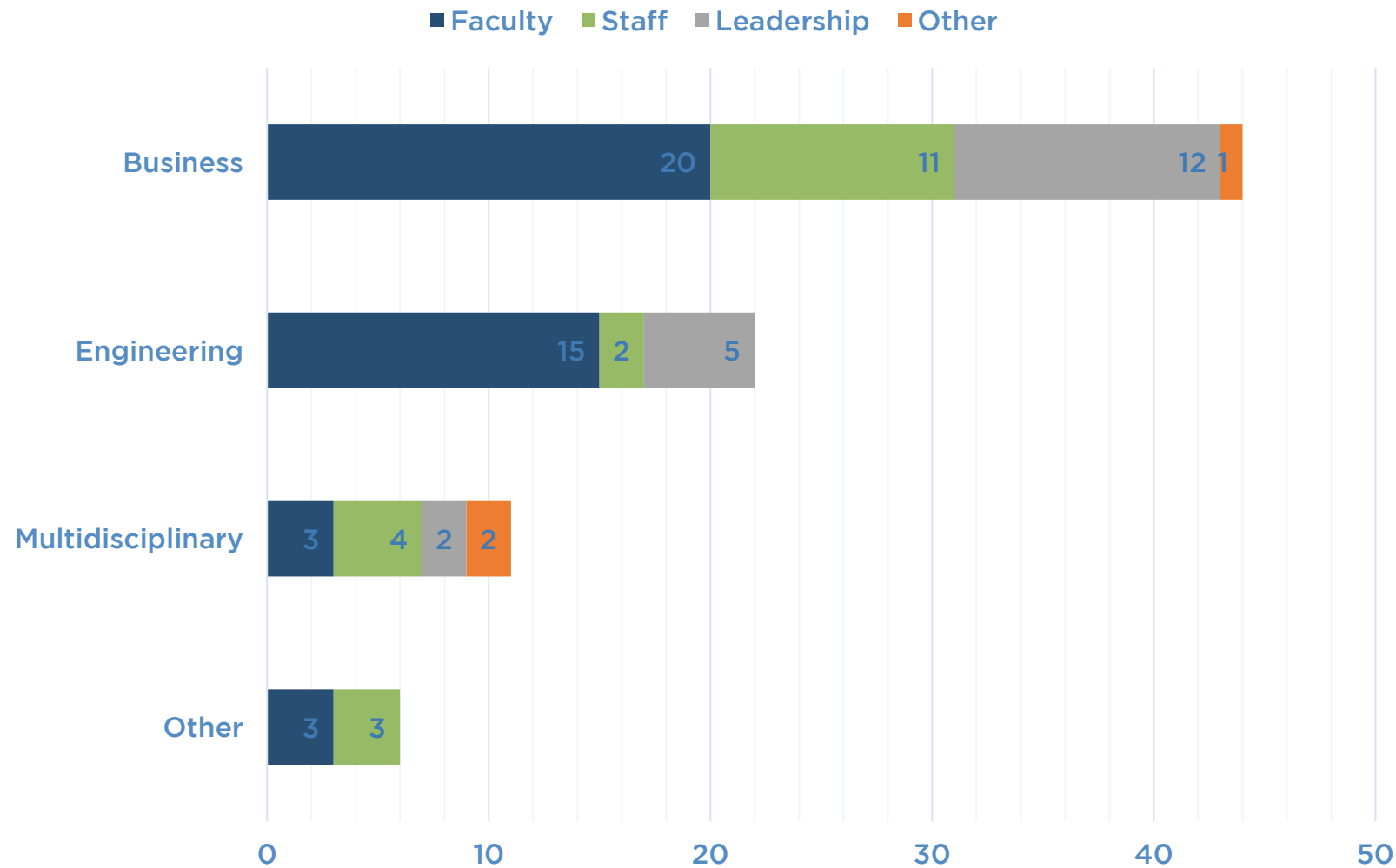




# 2021 Experiential PBL Benchmark Survey



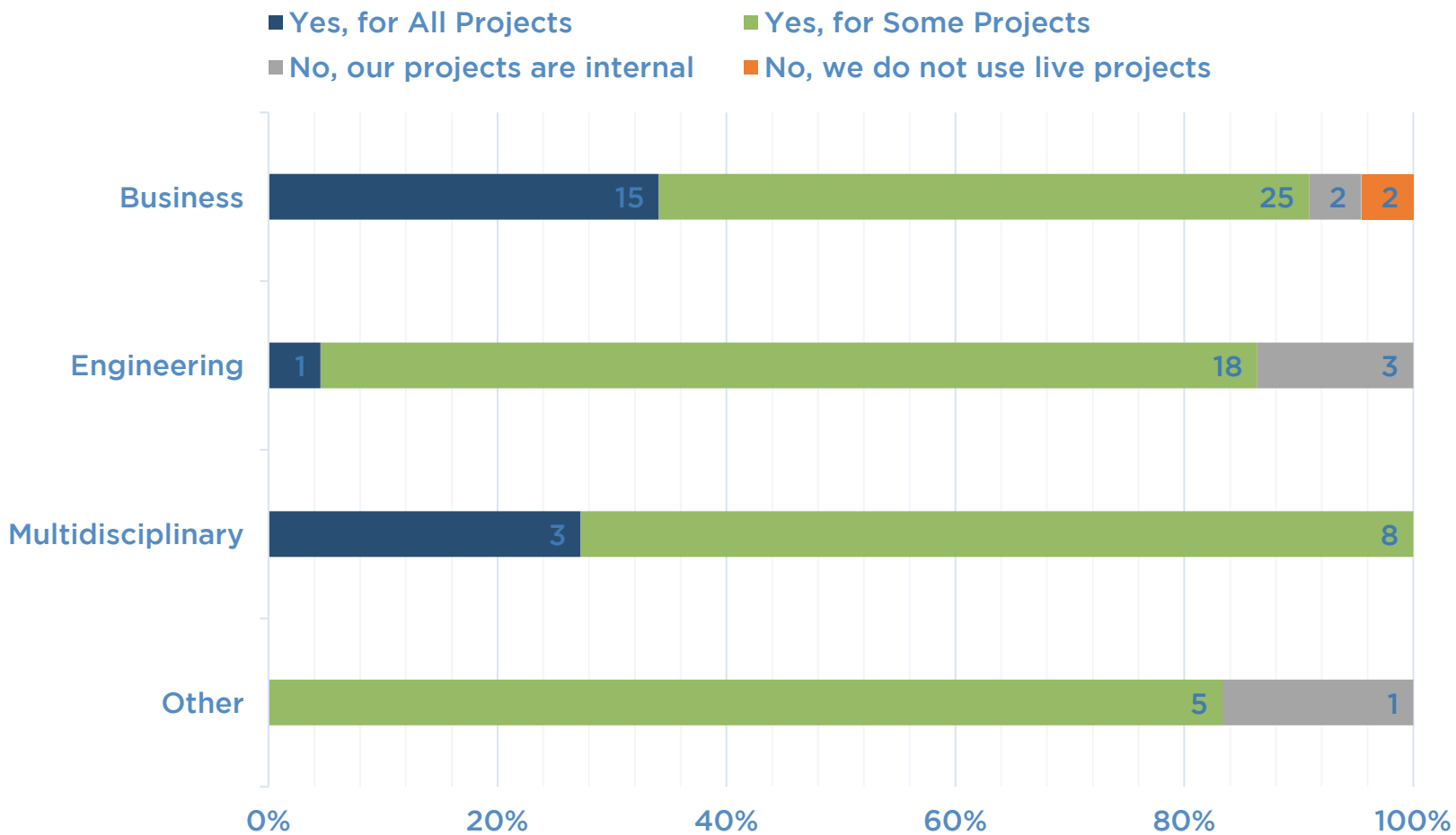
# Survey Participants



**83**  
Participants  
**78%**  
Directly Involved  
with Experiential



