The Enterprise Systems Center (ESC) was established in 1995. This multidisciplinary center is committed to providing students with experiential learning and leadership development through industry connections. ESC maintains a wide network of regional industry partner relationships to serve as a platform for course projects, summer and co-op projects, and leadership immersion activities. Partnership and teaming on projects and programs is important and occurs frequently with the Department of Industrial and Systems Engineering as well as other departments and centers. The center seeks to advance interdisciplinary research and scholarship relating to analytics, information technology, new process development, sustainable manufacturing, and enabling businesses to maintain global competitiveness. Additional research initiatives focus on discovering new methods for collaboration among academic, industry, and government partners through the use of advanced technology. Emphasis is given to innovative systems approaches to problem-solving. Operating as one of the centers in the P.C. Rossin College of Engineering and Applied Science, the ESC is housed in Mohler Laboratory. The Enterprise Systems Center provides undergraduate and graduate students from all four colleges with the opportunity to work on teams with faculty and industry professionals to solve a variety of real-world problems. Participation in these work teams, with ESC’s unique layered mentoring, provides students with a level of work experience representative of what they will encounter following graduation. This is often a critical factor in winning highly competitive employment positions. Since its inception, ESC has completed more than 1100 projects with industry and government partners. Over 3000 undergraduate and graduate students have benefited from experiential learning and leadership development through involvement with the Enterprise Systems Center.

RESEARCH ACTIVITIES

The ESC conducts research into the development and implementation of enterprise strategies to improve the effectiveness of organizations. This research involves the utilization of systems thinking, information technology, and leadership approaches that add value to engineering education. In its applied research efforts, the Center focuses on analytics techniques, operational improvements, enterprise resource optimization, sustainable manufacturing and product development or enhancement. Operational improvement research with partner companies has included the development of decision support systems, processes for workflow analysis and facility reorganization, analysis of constraints and throughput improvement, evaluating sustainable manufacturing opportunities, agile business practices, utilization of analytics tools and creating new solutions for supply chain management. Work in enterprise resource optimization has included methodologies for business process reengineering and for the analysis and selection of Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) systems. Applied research in product development and enhancement has included the use of computer modeling and simulation along with analysis and evaluation of existing products, and design for manufacturability and assembly support.

Involvement in these applied research activities with industry partners provides Lehigh students with hands-on learning experiences built on progressive responsibility and contribution to high-impact company projects. From these activities, students gain leadership skills and valuable industry experience.

The creation of technology-enabled educational resources augments traditional learning models. Coupled with knowledge management technology, these resources create integrated learning experiences and materials to support engineering courses. The ultimate objective is to identify key components of innovative behavior and develop the educational methods necessary to transfer to students the skills and experiences that will prepare them for leadership roles in society.

The Enterprise Systems Center houses laboratories and initiatives that enhance the overall center mission stated as follows: “The ESC is committed to helping students learn, while simultaneously providing value for our clients. We believe that our research should be driven by industry needs and enabled by close partnerships and collaboration.”