Diversity for a New Decade

2021 Annual Fall Educators' Conference Proceedings

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Marketing Management Association is proud to present the 26th Fall Educators' conference! As in previous years, we find that the submissions to the conference were quite inspiring! The range and depth of the analysis that were conducted in submitting panel sessions, as well as refereed and panel papers were beyond our expectations and we know the conference will be the talk of marketing educators for weeks to come.

The world has begun a rapid progression and change over the last 2 years, and 2021 is a year in which the expectations of new perspectives are essential. Not only do we have to look at a new normal in academia, we must also begin to investigate how diversity impacts all facets of the new decade. Faculty are teaching using diverse methods in classrooms of diverse student populations. Research is now looking at diverse perspectives, and companies are seeking new ways to engage a diverse world. As the Marketing Management Association, we want to help explore diversity in all its forms with each of you and share our combined knowledge to ensure that the marketing discipline continues to lead during the new decade.

We are very thankful to all the scholars who submitted position and refereed papers as well as volunteered for special sessions and panels. We are ever so grateful to **Zina Taran**, who helped evaluate all the position papers that were submitted; as well as to all the reviewers of the refereed papers (reviewers are listed later in the proceedings). In addition, we could not have the conference without the session chairs, listed separately in this publication, who help with the smooth coordination of panels and presentations. Special thanks to **Becky Hochradel**, Proceedings Editor, for assembling all the material into these conference proceedings, and to **Lyle Wetsch** (outgoing) and **Holly Syrdal** (incoming), MMA Webmasters, for placing them on the website for ease of access for all interested.

We are also quite proud to kick-off the conference with three pre-conference sessions. Thank you to our leads **J. Steve Kelly, Susan Jones, Brian Vander Schee** and **Debra Zahay Blatz**, for all their efforts in putting together a couple of great sessions. To all those who participated in those workshops, thank you for allowing us to learn from you!

Three teaching competitions were held this year with finalists being selected before the conference. Thank you to **Wessex Press** for sponsoring the Teaching Innovation competition, with **Barbara Ross Wooldridge** and **Theresa B. Clarke** leading the effort as the competition co-coordinators along with a great panel of judges. Special thanks also goes to **StratX Simulations** for sponsoring the Outstanding Teacher-Scholar Doctoral Student competition, managed by the ever-capable hands of **Lauren Beitelspacher**; we thank her for all the work in running an excellent competition. The Master Teacher Award competition coordinator role was taken on by **Don Roy**, who worked his magic in coordinating the judges and selecting a great slate of finalists. We also would like to thank **Interpretive Simulations** who sponsored this year's Master Teacher Award Competition. To all our sponsors, your continued support is invaluable to the Marketing Management Association and we look forward to a long relationship to come. All judges and finalists are listed later in these Proceedings. Thank you for all you did to make this another successful year for the Fall Marketing Educators' Conference.

Hubro Education sponsored the Best Refereed Paper Award. Thank you Hubro Education for your support. The winning paper was selected prior to the conference and the authors are listed in these Proceedings. We also thank all the other exhibitors noted below who offer us great ideas, tools, and training to improve our effectiveness in the classroom. Without you we could not put on this conference and so we thank you for your participation and welcome you again next year!

And, speaking of next year: the 2022 MMA Fall Educators' Conference will be returning to in-person format and will be held September 23-25, 2020 at the Drury Plaza Hotel in San Antonio, TX! The 2022 MMA Spring Conference will also be in person on March 10-11, 2022 at the Drury Plaza Hotel in St. Louis, Missouri.

Many thanks to everyone involved with the conference! We hope you enjoyed lots of stimulating conversation, learned a few new ideas to take back to the classroom, and met some fellow scholars who share your passion for improving the lives of our students!!

Ursula Y. Sullivan, Conference Program Co-Chair
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Master Marketing Principles

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Wessex Press 2021 Teaching Innovation Competition

Winner:
Peg Murphy, Columbia College, Chicago
Finalists:
Brian A. Vander Schee, Demetra Andrews, & Tony Stovall, Indiana University, Indianapolis
Haithem Zourring, Kent State University

Co-Coordinators – Theresa B. Clarke, Barbara Ross Wooldridge

Judges – Elliot Manzon, Brooke Reavey, Cindy Rippe, Ann Veeck, Kai-Yu Wang

StratX Simulations 2021 Outstanding Teacher-Scholar Doctoral Student Competition

Winner:
Tyler Milfeld, University of Tennessee, Knoxville
Finalists:
Ashley Hass, Texas Tech University
Louis Zmich, Louisiana Tech University

Coordinator – Lauren Beitelspacher
Judges – Stefanie Boyer, Adam Mills, Obinna O. Obilo

Interpretive Simulations MMA 2021 Master Teacher Award Competition

Master Teacher Award:
Vassilis Dalakas, Cal State University, San Marcos
Teaching Excellence Awards:
Dinakar Jayarajan, Illinois Institute of Technology
Michael Levin, Otterbein University

Coordinator – Don Roy
Judges – Tim Graeff, Jane Machin, Chad Milewicz, Michael Messina, Lyle Wetsch

Hubro Education 2021 MMA Fall Educators' Conference Best Refereed Paper Award Winners

Understanding the Role of Visual Anchoring with Product Image in Ad Effectiveness of Replacement Visual Rhetorics
Praggyan (Pam) Mohanty, Governors State University

2021 Fellows of the Marketing Management Association Award Winners

Susan Geringer, Fresno State
Gail Zank, Texas State University

2021 Marketing Management Association Innovative Marketing Award Winner

Michael Brady, Florida State University

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A STUDY OF AN UNDERGRADUATE MARKETING DEGREE PROGRAM: OPPORTUNITIES FOR COLLABORATIVE, INVITING, AND INCLUSIVE HIGHER EDUCATION PRACTICES

Henry Roehrich, Park University
Julie Grabanski, University of North Dakota
Nicholas Miceli, Park University

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research study was to develop a strategy for encouraging a collaborative, inviting, and inclusive program for students of diverse backgrounds and needs. The goal is to provide an opportunistic environment for women and minorities to partake in the pursuit of a marketing degree. The strategy will consider what is needed in the areas of curriculum, instructors, facilitation, and classroom learning environment for an inclusive approach to a marketing degree program. The data collected from program assessment compares program enrollment by gender and race/ethnicity with overall university enrollment. Student assessment performance in relevant business courses to marketing in a major field test was analyzed. The results of the study are the basis for a strategic integrated approach to insure inclusivity in a marketing degree program.

INTRODUCTION

In unprecedented economic times due to a pandemic, there is the need to rebuild for many Americans and businesses impacted by the resulting recession. The Covid-19 pandemic exposes inequalities in the economy in areas of income, wealth, health, race, and gender. These were all issues pre-Covid-19, but everything has exacerbated. Carnevale stated, “in the end higher education is part of the problem, not the part of the solution…higher education needs to fundamentally change to help solve the problem (Johnson, 2019, 16-17).” The goal of this paper is to contribute to solving the problem. During periods of business uncertainty, employees need skills that last a lifetime, give flexibility, offer resilience, and provide creativity.

Women and minorities have been significantly affected by the loss of jobs, loss of income, and a reduced amount of money to spend on education. The recession has also destabilized the job market and decreased the diversity of employees in the marketing field, which may be longstanding (Glei, D.A., Goldman, N., & Weinstein, M., 2019; Wilson, 2019). The challenges faced by women and minorities during the pandemic can be overcome if there are opportunities to develop new skills parallel to employer needs.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Economic Outlook

Unemployment rose during the Covid-19 recession in the United States and the effect on women and minorities is apparent. While the U.S. economy has seen growth during the last several years, members of lower socioeconomic status (SES) groups are still recovering from the pain caused by the Great Recession. Lost income averaged $3200, with the most severe outcomes concentrated in the lower SES groups (i.e. lost homes, bankruptcies, economic distress (Glei, Goldman, & Weinstein, 2019). Minority group members are overrepresented in lower SES groups and experienced a large share of these outcomes (Glei, Goldman, & Weinstein, 2019). The 2020 Marketing Week Career and Salary Survey revealed that 88% of marketers are White compared to Asian 5%, Mixed 4%, Black 2%, and Other 1%. The results of the Career and Salary Survey indicated that 39.9% of respondents whose company has a marketer on the board 51.8% were male and 48.2% in this role were female (Marketing Week Reporters, 2020). In order to thrive, academia and industry have to work together to provide a curriculum that addresses methods to increase diversity and desired competencies for future employment.

Impact of Technological Advances

Technology is changing so fast that it is challenge for employers to find and retain qualified employees with the desired combination of business and technical skills in order to meet the organization's goals. Digital business industries bring people together from different disciplinary backgrounds possessing the knowledge and skills for creative activities (Chan, 2010). The work within these digital business industries includes marketing, design, production, product management, creative direction, and content production (AIMIA, 2014). In order to work in the digital business industries, applicants need to assess their skills, both technical and soft skills.

Lessening the Gap

The explosive growth of multi-disciplinary businesses that have emerged since the pandemic has presented professors with increasing challenges to keep up with demands to teach effective marketing skills. Almost 60 percent of employers are looking for marketing skills utilizing technology (McKinley Marketing Partners, 2018). This shift in skills has caused marketers and scholars to affirm that technology has the most significant impact on changes within the marketing industry (Lamberton & Stephen, 2016). Organizational learning theory can be used to help academic institutions and departments of marketing organize the delivery of marketing education. This theory focuses on the discovery of new knowledge or practices designed to create performance-enhancing organizational changes (Gebhardt, Carpenter, & Sherry, 2006). Organizational learning theory suggests that institutional culture and higher administration support change within the University system and requires a shared vision among all stakeholders (Zahay, Altounian, Pollitte, & James, 2018).

Essential Competencies

Students need to be engaged in education programs aligned with the industry they are preparing to enter. Employers want new graduates that have developed some essential competencies in the form of broad, transferable skills such as critical thinking, problem-solving, use of technology, and communication skills. These basic skills and experience with business simulations, classroom experiences and discussions, case analysis, strategic planning exercises, team projects, and other on-the-job training via internships prepare students for employment. Students and educators need to understand that desirable characteristics of graduates in these career fields include being personable, ethical, collaborative, self-starting, and risk-taking. The skills and competencies demanded by employers need incorporation into the curriculum offered in marketing degree programs. To meet these demands, business, marketing, technology, and arts programs must provide an integrated curriculum across the University campus (Cates, Doyle, DeLotell, & Jackson, 2020). An integrated curriculum will require support from administration, faculty, students, and community stakeholders. The research focuses on race, ethnicity, and gender of students currently enrolled in addition to the outcome measurement for student learning in the marketing degree program.

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this research study was to develop a strategy for encouraging a collaborative, inviting, and inclusive program for students of diverse backgrounds and needs. The goal is to provide an opportunistic environment so that women and minorities enroll and pursue a marketing degree. Existing secondary data came from a nonprofit Midwestern private liberal arts university with extensive distance and online offerings for marketing degree students. The Office of Institutional Effectiveness provided internal institutional data for students enrolled in the Management/Marketing degree program for the three academic years of 2018, 2019, and 2020. The data for the Major Field Test was also collected from the Marketing Annual Assessment Report, 2020.

RESULTS

The internal institutional data indicates that the number of students enrolled as marketing majors in the Fall term has declined for the last three years. Table 1 shows the percentage of decrease in enrollment from the previous year for Fall 2018, Fall 2019, and Fall 2020. The most significant drop in enrollment for the marketing program occurred in Fall 2019.

Table 1

Student Enrollment: Marketing Majors, Fall

Fall Term	Fall 2018	Fall 2019	Fall 2020
Students	-10%	-30%	-18%

Internal Institutional Data, 2020

The Office of Institutional Effectiveness also provided the demographic breakdown of enrolled students in the marketing program. In Table 2, the proportion of marketing students attending full-time decreased drastically in Fall 2018 and then remained stable in Fall 2019 and Fall 2020. Part-time status increased significantly in Fall 2019 from Fall 2018 and then remained stable for Fall 2020.

Table 2

Major: Management/Marketing Attendance Status

Attendance	Fall 2018	Fall 2019	Fall 2020
Full-time	42%	26%	25%
Part-time	58%	74%	75%

Internal Institutional Data, 2020

The gender status information in Table 3 indicates that in Fall 2018, male marketing majors outnumbered female marketing majors. By Fall 2019, there was an even distribution of females and males. In Fall 2020, males were once again the majority of marketing majors.

Table 3

Major: Management/Marketing Gender Status

Gender	Fall 2018	Fall 2019	Fall 2020
Female	44%	50%	48%
Male	56%	50%	52%

Internal Institutional Data, 2020

Table 4 shows the distribution of race/ethnicity for students enrolled in the marketing degree program. The majority of students in Fall 2018 were White. In Fall 2019, to make up at least 50% of the students, the Black or African-American, Hispanic/Latino, and White groups had to be combined. The previous enrollment pattern seen in 2018 for Black and Hispanic/Latino students reoccurred in 2020, with declines. The 2018 enrollment pattern also occurred for the proportion and number of White students with increases in the total number and proportion of marketing majors.

Table 4

Major: Management/Marketing Race/Ethnicity

Race/Ethnicity	Fall 2018	Fall 2019	Fall 2020
American Indian or Alaska Native	1%	1%	0%
Asian	1%	1%	2%
Black or African American	21%	26%	21%

Hispanic/Latino	16%	21%	15%
Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander	1%	0%	0%
White	51%	40%	52%
Two or More Races	6%	7%	5%
Unknown	2%	4%	5%
Non-U.S. resident	1%	0%	0%

Internal Institutional Data, 2020

Major Field Test

The University's marketing degree program utilizes a major field pre-test and post-test for program assessment. All students complete the Peregrine Common Professional Component (CPC) assessment as a Major Field Test (MFT) when they start and finish the marketing degree program. The assessment results measure student learning for redesign and improvement of the entire business education program when needed. The 50th percentile for the Peregrine exam (CPC) results are based on all student scores from all universities administering the Peregrine exam, not just marketing majors. Results above the 50th percentile for the MFT are a positive indicator for the program. Table 5 shows how marketing majors scored over the benchmark of 50th percentile on all MFT performance areas for three academic years. The only program at this university that does not administer the Peregrine exam is the Economics degree program.

Table 5

Marketing Majors – Major Field Test (MFT) Average Percentile Rank by AY

Academic Year	Goal	Actual
AY 17-18	50th Percentile	57th Percentile
AY 18-19	50th Percentile	55th Percentile
AY 19-20	50th Percentile	55th Percentile

Marketing Annual Assessment Report, 2020

Table 6 shows how marketing majors scored over the benchmark of 50th percentile on all marketing topic areas for three academic years of AY 17-18, AY 18-19, and AY 19-20. The overall trend shows positive results and improvement in marketing topic areas for two of the three academic years. The scores dropped to the 62nd Percentile as more students attended classes on a part-time basis at the university.

Table 6

Marketing Majors: Marketing Topic Score by AY

Academic Year	Goal	Actual
AY 17-18	50^{th} Percentile	63^{rd} Percentile
AY 18-19	50^{th} Percentile	63^{rd} Percentile
AY 19-20	50^{th} Percentile	62^{nd} Percentile

Marketing Annual Assessment Report, 2020

The data collected from the MFT indicated that the marketing students exceeded the 50^{th} percentile in all subjects but had slight increases in Accounting, Finance, Macroeconomics, and Quantitative Research. The marketing students excelled in Ethics, Microeconomics, Global Dimensions of Business, Legal Environments of Business, and Marketing.

The makeup of the enrolled students is slightly less female than that of the student population. Ethnically and racially, the proportion of students is higher in underrepresented groups and lower for the majority group than the overall student population. Further analysis is needed to explain the causes of the fluctuation in enrollment patterns. The faculty level of diversity is a strength for the program. The department is primarily female and has faculty that are members of underrepresented groups.

DISCUSSION

To create more opportunities for diversity and increased competencies within the learning environment, all stakeholders must be involved within the University system. There are four main components for creating an all-inclusive learning environment across the University curriculum. These include strategic planning, program alignment, resource requirements, and curriculum adjustments. The administration and faculty in the University setting need to collaborate in order to align the components and produce an all-inclusive learning environment.

Strategic Planning

Strategic planning requires examining current trends and forecasting future needs by assessing strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats within the organization. Faculty understand that skills taught in the classroom have to align with industry needs. Employers need employees who can help them bring value and sustainable profits to their organizations. The University's curriculum should provide rigorous learning experiences for students to synthesize, apply, and evaluate marketing principles along with strategies to achieve this goal. Therefore, faculty and administration must continuously measure student learning outcomes to determine when revisions to the curriculum are needed.

Program Alignment

In this study, the marketing program's mission and vision align with the mission and vision of the University. Industry standards, accreditation requirements, and program competencies in the marketing degree program are aligned. Further analysis indicates that the curriculum planning map includes the criteria used to link learning outcomes and associated competencies. The learning outcomes for the program were established for student performance and assessed through assignments, exams, and projects. A Major Field Test (MFT), a pre-test and post-test, is part of the assessment strategy. The results of this exam (MFT) indicate the need for modifications to curriculum design and teaching methods to improve student learning outcomes.

Resource Requirements

The first step in lessening the gap between industry and academia is understanding current trends in industry and bringing them to the classroom. Collaboration between administration and faculty across the University's disciplines is essential in preparing students to enter the marketing field. Once higher administration decides to focus at least in part on teaching a particular area or developing a new program, resource allocation happens in the form of the professors needed and the training and skillsets required to keep them relevant (Zahay, Altounian, Pollitte, & James, 2018).

Faculty should generate teaching content relevant to current business practices. Students can then build upon their previous experiences and take advantage of opportunities to apply new skills through business simulations, team-based projects, and business internships within the community. Faculty attendance of continuing education courses on using new technologies, current business practices, diversity, and methods to teach and assess professional development skills can also contribute to student learning outcomes.

Curriculum Adjustments

Curriculum changes may occur within the department based on student learning needs and outcomes. Writing enhanced curriculum (WEC) programs are an example of integrated programs throughout the University. Programs such as WEC assess and teach the writing skills necessary to meet industry standards across fields of study. Implementation of such programs is an example of an integrated curriculum that includes all fields of study. Additional integration programs and collaboration between multiple areas within the University could offer students opportunities to work on business projects with various disciplines. For example, student projects may occur between healthcare and marketing to promote local community healthcare businesses, or education and marketing students could collaborate to market informal community education courses. Students enrolled in liberal arts and technology courses could also benefit from marketing and business courses to promote products and services.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

During the pandemic, the business model changed with more focus on efficiency and effectiveness within a virtual context. E-learning, virtual reality, use of social media, online shopping, telehealth, virtual workout programs, and products have grown exponentially. These areas will continue to grow through the technologies that have emerged. Everything is a business, and all organizations are competing for a share of the marketplace. Businesses have adapted during the pandemic to sustain their operations. Graduates in the marketing field will need to possess professional skills, written and oral communication, organization, teamwork, and be culturally competent to be successful. Students from diverse backgrounds are more likely to enroll in a diverse program area that embraces cultural differences. A diverse program includes the recruitment of various faculty members and students.

Learning opportunities to collaborate across programs at the University, and partnerships with businesses in the community, will prepare students for a diverse workforce. Opportunities for growing a diverse student group may include recruitment of students/partnerships with STEM programs, from STEM courses to marketing and business, leadership programs for peer to peer mentoring, and celebration of diversity across campus. Additional areas for growing a diverse student group in marketing include the international student center, women in business, and other leadership programs that promote inclusive participation in multi-disciplinary companies.

Cultural inclusion refers to access and equity for all students within all learning settings. Cultural inclusion and structural conditions in the curriculum that affect all students' presence, participation, and achievement must be supported by administration and faculty across the University. In order to recruit a diverse group of students, there should be math-tutoring, peer mentoring, mentoring of students from diverse faculty, and marketing efforts to students with diverse backgrounds.

A closer look at the curriculum and diversity can be accomplished by reaching out to the community and incorporating community learners within the curriculum of diverse multi-disciplinary fields in business. Service learning within the community businesses to explore unique aspects of diversity within the workforce should be encouraged between industry experts, faculty, and administration. An integrated approach among all three is required for creating an environment in a marketing program that is all inviting, accessible, and inclusive for prospective students of diverse backgrounds and needs. Understanding what is needed in the curriculum, course delivery, instructor facilitation, and classroom learning environment can create a desired learning experience that is all inclusive. A recommendation for further research is a study in collaboration with small, medium, and large businesses to assess the needs, and culture of each organization. An additional recommendation is a study to analyze the supports and barriers in the current curriculum to address inclusivity and cultural competence across a university.

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A REGIONAL COMPARISON OF GENDER BIAS IN ENTRY-LEVEL BUSINESS JOB POSTINGS

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ABSTRACT

This study sought to determine if gender bias in the wording of job advertisements differs between five disciplines and in four United States regions. A total of N=600 *job advertisements included 120 for each of the four highest populated metropolitan areas: Los Angeles (West), Houston (South), Chicago (Midwest), and New York (East), and 30 from each of the five selected academic disciplines: management, marketing, sales, accounting, and finance. This study has concluded that a significant difference exists between* neutral *verbiage and masculine/feminine bias in all five disciplines. The subcategories of sales and finance roles reflect a masculine bias. The subcategories of marketing, accounting, and management reflect a feminine bias. Researchers recommend organizations implement procedures that ensure job advertisements use of gender-neutral verbiage.*

INTRODUCTION

Gender bias remains a concern in media, marketing, classrooms, and within organizations. While society may be more aware of the problem, and some progress has been made, it is evident that gender bias still exists, indicating much room for improvement.

A university alumna sent a faculty member an entry-level job posting at her company. The alumna intended the professor share the opportunity with graduating students, thinking others from her women's university would prosper in her company's work environment. After reviewing the job posting, the professor doubted female students would be attracted to the role, considering the job description appeared to be written for a male. This experience led the professor to question how a female student from a women's university would react to a role intended for a male target market. The faculty embarked on further examination to determine if the gendered wording in the particular employment advertisement was an isolated or pervasive issue. This situation inspired a previous study that analyzed 60 job advertisements retrieved from one metropolitan area, including four academic disciplines (Nelsen et al., 2019). The current study expands on the previous research by increasing the sample to 600 job advertisements in four highly populated United States metropolitan areas, including five academic disciplines.

A publicly accessible website, gender word counter application (Matfield, 2018), developed according to Gaucher et al. (2011), was utilized to assess entry-level job postings in five primary business disciplines: management, marketing, sales, accounting, and finance. The selected positions were entry-level and suitable for recent university undergraduates. The researchers then evaluated the neutrality of words used in the job postings from a gender perspective (Gaucher et al., 2011) (see Appendix A). Findings indicated a mix of results from the various disciplines. However, none of the areas presented gender neutrality, meaning they were biased toward either masculine or feminine verbiage.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The following literature reviews the theory and practice of gender bias as it relates to job advertisements.

Theory and Gender Bias

Social Dominance Theory reveals the process through which consensually validated system-justifying philosophies contribute to the establishment and persistence of oppressive and hierarchically organized social relations among groups (Sidanius & Pratto, 2004). According to Sidanius and Pratto (1999), Social Dominance Theory contends existing institutional-level mechanisms reinforce and perpetuate existing group-based inequalities.

The researchers suggest that social dominance theory, which outlines how one social faction maintains group-based dominance, sustains the stereotypes found in job descriptions. According to the theory, group-based inequalities are perpetuated through three primary structures: evolved institutional discrimination, accumulated individual bias, and interactive asymmetry (Sidanius & Pratto, 1999). Together, these structures create ideological norms or socially shared faction belief systems (Shahidi, 2015).

In American culture, men reign as the dominant group, scoring a 62 on Hofstede's (1983) masculinity scale, indicating that the country has a predominance to emphasize ambition, wealth, and differentiated gender roles. This masculine default perpetuates bias toward characteristics and behaviors where the stereotypical male gender role is valued, compensated, or regarded as the standard (Cheryan & Markus, 2020). This masculine default within our society also makes it more challenging for many women to compete and thrive in organizations. Cheryan and Markus (2020) concluded that changing masculine defaults requires identification, determining whether they are needed, and disassembling or balancing them.

The use of words reflects and reinforces social attitudes toward gender. Eckert and McConnell-Ginet (2013) echo that belief, "language use and the use of language are inseparable…the weight of the linguistics system constrains the kinds of things we say and the ways we say them" (p. 43). Greater awareness regarding the vocabulary choices used to describe men and women pushes the need for neutral words to be used as much as possible (Wardhaugh, 2010). Thus, the principles of Social Dominance Theory provide the structure for this research.

Effects of Gender Bias on Organizations

According to Ross (2014), creating a bias-conscious organization reflects the organizational belief that productivity, individual contentment, and social growth are achievable if we first grasp the pervasiveness and power of biases held. Organizations may expressly choose to deploy job descriptions and advertisements, so these roles become more accessible (Perry et al., 1994). Even so, Bohnet (2016) determined that unconscious bias hinders this progress, and the process of helping employees recognize and seek to correct their unconscious bias proves to be both difficult and costly. Therefore, rather than putting the onus on individuals, employers should change their processes to limit the opportunity for bias by changing the organizational structure itself. Thus, if human resources or the c-suite, required the organization as a whole to de-bias, a change could be made to create a more considerable impact (Bohnet, 2016).

According to Bretz and Judge (1994), choices of human resource departments influence applicant job decisions, and the acceptance of a job offer ties back to whether the individual applicant's characteristics match the information presented. Suppose a disconnect occurs between personal attributes and the job posting content, the candidates' likelihood of applying or accepting a role decline. Beach and Mitchell (1996) also found that managers fail to consider the job seekers' decision processes when determining recruitment and selection policies. Recruitment advertising is a crucial part of organizational staffing. Although deemed significant, Kecia et al. (1999) determined that the impact of job vacancy advertisement wording on the prospective employee is poorly understood. This research team advocates for more research to be conducted to understand this process. Banaji and Greenwald (2016) concluded that by gaining unconscious or conscious bias awareness, we begin to modify both beliefs and behavior in an attempt to be less biased.

Gender Bias in Job Advertisements

Efforts to increase women's participation in majority-male departments and organizations would benefit from detecting and addressing masculine defaults on multiple levels of organizational culture, including ideas, policies, exchanges, and individuals (Cheryan & Markus, 2020). According to Gaucher et al. (2011), gendered wording (i.e., masculine- and feminine-themed words, such as those associated with gender stereotypes) exist as an institutional-level mechanism of inequality maintenance. Furthermore, Calanca et al. (2019) found gender bias in job advertisements led to wage premiums or penalties connected with soft skills considered to be masculine (premium) or feminine (penalty). To demonstrate how gendered wording commonly employed in job recruitment materials maintains gender inequality, Gaucher et al. (2011) conducted a five-part study. Findings conclude that job advertisement gendered wording exists and contributes to women's continued underrepresentation in traditionally male-dominated fields. "Job advertisements for male-dominated areas employed greater masculine wording (i.e., terms associated with male stereotypes, such as leader, competitive, dominant) than advertisements within female-dominated areas" (Gaucher et al., 2011, p. 109). Words that emerged across male- and female-dominated areas associated with female stereotypes included terms such as support, understand, and interpersonal. In contrast, words associated with male stereotypes included terms such as individual, leadership, and analysis. When job advertisements had more masculine than feminine wording, participants perceived more men within these occupations while women found these jobs less appealing. Results also confirmed that perceptions of belongingness (but not perceived skills) mediated the effect of gendered wording on job appeal (Gaucher et al., 2011).

Born and Taris (2010) found male applicants were more confident and indifferent to employment advertisements' gendered wording. However, because of sensitivity to employment advertisements' language, female applicants were more likely to apply for jobs where the advertisement profile listed feminine qualities (Born & Taris, 2010; Taris & Bok, 1998). Wille and Derous (2017) revealed women job seekers found messages conveyed in job advertisements about the organizations subtly influenced female job seekers' attitudes about both the job and the organization. They were less attracted to job postings emphasizing masculine traits. Thus, organizations may increase the number of women applying for particular jobs by intentionally writing a non-biased advertisement (Born & Taris, 2010; Wille & Derous, 2017).

In a European cross-cultural analysis, Hodel et al. (2017) found gender-skewed language in job advertisements more likely to occur in countries with lower gender equality levels while less likely to occur in countries with higher gender equality levels. Thus, Gaucher et al. (2011) reason that using gender wording of job advertisements as a variable could help social psychologists when studying the formation and underpinning of social inequalities.

Building on Previous Research

A previous analysis conducted by Nelsen et al. (2019) found minimal significant differences between male and female bias in advertised position postings. However, there were substantial differences between *neutral* verbiage and male/female bias of job advertisements. Nelsen et al. (2019) concluded the bias against women in entry-level sales careers has detrimental consequences, not only for women but also for the success of organizations worldwide. Addressing this bias is crucial for further exploring gender inequality in the workplace, affecting men, women, and organizations across the world. Thus, the goal should be conscious awareness when writing job advertisements to assure neutral gender verbiage (Nelsen et al., 2019).

Methods and Analysis

The researchers used the following methodology to expand on the previous research conducted by Nelsen et al. (2019).

