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TEACHING NEGOTIATION USING A NEGOTIATION SUPPORT SYSTEM: A PROPOSED STUDY

Debasish Banerjee, Western Carolina University
banerjee@email.wcu.edu
Gary H. Jones, Western Carolina University
gjones@email.wcu.edu
Beth H. Jones, Western Carolina University
bjones@email.wcu.edu

ABSTRACT

This paper describes a proposed study designed to compare different methods of teaching undergraduates the basics of negotiation analysis. Using student subjects, we plan to compare three conditions: reading, lecture only, and lecture accompanied by the use of a computerized negotiation support system. The authors are interested in two facets of learning: comprehension and attitude about the learning experience. Comprehension will be measured with quiz scores and attitude will be measured by responses on a questionnaire.

INTRODUCTION

Conflict resolution and effective negotiation are important skills, especially in business situations where parties involved have different outcomes in mind. College students, particularly business majors, could benefit from some formal exposure to basic principles underlying these skills. One important attribute of a successful negotiator involves understanding the structure of negotiation, *i.e.*, how much "give-and-take" exists. Is a specific negotiation situation a zero-sum game or are trade-offs available? In order to analyze the process of negotiation, one must have a grasp of such fundamental concepts as "settlement space," "Pareto-optimal ('efficient') frontier," "issue weightings," and "issue utility curves." At initial encounter, such concepts can be challenging to learn and, therefore, to teach.

Perhaps as important as the content in this study are the pedagogical approaches to teaching and learning the content. Three different approaches are employed: reading, lecture only, and lecture accompanied by active learning utilizing educational technology (computer-based negotiation support system software).

The following section describes the basics of negotiation analysis. This will give readers a summary of the topic being taught and help them understand the functioning of the negotiation support system, described in more detail in the "Treatments" section. After describing negotiation analysis, we describe pedagogical considerations, followed by the experimental methodology—including subjects, treatments, and dependent variables. The paper concludes with a discussion of our anticipated findings.

NEGOTIATION ANALYSIS

The concept we are trying to teach our students is that of "negotiation analysis" (Darling and Mumpower, 1990; Raiffa 1982), where the theoretical "payoff" of any particular settlement to a negotiator can be determined once his/her preferences on the specified issues have been determined. For example, say two issues are under consideration, salary and vacation time. To negotiator 1, the more salary and vacation weeks he can get, the better. Regarding the former, perhaps the employer is offering a salary of $30,000 and our negotiator is asking for $34,000. If negotiator 1 gets all he is asking for (100%, or $34,000), the payoff is 100 on that issue. If they split the difference at $32,000, the payoff to negotiator 1 on the salary issue is 50. In this example, the utility value of the salary issue is linear, but this is not necessary. (To make calculations possible, each issue's utility curve or "function form" is scaled from 0 to 100.) Regarding the issue of vacation, suppose vacation weeks (ranging from one week to three) is more important to negotiator 1 and is assigned a "weight" of .7; he weights the salary issue .3. To compute the value to negotiator 1 of any particular contract, a simple additive model is assumed which uses a weighted sum of the relative importance of each issue (.3 and .7 in this example) and the payoff of each issue's value. For example, a salary of $34,000 (utility of 100) and 3 weeks of vacation (utility of 100) gives our potential employee a total of "100" on this contract:

(100 utility on salary * 0.3 issue weight) + (100 utility on vacation *0.7 issue weight) = 30+70 = 100

In other words, the job applicant got all (100%) of what he was asking for. Assuming a linear function form, what would be the utility of a contract of $32,000 and 2 weeks vacation?

(50 utility on salary * 0.3 issue weight) + (50 utility on vacation * 0.7 issue weight) = 15+35 = 50.

That is, the job applicant received half of what he wanted.

Once each side's function forms and issue weightings are known, each side's total utilities for all possible contracts can be determined. Generally when using this approach, the utilities for each side are scaled from zero (for the worst contract to one side) to 100 (representing the best possible contract for that side), although any scaling would work. Now each possible contract's value to the two negotiators can be represented on an X-Y graph, with each axis showing the payoff to one of the two negotiators. This same approach can be used when many issues are involved and/or when the issue utilities are non-linear. The resulting joint distribution of payoffs for all potential contracts determines the shape of the "settlement space" and defines the structure of the negotiation problem.

More complicated scenarios can occur when several issues are involved, payoffs on issues are non-linear, and/or negotiators weight the same issues as important. Actually, quite different feasible settlement spaces can result from apparently minor differences in weights assigned to issues and/or differences in the payoff structure of individual issues (Mumpower, 1991). Obtaining an understanding of the feasible settlement region with a 2-dimensional representation can be a valuable aid in understanding negotiation structure.

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PEDAGOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Conventional wisdom suggests that the use of educational technology enhances student learning. This presumption has strengthened with the increase in available computer technology (note Milton, 1978, for an early discussion). Supporting empirical evidence remains sparse, but growing. In the realm of business education, several researchers have attempted to build an empirical case for improved student learning by utilizing appropriate computer technology. Clarke, Flaherty, & Mottner (2001) recognized the continuing need to measure the impact of educational technology. Looking at various technology "tools," their study did find a significant impact on perceived overall learning. The study, based on student self-report data only, was further limited by lack of a control group and lack of an empirical benchmark against which to measure learning. Koszegi & Kersten (2003) combined e-learning technologies (specifically an "e-negotiation" platform) with conventional face-to-face training. By the addition of technology-intensive resources, the authors claimed a contribution to student appreciation of the importance of both procedural and analytic negotiation skills, but were not able to offer evidence of a direct effect on improved learning.

Although Serva & Fuller (2004) were explored generally the evaluation of teaching performance, they had a particular interest in educational technology—and the lack of ways to empirically demonstrate progress in this domain. "Without reliable and valid instructional measurement systems," they wrote, "it is virtually impossible to benchmark new pedagogical techniques, assess the value of new technologies, or provide feedback to instructors for improving their classroom performance" (2004, abstract). Results of this study confirmed that both active learning and effective media use (along with five other dimensions of teaching evaluation) can play a large role in explaining student perceptions of teaching performance. These two important constructs are not typically measured by traditional teaching evaluation instruments.

PROPOSED EXPERIMENT – OVERVIEW

The authors have designed an experiment to compare three methods of teaching negotiation analysis. We plan to use eight classes of undergraduate students. We will have three treatment groups and one control group, with two classes assigned at random to each group. Each group of students will answer 20 quiz questions as a pre-test, then—after their treatment and approximately one week later—answer the same 20 (reordered) questions as a post-test . Students in the three treatment groups will also answer 10 attitudinal questions concerning their "learning experience." The control group will receive no treatment (*i.e.*, receive no instruction on negotiation). Students in the three treatment groups will be given instruction on negotiation concepts in three formats, as

follows: a) group one will read a three-page explanation of the terminology with accompanying diagrams, b) group two will see the same diagrams on an overhead and hear a 15-minute lecture on the topic, and c) group three will be treated as group two (*i.e.*, see the same diagrams and hear the same lecture), but will be given an additional 15 minutes to interact individually with a negotiation support system (NSS) installed on lab computers.

TREATMENTS

Three learning methodologies will be compared in our experiment. First, "reading only", will consist of a 3-page description and 2 pages of graphs showing settlement spaces that result from different negotiator issue utilities and weights. The three-page write-up is similar to the above "negotiation analysis" section, with greater detail in the explanation along with graphs depicting linear and curvilinear function forms (issue utilities), settlement spaces where both negotiators want the same issue (zero-sum game) and settlement spaces where negotiators weight the two issues differently (where there is give-and-take).

For the "lecture only" and "lecture/NSS" treatments, the same professor will give the lecture in each of the four classes assigned to these conditions (two classes per condition). The 15-minute lecture will cover the exact material covered in the 3-page reading, with overheads showing the exact same diagrams present in the reading material.

In the negotiation support system, or "NSS," portion of the "lecture/NSS" treatment, students will spend 15 minutes immediately after the lecture interacting with a software package. This package was developed by one of the authors for this purpose. In this program two parties, employer and employee are assumed. Up to six issues can be managed by this program. Issue utility functions and weights are represented graphically and can be manipulated easily using a mouse to "grab" and "drag" values as desired. That is, the NSS allows easy specification of utility functions and issue weights for the two parties and quickly provides the resulting graphical representation of the settlement space. This facilitates "what if" manipulation by making it easy to modify the utility information and to immediately view the altered settlement space. When the settlement space screen is displayed, a simple click on any point within that space brings up the contract(s) that yield that point. This can provide insight into the tradeoffs implied by the mapping of multiple contracts to a single payoff point. For a more detailed description of the computer system, see Jones and Hill (1993-94). (For a brief system description and thoughts on a more comprehensive NSS, see Hill and Jones, 1996).

COMPREHENSION AND ATTITUDE MEASURES

Comprehension will be measured by a questionnaire containing multiple-choice and true-false questions. We want to know if students understand concepts such as "settlement space," "efficient frontier," the difference between issue utility curves vs. the weightings of the issues, what it means for settlements to have "utility scores" for the two parties, and other notions about possible settlements (e.g., "50-50 is usually the best outcome possible, true or false?")

Attitude questions will be measured on a 7-point Likert scale, from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree". We will ask how much they enjoyed the learning experience, if they feel they

learned about negotiation analysis, if they believed they had learned something useful, etc. As a manipulation check, to be sure the treatments "took", we will ask a question such as "I felt hopelessly lost during this exercise". If any condition has overall agreement or strong agreement to this question, this will indicate a problem with the associated treatment. We do not expect our subjects to agree with this question.

HYPOTHESES

As mentioned above, there is evidence to suggest that the more actively engaged with material students are—in this case utilizing instructional technology—the better they will learn. Secondly, since negotiation structures are computationally intensive and lend themselves to visual representation, we believe this is an area of pedagogy to which computer technology should be well-suited.

H_{1a} Average student scores on a 20-point quiz measuring comprehension of presented material (difference scores) will be higher for the lecture/NSS treatment group than for the lecture-only group

H_{1b} Average student scores on the comprehension quiz will be higher for the lecture group than the reading-only group

Similarly, evidence supports the assumption that student attitude towards learning new (and here fairly challenging) material will be more positive when the learning process involves active engagement with relevant instructional technology.

H_{2a} Average student attitude scores towards the material will be more positive for the lecture/NSS treatment group than for the lecture-only group.

H_{2b} Average student attitude scores towards the material will be more positive for the lecture group than the reading-only group.

SUMMARY

Teaching methodologies are critical in all aspects of the educational environment. Clearly it is important to identify effective means of teaching undergraduate students particularly in an area as relevant and important as negotiation. In this experiment we will examine the effects of computer support/lecture vs. lecture-only vs. reading-only on student comprehension and attitudes towards negotiation analysis. Our study is designed to further identify factors that facilitate effective student learning in this critical area.

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THE EFFECT OF MONETARY INCENTIVES ON ACCOUNTING STUDENT MOTIVATION

Steven V. Campbell, University of Idaho
stevenc@uidaho.edu
Marcia S. Niles, University of Idaho
niles@uidaho.edu

ABSTRACT

We investigate the effects of monetary incentives on accounting student motivation. Using a within-persons decision modeling approach and Russian accounting student participants to investigate potential motivators, we find students with monetary incentives placed significantly less emphasis on their overall grade-point average and significantly more emphasis on esteem in the eyes of classmates. Our results suggest monetary incentives do not undermine personal satisfaction, an intrinsic motivator. Finally, in the context of improving course performance, we find students with monetary incentives tend to value the attractiveness of academic success over the expectancy of success in making their effort-level decisions, whereas students without monetary incentives tend to value the expectancy of academic success over the attractiveness of success in making their effort-level decisions. These findings support the use of Vroom's (1964) expectancy theory as a conceptual framework for understanding accounting student motivation in cross-cultural settings.

ECONOMICS AND BUSINESS EDUCATION A COMPARATIVE STUDY: THE UKRAINE AND THE UNITED STATES

Larry Dale, Arkansas State University
dalex@astate.edu

ABSTRACT

Dr. Larry Dale was one of 14 educators chosen by the National Council on Economic Education (NCEE) and the U.S. Department of Education (USDE), to get a first-hand look at Ukraine's efforts to teach students how to build a democratic market economy. The group, returned from an eleven-day study tour on Ukrainian economic education in the late fall of 2002, in which they visited 22 schools in the cities of Kiev and Lviv. The purpose of this study was to examine the effectiveness of the Ukrainian approach to business and economic education as compared to the status of economic literacy in US High schools.

