An Experiential Learning Approach
to the Introduction to Business Course

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Abstract

This paper presents the results of a multi-year effort to redesign the introduction to business course at Western Michigan University. ScrimmageSIM, a business simulation that emulates commercial ERP systems, provides the core experience in the course and is a mechanism for students to develop their understanding of business with a focus on quantitative analysis. The design and implementation of the simulation experience follows the experiential learning spiral, as students run the simulation five times with increasingly complex scenarios. The overall design of the course is competency-based, as students have the opportunity to redo many of the course assignments to earn a better grade. The simulation experience, combined with the competency-based design of the course, has resulted in a more rigorous course with students earning grades that are better than they were with the previous curriculum.

Keywords: Business Simulation, Experiential Learning, Introduction to Business, Competency-Based Education

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