METHODOLOGY

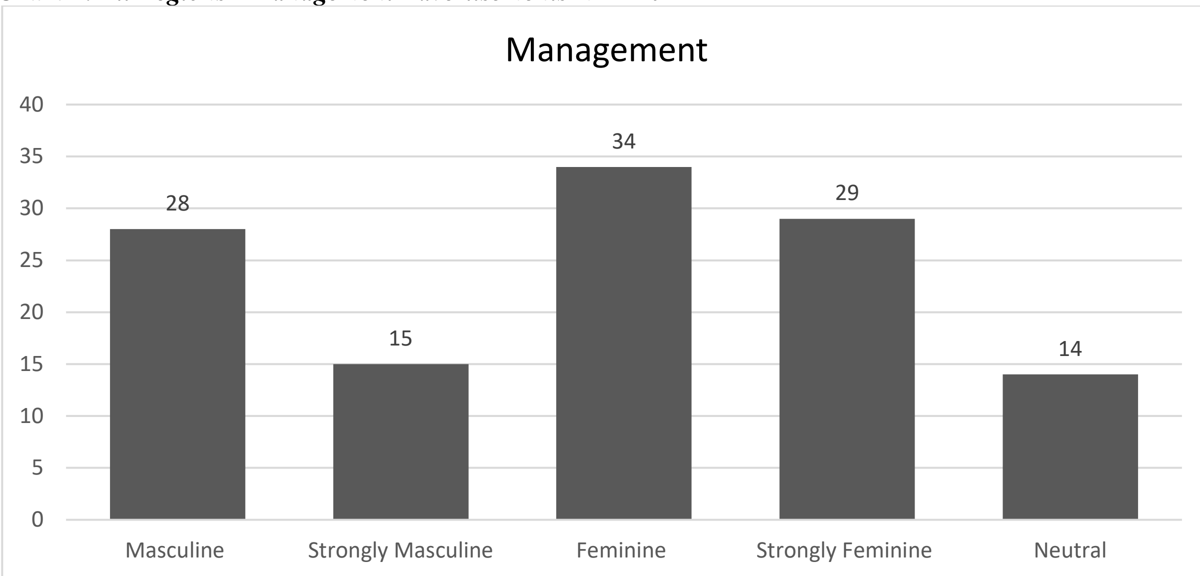
Researchers gathered 600 online job advertisements within a 48-hour timeframe in four large metropolitan areas (Northeast, South, West, and Midwest). Each job advertisement was electronically copied into an online gender word counter application designed by Matfield (2018). The gender word counter application was developed in accordance with the findings of Gaucher et al. (2011). The job advertisements gathered and used met the following criteria: (1) the position was intended for recent college graduates with a BA or BS degree in management, marketing, sales, accounting, or finance (2) the position's listed qualifications would be met by a recent university undergraduate with a BA or BS degree, (3) the position was within the vicinity of the four metropolitan areas used in this study.

The gender word counter application coded the words in the job advertisement as masculine or feminine and articulated how the overall posting skewed masculine, strongly masculine, feminine, strongly feminine, or neutral. If a posting contained equal masculine and feminine words (i.e., three words deemed masculine and three words deemed feminine), the posting was classified as neutral (Gaucher et al., 2001). The list of words and their categorization is listed in Appendix A. The results were analyzed using Chi-Square analysis ($\alpha=0.10$) to determine if there was an overall significant difference. Because an overall significance was found ($p=0.0035$), further t-test analyses were also performed ($\alpha=0.10$) for each of the geographic areas and each of the academic disciplines.

RESULTS

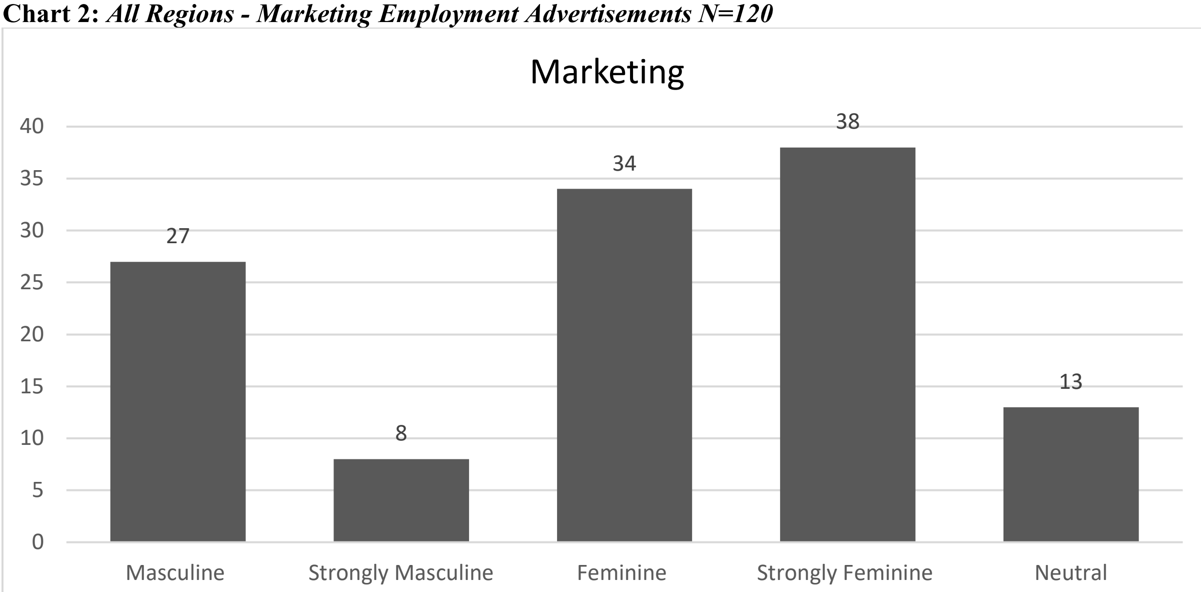
The breakdown of the *N=600* job advertisements included 120 for each of the selected four large populated metropolitan areas: Los Angeles (West), Houston (South), Chicago (Midwest), and New York (East), and 30 job advertisements from each of the selected five academic disciplines: management, marketing, sales, accounting, and finance. The results of the analyses are detailed in the following charts and graphs.

Chart 1: ***All Regions - Management Advertisements N = 120***



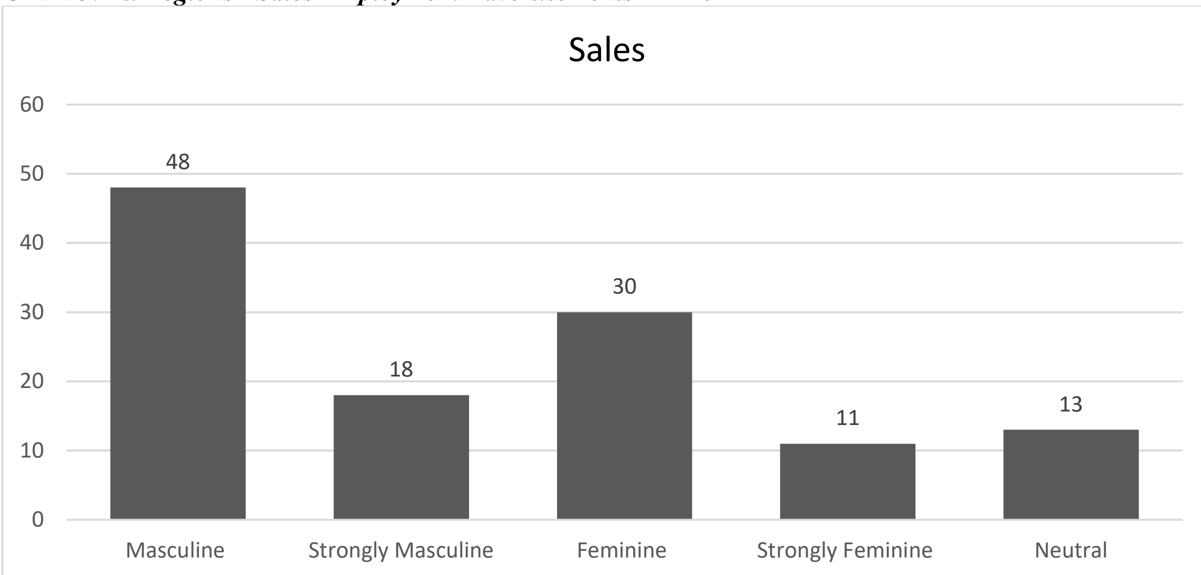
p=0.003 Significant difference between masculine/strongly masculine wording and feminine/strongly feminine wording (skewed feminine)
p<0.001 Significant difference between neutral wording and non-neutral wording (all gender categories: masculine, strongly masculine, feminine, strongly feminine)

Chart 2: ***All Regions - Marketing Employment Advertisements N=120***



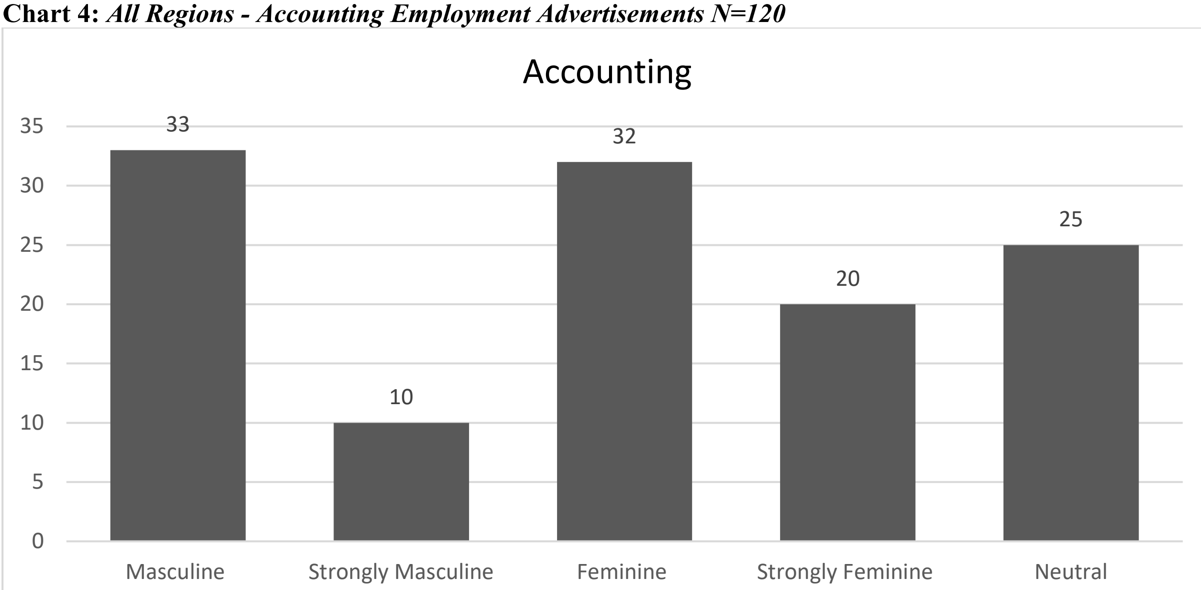
P<0.001 Significant difference between masculine/strongly masculine wording and feminine/strongly feminine wording (skewed feminine)
p<0.001 Significant difference between neutral wording and non-neutral wording (all gender categories: masculine, strongly masculine, feminine, strongly feminine)

Chart 3: ***All Regions - Sales Employment Advertisements N=120***



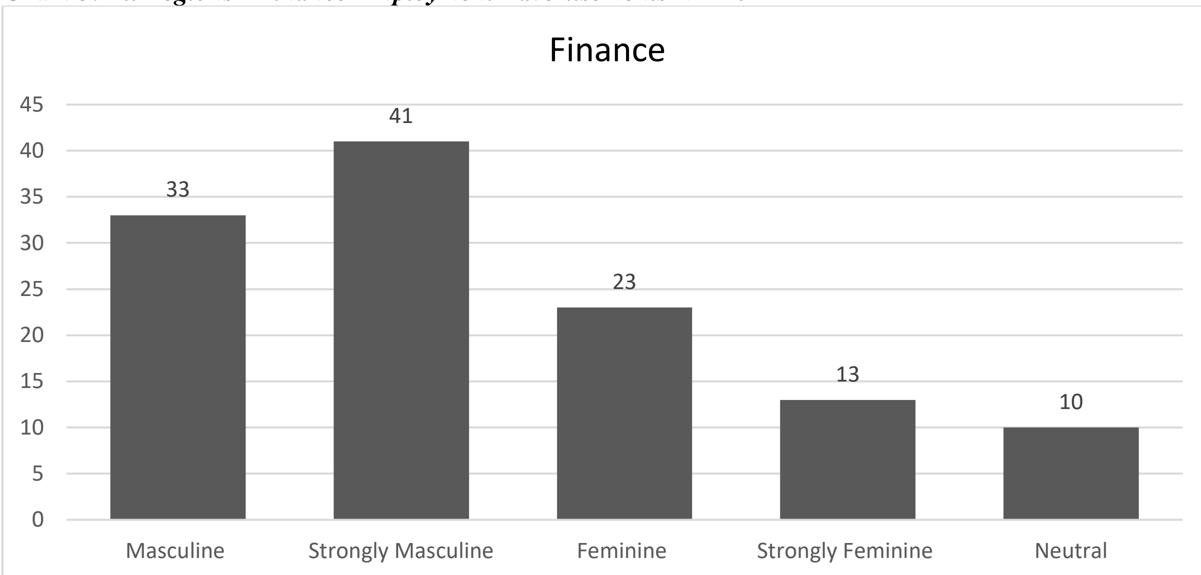
p=0.002 Significant difference between masculine/strongly masculine wording and feminine/strongly feminine wording (skewed masculine)
p<0.001 Significant difference between neutral wording and non-neutral wording (all gender categories: masculine, strongly masculine, feminine, strongly feminine)

Chart 4: ***All Regions - Accounting Employment Advertisements N=120***



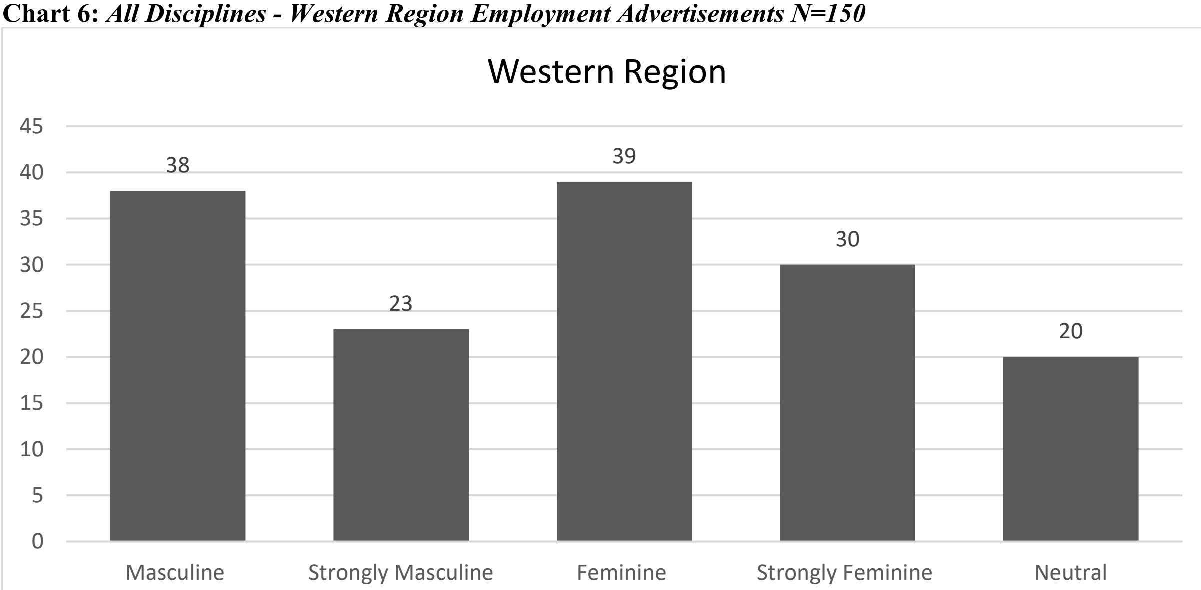
p=0.082 Significant difference between masculine/strongly masculine wording and feminine/strongly feminine wording (slightly skewed feminine)
p<0.001 Significant difference between neutral wording and non-neutral wording (all gender categories: masculine, strongly masculine, feminine, strongly feminine)

Chart 5: ***All Regions - Finance Employment Advertisements N=120***



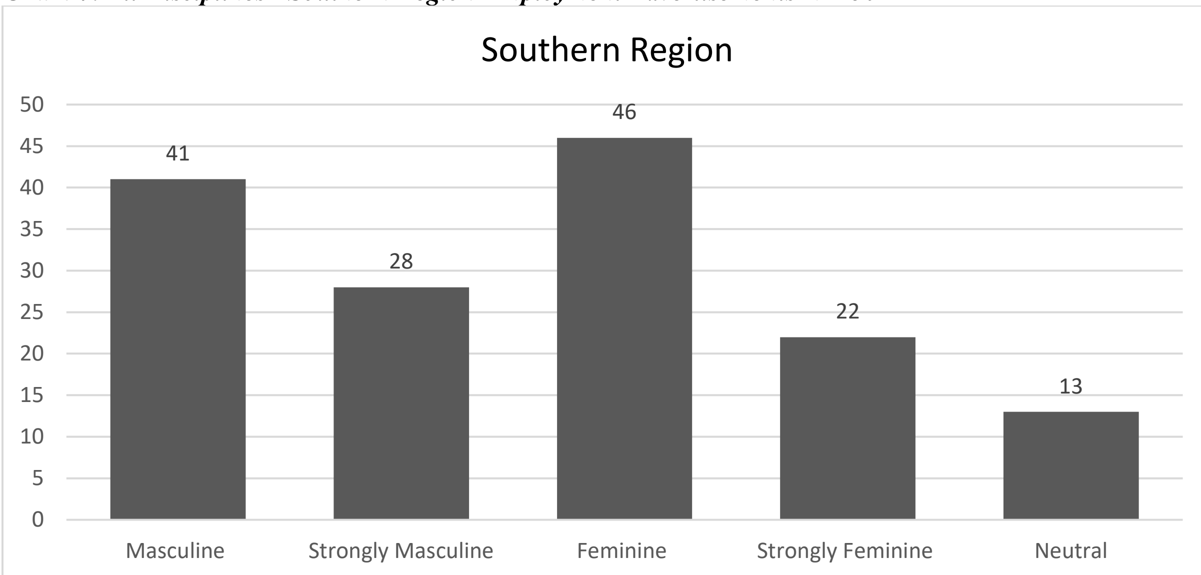
P<0.001 Significant difference between masculine/strongly masculine wording and feminine/strongly feminine wording (skewed masculine)
p<0.001 Significant difference between neutral wording and non-neutral wording (all gender categories: masculine, strongly masculine, feminine, strongly feminine)

Chart 6: ***All Disciplines - Western Region Employment Advertisements N=150***



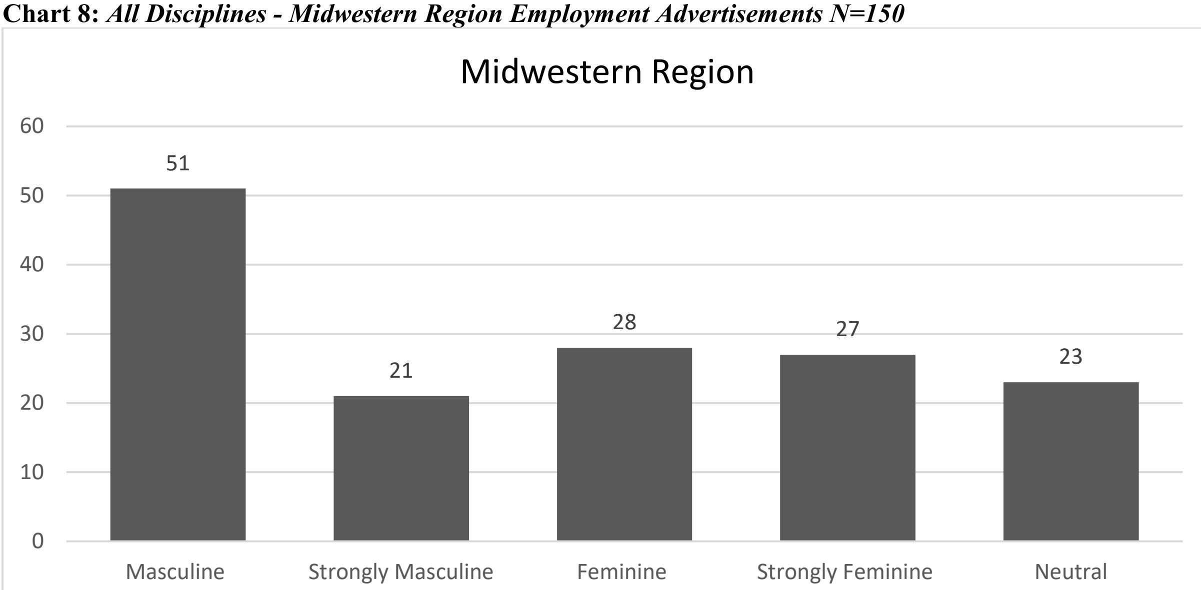
p=0.082 Significant difference between masculine/strongly masculine wording and feminine/strongly feminine wording (slightly skewed feminine)
p<0.001 Significant difference between neutral wording and non-neutral wording (all gender categories: masculine, strongly masculine, feminine, strongly feminine)

Chart 7: ***All Disciplines - Southern Region Employment Advertisements N=150***



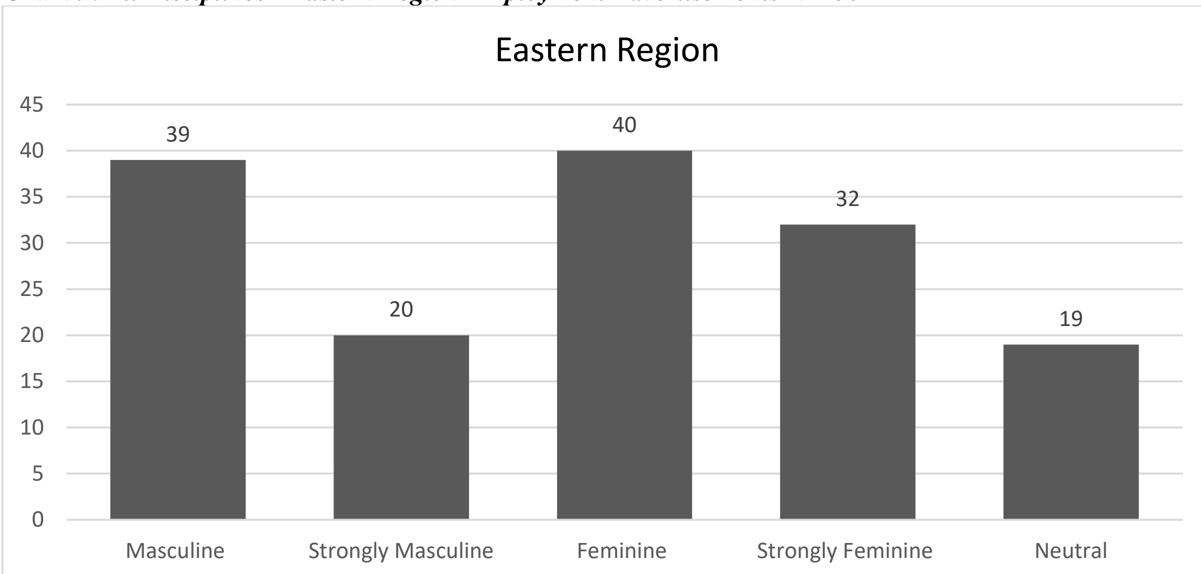
p=0.298 No significant difference between masculine/strongly masculine wording and feminine/strongly feminine wording
p<0.001 Significant difference between neutral wording and non-neutral wording (all gender categories: masculine, strongly masculine, feminine, strongly feminine)

Chart 8: ***All Disciplines - Midwestern Region Employment Advertisements N=150***



p=0.270 No significant difference between masculine/strongly masculine wording and feminine/strongly feminine wording
p<0.001 Significant difference between neutral wording and non-neutral wording (all gender categories: masculine, strongly masculine, feminine, strongly feminine)

Chart 9: ***All Disciplines - Eastern Region Employment Advertisements N=150***

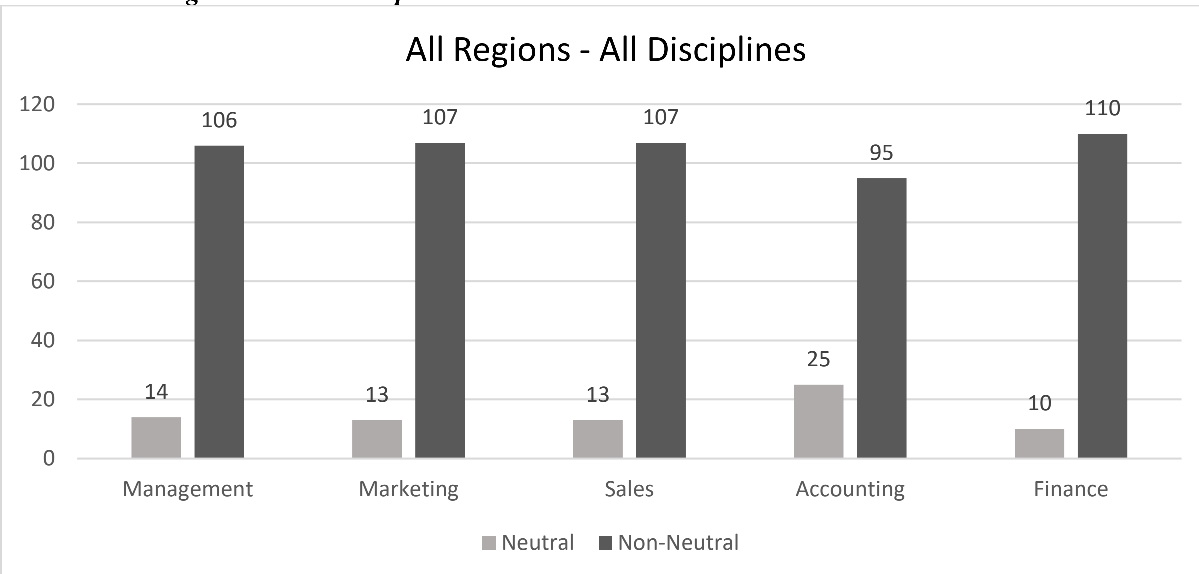


p=0.108 No significant difference between masculine/strongly masculine wording and feminine/strongly feminine wording
p<0.001 Significant difference between neutral wording and non-neutral wording (all gender categories: masculine, strongly masculine, feminine, strongly feminine)

Chart 10: ***All Regions and All Disciplines Employment Advertisements N=600***

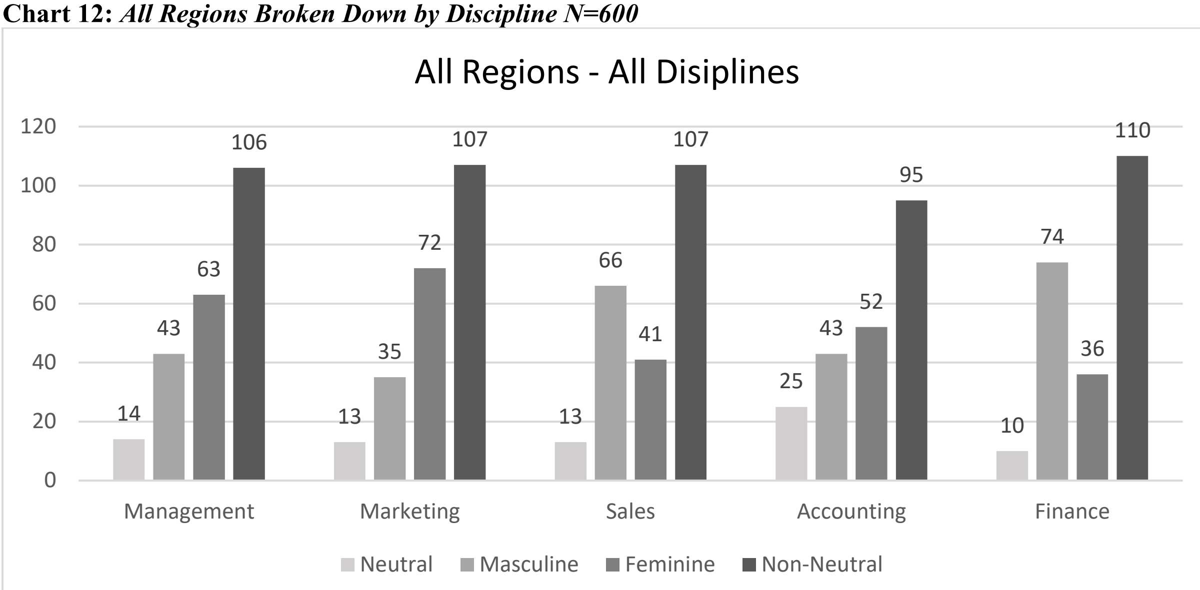
p=0.204 No significant difference between masculine/strongly masculine wording and feminine/strongly feminine wording
p<0.001 Significant difference between neutral wording and non-neutral wording (all gender categories: masculine, strongly masculine, feminine, strongly feminine)

Chart 11: ***All Regions and All Disciplines - Neutral versus Non-Natural N=600***



p<0.001 Significant difference between neutral wording and non-neutral wording (all gender categories: masculine, strongly masculine, feminine, strongly feminine)

Chart 12: ***All Regions Broken Down by Discipline N=600***



p=0.204 No significant difference between masculine/strongly masculine wording and feminine/strongly feminine wording (skewed)
p<0.001 Significant difference between neutral wording and non-neutral wording (all gender categories: masculine, strongly masculine, feminine, strongly feminine)

Table 1: ***Gender Bias in Employment Advertisements Broken Down by Discipline***

Area of Employment	N	Significance of: Difference between masculine/strongly masculine wording and feminine/strongly feminine wording	Significance of: Difference between neutral wording and all gender categories (masculine, strongly masculine, feminine, strongly feminine)
Management	120	0.003**	<0.001***
Marketing	120	0.001*	<0.001***
Sales	120	0.002**	<0.001***
Accounting	120	0.082*	<0.001***
Finance	120	0.001***	<0.001***
All - Total	600	0.204	<0.001***

**significant at p<0.10*
***significant at p<0.01*
****significant at p<0.001*

Table 2: ***Gender Bias in Employment Advertisements Broken Down by Region***

US Region	N	Significance of: Difference between masculine/strongly masculine wording and feminine/strongly feminine wording	Significance of: Difference between neutral wording and all gender categories (masculine, strongly masculine, feminine, strongly feminine)
Western	150	0.082*	<0.001***
Southern	150	0.298	<0.001***
Midwestern	120	0.270	<0.001***
Eastern	120	0.108	<0.001***
All - Total	600	0.204	<0.001***

**significant at p<0.10*
***significant at p<0.01*
****significant at p<0.001*

Analysis

Overall. The overall analysis of all $N=600$ job advertisements showed no significant difference ($p=0.204$) between masculine/strongly masculine wording and feminine/strongly feminine wording. However, the overall analysis of all N=600 job advertisements showed a significant difference ($p<0.001$) between *neutral* wording and *non-neutral* wording (all gender categories combined: masculine, strongly masculine, feminine/strongly feminine), thus, requiring further breakdown by discipline and region, as detailed below.