Our study examined seven different groups of students ranging from those with more than three hours of economics to those who had no formal training in both countries. These students were all given the Test of Economic Literacy, developed by the National Council on Economic Education and nationally normed in 1986, and translated into Ukraine in 1991. The mean scores were tested using a series of Chi Square tests of independence to determine if the difference between the overall performance score and the sub group scores were significant at the .01 level. The results tended to be significant for most of the factors. Then a regression analysis using the two-tailed test at the .01 level of significance, was run on the data. . Amazingly after only 12 years of independence from the Soviet Union the general Ukrainian student population was doing as well on a test of general economics as the American students who had never known any other system. This is because the null hypothesis could not be rejected indicating that there was no significant difference between the Ukraine and American groups overall. An examination of the subgroups was even more revealing. As would be expected, the group that performed the best on the test were American students taking the Advanced Placement tests in economics after completing a high school course in AP Economics that would count for college credit. There was no significant difference between this group and the Ukrainians who were using the economics test as one of their Olympiad exams, a series of exams that are required for graduation from high school. There was no significant difference between the performances of these top groups on the test, since both of these students groups had strong incentive to be successful. These top groups were followed closely by the college bound Lyceum students who also performed significantly better on the test than any of the other groups, except the top groups. There was however a significant difference between the top groups and the Lyceum group who had no formal training in economics, but not those with a minimal three hour course in economics and business. Since 73% of the College bound students had at least a three credit hour course in business and economics during their high school experience, they were almost even with those specializing in economics. The vocational oriented Gymnasium

students were well behind the brighter groups, but performed significantly better than the Midsouth High Schools students, from Arkansas, Tennesse, Missouri and Mississippi, who had not taken any economics or business courses in High School. Also it should be noted that the data from the national norming test bank demonstrates that U.S. students did significantly better in 1986, when the tests were first administered, than the current student groups. This may however represent a regional difference, since the more recent data came from a specific region of the country, where as the 1986 data reflected the national experience. Overall it is sad to note that the Nation that perfected the market economy has students that perform only as well as a nation of students that have only had 13 years of experience with a market economy in transition. One explanation may be that the newness factor has a halo effect on the Ukrainian students enhancing their interest in market economics and thus their performance, similar to the effect that computer tutorials had on American students when they were exciting and new in the 1980's. An exit survey of 352 randomly selected students from the US and Ukraine indicates an abnormally high interest in the subject by Ukrainians as compared to American students.

This study clearly demonstrates two important findings. First the Ukraine educational system with all of its problems has done a miraculous job of improving both interest in economics and more informed students, particularly among the general population. This may relate to the greater discipline found in schools in the Ukraine as much as the perfected teaching methods, but it is till significant. A second important finding is that both countries have some need for improvement in business and infusing economic education into their Pre-college education curriculum if they are to reach the majority of students in either country, since most will not attend College or post-secondary education institutions.

INTRODUCTION

Dr. Larry Dale, Director of the Center for Economic Education is one of fourteen economic educators chosen by the National Council on Economic Education (NCEE) and the U.S. Department of Education (USDE), to get a first-hand look at Ukraine's efforts to teach students how to build a democratic market economy. The group, returned from an eleven-day study tour on Ukrainian economic education in 2002, sponsored by the US Department of Education and the National Council on Economic Education. The tour included 22 schools in the cities of Kiev and Lviv. Three of the schools were public schools, 15 were private Lyceums, 3 were private Gymnasiums and one was a special advanced business school.

The fourteen-member group studied education reforms currently in progress, economic education activities, curriculum standards and assessment, civic education programs, training and delivery systems. Participants also observed the ways in which Ukrainian teachers overcome limited resources and administrative constraints. They also met with representatives of the Ministry of Education, the Ukraine Council for Economic Education, as well as business leaders.

The *International Education Exchange Program* (IEEP) helps international partners, undergoing the transition to a democratic market economy, reform their educational systems through training, materials development and translation, conferences, organizational development, and study tours. The IEEP brings together U.S. economic and civic educators with their counterparts from central and Eastern Europe and the former Soviet states. Since 1995, the National Council on

Economic Education *EconomicsInternational* program has been responsible for conducting the economic education component of the IEEP, which is funded by the U.S. Department of Education Office of Educational Research and Improvement, and conducted in cooperation with United States Department of State.

From the outset of transition in the early 1990s, the task of educational reform in Ukraine has been immense. Relative to the needs of a market economy, the Ukrainian educational system required substantial change. Courses never before offered during Soviet days had to be created and added to the curriculum. Further, all of this required developing a core of economics and social studies teachers who understood and could effectively teach market economic content, in a nation where no educators had any positive background in that field. Finally, the economic freedom and entrepreneurial spirit fundamental to a capitalist market economy required progress toward developing in school students an independence of thought and a greater skill in applying knowledge in new and creative ways. Strengthening this aspect of education required an entirely new style of teaching that would accommodate active learning methods and greater student freedom of expression. These changes began in 1991.

In classrooms of Lviv and Kiev, teachers trained through the cooperative efforts of NCEE and the Ukrainian Council on Economic Education (UCEE) delivered activity-based lessons with skill and great enthusiasm. From the Ministry of Education to the committees developing economics standards for Ukraine, the influence of NCEE is clear – lessons are being designed with an underlying active-learning paradigm and standards are being developed with significant reliance on NCEE guidance and assistance.

It is evident from both discussions with educational administrators and observations of classroom economics lessons that the active learning paradigm has been accredited by a core group of educators in Ukraine. With the leadership of Vladimir Melnyk, President of the Ukrainian Council on Economic Education, and the assistance of his dedicated Center Directors, epitomized by Ihor Shimkiv, it is clear that in time the economic education within the Ukrainian school system will fully adapt to the needs of a market-based economy. The Ukraine has a distinct advantage over the less organized fifty state efforts in the US. In the Ukraine in order to teach any subject teachers must pass a test and then be retested every five years to be certified to teach that subject. The Ukraine has a three-tiered educational system. First there is the "inferior" state run schools, which at least two-thirds of the students avoid, then there are private licensed Lyceums for college bound students and the Gymnasium schools for vocational education. Both of the private systems receive some support from the state and then are certified and monitored by the state. The private schools seem similar to the charter school system active in US Education.

Teachers in Ukraine must overcome many obstacles, making our own problems seem trivial. With a command-economy educational background, a limited number of available market-economy textbooks (according to Irina Parkhomenko, a choice of only seven approved by the Ministry of Education), poorly-heated classrooms, few computers, a paltry supply of paper and teaching materials, and worn-slick blackboards are some of the many obstacles faced by teachers in the Ukrqaine. The teachers of Ukraine, who we had the distinct pleasure to observe, enthusiastically conducted market-oriented economics activities with their students. After completing a full day in the classroom, it is likely that most of these teachers, in need of supplementing their meager salaries of 250 to 500 Ukrainian Currency a month (about $50 to $100), either walked in the cold or rode

a crowded old bus to a second job. Next morning, perhaps lucky enough to get a cold shower, they returned to school to guide their students once again – aiming to win the next Economics Olympiad.

The educational reform process in Ukraine is well underway, but with what results? Is there any evidence to suggest that the active learning approach is generating the desired improvement in intellectual freedom and innovative problem solving? Are students conquering the rigors of the economic discipline and gain survival skills in the world of business? It was the purpose of this study to examine the effectiveness of the Ukrainian effort when compared to that of the United States.

RESEARCH DESIGN

In this study I compared six independent treatment groups The performance of these treatment groups were first tested using the Chi-square test of significance then correlated using the dependent variable of a final score on the High School Test of Economic Literacy developed by the National Council on Economic Educations and tested in a variety of different sized schools across the United States with 4,235 students participating. Most of the students completed the test as an exit exam at the end of their senior year in school in both the United States and the Ukraine. Pretest were not administered in the Ukraine so that data is not available and was not included in either the US or Ukrainian portions of the study. The data from the American schools included: group 1-3 United States population; Group 1 [Y] national data accumulated in the process of norming the test in 1986 and available as a test bank from the National Council on Economic Education. Group 2 [x1] data from two Advanced Placement-Economics high schools [one in a medium sized town in Arkansas and one in Memphis, Tennessee]. These are schools that are teaching the AP course in advance Economics, this group included 293 subjects over a three-year period [2001-2003]. Group 3 [x2] a group of 326 students from a variety of randomly selected schools from all over the midsouth in Missouri, Tennessee, Mississippi and Arkansas.

The Ukraine groups included: Group 4 [x3] the exit exams from the population of 2,032 students in one large city school system run by the government in Kiev. Group 5 [x4] included results from the national Economic Olympiad, which include 1,793 of the brightest students who chose economics as one of their five areas in which they would be examined from all 22 states of the Ukraine Group 6 [x5] 231 students from two Lyceums or private academic high schools. Group 7 [x6] included 337 students from three vocational schools, called gymnasiums. These students are generally not going to attend college, but go directly into the world of work. An analysis of all equation variables is expressed in the functional relationship;

$$y = a + x1 + x2 + x3 + x4 + x5 + x6 + x7 + x8 + x9)$$

CONCLUSIONS

Our study examined seven different groups of students in the US and Ukraine. Three of these groups included 4,854 American High School students near the end of their senior year. Four of the groups included 7,098 Ukrainian students in their senior year. These students were all given the Test of Economic Literacy, developed by the National Council; on Economic Education and

nationally normed in 1986, as an exit exam. This exam was translated into Ukraine in 1999 for use as the exit exam in economics. The mean scores were tested using the Chi Square test of significance and a regression analysis using the two-tailed test at the .01 level of significance. Amazingly after only 12 years of independence from the Soviet Union the general Ukrainian student population was doing as well on a test of general economics (mean score 22.92 for students with a minimum of three hours of economics and 17.23 for students with no economics) as the American students (mean score 23.33 for students with a minimum of three hours of economics and 18.37 for students with no economics, who had never known any other system) based on the combined mean score on the test. The chi-square test determined that these means were not statistically significant from each other. Even though there was a slight difference of 1.87 on the means score between the two groups it was not significant at the .01 level of significance.

An examination of the subgroups was even more revealing. First there was no significant difference between the means of the groups tested in 2001 and 2002 so that data was combined. As would be expected the two groups that performed the best on the test were American students taking the Advanced Placement tests in economics after completing a high school course in AP Economics that would count for college credit. Their mean score was 25.89 [2001] and 26.03 {2001], which were not significantly different from each other but were significant when compared to the other sub groups. Their mean score was 25.71 [2001] and 25.09 {2001], which were not significantly different from each other but were significant when compared to the other sub groups. There was no significant difference between the AP American group and the Ukrainians who were using the economics test as one of their Olympiad exams. Ukrainian Students have three basic tests, which everyone must take in Ukraine language and culture, math and History. The students must select up to 5 exams from a broad range of subjects, as their specialties to form an exit text series from High School if they pass the test they will be certified as scholars in that area, one of these tests is the Test of Economic Literacy, which has been translated into Ukraine. There was no significant difference between the performance of these top groups on the test, since both of these students groups had strong incentive and the class background required to be successful. These students mean score was at the 91st percentile among students taking the exam.

These top groups were followed closely by the college bound Lyceum students who also performed significantly better on the test than any of the other groups, with a mean score of 20.71 [2001] and 19.92 [2002]. There was however a significant difference between the top groups and the Lyceum group who had no formal training in economics, with a mean score of 15.27 in 2001 and 14.73 in 2002. Since 73% of the College bound students had at least a three credit hour course in business and economics during their high school experience they were then performing well in economics relative to the specualized students. These groups performed at the 61 percentile among students taking the exam.

The vocational oriented Gymnasium students were well behind the brighter groups (mean score with economics 18.92 without 12.21 performing as a group at the 51 percentile and the 15th percentile respectively.) This group still performed significantly better than the Midsouth High Schools students, from Arkansas, Tennesse, Missouri and Mississippi (with a mean score with economics of 19.77 and without economics of 11.21 performing as a group at the 56 percentile and the 10th percentile respectively.) Clearly students who took economic, which was less than 20% of the total tested in the US, performed as well as their counterparts in the Ukraine. None of the

Midsouth schools required economics for graduation. The national graduates, regardless of whether or not they had taken any economics or business courses in High School, had a mean equal to that of the Ukraine students who had no economics but both were statistically significant predictors of lack of success on the test. Also it should be noted that the data from the national forming test bank demonstrates that students did significantly better in 1986, when the tests were first administered, than the current student groups. This may however represent a regional difference, since the more recent data came from a specific region of the country, where as the 1986 data reflected the national experience. No more recent national data was available to the researcher. Nor was their any data to test if there was a regional difference back in 1986. However there was no significant difference between the regional AP group and the nationally AP group, on the test, indicating that bright students do equally well in both countries. I do not believe that difference reflects a regional difference, but that students are receiving less information about economics today than they were in 1986. Some additional schools from other parts of the country need to be included to discover if this difference is a regional difference or if today's students are less informed about business and economics. Overall it is sad to note that Nation that perfected the market economy has students that perform only as well as a nation of students that have only had 13 years of experience with a market economy in transition. One explanation may be that the newness factor has a halo effect on the Ukrainian students enhancing their interest in market economics and thus their performance, similar to the effect that computer tutorials had on American students when they were exciting and new in the 1980's. An exit survey of 352 randomly selected from the US and Ukraine students did indicate an abnormally high interest in the subject by Ukrainians, 87%, as compared to American students, 23%. This study clearly demonstrates two important findings. First the Ukraine educational system with all of its problems has done a miraculous job of improving both interest in and more economically informed students, particularly among the elite group of learners. This may also relate to the greater discipline found in schools in the Ukraine as much as the perfected teaching methods, their was no way to test for that difference since it varied from school to school.

A second important finding is that both countries have some need for improvement in the process of teaching and learning business and economics into their curriculum in Pre college education if they are to reach the majority of students in either country, since most will not attend College or post secondary education. The United States, in particular, is at risk graduating with little or no interest or knowledge of basic market, as reported in the research paper "A Nation at Risk" conducted and published by the National Council on Economic Education in 2000. The Ukraine educational systems, with all of its problems, is improving business education thanks to the dedication of a few prominent educators in the government and the private sector, as well as an army of better trained educators. It should be noted that these train inning programs are due in large part to the efforts of the National Council on Economic Education through a massive infusion of funds, from government and private sources, into economic literacy programs in the Ukraine. Such an effort could produce even better results in the US.

