



# INDUSTRIAL GUEST LECTURES

ENHANCING ACADEMIA-INDUSTRY COLLABORATION – 30.10.2024

REFLECTIONS ON EXPERIENCES BY PROF. KIM MENS, UCLOUVAIN – BELGIUM

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# OVERVIEW

Industrial guest lectures can be a lightweight yet important instrument to bridge the gap between academia and industry.

Examples of Industrial Interventions

Positive Experiences

Possible Issues

Strategies for Success

# EXAMPLES OF INDUSTRIAL INTERVENTIONS

- **Industrial Lectures:** Replacing theory lectures by more practical, industrial lectures.
- **Company Visits:** Organizing site visits to companies relevant to course content.
- **Industry-inspired Projects:** Course or semester projects with topics provided by industry partners.
- **Use of Industrial Data:** Using (anonymized) industrial data in course projects.
- **Industrial Participation:** Inviting industry professionals to attend and learn in cutting-edge courses.
- **Industrial Seminars:** Weekly lectures by different industry professionals, with feedback and reflection activities for students.
- **Thesis Collaborations:** Bachelor/Master thesis topics in partnership with industry.
- **Industry-Academia** research positions.

# POSITIVE EXPERIENCES

- **Real-world relevance:** Demonstrates applicability of course content in industry.
- **Enhanced student perception:** Changes students' views on industrial careers.
- **Balancing theory and practice:** Complements theory courses with practical insights.
- **Academic benefits:** Keeps educators updated with industry practices.
- **Industrial benefits:** Keeps industry updated with academic advancement.
- **Mutual Benefits:** Facilitates academia-industry networking and collaboration.
- Overall student engagement and interest in industry involvement is highly positive (but should not be exaggerated).

# POSSIBLE ISSUES

- **Student Attendance:** Strategies needed to encourage participation (e.g., exam/reflection questions, making summaries, obligatory attendance).
- **Scheduling Challenges:** Need for advanced planning and flexible backup options to balance guest lectures with dense academic/professional schedule.
- **Content Alignment:** Need to ensure that contents is relevant and appropriately detailed.
- **Recruitment Motivations:** Managing potential conflicts between educational knowledge and recruitment needs.

# STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESS

- **Student Incentives:** Clear communication of benefits and assessment relevance.
- **Advance Planning:** Coordinating schedules months in advance.
- **Personal Contacts:** Through ex-researchers or industrial collaborators.
- **Content Quality Control:** Reviewing and adjusting slides from industry speakers.
- **Focus on Education, Not Recruitment:** Maintain educational intent of interventions.
- **Integrative Approach:** Embedding guest lectures within the broader course structure (or even at the level of an entire programme)