# Are live clients involved?



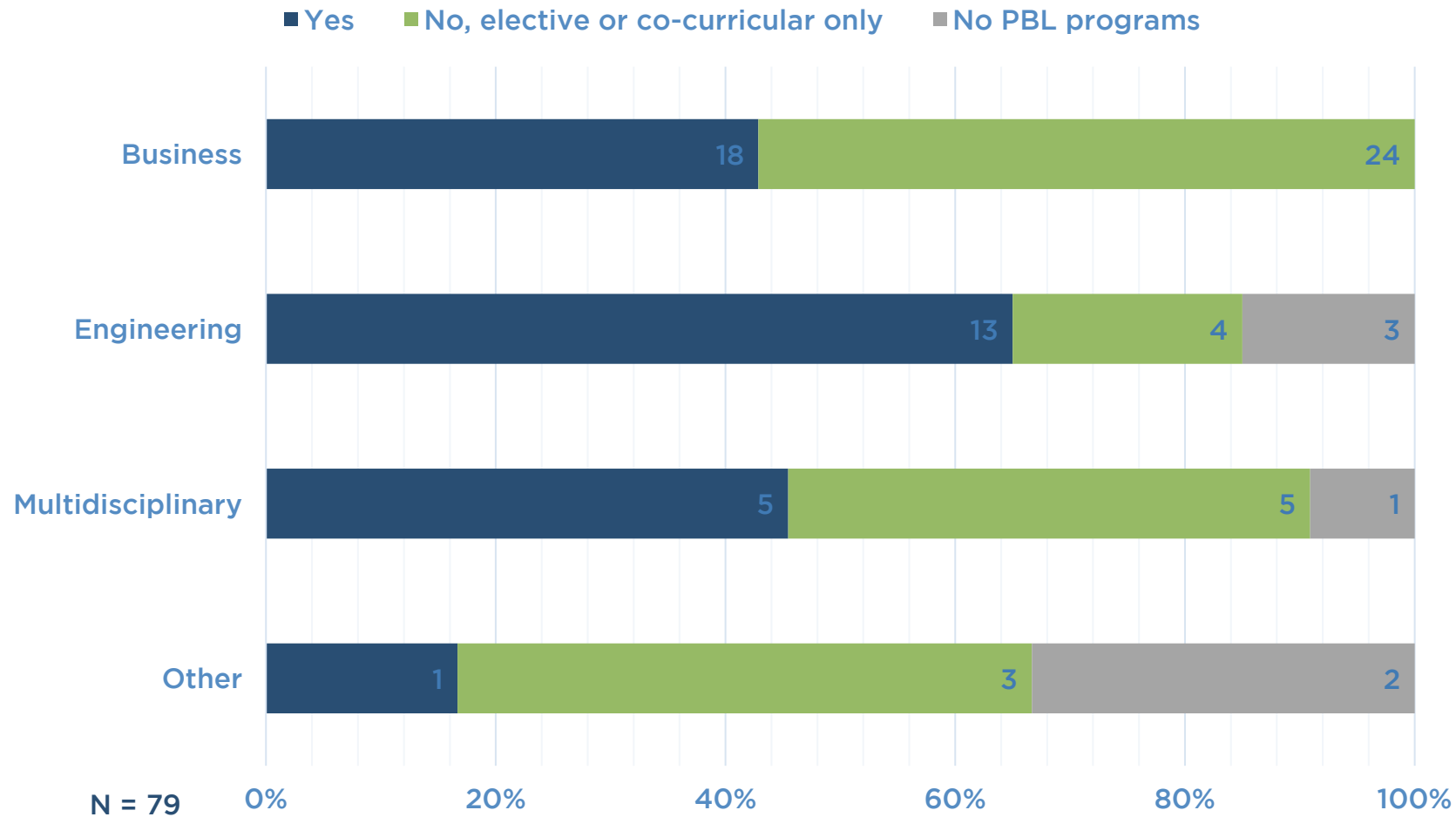
N = 83

## Live clients year over year

2021	2020
90%	96%



# Mandatory experiential PBL program?



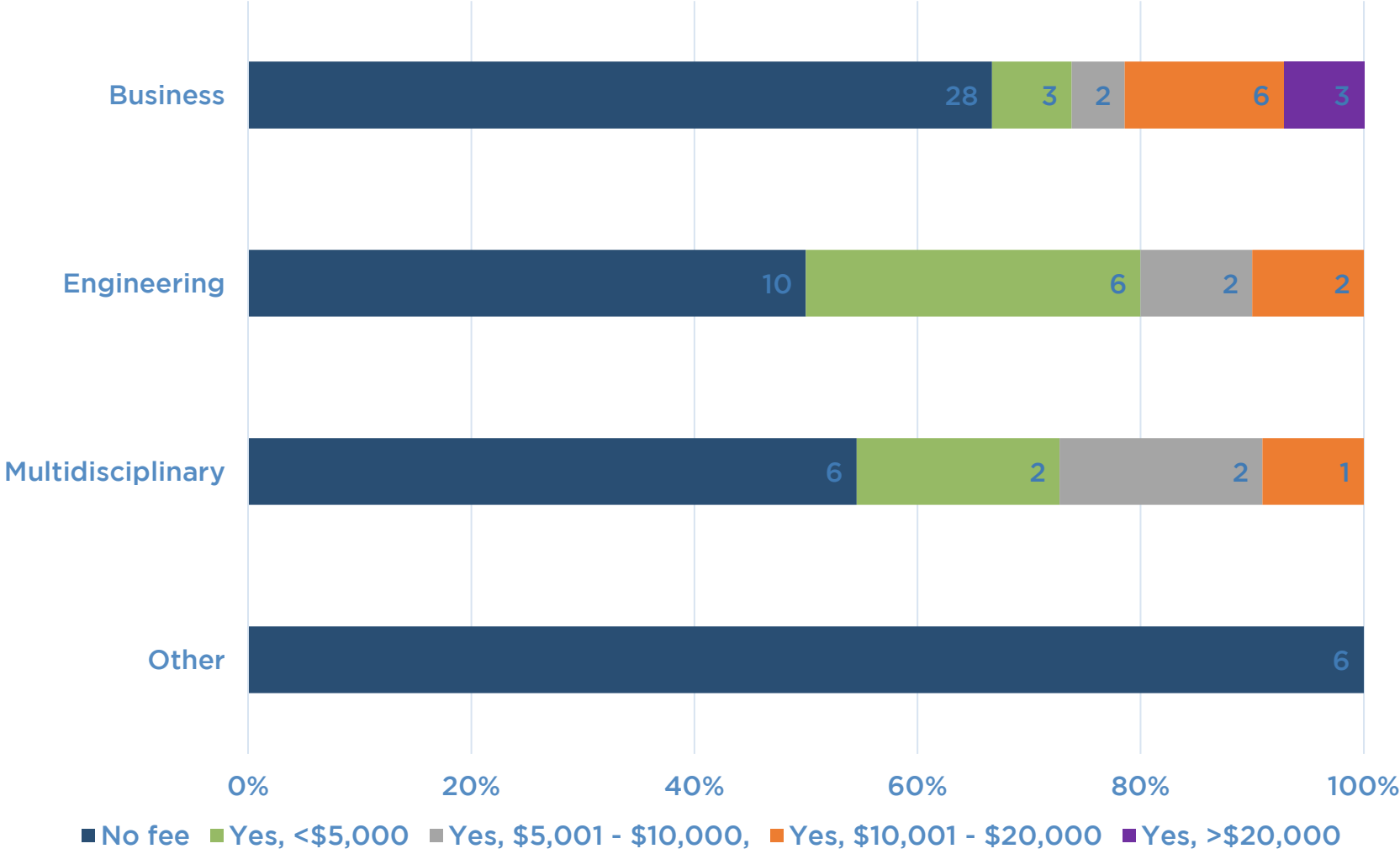
**65%**  
Engineering Programs  
Requiring PBL

**43%**  
Business programs  
Requiring PBL

**Trend: another year of  
increased PBL  
requirement for b-schools**



# Do you charge a project fee?



Fees year over year	
2021	2020
50%	63% engineering
33%	42% business
45%	42% multidisciplinary