A regression analysis of the groups pointed tot eh same differences noted from the Chi square test and both were confirmed by the t-test and f-test statistics. The Ukraine educational systems, with all of its problems, is improving business education thanks to the dedication of a few prominent educators in the government and the private sector. American students may eventual lose ground to these more motivated scholars in the Ukraine with potentially drastic results in the future.

American needs to improve its educational system with respect to economic literacy if it is to remain competitive with the emerging democracies in the market system.

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Table 1: Explanation of the Equation	
Symbol	Independent Variable
y	Student's mean score on 1986 Data Bank
Characteristics Dependent variables	
X1	Group 2 USA Advanced Placement
X2	Group 3 Randomly selected MidSouth HS
X3	Group 4 Ukraine Kiev HS
X4	Group 5 Olympiad Results
X5	Group 6 Lyceum
X6	Group 7 Gymnasium

Table 2: Raw Data

	Male Female	Y Mean	X1 Mean	X2 Mean	X3 Mean	X4 Mean	X5 Mean	X6 Mean
2002	51.21% MALE	1986 N= 4,235 With/23.33 None/18.37	N=181 25.89	N=141 With/19.77 None/11.21	N=2,032 With/22.92 None/17.23	N= 899 25.71	N=331 With/20.71 None/15.27	N=437 With/18.92 None/12.21
2003	52.31% MALE		N=112 26.03 2-year Mean 25.94	N=185 With/19.38 None/11.88	N=1,877 With/23.01 None/15.88	N=894 25.09	N=329 With/19.92 None/14.73	N=299 With/18.22 None/13.73

Total number of test subjects in 1986 was 4,235: in 2001 was USA 322/Ukraine 3699: in 2002 was 297 Ukraine 3,399.
Confirmed by f-test and t-test along with loglinear model.

TABLE 3 Regression Statistics

2002-2003 DATA	1986 MEAN DATA Y	X2	X3	X4	X5	X6
X1	X2=.OO89*	X2=.OO12*	X2= -.OOO9*	X2=.O32	X2=.OO04*	X2= -.OO6*
X2			X2=.OOO7*	X2= -.OO2*	X2= -.OO32*	X2=.O4
X3				X2=-.OO13*	X2= -.OOO1*	X2= -.OO11
X4					X2= -.OO29*	X2= -.OO38*
X5						X2=.OOO5*

COLLEGE OF BUSINESS STRATEGIC PLANNING "OUTSIDE THE BOX"

Olice H. Embry, Columbus State University
embry_olice@colstate.edu
Fonda L. Carter, Columbus State University
carter_fonda@colstate.edu
Robert A. Fleck, Jr. Columbus State University
fleck_bob@colstate.edu

ABSTRACT

The paper describes the use of Fred R. David's Strategic Planning Model as utilized by the D. Abbott Turner College of Business (DATCOB) to think "Outside the Box" and increase creative thinking. The DATCOB Strategic Planning Committee consisting of senior administrators and faculty first conducted an external audit to develop a finite list of opportunities that could benefit DATCOB and threats that should be avoided.

The DATCOB's Strategic Planning Committee next conducted an internal audit to develop a finite list of strengths and weaknesses. This was done by analyzing the DATCOB's management, marketing, financial, and Management Information Systems functions along with all degree programs.

In order to facilitate thinking "outside the box", the DATCOB's Strategic Planning Committee next developed David's Threats-Opportunities-Weaknesses-Strengths (TOWS) Matrix to develop four types of strategies: SO (strengths-opportunities) Strategies, WO (weaknesses-opportunities) Strategies, ST (strengths-threats) Strategies, and WT (weaknesses-strengths) Strategies. These strategies are listed and lead to the conclusion that Fred R. David's TOWS matrix is an effective tool to facilitate thinking "outside the box" and creative strategic planning. Specific results of the planning process are given

INTRODUCTION

A major problem in Strategic Planning is the tendency to simply make small changes to past successful strategies rather than thinking "outside the box" and bringing real creativity to the process. Almost all strategic planning models stress the importance of an external audit to search for opportunities and threats and an internal audit to search for strengths and weaknesses. Fred R. David's strategic planning model, however, utilizes a Threats-Opportunities-Weaknesses-Strengths (TOWS) Matrix to develop four types of strategies: SO (strengths-opportunities) Strategies, WO (weaknesses-opportunities) Strategies, ST (strengths-threats) Strategies, and WT (weaknesses-strengths) Strategies which forces thinking "outside the box" and unleashes real creativity (pp. 200-204). This paper describes one College of Business' Strategic Planning Committee use of David's TOWS Matrix during a two day retreat (Professors Carter, Embry, Fleck, Hadley, Hogan, and

Loughman). The retreat was held on campus, but in a location away from the College of Business to minimize interruptions.

THE EXTERNAL AUDIT

The DATCOB Strategic Planning Committee first conducted an external audit to develop a finite list of opportunities that could benefit the DATCOB and threats that should be avoided. This was done be done by "brain-storming" trends in Economic forces; Social, cultural, demographic and environmental forces; Political, legal and governmental forces; Technological forces and the Competitive forces. The abbreviated results of the session were:

ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES
- More high tech companies locating in our region
- HOPE Scholarship is keeping tuition low for students – "good value"

ECONOMIC THREATS
- No Raises for staff or faculty in the past few years
- Having to do more work with less funding
- Increased competition from other higher education campuses in the region:

SOCIAL/CULTURAL/DEMOGRAPHIC OPPORTUNITIES
- Millennium kids may have more dollars to spend
- Students are better prepared in the long-run
- Higher admission standards
- Community expectation are increasing
- Internships for students are increasing
- Giving to the University is increasing
- State has 10% growth in population

SOCIAL/CULTURAL/DEMOGRAPHIC THREATS
- More Special Needs Requests from students
- Community Expectations are increasing in light of AACSB accreditation
- Job exporting is increasing
- Campus population growth without growth in the budget
- Faculty Unionization is a possibility in the future

GOVERNMENT/POLITCAL/LEGAL OPPORTUNITIES
- Base closings of other military bases may help Ft. Benning
- Three year transfer system for military may move to seven years
- More military at the base for longer periods of time

GOVERNMENT/POLITCAL/LEGAL THREATS
- Base Closures are always a possibility
- Border between Alabama/Georgia

TECHNOLOGICAL OPPORTUNITIES
- Courses with online content
- Hybrid courses best (i.e. 40% internet and 60% classroom)
- More online or hybrid courses make classroom space more available
- Modular education and many online resources

TECHNOLOGICAL THREATS
- Students more savvy than faculty in terms of technology
- Increased demand for technology by faculty and staff in times of declining state funding.
- Shorter attention spans of students
- Need for faculty training
- How do faculty add value?
- Expectation of online content ahead of resources

COMPETITIVE OPPORTUNITIES
- Upper Division – Export lower
- AACSB Accreditation will give competitive edge
- Faculty Development

COMPETITIVE THREATS
- University of Phoenix opening branch in the city and sponsoring civic activities
- Private two-year Military College opening branch close to campus

DATCOB OPPORTUNITIES
1. Program changes made as needed
2. Course delivery methods
3. Partnering with the business community
4. Faculty Development

DATCOB THREATS
- University may decrease resources because of extra resources given for accreditation.
- Competition
- Community Expectations

THE INTERNAL AUDIT

The DATCOB Strategic Planning Committee next conducted an internal audit to develop a finite list of strengths and weaknesses. This was done by analyzing DATCOB's management

functions; marketing functions; financial functions; Management Information Systems functions; and the degree programs. The abbreviated results of the session were:

STRENGTHS
- AACSB Accreditation
- Physical Resources
- Good Faculty (work well together)
- Good Administration
- Community Support

WEAKNESSES
- State Funding
- No research funding
- Summer budget is low
- Better integration of technology is needed

THREATS-OPPORTUNITIES-WEAKNESSES-STRENGTHS (TOWS) MATRIX)

In order to facilitate thinking "outside the box", the DATCOB Strategic Planning Committee, next developed David's (2002) Threats-Opportunities-Weaknesses-Strengths (TOWS) Matrix (shown in the table below) to develop four types of strategies: SO (strengths-opportunities) Strategies, WO (weaknesses-opportunities) Strategies, ST (strengths-threats) Strategies, and WT (weaknesses-strengths) Strategies.

	DATCOB STRENGTHS	DATCOB WEAKNESSES
	AACSB Accreditation	State Funding
	Physical Resources	Faculty Burnout
	Quality Programs	Student Quality
	Good Faculty (work well together)	Low percentage of use of WebCT
	Good Administration	No faculty development funds
	Community Support	Salaries
		Accreditation drain on resources
		No 12 month department heads
		No research funding
		Summer budget
		Integration of technology
DATCOB OPPORTUNITIES	**SO STRATEGIES**	**ST STRATEGIES**
Program change(s)	Faculty development	Increase marketing (AACSB)
Course delivery methods	Joint degree programs	Increase alternative delivery methods
Partnering with the business community	Alternative Delivery method	Reestablish CREDIT
Faculty Development	Journal Contest between departments	Establish communications to match skill sets with expectations
	Curriculum development	

DATCOB THREATS	WO STRATEGIES	WT STRATEGIES
University may decrease resources because of extra resources given for accreditation.	Reestablish "Dean's" hour	Delivery Methods
Faculty replacement costs	Faculty Resource and development subcommittee	Distance Learning
Summer costs		
Competition	Allocate travel funds based on performance	Brown Bag Lunches
Community Expectations	Alternative development	
	Career development for students	

CONCLUSIONS

Fred R. David's TOWS Matrix facilitates thinking "outside the box" and helps unleash creativity. The TOWS Matrix does this by forcing planners to look at both the obvious strategies that build on strengths and opportunities but also those strategies that build on strengths and help avoid or minimize threats, those strategies that help correct weaknesses and take advantage of opportunities, and those strategies that might help correct weaknesses and avoid or minimize threats. The strategic planning committee was able to use the TOWS matrix successfully during a retreat, thereby demonstrating the ability of this model to apply to academic institutions. An ad hoc analysis of the participants' satisfaction with both the process and the results were positive. All the participants felt that they had an opportunity to suggest ideas and that the framework provided a vehicle for both short-and long-term planning.

The DATCOB Strategic Planning Committee was able to select and prioritize more than fifteen initiatives from the above matrix for both a long range and a short range strategic plan. The plan aimed at students, faculty, curriculum economic development and outreach. The committee has also established measurements and objectives to facilitate implementation of the strategic plan.

While not all initiatives identified in the TOWS matrix have been implemented, several have started. For example, a faculty committee will be looking at how to better allocate travel funds. The current process is a fixed amount per person. An alternate strategy is to allocate based on publication record. Similarly, a staff person has been identified as primary WebCT trainer. Similar initiatives have been started and well-received by the faculty.

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AN EXAMINATION OF THE GAP BETWEEN SUPERVISORY JOB EXPECTATIONS AND STUDENT PERCEPTIONS OF THOSE EXPECTATIONS USING THE KANO MODEL OF CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

Charles R. Emery, Lander University
cemery@lander.edu
Samuel H. Tolbert, Lander University
stolbert@lander.edu
Katherine J. Barker, SUNY-Fredonia
Katherine.barker@fredonia.edu

ABSTRACT

A principle complaint of today's supervisors is that graduating seniors do not understand job expectations. This study examines the validity of this argument using the Kano Model of customer satisfaction to clarify and quantify the gap between supervisor job expectations and student perceptions of those expectations. Supervisor and student expectations are examined in terms of "basic needs", "satisfiers", and "delighters" as well as a variety of demographic variables. The findings indicate that the students have a relatively strong understanding of supervisory expectations. Differences in the understanding of job expectations are examined and recommendations are provided to reduce the gaps and improve the supervisor's communication with newly hired college graduates.

INTRODUCTION

A supervisor's primary responsibility is to influence his or her employees to accomplish organizational goals. The clear communication of expectations is central to this process of influencing or motivating the employees. While most supervisors understand their responsibility to communicate expectations, the employees may not understand how critical it is that they understand the supervisor's expectations. This misunderstanding seems to be particularly apparent in newly hired college graduates (Kruger, 2004). In a sense, the employee (or the newly hired college grad) must view "the supervisor as the customer." As such, subordinate employees are the providers and it is their responsibility to determine and satisfy their supervisor's (customer's) expectations. However, it is not enough for the subordinates to merely understand customer needs or expectations; they must be able to quantify them. All needs or expectations are not created equal, and the resolution of all needs does not have the same impact on customer satisfaction or in this case, the employee's acceptance by the supervisor and performance rating or promotion.

Research in higher education indicates that students who better understand the vagaries of professor expectations get higher grades in that particular course and maintain higher grade point

averages (Emery, 2002). As such, it is reasonable to believe that employees, who better understand their supervisor's expectations, will perform better. The purpose of this study is to examine the gap between supervisory job expectations and student perceptions of those expectations using the Kano Model of customer satisfaction. Recommendations will be offered to higher education for reducing the gap and thereby improving the communication of job expectations between supervisors and potential job candidates.

KANO MODEL

The Kano model (Kano et al., 1984) was developed within the Japanese manufacturing industry to determine and prioritize/weight customer requirements or expectations. It illustrates that all needs are not created equal, and the resolution of all needs does not have the same impact on customer satisfaction or a performance report. Three types of needs are identified in this model: BASIC NEEDS, SATISFIERS, and DELIGHTERS. The first type expectation is the "basic need" or assumptions that customers have about a service (e.g., the availability of a restroom in a restaurant or clean silverware). In a management setting, the manager may have a basic need of employee punctuality. While achievement of these needs do not satisfy the customer (supervisor), their absence quickly causes dissatisfaction. The second type of expectation is the "satisfier" or the list of items that customers (supervisors) would normally mention as keys to their satisfaction, i.e. a responsive server in a restaurant or employees who meet deadlines in a management setting. Achievement of the satisfiers increases customer satisfaction, but only at a linear rate. The third type of expectation is the "delighter". These are needs that a customer does not have conscious knowledge of or fall into the category of "wouldn't it be great if someday an employee provided…." For example, a fine restaurant that provides baby-sitting facilities or an employee that synthesizes material into new way of looking at things. A provider that does not provide delighters will still have satisfied customers (supervisors), but those that provide delighters will experience a nonlinear increase in customer satisfaction.

METHOD

The supervisory survey and expectation results were taken from a study by Emery and Tolbert (in press) which examined the expectations of 270 first level supervisors using the Kano model of customer satisfaction and across a wide variety of variables (e.g., organizational discipline, the type of business and industry, number of direct and indirect subordinates, gender, experience, and age). The survey contained the following list of 32 typical expectations: Accountability, Appearance, Attendance, Attitude, Behavior, Commitment, Competitiveness, Continued Learning and Goal Setting, Customer-Oriented, Decision-Making, Entrepreneurial Spirit, Improvement-Oriented, Initiative, Innovativeness, Integrity, Interpersonal skills, KSAs (knowledge, skills and abilities), Leadership, Multitasking, Oral Communication, Performance, Personality, Planning, Problem-Solver, Resource Management, Safety, Social Responsibility, Stress Management, Team Player, Time Management, Written Communication, and Willingness to Change. In turn, the survey used in the Emery and Tolbert study was administered to 673 undergraduate business seniors at four universities and colleges. Students were asked to pretend that they were first level supervisors when

completing the survey. In other words, they were asked to clarify and quantify the expectations that they would have of employees. Subsequently, a comparison was made between the supervisor and student expectations to determine gaps in the students' understanding of the "real world." Further, the expectations and the relationships between the expectations and demographic variables were examined for variances (p>.05) using SPSS cross-tabulation and chi-square analysis and PHstat chi-square analysis of proportions.

RESULTS

Usable questionnaires were obtained from 662 business seniors across the following demographic variables: (1) State university (437) -- Private college (225); (2) Male (310) -- Female (352); (3) GPA above 3.0 (163), between 2.5 and 3.0 (282), 2.5 and below (217); and (4) Working while attending school (at least 10 hours per week) (158) – Not working (504). A chi-square analysis of the demographic variables indicated two significant differences in the perceptions of expectations. There was a significant difference (p<.001) in the perception of job expectations between those students who worked while attending college and those who did not. The perceptions of students who worked while attending school were more closely aligned with the supervisors' expectations. Also, there was a significant difference (p<.001) in the perception of job expectations between those students who had above a 3.0 GPA and those that had below a 2.5 GPA. Work expectations of those students with the higher grade point average were more closely aligned with the supervisors' expectations.

Overall, however, there were surprising similarities in the attributes that first-level supervisors and students expected of employees on the job. In fact, eight of the eleven work attributes (73%) chosen by the supervisors were also selected by the students. Specifically, both groups selected attendance, attitude, performance, accountability, initiative, leadership, problem-solving, and team player/team skills. There were, however, some notable gaps or disagreements. For example, the supervisors listed time management, learning and goals, and innovation as important work attributes while the students listed appearance, commitment, and improvement. Also, surprisingly, the supervisors and students agreed on the level of expectations (e.g., basic needs) in most cases. The two exceptions were that the supervisors saw "performance" as a "basic need" and the students saw it as a "satisfier" and the supervisors saw "initiative" as a "satisfier" and the students saw it as a "delighter."

Table 1.
Supervisor and Student Expectation Frequencies by Expectation Levels

Column 1	Column 2	Column 3	Column 4
Supervisor Basic Needs	Percent	Student Basic Needs	Percent
Attendance	17.3%	Attendance	19.4%
Attitude	12.5%	Appearance	10.2%
Performance	8.7%	Accountability	9.1%
Accountability	5.6%	Attitude	8.6%

Supervisor Satisfiers		Student Satisfiers	
Initiative	13.8%	Performance	8.6%
Team Player	9.2%	Commitment	7.6%
Time Management	9.1%	Team Skills	7.6%
Learning & Goals	6.0%		
Supervisor Delighters		Student Delighters	
Innovative	16.9%	Problem-Solving	10.8%
Leadership	9.0%	Initiative	8.6%
Problem-Solving	5.8%	Leadership	8.1%
		Improvement	8.1%

DISCUSSION

Overall, there is little evidence to support claims that business seniors don't understand the expectations of the workplace. The findings indicate that students have a reasonably accurate perception of what is expected of them and have a good understanding of expectation levels. This was particularly apparent in the students with higher GPAs and/or students who were working (more than 10 hours per week) while attending college. This isn't surprising because students with higher GPA have a higher "pattern sense" and more readily discuss expectations with a superior (Emery, 2002). Further, those with more work experience have a better understanding on what it takes to survive and prosper in the "work world." Also, it was particularly reassuring to note the lack of perceptual differences between genders and types of universities. Additionally, it was particularly reassuring to note that the students recognized "attendance", "accountability", and "attitude" as the same "basic needs" chosen by the supervisors. This indicates that the students understand the essential requirements of "real world" employment and as such, won't be completely out-of-step with management.

There were, however, some differences between the students and supervisors that merit discussion. The students failed to see "time management" as a critical attribute. According to the supervisors, the essence of time management is the setting of priorities and then organizing and executing resources to satisfy them. Many supervisors believe that "self-management" may be a better term, because it implies that we manage ourselves, in the allotted time, for maximum effectiveness. This is no doubt a key in today's highly competitive environment and the reason that recruiters often look for evidence of "time management" in a candidate's background. Also, it is interesting to note that the students, who did suggest "time management" as a critical attribute, were the small percentage who had both a high GPA and part-time employment.

Also, students failed to see "learning and goal setting" as a critical job attribute. Supervisors see this attribute as evidence of one's desire to be challenged, willingness to learn and motivation and process for self-improvement. Many believe this attribute is central to the culture of a "learning organization" and as such, have placed it high on recruiters' checklists. Most students, however, have not grasped the importance of how continued learning affects an organization's success. Students also failed to see "innovation" as a critical attribute. They did, however, identify "improvement" as a critical attribute. Perhaps this difference occurred because the students failed to understand the true nuances between innovation and improvement.

On the other hand, the students selected two interesting attributes that the supervisors didn't. Specifically, the students selected "appearance" as the second most popular "basic need" while the supervisors didn't select this attribute in the "top three" at any expectation level. This difference may be partially explained because "appearance" in the work force has been often emphasized to students whose appearance in the classroom has been less than business-like. Further, students must understand that while "appearance" is important in the workforce, it doesn't take the place of some other more important attributes (e.g., performance). The other difference was that the students listed "commitment" as a key attribute while the supervisors didn't select this attribute in the "top three" at any expectation level. The question concerning this difference is why didn't the supervisors believe this was a key attribute? Most of the literature on successful organizations suggests that you get the right people on the bus and that commitment is part of the definition of "right people" (Collins, 2001). Perhaps first level supervisors aren't looking for commitment as much as they are just looking for performance.

Additionally, it is interesting to note that the students saw two job attributes at higher levels of expectation than the supervisors. The students saw performance as a "satisfier" rather than as a "basic need." This is particularly worrisome because the supervisors see this attribute as a "basic need" or something expected without question. In other words, if satisfactory job performance isn't provided, the supervisor is dissatisfied. Also, since job performance is expected, it is particularly hard to "delight" the supervisor in this area. Also, the students saw "initiative" as a "delighter" rather than a "satisfier." This suggests that the students believe that "initiative" is a rather rare commodity and something that isn't really expected by supervisors. This is also worrisome because "initiative" is a "satisfier," i.e., one of the attributes that a supervisor uses to mentally judge a subordinate's overall performance.

CONCLUSION

Determining the customers' needs and measuring the gap between expected service and perceived service is a routine customer feedback process that is practiced by leading service companies. Employees provide service to their supervisors and therefore, should be subject to the theories and strategies governing service quality and customer satisfaction. As such, a key to developing improvement strategies within the supervisor-subordinate dyad lies in examining the discrepancy between customer (supervisor) expectations and the provider's (subordinate's or student's) perceptions of those expectations. Strategies for closing this gap or discrepancy can be approached from several aspects by higher education.

The first step is to insure that the students understand their organizational success is dependent upon how well they view their "supervisors as the customer." In other words, students should consider supervisor expectations as a road map for their organizational success. The second step is to insure that the students understand the typical first-level supervisor's expectations. Further, students need to be reminded to discuss their supervisor's expectations with them. The third step would be to train the students to recognize the levels of various expectations using a Kano seminar. Once the training is accomplished, students should discuss the implications of gaps between the supervisor's expectation and the subordinate's perception of those expectations. Also, it is important to insure that the students understand the importance of meeting the "basic needs"

while attempting to understand those attributes that delight the supervisor (e.g., leadership, innovation, and problem-solving).

In closing, communication is the glue that holds organizations together. The communication of expectations affects organizational performance (e.g., behavior, productivity, change, coordination, etc.) and culture. While it is important for subordinates to understand the expectations on their performance evaluation instrument, it is equally, if not more import to understand the expectations in the supervisor's mind. As noted in the Leader-Member Exchange Theory (Engle & Lord, 1997), it is the supervisor's mental software that determines whether the employee is in the "in group" or the "out group", not the formal performance ratings. Understanding what's on the supervisor's mind requires listening, pattern analysis and asking questions. In other words, the transmission, translation and performance of expectations require all the functions of a successful communication model. In short, it is paramount for organizational and personal success that the newly hired employees' understand their supervisor's expectations.

REFERENCES

Detailed references are available upon request from cemery@lander.edu

PERSISTENCE AND PERFORMANCE IN ASYNCHRONOUS COURSES

Robert A. Fleck, Jr., Columbus State University
fleck_bob@colstate.edu
Karen L. Hamilton, Columbus State University
hamilton_karen@colstate.edu

ABSTRACT

Several studies have shown that students in courses that incorporate some asynchronous content often achieve at higher levels than in courses taught completely online or in a more traditional synchronous format. It may be that one of the important issues contributing to student achievement is the use of selective online content and resources.

The authors have taught several undergraduate and graduate-level courses in a variety of disciplines using WebCT and other tools that tracked student usage of course content and resources. Data collected includes number of attempts at online tutorials and quizzes, frequency of use of other resources, timing of access, and scores on graded exams and projects.

The undergraduate courses in the study include required courses in computer skills, a required course in the Computer Information Systems major, and an MBA course on Information Systems

The analysis of the data provides some insights that may be contrary to commonly accepted beliefs for web-supported classes. The final comments and conclusions may provide instructors with additional reasons to support specific classroom management policies in online as well as traditional synchronous courses.

INTRODUCTION

WebCT (Web Course Tool) is a course shell that enables instructors to design a complete (or partial) course that can be used to deliver content, administer quizzes and surveys, and maintain communication between students and faculty via chat rooms, discussion areas, and localized e-mail. As these functions are performed, student activities are tracked. For example data elements collected include time of first course access, time of last course access, number of hits, number of reads, and number of posts. The WebCT grade book records WebCT delivered quizzes and may also be used to report other student activities not automatically captured by WebCT. For example, an instructor can record and report absences. The grade book also provides a calculation function that be used to compute averages based on an instructor-developed formula.

Using course shells such as WebCT can be a useful communication tool for both traditional and fully asynchronous courses. To an extent, using WebCT incorporates asynchronous elements into a synchronous course by supporting communication between students and the professor any time and anywhere.

The ability of WebCT to capture student usage of some course elements and the inclusion of instructor measures such as course grade and attendance provides a database for assessing success in asynchronous courses. The authors used this data to perform a regression. In the regression equation, the independent variable was the course grade (A=4, B=3, and so forth) and independent variables were hits, posts, absences (number of times) and number of items read.

THE UNIVERSITY

Columbus State University is an urban institution within a metropolitan area of approximately three million residents. The student population exceeds 7,000 and is demographically diverse. The university offers undergraduate and graduate degrees in a number of fields including health-care professions, education, the sciences, and business administration.The majority are non-traditional students who commute and work.

THE COURSES

The courses used in the study covered a variety of levels in the college of business. Course descriptions for each course appear below. The descriptions are abbreviated/annotated versions that appear on the university's web site. Each course is prefixed with an annotation indicating its level. All courses are semester-long courses and all, with the exception of the MBA course, were taught during regular semesters. The MBA course was taught during the summer with a modified calendar. The calendar had fewer days than a regular semester, but class periods were longer to assure the requisite hours were included.

(MBA) Management Information Systems The role of management information systems in supporting the decision-making process in modern business organizations. This course emphasizes the use of information as a competitive tool. Open to MBA students only.

(Junior-level course required of all Business students) Principles of Information Technology Management Completion of the Lower Division Business. Emphasis on management decisions involving single and multi-user systems, network architecture, database management systems, and the software development process. Students survey types of information systems used by modern organizations: transaction processing, decision support, executive information, functional area support, strategic, and expert systems.

(Junior/Senior-level course in the Computer Information Systems Major) Data Communication. The design and management of computer-based networks for business applications. Hardware, software, and security in a business environment are discussed.

(Junior/Senior-level course in the Computer Information Systems Major) Database Design Investigation of database design technology translating user information needs into working databases with an emphasis on relational models and software.

(Freshman/Sophomore Computer Skills Course) Introduction to Microcomputer Application Software. Introduction to the use of microcomputer software. Software applications include word processing, spreadsheets, databases, operating systems, the Internet, and university information resources. Course satisfies University's computer literacy requirement.

The MBA course was taught 40% Internet and used the discussion area in WebCT for students to post comments on a comprehensive question posted by the instructor. After a specified period of time, students were then required to post comments on original postings by other students. Three such graded activities were part of the course and were a significant portion of the grade.

The junior-level MIS course, the database course, and the freshman/sophomore level computer skills courses used WebCT to support the course and were taught in a traditional setting. The class met on a regular basis.

Data communications was taught 50% Internet using WebCT. Rather than meeting twice a week for 1.25 hours, the class met once-a-week for 1.25 hours. During that time, traditional lecture/discussions were held and exams administered in a proctored environment. The Internet portion of the class was a time for students to collaborate on networking projects and homework. Homework was submitted via WebCT and presented in class by teams.

ANALYSIS

Each of the courses was analyzed separately. The MBA course regression was significant at the 0.121949685 level. The most important item in the regression equation for the MBA course was items read. However, one item that caught the attention of the authors was the relationship between grades and attendance. Although the relationship was not significant, it was a foretaste of results in other classes.

The regression equation for the data communications class was significant at the 0.004 level. The most important independent variable in the data communications class was "absences" in predicting the course grade. The significance level was 0.090901293 and the coefficient was negative indicating that the more absences, the lower the course grade. A similar relationship between days absent and grade was found for the junior-level MIS course. The F statistic was significant at the 0.11 level and the most important independent variable was the number of days absent at a significance level of 0.07. More significant results were found for the skills course with the regression significant at 0.003084642. Again, the most important independent variable was the number of days absent at 0.001. Similar results were found for the database course. The most important independent variable was number of absences and it also had a negative coefficient. The significance level was 0.11.

COMMENTS

All the courses for which the regression was significant had an inverse relationship between attendance and grades. The same is true for courses that did not have a significant regression equation. The courses were taught by different faculty to different groups of students; students could not be in two courses at the same time due to pre-requisite requirements or scheduling reasons. Only the MBA course indicated a strong relationship between an asynchronous course element and grade. Still, the MBA coefficient for attendance was negative indicating a (weak) relationship between attendance and grades.

In addition, the most significant factor in most of the regression equations was the intercept. For example, one course had an intercept of 3.27 with a significance level of .00000003. This

indicates that the predicted grade is at least a B. Since this was an upper-division course in the major, this result is not surprising; most students in the class were seniors. One would expect the average grade in such a course to average around a B.

The relationship between grades and attendance across all levels of courses poses some interesting questions since it might be expected that other course elements would play a stronger role in grade determination. A closer look at student behavior and constraints on the data may offer some insights and valuable conclusions useful to the academy.

First, all course sections had some strict attendance policy. Students who exceeded that policy were dropped from the course and not included in the study. However, there are still a number of F grades from students who stayed in the course. Hence attendance could affect grades. In at least one case, excessive absences (prior to forced withdrawal with a WF) lowered the course grade by one letter grade.

Second, it is quite possible that students, who saw that they would not be able to maintain the required level of attendance, dropped the course before a grade had to be assigned.

However, it is also possible that other variables that were not included in the study act as intermediaries and hence cloud the issue. Those possible issues are briefly discussed below and left for further research.

CONCLUSIONS

It would be reasonable to say that high rates of attendance are good predictors of high grades. The quasi rigid attendance policy of instructors who supplied data for this study indicates that the upper limits of absences were strictly enforced. Since the number of absences is not a continuous variable, some of the assumptions of the regression are violated, but the trend is clear across all course levels. It may be that a more liberal attendance policy would yield a different relationship. However, such experiments could be to the detriment of student performance and called into question by other members of the academy.

Could it be that a belief, widely held by faculty, that attendance is important, might actually be true? Could it be that superior students are also those with better time management skills and therefore better able to judge the relationship between attendance, grades, and their commitment to other activities?

The positive impact of this conclusion should, to some extent, be a comfort to all faculty, whether they teach traditional synchronous courses or devote themselves to completely online, asynchronous courses. That impact is that absences do have consequences and that attendance policies are important. While the study is limited to business courses, all of which had some level of web-support and/or asynchronous component, the consistency of the data indicates that similar results may be found with other delivery methods and disciplines. It should also be pointed out that the strongest relationship between attendance and performance as measured by grades was found in the freshman/sophomore course. This would suggest that strict attendance policies may be more important in these courses than in upper-division, major courses. Attendance in these lower-level courses may also have implications for overall retention at the university. Careful monitoring of attendance should therefore be one of the trigger elements during the first two years of college.

Those in enrollment management and retention should be prepared to intervene with at-risk students identified by attendance patterns.

However, these findings to not obscure other elements in a class that contribute to student success. The study was limited to four independent variables, only three of which related to course elements. In the MBA course, one of those non-attendance elements proved to be a strong predictor of success. Since this was a required element, failure to perform would clearly have been to the detriment of a student's grade.

The common factor in all the results is that requirements, clearly stated, do have an impact. But the loudest element is that attendance and its concomitant element of participation and course ownership are important contributors to a student's success. It is therefore incumbent upon faculty to emphasize the importance or regular and consistent attendance and participation.

USING FILM TO TEACH LEADERSHIP; ENCOURAGING STUDENT REFLECTION

Kevin R. Howell, Appalachian State University
howellkr@appstate.edu

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this paper is to share some of the experiences and insights I have gained through teaching "Leadership in Technical Settings" over the past two years. This class brings together students majoring in Building Science, Electronics, Furniture Studies, Drafting and Design, Graphic Arts and Imaging Technologies and Interior Design. Half of the class is devoted to exploring the literature surrounding leadership. The second half of the class engages the students in a series of pseudo – problem based learning exercises. These exercises present a series of feature films, each with their own unique flavor. Students reflect on each film in terms of a particular theory. Topics addressed include basic course structure issues, developing Learning Guides for films, Character Development and ethical issues.

THE MBA: DOES IT DO THE JOB?

Robyn Hulsart, Ohio Dominican University
hulsartr@ohiodominican.edu

ABSTRACT

Controversy exists within the business community concerning whether a business school education is congruent with the needs of business. This quantitative study answered the question – do business professionals in the Columbus, Ohio area perceive graduate schools of business as adequately preparing employees with the skills considered important to the business organization?

The perception of individuals hiring MBA graduates gives the degree its special value. If a disparity exists between skills MBA programs are teaching and those perceived as important to business managers, it is likely new graduates will encounter difficulties securing employment commensurate with their expectations. Identifying the existence of such a disparity is important for the student of MBA programs and their respective programs of academic preparation. If not addressed, the end result is likely to be an oversupply of MBA graduates and an eventual decline in the demand for such preparation. The effects could be expected to subsequently create viability questions for many academic programs.

Identifying the skills perceived to be important to business organizations and the skills perceived to be acquired as a result of graduate business education would provide vital information for the supply chain of higher education. This study focused on twelve selected skills categorized as either hard skills or soft skills. Skills considered as qualitative or soft were customer orientation, decision-making, leadership/interpersonal, negotiation/conflict resolution, oral communication, and team building. The quantitative or hard skills were analytical/quantitative, computer, entrepreneurial/initiative, planning/organizing, risk taking, and written communication.

The research questions investigated were: What skills (hard vs. soft) do business managers perceive to be most essential to the business organization?; What skills (hard vs. soft) do business managers perceive graduates schools of business to be doing an adequate job of preparing students?; and, Is there a difference between the skills perceived to be essential to the business organization and the level of preparation provided by graduate schools of business education?

This study was instrumental in the development of an MBA program designed to be specifically marketed to students working in environments from which they would expect to receive tuition remission.

A NEW WAY OF LOOKING AT ASSESSMENT: THE JOB DIAGNOSTIC SURVEY

William T. Jackson, University of Texas of the Permian Basin
Corbett F. Gaulden, Jr., University of Texas of the Permian Basin
Mary Jo Vaughan, Mercer University
jackson_w@utpb.edu

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to explore the potential of using an alternative approach to assessing the impact of continuous improvement of curricula. Borrowing from Job Characteristics Theory, a modified Job Diagnostic Survey (JDS) was administered to all students enrolled in an academic business degree program at the mid-stage of an initial accreditation process. While a follow-up study will be necessary to assess improvement, this initial analysis suggests potential of the JDS as an appropriate tool for assessing the viability of course content and design.

Assessment of student learning has moved to the forefront of business schools over the last decade (Palomba & Banta, 1999, 2001; Banta, Lund, Black & Oblander, 1996). Much of this new emphasis is directly attributable to AACSB International expectations. In fact, many perceive this emphasis to increase with the new standards recently adopted that focus on assurance of learning (Black & Duhon, 2003; Mirchandani, Lynch & Hamilton, 2001; Michlitsch & Sidle, 2002).

Most schools seeking accreditation are torn between accomplishing standardized tests, imbedded measurements or surveys to seek a measure of improvement. An almost universal approach has been to survey students with either the periodic student evaluations administered each semester or an instrument that is locally prepared that asks a series of questions to provoke attitudinal responses. Many of these instruments lack a high level of internal validity.

The purpose of this research is to suggest an instrument that has already proven to be valid and reliable, and at the same time addresses those issues that should be important to all business schools. The instrument to be recommended is a modified Job Diagnostic Survey. This instrument addresses what many, such as Charles Duke (2002), see as being as important as actual content absorption-student perceptions. As will be presented in subsequent sections of this paper, the JDS focuses on how the job design (curriculum) creates unique psychological states (student feeling toward their educational environment) and thus creates affective outcomes (satisfaction or lack there of).

The JDS proposes that positive results will result in the work place (high motivation, high satisfaction with the job and high performance level) when three critical psychological states (experienced meaningfulness of the job, experienced responsibility for the outcomes of the job, and knowledge of the job results) exist. The theory goes on to suggest that the three critical psychological states are created by specific core job characteristics being present. These core job characteristics include: skill variety, task identity, task significance, high levels of autonomy, and

effective feedback. However, not all individuals will respond equally, but rather are influenced by their own growth need strength-how important is the job to each person individually.

No longer content with just technical competence from our business school graduates, employers are now demanding "...skills in leadership, problem solving, oral and written communication, along with attributes of motivation and assertiveness" (Fontenot, Haarhues & Hoffman, 1991, p. 56). However, the ability of our institutions of higher education to meet these changing demands has been severely questioned. Harvard President Emeritus, Derek Bok (1992) has chided our universities for their failure to even examine the effectiveness of their educational programs.

Fortunately, one stream of research has begun to investigate the effectiveness of selected programs using cognitive scales for this purpose in business curriculums. Using their Skills/Career Usefulness scale, Fontenot, et al. (1991) studied the effectiveness of Small Business Institute (SBI) courses and Business Policy courses in developing desired student skills. Using job analysis and design techniques developed for work environments, Watts & Jackson (1995) investigated the applicability of Hackman and Oldham's (1976) Job Characteristic Theory to course design. Job Characteristic Theory has also been used to assess an institution's student evaluation of instruction (Watts, 1992), and to analyze the effect of course redesign on SBI student outcomes (Watts, Jackson & Box, 1995).

The challenge faced today (especially for schools seeking AACSB International accreditation) is how to demonstrate that the curriculum has made a difference. The purpose of this study, once again, is to offer a validated instrument for assessment purposes. One that can show that "redesign" does make a difference. While showing that improvements in curriculum have a positive impact will not be possible in this study-a follow-up study (one comparing before and after intervention) will be required. This preliminary study is intended to demonstrate the possibility of its use.

In the full paper, we will present the results of an exploratory study investigating the use of the Job Diagnostic Survey instrument as a means of assessing students in academic settings. We will show that upon examination of the results, it appears that the instrument has potential in this area. While the instrument is intended to assess the impact of redesign of jobs, it could equally be as successful in assessing the impact of redesigning curriculums in the educational setting.

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FACTORS AFFECTING STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT IN COST ACCOUNTING

Florence R. Kirk, SUNY Oswego
fkirk@oswego.edu
Charles A. Spector, SUNY Oswego
spector@oswego.edu

ABSTRACT

In the last 15 years, there has been little published research on student success in management accounting course work. To our knowledge, there have been no published empirical papers focusing on factors affecting success in upper level management accounting course work in an American classroom setting. In our research, we control for different grading schemes across instructors, and we find that student grade point average, performance in managerial accounting principles and performance in the first statistics course are all significantly related to success in cost accounting. Math achievement, student age, gender and the length of time between taking principles and cost accounting are insignificant. With regard to course sequencing, this paper considers issues not addressed before in the published literature. We find that students perform significantly better in cost accounting if they first complete Intermediate Accounting I. Performance in Intermediate I does not significantly differ between students who have already taken cost accounting vs. those who take cost subsequent to Intermediate I. We find that cost accounting students perform better in the first finance course if they delay finance until after taking cost accounting. These results may have implications for student academic advisement on course sequencing.

THE FUTURE OF ONLINE LEARNING: A LOOK AT WEBCT'S VISTA

Tena F. McQueen, Columbus State University
mcqueen_tena@colstate.edu
Robert A. Fleck, Jr. Columbus State University
fleck_bob@colstate.edu

ABSTRACT

Asynchronous learning has been a part of education for decades. Some authors trace the advent of widely available asynchronous courses to the development of correspondence courses. These courses were later supplemented or supplanted by audio and videotapes, CD-ROMs, cable and broadcast TV courses, and to a more limited extent radio broadcasts. As it evolved, the Internet supported e-mail and the transmission of files.

This paper traces the evolution of Web-based course creation software from first-generation Web tools and shells such as Page Mill and NiceNet to richer second generation software such as FrontPage, Flash, Blackboard and WebCT. As users, students, and universities have evolved in their use and expectations of course tools, so have the course shells. One of the major complaints of earlier tools was the inability to share content easily among multiple sections or instructors.

One approach to addressing this situation is WebCT's Vista, an institution or system-wide course management tool that provides the flexibility needed for growth and collaboration. This paper focuses on WebCT Vista's features including the ability to migrate from earlier versions. The paper uses examples to demonstrate the features and limitations of what may be the model for third-generation course software.

INTRODUCTION

Distance education has enabled many who would otherwise not be able to participate in education, especially post-secondary education. While the original concept may have been to remove the barrier of distance, distance education has also removed the barrier of time by providing asynchronous as well as synchronous learning opportunities.

The article by Prewitt (Prewitt, 1998) traces the history of distance education from early nineteenth century attempts in the United States through the British Open University. In that article, Prewitt discusses correspondence courses, broadcast radio, pre-recorded media, computer conferencing, and other vehicles. While some of these services failed due to a lack of funding or general support, many of the concepts developed over a century ago are still in use. As Prewitt points out, attempts at distance education were not limited to the United States or the United Kingdom. Several Latin American countries experimented with educational television.

Some of the criticism leveled at these early attempts is related to how the traditional educational process of synchronous learning was ported to distance learning. Tiffin and

Rajasingham (1995) as quoted in Prewitt, label traditional learning as "2X4X6" education or education between two covers of a book, that is: within four walls in a six-hour time frame. Additional criticism of this porting includes a lack of recognition of different learning styles, the lack of faculty-student contact, and poor assessment tools. For these and other reasons, distance learning has often been characterized as "second rate" or only appropriate for those who could not afford the traditional classroom (see Schrum),

The development of the Internet enabled more contact between faculty and student. Individual needs could be addressed via email, although the volume of email and accessibility to the Internet continue to be issues. The inclusion of chat rooms, bulletin boards, and course shells enabled greater interaction among students and faculty, thus better simulating the traditional and successful synchronous model. In fact, it can be argued that chat rooms and discussion areas break the traditional boundaries of the 2X4X6 and provide everyone the equal chance to be heard and to express ideas. These electronic learning communities are one of the strong features of the newer course shells.

COURSE WEB TOOLS

A variety of software tools are available to support class management. The course designer has options ranging from creating course content by programming in HTML to using HTML code generators such as FrontPage and Page Mill to using course shells developed by NiceNet, Blackboard, and WebCT. Both FrontPage and PageMill provide a graphical interface and a word-processing environment that make the technical preparation of the course site less cumbersome than coding in HTML. However, some knowledge of HTML is useful with both Page Mill and Front Page; both provide a source view for editing the underlying HTML.

For those course designers who wish to concentrate on the course content, course shells such as WebCT, Blackboard, and NiceNet provide useful alternatives to coding and code generators. NiceNet (http://www.nicenet.org/), while limited in features, is a free course shell used by many universities and faculty. Besides being free, NiceNet also provides intellectual property safeguards. Since the course is not housed on a university server, the designer has more control of content ownership. Blackboard (http://www.blackboard.com/) and WebCT (http://www.webct.com) offer course shells with more options than NiceNet. These course shells require a licensing agreement between the provider and the institution. An advantage to course shells is that many publishers offer e-content that can be "loaded" into the course shell. E-content provides a faculty member with ready-made materials that can be modified to meet specific learning objectives.

One concern voiced by faculty who use course shells is the ability to easily share content among other faculty on the same or remote campuses. A similar concern is raised when a faculty member teaches multiple sections of the same course, but some elements are section dependent. Early course shells do not provide transparent solutions to these problems. Usually the course developer must make multiple copies of the course shell, upload the template to each course shell and then modify each course to meet section-specific needs. It would be more efficient to have a "common" area in an enterprise-wide shell. This common area could then lend learning objects to specific sections. To a certain extent, this is what WebCT Vista does. As might be expected with

new solutions to problems, the solution often has problems, some of them unforeseen. The rest of this paper discusses an implementation of WebCT Vista.

WEBCT VISTA

Increased enrollments in colleges and university systems, often accompanied by funding reductions, compels institutions to examine the most resourceful way of delivering instruction. The current version of WebCT called Vista, positions institutions for growth and provides the flexibility necessary for delivering courses in a Web-based environment.

An advanced capability is the option of sharing course content at the institution or system-wide level. In addition to the WebCT server, a third server supports collaborative ventures and file sharing. Cost to individual institutions can be reduced due to a single installation and maintenance schedule at the system-level. Although there is centralized installation, maintenance, and operating software, institutions have exclusive access and control over the appearance and content of their portal.

Moving content, prepared using previous versions of WebCT, creates challenges depending on the version used to create the content. Issues entail compatible file format, e-paks from textbook publishers, and exporting utility tools.

Learning contexts (groups, courses, and sections) and role types are used to set levels of access and the ability of instructors to share course content. In addition to administrators, designers, instructors, and students, role types include Help Desk Users, Teaching Assistants, and Auditors (students who audit the course). Permission is set to a specific learning context, i.e., group designer or course instructor.

Sharing course content is facilitated by the use of templates. Once a template is designed, it can be associated with a course and can be assigned to a specific section. Items added to the template are available to students in all the sections and can be modified by group, course or section designers. Once a template has been associated, only certain modifications to the template will filter down to the sections. Alterations in the template in areas such as assignments, assessments (quizzes and exams), and discussion will appear at the section level, but changes to the course calendar will not. New content added to the template once it has been assigned will not be available to the sections. A blank shell or blank module can be inserted in the template so that content added later will appear in all associated courses and sections.

THE DESIGNER SCREEN AND TOOLBAR

Once logged on to Vista and the institution's entry portal, the designer is presented with the "My WebCT" screen. Default features which can be accessed from this screen include a compiled calendar for all the designer's classes and To Do List. In addition to Personal Bookmarks, Campus Bookmarks include links to the university library or online catalogue. Also in this view is a list of how many of your students are currently online. This feature, "Who's Online," is an option and therefore must be enabled. The main component of the My WebCT screen is the listing of the designer's courses showing all courses and templates which have been created and made available

At the bottom of screen is the area displaying "Campus Announcements" and links to "External Courses" (i.e., courses offered via the University System Consortium). A view of the current day's calendar displays calendar entries for your classes and can be set to include personal items.

The Template Manager is used for creating or importing templates. The creation of templates is extremely helpful when delivering courses to large segments of students, multiple sections on the same course, and sharing course content with other institutions in the same university system.

Templates can be designed to contain course content, a syllabus, exams, and assignments. Once a course has been created, it can be associated with a template. Access to a calendar, announcements, chat, whiteboard, e-mail, and grades allow entries to be made after the course has been associated with the basic template. Templates are valuable teaching aids, but there is room for improvement.

Importing material and files created in earlier versions of WebCT can be imported into a template, but migration aspects, such as file compatibility and overwrites, continue to be significant.

THE FUTURE

Students will have more open access to instructors via "Invitations" to chat." Faculty no longer have the luxury of working quietly online in this channel without at least two screen interruptions in the form of a popup-screen with an invitation to chat. If Who's Online is enabled, it not only allows students to see who's online, but also which instructors are online.

Faculty collaborative efforts, in the state and world, will be facilitated by enterprise-level software. Student groups will extend beyond the borders of the campus.

E-learning software will interface with university administrative software, such as Banner. There will be no need to generate multiple databases because these systems will share a single student database. Faculty will enter exam grades in a Web-based course management program then "export" the grades to the university administrative program. Students will be able to access grades and transcripts from a digital campus portal such as Campus Pipeline. Software will have more interoperability, thereby, reducing the challenges facing faculty and administrators when working with disparate or different types of systems.

While WebCT Vista is not yet error free or intuitive to new users, it does provide a glimpse into the future of Web-supported instruction. The ability to create learning modules that can be shared between faculty and multiple sections will help assure commonality in core required courses. It will do this and still support the freedom to select a presentation method appropriate for each instructor. WebCT may not be the perfect image of the future, but it has solved many of the problems of earlier course shells.

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ONLINE TUTORIALS: SOME TIPS FOR BEGINNING DEVELOPERS

Marcia Niles, University of Idaho
niles@uidaho.edu
Michele O'Neill, University of Idaho
moneill@uidaho.edu

ABSTRACT

   Technology in the classroom can create great opportunities to enhance student learning. It can also create efficiencies in today's tight budgetary times. The first purpose of this research was to develop an online tutorial to be used by business students. The tutorial was designed to provide either a basic introduction to widely-used business concepts or to serve as a review. The specific topics developed into an online tutorial were the time value of money, regressions concepts and regression application. Pilot study results indicatd students had a better understanding of the concepts as a result of using the tutorial.
   The second purpose of the paper is to provide some guidance to other professors who may wish to develop similar tools for classroom enhancement. The authors, as novices, made some rookie choices and errors from which many lessons were learned; we share these lessons with our colleagues.

A DESCRIPTIVE STUDY OF GRADUATE INFORMATION SYSTEMS CURRICULUMS

Jessica R. Porter, Middle Tennessee State University
jrporter@chdmeridian.com
Stan Gambill, Middle Tennessee State University
sgambill@mtsu.edu

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to produce a follow-up study to that which was published in 1997 offering a comparison of the graduate information systems curriculum to the current MSIS Model Curriculum. In addition, the study sought to determine which courses are currently being offered in Information Systems (IS) graduate College of Business programs, to profile these curriculums, and to compare this profile to the most recent graduate IS model curriculum—the MSIS 2000 Model Curriculum. Graduate programs from 125 universities were identified as offering Master's degrees in Information systems. This list was compiled from previously published curriculum research and online directories at ISWorld Net, Link411, and Peterson's Education Portal. Complete program information was successfully gathered from 108 universities.

A curriculum profile was developed which included 10 total courses, of which 6 were required and 4 were elective. The 6 required courses were Analysis and Design, Management Information Systems, Business Database Management, Project Management, Data Management Applications/Concepts, and Telecommunications and Networking. The 4 Elective Courses were Special Topics in IS, E-Commerce, Object-Oriented Programming, and Seminar in Information Systems.

THE PERSPECTIVE OF NEW FACULTY ON AACSB ACCREDITATION

Wayne A. Roberts, Jr., Southern Utah University
Robertsw@suu.edu
Roy Johnson, Southern Utah University
Johnsonr@suu.edu
John Groesbeck, Southern Utah University
Groesbeck@suu.edu

ABSTRACT

Obtaining AACSB accreditation is a long, resource consuming exercise. In this study 62 faculty hired by 24 schools that had recently received AACSB accreditation between 1997 and 2001 were surveyed to determine their impressions of the impact and importance of accreditation on various stakeholders. Their responses are subsequently compared to the responses of faculty who were employed by their school prior to gaining AACSB accreditation. Overall, accreditation was perceived as being beneficial to the business school, students, and faculty, and to the employers of students. This is consistent with the perception of faculty who were employed at newly accredited institutions prior to receiving AACSB accreditation. Newly hired faculty perceive that they value research and teaching more than established faculty. In contrast, previously published results indicate faculty employed prior to receiving accreditation believe those hired since accreditation value teaching less. Importantly, everything else being equal, respondents decidedly prefer working at AACSB accredited schools.

INTRODUCTION

Obtaining AACSB accreditation is a major undertaking. It takes time, diverts a lot of administrative and faculty time from other activities, is fraught with uncertainty, and takes money. A fundamental question is whether or not it is worth the effort and expense.

The purpose of this research was to assess faculty perceptions regarding the impact, or outcome, of AACSB accreditation. Faculty from recently accredited schools rated the impact of accreditation on the business school, faculty who were with the school before accreditation, faculty hired since accreditation, the programs, and students and employers of students. Their preference or indifference regarding employment at AACSB schools was also assessed.

DATA AND SAMPLE COLLECTION METHOD

A list of business schools which obtained AACSB accreditation during the years 1997 through 2001 was obtained, and six United States business schools were randomly chosen for each year, resulting in a total of 30 schools. Email addresses for business school employees were obtained

via the Internet, except for one university, which graciously agreed to forward our email letter and questionnaire to their faculty.

Each email address was sent a cover letter with links to questionnaires on two different occasions. Ten schools were emailed April 12 and April 29, 2001, and the other 20 schools were surveyed November 21, 2001 and January 28, 2002. Faulty who were with the institution prior to receiving AACSB accreditation were requested to access one questionnaire, the results of which are discussed elsewhere (Roberts, Johnson and Groesbeck, 2004). Non-faculty were asked to reply to the email and indicate that they were not faculty. Faculty hired since accreditation, the focus of this study, were asked to fill out a questionnaire designed for them. .

Eliminating those that indicated they were not faculty resulted in a total of 1121 email addresses. Sixty-two respondents indicated they were faculty hired since accreditation, while 221 respondents were hired prior to accreditation. Hence, the minimum response rate was 25.25%. Depending on the number of non-faculty that remained on the list, the response rate might be considerably higher. It is not, of course, known how the response rate of those hired since accreditation compares to the response rate of those hired prior to accreditation.

