in Social Impact in your department?

How would you describe the overall social impact education goals of UCLA?

How does your work fit into these goals?

What funding is available for faculty and students?

In what ways does your school support social impact? (Courses, programs etc)

In what ways have you seen students support social impact? (Clubs, events etc)

In what ways (if any) could your school better support social impact education at the undergraduate level?

Interviews:

Student Interviews

Ana Carolina Scalero, UCLA Student. Co-Founder of Clean Consulting

Frances Lai, UCLA Student, Co-Founder of Net Impact Undergraduate Chapter

Kyler Gilbert, UCLA Student, President 180 Degrees Consulting

Lindsay Saldebar, UC Berkeley Student, Co-President of Net Impact Undergraduate Chapter

Arthi Bobbala, UC Berkeley Student, Project Manager BEACN (Bay Area Environmentally Aware Consulting Network)

Staff

Betsy Densmore, UCLA, Founding and Managing Director of Academies for Social Entrepreneurship

Douglas Barrera, UCLA, Associate Director for Engaged Research Center for Community Learning

Jill Erbland, Program Director, UC Berkeley, Global Social Venture Competition

Chetan Chowdhry, UC Berkeley, Director of Student Programs at the Bloom Center

Mara van Loggerenberg, NYU, Associate Director of Social Impact

Logan Schuerman, Indiana University, Assistant Director of Social Impact at the Kelley School of Business

Courses Offered:

UCLA

Social Enterprise Academy

Social Entrepreneurship

Philanthropy Lab

UC Berkeley

Philanthropy: A Cross-Cultural Perspective

The Social, Political and Ethical Env. of Business

Management Consulting Skills for Social Impact

Negotiating Human Rights Solutions In Business

Business Models and Strategies for a Better World

Becoming a Changemaker

Strategic Approaches for Global Social Impact

Sustainable Business in the Nordics

Equity Fluent Leaders: The Value of Inclusion & Diversity

New York University (NYU)

Business & Society

Law, Business & Society

Professional Responsibility & Leadership

Organizational Communication & its Social Context

Indiana University

Sustainable Enterprise

Sustainability Law and Policy
Sustainable Operations
Sales for Social Impact
Business Enterprise and Public Policy
Environmental Conservation
Green Building Concepts and Technologies
Capitalism and Nature
Sustainability in Product: Fashion Design, Merchandising, and Retailing
Environmental Management
Contemporary Issues in Public Affairs—Approved Topic Only: Environmental Law, Justice and Politics
Human Health and Natural Environments

Mission Statements of Clubs:

UCLA

Net Impact: “Net Impact UCLA is a student-run social impact consulting club on the University of California, Los Angeles' campus. We are a team of consultants dedicated to making social and environmental impact through business.”

180 Degrees Consulting: “180 Degrees Consulting at UCLA provides high quality business consulting services for socially conscious organizations around the world.”

Clean Consulting: “Clean Consulting aims to empower companies to understand and act on their connections with the natural world.”

UC Berkeley

Net Impact: “Through our focus on social and environmental impact, innovative methods, and diverse backgrounds, Net Impact Berkeley strives to bring social responsibility and environmental stewardship to business and innovation. We believe that the intersection of social good and business is point of progress for our world.”

BEACN: “To provide comprehensive strategies to our clients that integrate environmental, social, and economic factors in business decision-making processes.”

University	Major	Minor	Institute	Selected Clubs	Notable Programs
UCLA	None	Entrepreneurship Minor, Civic Engagement Minor	Impact@Anderson - focused on MBA Programs	Net Impact 180 Consulting Clean Consulting	Social Enterprise Academy
UC Berkeley	Business Major, no certificate program	Global Poverty and Practice Minor	IBSI: Institute of Business and Social Impact	Net Impact BEACN	Global Social Venture Competition
NYU	Social Impact Core Curriculum for all Business majors	Public Policy & Management (Cross Campus Minor) Social Entrepreneurship	Social Impact Director Position, Development for Business and Society Program	Net Impact	Social Impact Fellows Program
Indiana University	Co-Major in Sustainable Business	Co-Major in Sustainable Business	Social Impact at Kellogg	Net Impact 180 Degrees Consulting	Case Competition for Social Impact

Table 1