**Innovation and Higher Education**

**2nd Annual Fall Series (2013)**

Lead Niagara, a joint initiative of EAGLE Leadership and the Levesque Institute, in partnership with University Planning, is pleased to announce our second annual brown-bag lunch series that explores *Innovation and Higher Education*. The Fall semester series (five sessions) will be held on Fridays from 12:15pm until 1:15pm throughout the month of November (with the exception of Thanksgiving week) and on the first Friday in December. Sessions will be held in VIN 210 unless a larger room is needed. We invite the entire university community to participate. There is no preparation needed in advance as the entire workshop will be contained within the one hour. While we will look at innovation broadly, we focus on innovation as it applies to higher education and, in particular, what insights it might offer to Niagara University.

**Session 1 – The Minerva Project (Friday, November 1)**

Former Snapfish CEO Ben Nelson wants to topple a higher education system designed for the 19th century and in the process create a university that overthrows Harvard and every other Ivy League school. Set to take in its first undergraduate class in Fall 2015, Miverva University students will spend the first year living (in residence halls) in San Francisco. Over the next six semesters, they will move arund the world in cohorts of 150 students, living and learning in such cities as Sao Paolo, London and Singapore. Could such a “re-imagined university” work? Or will the Minerva Project go to the way of other ed-tech startups and close after losses in the millions of dollars?

*Session Leader: Dave Taylor, Director, Levesque Institute*

**Session 2 - The Ambidextrous Organization (Friday, November 8)**

In a highly regarded article in the Harvard Business Review, authors Charles O’Reilly and Michael Tushman describe ambidextrous organizations as those that exploit the present and explore the future. Moreover, successful organizations are those that, while constantly pursuing *incremental innovation* (making the existing product better), venture out and explore *discontinuous innovation* – radical advances that profoundly alter the basis for competition in an industry. In this session we consider how to balance incremental and discontinuous innovation, and we imagine what radical innovation might look like in higher education.

*Session Leader: Chris Sheffield, University Planner*

**Session 3 – Intellectual Entrepreneurship (Friday, November 15)**

“Imagine if students could discover their lives’ true passion and commitments, and from the very beginning design their education to pursue [sic] that path.” Such starts out the description of the Intellectual Entrepreneurship (IE) Consortium at the University of Texas. Seeking to respond to employers’ desires for their new hires to have “entrepreneurial experience”, supporters of IE simultaneously aim to enable students to transform themselves and the world. In this session we discuss the concept of IE and explore its possibilities.

*Session Leader: Mitch Alegre, EAGLE Coordinator*

**Session 4 – Holistic education and the Green School in Bali (Friday, November 22)**

This week we visit the Green School in Bali, Indonesia, which is “giving its students a natural, holistic and student-centered education in one of the most amazing environments on the planet.” After watching a short video on the school, we will explore the possibilities of carving out space in a Niagara education for holistic learning, the intentional and direct nurturing of mind, body and spirit.

*Session Leader: Mitch Alegre, EAGLE Coordinator*

**Session 5 – Competency-Based Education Goes Mainstream (Friday, December 6)**

Until this year, the notion of competency-based education was relegated to a couple of (primarily) online universities. However, as the University of Wisconsin moves to bring its new “Flex Option” program “online”, they do so with the blessing and endorsement of the U.S. Department of Education as well as the Carnegie Foundation, which, ironically, created the credit hour. In this session, we explore direct assessment of competencies, the future of the credit hour, and the implications of all of this for Niagara.

*Session Leader: Dave Taylor, Director, Levesque Institute*

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NOTE - If you have an idea for a topic or wish to propose a workshop session for the spring 2014 semester, please send an email to Dave Taylor at dtaylor@niagara.edu.