QUESTIONNAIRE

The questionnaire consisted of 17 Likert statements and 6 questions regarding the status and history of the respondent. It was developed using Microsoft FrontPage, and submitted questionnaires were automatically dumped into an Excel file, thus eliminating input error. For the purposes of analysis, Likert responses were coded as follows: -2 = strongly disagree, -1=disagree, 0=neither agree nor disagree, 1=agree, and 2=strongly agree. For some statements respondents were given a 'not applicable' choice, which was treated separately.

RESPONDENT CHARACTERISTICS

With regard to rank, 56.5% of the respondents were assistant professors, 14.5% were associate professors, and 12.9% were full professors. With regard to tenure, at least 14.5% had tenure. With regard to discipline represented, 16.1% were from accounting, 11.3% taught economics, 8.1% finance, 4.8% information systems, 21.0% management, 19.4% marketing, and 8.1% quantitative methods. Fully 40% reported that their current position was their first faculty position, while 30% reported that they had more than seven years experience at other academic institutions.

Based on these results there is little reason to suspect that the respondents do not constitute a representative sample of faculty hired at institutions subsequent to AACSB accreditation.

RESULTS

Perhaps one of the most interesting results concerns the importance of AACSB accreditation to this group. Regarding the statement "Everything else being equal, I would prefer to work at an AACSB accredited institution" was statistically significant (alpha=.000) with a mean value of 1.62. This mean was the highest of the survey, and more respondents strongly agreed with that statement

than with any other. Fully 90.2% agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, while only 1.6% of the respondents disagreed, and none strongly disagreed. Among the 24 respondents in their first academic position, 19 (79.2%) strongly agreed, 4 (16.7%) agreed, and only 1 (4.2%) neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement. Clearly, at least for faculty hired at AACSB accredited institutions, such accreditation is very important. Given that such institutions are no less attractive, overall, than other institutions, it appears that AACSB accreditation is a critically important characteristic among academic job seekers.

Items regarding faculty and faculty choice show that respondents perceive AACSB accreditation as benefiting them, new faculty, and faculty who were there prior to accreditation. Over 85% strongly agreed or agreed with the statement regarding AACSB accreditation benefiting them, 80% strongly agreed or agreed with the statement regarding new faculty, and almost 57% agreed with the statement regarding faculty hired prior to receiving accreditation.

With regard to the impact of accreditation on the business school, respondents, in general, agree with the statement that it has been positive. The mean response for the overall statement, 1.41, was significantly above zero. Ninety-five percent agreed or strongly agreed that it was good for the business school, and only 1.6% disagreed with the statement. The majority of respondents agree that AACSB accreditation helps the business school compete for financial resources, students, and faculty. Further, 75.4% agreed or strongly agreed that accreditation helps ensure that they have, and will continue to have, a quality program. Only 6.6% disagreed with that statement.

With regard to statements concerning values of faculty hired since accreditation to faculty there prior to accreditation, respondents saw the newer faculty as valuing research and teaching more. Mean scores for the statements concerning research and teaching were both positive and statistically significant. Importantly, though, 52.6% neither agreed nor disagreed that new faculty value teaching more, and an additional 10.6% disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement. With regard to the statement that new faculty have better contracts, while the mean value was positive the level of significance of the univariate test was .056, which, it could be argued, is marginally significant. Over 35% neither agreed nor disagreed with that statement, and almost 20% disagreed or strongly disagreed with it. Results regarding the university/public service component of faculty work were not statistically significant, and 50% neither agreed nor disagreed with that statement.

Two very significant considerations to any university are, of course, students and employers of students. Respondents agreed, as a group, that AACSB accreditation benefits both. With regard to the statement that AACSB accreditation benefits students, the mean response was 1.11, was statistically significantly different from zero, with 72.1% agreeing or strongly agreeing. Only 9.8% neither agreed nor disagreed, and only 4.9% disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement. With regard to the statement that AACSB accreditation benefits the employers of students, the mean response was .62, which was statistically significant, with 55.8% agreeing or strongly agreeing, 39.3% neither agreeing nor disagreeing, and only 4.9% disagreeing or strongly disagreeing.

Two statements intended to assess respondents' general feelings about the value of accreditation. Over 72% agreed or strongly agreed that AACSB is worth the effort to obtain it, while only 4.9% disagreed or strongly disagreed. The mean response was .97 and statistically significant. Over 73% agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that they would recommend it to other

schools, while only 4.9% disagreed or strongly disagreed. Again, the mean response was .93 and statistically significant.

An interesting question concerns how perceptions of faculty hired since accreditation compare to perceptions of faculty who were present prior to their school's gaining AACSB accreditation. Mean responses from the two groups were compared, and the hypothesis that the means are equal, without assuming that the variances are equal, were conducted. Mean responses from new faculty are taken from this study, while responses from faculty who went through the accreditation process are from _____ (2004). The two surveys were administered at the same time to faculty at the same institutions. It should be noted, however, that the Likert statements were worded slightly differently in the two surveys, in an attempt to make them more meaningful to the respondents. Basically, the statements provided established faculty used the past tense, while those to new faculty used the present tense. For example, whereas new faculty were asked to indicate their agreement with "Overall, I believe AACSB accreditation is good for the business schools," the wording for established faculty was "Overall, AACSB accreditation has been good for the business school." Nevertheless, it is believed that the comparisons are appropriate and meaningful.

Restricting the discussion to those statements where the achieved level of significance was less than .01, new faculty tended to agree more that accreditation helped the respondents themselves, as well as new and established faculty in general. Further, they agreed more that AACSB accreditation help the business school, overall, and more specifically when competing for appropriate faculty. Perhaps surprisingly, new faculty tended to agree that new faculty value teaching more than established faculty, while established faculty tended to disagree. Finally, new faculty agreed more that AACSB accreditation benefits students and employers.

Expanding the discussion to include achieved levels of significance between .01 and .05, the results suggest that there may be significant disagreement between the two groups regarding university/public service, and on the extent to which the two groups were recommend pursing AACSB accreditation to other schools. With regard to university/public service, new faculty tended to disagree with the statement suggesting new faculty value it less than established faculty, while the mean response from established faculty was above zero, although not statistically significantly so. Importantly, the modal response for both groups was the neither agree nor disagree category. With regard to recommending accreditation to other schools, the new faculty more inclined to do so.

CONCLUSIONS AND COMMENTS

The results suggest that faculty hired at AACSB accredited institutions view such accreditation very positively. Their perception is that it helps the business school compete for students, faculty, and financial resources, and helps ensure a quality program. Their perception is that it benefits all business faculty, and in particular, themselves. Perhaps because of this, they prefer to work at AACSB accredited institutions.

New faculty also believe that AACSB accreditation benefits students and their future employers, believe AACSB accreditation is worth the effort, and would recommend AACSB accreditation to other schools.

Comparing established faculty responses to new faculty hires, the primary difference seems to be that newer faculty more strongly agree that AACSB accreditation benefits faculty, helps their school compete for appropriate faculty, helps the business school overall, and benefits students and employers. Both groups perceive that AACSB accreditation changes the values of the organization, in that new faculty value research more. There is disagreement between the two groups regarding teaching: new faculty think they value teaching more, while established faculty believe new faculty value teaching less.

A limitation of this study concerns not the raw numbers, but the unknown response rate, and the possibility that the sample was heavily weighted towards faculty hires familiar with AACSB accreditation. That is, newly minted Ph.D.s unfamiliar with AACSB International would not have a basis for evaluating its significance, and hence may have been less inclined to respond to this survey.

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A UNIVERSITY'S ADVENTURE PROGRAM: CREATING A BUSINESS PERSONALITY

Anthony P. Santella, Lander University
tsantella@lander.edu
Charles R. Emery, Lander University
cemery@lander.edu
Katherine J. Barker, SUNY Fredonia
katherine.barker@fredonia.edu
Fredrick C. Bosarge, Lander University
fbosarge@lander.edu

ABSTRACT

More than ever, today's new hires are expected to hit the ground running. As such, there has been a resurgence of selection research over the last several years. In general, the findings of this research indicate that an occupationally-relevant personality has the greatest predictive validity (Taylor, et al., 2002). It is higher education's duty to provide the experience necessary to create successful business personalities. Further, successful business personalities cannot be created through lectures but must be grown through experiences that create the proper attitudes and values. This paper provides an overview of a university's attempt to create successful business personalities by growing traits in an 'outside-the-classroom', co-curricular program.

INTRODUCTION

Today's businesses are facing a new type of hiring crisis--a crisis of hiring the right person for the organization and the job. The first year cost of a bad hire typically runs 2.5 times the person's salary, not counting the intangible costs to organizational productivity and morale (Kruger, 2004). An overlapping problem is that organizations can no longer afford the patience and costs of training new hires. Most large to middle-sized organizations have cut back on-the-job training and eliminated the middle management that were used to coach new hires. Today's new hires are expected to hit the ground running. As such, there has been a resurgence of selection research over the last several years. In general, the findings of this research indicate that an occupationally-relevant personality has the greatest predictive validity (Taylor, et al., 2002). Recently, Donald Trump on the hit television program "The Apprentice" seemed to validate these findings by indicating that the final decision was made because the winning candidate had the right personality traits to succeed. In business, these traits make up what we call the business personality and they are currently the "holy grail" of business recruiters.

A person's personality is often defined as a complex interaction between heredity, attitude, experience, and values (Digman, 1990). Therefore, a person's business personality is the heredity, attitude, experience and values, he or she brings to the job. Although the appropriate business

personality is job specific and depends on the job analysis and supervisor expectations, there are several overarching traits that are sought after by all organizations (Emery & Tolbert, in press). We believe it is the duty of higher education to provide the experience necessary to create successful business personalities. Further, we believe that successful business personalities cannot be created through lectures but must be grown through experiences that create the proper attitudes and values. Additionally, we believe that a successful business personality cannot be developed in every student. The student must have a readiness or willingness to learn. As such, the growth process is provided through a series of coached experiences as suggested by the Hersey-Blanchard (1969) model of situational leadership. The purpose of this paper is to provide an overview of a university's attempt to create successful business personalities by growing traits in an outside-the-classroom, co-curricular program. Hopefully, our experience will foster a sharing of philosophies, delivery methods and results in co-curricular education.

THE BUSINESS ADVENTURE PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The aim of the Adventure Program is to mold the students' business personality during the formative years of undergraduate education. The program is based on building behaviors and attitudes by providing the defined expectations of business, character development training, and one-on-one mentorship. Students are rewarded and certified for achieving expectations. Opportunities to achieve expectations and to gain "real world" experience are developed through a strong partnership between the faculty, student services and the business community. Every effort is made to build a sense of community and create an achievement culture within this cadre of self-motivated students. Student achievements and experiences are certified by the university thus providing job recruiters with a credible insight to the student's business personality. The program's credibility is such that "high achievers" are often pre-qualified for job interviews. Consequently, the program's track record of success has created an ever-increasing group of student applicants. Several of the key components and program philosophies are expanded upon in the following sections.

EDUCATE THE WHOLE STUDENT

Most business schools only educate half the student--the in-class, academic half. Today's employers are looking for the complete recruit, one with both the job skills and a business personality. As such, business schools must begin to educate the whole student by providing structured opportunities outside the classroom that go beyond internships and systematically focus on building the business personality. Further, most business schools only provide potential employers with half the picture, half the story of student achievement. That half of the picture is the academic standing of the student represented by course grades and a cumulative GPA. What employers really want is a complete picture of student achievement and potential. The National Association of Colleges and Employers suggests in their Internet article "Resumes & Interviews: What Employers Want" (2004) that the picture should show evidence of the desirable intangibles, such as the ability to work in teams, to communicate effectively, to develop workable goals and strategies, to perform with honesty and integrity, to exhibit a strong work ethic, to demonstrate

initiative, to relate well to others (interpersonal skills), and to plan and manage budgets (organizational skills).

DON'T JUST POLISH THE DIAMONDS

Most schools focus leadership program activities on the academic high achievers because they are the easiest to identify and the easiest to motivate using the traditional in classroom extensions. This program, however, focuses on both the well rounded achievers and high achievers. The well rounded achievers represent a larger group of self selecting and motivated individuals. It has often been said that "when the student is ready, the teacher will appear." As such, this program gives an opportunity for those students who see the importance of education later than the "high achievers." In other words, this program provides the capability to reach a larger group of latent achievers who are usually forgotten by most traditional classroom extension programs. Particular efforts are made to reach this group through encouragement, coaching, and recognition to raise their performance. Further, the concept of a cadre training process, involvement of local businesses and faculty, rewards, and certification builds a sense of community amongst the participants.

LEVERAGE EXISTING VALUES

While most business school programs struggle with the overlap of other non-academic departments (e.g., career services, student development, international studies), this program has created internal and external partnerships to take advantage of extra curricular opportunities. Internal partnerships such as student affairs and career services that focus on the whole student help us leverage their skills and best practices to create a more holistic education. External partnerships were created with companies to define expectations and measurements of the Adventure cadre. Further, the external partnership has created an atmosphere of ownership by the business community. They truly see the Adventure as a "classroom without walls."

The program creates one-on-one coaching moments to integrate business values/beliefs and character development with academic concepts such as leadership and organizational dynamics. This may be the largest single benefit of the program and the key to developing the student's business personality. Further the program coaches or advisors discuss expectations and experience opportunities with each student as well as reviewing past performance. Although students are required to take complete ownership of their planning and developmental progress, they view the coaches/advisors as someone who really cares about their development and eventual employment. Previously, this was the responsibility of the academic advisor. Today, however, most faculty members are faced with advisee overloads and can only function as talking catalogues and drop/add signatories.