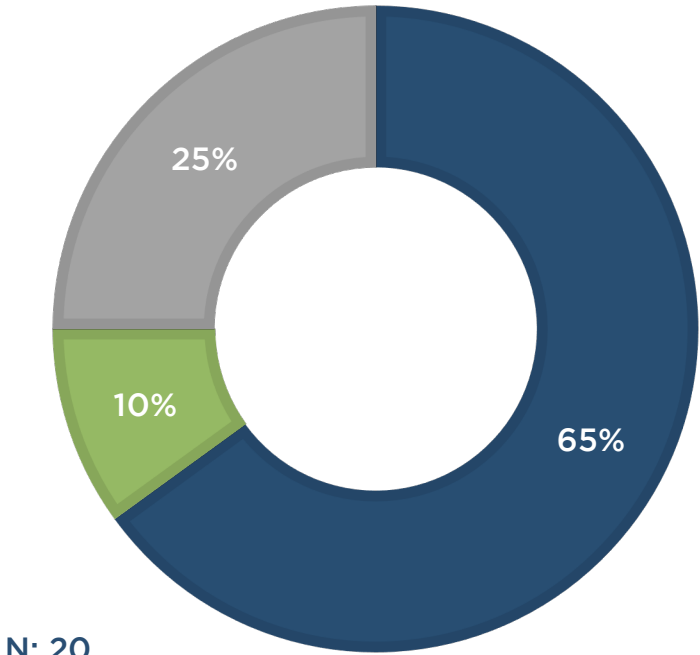
N = 79



# Multidisciplinary Projects?

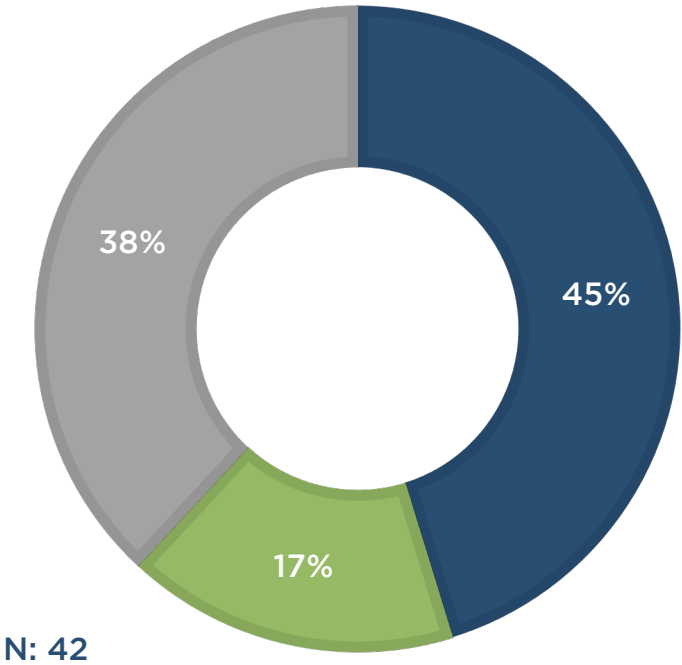
## ENGINEERING

■ Yes, within the college   ■ Yes, across colleges   ■ No



## BUSINESS

■ Yes, within the college   ■ Yes, across colleges   ■ No



**Compared to 2020**  
Engineering: +1%  
Business: -12%

After last year's significant increase in multidisciplinary PBL, the numbers have leveled off



## Formal director or office of experiential?

Business

40%

N: 42

Multidisciplinary

45%

N: 11

Engineering

25%

N: 20

### Compared to 2020

Business

-3%

Multidisciplinary

+3%

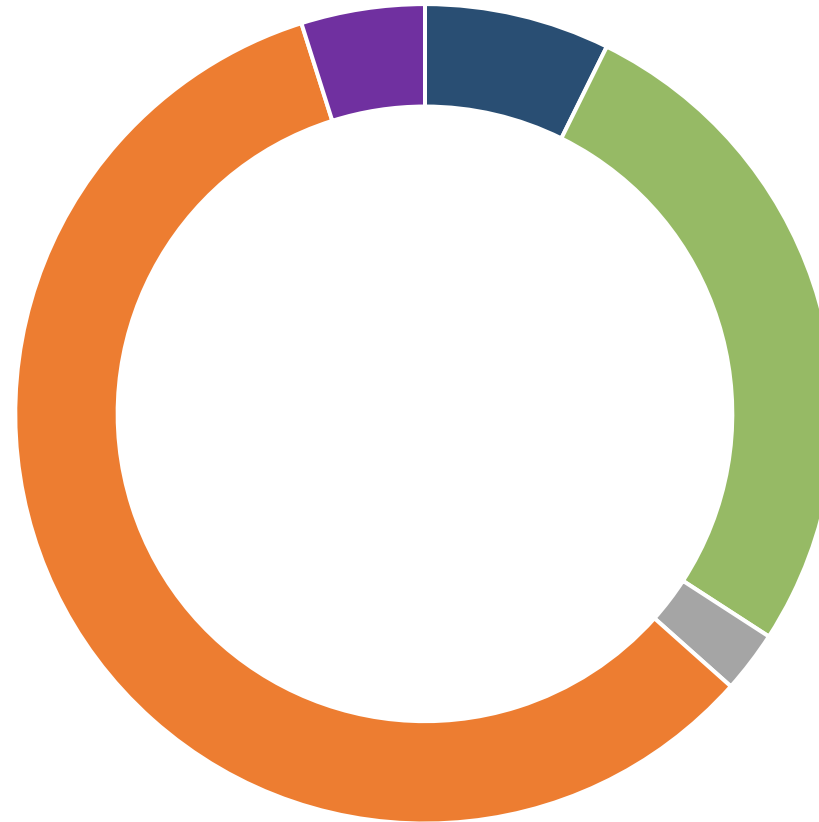
Engineering

-11%

**Trend: After a major increase last year, numbers are mostly flat this year**



# Who “owns” experiential at your school?



N = 41

- Associate Dean or other leadership
- A faculty member
- Career office
- No one, it is ad hoc
- Other





