



UNIVERSITATEA
BABEȘ-BOLYAI

FACULTATEA DE
BUSINESS
IN PARTNERSHIP

Faculty of Business Babeș-Bolyai University

Educational philosophy

November 2025

Educational philosophy

Or how we think about... education...

inspired by the principles carefully outlined by our dear colleague and friend, Assistant Professor, PhD Aurelian Sofică, the author of *The educational philosophy of the Faculty of Business*.

Aurelian, we are grateful to you
and you will always remain in our thoughts.

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Aim

Stimulating the interaction of the learning community (students, professors, guests) during learning events (lectures, seminars, training sessions, etc.), regardless of the learning environment (face-to-face, hybrid or online) in order to co-create the future.

Mission, vision, values

Our compass

Values are the moral compass that guides our educational performance.

Mission

Creating, together with our partners from the business environment, the public sector and NGOs, the knowledge, attitudes and skills that truly increase the impact of educational, research and entrepreneurial activities.

Vision

Promoting financial and intellectual independence for people of all ages who have “entrepreneurial DNA”. We have this vision because financial independence is worth less without intellectual independence. We do not want to focus only on the financial component; we want people to also focus on the meaning of their work. These two dimensions lead to real and sustainable development, allowing people to capitalize on the opportunities that will arise in the future.

Values

360 Degree Education: Education is a social construct, in which the partners involved in the educational process (students, professors, administrative staff, business community, local community, NGOs, institutions of

national and international interest... and the list remains open) co-create the future, covering diverse frequencies of reality. We want to integrate as many aspirations as possible... in partnership.

Entrepreneurship: Education should be useful, giving students the tools to become independent. The courage to implement small ideas that lead to great achievements, the challenge of solving complex problems, the timid beginning, the meaningful failure, the satisfaction of success, all of these are... priceless.

Innovation: Gradually, we aim to improve everything we do, day by day, article by article and project by project. Education means playing with “Lego bricks”, and in this game the number of pieces is important, the examples are indispensable, the overwhelming variety of combinations and the unique differentiation they offer is... vital.

Diversity and multiculturalism:

Business education should provide everyone with access to diverse educational opportunities in a transparent manner. In addition, learning should include numerous case studies, books, values, and perspectives

positioned in as many cultural contexts as possible. The way we teach/learn is deeply influenced by our cultural heritage, and we want to develop an... ethical and international identity.

Agility: We are in a position to face the challenges determined by the dynamism of the environment, the frequency, magnitude and speed of change. We want education to stop reacting and start taking advantage of the opportunities that the market and the environment offer... proactively.

Lifelong learning: Education doesn't stop after we graduate from a bachelor's, master's, or even doctorate program. It doesn't stop after our first job or even a meteoric success, but continues forever, helping us give meaning to our lives and continually raise the bar... of expectations.

Community of opportunities:

Developing a long-lasting organizational culture creates opportunities for all. Developing a sustainable network of students and alumni amplifies the transition from education to practice and creates a community that understands the importance of helping each other, ultimately becoming talent scouts.

The background of the entire slide is a photograph of a bright, overcast sky filled with soft, white, puffy clouds. The clouds are more concentrated in the lower half of the image, creating a sense of depth and light.

Theoretical foundations

“Theories are the experiences of thousands of practitioners, refined and archived in text form.”

Experiential learning
Flipped teaching
Gamification
Andragogy
Storytelling

Theoretical foundations *or* Approaches that inspire us

From the kaleidoscope of theoretical options targeting teaching, we have chosen a few that we consider interesting, useful and challenging. These will guide the development of the Faculty of Business teaching community in the coming years.

Experiential learning, flipped teaching, gamification, andragogy, etc. are more than theories... they are the experiences of thousands of practitioners, refined and archived in text form ready to be used to have a real, sustainable impact on the development of students, professors, and the community of which they will be part.

Experiential learning

or how to be pragmatic represents a holistic, integrative, four-stage approach that recognizes the role of consciousness and subjective experience in the learning process.

Concrete experience is the stage in which the learning participant is expected to experience, to feel a real situation. The professor's role is that of facilitator, and that of the participant, that of a player. The methods used include case studies, simulations, role-playing games, etc.

Observation and reflection is the stage in which, based on the initial stage, the participant perceives, analyzes, sorts,

discusses the information received with the other participants. The professor's role is that of a facilitator, and that of the participant as a critic. The methods used are group discussions, debate...

Abstraction and conceptualization represent the stage in which, based on the second stage, an attempt is made to stimulate cognition, identify the main concepts, principles or laws. The role of the professor is that of a pedagogue, and that of the participant is that of a disciple. The methods used are (interactive) lecture, reading, etc.

Testing and implementation is the stage in which, based on the previous stage, behavior change takes place, improving it in order to obtain a competitive advantage. The professor's role is that of a mentor, and that of the participant that of a practitioner (Kolb, 1984; Kolb & Kolb, 2005).

Flipped teaching

or how to democratize means that, before attending the meeting, students engage in knowledge transfer or a "first contact" with the central theme through activities such as reading, listening or attending a lecture. In this way, in the classroom, time is used for dynamic and participatory activities.

The objective of this approach is that students have enough information to relate to in such a

way that they can become active participants in the educational process. Classical pedagogy makes the student a passive actor, while flipped teaching offers them the opportunity to express themselves by having the basic elements.

The quality of the material provided for study (blog, video, etc.) is vital. Either a collection of external resources is recommended, or the professor records/edits audio/video explanations associated with the main concepts. The effort of restructuring the materials is great, but the rewards of the modularity of the resources and the opportunity for the student to lay the conceptual foundation at his own pace/biorhythm are worth it (Meriaux, 2019; Roach, 2014).

