

MIT Professional Education

Academic year 2013 marked the eleventh year of operation for [MIT Professional Education](#) (MIT PE), which was established in 2002 under the School of Engineering (SoE) as the umbrella organization for all non-degree/non-credit professional education programs at MIT aimed at science and technology professionals. All MIT PE programs (Short Programs, Advanced Study Program, and Custom Programs), as well as its international engagements, deliver practical learning benefits to industry professionals from around the world, furthering MIT's core educational mission and enhancing the Institute's leadership and influence globally. Teaching in MIT PE programs allows the faculty also to enhance its connections with the global practitioner community.

Current Goals, Objectives, and Priorities

MIT PE will continue to expand student enrollments in all its programs, with particular emphasis on increasing international enrollments to further the influence and relationship of MIT with professionals and companies around the world. MIT PE also seeks to expand the roster of MIT faculty teaching professional courses. To address the needs of industry professionals outside the United States who are not able to come to campus, MIT PE plans to deliver a select portfolio of short courses in markets in Asia, Latin America, and Europe. With the recent launch of the MIT/Harvard University online education platform edX, MIT PE considers as a high priority the introduction of revenue-generating professional programs on the platform to further widen MIT PE's reach globally. The following overall principles guide MIT PE activities:

- Utilize the best of MIT expertise to meet the learning needs of industry professionals globally
- Extend knowledge from MIT research and discoveries—particularly related to Institute-wide initiatives such as transportation, manufacturing, and energy—to industry professionals
- Maintain a small but nimble self-supporting, customer service-oriented organization

Accomplishments and Program Developments

During AY2013, MIT PE focused on expanding enrollments across all its programs, adding new courses with wide appeal, adding new faculty, enhancing international enrollments, increasing program deliveries in international locations, and pursuing new Custom Programs potential outside the US.

Short Programs

In its 64th year of operation, [Short Programs](#) (originally called Summer Sessions) delivered 33 one- to five-day courses taught by MIT faculty and invited lecturers. The summer courses were attended on campus by 925 students from more than 50 countries, marking an 8% expansion from the previous year. Several new courses, including ones

addressing cyber security and modern manufacturing, as well as hands-on laboratory courses from Lincoln Laboratory, were added to the portfolio.

International Engagement

After the successful introduction of short courses in AY2012 in Chile, Mexico, and Italy, courses on lean enterprise and lean healthcare, led by professor emeritus Earll Murman (Department of Aeronautics and Astronautics), were delivered in Chile and Colombia. In addition, a course on radical innovation, taught by professor Sanjay Sarma (Department of Mechanical Engineering), was offered to enthusiastic audiences in Milan and Rome.

Career Reengineering Program

After careful consideration—including a survey of former participants—the decision was made to discontinue the six-year-old Career Reengineering Program and direct potential new applicants to the long-standing Advanced Study Program, described below. Career counseling and individual coaching elements (not part of MIT’s core strengths) will be brought in from outside MIT and offered to students enrolled in the Advanced Study Program on an opt-in basis to address the needs of those seeking career change.

Advanced Study Program

In its 49th year, the [Advanced Study Program](#) expanded its enrollments dramatically by integrating students with a baccalaureate degree (who heretofore enrolled through MIT Admissions as “special students”) into the Advanced Study Program, with its professional community and networking advantages. As a result, the number of Advanced Study Program enrollments grew from 62 to 179 students, marking an impressive 289% gain over AY2012.

Custom Programs

MIT PE completed its seventh year of engagement in information technology curriculum review and examinations development for the Accenture Solutions Delivery Academy. In addition, MIT PE signed a contract with Accenture to facilitate the development of online introductory computer science workshops by MIT faculty, to be placed on Accenture’s new “open” online learning and recruiting platform. The workshops are contracted and labeled as independent contributions of MIT faculty, avoiding any institutional conflict with MIT/Harvard’s open online education platform edX.

The British Petroleum (BP) Operations Academy, run jointly by the professional education arms of the School of Engineering and the MIT Sloan School of Management, and offering technical and management training to BP operations executives, was reformulated in AY2012 to have the curriculum be more management oriented, reflecting the changing needs of the client. With the resulting curriculum requiring little contribution from the faculty of the School of Engineering, SoE’s revenue-share arrangement with Sloan relating to the running of the BP Operations Academy was suspended effective July 1, 2012.

Funding

MIT PE continues to be fully self-supporting. No external funding was needed or received in AY2013.

Future Plans

Plans for AY2013 include the following:

- Continue international outreach and delivery activities, extending presence in Europe and Latin America (with particular emphasis on Peru and Brazil); support MIT agreements in Russia and Saudi Arabia with professional programs when called upon; look for quality ground partners in India and China to offer programs in conjunction with MIT
- Bring in new faculty and short courses, particularly supporting MIT's manufacturing and environment initiatives
- Continue deploying web and social media-based marketing efforts toward building growth in enrollments across all open enrollment programs
- Aggressively seek out potential custom program clients from within and outside the United States
- Investigate the potential of offering revenue-bearing online courses utilizing the MIT/Harvard edX platform

Personnel

Juniper Friedman, a program assistant in Short Programs, left MIT PE to join *Technology Review* and was replaced by Luke McNeill from the Department of Biology. In addition, Sarah Foote from MIT Sloan joined Short Programs as a program associate. Tish Schilling Miller, director of academic programs, assumed responsibility for the Accenture custom corporate program in addition to her regular responsibilities running the Advanced Study Program.

Bhaskar Pant
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