Disciplines. When broken up by academic discipline, there were significant differences in all five disciplines in the gendered wording between masculine/strongly masculine wording and feminine/strongly feminine wording: management (*p=0.003*) skewed feminine, marketing (*p=0.001*) skewed feminine, sales (*p=0.002*) skewed masculine, accounting (*p=0.082*) slightly skewed feminine, and finance (*p=.001*) skewed masculine. Interestingly, while the sales discipline was skewed masculine, the marketing discipline was skewed feminine. Additionally, while the accounting discipline was skewed feminine, the finance discipline was skewed masculine. Regardless of the discipline, or how the data were broken up, there was a significant difference (*p<0.001*) between *neutral* wording and *non-neutral* wording (all gender categories: masculine, strongly masculine, feminine/strongly feminine).

Regions. When broken up by region, there were no significant differences in three of the four regions: Southern (*p=0.298*), Midwestern (*p=0.270*), and Eastern (*p=0.108*). The Western region had a slight significance (*p=0.082*) skewed feminine. Regardless of how the data were broken up by region, there was a significant difference (*p<0.001*) between *neutral* wording and *non-neutral* wording (all gender categories: masculine, strongly masculine, feminine/strongly feminine) in all five academic disciplines.

DISCUSSION

The results of this study showed no gender bias in the overall job advertisements of all disciplines between masculine/strongly masculine wording and feminine/strongly feminine wording. However, as in a previous study (Nelsen et al., 2019), there was a significant difference (*p<0.001*) between *neutral* wording and all gender categories combined (masculine/strongly masculine, feminine/strongly feminine) or *non-neutral* wording in every discipline and region. This reiteration of the research findings clarifies that job advertisements are indeed skewed toward one gender or the other as opposed to being *neutral* in wording. Researchers found additional gender biases between masculine/strongly masculine wording and feminine/strongly feminine wording in all five of the disciplines studied when broken down by discipline. These findings differ from the original study, which showed only two of the four subcategories: marketing (feminine bias) and sales (masculine bias) to be present when analyzed for just one market.

As noted earlier, management (*p=0.003*) skewed feminine, marketing (*p=0.001*) skewed feminine, sales (*p=0.002*) skewed masculine, accounting (*p=0.082*) slightly skewed feminine, and finance (*p=.001*) skewed masculine. Interestingly, although marketing and sales positions could be deemed similar in discipline, there were significant differences where the marketing discipline skewed feminine, and the sales discipline skewed masculine. Similarly, although finance and accounting positions could be deemed similar in discipline, there were significant differences where the finance discipline skewed masculine, and the accounting discipline skewed feminine.

As noted in the literature review (Beach et al., 1996; Bretz & Judge, 1994; Kecia et al., 1999), the impact of gender wording in the applicant's decisions and acceptance process and management considerations in the recruitment process is critical. Thus, we concur with Perry et al. (1994) and Ross (2014) that organizations should specifically create and choose job posting descriptions and advertisements that are gender neutral and devoid of gender bias in an effort to make various roles more accessible (Perry et al., 1994). We acknowledge Bohnet's (2016) findings that unconscious bias hinders this progress, and the process of helping employees recognize and act to correct this unconscious bias proves to be both challenging and expensive. However, by gaining bias awareness, both beliefs and behavior can be adapted in an attempt to be less gender biased (Banaji & Greenwald, 2016). Thus, the researchers concur with Bohnet (2016) that the onus should be on the organization as a whole rather than on individuals.

Thus, when creating job advertisements, more attention should be given to ensure each description has neutral verbiage. Per Bohnet (2016), the organization should instill processes that de-bias the organization rather than the individual – this could mean the addition of a review process for all job descriptions to check for bias prior to posting. This additional step could potentially result in a more diverse applicant pool.

Bias against women in sales and finance and bias against men in marketing, accounting, and management should be addressed as it has the potential for detrimental consequences, not only for the affected gender but also for the success of organizations. Thus, addressing these biases directly by modifying processes may improve gender equality in the workplace, which affects women, men, and the overall organization. The job posting is a crucial part of recruiting and staffing for organizations. Therefore, we recommend organizations implement a process to assure conscious awareness in the writing of job advertisements to assure neutral gender verbiage.

Limitations and Future Research

The researchers gathered the job advertisements for this study from one online employment listing site during a specific 48-hour timeframe in August 2020 from four highly populated metropolitan areas representing the East, South, West, and Midwest areas of the United States. Research and analysis could be conducted to determine if either the time of year or less highly populated areas influence the sample and corresponding results.

The gender word counter application defines a neutral job posting as one that utilizes masculine and feminine words in equal numbers. Ideally, research should be conducted that determines what a truly neutral vocabulary looks like, both by balancing masculine versus feminine wording and whether the overall language is intrinsically neutral. Additionally, further exploration is warranted to study the significant findings of feminine skewed wording versus masculine skewed wording of all five disciplines and the impacts on the individuals holding those positions, as well as the applicant pool and finalists.

This study considered only entry-level job postings. Future research should investigate advanced job advertisements for gender bias, specifically upper-management positions within all five disciplines. Longitudinal research should also be conducted to determine if initial bias in entry-level job advertisements leads to continued gender bias as employees advanced in organizations. This study is based on a binary approach to gender. Thus, with the growing awareness of the non-binary, further research should explore the impact of job advertisement language on individuals who identify as neither masculine nor feminine gendered. As this research was quantitative in nature, future qualitative research could explore impressions and feedback from those reading the employment advertisements. Additionally, qualities research could explore the intents of those writing the employment advertisements, including assessing any implicit biases (Banaji et al, 2013).

CONCLUSION

This study sought to determine if gender bias in the verbiage used for job advisements differs among five disciplines and within four regions. This study concludes that a significant difference exists between *neutral* verbiage and masculine/feminine bias in all five disciplines. The subcategories of sales and finance roles indicate a masculine bias exists. The subcategories of marketing, accounting, and management indicate a feminine bias exists. Researchers recommend organizations implement a process to assure conscious awareness in the writing of job advertisements to assure neutral gender verbiage.

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Appendix A

Gender-coded words

Masculine-coded words	Feminine-coded words
active	agree
adventurous	affectionate
aggress	child
ambition	cheer
analyze	collaborate
assert	commit
athlete	communal
autonomy	compassion
battle	connect
boast	considerate
challenge	cooperate
champion	co-operate
compete	depend
confident	emotional
courage	empath
decide	feel
decision	flatterable
decisive	gentle
defend	honest
determine	inter-personal
dominate	inter-dependent
dominant	kind
driven	kinship
fearless	loyal
fight	modesty
force	negotiate
greedy	nurture
head-strong	pleasant
headstrong	polite
hierarch	quiet
hostile	respond
impulsive	sensitive
independent	submissive
individual	support
intellect	sympathy
lead	tender
logic	together
objective	trust
opinion	understand
outspoken	warm
persist	whim
principle	enthusiasm
reckless	inclusive
self-confident	yield
self-reliant	share
self-sufficient	
stubborn	
superior	
unreasonable	

Gaucher, Friesen, & Kay (2011)

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UNDERSTANDING THE ROLE OF VISUAL ANCHORING WITH PRODUCT IMAGE IN AD EFFECTIVENESS OF REPLACEMENT VISUAL RHETORICS

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Advertisers use different styles of advertising to serve different communication goals (Abraham & Lodish, 1990). A prominent style of advertising—visual metaphors, present information in a manner that departs from standard messaging templates, potentially with the objectives of capturing people's attention (Berlyne, 1960), involving the audience in the comprehension process (Mohanty & Ratneshwar, 2015), rewarding the audience for cracking the puzzle (Corbett, 1990), and consequently boosting ad and brand evaluations (McQuarrie & Mick, 1996, 1999, 2003).

Visual metaphors present two ideas or terms in relationship to one another such that one (i.e., the source) is used to organize or conceptualize the other (i.e., the target) (Kittay, 1987; Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). A common type of visual metaphor—replacement visual metaphors, are depicted such that one term is present and the other term is absent. In such ads, the audience needs to evoke the idea of the missing element based on the context in the process of metaphoric comprehension involving the two terms (Phillips & McQuarrie, 2004). Thereby, replacement visual metaphors are considered to be one of the most complex types of metaphors (van Mulken, van Hooft, & Nederstigt, 2014).

Exacerbating the situation even further, certain replacement visual metaphor ads are depicted, such that, the product image (the target term) is ostensibly absent and the source term is visually present. For example, a recent ad from Volkswagen portrays a porcupine lined up between plastic bags of goldfish in water. The text at the bottom says, "Precision Parking. Park Assist by Volkswagen." The picture of an automobile is conspicuously absent. The ad makes an analogical comparison between a porcupine (the source concept that is visible) parked between bags of goldfishes and the automobile (the target concept that is absent from the picture) to illustrate the product's feature—park assist in delivering the benefit of precision parking.

Advertisers may assume that all forms of visual metaphors are persuasive tools of communication, however, this assumption may be misplaced (Corbett, 1990; Mohanty & Ratneshwar, 2016). What is currently unknown is whether replacement visual metaphors, which are commonly used in advertising, a potent style of advertising. Extant research has failed to systematically investigate the case of replacement visual metaphors. Hence, this paper fills this research gap by investigating, what is the effect of replacement ads—where the product image is absent on brand attitude, and factors influencing these effects. This paper investigates the following important, unanswered questions in the advertising literature: (a) What is the effect of replacement visual metaphor ads, where the product image is absent, on brand attitude? (b) Can visual anchoring with a product image improve this relationship? (c) How do Need for Cognition (Cacioppo & Petty, 1982; Cacioppo, Petty, & Kao, 1984) and brand familiarity (Campbell, Keller, Mick, & Hoyer, 2003; Keller, 1993) respectively, affect the relationship between ad type and brand attitude?

This paper makes a unique contribution by investigating the role of visual anchoring with a product image in boosting brand attitude. This is an ecologically valid technique as evidenced in some print ads, where a small product image is placed at the bottom of the layout by the punchline/slogan of the ad. Here, the concept of anchoring is appropriate, since the idea of adding a small product image, in the periphery of the visual metaphor, is not to detract from the replacement figure, however, akin to a verbal anchor, unobtrusively, direct the audience in selecting one of the potential product imageries prompted by the visual metaphor (Barthes, 1986; Forceville, 1994).

This is the first paper that investigates the case of replacement visual metaphor ads—depicted without a product image and its consequences on brand attitude. Across two controlled experiments (N = 175 (Experiment 1); N = 183 (Experiment 2)), utilizing ecologically valid stimuli, this paper demonstrates that replacement ads without product

image when compared with either direct ads or with replacement ads anchored with product image have a negative effect on brand attitude. Further, the paper examines the roles of brand familiarity and Need for Cognition (NFC), with the intent of exploring the boundary conditions for these effects. In Experiment 2, results reveal that brand familiarity interacts with ad type, such that, the presence of a product image, enhances brand attitude in the familiar (vs. unfamiliar) brand condition. Further, NFC moderates the effects of ad type on brand attitude, such that, the differences due to anchoring with product image is mitigated in high (vs. low) NFC participants. Other interesting patterns of results are revealed, when the replacement ads are compared with direct ads (control condition), and when ad attitude and subjective comprehension are considered as the dependent measures. Overall, the two experiments offer clear managerial implications that replacement ads without product image, should be anchored with product image to improve brand evaluations, particularly in the case of familiar brands, and low NFC consumers.

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ROASTING VERSUS BOASTING: EVALUATING THE UNDERLYING MECHANISMS THAT IMPACT THE PERSUASIVENESS OF BRAND'S ROASTING AND BOASTING TWITTER POSTS

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Wendy's started the trend of "roasting" or teasing other brands and consumers on Twitter, which soon caught on, and brands worldwide started engaging in "roasting" other brands or consumers on Twitter. In light of this recent phenomenon, the persuasiveness of "roasting" posts is contrasted with "boasting" posts: routine Twitter posts wherein the brands talk about their offerings and highlight how they are superior. Although "roasting" posts have been shown to result in higher consumer engagement on Twitter, the findings of this research indicate the “roasting” posts are less persuasive, highlighting that everything that results in higher consumer engagement might not eventually prove beneficial for the brand. Specifically, it is ascertained that despite being hugely popular, "roasting" posts are less persuasive owing to them being perceived as less appropriate than "boasting" posts. Additionally, the difference between brands “roasting” other brands versus consumers is teased apart in terms of their persuasiveness.

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AN ASSESSMENT OF A RETAILING MANAGEMENT MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTION BANK TAXONOMY

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Banks of multiple-choice type questions are a staple accompanying virtually all marketing textbooks and those of other business disciplines. Often, in these banks multiple-choice type questions are classified by the authors, usually as to level of difficulty and less often as to skill or type, e.g., conceptual, definitional, application, etc. The present study conducts an assessment of the questions accompanying a widely adopted retailing management text, Levy, Weitz, & Grewal (2019, hereafter LWG). Assessment of this particular test item bank, of course, should be of interest to adopters of the text. Also, though, the assessment may provide encouragement of and a *pro forma* for similar assessments of other question banks and a contribution toward establishing norms for such banks.

Multiple-choice questions are classified by LWG (2019) on three dimensions: question difficulty (Easy, Medium, Hard), selected Bloom's types (Apply, Remember, Understand), and six AACSB categories. (Regarding AACSB, nearly all of the bank questions are classified as analytic or reflective thinking, providing little differentiation among the questions.) The nominal population of LWG (2019) multiple-choice questions numbers 1164. Creditably, in the course of administering exams, only three sample questions were deemed invalid on the basis of there being no clear correct answer in the text. As well, for the present study four questions not having five answer options were excluded. Thus, the research population here comprises 1157 questions.

"The analysis of multiple-choice items typically begins with the computation of a difficulty and a discrimination index for every item." (Aiken 1991, p. 78) Accordingly, one criterion in the present study is question difficulty operationalized as the percent of correct responses for a given question, a near-universally prescribed measure of item difficulty (Anastasi & Urbina 1997, p. 173; Gregory 2011, p. 141; Guilford 1954, p. 418; Gulliksen 1950, p. 366; Henrysson 1971, p. 139; Nunnally & Bernstein 1994, p. 301). The mean percent correct over all 479 sample questions in this study was 79.48, with no questions being answered incorrectly by all students and 14 questions being answered correctly by all students.

"Item discrimination refers to how well an item can accurately discriminate between test takers who differ on the construct being measured." (Reynolds & Livingston 2012, p. 225) More directly, "Measures of item discrimination indicate how adequately an item separates or discriminates between high scorers and low scorers on an entire test." (Cohen & Swerdlik 2010, p. 258) For a given question, in this study discrimination is operationalized as the point-biserial correlation between a student's total exam score and the dichotomy of whether the student answered the question correctly or incorrectly. The point-biserial correlation is also a near-universally prescribed measure of item discrimination (Dick and Hagerty, 1971, pp. 106-108; Friedenberg 1995, p. 277; Henrysson 1971, p. 142).

Assessing the LWG (2019) taxonomy here joins its difficulty and Bloom dimensions with the two item analysis cornerstones item difficulty and item discrimination. Distributions of each criterion and summary descriptive statistics for the total sample of questions were examined. Particular to the assessment of the taxonomy, the distributions and summary statistics were also prepared for each classification category of each taxonomy dimension (difficulty and Bloom).

Providing data for the present analyses were a total of six examinations administered across eight sections of a retail marketing management course taught by the same instructor using a common format and evaluation scheme. The undergraduate course is typically taken in the third or fourth year of a student's university program and has as its prerequisites two semester-long principles of marketing courses. The course is administered on a self-study basis including a term project; there are no lectures. Each of the three exams counted for twenty percent of the students' final course grades. Exams were scored as the percent of questions answered correctly; no penalty was deducted for incorrect answers. In the very few instances where a question was not answered (23) or multiple answers were given, these were considered to be incorrect answers. Class sizes were 25 to 47 students, there being an average of 39.02

potential answers to each of the LWG (2019) questions.

LWG (2019) multiple-choice questions are arranged in the test question bank according to the order in which the question content appears in the textbook. For each examination, specific multiple-choice questions were selected on a systematic sampling basis, ranging from 15 to 18 questions per chapter. The total sample of questions was 479 or 41.40 percent of the total research population of 1157 LWG (2019) multiple-choice type questions.

Regarding item diffficulty with a mean percent correct of 79.48 the LWG (2019) questions are relatively easy; less than two percent of the questions (1.86 percent) have percentage correct less than or equal to 40 percent. Only about one-fifth of the questions (21.78 percent) have percents correct in the range that is optimal for item discrimination (30 $< \% \leq$ 70). Questions classified as Easy do have a mean percent correct (82.27) 5.48 percentage points greater than the mean for questions classified as Medium (77.39). There is essentially no difference in difficulty between questions classified as Medium (77.39) and those classified as Hard (78.59). <u>No</u> questions classified as Hard have a percentage correct less than or equal to 40 percent.

82.97 percent of the questions classified as Easy have percents correct greater than 70. The corresponding values for questions classified as Medium and Hard are 74.48 and 71.43, respectively. In other words, 74.48 percent of questions classified as Medium are no more difficult than questions classified as Easy. 71.43 percent of questions classified as Hard are, in fact, no more difficult than those classified as Easy or Medium.

Across the three Bloom question types there are no meaningful differences in the respective mean percents correct (79.48, 81.19, 78.66) and this dimension would not be effective in planning any desired difficulty level of an exam. In Bloom's cognitive hierarchy, remembering precedes understanding which precedes application. There is no evidence here of that precedence in the LWG (2019) taxonomy classifications.

Questions classified as Hard provide the greatest discrimination (mean point-biserial correlation 0.51) and questions classified as Easy materially lesser discrimination (0.37). The LWG (2019) difficulty taxonomy dimension is a useful basis for selecting questions toward that criterion. In contrast, the three Bloom categories have about the same mean discrimination ability

For the entire sample of questions, 67.18 percent of the point-biserial correlations are less than or equal to 0.5. Across the three difficulty levels, the percentages of questions with point-biserial correlations less than or equal to 0.5 are 74.09, 64.00, and 46.15, respectively. Across the three Bloom types, the percentages are 70.21, 66.24, and 65.38, respectively.

For the purpose of discrimination, dysfunctional questions are those where lower scoring students are more likely to answer a question correctly than are higher scoring students. This is reflected in a negative point-biserial correlation. Here, 4.19 percent of the questions have negative point-biserial correlations. The percent of negative point-biserial correlations for questions classified as Easy is 6.02 percent with the percents for Application and Remember questions being about equal: 4.26 and 5.73 percent, respectively.

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GATHERING IN PLACE: MARKETING EDUCATOR MOTIVATIONS TO PARTICIPATE IN VIRTUAL AND IN-PERSON PROFESSIONAL MEETINGS

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

The global pandemic that started in early 2020 abruptly forced faculty to instruct students in social isolation. All areas of academic life were affected, including academic conferences (Gössling et al., 2021). Approximately half of 150 professional conference organizers canceled their event in 2020 with much of the balance quickly pivoting to offer a virtual experience (omnipress, 2021). Over half of those conference organizers reported a decrease in revenue with 35% reporting a significant loss. It is imperative to have sustainable academic conference attendance because it is often the main source of organizational revenue, and it is usually the one time of year that members can gather collectively.

Virtual conference participation continues with the anticipation that large group in-person gatherings will be permitted at some point in the future (CDC, 2021). In this study, a virtual conference is defined as having live synchronous sessions with no in-person attendees. Now that many marketing educators have experienced a virtual conference, the leadership in MSPOs are left wondering whether attendees prefer in-person or virtual conferences.

A convenience sample of 19 marketing educators was contacted via email to respond to open-ended questions addressing motivations and preference for in-person and virtual conference attendance. Survey items for consumer motivation dimensions were developed from the open-ended responses. The measures for future conference attendance intentions were measured by individual survey items. Demographic, institutional, prior conference attendance, current MSPO membership, and funding information was also collected on the survey.

The results indicate in-person conference attendance dropped from 89% of survey respondents attending (or planning to attend) at least one in-person conference in 2019 to only 26.6% and 22.3% indicating such for 2020 and 2021, respectively. Although only 6% of survey respondents attended at least one virtual conference in 2019, 66.5% indicated doing so in 2020 and 68% plan to do so in 2021. Regression analyses tested the proposed hypotheses. The five hypotheses regarding motivation and conference attendance were supported.

Although many events were canceled in 2020 and 2021 to maintain social distance, the want and need for people to gather in some capacity (Getz & Page, 2019) will quickly restore academic conference attendance in some format. However, costs and potential risk will highlight the efficacy of virtual events (Seraphin, 2021). As the world returns to a post-COVID normalcy, the challenge for conference planners is determining the best elements to retain and which to adapt to best fulfill the expectations, preferences, and valued benefits of current and future attendees.

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ONE MORE LOOK AT CHEATHING AND HONOR CODES

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POSITION PAPER

It is no secret that many college students cheat on assignments at some point in time (see, for example, Malesky, Grist, Poovey, & Dennis, 2021). The problem worsened with the introduction and rapid improvement of tools and services for cheating. As all classes had to move online because of COVID-19 restrictions, many mechanisms used to keep cheating in check such as in-person proctored exams were no longer viable. At the same time, it is possible that cultural values of the American society (which has traditionally valued honesty) are rapidly changing away from placing a value on honesty altogether. We are revisiting the use of honor code as a tool to promote positive, ethical collegiate behaviors.

For rather obvious reasons, wide-spread unchecked cheating in college is undesirable. So, what can educators do to uphold the standards of ethics and honesty among students? We can enhance policing of such behaviors by suppressing and banning technologies, sites and tools that could enable cheating; often paraphrase our test banks (Golden & Kohlbeck, 2020) which is not always practical, etc. Or we can try promoting positive behaviors and standards of honesty by a variety of means. One of such means has been the honor code (Malesky et al, 2021).

Policing to prevent cheating is expensive. It can also be time consuming for instructors with large class sizes or lengthy tests. The difference between "policing" tools and what can be for the current purposes called "positive promotion tools" is that the former provides an external motivation, "do this for the fear of being punished", while the latter attempts to get students to internalize the ethical behaviors and use them "because that's the right thing to do." The idealistic reasoning here is that if we treat them like good ethical people, perhaps, it will elevate them to act like good ethical people. One of such tools is having students sign an honor code.

Evidence of honor codes' efficacy is somewhat mixed and are influenced by various factors including student's religious background, personality, particular culture of the institution [via peer pressure within the class], etc. (Malesky et al, 2021). This effort is aimed at refining this understanding. First, we ask: can cheating be reduced by using honor codes?

A paper-based test in two different sections of the same course, Section 1 and Section 2, was delivered. The test included two "impossible group" of questions. Questions in the "impossible group" were deliberately chosen to be beyond the capability of students, but whose answers could readily be found online. The test also included two open-ended questions. The professor distributed the 75-minute test and left the classroom. This was done to mimic an online environment where students must complete assignments without an in-person proctor. In Section 1, the university's academic code was put on the front page along with the implications of its breach. Students had to read and acknowledge that they had understood the honor code and the implications of breaching it. In Section 2, the same test was given without the honor code.

The results from this experiment showed differences in the average test scores between the two sections. The average score for students was higher in Section 2 than in Section 1 (students with the honor code). Students were more likely to look up answers to the questions online than ask their colleagues based on an analysis of responses to the "impossible group" of questions and the open-ended questions. A higher number of students who got the correct answers to the impossible group of questions came from the class without the honor code (Section 2). There was also a lot more similarities in answers to the open-ended questions in Section 2. Later, interviews with students in each class suggested a more chaotic situation in Section 2 (the class without the honor code) than in Section 1. There was more movement and chatter in Section 2. Did the "chaos" in Section 2 encourage more students to look up answers?

It is also possible students in Section 1 would have behaved differently had they taken the test in the privacy of their own homes. It is possible the presence of their peers helped reinforce the honor code. Thus, conducting the similar experiment using online classes will be useful. Does the honor code reduce cheating in an online environment? Future research involving larger scale testing via collaboration with other schools should also be explored. With larger pool of classes tested, it would be possible to add demographic and socio-economic factors, religiosity, and other data as well as test several different forms of the code.

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TEACHING CRITICALLY: UTILIZING HISTORY TO EXPLORE AND EXAMINE HOW DIVERSITY IMPACTS MARKETING

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POSITION PAPER

This paper and presentation summarizes the rationale for, and development of, a diversity module utilizing historical events, policies, and trends pertaining to gender, race, ethnicity, and social class. The goal of this module was to offer students insight into the experiences of traditionally underrepresented groups, as well as to tie those experiences to marketing strategy and implementation. This module was integrated into a course titled Critical Issues in Marketing, a sociology of marketing course designed to explore the ways marketing influences, and is influenced by, individuals, cultures, groups, systems, and societies. This course was initially developed to address concerns that white, predominantly middle-class students were lacking in their understanding of, exposure to, and skills necessary to work with diverse groups, as well as their inability to view corporations, economic systems, and the marketing function as connected to historical, social, economic, political, and corporate trends.

As a small college located in a more rural setting, in a state with scores of alternative options, many of which offer more diverse student and/or faculty populations, it has become increasingly challenging for our institution to attract a diverse class. This lack of diversity in turn creates ongoing challenges as students not only do not have the exposure to diverse and underrepresented groups, they are also limited in their capacity to develop skills and insights that could be used to market to diverse groups. The Critical Issues in Marketing course was developed to speak to these challenges. As originally designed, the course consisted of a series of lectures devoted to critical issues; a selection of films exploring such topics as race, gender, class, and capitalism; a set of field lectures and activities requiring students to explore (and experience) diverse communities; and assignments requiring students to work on projects with diverse groups.

While the Critical Issues course was successful in broadening student understanding, there continued to be gaps linking the present to the historical events and policies that have shaped structures, systems, policies, and the marketing activities that occur within. In essence, context was missing, and students struggled with recognizing the importance of life perspective so critical to the essence of marketers, as well as the role that the past has played in shaping not only the current environment, but the perpetuation of inequality. To address this, a new diversity module was designed to complement the original course. This new module consisted of four parts:

- Historical research assignment – Students were provided a list of events, policies, and court decisions, and were tasked with conducting research. Guidelines required the student to explore both the specific topic as well as trends or events that could have played an influential role. The list of topics were related to specific events or policies (examples included Nat Turner’s slave rebellion, the Stonewall Riots, the Chinese Exclusion Act, Loving vs. Virginia, Japanese internment camps, and the Triangle Shirtwaist factory fire) as well as broader topics (such as women’s suffrage, child labor laws, FHA redlining policies, Jim Crow laws, and immigration policies).

- Marketing assignment – Students explored how marketing may have been influenced by, or reflective of, the historical component. Often this section focused on promotions and media content, with images (or lack thereof) reflecting a worldview tied into that historical component, but students were pushed to explore all aspects of the marketing mix, analyzing how product, pricing, packaging, and distribution decisions reflected the period and spoke to how different groups may have been viewed by society through the prism of the marketing mix.

- Historical connection assignment – For this part, students were tasked with exploring whether the policies or events they were assigned could be linked to outcomes, trends, policies, and/or social norms in more recent times, and how, or if, this played out across the marketing mix. The goal was to get students thinking how remnants of the past, either directly or indirectly, may have impacted where we are at today.

- Presentation and discussion – The final piece was a student-led presentation of their research, with a discussion linking the assignment to other components of the course and, as the semester progressed, the work of other students on this module. In this way, individual events in history and the context of those events were connected.