Flipped teaching in relation to the online environment has evolved in the direction of hybrid teaching and attempts to capitalize on the best of face-to-face and online learning. Technology facilitates certain aspects of online learning (erasing the boundaries of globalization, building a unique skill set, and contributing to increased quantifiability of performance), while face-to-face interaction, in the classroom, other aspects (empathy, socialization, etc.).

Gamification

or how to make the experience exciting is the use of game

mechanics, aesthetics and philosophy to stimulate engagement, motivate and promote learning... to make the learning experience enjoyable.

Gamification is not the use of a game or information technology but rather the integration of design elements, models used in games (specific objectives, roles, stages, steps or levels to be passed, rewards, all mapped coherently) in the educational context. The approach meets the needs of generation Z to couple utility with fun and meet current needs. Trial, error, failure, success, frustration, adrenaline, reflection, all aim to obtain rapid feedback cycles. The element of competition is a strong motivating factor, and each completed stage allows advancement to another level. The score is visible all the time, and this hierarchy, this instant public "recognition" goes in the same direction.

Motivation is intrinsic for those interested in what they learn and the process itself, respectively, extrinsic for those interested in rewards (points, bonuses, status); a win-win situation (Buckley & Doyle, 2016; Nah et al., 2014).

Andragogy

or how to build responsibility is the continuation of the classical educational process dedicated to children (pedagogy) at another level, that of adults, and is based on several assumptions.

Self-knowledge helps to direct the learning process or to choose the content of learning. In the case of pedagogy, the direction

and choice of content is carried out by the teacher for "integration into society".

Personal experience is a reservoir rich enough to be used as a learning resource. In the case of pedagogy, the experience of the learner matters very little, the pedagogue holding the "monopoly of truth".

Learning needs are closely related to change, to the multiple, unstable social roles that an adult person plays, while in the case of pedagogy, learning needs are related to an idealized, much more stable version.

Learning is focused on solving problems and the immediate applicability of what is learned, while in the case of pedagogy the goal is to acquire information related to certain topics.

Motivation to learn comes from internal factors (intrinsic – process, personal development) rather than external factors (extrinsic – recognition of merit or good grades). In the case of pedagogy, motivation is external, the profound benefit of learning not being immediately visible.

The responsibility for learning is equally distributed between participants (professors and students), while, in the case of pedagogy, the responsibility for success or failure lies with the educator.

What does this mean for the educational process? It means creating a climate in the real or virtual classroom in which all participants assume their physical and psychological maturity. It

means that an adult student feels accepted, respected, supported and there is a democratic, mutual, partnership relationship between professors and students. It means that independence and initiative in learning are stimulated (Knowles et al., 2015; Merriam, 2001).

Storytelling

or how to evoke emotions helps participants see the big picture, placing the topic in a broader social and cultural context, a context that differently shapes our perceptions and the way we attribute meanings to the learning process. Storytelling presupposes, first of all, the presence of authenticity of the narrator, audience, moment and mission, but it also presupposes authentic humor.

Authenticity to **oneself** refers to the degree to which the narrator resonates with his story, the way his values are reflected in the story with candor and honesty. The narrator does not just sell the story, he sells the arguments, his personality, his emotions. Emotions mean anxiety, insecurity, fears, weaknesses, they mean openness, catharsis for the audience. Although the mind is part of the target, the heart is the Achilles heel.

Authenticity towards the **audience** refers to the fact that the narrator must understand what the listener knows, what they care about, what they are willing to "hear", what they are curious to hear, what keeps them in suspense. The audience gives its time to the storyteller, and time is the rarest resource.

Participants must be led through the story... expectation management is important. The story is not completely predictable at first glance, but it is predictable through meta messages or substratum. The “story” is a story that most people can identify with (adolescence, professional rigors) and that generates a physical response: bursts of laughter, grimaces of horror or amazement, angry frowns... and the ending leads to emotional fulfillment.

adapted to the situation. Context is part of the story. Good stories are prepared diligently, they are thought out, rethought, worked on, refined, and each story is better than the previous one.

The authenticity of the **mission** is about dedication to a cause; it encapsulates the values and beliefs that are desired to be adopted by others. The mission can be national, international, regional or global... everything that is said must serve the mission. Even if the mission conflicts with the audience, the mission must triumph, the cause being stronger than the audience. Rhetorical questions help to focus the audience... Why?

performance, self-confidence and level of acceptance of others’ opinions. An environment perceived as safe, in which openness to new things is high, creates a playful feeling and increases creative collaboration towards a common goal. Humor avoids tense and conflictual situations... we have fun with the students, not at the expense of the students! Humor helps transform the space from a competitive one into a collaborative one, mitigates sharp information and functions as a defense mechanism. And then, who doesn’t enjoy a little derogatory humor... (Freeman & Burkette, 2019; Gold & Holman, 2001; Guber, 2007).

Authenticity to the **moment** makes the narrator aware that the same story is never told the same way twice; it must be

Authentic **humor** helps avoid depersonalization and increases participants’ sense of security,

Teaching methods

Tools...

Teaching methods

Tools...

Teaching methods are the techniques for implementing the elements outlined in the theoretical framework or outlined in the teaching strategy. This is just the tip of the iceberg in terms of innovative teaching methods available to professors.

Debate

Structured argument competition between two teams with opposing perspectives. Emphasis is placed on developing six skills: analysis, argumentation, evidence, organization, rebuttal, and delivery. Participants use their knowledge to think critically and strategically respond to their opponents.

Puzzle

The main concepts are mixed up, and the task of the participants is to rearrange the concepts in the logical order of their succession and to argue the decisions made.

Mind map and concept map

The mind map starts from the center of the page with the central idea and then continues radially outward, in all directions, developing a “logical” structure from key words and images. The key aspects of the mind map are: organization, keywords, associations, groupings, mental anchors, uniqueness and conscious involvement. The differences between the mind map and the concept map are: a) the mind map has a radial structure, and the concept map has a tree structure; b) the mind map focuses on one aspect, and

the concept map connects multiple concepts.

