

Panel Proposal - ACE Institute 2021

Submitted by Erin Hancock, erin.hancock@smu.ca (9028027897)

Program Manager (Education), International Centre for Co-operative Management, Saint Mary's University

(Working from home: 205-87 Kearney Lake Rd, Halifax, NS B3M4H1 Canada)

Preferred language of all panelists: English

Will coordinate with all panelists (CCd in submission)

Title: **Doing a Master's in Co-op Management: Does it Affect Practice?**

Subtitle: *Students and graduates speak about specific initiatives they have taken in management and board roles to improve their co-ops and to contribute to the broader sector*

Summary: Can formal education affect co-op practice? The Saint Mary's University's Master of Management, Co-operatives and Credit Unions (MMCCU) program has been enrolling students since 2003. Although the providing centre, the International Centre for Co-operative Management (managementstudies.coop), is based in Nova Scotia, Canada, students from 11 countries have participated (online) while working in the sector, from all ownership types and economic realms. In this panel, students and graduates share how their education has influenced practice in their organizations and each will detail specific initiatives they have taken. They go **beyond just 'business as usual'**, to delve deep into the opportunities of the co-operative business model. You will hear about:

- ❖ A co-operative balanced scorecard and a Co-operative Health Committee in the context of a food co-op (Fred Medicott)
- ❖ A co-operative balanced scorecard and integrated financial reporting in the context of the housing co-operative sector (Michelle Cooper-Iversen)
- ❖ A co-operative impact study in the context of a food co-op (Susanna Collins)
- ❖ Why co-op associations are leading in building an inclusive economy, in the context of multiple sectors (Adam Trott)

By taking a uniquely co-operative lens to their work, they are able to identify, manage and govern differently, share co-operative narratives and expand upon the *co-operative difference*. If we will **'build back better'**, we have to take leadership in the opportunities of our unique business model - being member-centric, being focused on impact for members and community, living our principles, navigating the complexities of democracy and telling our compelling stories.

Related content:

Susanna's example - Links to Central Co-op's Impact Studies:

[Central Co-op: Feeding the Washington Economy I](#) (released in 2017)

[Central Co-op: Feeding the Washington Economy II](#) (released in 2019)

Adam's example:

<https://ncbaclusa.coop/content/uploads/2021/04/Cooperative-Business-Journal-Winter-2021.pdf>

Bios:

Fred Medicott (he/him), Panelist

Fred completed a Bachelor's Degree at the Evergreen State College and spent about a decade working various positions within the food system, on a farm, managed a butcher shop, been a wine maker's assistant, produced hand-made fresh Italian style pasta, managed cafes, a bakery delivery driver, etc. Through these experiences, he began to see the major flaws in our current food system and wanted to take a more active role in positive change. He came to believe that the co-operative model is one of the most powerful tools for substantive food system change. As a result, he began interning at the Northwest Cooperative Development Center (501c(3) non-profit organization devoted to assisting new and existing cooperative businesses in all sectors and industries in the states of Washington, Oregon and Idaho) and eventually became a bookkeeper and co-operative developer. He serves on the board of Olympia Food Co-op and is the co-chair of a new organization seeking to create a business trade association for co-ops statewide. Also, he lives on a sailboat in Washington State.



Michelle Cooper-Iversen, Panelist

Michelle Cooper-Iversen is the Chief Operating Officer of the Co-operative Housing Federation of BC (CHF BC's) Group of Social Purpose Entities— this includes COHO Management Services Society and the Community Land Trust. She is a Chartered Professional in Human Resources (CPHR) and oversees the day-to-day operations of the team with a focus on fostering a corporate culture that promotes accountability to the international cooperative principles, keeping ethical values of honesty, openness, social responsibility and caring for others front and center in the group's business operations and relationship with staff and community partners.

Susanna Collins, MMCCU, Panelist

Susanna Collins is a co-operative marketing professional and holds a Master of Management, Co-operatives and Credit Unions from Saint Mary's University. A recent transplant to British Columbia from Seattle, WA, Susanna was the head of the Marketing team at [Central Co-op](#) a natural grocery co-op for six years. In her time at Central Co-op, the Co-op updated owner benefits, launched two new websites, adopted an online ordering platform for home delivery, converted to a Solidarity Model of worker and consumer

ownership, merged with the Tacoma Food Co-op, opened a second store, won four awards for community impact and sustainability, and implemented a better than \$15 per hour entry level wage—all of which provided rich fodder for marketing, public relations and public affairs strategy. Susanna serves on the boards of the East End Food Co-op and the Co-operative Management Education Alumni and Student Co-operative.



Adam Trott, MMCCU, (he/him), Panelist



Adam Trott is the Director of Member Relations for Shared Capital Cooperative, a national CDFI (Community Development Funding Institution) loan fund that connects co-ops and capital to build economic democracy. He is also the Executive Director of the Valley Alliance of Worker Co-operatives, a co-op of worker co-ops that supports, develops and educates about and for worker co-operatives. Adam spent 13 years as a worker/member of Collective Copies, a collectively managed worker co-op and union shop offering full service printing and book-binding services in western Massachusetts. He received a Master of Management, Co-operative and Credit Union Management from Saint Mary's University in Halifax, Nova Scotia in 2019 and was the proud recipient of the Sid Pobihushchy Award, an award voted by peers in

the program and awarded to the person who best espoused co-operativeness in their behaviour.

Erin Hancock (she/her), Moderator

Erin Hancock is the Program Manager for education with the International Centre for Co-operative Management at Saint Mary's University in Halifax, Canada, which provides online, part-time business education to professionals in co-ops and credit unions globally, executive education and short courses, research, publications, free webinars and more. Erin serves on the board and CSR Committee of iNova Credit Union, is the Governance Steward on the board of the Bus Stop Theatre Co-operative and is also a Director with the Community Housing Management Network Co-operative. Over the years she has also served on other boards, including the Co-operative Development Foundation of Canada, the North American Students of Co-operation, the Ottawa Women's Credit Union and was a co-founder of the Co-operative Enterprise Council of New Brunswick. Erin coordinates the ed.coop open education portal of the Association of Cooperative Educators. She holds an MPhil (Public Policy & Co-operative Development), a BPhil (Leadership Studies, Psychology & International Development), a Certificate in University Teaching and a Certificate in Co-operative Management.



Contact: erin.hancock@smu.ca | +1 902 802 7897 | managementstudies.coop