The University of Texas at El Paso, Olin College, form Partnership to Explore Engineering Education Innovation

The College of Engineering at The University of Texas at El Paso and Olin College of Engineering have entered into a groundbreaking multi-year partnership to explore whether hands-on, interactive learning approaches—such as those in use at Olin—can boost leadership skills among engineering graduates and improve student retention.

Through faculty exchanges and other collaborative activities, Olin will help UTEP incorporate key aspects of its project-based learning model into the curriculum of the new program. The Argosy Foundation, a private foundation based in Milwaukee, will provide funds to support the faculty exchanges that will drive the partnership.

“UTEP is representative of what urban, public universities will look like in the 21st century. Innovation in engineering education must come from institutions like UTEP to have the scale and impact our society needs to address our most pressing challenges.” said Richard T. Schoephoerster, Dean of the College of Engineering at UTEP. “A partnership with an institution whose founding mission is innovation in engineering education makes sense for both universities.”

UTEP understands the unique needs of the urban commuting student population and offers Olin the opportunity to learn from their successes in working in a large urban minority setting.

“With the combined innovative educational techniques used at Olin, this partnership blends two successful approaches together. It brings the opportunity to impact each other in learning how these two diverse campus environments can improve engineering education,” said Roger V. Gonzalez, Director of the Leadership Engineering Program at UTEP. “For years, and recently as #1 in the country in social mobility by Washington Monthly, UTEP has been recognized for its social mobility responsiveness.”
As a result of this new partnership, UTEP faculty will spend time at Olin developing and piloting new student experiences to bring back to UTEP, and Olin faculty will travel to UTEP to provide advice and program support.

According to Vincent P. Manno, provost and dean of faculty at Olin, a key part of Olin’s mission is collaborating with partners around the globe who are advancing engineering education innovation.

“UTEP is envisioning a trailblazing program, which promises to be a major step forward in the education of the 21st century engineer,” Manno said.

About Olin College
Located 14 miles west of Boston in Needham, Mass., and enrolling 350 students, Olin College is an undergraduate engineering institution that has been exploring innovative approaches to engineering education since its founding in 1997. Olin's dual mission is to offer an innovative engineering program to talented undergraduate students, and to play a leading role in the transformation of engineering education in the U.S. and abroad. Olin is increasingly recognized as a leader in engineering education reform for its interdisciplinary, hands-on curriculum and distinctive learning culture. More at olin.edu.

About UTEP College of Engineering  The College of Engineering is a national leader in engineering education and a leading producer of doctoral, masters and baccalaureate degreeed Hispanic engineers. The University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP) is the second oldest academic institution of The University of Texas System. Washington Monthly ranks UTEP as No. 7 in the nation in its annual College Guide and Rankings. The magazine's rankings were based on a combination of social mobility, research production, commitment to service and cost-effectiveness of degree completion. For more information visit engineering.utep.edu