Case study

Ethnographies of cases relevant to the topic under discussion, focusing on identifying the central problem, the actors, the relevant theoretical elements and identifying solutions. Case studies are the bridge between theory and practice.

Guest specialists

People invited to present their experience related to specific topics to enrich the learning experience. The value of such a method comes from the complementarity it brings to the professor, the credibility transferred to the course, the passion it shows and the pragmatic character that such a method can project. Furthermore, the invited specialists are potential employers, business partners, guides, mentors, information brokers, being useful for the development of professional networks.

Field trips

Field trips allow for connection with the topic discussed in the real environment, participatory observation, artifacts and organizational dynamics that are otherwise not accessible to the student. The student is prepared for the visit to understand the purpose, what they are going to observe and what the learning objectives are.

Experiments

Experiments are teaching methods that have as their main purpose the verification, validation or invalidation of a hypothesis. Simply put, experiments have the role of convincing the student of the usefulness of the educational content, of persuading, of changing attitudes. Experiments can be controlled in an artificial environment (in the classroom) or in the field (in the real environment).

Role play

Students have the opportunity to play a fictional role, to react spontaneously, without any risk, to a hypothetical situation. The goal is to understand the central themes, values, behaviors that arise and can view the problem from the perspective of other participants.

Simulation

Simulation is the method that best responds to experiential learning. Learning scenarios are designed and the student is placed in a “world” drawn by the professor with which he must interact. The parameters of this world are controlled by the professors in order to achieve the intended didactic objectives (Branco, 2016; Sottolare et al., 2014).

The more methods you use and the deeper your understanding of them, the better your results will be.



Involved actors

We thought, discussed and were inspired by
several social actors...

Who has something to say?

in Partnership

The involved actors, our partners, are vital for the development of the educational offer. The curriculum of the study programs is periodically (once every three years) reviewed by the teaching staff, the business environment, students, graduates and other partners with whom consultative meetings are organized in order to make changes in order to modernize, update and optimize the academic offer.

Babeş-Bolyai University

The Faculty of Business recently celebrated three decades of existence under the aegis of the most prestigious and comprehensive Romanian university. In achieving one of its key objectives, quality education, the Faculty of Business constantly reports to the university's policies and calls on its various structures (Teaching Council, Qualitas Center, Career Center, Professional Orientation and Alumni, Information and Communications Technology Directorate).

Students

The students of the Faculty of Business are the quintessence of the teaching-learning process. Through their innovative spirit, their innate curiosity, their entrepreneurial aspirations or their desire to perform at work, and their desire to learn, our students stimulate the faculty's professors to constantly update their teaching materials and stay up to date with the latest market trends. The feedback provided by the students is valuable, leading to

the implementation of various changes in the curriculum, educational process, etc.

Alumni

We look to our graduates with pride and confidence, trusting in a solid partnership with implications and contributions in the curricular sphere, practice partnerships, educational and research projects, as well as community energisation...

MEC, ARACIS, CNATDCU, CNFIS and ANC

The Ministry of Education and Research and its advisory bodies, as the National Commission for the Attestation of University Titles, Diplomas and Certificates, or the Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education and the National Authority for Qualifications are the institutions that set the direction vectors, which certify and guarantee the anchoring of the educational offer of the Faculty of Business in the real needs of the market and the preparation of competent graduates, capable of adapting and performing in the business environment.

Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB)

The Faculty of Business has made considerable efforts to obtain one of the most prestigious international accreditations, the AACSB accreditation. Over the years, numerous steps have been taken to align with international quality standards in the field of business education, with the faculty striving to harmonize the

particularities of the national accreditation framework with the AACSB standards. Obtaining the accreditation will place the faculty alongside the top schools globally, among the 6% that are accredited.

Business environment and civil society

Partnerships with the business environment and NGOs represent the bridge between the teaching process, the professional training of students and graduates and the business environment, through interventions within teaching activities, through contributions to the implementation of internships and internship programs, respectively through employment offers. With the support of partners from the business environment and the non-profit sphere, the faculty's students benefit not only from educational services, but also from exposure to valuable experiences associated with corporate social responsibility (CSR) programs.

UN SDGs – Embracing the Sustainable Development Goals formulated by the UN

In the context of developing a faculty project, supported by an academic community aware of the importance of sustainable development, at the Faculty of Business level we have assumed four of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) formulated by the UN, in order to achieve the strategic objectives.

Quality education (SDG4)

By assuming its role as a provider of *quality education* services, the

Faculty of Business contributes to the development of the local business environment by training young people and adults, current or future, entrepreneurs or successful employees. Both through a modern, constantly updated curriculum and through the extracurricular activities offered, the teaching staff directly contributes to the transmission of theoretical and practical knowledge, to the development of key skills, as well as appropriate attitudes, which, when summed up, translate into the competencies acquired by future graduates, competencies intended to facilitate their employment, the creation of decent jobs and orientation towards entrepreneurship, under the conditions of adopting and implementing the principles of sustainable development both professionally and personally.

Decent work and economic growth (SDG8)

Strongly believing that *decent work* contributes to sustainable *economic growth*, the Faculty of Business provides educational and professional training services aimed at stimulating the entrepreneurial orientation of students and graduates, contributing directly and indirectly to the development of the business environment by establishing new businesses and growing existing ones. In developing its partnerships, the faculty focuses on both local and regional small and medium-sized enterprises, and international, even global, organizations, focusing on facilitating students' access to companies in order to carry out internships and practical

training, respectively, to capitalize on employment opportunities. At the same time, in addition to the access offered to potential employers to well-trained human resources, collaborations with the business environment offer entrepreneurs and managers the opportunity to capitalize on the research and consulting potential of the academic environment.

