

SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP MASTER’S PROGRAM: ALUMNI SURVEY- KEY TAKEAWAYS, FEB 2022

I. Introduction

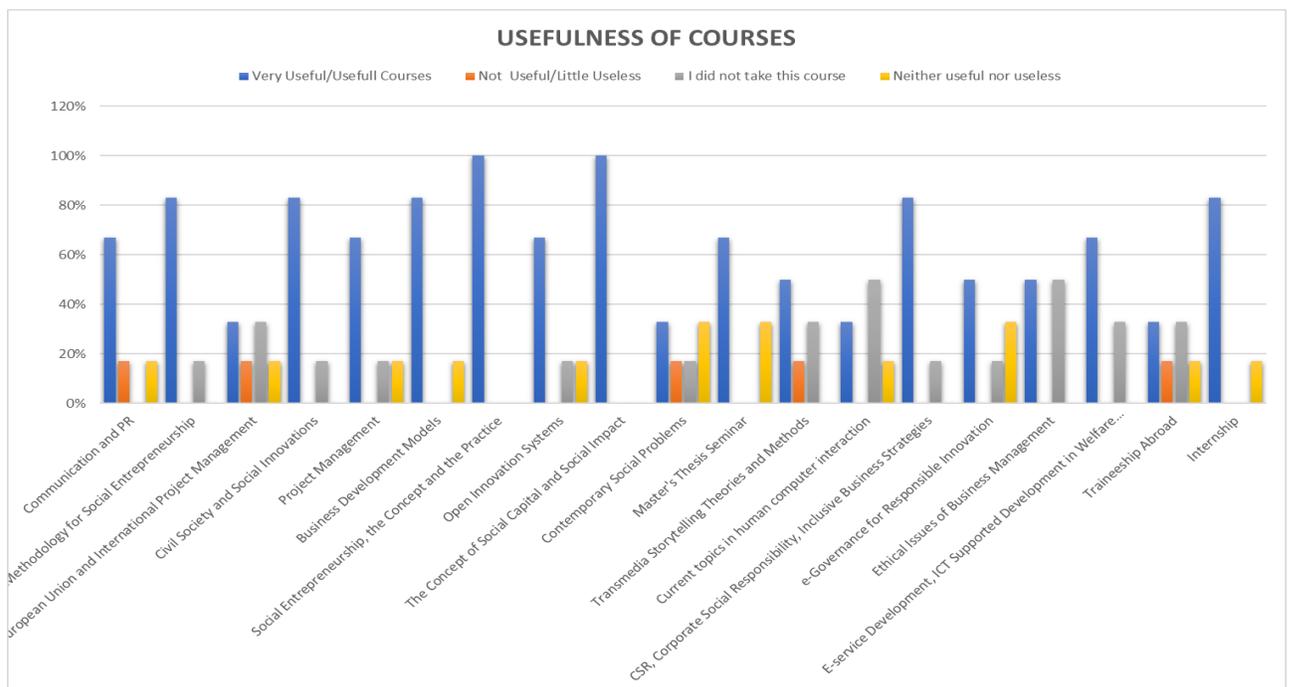
The Social Entrepreneurship Master’s program (SEMA) at TLU University is a 2-year, 120-credit program first launched in 2019. Its core courses include: Social Entrepreneurship, concept and practice, The concept of social capital and social impact, Civil Society and Social Innovations, Research methods and methodology for social entrepreneurship, Project management, Open Innovation Systems, Business development models, E-Governance for responsible Innovation, European Union and international project management, Master Thesis Seminar, Communication and PR, and the ELU Course (multidisciplinary, practical course mandated by TLU for all students).

Since its launch, 34 students (including the 2022 graduates) have already been trained. For the purpose of the upcoming conference, a small survey was conducted by the conference organizers to inquire about the perceptions and satisfaction of the SEMA alumni. The feedback collected from the SEMA alumni will allow conference participants to cater to the expectations of the future beneficiaries when developing future training guidelines for social entrepreneurship education in Estonia.

II. Knowledge and Skills

a. Evaluation Of Courses at TLU

The courses stated above were ranked in order of usefulness by the alumni and the results are stated below.