Implementing this module was not without challenges. Most students had little knowledge of the historical events or, in cases where they did, little understanding of the deeper nuances often contained within. In addition, some students pushed back on the conceptual framework underpinning this module, namely the idea that there are connections between the past and the present. Yet over the course of the semester, as the exploration crossed historical events, students became more reflective. Results demonstrated that students left the course with a greater understanding of historical events; were less likely to see modern events as disconnected from the past; had a greater appreciation for the way history shaped social and organizational structures; and were more aware of the way marketing both influenced, and is influenced by, society. Moving forward, the goal is to both expand the work of individual students as well as to further refine the module by expanding the depth and breadth of policies and historical events.

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PROMOTING MENTAL HEALTH TREATMENT FOR COLLEGE STUDENTS

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POSITION PAPER

During the 2019 - 2020 school year, 27% of college students reported having an anxiety diagnosis while another 24% of college students reported having a depression diagnosis (Elfein, 2020). According to Bourdon, Moore, Long, Kendler, and Dick (2020) over the last decade, Institutions of Higher Education (IHEs) have increased mental health treatments to meet the needs of students. IHEs through their Counseling and Psychology (CAPS) departments provide a variety of mental health services ranging from disability accommodations, clinical services, telemental health services, peer-based support groups, crisis services, and online mental health apps (Bourdon et. al 2020). The Covid-19 relief bill allocated $40 billion in funding to colleges to target mental health treatment. An increase in funding for mental health treatment should increase treatment engagement, but college students continue fail to receive mental health treatment resulting in increased dropout rates.

IHEs stakeholder fail to understand why students do not seek treatment. College health organizations report the number of students requiring mental health treatment is high, but the number of students engaged with mental health treatment is low. Factors that undermine obtaining mental health treatment for college students include economic challenges, people skills, time management, and preferences to deal with issues on their own (Healthy Minds Network, 2020). Students fear the stigma of a mental health diagnosis, and students prefer to manage their mental health treatment alone, which results in students becoming more depressed, anxious, and dropping out of school.

Corrigan (2004) examined mental health treatment messaging and suggested marketing messaging that can persuade students to seek and engage in treatment. The messaging focused on how mental health treatment can improve the quality of life and academic performance for students. Collins, Wong, Breslau, Brunam, Cafalu, and Roth (2019) examined how marketing campaigns can improve treatment engagement. They recommended future mental health treatment campaigns include messages that people can improve their quality of life if they seek treatment and try not to manage life's problems on their own. A Dias and Wang (2021) study found graduate students were concerned about their workloads and the cost for treatment which prevented them from attending to their mental health. While suggestions for general marketing messaging to encourage mental health treatment have previously been researched for the general population, there is a gap in the literature that evaluates and recommends how to market mental health treatment to college students through digital marketing channels like the college CAP webpage.

With increased funding and resources, students have increased access to mental health treatment which may result in improved academic experiences and retention rates; however, students are still not engaging with treatment, which may be a result of the marketing messages. To understand current mental health treatment messages, the researchers conducted a qualitative media analysis of 30 Land-Grant college counseling websites. The researchers collected data on the following marketing elements: keyword search, URL structure, webpage hero image, webpage headline, video content, infographic information, FAQ, online psychology app, registration process, and cost. Researchers collected and coded the data from the college CAP websites from July 19, 2021 – July 29, 2021. The researchers had a challenging time finding the CAP website from the college homepage, suggesting students may not be able to find the CAP websites. Most college CAP webpages were located from the search function on the college homepage rather than through the student services tabs. The researchers typed "counseling" in the search bar and 53% of the CAP webpages were located using this search term. Most college marketers select a URL using the words Counseling and Psychological Services (70% in the sample). In terms of advertising the "product" of a student receiving a counseling session, only one CAP webpage had a headline/hero image showing a student in a counseling session. Thirty-seven percent of the webpages had no hero image on the webpage and 17% showed an academic building or hospital image. The dominant headline of the webpages was the title "Counseling and Psychology Services" with 73% of the marketers selecting this headline for the webpages. Of the college webpages in the sample, marketers used video on 23% of the webpages and the content of the video was usually "what to expect during a counseling session." Marketers shared graphics on half of the CAP webpages explaining the available counselling services (47%). Marketers provided a

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document (57%) and information to access an online psychology app (77%). The most consistent, most frequent marketing message communicated by marketers on the CAP webpages was the call to action to book a phone appointment (67%). Marketers of the CAP webpages (27%) offered online appointments, and some offered both phone appointments and online appointments (7%). Half (47%) of the CAP webpages failed to mention the cost involved in receiving mental health treatment, while (43%) communicated that treatment was available for "eligible students." Marketers failed to communicate marketing messages of improved quality of life or academic performance on the CAP websites.

Some may argue providing mental health treatment to students is not the responsibility of the IHEs. As the number of college students diagnosed with mental illnesses increases, IHEs need to improve mental health treatment for students to maintain retention rates. Researchers observed IHEs lack of basic knowledge of how to market the delicate topic of mental health treatment. Additionally, the counseling and psychology webpages may be managed by staff from the college department, rather than a marketing professional. Primary research explaining college students' preferences for marketing messages is lacking. The researcher would like to conduct a research study to understand what marketing messages and website marketing elements may improve the probability of students registering and engaging in mental healthcare treatment.

A Healthy Minds Network study estimated treating one hundred depressed students can prevent six students from dropping out of college which saves colleges an average of $240,000 in lost tuition (2020). IHEs need to improve their marketing of mental health treatment to students. Improving the marketing messages could result in improved quality of life and academic performance for students. The next research step is to conduct a student survey to evaluate marketing messages and webpage designs to persuade students to seek mental health treatment. We hope this research will help college marketers and their mental health stakeholders improve the marketing of mental health treatment resulting in an improvement in quality of life and retention rates for students.

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WHAT WE VALUE & PRACTICE – A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF DOCTORAL LEADERSHIP STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS IN 2013-16 AND TODAY

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POSITION PAPER

In this study, doctoral students were asked 3 questions in an Ethics course to get a pulse on where we are in 2021. The findings were then compared with what was found in a previous 4 year study conducted from 2013 to 2016. This study contributes to exploring diversity of views on what we value, what we are practicing, and where we are lacking in our education and workplace. With this shared knowledge and reflection, we can ensure that the marketing and management disciplines continue to lead during the new decade. Martin (2011) states, "Individuals and organizations organize and prioritize their values in particular ways, forming value hierarchies. The purpose of these value hierarchies is to enable people to make choices when values conflict with each other" (p. 98). In addition, there is a component that Martin (2011) points out regarding the roles individuals in leadership and employees have within their hierarchy, and the challenges that arise in various cultures based on the ethical standards of oneself versus the ethical framework outlined by organizations.

Using a convenience sample of six ethics courses that I taught in the period of (Fall, 2013) through (Fall, 2016), students in a Doctorate in Leadership Ethics course were introduced to an exercise, determining their top five values using the Values Activity Card Set (2005), based on thirty preset options such as "life, compassion, freedom, creativity, work, religion, wisdom, health" and many others. Other questions addressed included: "In our corporations and schools, which values are we practicing most often?" And, "Which values seem to be lacking in the workplace/society?"

For Question 1: (Fall, 2013) to (Fall, 2016) "In our corporations and schools, which values are we practicing most often?", the values discussed most frequently and the number of votes given, were the following: Being Successful (12), Creativity (11), Power(11), Knowledge (9), Accountability (8), Integrity (8), Responsibility (8), Dedication (7), Respect (7), Work (7), Advancement (6), Wealth (6), Cooperation (4), Honesty (4), Loyalty (4), Security (4), Transparency (4), Empathy (3), Recognition (3), Religion (3), Better Life (2), Compassion (2), Doing More with Less (2), Ethics(2), Excellence (2), Faith (2), Holistic Growth (2), Inclusivity (2), and Love (2), with thirty-six other values rounding out the list with one tally.

For Question 2: (Fall, 2013) to (Fall, 2016): "Which values seem to be lacking in the workplace/society?", the values discussed most frequently and the number of votes given, were the following: Honesty (9), Integrity (9), Empathy (7), Compassion (6), Trustworthiness (6), Valuing Loyalty (6), Accountability (5), Cooperation (5), Creativity (5), Patience (5), Dedication (4) Engagement (4) Faith (4), Love (4), Respect (4) Responsibility (4), Security (4), Spirituality (4), Transparency (4), Professionalism (3), Authenticity (2), Communication (2), Community (2), Courage (2), Family (2), Health (2), Innovation (2), Recognition (2), Reflection (2), with twenty-seven other values rounding out the list with one vote.

For many of the participants, choosing five values that they hold dear was very easy. For others limiting to this finite number caused some consternation. Others wanted to pull out values outside of the prescribed thirty that were provided, and create their own. A frequency distribution was created to show what we value today in 2021. Integrity & Honesty (6), Knowledge, learning & growth (4), Respect (3), Trustworthiness (3), Empathy (2), Family-oriented (2), Justice (2), Decency & equity (2), Love (2), Accountability, beauty (mostly of nature), health (physical/mental/emotional), helpfulness, humor (life is too short to not find some humor), kindness, life, loyalty, patience, security, social justice and having satisfying work were all mentioned.

For these same participants, choosing which values we practice most was very easy to describe. For others this caused some frustration. There were varied responses, but some continued to emerge from the majority of participants. A frequency distribution was created to show what we value today in 2021. Loyalty & dedication (5), respect (3), success & achievement (3), work & usefulness (3), power (2), helpfulness (2), advancement (2), cooperation (2), profit

& bottom line (2), accountability, conformity, creativity, duty, efficiency, independence, integrity, knowledge, leadership, professionalism, and tolerance all were discussed.

For many of the participants, choosing which values are lacking in the workplace and society was very easy to describe. For others this presented a challenge. There were varied responses, but some continued to emerge from the majority of participants. A frequency distribution was created to show what we are lacking in 2021 and what we could see as goals to bond us together and see if there are opportunities for alignment with others. Honesty & integrity (5), empathy(3), social justice(3) and upholding it, morality (2), respect (2), acceptance of diversity, communication, community, cooperation, differing standards, equity, freedom, generosity, learning, honoring others, humor, knowledge, less individual and more community focus, love, loyalty, patience, and self-awareness topped the list.

For participants, when the notion of education is discussed, advancement rushes to many minds as a core value. Schools and corporations practice more of the following values; accountability, creativity, work, loyalty, cooperation, professionalism, and power. In schools and corporations, it is all about the end game. For schools, it is about student performance in standardized tests, and for corporations it about profits and the bottom line. For this to happen there has to be a lot of creativity going on to sustain the organizations profitability. Workers are expected to be professional in all aspects of their jobs. They are also expected to work hard and be loyal to the organization. Management use their power to persuade workers into working overtime with little to no incentives for the extra time they may put in for the advancement of the organization.

Comparing findings from the previous 2013-2016 study, Honesty, integrity and an empathy for men and women in our work world continues to be perceived to be lacking in our society, and in many cases continues to evidence itself by unethical actions we hear as ethical violations or exposed in news stories. Loyalty & dedication, and respect are still practiced, along with striving for success & achievement. Work balance and being valued as useful people in organizations, while still navigating power structures continues to be a common theme in the past decade. Many want to be helpful and cooperative with their colleagues. When treated with respect, most workers are accountable, dutiful, value efficiency and conform to the organization's mission, while wanting to remain creative. Workers still want a form of independence to use their knowledge, leadership abilities and professionalism to enhance the needs of the organization whether it is business or education. Consideration should be given to whether there would be differences between men and women and whether there are possible different views among cultures (which arose in discussions). Also, my research looked at two snapshots in time. A longitudinal study would be fascinating to see if people change their value choices as time goes by.

As educators and practitioners alike, the ramifications of understanding the perceptions of our students, what they value, what they perceive we are practicing in society, and where we can improve - can be beneficial as we work with new paradigms of change - and students with new insights for marketing and management practices.

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TEACHING ABOUT MARKETING AND DEATH: HOW MUCH IS TOO MUCH?

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POSITION PAPER

We all will die. But why would we want to travel to experience the morbid and the macabre as a tourist? This is the question that is explored in the study of “Dark tourism”. Dark tourism, as defined by Sharpley and Stone, 2009 is “the act of travel to sites associated with death, suffering and the seemingly macabre”. This is also the topic for a Seminar course that has been offered and taught by the author since 2012. The content of the course includes class discussions, videos, and exposure to ephemera on the darkest of topics, such as the Holocaust and Genocide tourism, to artificial sites of “darkness” such as haunted houses and ghost tours. In order to allow for multiple, individual assessment of the morality, ethics, and other behavioural aspects of death, this course has developed a variety of assessment methods. This research examines the major challenges that are involved in teaching this type of course; the main question is how to encourage students to advance their personal and societal thoughts on how death should, or should not be commemorated, or more controversially, marketed. Further questions examine how to address students’ queries about death in both a straightforward, inclusive, and empathetic manner.

This course is a part of a larger “First Year Seminar” program. These courses are “an academic, interdisciplinary, first-year course, that are only available to first-year students. Classes are small, with a maximum enrolment of 22 students (note: pre Covid-19 the maximum class size was 18) per class. There are no exams”. The challenge with such as course, particularly one that is for first year University students, who are drawn from any program at the University, is how to structure the learning in a way that both captures the often horror and tragedy of the content, with the ability to convey the value of such knowledge to the student. Thus, how to best develop course content and evaluation materials to accomplish this. The name of the course, “Dark Tourism: An Immoral Promotion of Death & Disaster?” has a stated aim “to explore the individual and societal motivations and fascinations with such experiences, as well as to better understand the impact that marketing practice has on such tourism related sites and attractions”. The fact that the name of the course is framed as a question, is intended to highlight the oft contentious nature of marketing of, and profiting from, events that resulted from someone’s death or tragedy. The expectation is that the student will learn how to frame examinations of a controversial phenomenon in an objective and critical fashion. In order to effectively deliver such a course, and ensure that the students advance, or glean traditional marketing knowledge, includes a number of applications of marketing theory and practice, such as pricing, promotion, and brand positioning, but within the context of death, pain, and suffering.

From the first offering of this course, a reality emerged as to the challenge involved in being able to expose the students to often horrific images, videos, and discussions on topics such as violence, death, pain, and conflict. This challenge was further heightened by how to link and teach students effective, but sensitive, theories, and practices in how marketing such phenomenon. Although most students would have knowledge of dark events, such as the Holocaust or the sinking of the Titanic, by exposing the students to the more horrific and violent aspects of these events, continues to highlight the value in this type of course in going beyond the basic facts of dark events. Each year, student feedback on the content of the course provides interesting insights as to the effectiveness of the teaching tools, but also insights as to original student expectations, versus their take-away from the course. One way in which to gather understanding of student learning, is to incorporate individual, and group student reflection opportunities as to student interpretation of the linkages of marketing practice and dark tourism. These traditional evaluation methods are complemented with field studies and an individual written project and presentation. One example of a regular field study is to visit a local and regional cemetery. Students are provided with one to two hours of unstructured time to wander around the cemetery after which there is a class debrief as to student thoughts, feelings, and insights. This experience has been well received in light of the historically conflicting position of a cemetery as a site of death and remembrance, one that is designed and limited for personal connections. Prior to visiting a cemetery, particularly as part of a University course, students have stated that they had often been hesitant to share their reality that many cemeteries are beautiful parks, where one can enjoy nature and personal reflection.

Additional challenges that have emerged in the course are how to best take into account the personal connections and cultural backgrounds of the students. As noted, the enrolment in the course is cross disciplinary, and the students also come from various cultural, ethnic, social, and religious, backgrounds. During in-class and online discussions students are very open in their thoughts about the ethics and morality of not only providing these types of attractions, but the ways in which they are marketed to potential customers/visitors. Discussions as to potential economic exploitation, from the costs to visiting the sites and the selling of souvenirs, are positioned within the question of the need to raise funds in order to continue to provide education about these tragic events. This fact often originates, particularly from non-business students, that one should not exploit death and tragedy, and definitely not profit from it. This challenge has provided an opportunity to frame these discussions within the halo of "marketing for good", which aligns with the Business School's focus on "Business as a force for good". Although this is not a marketing course, having the opportunity to highlight the benefits of marketing practices to non-business students has evolved as an unexpected benefit of the course.

After almost a decade of offering this course, two opportunities for future teaching and research have emerged. The first is to take a longitudinal perspective as to how student views have endured, or changed, over time. Although the overall teaching ratings for this course have been strong (8.8/10), it has only been recently that a second, advanced course, on the topic has been introduced. "Advanced Dark Tourism" was first offered in Winter 2020 and provided a select number of students the opportunity to be engaged in a focused seminar course that included a field trip to Bermuda to experience a more integrated learning experience of Dark tourism. The field trip involved meeting with Dark tourism service providers, tourism authority members, and governmental representatives, which provided the students with insights as to the success/challenges of marketing such a form of tourism in a country positioned historically as a destination of sun and relaxation. The students, in addition to visiting dark tourism sites and attractions, conducted interviews with key stakeholders and wrote a terms research paper on a specific dark tourism aspect related to Bermuda (examples included, the Transatlantic slave trade, shipwrecks, haunted histories, and the Bermuda triangle). As an upper year course there was a greater expectation of student insight and academic maturity, with the result being research publication opportunities. As the majority of these students, were marketing students, the potential introduction of a permanent course was discussed, but the reality of offering such small sized course may prove to limit the feasibility of future offerings. An unexpected benefit was from the quality of the research papers and the potential for research publications. It would have been very unlikely that an advanced course on this topic would have been able to move ahead without the success of the First Year Seminar course. A second benefit that arose from this course was how to best incorporate important topics such as diversity, equity, and inclusion, into the course content, while still being able to address examples of sites and attractions that may be in direct opposition to these concepts. Interestingly, the reality of the Covid-19 pandemic may alter how students wish to, or react to, courses such as this. Research that can best do this, while still dealing with a sensitive topic, will be of great interest. Overall, the marketing of sites and attractions that relate to death and tragedy continues to grow, and in parallel the topic of Dark tourism also grows in terms of specific courses, or course content in higher education. Furthermore, the way in which one educates and integrates discussions of painful topics within core marketing courses can provide a fruitful way of countering negative perspectives of marketing practices as encouraging wasteful, and unhealthy consumption.

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ENGAGING COLLEGE OF BUSINESS STUDENTS IN THE AOL PROCESS FOR MARKETING-RELATED TECHNICAL BUSINESS KNOWLEDGE

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POSITION PAPER

Most college of business accreditation organizations require colleges to provide evidence of systematically setting academic achievement standards for students, assessing student progress, and addressing gaps between achievement standards and student performance. Each accreditation organization tends to use its own terminology to describe this process. We utilize the term assurance of learning (AoL), consistent with the language used by the Advance Collegiate Schools of Business International (AACSB). It is generally accepted that faculty should actively engage students in the process of reaching prescribed academic achievement standards as part of the AoL process. In this position paper, we share an option for faculty to actively engage college of business students in the undergraduate program-level AoL process, focusing on the context of students achieving marketing-related technical business knowledge.

It is common among undergraduate business degree programs to set an academic achievement goal related to technical business knowledge. This usually involves assuring that graduates demonstrate competency in knowledge across several business areas, including marketing, accounting, finance, economics, management, information systems, legal and social environments, and quantitative analysis. The Major Field Achievement Test in Business (MFT-B) is a broadly used tool for assessing student's technical business knowledge (Bisalski, Helms, & Whitesell, 2017; Pringle & Michel, 2007). Though the test provides external validity and makes it easy to collect assessment data, faculty are challenged to find ways to engage students in the process of preparing for this assessment and ways to improve students' preparation if scores fall below a college's established standard.

The MFT-B and other direct-assessment tools used to assess students' technical business knowledge are often administered to senior-level students. This timing provides a way to assess the overall effectiveness of the business program in helping students attain sufficient competence across each of the assessed areas of business knowledge. However, it also creates several challenges. Some challenges involve making students aware of the eventual assessment and encouraging them to buy-in to the importance of preparing for it. For example, an accounting student my only take one marketing class during their junior year. If a student is not aware of the assessment and its purpose, they may put less effort into obtaining and retaining proficiency in areas of knowledge outside their major. This is one reason a pedagogical method encouraging students to put forth energy and time to learn topics outside their major is valuable.

Based on initial tests, we recommend an in-course pedagogical approach to preparing students for marketing content on the MFT-B, or similar direct assessment. This approach was implemented within a Principles of Marketing class and involves introducing students to the MFT-B test and requirements at the beginning of the class. Thereafter, close to the end of the semester, a pool of general marketing related questions reflecting a comprehensive exam were selected and uploaded to Kahoot. Kahoot is a free online game learning platform that allows for a self-paced learning and a competitive classroom environment. This practice test had 50 questions worth 1 point each, and each question covered marketing topics in the MFT-B exam.

During an online synchronous class session, a total of 26 students completed the self-paced Kahoot exercise. Students were not timed and were encouraged to search for answers before answering. This exercise encourages review, increases student's engagement, introduces competitiveness among the student and gives instructors a chance to explain and elaborate on topics. The average score was 45 out of 50. In a short survey administered after the exercise, 25 out of 26 students indicated that reviewing marketing concepts using Kahoot was fun, and all 26 students indicated that they learned something new though the exercise and that they would recommend it to others.

Assigning a grade encourages student participation and focus. However, implementing the exercise via an online synchronous class session still creates a challenge for sustaining student participation. We suggest communicating that leaving any questions unanswered disqualifies the student for the exercise. Encouraging preparation is also important. As such, incorporating this assignment to a course along with supporting review materials is helpful. One option is to add slides or videos covering major marketing topics in a central place. This could be inside a course's learning management system or through an institution's library in the form of a study guide, or LibGuide.

One alternative to using Kahoot is to implement a review test via Blackboard, using untimed, multiple attempts test. This also encourages students to review contents as they take the test and search for current answers. A second alternative would be to create a library resource guide where questions similar from all business disciplines would be created and made accessible to students to use to prepare for their major's MFT-B or other direct assessment.

Future research needs to examine if this pedagogical approach improves performance across all disciplines or only in specific areas. Analysis of student performance data over time would help measure the effectiveness of this in-course pedagogical approach to preparing for the MFT-B. Future research could also measure extent to which competitive approaches like using Kahoot increase student engagement and motivation towards MFT-B preparedness.

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INCREASING STUDENT PERFORMANCE BY INCREASING CLASS ATTENDANCE: PRELIMINARY FINDINGS

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POSITION PAPER

In late March 2020, all marketing classes at an AACSB-accredited university moved to an online format due to the Covid-19 pandemic. These online class formats continued into the 2021 academic year. As students became more used to these alternate methods of instruction, many marketing faculty members noted that the student attendance of online classes was decreasing quite dramatically, despite instructors' best efforts to have engaging and experiential learning-based sessions. Instructors were concerned that this decreased attendance could result in decreased student performance as well. This paper investigates the relationship between student attendance and performance and discusses one method that was used successfully to increase student Zoom attendance and related performance as follows.

The instructor was an experienced faculty member teaching three Sales sections of approximately 70-90 students in each of the 2020 (Fall) and 2021 (Winter) academic semesters. Both semesters were conducted using identical class formats and evaluation methods. For each class in both semesters, an approximately 1.5-hour segment of instructor-designed PowerPoint slides with audio-visual lectures and content was provided on the course D2L website. In addition, a 1.5-hour Zoom lecture was held during the scheduled class time. In the Zoom sessions, the instructor would review the class slide content and provide experiential learning-based exercises and discussions. After the Zoom lectures, students could ask the instructor questions or ask for assistance on any of the class materials or upcoming evaluations. Student evaluations in all sections were based on two multiple choice midterms (25% each), a multiple choice / long answer final examination (40% where 10% was multiple choice and 30% was long answer) and a group project (Zoom presentation: 10%). The instructor collected student attendance data for each of the class sessions (1-10 possible content sessions). All evaluations for all sections were graded by the same experienced teaching assistant who was unaware of the experimental conditions.

After the Fall 2020 semester was over, the instructor examined whether there were any significant relationships between student attendance, student demographics, instructor teaching evaluations and student performance for all three sections. After confirming normalcy, a GLM procedure determined that there was a significant between subject effect for student attendance and student performance, $F_{(10,\ 261)} = 12.512$, p=.000, indicating that as the number of classes attended increased, so did the students' final course grades. There were no significant results for any other variables considered.

Based on these initial results, the instructor decided to tell her Winter 2021 students about the positive impact online attendance seemed to have on final course grade. In the first classes of the Winter Semester, she told the students about these results and also announced the information on D2L: "Want to get a great grade in this class? Attend the Zoom Meetings!!". To make it clearer for students, the instructor categorized attendance as 'low' (1-5 classes) and 'high' (6-10 classes). 106 students from the Fall semester attended less than five classes and 166 attended more than 5 classes. An independent sample t-test for final course grade and the low/high variable was significant at $t_{(2,\ 270)} = 8.677$, p=.000, with an average mean difference of 6.42% between the high and low groups. Because these results could easily mean at least a one grade increase on their final letter grade in the course, students seemed to really pay attention to this information. To ensure all students had been exposed to this information, this data was repeated during the online classes and on a D2L announcement in week six.

After the classes ended in the spring, student data was analyzed to determine whether there was any positive impact on increased attendance and/ or student performance as a result of the information provided to the students. After the data was analyzed for normalcy, a GLM procedure found that there was a significant between subject effect for the variables class attendance and course grade, $F_{(1,\ 209)} = 44.567$, P=.000. As attendance increased, grades also tended to increase. Similarly, analysis using the hi/low categories used previously showed that, unlike the Fall classes, many fewer students (40/211) attended less than 5 classes, a significant proportionate improvement compared to the previous semester, (106/272). Finally, the high attendance students had an average final course grade of 78.43 percent, whereas the low attendance students had an average of 70.05 percent, $F_{(9, 201)} = 6.943$, $p=.000$, a difference of 8.38%. These results again suggested that as student attendance increased, final course grades also tended to increase.

Based on these results, there seems to be a positive increasing relationship between online class attendance and final course grades and as a result, every step should be taken to ensure optimized attendance. Caution must be taken in interpretation of these results, however, because other factors such as levels of involvement, time spent studying the materials, time spent reviewing the PowerPoint slides, interest, how much the student liked the class, the class format, the instructor, additional student demographics and a number of other variables likely had an equal or greater impact on the final course grade rather than just the simple factor of attendance; for example, it is unlikely that a student who simply turned on the Zoom meeting, and then watched TV as the lecture progressed would benefit from increased attendance levels. These variables will be analyzed in future research. Despite the lack of clarity of the exact causation and mechanisms leading to the increased student performance found here, it appears that encouraging online attendance may contribute to higher final course grades for students. Instructors may wish to discuss or use this preliminary evidence with their own classes, to encourage their students to maximize their class attendance online in the future.

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MARKETING PROFESSIONALISM: HOW MUCH HAVE OUR STUDENTS LEARNED?

Joyce Shotick, Judson University

POSITION PAPER

The word professionalism is frequently used to refer to someone who behaves in a certain manner. With much news in popular press on the behaviors of CEOs, political leaders, and local officials, we make assumptions that our students have encountered professional behavior and model those behaviors. However, many of the behaviors that are displayed in public and reported in the press are not those that educators will endorse. Then how will young marketing professionals learn the "approved" marketing professional mannerisms?

In business schools, faculty and staff strive to produce "well educated business professionals." We clearly measure the extent to which students have acquired content through examinations, case studies, and presentations. Yet, how do we measure someone's professionalism? Is it a polarized term that you either are professional or you are not? Is there some graduated scale from which an individual can be rated on their level of professionalism? The purpose of this article is to gain a greater understanding of the constructs of professionalism and to identify a mechanism by which business professionalism can be measured after a business education.

The industry producing the most research on professionalism is the medical field. The research is primarily for doctors, nurses, dentists, therapists, hospital staff, speech therapists, and lawyers. Researchers have studied the level of competence, sensitivity to patients, communication skills, and apparel of such positions. However, there is scant literature on the specific qualities and characteristics of marketing professionalism. Therefore, the recent literature on the health care field was reviewed to identify constructs used to study professionalism and then translate them to the business field.

In a qualitative study on the different perspectives of professionalism exhibited by medical students (Bartle and Thistlethwaite, 2014), the authors found that the concept of professionalism was different for each individual surveyed. They discovered that several factors, such as status, attitudes, behavior, patient expectations, identify, clinical context, organizational context, and workplace culture influence a person's definition of professionalism and their judgement of someone's professionalism.

Regarding competence and appropriate attire for professional work, Furnham, Chan, and Wilson (2013) found a direct correlation between appropriate and well fitted apparel and job interview success. Shapiro, Nixon, Wear, and Doukas (2015) found that medical knowledge is important to the success in the medical industry, and expressing and appearing as neatly can improve one's chances of succeeding in the medical field. This article builds on the previous research on professionalism that has focused on the medical field by using the constructs and applying them to the business environment.

Six constructs were identified in the literature and from various course objectives of core business classes. The constructs were analyzed and an instrument for measuring professionalism was designed. These constructs include competencies, communication skills, interpersonal skills, ethics, attitude and behavioral. A series of questions to ascertain individual question scores that can be summated for an aggregate measurement has been established. Content validity was tested by faculty with expertise in those construct areas.

