

Professional Development Workshop

Business Schools and The Inner Life: A Contradiction in Terms?

Business schools are not known as places where students reflect on their inner lives! Should they be? What would students gain from such reflection? Would society benefit? And even if there were benefits, how could a secular business school stimulate a diverse class of students to reflect on the inner life?

This workshop contrasts two quite different approaches that stimulate business students to reflect deeply on their inner life. The first course takes an overtly spiritual approach for MBA students in Texas. The second speaks to “Being” for a demographic in resolutely secular Sweden.

Professor Jody of Texas A & M University Central Texas teaches a graduate course on leadership development and formation. At its core is a model of spiritual leadership, sourced through an inner life of mindful practice, focused on loving and serving others to satisfy fundamental spiritual needs for purpose and belonging and, ultimately, maximize the triple bottom line (People, Planet, Profit). Professor Fry’s students have an average age of 38 and many are active military.

Professors Lasse Lychnell and Emma Stenström from the Stockholm School of Economics will share experiences from their course on "Being" in order to stimulate deep reflection on the meaning and purpose of life.

In this PDW, panelists will encourage discussion on the appropriate role of business schools in stimulating students to reflect on the big questions of life. They will also encourage sharing of other experiences, concerns and best practices.