Responsible consumption and production (SDG12)

The sustainable development goal focused on the development and implementation of *responsible consumption and production habits* is translated within the Faculty of Business by integrating these principles into the content of the subjects included in the curricula of the bachelor's and master's degree programs, respectively within the extracurricular activities offered to students, as well as in the research projects in which teaching staff are involved and towards which students and master's students are attracted.

Partnerships for the goals (SDG17)

In the case of the Faculty of Business, partnership is the defining element, therefore, *partnerships for objectives* are naturally found among the assumed objectives. In essence, *in Partnership* symbolizes and expresses the positioning of the Faculty of Business as a trusted partner of all stakeholders, students, entrepreneurs, small or large businesses, local or international, respectively consulting firms, non-profit entities, international companies, the academic community, as well as the local community. In our

understanding, the purpose of the partnership idea is precisely to contribute to the well-being of the local community, of the future entrepreneurs and/or employees we train, respectively of the local business environment. Through the network of international partners and through the projects carried out, we assume the building of solid and relevant partnerships at the regional level, the faculty wishing to become an important partner at the level of South-Eastern Europe.

The Faculty of Business assumes the mission of being a trusted *partner* locally, nationally and internationally, *offering student-centered educational services in a multicultural context, emphasizing the development of entrepreneurial spirit and professionalism, by stimulating dynamism and innovation. In order to ensure an environment in which students can accumulate knowledge and develop attitudes and skills essential for their success in business, within the Faculty of Business partnerships with the business environment have been established and developed, oriented both towards the educational process and towards research. Through the teaching and extracurricular activities carried out within the faculty, the Faculty of Business assumes the role of contributing to the development of the business environment by training future entrepreneurs and business people sensitive to the needs of sustainable development of society and aware of the importance and benefits of social responsibility.*

Looking to the future

The new world of online and hybrid education

Where do we go from now on?

Towards access to education for all, 24/7, asynchronous, interactive, adapted to the strategies, but also to the limitations of each one. Although the skills and hardware component are not the same for everyone, they can be developed to give hope. Access across seas and countries, access from wheelchairs, access regardless of the limitations of gender, age, religion, or given by a physical, formal space are overcome.

What do we need to solve?

High-speed Internet access, interactive management of large classes, increased involvement and transparency, adherence to a code of ethics in the evaluation stage, loss of immersive experience and ability to reflect, decreased motivation to learn... and giving up hope...

How bright is the future?

It depends on our level of determination. We are pleased with the increased interest of high school graduates and, implicitly, that they enter our community. That is why we are developing solutions to facilitate their adaptation and ensure the highest possible retention. Other directions: micro-learning, making the curriculum more flexible for better personalization, valuing face-to-face interaction (you don't know how to appreciate what you have until you lose it) (Timis & Kodjabachi, 2020).

Who should get involved?

All interested social actors, with resources, power and vision, eager to create a learning ecosystem that responds to new challenges. Catalyzing those interested contributes to the conception of the new paradigm. Connection, reciprocity, authentic contribution.

What online and hybrid education should look like?

Cognitive presence: information exchange, connection of ideas, discovery of new perspectives, critical thinking.

Social presence: communication, emotional intelligence, opportunity for connection, socialization, identification and belonging.

Teaching presence: professionalism, topicality, applicability, passion, empathy, flexibility, innovation, openness.

What IT solutions do we adopt?

Using the *Microsoft Teams platform*, students can access meetings scheduled in accordance with current regulations (lectures, seminars and laboratories), uploaded materials in classes, conversations and assignments from anywhere, on various devices and operating systems. They can find all the information in one place. The functions offered by Microsoft Teams can be extended by adding applications (e.g., Kahoot!, Slido, Miro, Insights, Reflect, collaborative applications, etc.) and through individual or group activities, synchronous and asynchronous.

Through the state-of-the-art facilities in the Hospitality and

Neurobusiness Laboratory, students have access to simulation programs and applied research tools, all ensuring their exposure to a modern educational process, anchored in reality.

By using augmented reality and virtual reality, the *EON-XR platform* allows the creation of interactive lessons and adds an immersive experience to the learning process. These lessons facilitate the development of practical skills by allowing interaction in the virtual environment with elements existing in the real business environment. At the same time, they support asynchronous learning and allow the creation of simulations.

The challenges of the present determine both parties involved to be aware of the need for judicious use of *artificial intelligence (AI)*. In this regard, students and professors of the Faculty of Business have at their disposal a Guide to the use of artificial intelligence in the teaching and research process.

References

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Teaching strategy

Playing with teaching methods

Teaching strategy

General approach

The teaching strategy represents the unique combination of methods and theoretical approaches used in planning the teaching stages. The attached model (Figure no. 1 Teaching strategy) is just one of the potential combinations.

One element that can be considered is the use of modules of approximately 30 minutes, which allow for alternating learning methods and maintaining student attention, as well as effectively distributing the professor's effort.

The activity is divided into three stages: a) before the meeting (the student reads or watches useful materials recommended by the professor to gain some points of reference); b) during the meeting (the professor stimulates interest, reflection and understanding of the field); c) after the meeting (the student and the professor identify concrete ways, during consultation or tutoring hours, through which the student can capitalize on the knowledge acquired in the professional environment).

The activity can be conducted face-to-face, hybrid or online. Regardless of the choice made, the theoretical framework, the collection of methods and the unique strategy in which they are combined, give shape and "flavor" to the learning and teaching process.

