

## **Université de Sherbrooke, IRECUS**

### **Master in management and governance of co-operatives and mutual (Maîtrise en gestion et gouvernance des coopératives et des mutuelles)**

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**Location:** Sherbrooke, Quebec, Canada

**Website:** <http://www.usherbrooke.ca/irecus/education/>

#### **Program Description:**

Since 1981, IRECUS (Institut de recherche et d'éducation pour les coopératives et les mutuelles de l'Université de Sherbrooke) at the Université de Sherbrooke provides a university Master's degree (45 credits) dedicated to the co-operative and mutual models of enterprise:

- Master in management and governance of co-operatives and mutuals (MGGCM) – 10 month full-time.
- Bilingual Certificate in Co-operative Management – a 10 month program offered in partnership with Saint Mary's University, Sobey School of Business<sup>1</sup>. (footnote that see SMU for details)

These programs were created by the request of the co-operative and mutual sector to enrich knowledge on co-operatives, and to encourage research and learning. The Master's is offered to students from all backgrounds interested to a social approach to business. Through a co-operative pedagogy, the students experiment with cooperation in all aspects of their training.

#### **Program Purpose:**

The programs intend to offer a new perspective through the co-operative and mutual business model and enhance the management capacity of new and existing managers and members of the co-operative and mutuals organizations.

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

The Master's program uses co-operatives and mutual as the lens through which all management and governance curriculum is developed and delivered. The program aims to challenge traditional enterprise models and presents alternatives that put people and the community at the center of the enterprise.

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

The program has close relationships with the co-operative sector including having an advisory board made up of sector partner representatives.

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<sup>1</sup> See the Saint Mary's University Profile for all details on the Bilingual Certificate in Co-operative Management

## **Student and Graduate Profile:**

**Target Audience:** The Master is dedicated to all types of students, from all background and professional experience. Being affiliated already with the co-operative sector is not a requirement.

### **Student and Graduate Profile for the Master:**

- Average 5 years work experience
- Approximately 50/50 males and females
- Average student is in the beginning of his/her career

**Average Class Size:** 15

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

**Number of Students Currently:** 10 (2013/14 academic year)

**Number of Graduates:** approximately 350 across 30 graduating classes (as of May 2014)

**Recruitment Strategies:** Our most successful recruitment strategy is constant awareness raising through the University marketing network, activities on Québec' campuses, advertising on campus newspapers and booth presented in the main building of the Université of Sherbrooke. We also distribute our advertising through co-operative sector human resources departments.

## **Program content and approach:**

### **Courses:**

#### **Fall courses**

COP 742: Co-operatives, Humanism and Sustainable Development

COP 702: Co-operative Law

COP 706: Co-operative Management

COP 717: Co-operative Leadership

COP 718: Co-operatives, Local and International development

#### **Winter courses**

COP 716: Co-operative Strategic Management

COP 740 Co-operative Education and Training

COP 716: Co-operative Financial Accounting

COP 745: Co-operative Communication

COP 741: Co-operative Consultation Methods

#### **Spring courses**

COP 744: Co-operative Entrepreneurship

COP 722 Financial Governance in the Co-operative

ADM 810: Consulting Project (in a co-op)

ESS 880: Final Research Paper

### **Teaching Methods:**

- Case studies
- Field trip

- Independent learning
- Group based assignments Research project
- Class or group discussions

Courses are in person in a classroom setting. Readings, lectures, discussions, and assignments are used in all courses. Co-operative study visits are occur throughout the program. The program is structured to develop linkages between the program, students, instructors, and the co-operative sector.

The co-operative consulting project and final research paper allow the students to go in the field and apply the co-operative knowledge to a specific managerial problematic.

**Teaching Material Used:**

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

**Program Format:**

The Master's is 10 months full-time and in-person at the University.

**Tuition Fees and Expenses**

The total program costs include: orientation fee; tuition, books and materials; and local co-operative study visits.

Quebec student tuition: \$4,200. Canadian students outside Québec: \$10,000. Foreign student tuition: \$23,000.

**Program's Financial Sustainability:**

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

**Strengths and Challenges:**

**Greatest Strengths:**

- Close relationships with the co-operative sector.
- Professors and instructors involved in the co-operative sector for both learning and research.

**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.