

## **Saint Mary's University, Sobey School of Business**

### **Co-operative Management Education Programs (Master's and Diploma)**

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**Location:** Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada

**Website:** [www.ManagementStudies.coop](http://www.ManagementStudies.coop)

#### **Program Description:**

Since 2003, Saint Mary's University has provided on-line, part time international programs that provide management skills to current and future co-operative leaders:

- Master of Management, Co-operatives and Credit Unions (42 credits) – 3 years part-time. Includes a 10 day study tour to Italy or Spain.
- Graduate Diploma in Co-operative Management (21 credits) – 20 months part-time.
- Bilingual Certificate in Co-operative Management (7.5 credits) – a 10 month program offered in partnership with IRECUS (a co-operative education and research institute) at Université de Sherbrooke.

These programs were created to provide a co-operative business educational opportunity that is available to anyone, anywhere in the world. Programs are designed for working professionals seeking a program geared to co-operatives. The programs draw students, faculty, and researchers from around the globe and from a diversity of co-operatives and credit unions.

#### **Program Purpose:**

The programs strive to enhance the management capacity of existing managers and executives within co-operatives globally.

#### **Co-operative Curriculum:**

100% of curriculum is co-operative business education focused. Throughout the curriculum, management functions are explored within the context of the co-operative business model while being driven by the purpose, values and principles of co-operation. Beyond the development of a deep understanding of the history and evolution of the co-operative movement, learning encompasses governance, strategy, leadership, and people management skills through to accounting, finance, marketing, and information technology.

#### **Co-operative Sector Partnership:**

The Co-operative Management Education Co-operative (CMEC) has a Memorandum of Understanding with Saint Mary's University. Through this arrangement CMEC provides strategic oversight and a critical tie to the co-operative sector for recruiting and fundraising.

The CME Student and Alumni Association (Co-operative) is a relatively new entity that has the potential to create long lasting relationships and connections with the sector.

## **Student and Graduate Profile:**

**Target Audience:** Co-operative sector managers and executives from any country, sector, and type of co-operative. Ideally students enter with a minimum of 5 years' experience in the co-operative sector. Students from mid-20s to late 50s have taken these programs.

### **Student and Graduate Profile:**

- Average 10-15 years work experience
- Approximately 50/50 males and females
- Average student is mid-career

**Average Class Size:** 12

**Hypothetical Maximum Class Size:** 30 (with current program structure)

**Number of Students Currently:** 38 (active across all years – as of April 2014)

**Number of Graduates:** 73 across 8 graduating classes (as of May 2014)

**Recruitment Strategies:** Our most successful recruitment strategy is constant awareness raising done by program staff, the Board of the Co-operative Management Education Co-operative, students and graduates. Promotional tactics include our 1/4ly eNews, webinars, face-to-face information sessions, presentations at conferences, and booths at conference exhibits.

## **Program content and approach:**

### **Courses:**

MMCC 5100: Philosophy and History

MMCC 5110: Global Economy and Society I

MMCC 5120: Comparative Practice I

MMCC 5130: Financial Management I

MMCC 5140: Marketing the Advantage I

MMCC 5150: Management Innovations I

MMCC 5160: IT and Communications

MMCC 5200: Strategic Analysis I

MMCC 5201: Leading and Managing People I

MMCC 5205: Diploma Research Project (not applicable to Master's students)

MMCC 5210: Global Economy and Society II (Master's students only)

MMCC 5220: Comparative Practice II

MMCC 5230: Financial Management II

MMCC 5240: Marketing the Advantage II

MMCC 5270: Field Research and Study Tour (Italy or Spain)

MMCC 5350: Management Innovations II

MMCC 5370: Community and Environment

MMCC 5300: Strategic Analysis II

MMCC 5301: Leading and Managing People II

## MMCC 6000: Master's Research Project

### **Teaching Methods:**

- Case studies
- Field trip
- Independent learning
- Study tour
- Group based assignments Research project
- Class or group discussions

Courses are on-line using the Blackboard Learning platform (an online educational software). Readings, lectures, discussions, and assignments are used in all courses. Students complete the program as a cohort and travel through all courses together. A co-operative learning approach is used to teaching (e.g. group and full class interaction). Students use their co-operative as a case study / living laboratory throughout the program. In the Master's program, there is a 10 day study tour to Italy or Spain. The final program requirement is an independent research project.

### **Teaching Material Used:**

- Academic literature
- Sector publications
- Case studies
- Videos
- Instructor lectures (written and audio)

### **Program Format:**

Part-time and online except for a 5 day face-to-face orientation at the University and a 10 day study tour to Italy or Spain.

### **Tuition Fees and Expenses:**

The total program costs include: orientation fee; tuition, books and materials; and most in-country study tour costs (for Master's Program). The Master's program is \$28,000 CDN and the Graduate Diploma is \$13,300. Additional costs include transportation to and from Orientation + lodging and some meals; transportation to and from Study Tour origin + lodging and some meals; and graduation travel, lodging, and meals.

The cost for the Bilingual Certificate in Co-operative Management is \$5,000 CDN for Level 1 and \$10,000 for Level 2.

**Financial Sustainability:**

More students are needed for long-term financial sustainability of the program. The break-even point is approximately 15 students based on the current program configuration.

**Strengths and Challenges:**

***Greatest Strengths:***

- Partnerships directly with the co-operative sector through CMEC, students, and graduates.
- Engaged instructors that conduct related co-operative research and many have practical co-operative business experience.
- The online and part-time nature of the programs.

***Greatest Challenges:***

- Recruiting sufficient students. **Potential solutions:** Continue awareness raising across the sector, solidify more direct partnerships with individual co-operatives and at apex organization level, plus partnership with other like-minded programs globally.