

# Bringing Business into the Classroom

A Client Based Course Embedded Economics Project

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**Authentic Assignments through partnership with 7 area organizations:**



SBDC assisted with client recruitment. Some were “cold calls”. Commitments were not difficult to obtain. I led with a “Project Overview” and promised no more than 10 hour commitment and only 2 campus visits.

## Integration with Curriculum:

Deliverables were directly mapped to course objectives, major learning outcomes and CBA learning objectives.

## Course Format:

3 Credit MW class. Traditionally lecture based. First 6 weeks of the course was primarily traditional lecture based instruction to deliver foundational material but pace was aggressive to allow time to cover additional topics that directly supported the projects.

## Preparation and Timeline:

- *Fall 2014:* Plan project and design 1 page overview to share with prospective clients.
- *Dec & Jan:* Meet with prospective clients
- *1st Week:* Set teams, obtain non-disclosures and certificates of insurance for job shadows.
- *7<sup>th</sup> Week:* First Round Tables & Report 1 Due
- *9<sup>th</sup> Week:* Job Shadows
- *10<sup>th</sup> Week:* Report 2 Due
- *13<sup>th</sup> Week:* Present posters to faculty and peers
- *14<sup>th</sup> Week:* Reports 3 & 4 Due
- *Finals Week:* Final Round Tables with Clients

## Project Components

Four Professional Reports:

1. Labor Market Analysis
2. Policy Brief
3. Hiring Assessment
4. Compensation Analysis

Plus

- Two round table presentations
- One day job shadow
- Poster presentation to faculty and peers.