# Ranking sources for projects by volume

## Business

1. Faculty referred
2. Alumni
3. Career office
4. Unsolicited inbound
5. Student referred
6. Office of experiential
7. Third-party sourcing

## Multidisciplinary

1. Alumni
2. Unsolicited inbound
3. Office of experiential
3. Faculty referred (tie)
5. Student referred
6. Career office
7. Third-party sourcing

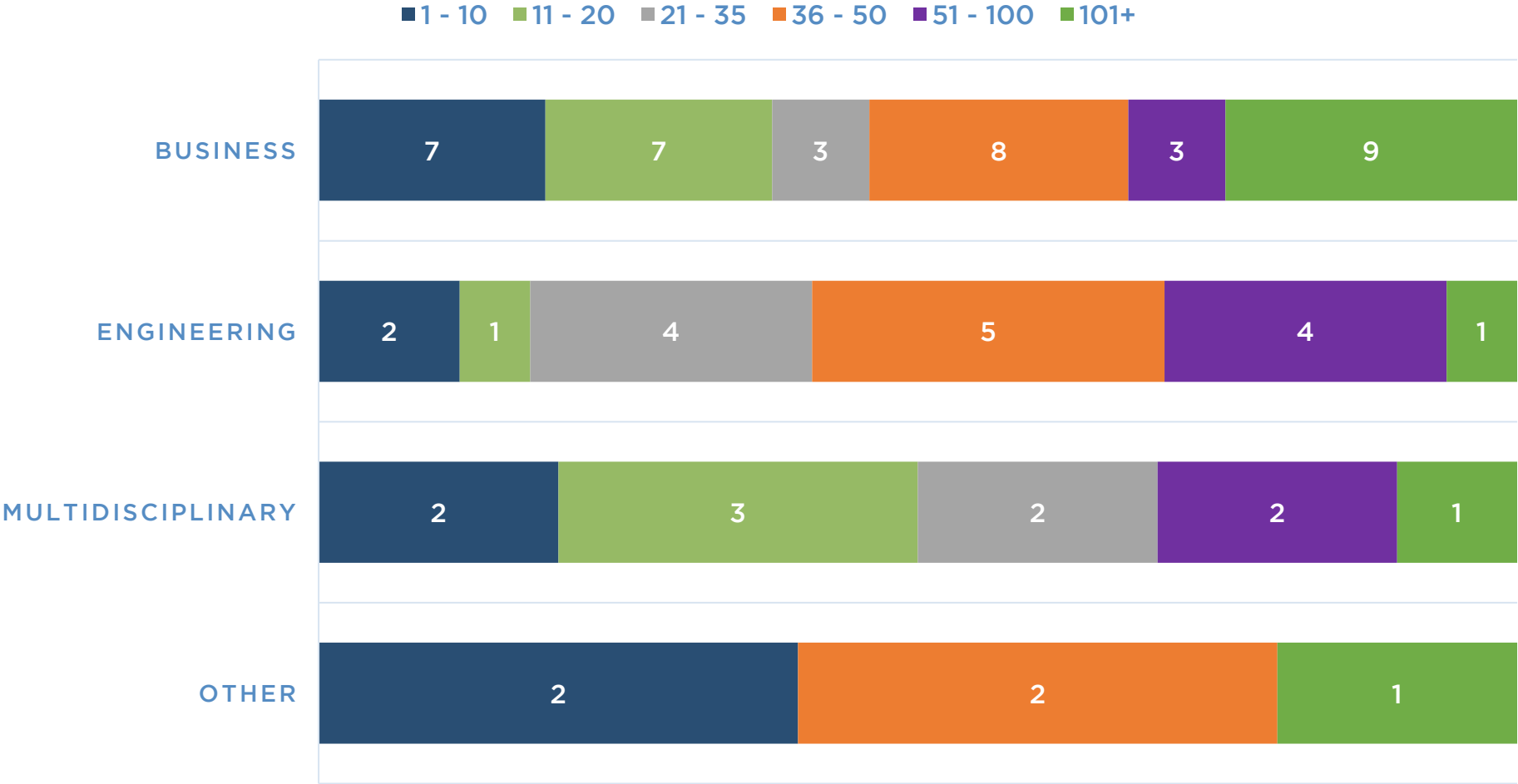
## Engineering

1. Faculty referred
2. Alumni
3. Unsolicited inbound
4. Student referred
5. Career office
6. Office of experiential
7. Third-party sourcing

N: 64



# How many projects each year within your college?



N: 69



# Do you use an NDA?

No significant change year over year in NDAs: schools remain overwhelmingly open to doing them with their clients.

Compared to 2020  
Engineering: no change  
Business: no change  
Multidisciplinary: +3%

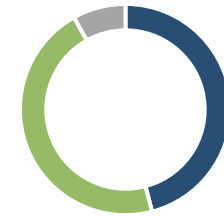
N: 69

## Multidisciplinary



- Yes as a standard procedure
- Yes if the client insists
- No

## Business



- Yes as a standard procedure
- Yes if the client insists
- No

## Engineering



- Yes as a standard procedure
- Yes if the client insists
- No

## Other

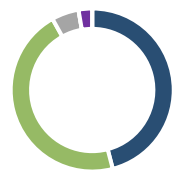


- Yes as a standard procedure
- Yes if the client insists
- No



# Your program sets clear expectations with project sponsors

## Business



- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Neutral
- Somewhat disagree
- Strongly disagree
- N/A

## Engineering



- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Neutral
- Somewhat disagree
- Strongly disagree
- N/A