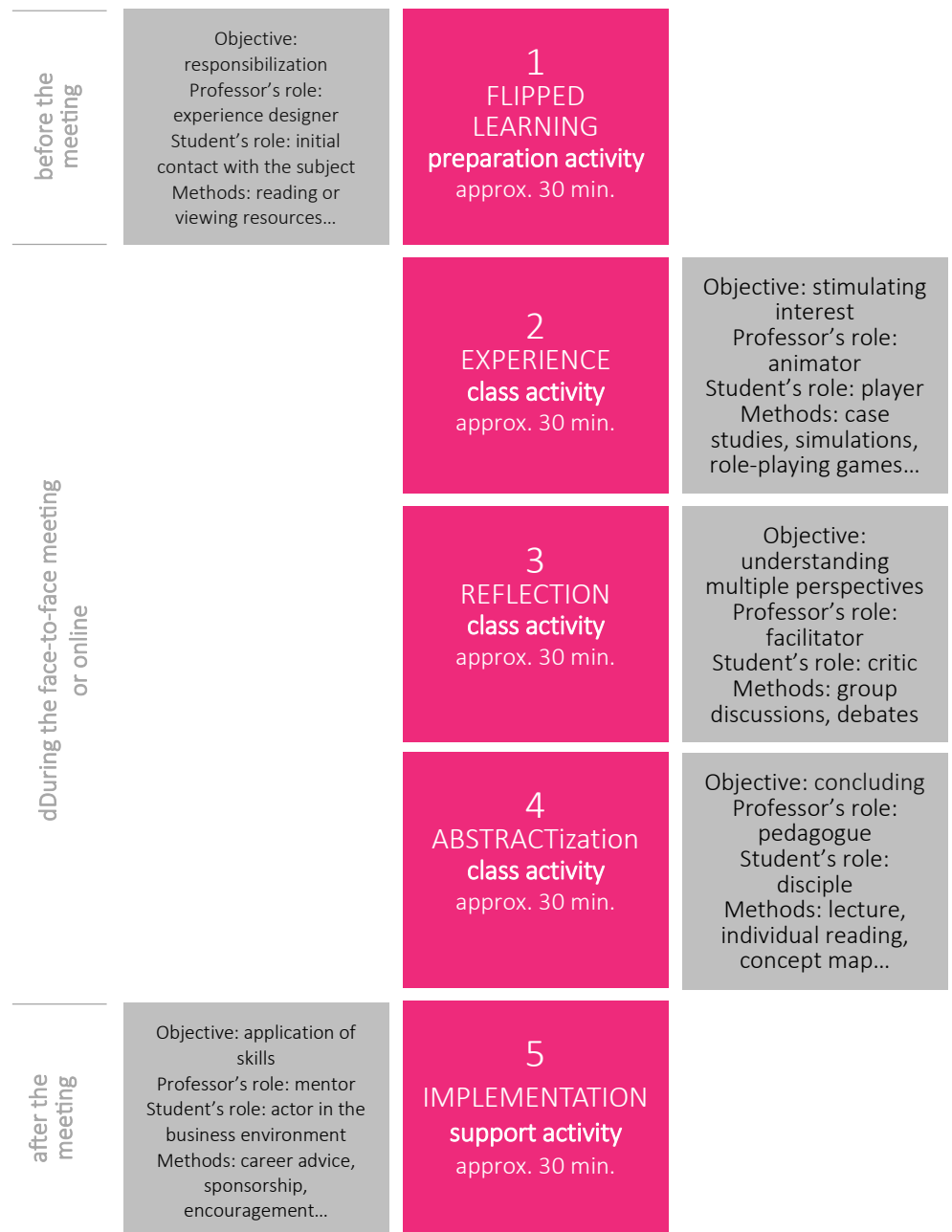


Figure no. 1 Teaching strategy

The professor and the student must help each other through feedback and appreciation. The professor provides encouragement to the students so that they can develop, and the students provide feedback to the professor so that he can make the necessary adjustments in the teaching strategy. Feedback can also be provided at the end of the

semester by evaluating the course and seminar hours. Without honest, transparent and specific effort, the mutual chances of success decrease. Students do not get what they need, and professors do not understand how to deliver the classes.

Teaching strategy

Particular example

Discipline – Human Resource Management

(Assistant Professor, PhD Aurelian Sofică)

Topic: The logic of human resources activities

Details: bachelor's and master's level; 20-40 participants; 2-4 hours; methods: puzzle, role-playing game, case study, debate.

Teams' task: Rearrange 25 human resource activities in the logical order of their sequence.
1 = beginning, 25 = end.

Background story: You are part of the HR department of an MNC, and the company is preparing for an offshore. Your team is preparing the next steps and will make a presentation in front of the board of directors (the jury formed by the team representatives). It will decide which team will receive the project, the funding and... the bonus for the best team.

Objectives associated with the learning process: Make sure you consider: • temporal logic (you don't want to waste anyone's time), • financial logic (you don't want to spend too much money), • legal logic (you want to be on the side of the law), • ethical logic (you don't want employees, customers, community to lobby against you), • cultural logic (you don't want to violate local customs), and • other kinds of logic (you want to differentiate yourself from other teams...

Roles: • *Presenters* decide on the presentation strategy, deliver the

presentation and have the highest bonus (0.2 points). • *Jurors* manage the presentation process, ask questions and choose the winning team. The jurors' bonus is 0.1. • *Group members* contribute to success by advising, identifying arguments, asking questions to the competing teams. The bonus for group members is 0.05. • *Consultant/facilitator*. During the activity, the professor can only provide advice to the groups for two activities (limiting increases the importance of the professor). During the presentations, the professor facilitates the discussion. The reward is the students' energy.

Stages: • Exercise presentation (10 min.) • Team activity: solving HR activities puzzle (40 min.) • Presentation and debate in front of the jury and participants (40 min.) • Choosing the winning team and feedback (20 min.)

The “**resource materials**” provide partial solutions or clues to the puzzle.

Creating a generic expatriate profile	Advice during the adjustment period for expatriates			
Building an organizational learning system	Background checks or antecedents	Realistic job presentation	Recruitment message design	Managing culture shock
Planning personnel needs	Repatriation interview (debriefing)	Identifying recruitment methods	Selection interview	Expatriate career management
Training – intercultural skills	Managing repatriate expectations	Analysis of the labor market in the expatriation country	Analysis of available positions for expatriates	Family and logistical support for the expatriate
Expatriate performance evaluation	Identifying recruitment sources	Testing expatriation candidates in testing centers	Employment contract negotiation	Design and “top employer” development
HR activity puzzle. Arrange the activities in logical sequence, from 1 to 25...		Analysis of the legal context of the country of expatriation	Counseling – reverse culture shock	HR diversity audit

The volume is intentionally high for overstimulation.

