

Turntable Project - Closure and Final Report

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1. Purpose

The purpose of this paper is to provide:

- A closure and final report on the Turntable Project at the EU Business School;
- Insights to improving the course content and delivery; and
- Recommendations for the next steps in developing a Major subject area in public transportation at the EU Business School.

2. Background

- 2.1 Turntable Project was initially conceived as a collaboration between the EU Business School, Dean Begoña Otero and the UITP Sustainable Development Commission, Mr. Gunnar Heipp, Munich MVG in November 2016. Dr. Glenn Frommer, ESG Matters IVS, the Honorary Chair of the Commission would be the formal course leader. The course would be administered by the EU Business School, Dr. Suddha Chakravarti, Head of Research.
- 2.2 Project Turntable was envisioned to commence development of a new set of business skills directly related to public transportation while building capacity with the Paris Agreement, in particular the Nationally Determined Contributions for reducing greenhouse gas emissions.
- 2.3 A call for students was issued in Q4/2017 for qualified students from the Swiss and German campuses. A six-month programme was envisioned resulting in a set of specific business plans that could be used by UITP members to approach national and local governments in development of bus, ferry, light and heavy rail systems. Focus was placed on data collection, analysis, presentation, marketing plans and documentation.
- 2.4 The course commenced on 19 January 2018 with an introductory lecture. Course lectures and private discussions were undertaken with the students regularly throughout the Q1 and Q2/2018. A total of 13 students registered for the course covering the following countries: Pakistan, Mexico, China, India, Albania, Sri Lanka, Ukraine and the United States. A copy of all the supporting documentation,

presentations, recordings of lectures and plans noted in this paper are available from the EU Business School website on the course webpages¹.

- 2.5 Students presented their country specific findings to a panel of UITP experts chaired by Mr. Philip Turner from the UITP Headquarters on 27 April 2018. The panel noted the exceptionally high quality of the research and presentations. Comments and recommendations were collated and summarized into a paper for the UITP to be presented to the United Nations Talanoa dialogue in July 2018.
- 2.6 Business Plans for one transport system from each chosen country were developed as the conclusion to the course. These plans introduced an operative aspect to the course leading students into a further competency.

3. Review of Project

- 3.1 The course was slightly delayed in commencing from early January until 19 January 2018. The flexibility of the course leader and the administrator minimized any negative impacts of this delay, though the Business Plans were delayed and first completed in early July 2018.
- 3.2 Though the number of students was slightly less than initially desired, the number of students was deemed acceptable. Though both public transport and the Paris Agreement were new subject areas for the students; the group was intently focused and passionate on the course curriculum. Students demonstrated good skill in data collection and presentation techniques.
- 3.3 Lectures were held in 2 to 3-week intervals throughout the semester and the course leader held many private sessions with the students. These sessions arranged through e-mail focused on a detailed understanding of the Paris Agreement and public transportation. These were very useful. The course leader found that additional subject matter assistance in environment or sustainability would have been very supportive.
- 3.4 Focus was made on the students' presentation to the UITP and several practice sessions both as a group and individually were held. It was felt that students reacted well to the private guidance provided by the course leader and the result bore this out.
- 3.5 A compendium of student recommendations was edited as a UITP paper for presentation at the United Nations Talanoa Dialogue meeting in July 2018. The recommendations were very well received by the UITP and shared with the students.
- 3.6 The meeting software was generally fit for purpose but the audio and video did not always function as required. Work-arounds by the course administrator were instrumental in maintaining contact and student involvement.

¹ <http://intranet.euruni.net/course/view.php?id=13144>

- 3.7 The resulting Business Plans prepared by the students were well crafted and focused, though the late time in course completion did not allow for adequate feedback, review and development of the plans.

4. Course Leaders Views

- 4.1 This is the first time that this course was taught, and it is judged that the curriculum was perhaps a bit too optimistic.
- 4.2 The students did an excellent job in getting the key information to prepare their presentations and business plans.
- 4.3 It is clear that the area of carbon emission reduction is not well understood by the majority of the students and should be the focus in allied environmental and sustainability courses.
- 4.4 Nonetheless, it is judged that the course was successful in providing students with learning about the Paris Agreement, Global warming and public transportation issues.
- 4.5 While more formal lectures would have been beneficial, the students course load and programme impacted the scope and frequency of the lectures and documentation. The course leader would have preferred more time to interact with the students on a course level but this was supplemented through one-to-one personal interactions.
- 4.6 Should this course be repeated, it would be most helpful to coordinate with allied courses on environmental management or sustainability reporting to inform on management techniques and metrics.

5. Conclusions

It is concluded that:

- 5.1 Project Turntable presented a good first step for students to understand one aspect of public transport, that of being energy efficient.
- 5.2 Lecture frequency and the capability of one-to-one contact were acceptable for information dissemination and assignment completion.
- 5.3 The formal presentations to the UITP were of very high quality and provided key input into a United Nations briefing document.
- 5.4 Project Turntable is a good first step in building a major study area in public transportation at the EU Business School.

- 5.5 Further planning is needed to extend Project Turntable to develop a major study area in public transport. The plans and additional courses could be developed as needed in collaboration with the UITP Departments and Divisions through the course leader.
- 5.6 Coordinating Project Turntable with other environmental and sustainability related courses during the semester would be beneficial in the future.
- 5.7 The administration of the Project Turntable was fit for purpose.
- 5.8 The software was acceptable though its stability, video and audio could be improved.

6. Recommendations

It is recommended that:

- This closure and final report on the Turntable Project at the EU Business School is noted;
- The insights to improving the course content and delivery are noted; and
- The next steps in developing a Major subject area in public transportation are noted.