## Multi-College

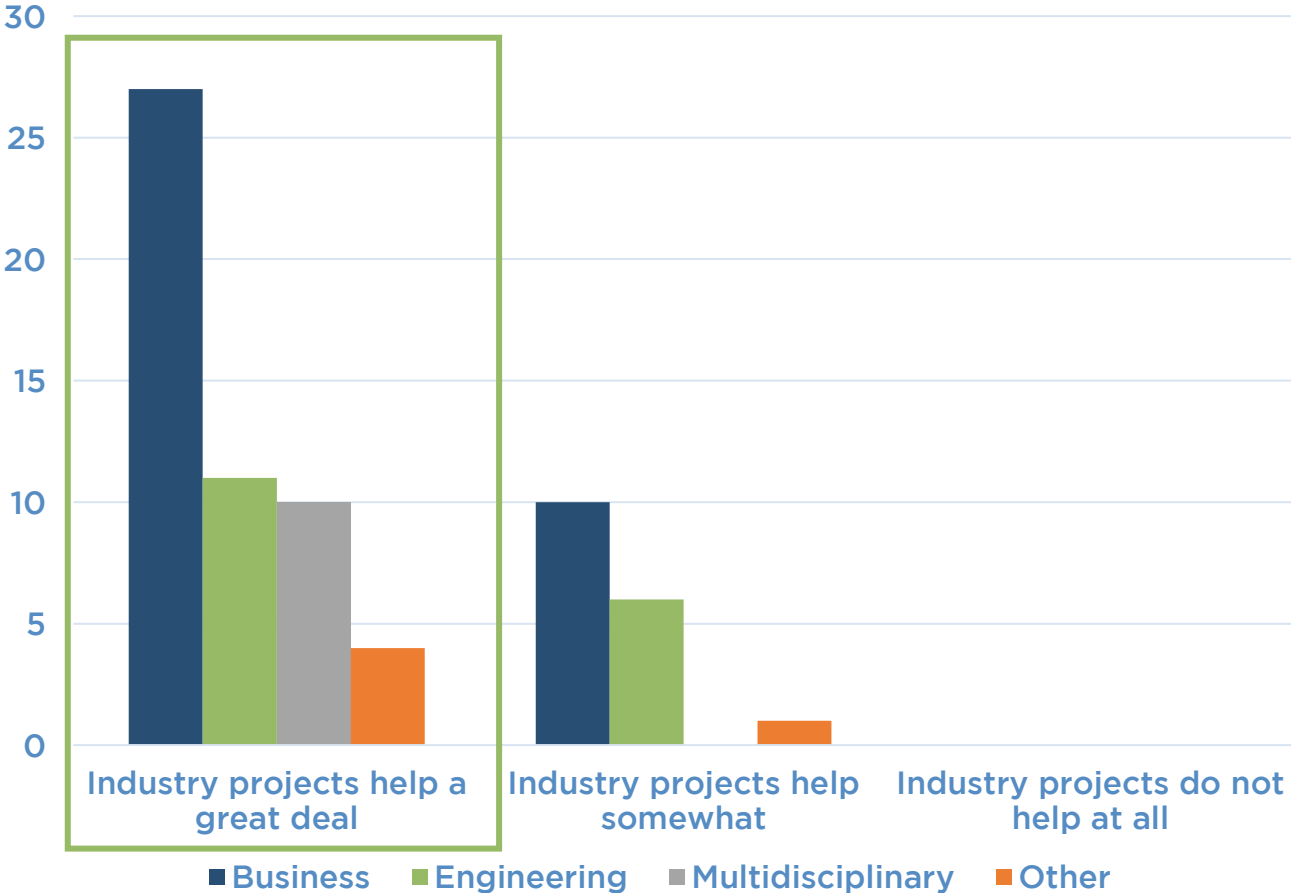


- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Neutral
- Somewhat disagree
- Strongly disagree
- N/A

N = 69



In general, you believe industry projects in the classroom are growing in importance



N: 69

How strongly do you feel industry projects help with their first job?