Examples of materials: • Noe, R. A., Hollenbeck, J. R., Gerhart, B., & Wright, P. M. (2017) *Fundamentals of Human Resource Management* (7th ed.). McGraw-Hill. • Groysberg, B., Nohria, N. & Fernández-Aráoz, C. (2009, March 31) The Definitive Guide to Recruiting in Good Times and Bad. *Harvard Business Review*, 87(5), 74–84.
<https://hbr.org/2009/05/the-definitive-guide-to-recruiting-in-good-times-and-bad>

Used theories: Experiential learning (Kolb, 1984; Kolb & Kolb, 2005), Gamification (Buckley & Doyle, 2014; Nah et al., 2014), Creativity stimulation (Robinson, 2015).

Results: High level of involvement, realism, interdependence, large volume of processed information, creative arguments, multiple layers of learning... co-creation learning.

The teaching strategy was tested both in the academic environment (bachelor/master students from Romania, France, UK, Netherlands) and in the professional environment (MBA practitioners from Romania, UK, Bahrain)

Teaching strategy

Particular example

Discipline – **Economics and Policies in International Tourism**

(Associate Professor, PhD
Valentin Toader)

Statement: Mass tourism can be sustainable

Details: master's level; 20-50 participants; 1-2 hours; methods: debate and role-playing game

Teams' tasks: Two teams are chosen to debate the statement: *Mass tourism can be sustainable.*

Roles: • The *affirmative Team (AFF)* (3-6 participants) has the role of providing arguments in support of the statement. Involvement bonus (0.2 points) • The *negative team (NEG)* has the role of providing arguments that oppose the statement. Involvement bonus (0.2 points) • The *audience* has the role of documenting and preparing questions for the teams to augment the process. Bonus for the best questions (0.05 points) • The *moderator* is the professor and has a critical role in organizing the setting, forming teams, guiding the discussion so as not to deviate from the central theme, managing the time of presentations, handling questions, maintaining the energy of the event. The emphasis is on neutrality.

Stages: • Presentation of instructions and organization on MS Teams channels (20 min.) • Preparation of arguments by teams on MS Teams channels during a video session (20 min.) (can also take place in advance, before the meeting) • Debate in the general channel according to pre-established steps:

Step 1. The arguments are presented, one by one, by the AFF and NEG teams (2-4 min./team)

Step 2. The teams have time to analyze their opponents' arguments (2 min.)

Step 3. Respond to the arguments presented by the other team (2-4 min./team)

Step 4. The teams have time to analyze their opponents' arguments (2 min.)

Step 5. Conclusions – Why would the audience agree with them? (2-4 min./team)

Step 6. Questions from the audience and answers from the teams (2-4 min.)

Step 7. The audience deliberates and votes for the winning team (2-4 min.)

The steps of the debate

Strategy augmentation: To amplify the experience, additional layers of complexity can be added.

Role-playing games can be integrated into the debate. Each member of the two teams plays a role (e.g., tourist, resident, tour operator representative, local government representative, etc.). After the presentation of the arguments, the audience asks questions and deliberates.

Assuming a position. Each student has 5 minutes to assume one of the following positions: completely agree – agree – disagree – completely disagree. Each assumed position will have a distinct channel in MS Teams, where those who assumed it will meet to formulate the arguments that support their position. Presentation of arguments in class or in the General channel. Students maintain or reconsider their position, and go to the appropriate channels to identify “X” final arguments that support their position.

Theoretical framework: The Karl Popper (philosopher) format, the originator of the idea of “falsification” in which knowledge arises through the dialectical construction of consensus within the scientific community. The reasoned opinions (following investigation) of two camps (affirmative and negative) targeting a controversial issue (the assertion debate), help to sediment understanding and choose a direction.

Results: Developing verbal and nonverbal expression skills, increasing the ability to make quick decisions, multiplying the number of ideas, publicly testing the viability of ideas, developing critical thinking, clarifying the topic of debate.

Strategy

Particular example

Discipline – Financial Control and Audit

(Associate Professor, PhD Sorin Romulus Berinde)

Topic: Variable costs and the decision to produce/purchase to maximize profit on sale

Details: bachelor's level; 20-40 participants; 1-2 hours; methods: case study, debate, role-playing game

Individual task: Substantiate a decision regarding the optimal quantity that should be manufactured or purchased of each finished product manufactured by a company to maximize profit at the time of sale, starting from the particularities of variable costs.

Background story: A company has a diversified offer of finished products to attract customer interest, consisting of four assortments. Customer requests are reaching record levels. The Financial-accounting department, the personnel who manage the cost level, have estimated data on available personnel, relevant costs/prices: variable unit production costs, potential cost for the acquisition alternative, selling price, time allocated to

obtaining a unit, time available in agreement with the productive personnel employed. What is the recommendation sent to corporate governance regarding the decision to assume under the conditions in which it is desired to obtain maximum profit from these favorable circumstances in which the company finds itself?

Objectives: You are part of the financial-accounting department of the company that wants to verify whether it has enough staff to produce the entire quantity requested by customers. Otherwise, a recommendation is requested regarding the finished products that should be manufactured as a priority, respectively those that should be abandoned in order to obtain maximum profit in the conditions of labor shortage. In addition, a decision to purchase some products and quantities from suppliers can be considered justified when this aspect would support the accumulation of a surplus profit for the company.

Stages: • Case study presentation (10 min.) • Individual activity: solving the case study (60 min.) • Discussion and debate on

alternative comparative erroneous decisions (40 min.)

