

Innovative Ideas- Appalachian State University

Category: Research

Project Name: Entrepreneurship Education: Student & Faculty Attitudes Across Campus

The Idea: Faculty in the Walker College of Business at Appalachian State University (ASU) investigated student and faculty attitudes regarding entrepreneurship and, more specifically, entrepreneurship education.

Project Execution: Survey data was collected from roughly 300 students and 100 faculty members from across campus to analyze topics including the level of interest in entrepreneurial activity, perceptions of motivations and barriers to start-up businesses, and student occupational aspirations. Student and faculty respondents were from a variety of disciplines both within and outside the business school.

External Impact: ASU's study is part of a larger multi-national project examining entrepreneurial attitudes and intentions in universities. This study has served as a catalyst for discussion as well as subsequent entrepreneurship programming on campus, led to presentations by the study's authors at professional conferences, and contributed to a series of scholarly papers on entrepreneurship.

Internal Impact: The survey methodology and findings could be useful to other universities seeking to assess barriers and opportunities for increased entrepreneurial activity on campus. Key findings on ASU's campus include following:

- Student and faculty views on entrepreneurship often differ dramatically, particularly in terms of students' occupational aspirations. Students see themselves as more entrepreneurial (and more interested in eventually owning their own business) than faculty realize. For example, roughly 80% of all students surveyed had thought seriously about the possibility of running their own business.
- There is substantial interest among non-business students in entrepreneurship. This suggests a significant opportunity to formally expand entrepreneurship-related education beyond the business school.
- In contrast to previous research at other universities and in business settings, this study found no significant differences between men and women regarding interest in entrepreneurship.

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