According to Goldie (2012) the assessment of professionalism is best evaluated longitudinally. Therefore a pre- and post-test survey method was designed to determine the advancement (if any) in professionalism. Incoming freshmen at a private, liberal arts college were administered the test instrument on the second day of Introduction to Business as the pre-test sample. Graduating seniors in the Marketing Capstone class were administered the test instrument during the last half of their final semester as the post-test sample.

The average score for the freshmen was 11.01 with a standard deviation of 3.67, and the average score for the graduating seniors was 17.33 with a standard deviation of 3.11. Using the Student's t test, the seniors scored significantly higher than the freshmen (p-value < .001). The seniors' mean score was almost 50% higher than the freshmen. These results indicate that students are learning marketing professionalism.

After conducting this survey of professional knowledge of freshmen (the base level) and comparing to graduating seniors (the experimental factor), it can be established that the education received improved the students' understanding of professionalism. A business education assessment has now been designed that will respond to individuals asking for validation of the value added from a college education. The next step to further this research would be to identify if these findings are the result of testing, written assignments, class activities, group projects, consulting projects, internships, outside of class experiences or some combination of all.

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POST-PANDEMIC MARKETING: INCORPORATING VIRTUAL REALITY INTO INTEGRATED MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS

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POSITION PAPER

The way sales and marketing professionals deliver sales pitches has changed as the world has adapted to remote working. Post-pandemic, pitches are delivered online, through video conference calls or webinars. This requires a unique skill set for delivery compared to in-person sales. How can marketing educators prepare students for post-pandemic marketing? One potential solution is VirtualSpeech, a virtual reality (VR) education platform that allows students to practice how to deliver successful video-based sales pitches in a virtual simulation.

Biocca and Delaney define virtual reality (VR) as the hardware and software systems that seek a comprehensive, sensory illusion of being in another environment (1995). VR offers businesses the opportunity to rethink how they present to and engage with their customers (Marr, 2017). From a marketing perspective, VR opens new possibilities for showcasing products and services (Marr, 2017).

Just as businesses are exploring VR, universities are looking at integrating VR technology into curriculum. Effective technology integration in the classroom contributes to skills such as personal and social responsibility; planning, critical thinking, reasoning, and creativity; strong interpersonal and presentation communication skills, cross-cultural understanding; visualizing and decision making; and knowing how and when to use technology and choosing the most appropriate technological tool for the task (“Why Do We Need Technology Integration,” 2007).

The author proposes to incorporate VirtualSpeech, a virtual reality (VR) education platform that will allow students to practice how to deliver successful video-based sales pitches in a virtual simulation in an Integrated Marketing Communications course. The course, Integrated Marketing Communications, was chosen for two reasons. First, at most universities, Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC) is a required course for marketing majors. Second, in the selected IMC course, students work with and for local organizations and businesses to develop marketing strategies and promotional campaigns. These hands-on projects equip students with the analytical and communication skills needed to solve real-world problems. IMC projects such as the one just described are designed to (1) develop students’ knowledge and skills to create an integrated marketing communications plan; and (2) to develop and practice oral presentation and group interaction skills. The VR platform could have been implemented in a personal selling and customer relationship course, but unfortunately, it is an elective course in the selected marketing program.

For the pilot program, the author plans to incorporate a week-long module to learn the fundamental techniques and strategies for giving video-based sales pitches through articles, videos, quizzes, and case studies. After completing the week-long module on video-based sales pitches, students will practice what they’ve learned by pitching in the VirtualSpeech VR platform. The simulation will analyze student’s voice and delivery, providing feedback on pace, audience perception, and confidence. A second round will be incorporated to enable distractions while students present, such as mobile phones ringing and loud background noises to test sales pitching skills further.

As a result of implementing the VR platform students will be given an opportunity to practice their sales pitch skills in a safe and controlled simulated environment. The benefit is that students will be able practice reactions to distractions in their virtual sales pitch to mirror real world distractions. Students receive instant feedback on delivery, level of assertiveness, openness and speaking pace. Students (and faculty) will be able to review the recorded audio and video to self-evaluate and identify improvements. One potential drawback of practicing in a simulated environment is student perception. If students know it is safe and controlled, they might not perceive the value of practicing their presentation on a virtual conference room of avatars, even if the avatars represent real people. Other reported common issues for VR users include nausea, dizziness, and some other physical symptoms (Radianti, Majchrzak, Fromm, & Wohlgenannt, 2019).

When faculty incorporate technology, they face several challenges. First, the faculty must learn how to use the technology in order to teach it and answer student questions related to the technology (“Challenges Teachers Using Technology,” 1993). Second, faculty must allocate time within an already full course. Third, and most likely, the largest hurdle is the expense of the VR equipment and simulation to the university and/or department.

Given the increasingly prominent role VR is playing in business and specifically in the field of marketing, the integration of VR technology in the college classroom is imminent. VR and its impact on learning, student achievement, academic performance, higher-order thinking, problem solving skills, and workforce preparedness should be explored.

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INVOLVING STUDENTS IN RESEARCH, A WIN-WIN EXPERIENCE

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POSITION PAPER

When I joined University of Georgia as an assistant professor, I was appointed to teach digital marketing analytics. Digital marketing analytics is an elective 4000-level course for students who are juniors or seniors. Although some social science courses include materials that are easy to convey and can be memorized by students, teaching some social science classes can be challenging especially if they require some hands-on experience. Digital marketing analytics is one of those courses that students need to both learn the materials and apply it in practice.

I had almost no teaching experience at that time and preparing for every session of the course was taking me a lot of time. Spending a lot of effort on teaching and keeping up with research expectations at the same time was challenging. This was the time that I thought about a synergic relationship between teaching and my research, and I was trying to come up with a solution that both my teaching and research can benefit from.

Another challenge that I had in my class was keeping students engaged with analytical thinking. I noticed most of the students in my class are not aware of the importance of analytical inferences and data analysis. So, I thought about coming up with a pragmatic solution so that students can be engaged with the research process and to break their huge resistance to analytical thinking.

My research focus is mainly quantitative modeling on topics including online word of mouth and social networks. Trying to get the most out of the time spent on both research and teaching, I could find a common topic between my class syllabus and research area. At the beginning of the spring 2021, I started a new research project about digital advertising. And also, part of my class is about digital advertising and Google ads. This is how I could find a connection point to get the students engaged in an activity that could help them understand the class topics deeper and also benefit my research. The research project was about users' perceptions of ad creepiness on social media platforms, and I needed some real data from Facebook users about their ad perceptions. Considering the high involvement of college students with social media platforms, the class population could be a perfect match for data collection.

Different active learning techniques have been explored in the previous research (e.g. Armbruster et al. 2009; Bransford et al. 1999; Prince 2004). These methods include encouraging students to interact with the material, pausing and asking them questions, motivating students to work together in groups or discuss case studies. Another important aspect of teaching a social science course is integrating technology with the course materials and helping students with the hand-on experiences (Hanover Research 2013). Teaching courses with dynamic curriculum such as digital marketing analytics requires a deep integration of innovation and creativity with teaching methods (Sivakumar 2018).

1. For both keeping students engaged and collecting a panel dataset tracking users' interactions with their friends' posts and Facebook ads, I designed a survey to obtain the users' perceptions of posts, and ads during their real time Facebook activity and asked the students to fill out the survey weekly. Although this task was a weekly assignment and was part of their grade, students had another alternative if they didn't want to participate in the data collection. The students were supposed to go through their Facebook profile, and stop scrolling when they see an ad on their news feed. They had to answer some questions about their perceptions of ad creepiness, and especially why they consider an ad to be invading their privacy.
2. This weekly activity helped students to understand that some of the Facebook ads they see are actually intrusive though they are all customized based on the users' needs. Answering the survey questions was beneficial to improve their analytical thinking skills. And also, they got introduced to some basic steps of research process such as survey design and data collection. It was a successful experience resulting in a panel dataset of real Facebook users over 15 weeks. I was able to do some preliminary data analysis and share the results with the class. I also explained to them some summary statistics of the data collected, which was very interesting to the students. It was a win-win experience for both me and the students. Although this activity had a small grade point, I saw a high participation rate

in this assignment than the alternative option. And I think the reason is this plan provided students with an opportunity to make analytical inferences.

One of the main challenges can be finding the connection point between your research and teaching, especially if you teach a completely different course than your research area. Making such a connection point was not complicated for me since I teach digital marketing analytics and almost all my research projects are involved with digital platforms.

The other challenge is coming up with an appropriate type of task to keep students engaged, and specifically its level of difficulty because it can't be too complicated or too simple. Coming up with a task that can be both engaging for students and helpful for my research can be challenging because first, it needs to be relevant to the class topics and, it should also have an appropriate level of difficulty to keep students motivated in doing research. Another important point is considering a similar alternative activity for those students who are not interested in doing the research activity. That's very important because not all the students want to do a research-related activity and there should be another option for them to get the equivalent grade point. Having another alternative is also required to get the IRB approval to implement the whole plan.

One area of improvement can be finding an effective way to convey the research process and the results as an ongoing process to the students. That way, they can be more involved and motivated about the task. The other important future research can be finding techniques to simplify the complicated research process when communicating them to the students.

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CHANGES TO ONLINE TEACHING MANAGEMENT DURING COVID-19

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POSITION PAPER

The Covid-19 pandemic suddenly propelled higher education and its educators to face a rapid, almost immediate change. Educators were forced to leave their classrooms and create an online virtual learning environment (Finnegan-Kessie et al., 2020). And, while some may have had previous online instruction experience, almost all were called to find new ways to interact with students (Rankin, 2020). Educators faced incorporating new technologies, experimenting with new teaching methods, and overcoming the new challenges associated with helping students thrive in an unprecedented chaotic environment (Ramirez-Hurtado et al., 2021).

For those who oversee online teaching management, the pandemic and transition to almost universal online instruction presented several challenges: (1) How do we help traditionally in-person educators make the transition to online teaching? (2) How do we help those with existing online experience deal with the potential challenges arising from the entire industry's intense new focus on and shift to online? (3) How can course curriculum be adjusted to help students learn and stay engaged in this new environment, and (4) How can we help prepare educators and students to navigate the potential consequences of this upheaval in traditional learning dynamics and community interaction (e.g., emotional toll, society pressures and health concerns).

Additional training for adjunct, instructors and full-time professors was provided, both in a group setting and individually, to help educators understand new expectations, how to operate available technology, and to build engagement in a virtual synchronized setting. Administrators supported the effort with once-a-month voluntary Faculty Roundtables to share best-practices and address concerns. Dedicated virtual platforms were established for key elements and events like professional development seminars, doctoral colloquiums, and even doctoral residencies.
Classroom dynamic changes often resulted in a more essentialist-based, stricter adherence to course elements like reading, writing, discussion, critical thinking, and creativity, even at the graduate level. Curriculum that, previously, was sometimes unintentionally recycled year-after-year, was updated to more timely assignments, short learning videos and Zoom breakout sessions. Online courses were often modified with shorter class times balanced by more frequent postings.

Staffing was an immediate challenge. Many adjuncts, who are typically industry professionals working a full-time job during the day and teaching evening classes, resigned to take on additional responsibilities at their full-time job or because of additional childcare and/or family responsibilities. Full-time faculty were put in the position of teaching the classes they left behind, often taking on three or four courses above regular workload.

The teacher-student relationship is an important foundational element in the classroom (Boivin & Welby, 2021). This relationship faced new challenges in the exclusively online learning environment. Computer screens can be poor conveyors of body language, facial expressions, comprehension indicators, and general wellbeing (Stanton et al., 2016). Students and professors alike faced anxiety-causing challenges (Roman, 2020) such as exposing their once-private home environment with others, adjusting to new routines in all aspects of life and dealing with a multitude of new and different situations. Many educators also found that they faced similar challenges in maintaining connections with their colleagues (Peimani & Kamalipour, 2021). Creating and nurturing productive relationships, whether with students or fellow educators, took extra diligence and effort in the online environment.

Future research will help provide additional detail and depth regarding whether transitional teaching techniques were successful in preventing student learning loss or promoting educational growth.

Additionally, as a result of the fluctuating number of Covid cases and individual state regulations, there are several institutional variances of "open" schools. A deeper look into the methodologies of how different institutions handled these variances may lend insight into different teaching methods that can be incorporated into future courses.

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HANDS-ON SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGN EXERCISE PROMOTING THE COLLEGE

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POSITION PAPER

Experiential learning theory suggests that experience plays a central role in the process of learning (Kolb, Boyatzis, & Mainemelis, 2001). Yet students do not always have opportunities to obtain real-life/hands-on experience, particularly with social media. Simulations are available, but they are not as realistic as using actual social media channels. Additionally, many small schools do not have funding to hire a social media employee or a marketing agency to promote their university/program.

The following solution has been implemented:
A social media marketing course partnered with an MBA program at a small regional university to address these two challenges. They worked in groups to identify a target market to pursue through a social media marketing advertisement.

Groups then worked with the University's Marketing and Communications Office to create advertisements on Facebook. Each advertisement was boosted by $10.

In addition to creating their Facebook advertisements, groups submitted a paper that explained who their target market was, why this target market was selected, and how the university was positioned to appeal to this market. Once the advertisements concluded, the class examined the analytics provided by Facebook to determine which advertisements performed better than others. Students were then asked to discuss (in an online discussion board):

- Do you feel your advertisement was successful? Explain why or why not.
- Was the segment that you targeted responsive to your advertisement? Explain.
- What would you do differently if you had another chance to run this advertisement?
- What did you learn from this assignment?

Experiential learning involves immersing students in an experience, followed by a reflection on the experience (Devasagayam & Taran, 2009). This exercise afforded students an experiential learning activity that allowed them to incorporate marketing strategies like segmentation, targeting, and positioning in a real-life scenario. It also allowed them to better understand the complexities of advertising on social media. They learned how to create real content, develop wording to accompany graphics, and create actual target markets. Then, they were able to see how their advertisement performed and think critically about how their advertisement could have been better.

Upon the conclusion of this exercise, the class created and boosted 5 advertisements on Facebook. Each advertisement was boosted by $10, but results varied vastly. The most successful advertisement reached 58,766 views and received 396 links clicked. The least successful advertisement reached 1,318 views with just 8 links clicked. Overall, for a $50 investment, the MBA program's advertisements received 73,926 views and 564 links clicked. It is also important to note that the MBA program's social media channels (Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and LinkedIn) were created by a social media marketing class from a previous semester, and all content has been posted by either current or former social media marketing students. Specific lessons included:

- The importance of crafting a target market and positioning strategy.
- Aligning the image of an advertisement with the selected target market.
- Learning how to create content (including who, what, where, when, why, how) through sources like Adobe Spark/Canva.
- Understanding branding guidelines and the importance of branding in advertising.
- Reflecting on why certain ads were more effective.

The most challenging aspect of this partnership between our MBA program and our social media marketing students would be the lack of skill when it comes to graphic design. In the future, we may consider working directly with our university's graphic design students. Another challenge is the timeline of posts. Rather than posting these advertisements year round, they are posted in spurts during the semester. This allows students to see the results of their advertisements, but can be detrimental to the university as there is not continuous advertising.

One of the future directions includes collaboration with Graphic Design students and related issues of coordinating projects vis-a-vis respective learning objectives across different schools within the college. Another direction is in factors and antecedents of successful campaign creation.

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INCREASING MBA ENROLLMENT POST-COVID: ENABLING US SUCCESS IN CRITICAL MARKETS

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POSITION PAPER

Foreign student enrollment in USA, including MBA enrollment, is on a recent decline. (Gee, 2017). The Covid pandemic made the decline more pronounced and visible. The situation is bothersome to universities because it affects them both in the quest for diversity and financially. The two together affects the other MBA students in the university. ICE (2021) reported a 72% decline in international student enrollment in 2020 as compared with the previous year. NAFSA (2020) reported that international students had contributed $38.7 billion to the US economy in 2019-2020 and supported 415,996 jobs. This is a situation that demands urgent attention and this paper provides a look at the situation and potential approaches post-Covid to ameliorate the decline in international MBA students and revamp enrollment through strategic recruitment, retention, and reentry of foreign students. The precarious situation in foreign student enrollment can be addressed by looking into US country-of-origin image (COOI) and examining consumer ethnocentrism (CE) or ethnocentric tendencies in the critical markets of importance (Ghose, 1993, Ghose and Shah, 2008). Next, we look into CE as "Irrationality" (Thaler, 1991) and COOI as "Nudge" (Thaler and Sunstein, 2003). Following that, we take a look into potential segments in critical markets derived using high and low levels of both irrationality and nudge respectively. Positioning or nudges are recommended to revamp recruitment, retention, and reentry of international MBA student enrollment from each of the market segments.

According to research conducted by the American Association of College Registrars and Admissions Officers, four out of 10 U.S. colleges reported fewer international applications for as early as the 2016-17 school year (Alpert, 2017). This had been a trend visible at multiple universities across the country, particularly when looking at applicants from the largest markets that happen to be in Asia. In 2017, there were 1,078,822 international students in the United States (NAFSA, 2017), who contributed not only with their diversity, knowledge and experiences, but also financially. The financial contribution to the U.S. economy of international students for the 2019-2020 school year was $38.7 billion and they supported 415,996 jobs (NAFSA, 2020). It is important for USA to do better in the Indian, Chinese, and Saudi Arabian markets, especially because US has historically faced a significant trade deficit with these countries for several years in the 21st century so far ("India", 2017, "The People's Republic of China", n.d., "Saudi Arabia", 2014).

Russell and Thaler (1988) had warned that educating the irrational is unprofitable in a perfectly competitive market. The US, despite facing an onslaught of greatly perfect competition globally from other nations for recruiting, retaining, and readmitting international students, does not have a choice but to position its MBA program to both rational and irrational market segments and to entrench that position as an inimitable competitive advantage. The Covid pandemic situation is common news and its impact on normal life activities is public knowledge. This paper looks into additional aspects beyond Covid. With the continuing confusion and uncertainty about US country-of-origin image globally due to politically induced actions and announcements, particularly since 2016, the impact on potential consumers abroad has been significant. US higher education is a very high financial involvement product. There is cheaper competition from other countries such as, United Kingdom, Germany, Australia, and New Zealand. According to Russell and Thaler (1988), "There is no shortage of evidence documenting human judgements which fail to satisfy rational objective standards." Consumer ethnocentrism is no exception. Thaler's "irrationality" can be defined as "the tendency of consumers to exaggerate or underestimate reality" (Ghose, 2018). Irrationality and biased assumptions can be created or enhanced by stimuli and communications from a variety of sources. Potential foreign students are no exception. Three such irrational or stereotypical or biased assumptions held by prospective international students are presented here. The first irrational assumption would be "every international will be deported". Another irrational assumption is that "international students think they might be at risk in the US. The third example for Thaler's "irrationality" in connection with international student recruitment and retention is "Equal opportunity does not include foreigners".

Thaler has been a leading proponent of libertarian paternalism, an approach where beneficial changes in someone's behavior can be achieved by minimally invasive and low-cost policies that nudge people to make the right decision for themselves (The Committee for, 2017). Nudges can be defined as "Positioning cues to guide consumers" (Ghose, 2018). Nudges can be particularly useful for decision making through the model of default options, which gives consumers a default option, such as an automatic enrolment into a retirement savings plan. This same concept can be applied to international student enrollment in the United States. COOI can be used as a positioning cue otherwise known as a nudge. Like all concepts and products, including institutions, countries also portray images (Erickson et al. 1984). Country-of-origin image may create a bias either for or against a foreign country which in turn influences the consumers' attitude toward a product associated with that country. The country-of-origin image construct has been found to be specific to particular categories of products e.g. consumer or industrial (Hafhill 1980). Country-of-origin image is very important since it can make a difference in consumer acceptance or rejection of products associated with those countries (Chao 1989). US COOI has been on a decline in many parts of the world. For example, a repeated study in the Indian market has shown a steady pattern of decline in the years 1999-2013. US COOI needs to be reinforced in foreign markets for recruitment of international students.

Potential segments for recruiting international students can be determined and nudges or positioning cues to appeal to these segments are recommended as shown in Figure 1.

POSITIONING FOR MARKET SEGMENTS
Figure 1. Recommended Nudges or Positioning Cues
Source: Ghose, 1992.

		US Country-Of-Origin Image	
		Low	High
Consumer Ethnocentrism	Low	Segment 1 "Excellent Education" and "Nation Building"	Segment 2 "Meritocracy" and "Nation Building"
	High	Segment 3 "Resources" and "Nation Building"	Segment 3 "Excellent Education" and "Good Corporate Citizen"

This paper provided a descriptive update on the current situation, presented a theoretical basis for understanding the scope of the challenge, and recommending strategic drives to ameliorate the situation. Higher success is required to stem the financial impact of lower international student enrollment in the US MBA programs in order to ameliorate the challenging impact on American students, financially, due to the distribution of overall costs of running the programs. The MBA program is often a significant earner for many US universities.

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BRAND EQUITY: A VALUABLE TOOL FOR RECRUITING IN MANUFACTURING

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POSITION PAPER

Marketers maintain a strong understanding of the importance of product brand equity. Brand equity has created value for many products and companies over the years. Brand equity represents the belief that a product is superior to another, not based on attributes of the product or that of the competitors, but rather on the shear perception of the image and/or name of the product or company (Aaker, 1991). This perception can be either positive or negative, leading a consumer to either purchase a product based on one's positive perception of the product or it can cause a consumer to leave the product on a shelf and choose the competition based on product awareness alone. A target market's brand awareness can make or break a product's value.

Human resource managers need to utilize brand equity in the same way marketers do. Currently, employers all over the United States are in search of qualified applicants and many lose out on the best employees because the applicants are not aware of the company or the products they sell. A great example of this is the manufacturing industry. In a 2020 Recruiter Nation Survey, 49% of company recruiters stated the competition as their top hiring challenge (Wood, 2021). Two in three manufacturing employers also state they do not utilize creative means to recruit qualified applicants (Nighbor, 2021). These two statistics indicate that companies need to apply brand equity to their company just like marketers would use when attracting customers.

Manufacturing firms should employ brand equity dimensions into the recruiting process including brand awareness and brand associations. Brand awareness refers to the strength of recall a customer has regarding a product or company (Keller, 1993). If there is strong brand awareness, the chance of the consumer selecting that product increases (Baker, Hutchinson, Moore, & Nedungadi, 1986). Brand association includes the knowledge and beliefs a consumer has regarding that particular product or company (Keller, 1993). This includes how well the product fits the need or want of the consumer based on that individual's attitude and evaluation (Aaker, 1991). Together, brand awareness and brand association impact an individual's perception of a product, as well as the likelihood of the consumer purchasing that particular product.

It can be hard for manufacturing firms to differentiate themselves from the competition when recruiting qualified employees. Many times an applicant does not know what product the company manufactures. If the prospective employee has never heard of the company, it may be hard to generate an employment interest from this particular applicant. This is where manufacturing companies could incorporate brand equity into their recruiting practices. Manufacturing firms need to rethink their recruiting practices to generate brand awareness and brand association, which would increase the likelihood an applicant would apply to work at that company.

In order to develop brand equity for manufacturing firms in regards to the recruiting of employees, the human resource management (HRM) department should research the unique and/or distinctive attributes, benefits, and perks that would differentiate itself from the other manufacturing firms. In other words, think like the marketing department. How have the products the company produced been marketed? To answer this question, the characteristics of the product have been analyzed and a competitive advantage has been discovered. The competitive advantage is then marketed to the consumer. This same thing can be done in HRM. The competitive advantage of working at the particular company should be marketed.

As mentioned above, 2 out of 3 manufacturing firms do not utilize creative ways to recruit employees. One suggested way to reach out to potential employees could be through social media. There are various forms of social media; therefore, research should be done to determine which social media platform(s) should be used. The manufacturing company could also research how they could become active in the community by sponsoring or co-sponsoring a community event. This is a great way to get the company's name out into the community through philanthropic events. The company could also look into developing brand ambassadors for the organization. Brand ambassadors are employees who help promote products to customers; however, these brand ambassadors could also help recruit employees by modeling the culture and fit of the organization at external events (Al-Shuhaibi, Shamsudin, & Aziz, 2016).

There are a few challenges with brand equity in HRM and the above suggestions. First, it will take some time to research the brand equity of the firm in regards to employees. There is no one-size-fits-all approach to brand equity, and that is a good thing. Each company will need to identify its competitive advantage for the employees and determine how to best market that to applicants. It will also take time to develop brand equity in the community. Creative recruiting activities should be analyzed and this will take time. Lack of resources (time, talent, money) may also be a concern.

Expanding the research on equity branding to include other disciplines should be considered. Future research could also investigate creative ways to market employment opportunities and build brand equity in various industries, not just manufacturing. Competitive advantage and differentiation could also be researched and applied into various areas of management. Marketing techniques and tools should be utilized when recruiting employees just like they are used when recruiting customers. HRM does not need to reinvent the wheel; it just needs to take a lesson from the marketers.

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A BACKWARDS APPROACH TO TEACHING SWOT

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POSITION PAPER

The SWOT analysis, one of the most widely used tools in marketing, management, and other business functions. This tool involves listing the entity's internal strengths (S) and weaknesses (W), as well as the external opportunities (O) and threats (T) it faces. The output of a SWOT analysis is generally presented as a simple 2 x 2 grid, with one side or dimension representing internal versus external factors, and the other depicting positive versus negative valence. When teaching the SWOT analysis, the instructions are often as minimal as the model itself. Despite its popularity, SWOT is not really an analysis or diagnosis at all. Rather, it is simply a list and categorization of the situational factors related to the subject being evaluated, making it simply an elegant organizational tool (Palmer, 2020). But with a few tweaks, the SWOT can become a tool that leads to supported, actionable recommendations (Minsky & Aron 2021) all without losing the simplicity and elegance that it currently offers.

We find that SWOT falls short across undergraduate, graduate, and professional levels. Its elegant 2 x 2 layout leads users to present information on a single PowerPoint slide or piece of paper, resulting in one- or two-word descriptions. This can lead to shortcuts in thinking, where attributes like "price" or "location" can be listed simultaneously as a strength, weakness, opportunity, and threat, without further explanation. Also, the SWOT is typically presented without any indication of hierarchy or sense of integration. This makes the list, with all quadrants of the 2 x 2 grid emphasized equally, difficult to interpret and form recommendations. Finally, the instinct with a SWOT is to jump to solutions, particularly when it comes to listing opportunities. In many cases, especially with students, SWOT users misinterpret "opportunities" as recommendations of "what could be done" as opposed to a statement about the external environment. To turn the SWOT analysis into a helpful tool for insight or planning, the user must turn the development process on its head, changing how we teach it as well. For example, the traditional SWOT analysis is conducted (and is taught) as the letters are presented, starting with Strengths and Weaknesses (internal attributes) followed by the Opportunities and Threats (external factors).

To improve the analysis, two key changes are recommended: Start by examining external factors. These conditions exist not only for the subject of the analysis, but also for all competitors within an industry. To do this, one should gather an inventory of relevant environmental conditions – both the threats and opportunities; and don't worry about whether the factors are positive or negative. Users often struggle with deciding whether an external condition is positive or negative. It could be either or even both, depending on how the company is poised to respond. The act of conducting an external environmental scan can be overwhelming but such tools as the PEST analysis or other variations of this model can help direct and organize this activity. Furthermore, a tool such as Porter's Five Forces model (Porter, 1980) can also offer categories for identifying external factors.

Once all the external factors have been identified, the next step is to identify the entity's internal strengths and weaknesses. It is helpful to ignore whether these attributes are potentially positive or negative. The key is to create an inventory of attributes. The relative positivity or negativity of a factor included in the inventory may be a function of the external environment. Also important for a stronger output: Don't settle for one- or two-word descriptors like "price" or "technology." Instead, spell it out with a detailed phrase or sentence.

At this point, the relationship between the external factors and internal factors can be explored. By looking at the external conditions, in conjunction with internal attributes, a set of clear and supported recommendations can be generated using our simple formula:

Given the condition of [external factor], our ability (or inability) to [internal factor] leads to our recommendation that we [recommendation].

Consider one external factor, an economic recession, as a starting point. In a traditional SWOT, one might include the internal attribute of "price" in all four cells because it's a strength (the offering costs less to purchase), a weakness (it is out of people's price range), an opportunity (run a price promotion), and a threat (the competition can undercut us). However, this leads not to an actionable analysis, but to poorly supported suggestions. In our new model, the formula could lead to such recommendations as:

- Our cost savings over our competitors leads to our recommendation that we reduce our price.
- Our strong relationships throughout our distribution channel leads to our recommendation that we offer discounts to our channel partners to help them weather the storm.
- Our low brand recognition leads to our recommendation that we reduce marketing support for this brand.

The analyst will now be able to identify a range of possible actionable options, which should be the goal when using any analytical tool. Then they can prioritize the options and decide on which ones to try. This approach has been used in the classroom for marketing management and marketing strategy courses at both the undergraduate and MBA levels, employing the same steps.

Here is the process: Early in the semester, students learn the name and industry of the classroom client, followed by a discussion of the client and its industry. Internal and external factors are also explored. During the first meeting, the students are provided with guidelines for determining external factors that pertain to the client's industry. The PEST (or STEEP or PESTEL) and Porter's Five Forces are offered as tools to use in identifying the external factors. The Porter model, often used to help determine key competitive factors within an industry, can also be applied to help understand what we call mezzo-environmental factors that apply to all competitors within an industry (as opposed to the macroenvironmental factors that PEST helps us to understand).