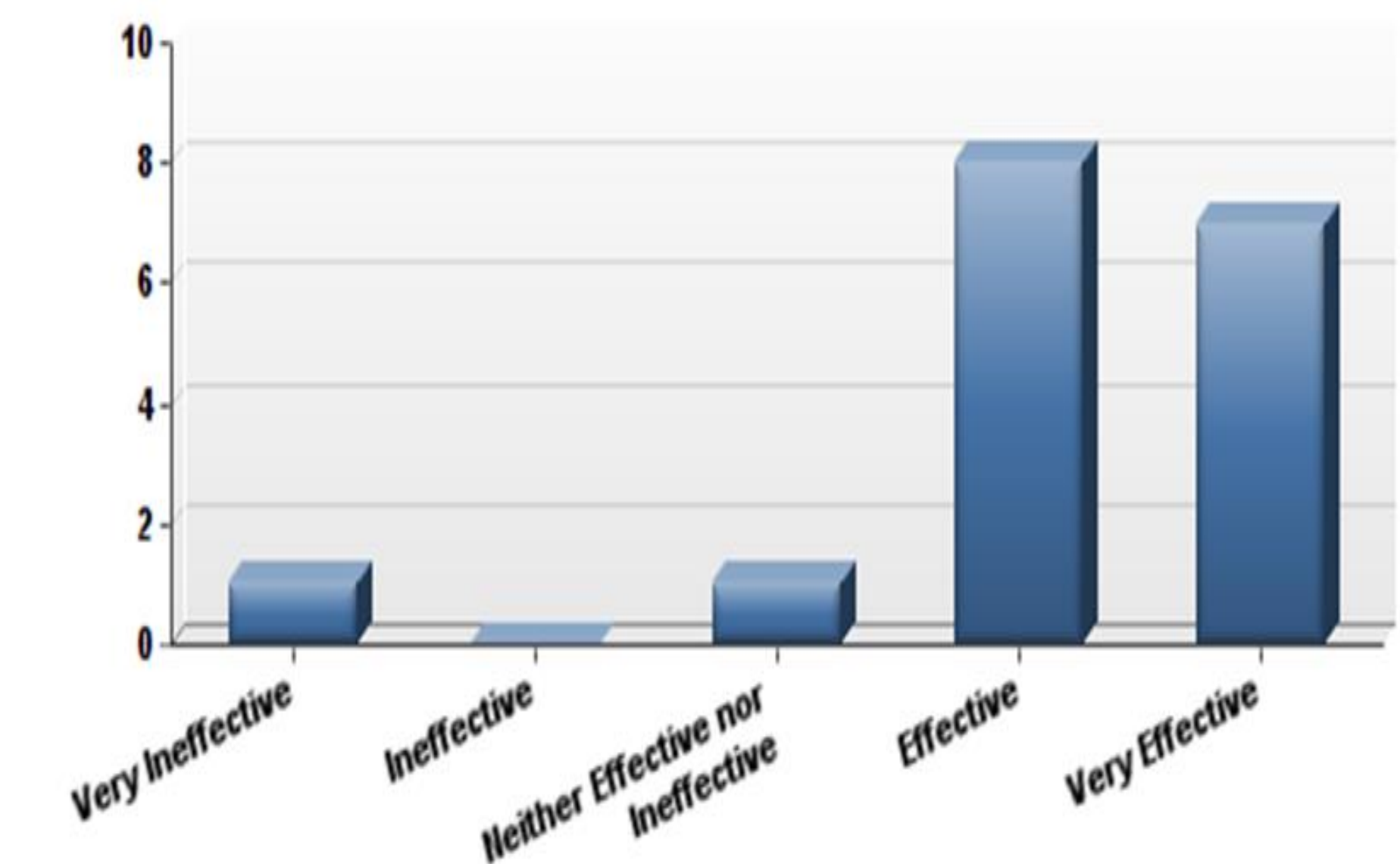


## Assessment

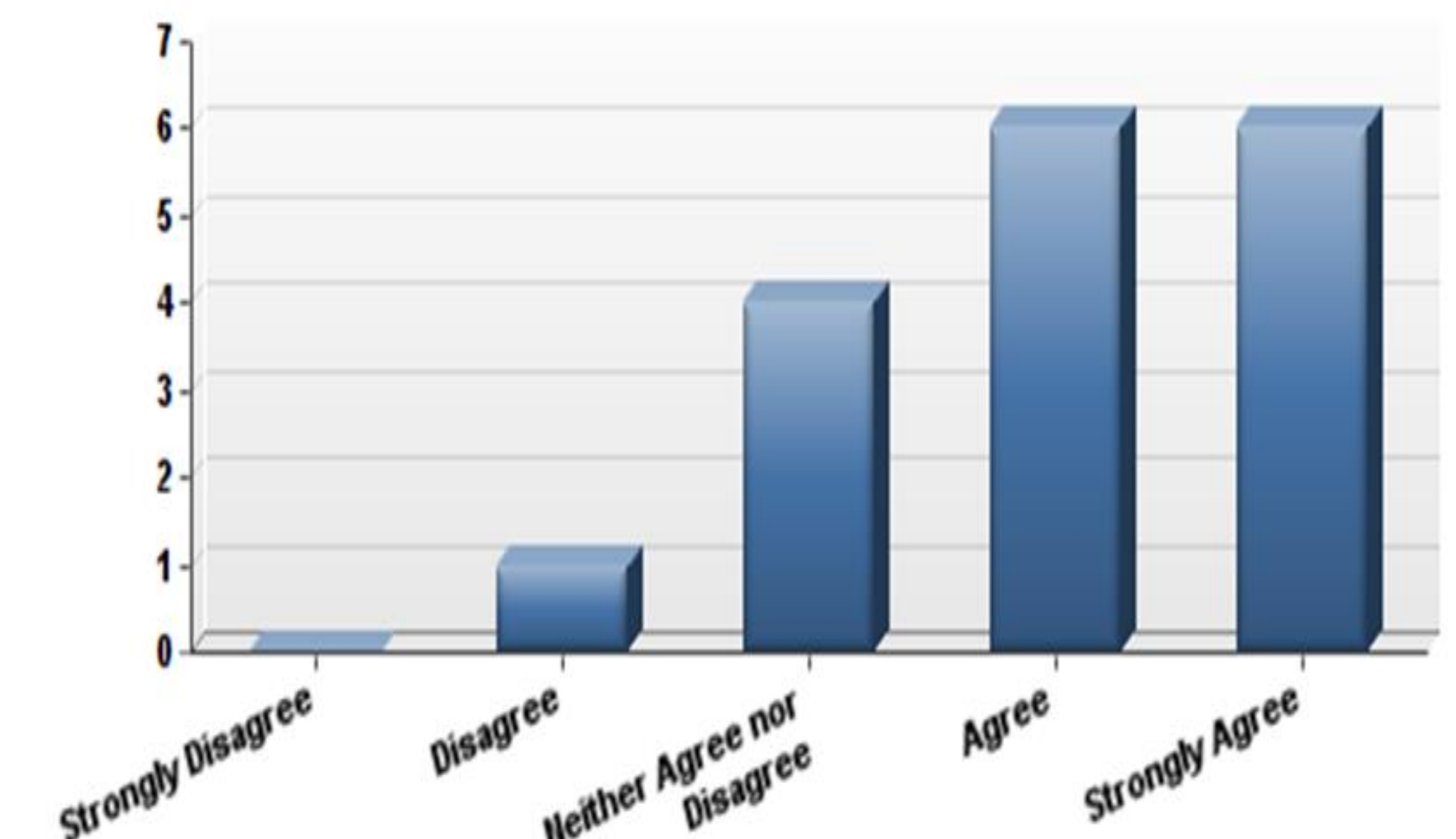
Grades were assigned to team output and CATME adjustment factors were used to assign individual grades. Grievance procedure and binding arbitration ensured recourse. The same rubric was used for drafts and final versions of all 4 professional reports. To incentivize strong drafts, low draft scores would trigger mandatory meetings with me and could cap final deliverable grades. High scores secured a minimum grade on the final deliverable provided all requested revisions were completed. Presentations were pass/fail but students received feedback from clients.

## Evidence of Learning

Perceived Effectiveness of Project for Applying Classroom Knowledge to Actual Businesses



“This project enhanced my understanding of labor economics beyond what would have been possible in a traditional classroom”



## Lessons Learned

1. Managing 7 clients is crazy, but worth it.
2. Multiple deliverables helped smooth the workload and keep clients engaged, but the workload was too heavy for students and me. Either reduce the number or scope of deliverables.
3. Lower exam scores are not necessarily indicative of poorer grasp of material. Projects may compete with time spent studying for traditional exams.

Scan QR to access instructional materials and tools used for this project:

