

Duke Fuqua's Cryptoventures Course Tackles Rise Of Blockchain, Bitcoin, & Cryptofinance

"Blockchain is the largest disruption to business that I have seen in my career," says Cam Harvey, professor of the Innovation & Cryptoventures course at Duke University's Fuqua School of Business

Written by Thomas Nugent (<https://www.businessbecause.com/resume/thomas-nugent>) 31 Jan 2018
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Upon inception, blockchain technology set off a ripple effect that has grown in magnitude, unleashing a tsunami of disruptive technology set to change the the way we view the world of business and finance.

Recognising the role blockchain would play in the future of business, Duke University's Fuqua School of Business launched an Innovation and Cryptoventures course in 2014, which has grown from a mere 13 students, to 230.

Modules include Bitcoin Myths and Facts, Cryptofinance, and The Blockchain Innovation, among others. When sourcing content for the modules though, course professor Cam Harvey admits the rapidly changing nature of the technology can make it a logistical nightmare.

"Blockchain is the largest disruption to business that I have seen in my career," he says.

"[The course] requires an enormous amount of work," he admits. "When I finish teaching I have to start preparing almost immediately for the next time, and the turnover of content is about 50 percent—you need to really be excited by this space to teach a course like this."

Blockchain grazes on much more than cryptocurrencies and the price of bitcoin though, Cam explains, as his holistic approach covers its impact on supply chain, marketing, accounting, "to the obvious applications in FinTech."

The excitement around it might be outweighed by necessity though, as the technology will tip the scales in favor of automation, increasing the loss of jobs. "Most traditional back office jobs will disappear," he explains.

These jobs are primarily held by white collar workers with undergraduate degrees, many of whom also hold Masters qualifications.

For Cam, this drives a lot of Duke students to his course, as they look to become the "disruptors, not the disrruptees."

This correlates to half of the Duke Fuqua MBA class of 2018 being educated in blockchain technology, and the numbers will surely continue to grow.

Duke Fuqua's Innovation and Cryptoventures module highlights the imperative need for business school students to remain in the loop of current industry trends—technology's impact on the MBA is becoming inherent, and as business schools battle to remain up-to-date it is vital courses like this continue to surface.

As well as teaching students face-to-face through the course's modules—one of which requires them to create a Smart Contract using the Ethereum platform—Cam brings in speakers to inform the students on the latest developments.

Made up of Amber Baldet from JP Morgan's blockchain initiative, Fred Ehrsam, co-founder of Coinbase, and Matt Higginson of McKinsey, among others, the speakers are "a who's who of people in the blockchain space," says Cam.

Their companies all have the same cloud hanging over them—how to harness innovation around blockchain technology—which could burst without direction, washing away the potential the technology has.

"Companies are looking for somebody to identify opportunities," Cam explains. "Many of my students take what you'd think are traditional jobs, but immediately they are tapped to share their expertise on blockchain technology."

There are those though, who actively seek to harness their knowledge, such as Ben Richman, who embarked on Cam's course back in 2015.

Now working within business development at leading provider of blockchain technologies, Blockstream, he is benefitting greatly from the insights gleaned from Cam.

"Without this class I would not have been able to pass the intimidation hurdle, as the blockchain space gets very technical, very quickly," he says.

Gaining an understanding of the opportunities and trade-offs the blockchain presents for different cases, while learning not to be intimidated by the technical details, is why MBA students should opt for this course at Duke Fuqua, Ben adds.

With financial institutions beginning to invest in cryptocurrency and build blockchain technology into their business models, it is set to revolutionize the future of business—MBA students need to ignite their curiosity and delve into

the world of blockchain regardless of whether or not it plays an active part in their own career paths.

"It will fundamentally change the way we view money," concludes Ben, "and I think it's important to have smart, ethical, business minded people with this knowledge."

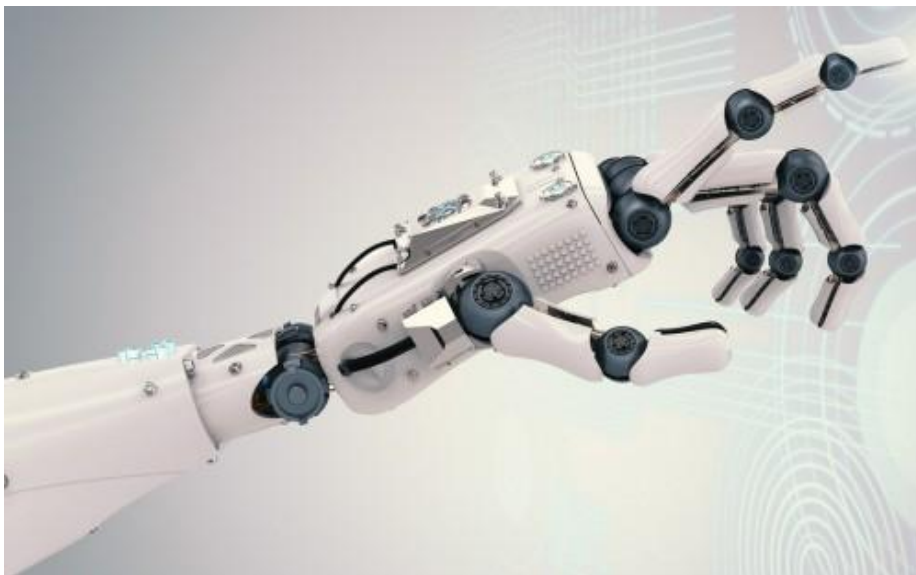
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