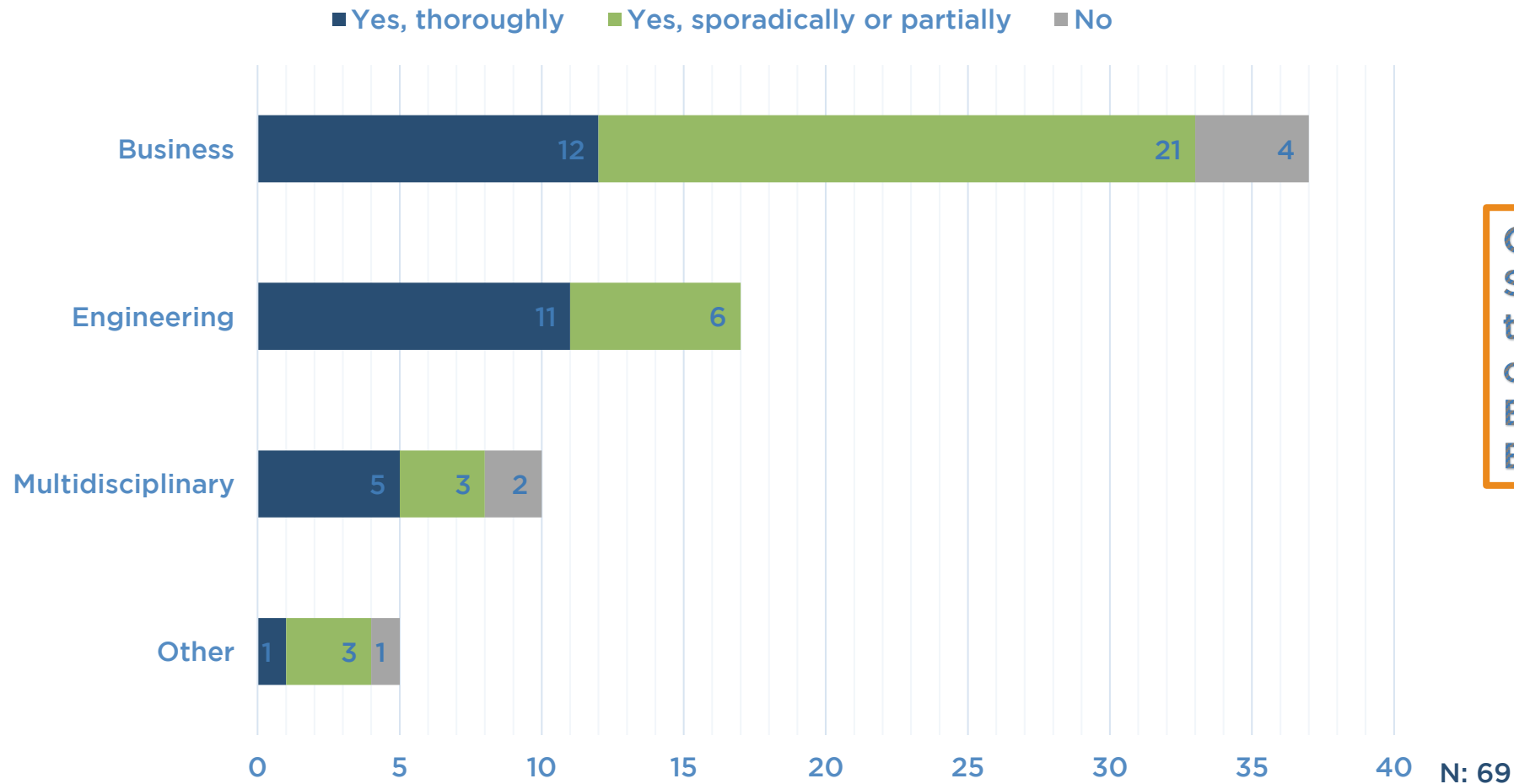
2.8/3 Weighted Average



Results unchanged from 2020

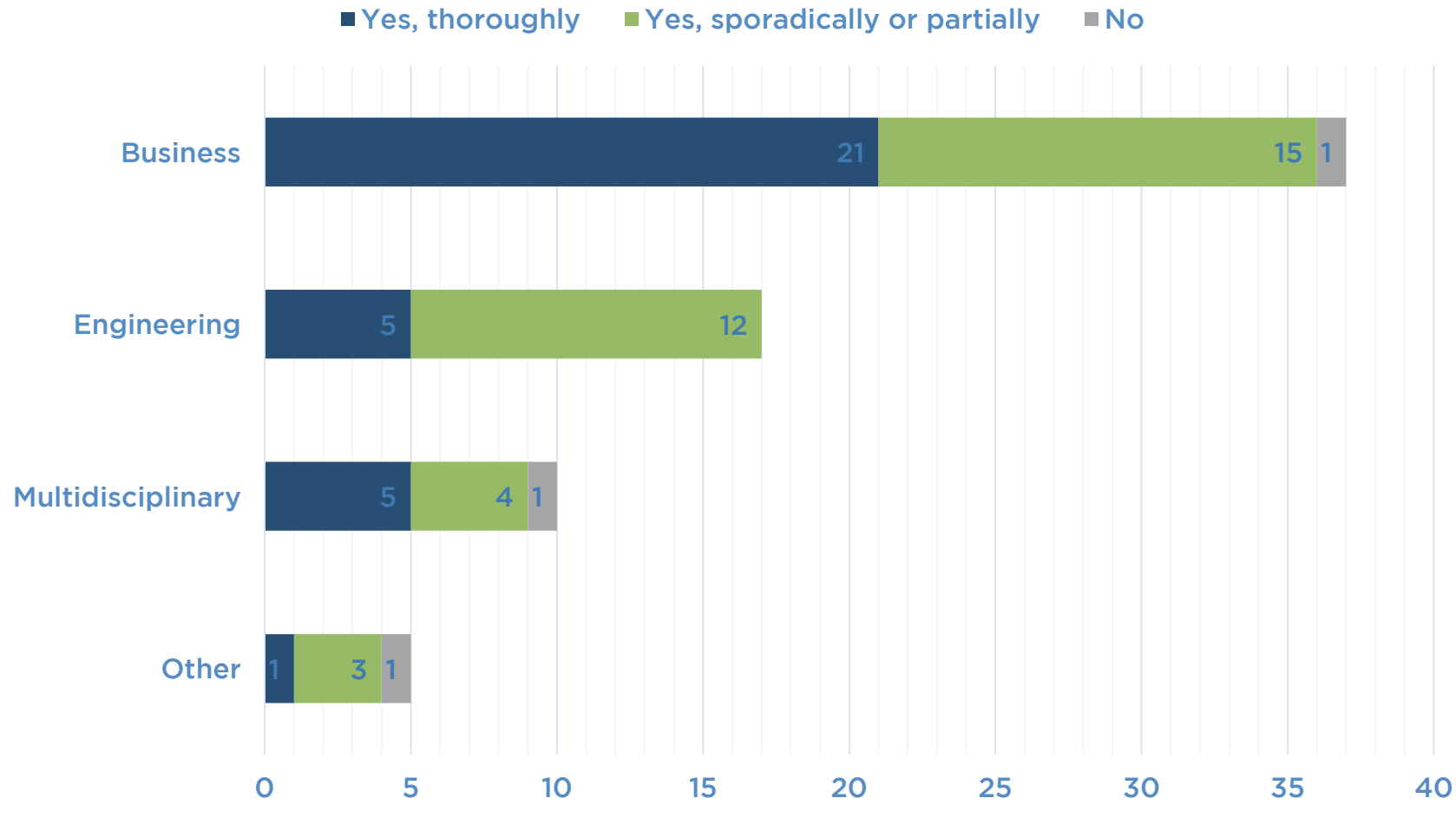


# Does your program measure learning outcomes?



**Compared to 2020**  
Significant increase in tracking learning outcomes  
Engineering: 88% -> 100%  
Business: 71% -> 89%

# Does your program maintain records of past projects, clients and student participation in industry projects?



**Compared to 2020**  
Record keeping is improving  
Engineering: 88% -> 100%  
Business: 71% -> 89%

# Experiential Innovations

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Detailed performance review sessions of 2nd-year, full-time, MBAs selected to become Principals and lead the 1st-year student teams

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Joint teams of students from my University and a Spanish university addressing a challenge posed by one of four social enterprises

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We love having MBA students manage our Undergraduate Student teams. MBAs learn to manage teams and a client, Undergraduates have great support, role models, and connections.



# Experiential Innovations

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There is a groundswell of interest by faculty to adopt this teaching style so that students are more able to apply KSA's to real-life projects that have impact. I am also very intrigued about scalability. Third, I'm very interested in measuring success of the programs among all stakeholders.

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Student teams get loans from banks, develop and sell products, pay back loans and give profits to charities (clients).

---

Program level design including intentional sequence of experiential learning courses

# Your biggest challenges?



The quality of projects varies. Not many tailored to student's specific areas of interest.



Streamlining contracting



Managing expectations with all stakeholders



Managing unequal levels of motivation and performance among all students on a project team. Expectation management of first-time clients

# Your biggest challenges?



Getting the word out to students to have them participate.



Dearth of faculty advisors (subject matter experts) leading to overworked faculty advisors.



Effective oversight at the college level. Departments and programs have their own policies, procedures, and records.



Locating quality projects 3 times each year

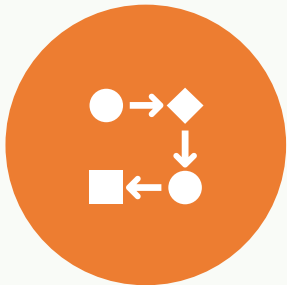
# Your biggest challenges?



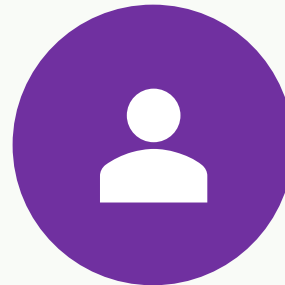
Students trying to see the value of fitting in the extra course. We do have some that are done in senior LYE courses but those often get overmanaged to fit into the faculty course schedule.



Adequate number of students and projects that match up with interests



Matching skills to projects. Also making sure the scope is appropriate.



External client expectations

# Your biggest challenges?



Converting our school's policies and procedures to apply to faculty who teach experiential rather than classroom-only classes



Keep the scope of the request under control after the project starts



The project has to be important enough to the client to be willing to invest time and share data.



Due to a shrinking MBA population, our biggest challenge is getting enough MBA students to have one to manage each team.