CREATE CARROTS…REWARDS THEY WANT, WHEN THEY WANT THEM

A key to student recruitment and program success are the extrinsic and intrinsic rewards. The rewards are designed to be meaningful, achievable and timely in order to motivate students to perform program duties in addition to their normal academic load. Further, the students must

perceive the rewards as more valuable than the money and experience earned in a part time menial job.

Another key to success is the way the program is marketed. Today's students are the MTV generation who have grown up being bombarded with slick, highly visual messages that describe how cool a product is. Accordingly, the program's marketing centers on slick mottos, generation heroes (e.g., Sponge Bob) and mediums that attract student attention. For example, mottos such as, "Achieve Now-Rewards Later" speaks to the notion that success is based on ever increasing levels of achievement. Additionally, a video of students performing their Adventure activities is continuously projected on a wall in the business school's common area. Students enjoy seeing themselves achieving in academic and social situations. The key point here is to never underestimate the power of giving students their 15 minutes of fame. Students indicate that this satisfaction is very akin to the enjoyment one feels in watching a reality TV program that gives fame to ordinary individuals. Further, the videos convey a strong message and values of an achievement culture. Non-participants can clearly see that they are being left in the wake by the achievers.

CREATE A COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE FOR YOUR JOB SEEKERS

Through its unique out-of-classroom training, experiences, and achievement certification, the Adventure Program adds a competitive advantage for job seekers. Recruiters can quickly see what desirable business qualities and skills have been acquired by reviewing a student's achievement profile or portfolio. This profile contains specific evidence of desirable business qualities, such as the ability to work well in teams (interpersonal skills), motivation, integrity, and communication and organization skills.

One recruiter for a national car rental company recently expressed enthusiasm for the program after interviewing several students who had just completed the program. This recruiter found that these student achievers not only had the desired academic knowledge, but also possessed the maturity and positive attitudes usually only found in experienced business employees. Similarly, another recruiter noted that, "the Business Adventure Program fosters the dynamic business personality traits that our employers want in all their employees." Obtaining certification from the Business Adventure Program saves valuable recruitment time since it immediately identifies the kind of well-rounded, high achievers that are in demand in the workplace.

PROVIDE ASSURANCE OF LEARNING

Seeking or maintaining accreditation is a key focus of most business schools. Central to AACSB accreditation is the requirement to demonstrate assurance of learning. The Business Adventure Program provides evidence of a school's efforts to provide voluntary learning opportunities outside the classroom. It has well-documented, systematic processes that assist in the development, monitoring and evaluation of student learning outside the classroom. By encouraging students to actively participate in business organizations and experiences, they are not only "graded" through the earning of points, but they actually begin to live the business concepts taught in the classroom. Students gain first-hand experience of working together as a business unit, and begin to appreciate and develop personal qualities that are valued by business professionals (e.g., self-

motivated, outstanding work ethic, integrity, enthusiasm, maturity, dependability, high standards, good communication skills, perseverance, etc.) In addition to providing an assurance of learning, this unique program provides supplemental evidence of efforts toward satisfying the AACSB standards of student retention efforts, aggregate faculty and staff educational responsibility, and individual faculty educational responsibility.

DEFINE AND IMPROVE UPON PROGRAM SUCCESS

The program uses an advisory council of business managers and job recruiters to help define program success and key measurements (e.g., individual performance targets, performance evidence, etc.). Additionally, off-the-shelf instruments are used to measure pre and post character development and the students' knowledge of business expectations. These measures are compared to non-participants to demonstrate the program's value. Although the program is still in its infancy, preliminary results indicate striking differences in attitude and behaviors between the participants and non-participants. Further, the program has incorporated the continuous improvement mechanism of benchmarking. The advisory council focuses on changes in business recruiting practices and requirements while the students examine the best practices of other university co-curricular programs. This information is fed into the program's strategic planning cycle for possible implementation in the next academic year. Lastly, the program has an on-going product improvement or corrective action team (faculty, staff, participants, business managers, and job recruiters) that examines student feedback from each experience.

CONCLUSION

The Business Adventure Program is an extremely innovative framework intended to create student ownership of business and community projects that are designed, initiated and completed by students. This has a profound effect on recruitment, retention and the motivation of students in the business program as well as achieving the core objective, i.e. developing a student's business personality. The program provides recruiters evidence of that business personality. It creates an achievement culture which fosters deeper involvement of the students in the study of business and good business practices by actively involving students in the learning process. In turn, the achievement culture promotes higher levels of in-class learning, teamwork, confidence, grade point averages and a sense of community. Further, the program helps students to assimilate business concepts by allowing them to practice classroom learning in faculty-supervised activities outside the classroom.

It is also designed to give feedback each semester in the form of points earned by students for their contributions and activities throughout the semester. This feedback mechanism has been designed to appeal to the students and provide motivation similar to that found in the business world. This feedback also has a unique feature in that student achievement in the program is provided in the form of a report to potential employers to be used as an additional assessment tool and an indicator of future business success. In short, it provides the student with a competitive advantage in the job market.

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Detailed references are available upon request from cemery@lander.edu

B-SCHOOL DEANS' PERCEPTIONS OF E-JOURNALS

Robert H. Stretcher, Sam Houston State University
Geraldine E. Hynes, Sam Houston State University
Charles R. B. Stowe, Sam Houston State University
fin_crs@shsu.edu

ABSTRACT

Electronic journals are clearly now part of the landscape of intellectual, peer-reviewed journals. Given that published intellectual contributions affect faculty pay, promotion, merit and tenure, this survey of business school deans reveals that not all deans regard e-journals as meritorious as their hard copy brethren. A 25.5% response rate from the 419 deans of AACSB member institutions suggests that interest in the subject was strong. An overwhelming 84.11% of Business School Deans said that their faculty evaluation policies include criteria for rating the quality of a journal in which the faculty are publishing. Among the 90 respondents comprising the 84.11%, about 20% indicated that the format of the journal (electronic versus print) was an important factor in their rating process. 42% indicated that format was of little or no importance. Interestingly, among the respondents indicating that their business school did not rate journal quality, 93% do not consider electronic journal publications to be valid intellectual contributions. Among all survey respondents, none indicate that their business school weights electronic journals superior to print journals, but almost 32% indicate that print journals are more heavily weighted than electronic.

A METAPORIC UNDERSTANDING THE ROLF OF TEACHER: DISCOVERY OF PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY FOR PRE-SERVICE BUSINESS EDUCATION TEACHERS

Patricia Toney-McLin, Arkansas State University
mclin@astate.edu

ABSTRACT

A metaphor is the transfer of meaning from one object to another to the basis of a perceived similarity. How teachers perceive the used metaphors will affect the approaches they take when engaging with students. The use of metaphors in a performance instructional design course for a teacher-training program describes how business education students, using metaphoric inquiry, become cognizant of their teacher image that governs their practice.

This paper will include a performance growth-model for pre-service teachers, utilizing metaphoric inquiry and reflection for the development of self in the role of teacher. Since there are multiple components of teacher preparation, this model presented is one example of how to improve the way pre-service teachers develop and interpret the meanings that they give to their role of teacher. The model utilizes reflective practices needed to assist pre-service teachers understand their role as teacher and situational constraints impinging on this role in teaching situation in which he/she interacts during their field experience. To understand this role, it is necessary for pre-service teachers to see the world of teaching through their eyes and reflect upon what they are seeing.

Students' personal narrative descriptions of their metaphoric reflections within the classroom and their field experience are included in this paper. These narratives will provide affirming image of their professional identity and an understanding of how they might wish to modify their practice.

AN INVESTIGATIVE STUDY TO DETERMINE PERCEPTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION FACULTY IN SOUTH CAROLINA ON VALUE OF DISTANCE EDUCATION

Larry E. "Ward" Ulmer, High Point University
lulmer@highpoint.edu
Raghu Korrapati, Walden University
rkorrapa@waldenu.edu

ABSTRACT

This study investigated the extent to which higher education faculty members in South Carolina believe that distance education provides the same level of learning outcome value compared to traditional face-to-face education. Research questions pertaining to the differences between higher education faculty in South Carolina who had experience with distance education, and those who have not, with regard to their perceptions of distance education to provide effective learning outcomes were discussed. The results of this research could be used by the administrators of institutions of higher learning exploring the possibility of providing distance education.

INTRODUCTION

This study was an investigation of the perceptions of higher education faculty relating to quality in distance education. Learning outcomes from traditional and distance education are compared. This study relied heavily upon the results of a questionnaire to describe the overall quality of distance education as seen by higher education faculty in South Carolina. Higher education classes have changed tremendously over the past few years (Bear, 2003; Deal, 2002). While there is existing research in distance education, it is an important, dynamic issue that must be considered in full when discussing the future of higher education (Uhlig, 2002). The worthiness of this study was warranted by the relatively small amount of current research pertaining specifically to higher education faculty perceptions of distance education (Berg, 2002). As distance education grows in popularity (Bear, 2003; Hochmuth, 2002; Nixon & Leftwich, 1998), little has been researched regarding the faculty stance (Berg, 2002; Broady-Ortmann, 2002). Faculty is on the front lines of distance education, and it was important to investigate what their thoughts. Research in this area hopefully allowed faculty to better understand more characteristics of distance education, therefore creating a more productive environment for all involved.

LITERATURE REVIEW

While a substantial body of research (Bear, 2003; Blackbourn, 2001; Deal, 2002) in regards to distance education for students existed, few studies had been conducted that explored faculty perception of distance education. This study attempted to determine if quality is or is not sacrificed through the use of distance education and, in fact, if online education has the ability to enhance the education process. In tracing the emergence of modern distance education, Uhlig (2002) reported that universities and colleges have long offered text-based or print-based correspondence programs covering virtually everything from high school courses to advanced degree programs, licensure and certification programs and examinations, and traditional college-level courses. The critical difference identified by Uhlig between the earlier distance education programs and today's Web-based programs is the option of immediate or nearly immediate feedback.

Deal (2002) made note of the fact that many university instructors are far more comfortable with traditional classrooms than with virtual classrooms. Indeed, Piotrowski and Vodanovich (2000) considered this issue and identified via a meta-analysis the central issues that are preventing many faculty members and their institutions from being more fully engaged with emerging pedagogical technology. These researchers reported that empirical investigations on the impact (and the actual extent) of using the Internet for teaching are sparse and equivocal, offering only partial support for the many potential drawbacks associated with the strategy.

METHODOLOGY

This study was quantitative, with a questionnaire used as the primary data collection tool in the descriptive survey design. A descriptive survey was chosen as it applies to the ability to "generalize from a sample to a population so that inferences can be made about some characteristic, attitude, or behavior of this population" (Creswell, 1994, p. 118). Relevant to construct validity, the researcher was confident the instrument measured the ideals of the study due to its relationship to similar studies. This study used an amended version of the questionnaire used in a similar study in Florida. The external validity of this study provided the ability of applying the results to situations beyond the study itself (Leedy & Ormond, 2001). This study examined higher education faculty in South Carolina, so that the results may be generalized to other parts of the country, or even other parts of the world. This replication of multiple studies "provides evidence that the conclusion has validity and applicability across diverse contexts and situations" (Leedy & Ormond, 2001, p. 100).

A questionnaire was used as the primary data collection tool. An effective survey instrument is deemed "a query that every potential respondent will interpret in the same way, be able to respond accurately, and be willing to answer" (Creswell, 1994; Dillman, 2000, p. 32). The questionnaire was designed to collect information to answer the research questions, as well as to provide significant data that may be used to determine the extent to which distance education improves learning abilities, academic outcomes and attitudes toward distance education in higher education. The questionnaire consisted of questions related to the higher education faculty members' experiences and observations of distance education and value.

RESULTS

The results indicated that a high percentage of those surveyed among higher education faculty in South Carolina with experience in distance education believed it provides an equivalent, and in some cases, a superior product as compared to traditional education. Others in the same group believed distance education provides an equal level of effectiveness as traditional education. The majority of South Carolina higher education faculty without distance education experience perceived distance education to be inferior to traditional education.

CONCLUSIONS AND FURTHER RESEARCH

There is a growing body of evidence that supports not only the popularity, but also the effectiveness, of distance education at the college and university level (Deal, 2002; Fredrickson, 1999). Despite this trend, some faculty appears to believe that the technology of distance education is less effective than traditional education and has new pedagogical activities that are unfamiliar. Other faculty members believe strongly that a more direct, face-to-face interaction with students is the ideal learning environment, allowing for a necessary level of interaction between instructor and student. Still others indicated that the amount of time needed for effective distance education places an unacceptable burden on their shoulders, requiring not only new learning, but also an excessive amount of time spent in cyberspace and in mastering new technologies.

These barriers to distance education are matched, according to the literature, by the perception of the costs of such services on the part of administrators in higher education (Piotrowski & Vodanovich, 2000). Many institutions of higher education do not yet recognize distance education as at least the equivalent of traditional education. Because this is the case, some such institutions have developed a "hit and miss" approach – perhaps inadvertently – to providing distance education degree programs. Individual professors or departments in some universities have developed distance education programs, but a school wide strategy for distance education is relatively rare.

The present study should be regarded as essentially a study in which a new instrument was tested with a limited sample of university faculty members. The expansion of the present study to include a significantly larger sample of respondents would be valuable. The new study could assist in gaining additional input from faculty members in different university settings or different geographic regions.

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