

Student-driven innovation at Ryerson University

An information session on the proposed
Optional Specialization in Zone Education

Spring 2013

The Office of the Provost and Vice-President Academic

RYERSON
UNIVERSITY

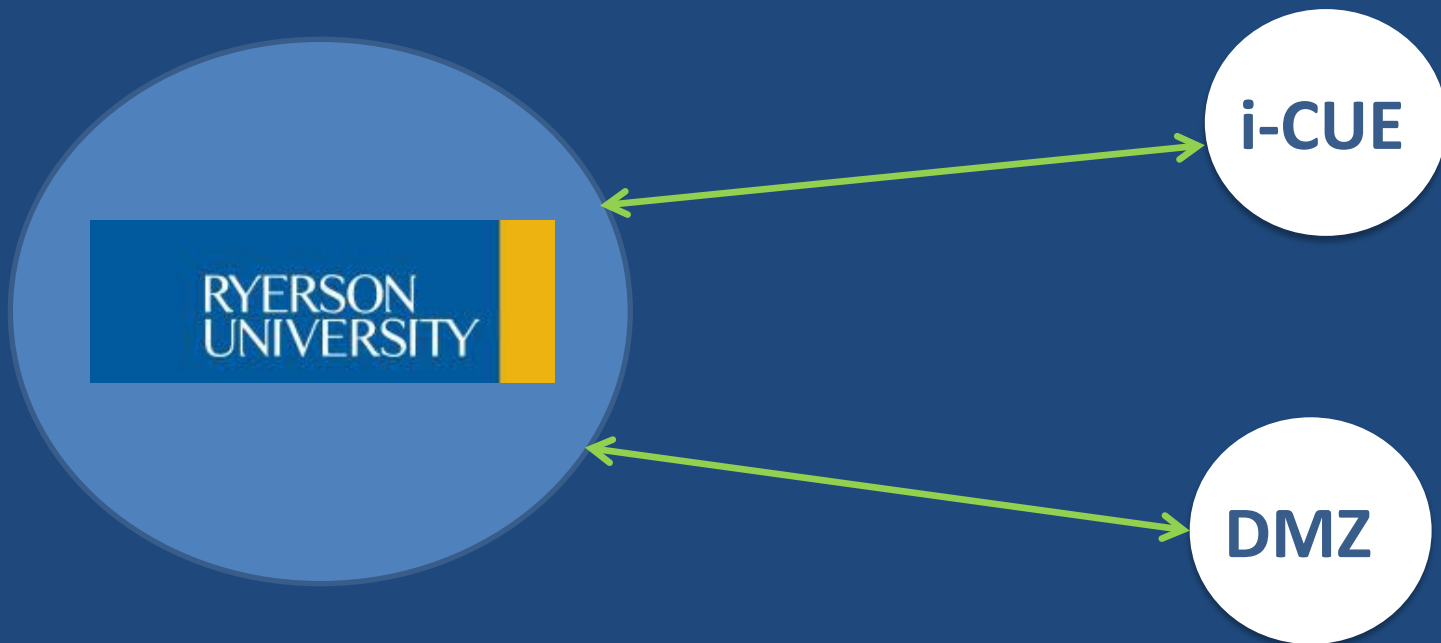
Entrepreneurial zone education?

- Experiential learning environment
- Student-driven and motivated
- Active mentorship, coaching and support
- Student teams:
 - Conceive ideas
 - Create, incubate and accelerate start-up companies
 - Test prototypes
 - Develop solutions to industry and community challenges