Next, the students, working alone or in teams, create a list of external factors related to the client and its industry. Students are asked to come up with a list of at least ten factors, and if they struggle, they can strive to come up with one or more factors for each of the PEST and Porter categories. Students save time and effort by not worrying about the valence of any external factor in isolation. Another benefit: Students become well-prepared for the client's upcoming class visit and develop questions related to the client and its industry, which they can research by a thorough online search, examining the client website, and, if applicable, visiting retail locations.

The students then meet the client, allowing for the client to explain their business and marketing issues. Students are asked to create a list of at least ten internal factors that might affect our client. The students now have two lists of factors, external and internal, with at least ten items on each list. Then, students consider each of the external variables with regard to each of the internal factors, one-by-one. With ten external and ten internal factors, students would end up with 100 combinations, each of which can be considered using our sentence formula. While 100 combinations may seem intimidating, it's likely that many of them won't lead to a clear recommendation. You could also ask students to select a smaller number of combinations, perhaps ten or twenty, from the array of 100; students can focus on a relevant external factor such as sustainability or climate change; or students can focus on one internal variable such as a new product launch or a newly hired CMO. Through this process, students – and professionals – will make the most of the information generated from a SWOT analysis.

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EXPERIENTIAL "INTERNSHIPS" FOR FACULTY: A VISITING PROFESSOR PROGRAM (VPP)

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POSITION PAPER

While there are generic VPPs, this innovation is based on an "internship" faculty complete within a participating company – one-on-one. We know many faculty currently teach in areas in which they have work experience, how current is that experience? A look at the typical timeline shows work experience followed by doctoral studies, taking an average of 5 years to complete. Then the immediate immersion in the pursuit of tenure and promotion taking another five or so years. In that ten year period the working world changes—within the last 10 years there have been drastic and rapid changes in marketing. Furthermore, the geographic region in which faculty teach may be very different from the region they worked, and the concentration of industries may also be different.

Since it is likely faculty have been out of the industrial workforce for years, the skills they had for success in industry have likely changed and creates a gap between current industry needs and current offerings in marketing curriculum. This paper presents a faculty "internship" type program that addresses this gap and offers opportunities to bring current industry/marketing practices into the classroom…and curriculum.

The faculty "internship" idea came about in a small marketing department with this exact realization. Their most junior marketing faculty member had not worked in industry for over 10 years. Even though their career was in the same geographic region, the dominant companies had changed. Yes, collectively there had been consulting opportunities here and there, but none of the faculty members had worked full time in industry in over a decade. All agreed they were somewhat "jealous" of their students' summer internship experiences. The faculty internship program, or the visiting professor program (VPP), is designed to emulate student summer internships and experiential learning but supercharged and focus to benefit both faculty and marketing organization/department and creates a regional talent pipeline between colleges and companies.

This phenomenon is called the faculty practice gap (Brinson, Adams, & Wilcox, 2019; Lange, Rosengren, Colliander, Hernant, & Liljedal 2018). Faculty internships have a history within the business literature to keep faculty skills current and classrooms relevant. For instance, Kulesza (1994) described faculty internships in automotive production; Christopher Schertzer,& Schertzer (2013) reported the value of faculty internships in accounting, and Stephens & Gibson (2010) reported their value across business disciplines. This teaching innovation is not a typical teaching innovation where the classroom is college students. Instead, it creates an experiential regional "internship" program for ***faculty!*** The program was designed so many faculty can gain new relationships with marketing professions but also gain new perspectives and update their skills—bringing these perspectives, skills and relationships back to their classrooms—for the benefit of their marketing students.

The VPP is designed to be win-win (quid pro quo) for both the company and the visiting professor. The VPP program works with marketing departments and marketing organizations of well-known companies in the region which agree to take one to two faculty "interns." Similarly, the VPP program recruits faculty from universities in the region interested in a marketing "internship." Faculty apply for "internships" and companies rank their top three choices based on the match between expertise and teaching within a specific area (for instance, advertising, services marketing, sales management, strategic marketing). During the VPP, faculty may be given access to hiring managers, recent hires and detailed information about the organization's strategies and the knowledge skills and abilities required by the employees to achieve the marketing objectives. VPP companies benefit from having an outside set of eyes look at their operations as well as working with faculty to provide a relevant workshop or give a presentation within a marketing area to the organization. Nondisclosure agreements are signed by all parties (see Appendix A for complete program details for the 2021 edition).

While professors' knowledge, skills and abilities are refreshed, they in turn bring insights gained through their VPP experience back to the classroom and even update curriculum. Professors found value in the VPP, commenting that it "was great to learn in real time about real world problems relating to supply chain, ecommerce, and B2B" and that the VPP experience provided "an opportunity to learn about things I could use in my classroom" and "forged relationships that I believe can help students when networking." Marketing organizations can showcase their latest projects and programs (some even proprietary) to professors and obtain their insight. Participating companies found value as well. A theme shared after working with the selected VPP professor "intern" was that company leaders were able to see their organization "through someone else's eyes..." and that the workshops and presentations led by the professors were "relevant" and "valuable." At our institution, two faculty participated in the VPP. Because of this participation, changes to the curriculum have been made based on the information gained through the internship program better connecting our curriculum to the wants/needs of local employers. The program also provided connections resulting in speakers in the classrooms and for the clubs in area schools of business.

After a one company/one faculty piloted the program in 2019, the program was revised and rolled out in 2020. Of course, the pandemic disrupted plans, but most of the 10 companies that had agreed to participate continued in with a virtual program. After the VPP was pitched to local professional AMA chapter, they decided to house the program because of the value add to its professional members. In 2020 AMA local chapter facilitated what will be a yearly debriefing of VPP participants so that the lessons learned can be shared across organizations and plans made for the next VPP.

Now in its official second year, there are seven companies that have signed on and eight faculty. The fact that there is still a pandemic has caused some hesitancy for participation. To the last person, the reason given for not participating "yet" is that an "in person" VPP is much more appealing than a virtual VPP.

This type of program can be replicated in cities by leveraging relationships with professional organizations like the Marketing Management Association (MMA), the American Marketing Association (AMA, and Chief Marketing Officer (CMO) organizations. Departmental advisory boards can also be leveraged for institutions that are not located in cities with vibrant professional associations.

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PROJECT "SPREAD KINDNESS"

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POSITION PAPER

In Fall 2019, I launched a project called "Spread Kindness" in my Marketing Management (MM) and Marketing Research (MR) classes. This project is innovative because it requires students to commit Acts of Kindness (AOKs), report them in a qualitative (Blogs & Photos) and quantitative (Excel file) manner, and then analyze their data applying course models.

Mental health research finds that the ages 17-24 are "a peak period for the onset of mental disorders" (Cuijpers et al., 2019, p. 1). This includes suicidal thoughts and behavior, which are widespread among college students (Ebert et al., 2019; Mortier et al., 2018). One way to alleviate mental health issues is to engage in pro-social behavior intentionally (e.g., AOKs), resulting in increased well-being of givers, receivers, and observers. Multiple studies demonstrate how pro-social behavior results in increased happiness (Aknin, Dunn, Proulx, Lok, & Norton, 2020; Aknin, Sandstrom, Dunn, & Norton, 2011; Dunn & Norton, 2014). In a more recent study with 712 students, Aknin et al. (2020) showed that those who spent money on strangers in need reported a higher level of happiness than those who spent money on themselves. Similar results were found in a study of undergraduates who reported an increase in their well-being as givers and receivers of Pay-It-Forward (PIF) acts (Pressman, Kraft, & Cross, 2015). Forty percent of receives reported that they reciprocated with their own PIF acts. Finally, kind acts benefit observers, as well, enhancing their state of well-being. In a similar large-scale study (683 participants), Rowland and Curry (2019) found that regardless of who kind acts were directed toward, observers experienced a heightened state of happiness. Thus, acts of kindness (AOKs) positively affect both the direct (givers, receivers) and indirect (observers) parties involved. Done intentionally and systematically, AOKs can transform young adults, enhancing their emotional health, workplace performance, and relationships (Chancellor, Margolis, Jacobs Bao, & Lyubomirsky, 2018; Curry et al., 2018; O'Connell, O'Shea, & Gallagher, 2016). As a result, researchers in education recommend implementing systematic and intentional acts of kindness in the classroom (Binfet, 2015).

This project has been applied to two courses with several variations. AOK was defined for students in the following way: "An intentional, selfless act (behavior) toward another human, non-human (animals) being/s, or nature (parks, public places) without a foreseeable reward to the performer except for feeling good." **Marketing Management Courses**. In 16-week courses during the Fall 2019 and Spring 2020 semesters, students completed the "Spread Kindness" project. They were divided into groups, where each member was assigned the task of performing kindness acts throughout the semester following their group's specific kindness theme. Each group decided on its theme. The themes students chose included: kindness at work and school, kindness toward the less fortunate, and kindness toward the environment. To generate the qualitative and quantitative data, students were required to document their acts of kindness in a blog, detailing the acts themselves, explaining who or what the recipient of the AOK was, reporting any witnesses to the AOK, describing any efforts to promote the AOK on social media or in any other form, and explaining how performing the AOK made them (the students) feel. Students were also instructed to summarize their AOK in an Excel report. For an example of the blog and Excel report instructions, please see the Appendix. At the end of the semester, the resulting data were analyzed within the context of course objectives and submitted as group reports. Students also presented their results to the class.

I created a booklet for this project with specific instructions for each stage. The outline of this booklet is as follows: **Planning stage and bi-weekly assignments.** Planning includes deciding on a theme, the number of AOKs per week each student in the group will commit, and the growth rate from week to week. Bi-weekly assignments include a blog describing the AOKs and the Excel file representing the blog data numerically. **Workshops 1 and 2**. Students prepare two presentations and two reports in their groups during the semester by analyzing the data they created and relating the analysis to the marketing management models. One example is having students use their Excel data to create a Boston Consulting Matrix. Each student is considered a brand, and they learn how to position themselves in relation to other students based on the growth rate of their AOKs and their market share within their groups. They receive feedback from me on their work. **Final project**. At this stage, students combine all their previous work after they revised it into a final presentation and report. They add additional analysis related to the few chapters covered in class after they have completed their previous assignments.

In Summer 2020, during a 4-week course, students performed AOKs and reported their acts in a qualitative and quantitative format; but they were not divided into groups and were not required to follow a theme. At the end of the semester, they analyzed the data and submitted individual reports. In Fall 2020, during the COVID-19 pandemic, I revised this project and required students to submit only two reports, one in the middle of the semester and one at the end. They worked individually on this project and analyzed their data, blogs and Excel files, created based on their AOKs during the semester. They were able to be very creative in committing AOKs remotely towards friends and family members.

Marketing Research Courses. Students were asked at the beginning of the semester three questions related to AOKs. Their answers were combined into a qualitative data file. Students used this file to practice content analysis. They also worked with me to design and execute a survey to collect quantitative data. Students were then tasked with analyzing different questions from the survey to practice quantitative data analysis via SPSS. They submitted a report at the end of the semester.

Dual Enrollment (DE). We are developing a principle of marketing course to be taught to high school students that will count for college credit (an honors course), which is part of the Dual Enrollment program at our university. I oversee this course's curriculum development and implementation at the targeted high schools. I spoke with one of the teachers that will be teaching this course in Fall 2021, and she was excited to learn about this project and was eager to implement it in her class. She added that this project fits the school’s mission of developing programs that engage students in pro-social activities.

Preliminary results have already indicated the value of this program. The students reported committing incredible acts of kindness. They were cleaning parks, giving food to homeless people, baking and bringing treats to share with coworkers, driving their friends around to save on emissions, and donating clothes and toys to organizations and/or neighbors.

To add rigor to the impact assessment, marketing management students' perceptions of the project (perceived value, attitude toward assignment completion, and satisfaction) and engagement (cognitive, emotional, and behavioral) were assessed via a survey. A total of 33 students completed the survey. The scales were adopted from existing publications as follows: (a) perceived value (Burns & Lutz, 2006; Ducoffe, 1996; Florenthal, 2016), (b) attitude toward project completion (Florenthal, 2016; Venkatesh, Morris, Davis, & Davis, 2003), (c) satisfaction (Chou, Min, Chang, & Lin, 2010; Florenthal, 2016; Wang, Butler, Hsieh, & Hsu, 2008), and (d) cognitive, emotional, and behavioral engagement (Reeve & Tseng, 2011). Though this project was tested on a small sample, the engagement indicators, perceived value, attitude, and satisfaction are encouraging.

I believe the AOK project may have a lasting impact. Many argue that to create a habit, you need to do something for 21 days. I decided that performing acts of kindness for the entire semester might increase the possibility that these students will make AOKs a habit long after the semester is over. I also find kindness to be contagious, encouraging students in other classes to do similar acts.

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THE FLIPPED CLASSROOM (FC) DESIGN IN THE AGE OF DIGITAL DISRUPTION

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PANEL POSITION PAPER

Education is always about individuals' pursuit of continuous improvement, including in their lifestyle, and it is a passport to the future that allows them to prepare for it today. What education promises can only be actualized in the future; however, those who are investing in education do gain psychological benefits from a sense of achievement and a sense of being prepared for an uncertain future. Education enables one to strive toward their passions by shaping their viewfinders of seeing our world and their philosophies of understanding themselves and others. It is no coincidence, therefore, that education has also been regarded as the apparatus for reaching a state of enlightenment—being advanced and gaining necessary information, knowledge, or spiritual knowledge (Jianfu 2009)—while educated individuals have always been respected for their rigor, drive, and persistence in learning (Bahtilla and Xu 2021).

Learning is different from being taught. In fact, "being taught" is based on an expectation of what others will do for us within the confines of their influence, such as being taught by a teacher in a classroom. On the other hand, learning is a much more powerful and proactive concept, embracing an expansive and inclusive perspective of what, where, from whom, and how a student will learn. In other words, being taught is limited to the passive process of imparting knowledge, while learning is about the proactive process of acquiring knowledge (Ivory 2021).

Despite the expansive nature of learning, the primary delivery mechanism of education has been lecturing. This requires students to pay close attention to lectures while being taught at classes. However, research shows that an average attention span of 15—20 minutes is often observed among typical college students at the beginning of a class, and that attention span declines steeply afterward (Sakar et al 2020). Other research even suggests that college lectures should adhere to the 10—15 minutes attention span that is characteristic of modern-day college students (Bradbury 2016). Being a passive learning, lecturing often bores students, and they tend to disengage with the course materials (Sakar 2020). Even worse, powered by personal technologies, such as smartphone, personal computer, and social media, students' distractions have increased steadily with constant smartphone notifications, urges to engage in online shopping, or digital conversation with their peers consuming their attention (Schneider 2018). In addition, students' pre-class foundational knowledge acquisition often assists them in deepening their understanding by combining the gained knowledge with exposure to applicational knowledge (Strelan et al. 2020). However, once such conditions fall apart, the knowledge loses its effectiveness without the students' preparation and attention. In the age of digital technologies, personal smart devices, and social media, students' over stretched attention often disrupts their information absorption during in-class lectures; besides their seemingly hectic lives do not guarantee their pre-class knowledge exposure (Sandbox 2020). The plethora of social media and smartphones leading to shrinking attention spans of college students and the culture of instant gratification have become the most formidable obstacles against college classrooms.

Consequently, lecture and class-wide discussions inherently contain a fatal flaw: instructors assume that everyone who attends classes wants to learn, investigate, and explore knowledge. Many instructors do find their teaching rewarding with students who ponder their own contributions to class discussions and demonstrate their understanding of course ideas. Nevertheless, most college students view coursework as little more than a sequence of hurdles on their paths to desired jobs and lifestyles, while only a minority appreciate classes as an opportunity to learn, investigate the complexities of our world, and explore the realm of knowledge (Clydesdale 2015). Especially among high school students, college is a means to an end, getting a job (Selingo 2018). Thus, while only a minority of students are willing to spend time and effort to learn and explore, most students may care about grades but balance them against other priorities, such as employment, family, relationships, extracurricular activities, or other classes that they find more valuable. At the same time, some students may orient their week around hedonic events, such as sport games or other gratifications, with minimal effort to meet academic requirements (Clydesdale 2015).

Therefore, lectures with an expectation of voluntary active learning and contribution to class discussions are not only ineffective with those who view certain courses as "hurdles" to pass, but also inefficient as a primary education method, making traditional lectures increasingly irrelevant for this era. Hence, the proposal of adopting the flipped classroom (FC) design is worth considering in order to educate contemporary college students whose motivations to pursue higher education have become more diverse than ever.

Traditionally, in a lecture-based class design, course content is acquired in class, while applied learning takes place outside of class via homework assignments or class projects. The FC design reverses the traditional dynamic: students are accountable for acquiring knowledge out of class by gaining first-exposure learning prior to class via lecture videos, assigned readings, or other online videos or resources. Then, class hours are dedicated to applicational activities of knowledge facilitated by instructors while students work together. In other words, students are engaging with lower levels of cognitive work, like gaining knowledge and comprehension, outside the classroom while their in-class hours are repurposed for higher levels of cognitive activities such as application, analysis, discussion, and problem solving, guided by their instructor and with the support of their peers. This approach reverses the order of the first exposure to new materials before coming into the classroom, hence the term flipped classroom (FC) or inverted classroom (IC) design (Sarkar et al. 2020; Strelan et al. 2020).

The flipped classroom (FC) has been broadly adopted in elementary and secondary education since 2000, while college-level business courses have been slow to adapt (Sarkar et al. 2020). Among its benefits, the FC model allows students to engage in active learning, improving their learning outcomes (Freeman et al. 2007). Other research reports that students improved exam scores and achieved more efficient course content learning, allowing them to perform better in their overall course assessment. Instructors were able to improve optimization of time, with some instructors being able to cover additional topics that were not feasible under the conventional lecture model. Given the model's core idea of students' self-learning, instructors reported that more time was dedicated for more personalized and diverse teaching and learning processes (Colomo-Magaña et al. 2020). From an institutional perspective, the FC model adapted classes showed higher retention rates than other hybrid classes, potentially being contributed by their structure, which keeps students engaged and motivated (Sakar et al. 2020; Hossein-Mohand et al. 2021).

Nevertheless, the FC model is not free of its challenges. First, the model is likely to increases workload for the instructor vastly, as it involves significant time and effort to rethink course structure and prepare both pre-class and in-class activities (Sakar et al. 2020). Although some instructors reportedly managed to add additional topics to their classes (Colomo-Magaña et al. 2020), instructors may need to decrease the course content, considering that the FC model is inherently associated with greater student participation, dialogue, and coordination. Second, as the FC model requires careful coordination of course activities, communication to students regarding expectations and content integration is critical. As much as it can both accommodate coordination of pre- and in-class activities, students might resist such a transition from being passive in a lecture to actively involved in class. Meanwhile,
some students may not be prepared for their classes at all (University of Waterloo 2021). In fact, being passive in a lecture is easier and less intimidating. Although students often highly value an active and deeper learning experience and find it more meaningful (Smith 2008), such significant mental effort of switching their mode of learning would likely cause cognitive strain and cause them to resist by becoming vigilant and suspicious, as the principle of cognitive ease suggests (Kahneman 2011).

Overall, regardless of the manner of learning being executed, a great education ultimately prevails. The flipped classroom (FC) is not a silver bullet that can remedy the modern-day college classroom wherein students and instructors are both struggling to combat the plethora of personal communication technologies and declining attention span. However, educators have historically served the role of facilitating students' learning, and the FC model has tremendous potential to become an effective educating modality in the age of constant digital disruption amid the struggles to retain students' attention.

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CLIENT FORWARD: FOUR CREATIVE USES AND THE FUTURE OF EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

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PANEL POSITION PAPER

If a primary goal of marketing education is to prepare students to secure jobs in the field upon graduation, it is important to understand what employers are seeking in their new hires. In addition to content knowledge, the most important qualities that employers cite are the ability to work in a team, analyze and solve problems, communicate, take initiative, and lead (NACE, 2021). Experiential learning, defined as "the study of learning through action" (Payne et al., 2011, p. 206), is one of the most valuable and high-impact pedagogical approaches for marketing, enabling both the application of content knowledge as well as development of these critical professional skills. Community-based learning is a "high-impact" educational practice that gives students the opportunity to apply what they are learning to real-world challenges. These high-impact practices are effective because they entail a considerable time commitment, compel students to communicate with peers and professors, expose students to diverse ideas and people, offer students regular feedback, and facilitate opportunities for students to apply their learning outside of the classroom (Kuh, 2008). In this paper, the authors discuss four specific examples of community-based, client-forward learning solutions, as well as challenges and areas for future research.

Service learning is an effective way to engage students in community-based learning due to the natural pedagogical fit for business courses. For instance, in a marketing for e-Commerce course, a small student group participated in the Google Online Marketing Challenge (GOMC), now called the Google Nonprofit Marketing Immersion program. The GOMC provided a unique opportunity for the students to gain real-world experience in digital marketing while helping their assigned client, a women's health nonprofit organization, make an even bigger impact. Another example is a client-based project implemented in a marketing research course where students had practical experience applying the concepts and methods of marketing research using different data collection methods such as interviews, surveys, and observation. Students collected and analyzed data, wrote a research report, and made a presentation to the client, a Vice President of Marketing for a national hotel chain. Students gained experience working with a client, provided actionable recommendations, and practiced consulting and relationship management. As a result, students developed a sense of civic responsibility and a commitment to the community.

In campaigns classes, competitions like the Digital Marketing Competition and certifications from third parties such as Google, Hootsuite, Stukent, Muck Rack, and Hubspot, partnered with real client issues, is where real life meets the classroom. The ability to foster the theory that drives the strategy behind the tool not only allows students to be tool agnostic in their career, but helps them troubleshoot glitches in real time, no matter the platform, to improve campaigns. This results in better outcomes for the client, but also for the students in their future internship evaluations; host feedback has consistently reinforced the benefits of client-based, i.e., non-hypothetical, experiences in the classroom that are both supportive and challenging. Competition in the classroom makes for well-adjusted interns and entry-level employees. Certificates, simulations, contests, and project-based experiential learning allow for higher levels of next generation engagement and build equitable learning environments.

In another integrated marketing campaigns course, during the first eight weeks, student teams bonded in low stakes activities as they learned theory and best practices. In the second half of the semester, the students then applied that knowledge to a live, client-based consulting project in a flipped classroom format. The student teams each functioned as a consulting agency, conducting at least four market research studies. From the results, they developed consumer insight driven brand positioning campaigns, then competed in client pitch presentations as their final project, improving career readiness. Prior to the next iteration of this campaigns course, as a result of rapidly evolving technology, media channels and consumer habits, two eight-week "pre-courses" were developed: social media strategy and inbound digital marketing strategy. Students completed HubSpot certificate modules before class, had large group content discussions, then met with their agency teams to apply their training to the client project. Students presented check-in assignments, and conducted multiple dress rehearsal presentations before their final to the client. Students ended this series of courses with two certificates and three different client projects while developing vital career readiness competencies like critical thinking/problem solving, professionalism/work ethic, team/collaboration, digital technology, and communication/presentation (NACE, 2021).

Although client-based consulting projects are typically implemented in upper-level courses when students may have more knowledge and maturity, faculty should not discount the possibility of including them in lower-level courses as well. In two principles of marketing courses, students took part in social media consulting-style projects for nonprofit organizations and a consumer product. The instructors took on more a supervisory role than would be in upper-level courses, but students were given the opportunity to work in teams on researching, ideating, and implementing social media marketing tactics for real-world clients. Connecting their work to tangible outcomes raised the stakes and students reported having memorable, impactful experiences. In addition, they developed their professional and project management skills, helpful when they encounter more sophisticated and independent consulting projects later in their academic career.

Many challenges arise in providing in-class client learning experiences for students. Projects require significant faculty dedication to client management plus student competency development beyond course theory and content. Identifying and matching potential clients to appropriate courses is inherently time-consuming. While courses with a history can attract clients based upon reputation or from alumni students, recruiting clients and fitting their needs neatly into semester timing or course learning objectives is rarely simple. Content may need to be adjusted for the client's needs which means continually curating in an already rapidly changing discipline. Younger, less experienced student teams can require significant coaching above and beyond learning content. Thus, courses need to be heavily scaffolded for presentation skills development, to understand how to empirically support recommendations, and display professionalism, which may mean extra coaching hours with faculty.

Without question, the future of experiential education in marketing includes digital. Technological advances have impacted nearly every facet of marketing, yet little is known about how marketing pedagogy has or has not shifted to accommodate digital practices. As universities develop or expand experiential learning, we see the areas of contests and competition, certifications and simulations, and internships/co-ops/apprenticeships open to future research as they spark our curiosity for marketing pedagogy as well as addressing professional skills gaps that may challenge the emerging talent in our classrooms. We recommend more outcomes-based research on these opportunities from a work readiness perspective. While the anecdotal evidence is high, the research is just starting to come into its own to determine the pedagogical implications or true pedagogical soundness with the value largely unexplored. As such, room exists in the assessment, equity, and standardization of client-based, experiential classroom practices that strive to improve student outcomes as they apply theory to practice. A stronger connection can exist between scholarly, pedagogical, and industry-related outcomes.

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MANAGING GROUP PROJECTS OR PRESENTATIONS

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PANEL POSITION PAPER

Managing group projects or presentations takes on a higher level of significance when partnering with an outside organization, as the instructor and the students participating in a client-based learning project are representing the institution. While engaging with outside organizations provides students with experiential learning, the role and responsibility of the instructor to oversee, manage, and facilitate increase to ensure students deliver on the agreed upon objectives and deliverables, thereby maintaining and enhancing the broader relationship between the university and the organization.

The author recently participated in a client-based project that focused on leveraging big data to build a predictive model for future customer business. Several individuals from the client company, including the author, invested a significant amount of time in partnership with the students. The students were responsible for scheduling and holding weekly meetings with the company's management, which included an agenda, reviewing progress by each student, and publishing minutes (see Mackh, 2018, for pedagogical practices). With the project lasting approximately six months, only two students were on the project from kickoff to final presentation, with other students entering and exiting the project group. Members from the company expressed concern about the students in the group changing and questioned whether the agreed upon deliverables would be accomplished.

Recognizing changes to the group on the project had the potential to undermine the students' experiential learning while also concerning the company's management, the professor and project manager from the university increased their engagement. Both helped guide the students while addressing input and feedback from the company's management in weekly review meetings to continually move the project forward. It was evident that the students felt a personal responsibility to each other, their professor and project manager, and to the members of the company. The students demonstrated positive interdependence and individual accountability (see Nilson, 2016, for pedagogical practices). The final presentation was presented by the students, with each having a section to cover, to executive management of the company. The presentation was well-received, and as a result, the company is in the process of leveraging the predictive model. While the students did excellent work, the oversight and guidance from the professor and project manager from the university were instrumental in ensuring the students stayed on track and gained valuable experiential learning while completing the project deliverables.

Although successful, the increased engagement of the professor and project manager presented scheduling challenges and additional time required to oversee this group project. An alternative perspective could be that the students may have benefitted from managing through the issues on their own and addressing the client's concerns. While the project may have resulted in a less positive outcome for the client, the students may have had a more realistic experience.

To further understand the potential benefits and drawbacks of instructor management and intervention in client-based projects for participating students and outside organizations, future research should be conducted within each population.

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WHAT IS ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AND HOW CAN WE INTRODUCE IT TO NON-TECH MARKETING STUDENTS AND PROFESSIONALS

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PANEL POSITION PAPER

The answer to all of these questions is "yes." And if you are reading this and, like us, have noticed the increased coverage of these topics in the media, it is time to consider how to teach or learn about artificial intelligence in a non-tech approach. At Lehigh University, we have developed a seven-step teaching process that helps students understand what Artificial Intelligence is and how they may be able to cover or actually use it. We believe this approach can be used to teach any college student or non-tech professional to start to understand and engage in the development of AI tools and applications.