The most useful courses, with at least 80% of individual votes, were: research methods and methodology for social entrepreneurship, business development models, social Entrepreneurship, concept and practice, CSR and Inclusive business strategies, the concept of social capital and social impact and the internship.

In those courses, the alumni stated that they acquired: a “wider understanding of business processes”, the “ability to look at the entrepreneurship ecosystem in a more diverse and broad view, the capacity to “see the interconnection between all players in our society and the role of both entrepreneurs and customers in influencing which way the society develops”, “Business development skills, pitching and communication skills”, and practical skills such as “networking, better communication, public speaking, giving a presentation, writing a one pager”.

On the other hand, with regards to the European Union and international project management course, they requested that courses on funding stakeholders and schemes should “be transformed to worldview because not all of us are from Europe and wanna attain the funding from EU”.

The alumni who established their own social enterprises wished that TLU had emphasized training in innovation (100% of votes), technology-based solutions (75%), general management courses (75%). Fundraising, financial management, research, business development and communication courses could have been developed further (50%).

For some alumni who did not establish their social enterprises, the main reason was attributed to the lack of the following skills: financial management (75%), fundraising, innovation, and technology-based solutions (50% of votes for each).

25% of alumni didn’t feel ready to establish their own social enterprises even after graduation.

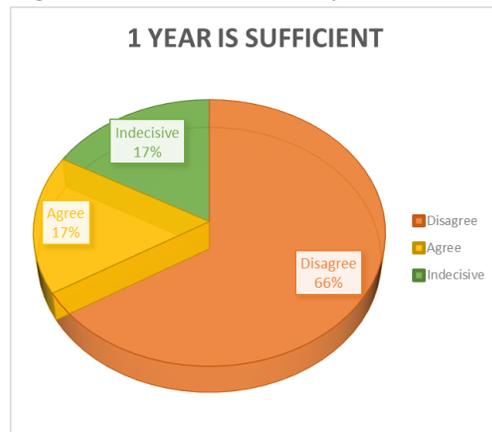
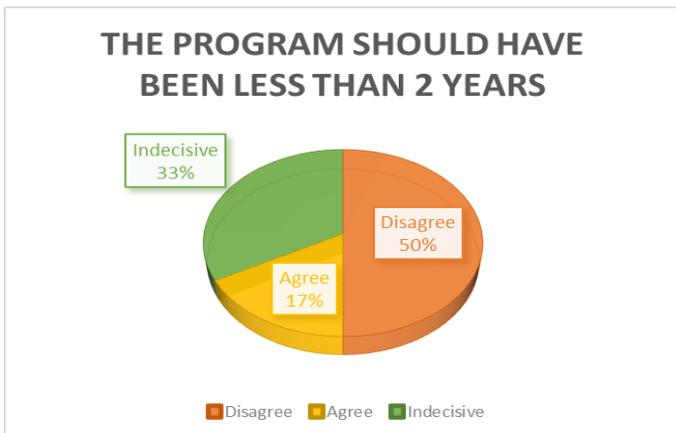
25% of alumni did not establish their own social enterprises after graduation because they are “lacking the idea”.

When it comes to the value of the required internship, alumni stated that they learned “social value processes”; “multi-tasking and digital marketing” and to be operational (“to do good with their own hands). Some alumni also experienced the “main pain points of startup or seed level social enterprises in Estonia”. Others were able to widen their networks and to collect data for their thesis.