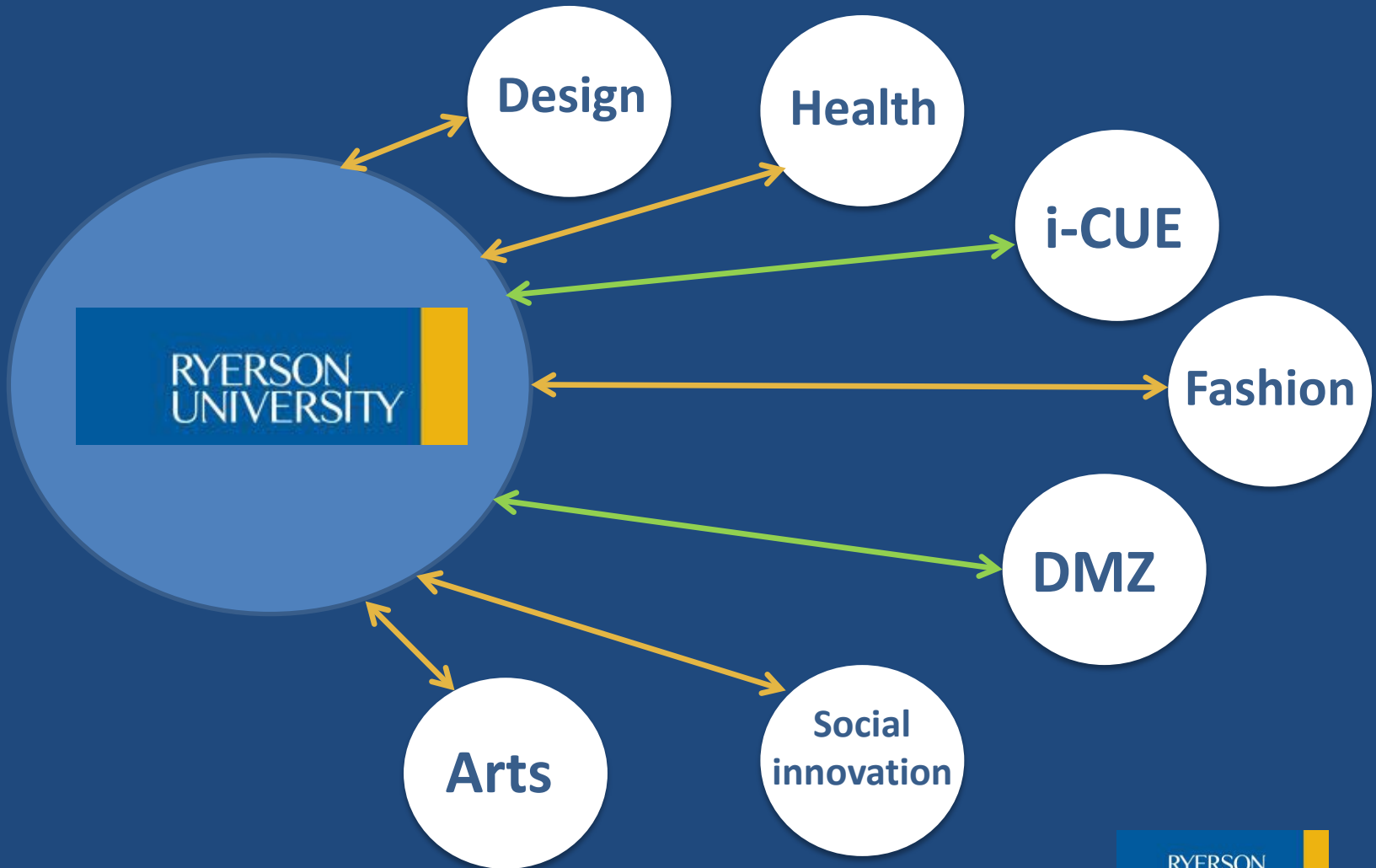
A broad definition

An **entrepreneurial approach** can be applied in any area in which innovation is sought = **private enterprise**
= **not-for-profit sector**
= **government**

Optional Specialization in Zone Education



Optional Specialization in Zone Education



Structure

- ZEDXXX – a single umbrella course/six-credit curriculum for full-time participants
ZEDxxy for part-time
 - Fully experiential
 - A major team-based project
 - Analogous to a **graduate research thesis project** – project milestones are defined and evaluated regularly; week-by-week course outline not meaningful
 - Graded on a Pass/Fail basis
 - Optional addition to a student's undergraduate education
 - Will appear as a credential on transcript

Stages of zone education

Education Stages

Economic
Development

Stage 1:
Preparation

Stage 2:
Development

Stage 3:
Application

Stage 4:
Commercialization/
Actualization

Study modules to
develop skills

Construct teams

Work with
experts/faculty and
team to develop
concept

Detailed work plan

Market understanding

Feasibility assessment

**PERFORMANCE
EVALUATION**

Active mentorship,
coaching and
professional support

Develop and prototype
business plan

Technical direction and
guidance from
mentors/experts

Develop, test and
evaluation initial
versions

**PERFORMANCE
EVALUATION**

Complete and test
product, service or
solution

Advance
company/organization,
technology/product via
investors, etc.

Set-up operational
structure

Market readiness
assessment

**PERFORMANCE
EVALUATION**

**Going concern with ongoing
revenue stream**

“...Ryerson’s academic units can design and implement Zone Education that reflects the **nuances of their fields** of endeavour while permitting the **cross-fertilization** of ideas and skills from a wide range of disciplines that is part of the **ethos of Zone Education.**”

Student profile

- Open to current Ryerson students and others (enroll as special students)

Completed first year or higher of undergrad degree with CLEAR standing or equivalent experience

- Interests and traits

Multi-disciplinary, team-focused and collaborative, industry/sector-facing, highly-qualified, able to prototype and innovate, passionate, confident, disciplined, and able to leverage real-world experience

- Evaluated in terms of prior experience/learning

- 800 students approximately (steady state)

Equivalent to 10% of graduating student body

Evaluation and assessment

- A performance evaluation approach to reflect “real-world” working experience
- Formal evaluation is done at least once a semester
 - Two-tiered:
 - A panel of experts (Ryerson faculty and industry experts)
 - Provides supervision and mentorship
 - Gives pass/fail
 - A group of peers (the “peer-to-peer” evaluation)
 - Most effective in the application stage once students have some experience of idea development
 - Final Pitch

Each team required to pitch their product/service/process idea to the expert panel

Governance

- Academic home - single Dean of Record
- Optional Specialization Committee – responsible for academic and admission decisions:
 - Director of Zone Education will be appointed
 - Associate Dean from each of the six faculties
 - Chair (or designate) of the Department of Entrepreneurship and Strategy
 - Optional Specialization Program Coordinator
 - Director of the Digital Media Zone (or designate)
 - Supported by an Optional Specialization Program Assistant

Societal problem

“Technology has dramatically changed the way the world’s problems get solved...**focus not on solving problems but on discovering them.**

Discovering new problems is something that computers can’t really do. Discovering new problems is otherwise known as “creativity.””

Don Peppers

Class of 2013: You Can’t Make a Living Just by Solving Problems

The opportunity

- Optional Specialization :
 - Aligns with Ryerson's current academic plan
 - Furthers Ryerson's commitment to experiential learning
 - Responds to the needs of the market and society
 - A blueprint/road map for funding opportunities; an extension of Ryerson's Strategic Mandate Agreement

Where we go next

THINK WITH US

- The Optional Specialization is only one small step in this direction
- Share your ideas about the best ways to move forward on the innovation of higher education – including zones