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##### **Learning by Doing: Practical projects in International Business Hossein Varamini (Business)**

The purpose of this round table presentation is to discuss two different types of practical projects for seniors in International Business. The first project is the Collaborative Industry Partnership (CIP) assignment. I will discuss the inception, implementation and evaluation of an annual cooperation among an educational institution, a government agency and the private sector to conduct consulting projects by the undergraduate IB students for firms. Students in teams of 2-3 are assigned a real challenge faced by a multinational for a semester-long research. Each team, under supervision of its advisors, conducts intensive research on topics such as marketing a product abroad, finding foreign distributors or analyzing appropriate entry modes to other markets. In addition to making oral presentation of their recommendations, team submit a professional written report to clients at the end of the semester. Comments from the students and the clients are used to improve the process for subsequent years. In the second project (X-Culture), my students work with 5-6 other students throughout the world on a real project for a company. The students in this course will have an opportunity to gain first-hand experience in international business collaboration and business consulting by working in an international team. Each team will work to solve the challenges faced by an assigned company and suggest its solution. The format of teamwork and the nature of collaboration with people in other countries with different time zones and diverse cultures are reminiscent of those used in the modern workplace, making the project a very realistic preview of work in corporate global virtual teams. Communication and coordination among X-culture participants is conducted using free online collaboration tools such as email, Skype, Google+, Facebook, Dropbox and Doodle. Each team prepares a written report for the company and presents its recommendation to class at the end of the semester.

Learning Outcome(s): Participants at this presentation will gain some ideas about interdisciplinary collaborations, working with the outside community to help their students "learn more by doing" and some of the challenges of organizing, implementing and grading these projects.