Roles • The presenters are the students who establish the minimum level of costs that support profit maximization. The hypothesis of the erroneous decision will be tested complementary, the effect on profit is quantified/compared • Consultant/facilitator. During the activity, the professor initiates alternative hypotheses to stimulate and test the students' reasoning (negative aspects, sufficient staff availability, prospects for activity restriction, importance of product diversity, potential advantages of acquisition and resale at a loss, etc.).

Results: Interactivity, students realize the usefulness and impact of financial-accounting information on profit, on equity, become aware of the effect of a correct decision and the consequences of an erroneous decision, quantify the effects of the efficient use of employees, learn alternative thinking techniques to adapt to a diversity of circumstances in the business environment.

A company manufactures four finished products. The cost control and management department estimated the annual budget :

	Product A	Product B	Product C	Product D
Unit variable cost (lei)	20	15	8	15
Hours required to manufacture one unit of product	3 hours	2 hours	1 hour	1.5 hours
The cost of purchasing a unit from a supplier (lei)	60	46	24	48
Budgeted sales quantity (units)	4,000	3,000	6,000	2,000

The maximum number of hours that can be worked in a year by employees is 24,000 hours. As an alternative to production, any of the four types of finished products can be purchased from a third party (supplier-subcontractor).

Teaching strategy

Particular example

Discipline – Statistics

(Associate Professor, PhD
Gabriela Reghina Petrușel)

Topic: Calculating the
variance and plotting the
regression line

Details: bachelor's level; 20-
30 participants; 1-2 hours;
methods: case study,
debate, role-playing game

Background story: A group of
students intend to study the
relationship between intelligence
quotient (IQ) and the final result
obtained from an exam
(measured on a 100-point scale).

Data obtained from a number of
subjects are:

Student	IQ	Score
1	110	42,5
2	112	53
3	118	46
4	119	61,75
5	122	70,5
6	125	56,5

7	127	70,5
8	130	60
9	132	81
10	134	70,5
11	136	77,5
12	138	88

Team tasks/objectives: • To study
the association of the two
variables – IQ and score. • How
much of the variance in the
scores can be attributed to the IQ
variable? • To estimate the
regression line that approximates
IQ as a function of score, based
on the use of the formula:

$$IQ = a \times \text{score} + b$$

• Estimate the regression line
that approximates the score as a
function of IQ, $\text{score} = a' \times IQ + b'$.

Stages: • Presentation of the task
(10 min.) • Team activity (4
teams): identifying answers for
tasks/objectives (50 min.) •
Presentation of results (5
min./team) • Professor's
feedback (15 min.) • Initiation of

debate focusing on the question
*"Is it possible to skip the exam
and get the grade from the last
estimated equation knowing the
student's IQ?"* (25 min.)

Roles: • The presenters of each
team will mediate the interaction
between the group and the class.
• The consultant/ animator is the
coordinating professor of each
group, providing them with the
theoretical tools necessary for
statistical analysis for each task.

Results: Student–student,
student–faculty interactivity;
achieving the applicative utility of
information and indicators in the
field of economic statistics;
increasing individual work
capacity in limited time; learning
some thinking techniques and
argumentation techniques;
problem-solving, developing
analytical skills.

Teaching strategy

Particular example

Discipline – Financial Analysis and Forecasting Techniques

(Associate Professor, PhD George Cordoş)

Topic: Balance sheet and profit and loss account forecast

Details: bachelor's level; 20-40 participants; 1-2 hours; methods: case study, debate

Individual task: Forecast the Balance Sheet and Profit and Loss Account (P&L) for company XYZ for year N+1, assuming an increase in turnover, according to market information. Determine the level of additional financing required and present/argue/motivate why a financial institution would be interested in providing this financing.

Background story: A company builds/forecasts its financial statements for the next year, assuming a 20% increase in turnover compared to the previous year. The increase is based on market information, according to which the demand for the products/services offered will increase in the following year. The company has the necessary resources to improve production capacity, however, given that most of the elements in the

Balance Sheet and P&L Account vary proportionally and directly in relation to Turnover (Sales), the new forecast Balance Sheet will have to be determined, respecting the principles of balance sheet equality (Asset = Liabilities). Also, the forecast of the P&L Account must take into account the obtaining of a profit.

Objectives: The case study starts from the Balance Sheet and P&L Account from the initial year and aims to use the financial and accounting concepts accumulated to forecast the financial statements and argue the attractiveness of the company for obtaining financing from a financial institution. The additional information provided refers to various financial indicators and/or Balance Sheet or P&L Account elements for which new values or percentage variations are provided between N+1 and N. After the Balance Sheet and P&L Account forecast is made, the additional financing needed to achieve the objectives (20% increase in Turnover) will have to be determined. The substantiation and motivation will be based on the information from the Balance Sheet and P&L Account, year N and N+1.

Stages:

Step 1. Case study presentation (10 min.)

Step 2. Individual activity: solving the case study (60 min.)

Step 3. Discussion and debate on erroneous decisions/motivations (40 min.)

Roles: • The presenters are the students who establish the financing needs and motivate the attractiveness of the company (from a performance perspective) for a financial institution. Erroneous calculations and/or motivations will be tested. • Consultant/facilitator. During the activity, the professor initiates alternative hypotheses to stimulate and test the students' reasoning (motivations and arguments, their importance, etc.).

Results: Student–student, student–faculty interactivity; achieving the applicative utility of information and indicators in the financial-accounting sphere; increasing individual work capacity in limited time; learning some thinking techniques and argumentation techniques; developing communication and verbal expression skills.

