VIT University, Vellore, India

Head count (Full time enrolled) : 26,000 students
Residential % : 75%
Commuter % : 25%

Degrees offered : Ph.D., M.Phil., M.B.A., M.Tech., M.Sc., B.Tech., B.Sc.

Institutional structure:

- Two campuses (Vellore and Chennai, India)
- Each campus has constituent Schools for different disciplines
- Offers degrees in Professional Engineering, Science and Management disciplines
- Ranked as one of the top Engineering universities in India
- Various engineering programmes have been approved by ABET

Goals: The primary objective of the Team will be to understand the complete process of Project Based Learning (PBL) and how to implement the concept in our University successfully.

Specifics:

- How to motivate students to adopt PBL
- How to help/ make students identify a project of relevance to their course?
- How to formulate a project, identify team members, how to plan its execution, etc.
- How to plan the resources, time and work?
- How to formulate faculty development programmes and implement the same so that faculty will be trained in implementing PBL in their courses?
- How to balance available course time of a faculty between lecturing, project guidance, evaluation, etc.?
- How to provide faculty guidance to student teams on inter disciplinary matters?
- How to evaluate a project, measure individual student contribution, etc.?
- How to motivate group work among student team members?
- How to create/ tune the existing Engineering curriculum currently adopted by our University into a PBL based curriculum?
- What are the limitations of PBL and its implementation? How the University can provide administrative & financial support to various teams?

We expect our learning at WPI will help us to derive answers to the above questions so that the concept of PBL can be successfully implemented at VIT University.

Our University's present work with PBL: Currently PBL is offered as part of about 150 courses. PBL group projects are decided by students with the necessary guidance of class faculty. These projects are executed by students within a time period of about 3 months and evaluated by the class faculty concerned. The projects carry a maximum weightage of 20 to 40% of a course. The quality of projects vary widely. Projects are partly supported by the University. Though most projects are based on the course syllabus, few are inter-disciplinary in nature and application based. Specific problems faced include: identifying problems for grades and not for learning; retaining interest of all student members of a project over the time period; diluted evaluation by faculty due to additional workload. We want to share our learnings in implementing PBL so far and are keen to listen from other teams their learnings in this area.