# Your biggest challenges?



Industry doesn't like to share research so one has to be creative about what bits of a project are public



Anticipating and matching client readiness with student capabilities. Businesses don't work on a semester calendar. Student capability/talent/interest varies class to class and is not always aligned with client needs.



Faculty not qualified to do the work.



our student numbers are growing dramatically - especially in our graduate programs - streamlining process and consistency in dealing with external contacts is so important as there are now dramatic increase in number of projects needed each term



Getting leadership to provide enough staff resources

# What advice would you give?

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Organizing both short and long term are more effort than you would think.

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Have policies in place, even if they are dynamic, prior to launching the program.

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Invest in quality client recruitment and team advisors

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Talk with people who have significant experiential learning experience before developing your plan.

---

The more integrated the projects/experiential learning, the better. One-off courses are good, but figuring out how experiential learning fits into the overall student experience leads to better results

# What advice would you give?

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Don't be afraid to mess up.

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Create some infrastructure that helps new adopters to engage in EL. Find EL champions among your faculty that can create a community of practice around it. Share early wins and impact on student.

---

Relationships and rapid prototyping. All successful projects are built on solid interpersonal relationships and a shared vision between the various partners involved. Collaboration really spreads the load, sustains motivation, and improves the final result.



# What advice would you give?

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Have University or college-wide buy-in. A team of corporate relations, career services, faculty need to work together to ensure that the program has legs. Scaffolding the learning for student experience starting with freshman. Include unpacking/reflection after each experience so that the complete learning cycle is achieved.

# What advice would you give?

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Work with alumni, help the students learn to negotiate project deliverables with clients and avoid making the program required as that mixes teams of motivated and unmotivated students.

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Have a single person in the college who can serve as a coordinator. This will help with institutional knowledge, communication, and (potentially) enhance what could or should be multi-disciplinary projects.

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Make sure you have an excellent relationship with your community supporters. They will really be essential in finding projects.

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Have a centralized experiential learning office