Year N		Year N		Additional information for the year N+1
Assets	574	Turnover	41226	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The turnover increases by 20% compared to year N The receivables collection period remains at the level of year N The share of inventories in turnover decreases by 1% Fixed assets become 618, advance expenses are eliminated Bank loans on short term are maintained at the same level The payment period of suppliers is 58.6 days Salary debts increase by 3 monetary units % of turnover expenses in turnover remains constant % of general expenses in turnover increases by 1% Interest expense remains constant Immediate liquidity from year N is maintained
Stocks	4534	Turnover Expenses	35454	
Debts	5772	General expenses	4534	
Adv. expenses	36	Interests	180	
Availabilities	824	Profit tax rate	16%	
Share capital	300			
Reservs	3158			
DTML	1520			
Suppliers	6424			
Salaries	238			
Short term loans	100			
REQUIREMENT: Forecast the balance sheet and profit and loss account of XYZ company for year N+1. Determine the additional financing needs.				

Teaching strategy

Particular example

Discipline – **Economic and Financial Analysis**

(Professor, PhD Larissa Margareta Bătrâncea)

Topic: Using eye tracking technology to highlight the role of financial position analysis in investment decision-making

Details: bachelor's level; 15-30 participants; 4 hours; methods: eye tracking experiment, case study, comparison, debate, role-playing game

Individual task: Analyze the financial position of two companies in the same industry and identify the company with the stronger financial position and in which it would be more appropriate to invest. Justify the recommendation made.

Background story: You are a financial analyst in a specialized department of a company specialized in financial consulting services. You have been hired by a group of four Romanian angel investors interested in supporting a business with long-term growth potential in exchange for a percentage of the company's share capital. Studying the market, the angel investors have identified two companies in which they would be willing to invest based on the analysis you will perform: Company A and Company B (the main competitor). If at least two of the angel investors decide to financially support the company you will recommend, the task is

considered to have been successfully completed.

Objectives:

- Visually analyze the financial position of two companies in the same industry.
- Identify the defining elements that facilitate comparative analysis of financial positions.
- Identify the company with a stronger financial position.
- Present at least three rational arguments according to which angel investors should choose one company over the other company.

Roles:

- Each *financial analyst* is given a certain amount of time to visually inspect the companies' balance sheets and form an opinion on their financial position. The financial analyst then makes a recommendation to the investors.
- *The four angel investors* weigh the arguments provided by the analyst, ask questions and decide whether or not to invest in the recommended company.
- *Consultant/facilitator.* During the task, the professor does not intervene, as each financial analyst must form his or her own opinion. While the analyst presents his or her arguments to the angel investors, the professor facilitates the discussion, maintaining a neutral tone.

Stage: The teaching strategy involves three stages:

- Carrying out the task *without prior training on the financial position* (70 min.). Presentation of the task by the professor (10 min.). Individual activity: analysis of the balance sheets of two companies, presented in parallel on the screen (10 min.).

Formulation of an investment recommendation (10 min.). Presentation of the arguments in front of angel investors (5 min./presentation x 4 financial analysts). Deliberation by angel investors (5 min./presentation x 4 analysts).

- The professor trains the students on the financial position of a company and the defining elements that facilitate a comparative analysis of it (60 min.).
- Carrying out the task *after training on the financial position* (70 min.): the task is repeated identically using two other balance sheets.

Used technology: The students' ability to "read" and interpret balance sheets will be measured using eye tracking technology and specific indicators (*e.g.*, thermographic map, gaze trajectory). It is anticipated that before the training, the students' gaze will cover the surface of the balance sheets chaotically. After the training, the gaze will focus from the first moments on the elements that facilitate the analysis of the financial position.

Results: Learning the ability to "read" a balance sheet at first glance and diagnose the financial position of a company, developing attention and critical thinking, developing the ability to formulate a pertinent opinion and support it with logical arguments. The teaching strategy was tested within the activities of the *Financial Analysts in Business (FAB)* student circle of the Faculty of Business, as well as at universities in Brazil, Pakistan and Turkey.

Professors' roles

Or how we contribute to development

Professors' roles

Each professor assumes a professional identity, a sum of strengths, a role or set of roles that are unique to him or her and that make him or her valuable in his or her field of knowledge. This diversity of roles comes to respond, in partnership, to the diversity of learning styles that exist among students.

The roles associated with professors

that we chose to start from are: designer, coach, facilitator, pedagogue and mentor. These roles are differentiated on a series of dimensions: purpose, approach, participation, necessary skills, objective, learning direction, helping to build a professional identity for each professor.

These roles are context-dependent, but also personality- and comfort-zone-dependent. Our goal is to cover these roles as flexibly as possible, to accommodate the different learning styles of students.

The learning styles and their diversity represent a challenge that we gladly accept. Some students learn by engaging in class activities without holding back (active); other students prefer to observe, gather information and opinions from colleagues, and then engage in debates (reflective); other students prefer to read materials with a large cup of coffee (theoretical), and others only activate when the learning process shows how the information, attitudes and skills in the classroom can be used to practically obtain a competitive advantage (pragmatic).





	DESIGNER	ANIMATOR	FACILITATOR	PEDAGOGUE	MENTOR
Scope	Identifies or creates relevant, useful, interesting materials	Generates energy and motivates	Helps create new ideas and reflection	Trains the participants	Guides, inspires people and helps protégés grow
Closeness	There is no direct contact with participants	Open, jovial, close to the group	Close to the group with whom he works	Formal with large groups	Close only to some participants who become protected
Participation	Students discover at their own pace	People are drawn into the learning process	Involvement in the learning process is voluntary	Participation is the result of a formal process	Participation is negotiated and only a few are accepted
Skills	Editor, designer, copywriter	The ability to motivate, to involve people	Relation, synthesis, empathy	Presentation, persuasion	Face-to-face counseling and communication
Aim	Initiating a first contact with the theme and concepts	Involvement, attitude change, co-interest	Connects theory, practice and participants' experience	Conveying information, changing attitudes	Career development is paramount
Direction of learning	Rigid, determined by the designer	Flexible, determined through interaction	Determined by the participant	Determined by the pedagogue	Determined by mentor and protégé

Table no. 1. Professors' roles

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