Here in a brief summary, is our approach divided into seven parts and two sections: First, like all learning materials, we start with trying to give our students the who, what, why and how of Artificial Intelligence today. If our teaching is successful, our students will be up to speed on the basic issues, problems, and principles of Artificial Intelligence when done with this brief course. And to start our process, we first define what Artificial Intelligence is and where it is today. We start our course with a working definition of Artificial Intelligence (AI). And for that we look at how the key thought leaders in AI define it. Most will tell you that human intelligence falls into four categories: memory, thinking, learning, and consciousness with a background of whatever your reality is to define them. Although we define reality as one of the five ingredients to understand intelligence and how it needs to be replicated in AI, we don't go into detail here nor are we qualified to do so except to say science, your environment, your past experiences and many other items make up your current reality. The four ingredients one will need to understand and replicate from this starting point are the following: <u>Memory:</u> Artificial Intelligence processes are now far better at remembering data or rational experiences than humans and are able to tap into them much faster. Almost no one challenges this statement in AI, and almost all would tell you AI processes today are far ahead of humans in memory aspects of intelligence. If anyone questions this, ask them whether their memory is better than Google's. <u>Thinking:</u> AI experts look at rational thinking as taking certain inputs -- usually from our senses – analyzing those inputs in a structured way that produces a different output. It is their belief the thinking process can be replicated through software that takes the inputs, and then uses processes -- in most cases algorithms or programming languages to come out with the rational analysis of the inputs to generate useable information/ next steps. There is some controversy here as software "thinking" -- entirely based on rational or straight-line thinking -- can lead to too many mistakes if always thought of as the right decision. The example we use in our teaching is from the book The Best and the Brightest, by David Halberstam, which describes how computer experts hired by Defense Secretary Robert McNamara created huge mistakes in the Vietnam war using this type of thinking. Group think, non-lateral, creative, and worse-case thinking come to mind as some of the weaknesses exposed through just using a rational approach as an answer. Experts in AI will say that while these problems or errors still might exist with current AI thinking processes, the next step of learning from AI's mistakes will correct these problems. <u>Learning:</u> Learning is where the greatest leaps in artificial intelligence have come in the past few years. The internet provided us with data access unheard of ten years ago, and more and more is coming on line. Computer processing power has made thinking with software and algorithms advance at unheard of speed. But what of the ability of AI to learn from mistakes or actually stop any action that would not have a desired outcome without large data sets? When is probability in decision making not enough and one or two examples all you have? We use irrational aspects of popular ways humans make decisions to highlight this issue. The work of some Nobel-prize winning behavioral economists can be included here to highlight the irrational aspects of human decision-making, and we consider situations where one must be absolutely right because the risk of being wrong -- if even less than one chance in a million -- leads to catastrophic outcomes (think nuclear war or viral nerve gas). Of course, we can't get into many of the specifics here, but we do highlight how the new processes of deep learning and neural networks are much more advanced than machines just learning from algorithms; in fact, AI processes now make some decisions based on deep learning that humans don't really understand. Deep learning and neural networks are a very controversial and rapidly developing area -- one that many cutting-edge institutions, such as Stanford and MIT, declare cannot be left to AI computer professionals alone. They insist that philosophers, psychologists, scientists, fiction writers, and many other non-tech thinkers and practitioners -- including journalists and business leaders -- must be included in its development. We would state to students that -- in our mind -- this area is not ready for prime time and cannot be left solely to AI professionals, whose main line of thinking comes from software and hardware training. Imagine teaching a child that way about the world!

Finally, we come to the last component of our four types of intelligence and the one still least understood: Consciousness: How does one teach love, faith, fear, forgiveness and many more of the aspects of consciousness that don't conveniently fit into an algorithm or even a deep learning process that mimics human consciousness without truly understanding it? This area is so gray and so vague, we honestly can't really give any advice except to point to some examples of what consciousness is and what it might be. Here, we focus on two stories about consciousness, ones that give examples of ways consciousness in AI might be needed to connected to other life forms. The first one involves how the leading polygrapher in the 1960s concluded plants have consciousness by watching his polygraph test recognize when certain good and cruel actions were done to the plants. The second one has to do with Fermi's Paradox, which points to the high probability of extraterrestrial intelligence even though there is no empirical evidence supporting it. We don't claim to have the best examples of the "consciousness challenge" and are always looking for better ones, but we think our goal here is to open minds to this issue and give them a sense of the difficulty of addressing this issue in any AI development. A quote we sometimes use to end this first step of the class says, "Until humans learn to respect and dialogue with the natural world we will never know our role on the planet."

A brief overview of the history of AI comes next in our teaching. This shows our students it wasn't all peaches and cream for AI development. There were, and could again be, a number of times when effective AI was deemed impossible due to limits of what our tools are. These times are called AI winters. Rather than talk you through each piece of our brief walk through time we highlight in our chart at the end of this paper, let's just highlight what we think are some of the key people, events, and issues we talk about. Students understand that without Socrates, Aristotle, and Greek rational thought there would be no Artificial Intelligence. Mathematical principles such as Bayes' theorem of probability and Boolean logic are also highlighted. And key people such as Alan Turing, Ray Kurzweil and Thomas Watson are discussed. But the key modern-day starting point of AI is the 1956 Dartmouth conference attended by such experts as Nobel Prize-winning economist Herbert Simon. This was truly the event that marked AI as a technology area to be developed that could dramatically help our lives.

Our teaching then moves on to the highlights and hurdles AI development encountered in the 60 -plus years since the Dartmouth conference and the two "AI winters" we have had during this period, where professionals believed they had run up against unsolvable problems in AI development. We do note that the past decade has created more advances in AI than all the time before this and leave this part of the AI teachings by asking the question, "Are we going to see another AI winter soon and why?" Our third section/step of the course on Artificial Intelligence is a brief one. It describes the three types of Artificial Intelligence, the differences among them, and where we are today. First up is Narrow – or Weak -- Artificial Intelligence. We highlight we are just in the beginning seeing narrow AI applications operate in the real world. This is where AI products and tools are being monetized now and business professionals that really understand how to communicate and use these tools are sorely needed. From internet products to social media, we are on the cusp of having AI processes help us think and act on what we do next in one area at a time. And there are two AI models of how to do this: the what we call the Apple model, which tries to help make humans better at all encounters, and the Google deep-mind model, which is geared towards doing things for you without your involvement. Which way succeeds? Probably both will succeed in the near future, and this is where the next billion-dollar companies will come from. If we believe such entrepreneurs and funders as Peter Theil or Mark Cuban, this is the next huge area of success in the technology business. We always have current examples such as voice recognition applications, virtual reality games and currencies and the new exploding area of metaverses for humans to use as examples right now becoming hugely successful.

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AOL LEARNING GOALS AND INNOVATION IN INTERNATIONAL MARKETING CLASS

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PANEL POSITION PAPER

This paper examines the undergraduate learning goals and how to innovate international marketing class based on learning goals. Undergraduate learning goals at Miller College of Business, Ball State University can be easily remembered with acronym, C-KITE (Communication, Knowledge, Integration, Teamwork, and Ethics). More details are as follows:

1.Communication: Graduates will be able to communicate appropriately in a professional context. **2. K**nowledge: Graduates will have functional area knowledge. 3. **I**ntegration: Graduate will be able to integrate business knowledge in decision making. **4. T**eamwork: Graduates will be able to work effectively in teams. 5. **E**thics: Graduates will be able to recognize and resolve ethical dilemmas.

International marketing class was upper-level and elective undergraduate class in the Miller College of Business. To achieve these learning goals, several innovative class activities were performed. These innovative activities are listed below under each learning goals.

Communication. Country analysis and global product launching presentations were required for all teams. Student teams demonstrate that whether the target country is the right fit to the product using five rationales and design comprehensive product launching plan in their target country. After the presentation, all teams submitted written report following standard research paper format. Thus, students were able to develop both oral and written communication skills.

Knowledge. Global market entry simulation project required students to report weekly results of market share, revenue and profit. Students applied all functional knowledge of business (Marketing, Management, Finance, Economics, Accounting and Operations) to maximize the output given the input. The best student was announced and recognized weekly.

Integration. One comprehensive case study analysis (e.g. Wendy's global expansion plan) was used to give students the opportunity to apply the business functional area knowledge and integrate all area knowledge (Marketing, Finance, HR, Operation, in real world problem solution. The case analysis was submitted in written report form.

Teamwork. One in-class project (e.g., Ball State Global Marketing Plan) and comprehensive global marketing plan project were designed to give students chances to work interactively and produce effective solution. Peer evaluation was used to evaluate the contribution.

Ethics. Exams and quizzes were effectively administered to help students identify an ethical dilemma and suggest solutions.

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HOW MARKETING STUDENTS LEARN BY DOING: NEW CASE STUDY CREATION

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PANEL POSITION PAPER

Case studies have been used by academics since teaching has been a practice. New methods for student-created and presented cases are discussed here. This author has created dozens of case studies for existing business clients since 1993 and has created fifty case studies for other companies to be used as teaching lessons for other marketers.

The case study can have an impact that surpasses any other form of research (Gillham, 2000 p.101). General lessons are drawn from single incidents, and there is no question of the facts. This is one on one research rather than quantitative research, and it's sometimes even more convincing than other research since there is proof of evidence, rather than a hypothesis.

Yin (1989) refers to a chain of evidence with links to different types of evidence of different kinds. Investigation skills similar to a journalist or lawyer which would be appropriate for a marketing student. Acting with this skill of gathering the evidence means they will be personably accountable for the outcome as the logic will flow from the proof.

Students will have objections to writing their own cases without the tools to create them. A wise professor will address these concerns. Simon (2009) has tackled common misconceptions and addressed the questions often raised by students about writing case studies, including the motivation for creating them.

Here are the important elements of a simple integrated marketing case, according to Kelly & Jones, (2008). They require four items including a basic general outline to get started. The writer will need some background on the organization, some industry issues surrounding the case, a deeper discussion of the marketing mix (i.e., the 4 P's), including a focus on the communications efforts. The last item is a forthright statement of one or more issues that face the company, including alternatives to be considered. Kelly & Jones (2018, 2020) also recommend a writing plan to help guide the writing once you start, so you stay organized.

The following will guide marketing students when they are embarking on creating their own case study writing.

- Select a company or topic that deeply interests you and identify it.
- Consider how to find information on the company and/or industry and gather some insights into why you are passionate about the topic.
- Think about what kind of lessons you can teach others with this topic. You are working backwards now, toward the end, which is your beginning.
- Which stage of the customer journey does it fit? What is the data collection process? Privacy concerns? What are the attributes, market sector, what brand names, what dates and times are relevant. Qual or quant, Consumer facing or B2B.
- Make a list of three or more things you can teach others through your case. i.e., learning outcomes. (these can change later)
- Research the topic by talking to experts, librarians, sources of high value, and customers of these businesses. Gather your notes together and in a quiet place begin writing your case.
- Create a scenario that would be plausible, using your imagination and credible circumstances, identifying the protagonist, the challenge, and the possible outcomes. The writer needs to know that they don't need to have a solution.
- Gather specific theories that you can support your learning outcomes. Use diagrams and images where possible. Add details to your story. Fill in any blank areas with details. Use industry research to support the lessons and make them meaningful to your audience.
- Create questions for discussion and assignment questions. Edit and revise your writing. Share your idea with others and get feedback. Publish your case and use it in your practice, especially as a student, gathering new insights when you teach others.

One example of writing a case is about a plausible ethics situation of the former healthtech innovator Theranos, Inc. The former CEO of the firm was charged with fraud, and the case draws upon the interaction between the advertising agency, TWBA\Chiat\Day and the client, CEO, Elizabeth Holmes (Griffith & W00, 2021). Students learn best from evidenced based activities such as writing cases themselves and sharing these lessons with peers.

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STUDY ABROAD AS EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING: STUDENT PERSPECTIVE

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PANEL POSITION PAPER

The process of learning by doing is referred to as experiential learning. Study abroad programs are accepted experiential learning (Gray, Murdock & Stebbins, 2010).Students are better able to connect classroom theories and knowledge to real-world situations when they participate in hands-on experiences and reflection. Active learning opportunities can take many forms, including community service, service-learning, graduate research, study abroad/away, and eventually leading to career building experiences.

Regardless of the student being a business major or wanting to widen their knowledge of the world, studying abroad can be a great way to learn cultural and business practices which they won't find back home.

Moving to another country for a semester or a year for studies, will allow the student to interact effectively and efficiently with international businesses and clients. They will gain an understanding of cultural differences in norms and communications. It will help them to gain a deeper understanding of the role of foreign issues and their role on business, both domestic and international. Olson & Kroeger (2001, p. 122) said, "It is no longer a question of preserving one's cultural reality but rather of creating new categories that allow for the coexistence of diverse cultural realities. To evolve, difference is sought rather than feared."

Management skills and techniques are critical to a student's business education because it is an important part of every organization. Business administration varies by country and studying business abroad will expose them to a wide range of these nuances. They will be well-rounded if they can incorporate the various management styles from each culture into their future career.

Study abroad gives an insight into a student's skills, interests, passions, and values. Studying abroad can help them to launch their career and make them more marketable. It will allow them to demonstrate to potential and current employers that they have the flexibility, resourcefulness, and drive required to adapt to a new and changing environment. "Study abroad offers a unique opportunity for students to confront both differences and similarities in many aspects of culture and values, as well as develop specific skills in multicultural competence," added Lindsey (2013). Many employers prefer graduates with international experience. According to a recent survey, 64% of employers value study abroad experience, and 92% look for globally competent transferable skills that are typically gained from the experience. Some of these skills include cross-cultural communications and resourcefulness.

In every situation, strong leadership and team management abilities are required. Knowing how to lead and inspire those around, can help a student build stronger relationships, whether they're working on a group project with internationals or doing an internship abroad (Shulsinger, 2017).

By immersing in another culture, the student will gain valuable life skills necessary for personal development, such as independence and adaptability. These abilities can boost one's self- confidence in professional life.

Instantly adjusting to your new surroundings will help a student to develop self-reliance and resilience. These are critical competencies useful in minor tasks such as fending for themselves or lending a helping hand to a colleague to negotiating with or adapt to the management styles of a different culture. Strong written, public speaking, and negotiation skills are essential for effective communication, especially in foreign environments. These can be furthered developed in a study abroad (Shulsinger, 2017).

Students get opportunities to collaborate with diverse organizations and people in a foreign experience. Studying abroad allows the students to form invaluable bonds with people globally. It gives an opportunity to broaden the international connections while meeting people who could become lifelong friends. Some connections can even lead to job opportunities, internships, and business partners. The larger the network, the more likely the student will be introduced to exciting career and social opportunities.

Entrepreneurs and startups are thriving all over the globe in this hyper-connected world. If a student wants to learn about global business, studying abroad is a great way to have unique experiences and learn lessons that they can apply to climb up their career ladder.

While the theoretical principles of business remain the same, business in each country is vastly varied. Studying business management in a foreign nation will provide a student with unique insights into consumer mindsets in both their host country and any other countries where they study. "Learning is a co-constructed process in which all participants change and are transformed through their actions and relations in the world," noted Driscoll (2005, p. 159). No matter where a student ends up pursuing a career, empathizing with their consumer is an advantage.

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THE USE OF STUDENT TEAMS IN EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

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PANEL POSITION PAPER

Businesses today want and need new hires to become assimilated and productive as soon as possible. In a Harvard Business Review article entitled, How to Get a New Employee Up to Speed (Stibitz, 2015), Michael Watkins, author of the bestselling book, *The First 90 days* said "90 days and not a minute longer." Article author Sara Stibitz thinks Watkins may be joking. He's not. The concept that business students need to be ready to make contributions as soon as possible is widely held belief. "The first 90 days of employment will determine if a new hire will make it in the company long term" (O'Donnell, 2016).

Experiential learning is defined as a pedagogy focused on participation, experimentation, and activity where students take a highly proactive role in their learning process. Experiential learning is often described as "learning by doing," and therefore differs from the typical lecture, exam and paper writing approach to learning and assessment. It has been recognized as a highly effect method of teaching and learning, and of transferring understanding and knowledge (Kolb, 1984). This process is also enhanced by a post learning reflection activity, where the learner examines what went right and what went wrong during the execution or experimentation of learned activity (Schon, 1983), and it is this reflection that may be the most impactful activity in the experiential learning process (Boud, D., Cohen, R., & Walker, D. (Eds.), 1993). To summarize, experiential learning works to help students acquire the necessary skills through experience that can be utilized quickly later with solid results.

Marketing, which is both analytical and creative, relies on teamwork, requiring multiple inputs and perspectives to provide the best outcomes. Product groups, marketing research departments, new product development departments, advertising agencies, public relations groups and others are typically organized in a team structure. This is now being recognized within business school coursework, "67% of campaigns courses nationwide, students are organized into client teams" (Ahles C. B., Bosworth, C. C., 2004). The ability to work in teams affects both the individual and team success. Yet many obstacles to learning how to successfully work in teams arise which will follow the students into the workplace. What are some of these issues?

Students themselves will often complain about the lack of successful teamwork in the courses where it is a necessary part of the course structure. Developing a "groupthink" mentality, social loafing (thinking they are working when they are actually socializing), dominance by one member, and lack of cohesion are some of the obstacles (Kayes, A. B., Kayes, D. C., Kolb D. A., 2005). Others include a lack of good communication skills, poor negotiating skills, a lack of understanding of cultural differences. These can all be summed up as a lack of training, experience and practice.

While there are a number of pedagogical strategies that have been introduced, this paper will propose an additional feature, the team presentation. In addition to working as a team on a semester long project, the teams will present their work in various stages, as well as the final, complete project, to the class for evaluation. This is how teams are created. The entire class is invited to propose a product or service that they would be interested in working on. After a list is developed the class is invited to vote on the product or service they would like to work on from the list. The team size is limited to a range from 3 to 6 members. A vote is then taken to determine the order of the team weekly presentations. Each week one of the teams presents their project progress to the class for evaluation developed using class lectures and research. At the end of the semester each team presents their completed project.

Why does the team presentation make such a difference in enhancing teamwork? ? Once students realize that they will be evaluated and judged by their peers as well as the professor, there is a build in motivation to do a good job-no one likes to be embarrassed in from of their peers. When teams see the progress of other teams, they tend to not want to fall behind. Also, the workload is too great for only several members of the team to make enough meaningful contributions for a successful final project. However, there may still be times when one or two team members do not participate or cooperate with the rest of the team. In this case the team is instructed to conduct a team meeting and hold that member responsible and propose corrective action. If the situation persists, the team invites the professor to the next team meeting and can ask for permission to fire the non-participating member. If approved, the fired team ember must complete the rest of the project on their own, separate and apart from the rest of the team, to the same standards. In many years of using this pedagogy, this extreme remedy has been exercised less than 5 percent of all projects.

There are several key outcomes from this team pedagogy. One is that the students are expected to make all the decisions, and begin to get used to real responsibility and meaningful consequences. Another is that they begin to adapt to long term pressure, while learning reliance and trust of their teammates. Additionally, they learn to spot problems and trouble early enough to still have time for remedial action. All this is learned through experience delivered though experiential learning and is something they will bring with them into the workforce.

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HOSTING CASE COMPETITIONS WITH EXECUTIVE MBA STUDENTS

Ursula Y. Sullivan, Northern Illinois University

EFFECTIVE USE OF EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING PANEL POSITION PAPER

Executive MBA students, by their nature, already have a wealth of experience; in fact, almost 100% of them are "experiencing" their day-to-day companies and attending classes only on weekends. So, how can one effectively engage them in experiential learning without making it a drudge?

Very recently, NIU revamped its Executive MBA program to integrate the core business disciplines (e.g. Marketing, Management, Operations Management and Information Systems (OMIS), Accounting and Finance) into one cohesive course. To "teach" the class, faculty from Marketing and OMIS were linked to present concepts from both areas. While the courses were each taught separately, the goal was to have a means to "put it all together."

From previous familiarity in hosting case competitions, it was decided that this same pedagogical tool could be used to integrate the concepts while giving the students the experiential outlet that is so effective in teaching. Cases are often used to have students solve problems for a company by applying concepts that have been learned in the class; they also are used to present new concepts to students. The competition part of the experience provides a realistic means giving the students ownership for ideas as they compete with other teams. Furthermore, Subject Matter Experts were recruited to judge and provide feedback to the executive students on their ideas.

In this session, I will share the process that I followed to put together the competition and provide insights into what worked well and what could be revised in the future.

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MANAGING GROUP PROJECTS OR PRESENTATIONS

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PANEL POSITION PAPER

One of the first challenges an instructor faces when teaching a course involving student teams is how best to assign the teams. Students often prefer to work with others in class who are friends or are better academically while but also wanting to exclude others for many reasons such as those who lacked the drive to perform at a high level in other courses or having a pattern of wanting to work alone. Instructors understand the challenges of the three options: 1). Students select the team members 2). The instructor selects the teams 3). There is a random draw of the team members. Each option can influence the learning experience and the level of motivation of the students which can result in the level of satisfaction from the assigned business.

Once teams are determined it is important to find organizations willing to actively participate in the process. The instructor must assure that the students will get a quality learning experience working with the actual businesses who are willing to provide information and help the students to learn about their operation. Communication among team members as well as the business assigned is the key to a successful project. Students must be motivated to work with all team members to complete the project in a thorough manner. It is necessary to meet with the student teams regularly during the term to assure the process is moving at an adequate pace and to review the deliverables. Regular meetings with the students can help to avoid unnecessary scrambling by the students to complete their projects and eliminates any negative feelings. I also find it necessary for each student teams to meet with the instructor to do a practice presentation where I can listen and make comments about the delivery including the exhibits displayed to make every effort to have a satisfied business client.

No compensation is ever expected for the time and effort students invest in the marketing plan projects but I do request each assigned business to write a letter that also includes a satisfaction survey, so that I have evidence regarding the extent that the businesses benefitted from the projects completed. These projects can provide positive publicity for the university and by completing the marketing plans it also benefits the business community in a form of an ongoing partnership linking our students to the business community..

It is important that each company understands the limitations students have when completing the marketing plan. Too often businesses expectations have exceeded what a student team can actually complete in a semester project. It is important for the instructor to clearly explain to each selected business what will actually be completed by the students.

Most businesses have been very satisfied to work with student teams to help develop creative ideas and potential solutions for their success. There are always a few businesses that expect more than can be completed in 15 weeks.

Students must evaluate everyone who worked on the team project. If a student gets a low evaluation by the team members, the grade for that student's project would be adjusted. Unequal team member contributions are a major problem with team projects. Instructors must work to assure that all team members are contributing on an equal level.

There is a noticeable difference between the quality and depth of work performed by MBA students than undergraduate students which explains why companies often expect a higher level of performance from graduate students. MBA students have more detailed classroom training and work experience to benefit their select business.

Future research can involve a longitudinal study with survey data generated from the businesses who had MBA student projects and those who had undergraduate marketing students performing the marketing plans. It would help understand whether there are higher expectations from MBA students in completing the marketing plan projects compared with the assigned undergraduate students also working on the marketing plans. An important goal would then be to match the expectations of the select businesses with the appropriate student teams based upon their educational level. This future study can help determine the type of business profile that would benefit more with MBA students and those businesses who would welcome undergraduates for the marketing plan project.

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INCORPORATING ETHICS AND SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY INTO THE CURRICULUM USING CURRENT ISSUES

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PANEL POSITION PAPER

Previous research demonstrates that consumers want brands to share their values in order for them to determine whether or not there is a good “fit” between the culture and values between the consumer and the brand. In addition, research also shows that Gen Z students in particular, are more interested in brand values, using them to choose what to buy and where to work. Will students be receptive to an infusion of social responsibility and ethics in the marketing curriculum, as a way to better understand and appreciate a brand’s mission and value?

Concerns, such as systemic racism, abortion, AIDS, same-sex marriage, gender equality, and gun control, are pertinent political and societal issues. Corporations are now being publicly supported or face backlash by consumers based on their response to such issues. Nike and Ben & Jerry’s have publicly denounced systemic racism with their corporate commentary as well as through their product offerings. Both Nike and Ben & Jerry’s have recently introduced products endorsed by Colin Kaepernick. Nike’s Colin-inspired shoe line is called the “Nike Air Force 1 x Colin Kaepernick” and Ben & Jerry’s ice cream flavor is called “Change the Whirled.” Consumer response has been mixed. Students enrolled in a Multicultural Marketing course will be introduced to several multicultural consumer segments throughout the semester. As an element of their brand analysis project, students will be required to identify and discuss a sociopolitical issue impacting their selected cultural group. Students will present an overview of the sociopolitical issue (i.e., definition, history, recent news), discuss the ethical issues associated with the sociopolitical issue from consumer and marketing viewpoints, and make a recommendation for optimal ethical marketing initiatives that the brand may institute in order to address, support, or denounce said sociopolitical issue.

In addition, brands are using social media increasingly over traditional media to connect with consumers in order to build loyalty and propel repurchase. During COVID-19, many brands attempted to use social media platforms to communicate their solidarity with consumers on social issues because these issues are increasingly important influencing brand loyalty and trust. One brand in particular, Bombas, has been at the forefront in using its social media platforms to not only inform consumers about its products, but also to engage consumers about its position(s) on social issues, as well. Does it help B2C brands connect with consumers by sharing corporate social responsibility values about political and social values on social media? A mini-case study of Bombas and its use of B2C social media marketing during COVID-19 will be shared to illustrated how students can learn more about how brands share their ethics and values with consumers.

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STUDY ABROAD AS EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING: MEANINGFUL SHORT-TERM PROGRAM

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PANEL POSITION PAPER

Marketers face new challenges in expanding sales with corresponding changes and competition worldwide. Many marketing classes cover international marketing. Experiential learning, such as study abroad, plays a major role in developing global competencies in. This paper highlights a study abroad experience that injects global competencies in marketing students.

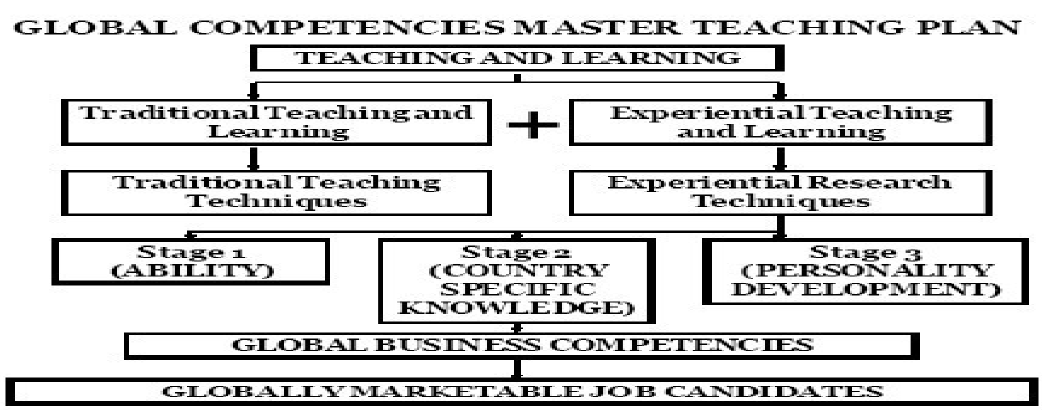
In such a scenario where the global economies are opening up and making every effort to reap benefits by collaborating with other countries, it is very crucial for students to acquire global competencies in order to compete in the world beyond US. However, most marketing classes offered today can only provide book knowledge with very little real understanding of the true situation and environment of the global nature of marketing.

This paper will provide an insight into how global competencies can be introduced into marketing classes by way of an experientially enriching study abroad program. The program provides both cultural and business immersion opportunity for participants and is especially valuable to marketing students and practitioners. They gain first-hand knowledge of business customs, expectations, requirements, networks, and opportunities from the program in a very time-efficient and effective manner.

A look at these gigantic business moves taking place all over the globe throws light on the fact that trade liberalizations are creating a lot of new opportunities in many new lands. As a result competition is also increasing rapidly. Businesses are seeking job candidates with adequate international knowledge and experience in order to succeed in the global village. Such knowledge can be significantly acquired and increased through direct exposure to, communications with, and other forms of direct interaction with individuals from other cultures and countries, especially the ones that are most promising at this time or in the very near future for business development.

USA is no longer investor's only favorite place to set up businesses or seek jobs although recent polls have once again ranked it the number one destination for foreign investments. At the same time, several emerging economies such as India and China are becoming more and more attractive to investors, businessmen and job seekers alike, due their cost effectiveness.

In order to provide a meaningful study abroad for valuable experiential professional and cultural competency, the Global Competencies Master Teaching Plan (Ghose and Shah, 2008) was used as the theoretical framework.



Source: Ghose and Shah (2008)

A sample meaningful study abroad program is presented for the benefit of those desirous of starting one or improving an existing program. This is a tried and tested program.

The India Study Program -- Participants are accompanied by a faculty member on a visit to Chennai. Kanchipuram, Mahabalipuram, Delhi, and Agra in India. Chennai and Delhi are booming centers of international business and Kanchipuram, Mahabalipuram, and Agra are cultural centers. We focus on a short term, two weeks program because most working adults can only get that much time away from work. The group visits large and small businesses, multinational and local businesses, and gets into conferences with high level executives and administrators from private industry and government. The group also gets guided tours of factories, hospitals, educational institutions, and cultural sites by renowned experts, and attends exclusive seminars at these locations. Focus is on both cultural and business competency.

No program or tool is useful for replication unless it is assessed. Debriefing provides the opportunity to assess the study abroad program. Participants were debriefed using journalizing, discussions, clarifications, reflections, and analysis. Assessment during debriefing showed almost a 19% increase in students' self-evaluation between pre and post program.

Globalization is here and a fact of business. However, the supply of globally competent personnel is in critical short supply. Business schools have to take the responsibility for supplying organizations with globally competent graduates. There are many understandable challenges though, such as the availability of resources, the lack of faculty preparation to lead these efforts, and the superficiality of knowledge of some of the existing leaders (Koernig, 2007). In addition, many existing so-called study abroad trips are essentially, "Beer Binge Trips" or "Margarita Trips", which are programs that are vacations with little or no contributions to cultural and business competencies. It is therefore necessary that US students in marketing and business are taught business competencies in order to compete and collaborate with global competitors and build strategic networks and alliances. To be of benefit to aspiring competitors in the arena of global business, serious attention should be focused on meaningful study abroad programs in addition to traditional experiential research techniques to address both cultural and business competencies in the marketing program in universities and colleges.

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STUDENT COMPETITION "WINS" AND THE 4 P'S: PARTICIPATION, PROFESSIONALISM, POSITIVITY, AND PERSEVERANCE

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PANEL POSITION PAPER

Whether the student team wins or "loses," marketing related competition classes are exhilarating, demanding, nerve-wracking, and one of the most rewarding experiences for both students and honestly, faculty. Based on leading student teams through to multiple regional and national wins in assorted student marketing based competitions over ten years' time (including the American Advertising Federation's National Student Advertising Competition, the National Retail Federation's Student Challenge, Collegiate Effies, Kohl's Case Competition, and the International L'Oréal Brandstorm), this author contends students "win" when the experiential, hands-on coursework is design to engage the 4 P's of student competition classes: participation, professionalism, positivity, and perseverance.