III. Ideal Duration of Training for SEE

a. The Alumni’s opinion of the ideal duration of study of SE

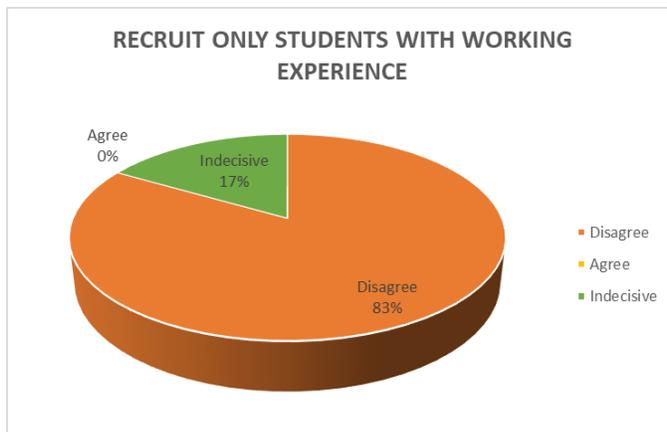
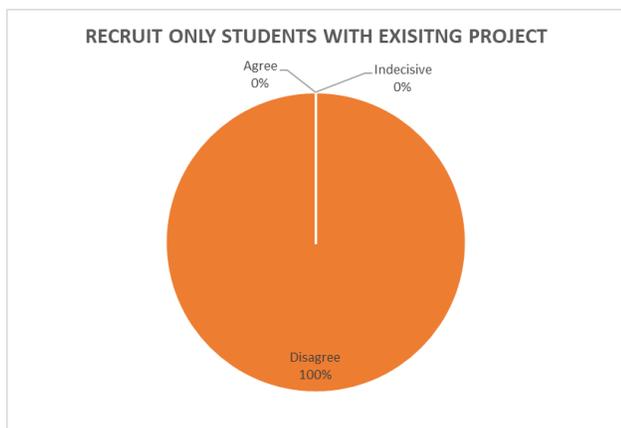
The majority of SEMA alumni indicated that the ideal SE training duration is more than one year.



IV. Student Recruitment

a. Alumni's Opinions on Ideal Student Enrollment Criteria

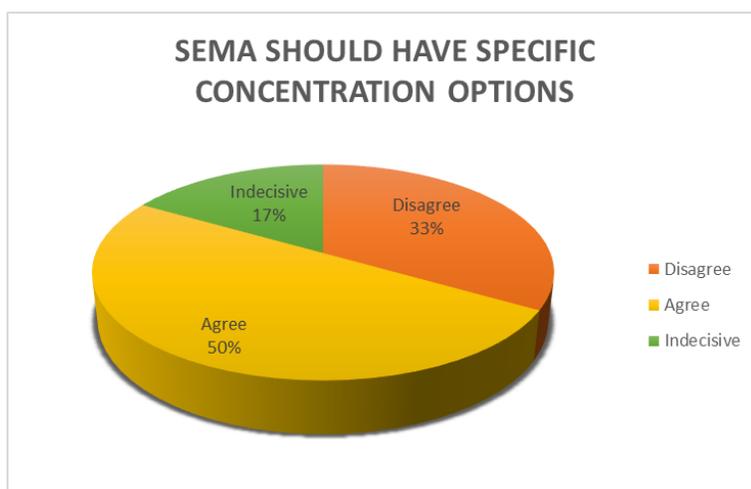
The alumni disagree that previous working experience and having an existing social enterprise project should be mandatory student recruitment criteria.



V. SEE Teaching

a. Alumni's Opinions about Area-Specific Training in SE

50% of the alumni believe that social entrepreneurship training should have some sort of concentration options.



b. Alumni’s Opinions about Recruiting SE Teachers

The respondents stated that the most fundamental characteristic of SE teachers is their prior experience in the field of social entrepreneurship, entrepreneurship or business (mentioned by 83% of respondents). For example, teachers who can teach different “SE models”, and “financial and operational knowledge” are preferable.

Other skills mentioned include: effective teaching, communication skills, open-mindedness, and courage.

VI. Types of Partnerships

The SEMA alumni stated that the most important partnerships necessary for social entrepreneurship education are:

- Governmental support institutions and business unions;
- Other social enterprises due to “learning from experience - more peer to peer learning/business opportunities between all level SE-s and the whole community behind it”;
- Other HEIs and organizations with similarities. “ This {cooperation} would vary by the area of specialization and vision of the organization. Co-operation would be necessary with organizations whose vision would be beneficial to yours. In general, I think co-operations in the area of marketing and awareness will be key to most organizations.”

VII. Life After SEE: Where Are The Alumni Working?

After graduation:

- 100% of alumni are either employed or self-employed.
- Alumni are most likely to work for traditional companies.
- Very few alumni set up their own social enterprises.