Marketing team courses are oftentimes difficult to teach successfully and group competition courses even more challenging. Beyond the frequently disliked element of "group project" work, common student concerns are that fellow students are not equally motivated, underperforming students can get by as it is a group effort, matching skillsets with desired outcomes can be difficult, leadership demands can lead to star student burnout, and, from a faculty viewpoint, it is often hard to encourage students to get out of the "one and done" mentally to embrace the refinement and revision work needed (Anderson, 2018). In addition, some argue that such courses require a very conscientious and dedicated faculty member working with the students well beyond the traditional classroom (Harrower, 2016). Therefore, finding tools and techniques to make these very worthy experiential courses easier, more efficient, and effective for the faculty member involved and improve the outcome for every student participant is a course design imperative.

To begin with, faculty should consider employing a variety of participatory tools to start building camaraderie -- before or right when the class begins. These early team building exercises help create true team engagement and full class **participation**. Tools utilized early on can include: a confidential class survey (exploring preferred name, pronouns, prior experiences, skills, interest areas, as well as hopes and concerns for the course), deconstruction discussions (showcasing appropriate cases either because of brand category or solution area -- or, prior winning materials) where students engage in friendly debates (can be employed throughout the course), and digital video or photographic discussion introductions revealing more than name-major-year, delving into more student-relevant topics such as favorite Tik-Tok influencer, must-watch binge stream, ride-or-die music playlist, etc. Or something silly like stupid pet tricks show and tells and/or leveraging Buzzfeed Party quizzes to rehash favorite childhood toys (e.g., Webkinz versus Pokemon -- get ready for some heated debates0. Seemingly nonsensical discussions can serve as a strong bonding base before you hit the hard stuff. They can also help create a community which builds kinships, increases team commitments, and creates funny fall backs when things get tense.

Once class is underway, the surveys should be leveraged to help assign team responsibilities in terms of brand management, research, strategy, creative materials development, budgeting, calendaring, measurement, etc. Students are far more likely to be engaged if their assigned role/s are areas of interest. Other participation tools include holding each other accountable with peer evaluations (including both quantitative measures and open-ended qualitative feedback) as well as requiring initials on all team documents indicating "who did what" with the clear understanding that it is about quality versus quantity of work. Depending upon how the course progresses, small group and/or individual work sessions maybe required to address underlying issues, etc.

As the competition class unfolds, participation can also be encouraged by utilizing industry best practices and encouraging **professionalism**. Generation Z's difficulties with soft skills are well documented (e.g., breaking up with significant others via text). Employing industry-standard professional tools such as Slack can not only help with project management and in-between class chats and discussions, but also further participation, project ownership, and increase team bonds. Other professional practices to be encouraged weekly "huddles" or status report check ins to ensure all are on track (including taking turns with agency status reports summarizing deliverables, roles, and responsibilities).

Another professional tactic to consider is the use of "department leaders." Note, this practice can lead to resentment and internal strife. An alternative is to have rotating leadership to ensure everyone has the learning experience and develops appreciation for others' perspectives. One last professionalism consideration is the idea of self-advocacy. As in the "real world," inevitably problems will arise with deliverables, production logistics, budgeting, timetable, etc. It is strongly encouraged to create an environment where students feel they can surface concerns before they become real issues for the entire team and competition project. Students should be encouraged to make short appointments (individually or as a team) with senior management (a.k.a., faculty) to outline both the issue and some possible solutions. Not only is important for these pre-professionals to learn to not let problems fester, but how to advocate for an alternative solution proactively and professionally.

As the competition project unfolds, there will inevitably be some low points (e.g., consumer primary research reveal issues with student concept ideas, similar competitive products or programs emerge late in the development process, etc.). Student (and faculty) burnout and mental health concerns are paramount concerns in higher education today and maintaining **positivity** is a real need. Faculty might consider taking a few minutes for a general "how's it going" check-in tool (e.g., "burdens and balloons" or "blossoms, buds, and thorns") or try an approachable projective technique ("what color are you feeling," "what animal best represents you today," "personal movie title today") and allow students time to share via a chat function or live conversation. Warmups like these again increase the team bond, participation, and create a culture of togetherness. Other small classroom environment positivity gestures that go a long way include simple tactics such as allowing students to take turn as "guest DJ" during work sessions and celebrating the individual and/or working group/department achievements each week. Peer critiques of work in progress can also harness some positivity by requiring each peer student critique to highlight "something liked and something to work on.". And, of course, win-lose-or draw, when the competition concludes, the student team and faculty member should celebrate the hard work and accomplishments. The last class could focus on "the greatness" of the students highlighting stories of triumph for interviewing and potential portfolio material showcases. If the faculty member is so inclined, class awards (certificates are so easy to create on Canva) can be created and distributed.

Lastly, a successful marketing competition course should encourage and celebrate the grit, or the **perseverance** needed to pull together as a team and create a substantial marketing undertaking including secondary and primary research, carefully considered strategic frameworks, multi-platform communication plans and executional examples, merchandising plans, pricing strategies, distribution, and measurement recommendations. Marketing competitions are a tough ask of students, and they need to be encouraged and motivated to keep pushing. Some students have a natural drive, but others have never participated in an "all-in" activity with the accompanying highs and lows. Periodic recaps of "look how far you've come" and pep talks are sometimes helpful, as well as careful project management tracking to help the students literally see what has been accomplished to date.

In conclusion, for faculty tackling marketing competition coursework, utilizing some of these practice-based techniques to encourage the "4 P's" (participation, professionalism, positivity, and perseverance) will hopefully help create more "wins," in terms of career preparation, experiential learning, and even, personal growth. Plus, help the faculty member involved create and lead a successful and hopefully, more enjoyable class experience for all.

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INTEGRATING TEAM-BASED CHALLENGES AND COMPETITIONS INTO THE CURRICULUM BOTH INSIDE AND OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM

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PANEL POSITION PAPER

The benefits of experiential learning as pedagogical practice have been widely studied and are such a critical component of many college majors. Yet the words "team project" are often met with eye rolls and sighs by students who loathe such course projects. Words like "slacker" often come to mind where the workload can be uneven between those who strive to do their best work and those who just get by. Yet, these sentiments can be overcome. This paper explores both team-based courses and outside competitions and tips and tricks to make incorporating them into curriculum.

Numerous studies report positive student learning outcomes from service learning, including leadership development and better group dynamic engagement (Pope-Ruark et al., 2014). Creating effective teams requires thought by the instructor. Assessing majors, academic year, diversity, and knowledge of student work ethic are all necessary to create strong teams. While this takes time, it's worth the effort to create teams with varied skills sets focused on the whole of the team rather than any one individual. Communicating the process for creating the team is also necessary as it offers students insight on why their individual skills are important to the overall success of the team. Finally, it's useful to share and model "lead and follow" examples, letting them know that based on the knowledge or expertise everyone brings to a team, sometimes you lead and sometimes you follow.

Team based courses have an additional task for grade distribution. While the process and outcome of the project is a top priority, individual contributions also need to be assessed. Best practice would allow for team and individual grades each week of the course. This model allows for both team and individual contributions to be graded accordingly, which lessens grade inflation for those who are not contributing and still acknowledges top performing students. Periodic peer evaluations are another aspect of the individual grade and provide additional insight for faculty to address inconsistent performance throughout the semester.

In addition to courses that are built around team-based competitions, instructors can also embed team-based competitive elements into their regular course offerings. Low to intermediate levels of competition have been shown to increase the creative output of teams (Baer et al. 2010), with creativity and increased cognitive effort being particularly important in the development of marketing content and strategies. Accordingly, an easy way to build in small competitive elements into a course on a daily basis is to incorporate low levels of social comparison into daily team exercises. Specifically that means clarifying to students during instructions that not only will they complete an in-class exercise with their team, but will also be required to share their team's output with the class. While there is no grading component to this element of competition, the mere notion of social comparison inherent to sharing a team's idea can spur greater effort and creativity. And further, regularly incorporating the sharing of teams' in-class exercise output can build an expectation of low-level competition and encourage greater effort throughout the course. However, it is important to note that this type of sharing-induced competition is primarily effective for class exercises which do not require one specific answer. Additionally, larger competitive elements can be incorporated into larger components of the course, like year-end group projects. One effective strategy is employing a "people's choice award" concept into the grading of group projects where the winning team receives an automatic grade of 100 that supersedes any grade assigned by the professor. This type of grading mechanism introduces a more intermediate level of competition as teams are competing for something valuable, however it is not overly competitive as to dissuade students, since they still receive an assigned grade from the professor. In comparing a recent class that employed this strategy to a prior class that did not, both the amount of effort and the caliber of projects produced by students dramatically improved.

Although team-based competitions in and outside the classroom vary widely, there is no one-size-fits-all model for success. Yet even with all the nuances, a few best practices have been uncovered throughout the number of years advising and even more recently researching faculty perceptions of student-based competitions. The following four tips are advanced.

- *Strategy.* As an adviser, you must help students "read between the rules." Breaking down the contest instructions and look for the nuances can help build an effective strategy to best approach the project. Encouraging students to evaluate past winners to find commonalities can help them further understand the unspoken contest expectations. Furthermore, advisers should determine how much time they are willing/able to help with the guidance of the competition. Sometimes contest guidelines determine how much time can be contributed from the adviser, but many times it is up to the adviser's discretion.
- *Feedback.* Frequently students perform best when they get detailed, timely feedback early and often. And, good, bad or ugly, it's got to be honest. Be blunt, but kind, and make sure students know you're ready to help if they take that initiative to ask. Rubrics that are provided by the competition can be incredibility helpful in building strategy that aligns with what judges are seeking to evaluate. If rubrics aren't provided, evaluating past winners is a good way to seek those unspoken expectations.
- *Deadlines and Budgets.* Make plenty of internal deadlines and stick to them. Contest timelines are often tight. But note 1) students almost always work up to the last minute, but 2) students accomplish amazing things in short periods of time. So, set the deadlines and watch the magic happen. If budgets are determined from the onset, making sure you have the reimbursement process/or how finances for the campaign/contest can be obtained so securing dollars or resources doesn't impede running an effective campaign.
- *Pep Talks.* Despite what it sometimes feels like, students are listening. They want to know that advisers believe they can be successful. You don't have to have the perfect speech. You just have to keep showing up and showing students how much you care.

While challenges will always exist with team-based challenges and competitions, our hope is that the ease of implementing will be improved by practicing some of the tips and tricks mentioned in this position paper. Future studies could explore how pandemic-related competitions or team-based projects are impacted, if any. Suggestions could be put forward of additional ideas of work-arounds should competitions be impacted by the pandemic work orders. Other suggestions could explore the framework for such team-based challenges and competitions in online courses.

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EXAMPLES OF PERSONAL BRANDING ASSIGNMENTS IN SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING

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PANEL POSITION PAPER

Personal branding is defined as a strategic process of creating, positioning, and maintaining a positive impression of oneself, based on a unique combination of individual characteristics, which signal a certain promise to the target audience through a differentiated narrative and imagery (Gorbativ et al., 2018). The importance of one's personal brand is discussed widely in the literature (Wetsch, 2021). A personal brand can increase one's social capital and help differentiate from the crowd (Harris and Rae, 2011; Johnson, 2017). In addition, a personal brand can impact a potential employer's perception, including providing information about one's qualifications, skills and fit within the company culture. While many students have some online presence (most likely LinkedIn), not all have developed their presence across various online platforms. In this paper, we summarize four teaching assignments to help students implement digital marketing and branding concepts on their own personal brands using various digital and social media platforms.

Using The Black Book of Social Media. In a social media class, students will follow 30 mini-exercises using T*he Little Black Book of Social Media* (Attaran and Boyer, 2020) to build their online personal brands. Each exercise guides students to create goals and objectives for their brand, study their target audience, determine brand image, develop and post content calendars, implement engagement strategies, and report results. Students will choose two social media platforms to post on throughout the semester and submit a PPT presentation of how they applied the exercises to their brand along with a one-minute video and a blog post. Blog posts will be published on a course website and students will comment on each other's posts, including three questions and three answers. Topics focusing on social media strategy, content marketing, search engine optimization, and web analytics will be discussed while reviewing the blog data. Some students will choose their professional online brand, while some will choose to develop an influencer brand or help a small business. This semester-long assignment is designed to provide the opportunity for students to blend their passion with practice in the field and ultimately results in a portfolio piece that students can share with potential employers.

Introducing LinkedIn. Undergraduate students in an Introduction to Business course will conduct class discussions and readings about the importance of personal branding prior to graduation, and will be introduced to LinkedIn as one popular tool for beginning to build this brand and a network of professional contacts. The students will first complete a pre-survey asking about views on personal branding and the potential value and uses of LinkedIn. Next, they will create a LinkedIn account or modify their existing account and conduct certain types of account activity over a one-month period, including posting updates and adding a minimum number of connections. This will be followed by class discussions, a written reflection, and a post-survey. A control group of students in other business courses will complete the same pre-survey. Annually until they graduate, the Introduction to Business students will be surveyed regarding their continued voluntary brand building through LinkedIn. Extant literature suggests that LinkedIn can assist students in personal brand building (Ezumah, 2013; Neier and Zayer, 2015), but that students have a low awareness of it (Ezumah, 2013) or believe that it should only be used after graduation (Florenthal, 2015). This scholarship of teaching and learning study can offer insights into whether students will continue to use LinkedIn for personal branding after an assignment's completion, and whether this type of assessment can be useful for marketing students.

Creating Content for LinkedIn (Profile and Posts). Dr. Leung's social media marketing students are assigned to obtain industry certificates (e.g. HubSpot Content Marketing and Social Media Marketing Certification, Google Analytics for Beginners, etc.) (Cowley, Humphrey, & Muñoz, 2020) before class sessions about the topics. In addition, students are to create an infographic about selected social media marketing topics (e.g. personal branding examples, optimizing LinkedIn and Twitter accounts, etc.). They students watch a video created by a topic's expert and then present the lessons learned in a concise and meaningful way on an infographic. The infographic will be shared in their social media accounts, such as Facebook and LinkedIn. The practices of getting industry certificates and sharing industry's knowledge is to serve three purposes: 1) Introduce the topic and industry jargon, 2) Build their resumes (the students update the certificate information on their LinkedIn profile), and 3) Create content for LinkedIn (profile and posts), which will be covered subsequently in the course about social media platforms. The ultimate goal of these practices is to help students start thinking about which areas in social media marketing they should be known for and eventually proactively work towards becoming an expert in that area, e.g. getting more advanced industry training, applying social media marketing principles and technologies on their clients' projects, and showcasing their project deliverables on their own personal websites and/or social media accounts.

Personal Branding Website. Undergraduate students enrolled in a Social Media Marketing class will create a personal branding website using the platform Wix. There is no need for students to have previous website design, coding, HTML, or other technical experience for this assignment. Wix is a free, user-friendly, intuitive technology that has a built-in drag and drop feature that makes it easier to design a professional looking website. The website assignment includes self-exploration, goal setting, defining a target audience, developing a social media content calendar, and practicing engagement on social media. Students will create 3 professional social media channels with content that are connected to their Wix website including LinkedIn, Twitter and the third channel they can choose themselves depending on their goals (Pinterest, Youtube, Tiktok, Instagram, etc.). The goal of the personal branding website assignment is for students to build credibility, gain digital skills and practice posting professional social media content online. There is a need for individuals entering the job market to have an understanding and knowledge of social media and digital skills which can be showcased using a personal branding website in the classroom (Key et al., 2019). By implementing an experiential learning assignment using digital skills for the purpose of professional branding the student's learning experience is enhanced and their value to potential employers is increased (Wetsch, 2012).

Development of a personal brand can impact the perception of one's target audience. For students, the target audience are employers! To give students a jump start, authors suggest incorporating experiential assignments where students practice building a brand online. This position paper provides a few ways faculty can incorporate personal branding into a marketing course. Students indicate that developing their personal brand gives them confidence in their digital marketing skills and helps them build a portfolio to share with potential employers.

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WIN/WIN: HELPING NONPROFITS WHILE STUDENTS LEARN

Karen Mishra, Campbell University

PANEL POSITION PAPER

This paper will share how student projects are able to help nonprofits create an effective marketing communications strategy and help them implement it in such a way to build their brand image, cultivate loyal donors and build trusted relationships, all while offering both an online and traditional communications mix.

In order to build close relationships with donors, nonprofits must create marketing communications which are able to develop and maintain successful long-term relationships with customers, or donors (Khodakarmi, Petersen & Venkatesen, 2015; Morgan & Hunt, 1984). Nonprofits use these marketing relationship activities to build trust with their donors. Trust is critical to building long-term relationships with donors (Roy, Eshghi & Shekhar, 2011). Donors want to trust that not only will their giving be used well, but that it will actually make a difference to those who need it (Roy, Eshghi & Shekhar, 2011; Wardell & Ashley, 2011).

Nonprofit organizations rarely hire marketing personnel on their teams due to the fact that marketing salaries are prohibitively expensive. As a result, nonprofits will rely on board members, volunteers, or fundraising personnel to fill the marketing role. The result is that many nonprofits don't have a marketing plan to execute. This is where student help can be a valuable addition. Nonprofit organizations know however, that the way in which they communicate to donors will influence their giving behavior (Wardell & Ashley, 2011). Research shows that 50% of the variance in nonprofit giving is due to effective communications (O'Neill, 2008). Donors are more trusting of an organization when it communicates strong intent and transparency of its charitable efforts (Sinclair & Mishra, 2006).

Despite the fact that nonprofits don't hire marketing personnel, donors and volunteers rely on marketing information to give both time and money to a nonprofit organization. This includes locating information from a website, social media portal, or email campaign. Marketing communications build strong relationships between the brand (or in this case, the nonprofit) and the customer (or donor) (Thaichon & Quach, 2015), especially when that communication is highly relevant to the donor (Bennett & Barkensjo, 2004). Online communications, such as social media can be an effective method for communicating shared values on a regular basis to a loyal audience (Vernuccio, 2014). A firm's corporate reputation and brand image can be enhanced when its online marketing communications efforts are managed well (Jones, Temperley, Lima, 2009).

In order to help the NC Nurses Association launch a new product, an MBA marketing class created a marketing plan in lieu of association personnel. This plan consisted of a situation analysis, reviewed its past performance, created new marketing objectives, and developed marketing collateral (print, digital, PR and one additional option chosen by each team). Each team then created a yearly calendar for the nonprofit to help them implement the plan.

The biggest challenge with this nonprofit plan was that this was a brand new product and the teams did not have much direction to help them decide how to proceed. The positives for each team was that it forced them to rely on conducting market research to understand the client and its environment better, while also giving them more latitude to come up with creative ideas to implement this new product launch.

Future research could examine the use of student groups creating nonprofit plans and whether or not the nonprofit executives find them useful and are able to implement them. Future research should also examine the impact this has on campus/community relationships, as this might be a positive way to build not only stronger town/gown relationships but provide opportunities for internships and jobs.

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INTEGRATING TECHNOLOGY INTO MARKETING EDUCATION

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PANEL POSITION PAPER

The challenge presented is the gap in academic textbooks to that of the rapidly changing landscape of Digital Marketing. This requires students to be proficient in many software and platform applications. Fortunately, key software companies offer certifications to develop one's skillsets in a variety of digital marketing applications. Hubspot, Hootsuite, Google and SEMRush are all platforms in the digital marketing field that offer various free certifications. In many instances, the certifications require several hours of instructional video on how to use a platform, require the student to actually use the platform, quiz the student in various steps of the learning path, and ultimately take a final test before certification is awarded. The student experience of pursuing and achieving certifications strongly augments the classroom lessons and discussions that develop.

In addition to certifications and platforms, individual websites offer a wealth of valuable insight for digital marketing students. These websites can provide digital marketing students a set of tools they can use to immediately research, analyze and develop strategies to gain and maintain customers. Answerthepublic.com, adbeat.com, wordstream.com, moz.com, buzzsumo.com, similarweb.com and canva.com are just a few sites that need to be incorporated in the digital marketing classroom. As well, to ensure practical application of the various sites, professors should have students develop a website through Wordpress or Wix (as free options), for an event, cause or entity so they can use the various tools and see the impact of their efforts. One of the problems that arises in teaching digital marketing with professional websites is that not all website tools are free and hence require a source of funding acquired by the teaching professor, which can include grants.

Professors of Digital Marketing courses have an opportunity to enhance student learning, develop practitioners of key software platforms, and offer students a valuable and notable achievement they can include on their résumés by implementing certifications rather than traditional quizzes in the digital marketing courses. Multiple semesters of implementing such certifications have resulted in students providing specific feedback that employers regularly were impressed with certifications listed on the students' resumes. As well, it is extremely beneficial for student learning and implementation in the classroom when the teaching professor has attained the various certifications. Future research into how many professors are achieving certifications, how they are implementing various certifications into the classroom, and understanding the extent of collaboration between professional websites and academics would be useful.

There are a range of location-based applications for marketing that make complex analysis easy for business students. Understanding and effectively using location has consistently been an important consideration in marketing as well as other business domains. Today, as in many areas of our daily lives, new tools and interfaces have put powerful tools into the hands of students and professionals.

Over 80 percent of businesses use location analysis in at least one function (Spatial Business Initiative, 2018) while only 9 percent of business schools offer any exposure to spatial analysis or GIS. Marketing textbooks are almost silent about the value of location analysis (Ramakrishna, Sarkar, & Vijayaraman, 2011). These tools address common marketing questions: what customers are we reaching and how can we find more like them? Given the market potential, how quickly should we expand our operations and where? Given the locations of store outlets, how do businesses use differentiated markets to enhance store profitability (Kantor and Peters, 2019)? The value of integrating location into these and other business questions is paramount for our students and for our own work (Horan, 2018).
Many campuses already have the resources at hand to develop expertise in faculty and students. Most institutions have GIS, visualization, and location software licenses (ESRI, Tableau, etc.) that are being used by other departments and are available to business schools to integrate into the curriculum. In particular ArcGIS Online and Business Analyst

provide sophisticated data sets for novice learners. These often include tutorials that serve both faculty and students outside of classroom time. This takes the burden of app instruction away from faculty so they can focus on developing and assigning applied problems.

As MAC OS computers have become more common for students enrolling in our BUS-K201 course in the Kelley School of Business at IUPUI our faculty explored options to help them be successful using the MS Office for Windows suite (including MS Access) required for our course. Our K201 course teaches skills in Windows Microsoft Excel, Access versions 2019 (or MS Office 365 for Windows operating system), and Management Information Systems (MIS) content. Due to the COVID pandemic, many students with MAC computers no longer had the option of using a campus computer lab running Windows OS to complete assignments and homework because to campus closings. Being able to run Windows software on a MAC became critical for our students with MAC devices so they could be successful in many of our business courses.

For technology purchases it is wise to let the software requirements determine the hardware purchase. If users have already purchased or received as a gift a hardware device before realizing they need a Windows OS, we are motivated to help them use their device successfully for their business courses and beyond. Hence, we have been driven to help students know their options to successfully run Windows operating systems apps/software on MAC devices.

Option 1: Leveraging VirtualBox, VMWare Fusion or Parallels. With this option, you will be able to switch between Mac OS and Windows without shutting down. This will be the easiest solution to use once it is installed. Option 2: IUanyWare. This is the fastest to setup but requires fast internet and patience to use each time. With this option, you will need to setup your storage too. Option 3: Apple Boot Camp. This option requires a restart each time you switch between MacOS and Windows. Other Options: Borrow someone's Windows computer; or go to a public Campus UITS STC Labs or Study room to do the work on a Windows Office 2019 workstation. This options maybe limited during COVID restrictions. As new software and hardware are developed, the quest to help students run Windows on a MAC will continue to evolve and we will modify our options.

Another way to help increase efficiency for instructors and students is to offer online scheduling for faculty office hours. One product we have found that is free and effective is called Calendly. Calendly is a hub for scheduling meetings efficiently. Faculty can let Calendly know their availability preferences, then send the guests the link via email or embed it in an LMS Announcement, then students pick a time, and the event is added to the calendar and confirmed. Meetings get scheduled without calendar conflicts, reminders go out automatically and rescheduling is a breeze for everyone.

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VIRTUAL INTERNATIONAL INTERNSHIPS IN A TIME OF COVID

Mary Conran, Temple University

PANEL POSITION PAPER

As a result of Covid Restrictions, many academic programs needed to consider removing or adapting delivery of value-added activities, such as internships. This paper examines the challenges and opportunities of pivoting international student internships to a virtual format while continuing to offer learners the critical outcomes of internships despite the global pandemic.

Our program's international internship program connects learners to the internship opportunities aligned with their course of study however, when Covid hit in Spring 2020, our program had over 40 students completing in-person internships with Italian internship sponsors, and it was necessary for us to adapt the delivery model to allow participants to continue with work with their sponsors in a virtual format. Based on the successful conclusion of the program in Spring 2020 and ongoing pandemic issues which precluded sponsoring in-person program participants in Summer and Fall of 2020, the program was modified to offer Virtual ONLY internships.

These credit-bearing experiences offer undergraduate and graduate students an opportunity for experiential learning; participants enjoy the benefits of an internship (Skills, competencies, and experiences useful for improving their career readiness) but also allow opportunities them to expand and explore their global competence in a virtual delivery model. Virtual Internship opportunities included working with Italian and multinational companies, law firms, nonprofit organizations, sport and tourism consortiums, writers, local schools, galleries, museums, and local artists.

Interested students apply for the Virtual Internship (opportunities are limited, and application does not guarantee placement); a process like the pre-covid application process. Most internships became project/deliverable based which allowed participants to build their portfolios. The faculty supervisor (based in Rome) oversaw the internship experience, set the evaluation requirements, met with the student regularly via Zoom, liaised with internship sponsors (getting feedback on the participant's progress), and required a final report or project related to the virtual internship experience. All these activities were adapted from the in-person model used by the program.

Internship sponsors were willing, and eager, to continue to use US Students as interns, even in a virtual format. The excitement about the virtual program allowed expansion of the base of internship sponsors who were unable to hire/sponsor local students due to travel restrictions in Italy. This expanded interest resulted in program participants in the virtual internship program having access to the benefits of international internship (focused on developing global competence and emotional intelligence along with career readiness skills) which could have a wider and deeper impact on their career readiness.

A key outcome of the virtual internship program was that it provided a unique opportunity/tool to support the program's diversity initiatives; virtual internships reduce the barriers for access to global opportunities for many participants (e.g., program participants wouldn't need to be in the EU to contribute as an intern) and the mentoring opportunities allow participants to develop critical skills for workplace success. Based on results from summer 2020, there was an expanded outreach to academic units. There was an investment in updating collateral material and website to assure the student application process and process of recruiting sponsors were more seamless and attractive and an increased outreach to current and prospective internship sponsors to make them aware of the resource of working with US students virtually.

Key Program milestones:

May 2020: launch of the Virtual Internship program with five virtual interns during Summer I Session

September-December 2020: Sponsored 11 virtual interns during Fall 2020 semester (the semester was hosted fully online)

January-April 2021: Sponsored 12 virtual interns during our Spring 2021 semester in addition to hosting 26 in-person internship as the Rome campus was open.

May 2021: hosted 18 students for virtual internships (some had in-person elements as program participants were in Rome)

Feedback from virtual internship participants (both students and sponsors) indicated a need for coaching in language and cultural context which would have been more "organic" had the internship been in person (where students in the program are required to take ITAL language lesson). To address this gap in cultural competency, the program piloted an intensive ITAL language and cultural experience for spring and Summer 2021 interns. This program introduces participants to the Italian workplace, explain routines and rituals (e.g., coffee as a social interaction) while also providing learners with basic Italian vocabulary relevant to workspaces.

As part of the learning activities for internships, students completing internships did reflective essays, including the impact of the virtual internship experience; comments by selected program participants of the expanded Virtual Internship Program include:

"I am so happy that I decided to do this virtual internship, even during a pandemic. The virtual format made it possible (for me) to work with an organization that I would not have been able to work with otherwise. Working with an Italian based group also gave me a new sense of differences in work culture, which has widened by world view in both my professional and personal life". **Helene Holm Gottlieb,** Bachelor of Arts in Political Science |College of Liberal Arts, Class of 2021

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SOCIAL MEDIA METRICS AND ANALYTICS

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PANEL POSITION PAPER

Social media marketing (SMM) channels like Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram, Snapchat, YouTube, Twitter, tic toc, Pinterest etc., have received strong support by US marketers. In fact, according to eMarketer, total ad dollars spent on social media networks will exceed $40 Billion in 2021. While business performance indicators such as firm value, brand image, customer loyalty, awareness, reach, engagement, attitudes, perceptions, financial values like sales, profitability etc., are meaningful to assess SMM, understanding individual social media (SM) channel attributions and measuring their effectiveness towards strategic goals remain challenging. In addition, considering only individual SM metrics can undervalue SMM effectiveness as spillover effect (sharing) among social media channels may not be accounted.

SM channels offer a variety of quantitative metrics such as number of likes, dislikes, clicks, views, followers, favorites, replies, share (retweets), mentions, comments etc. as well as qualitative measures such as sentiments expressed in comments and reviews. A disparity in measurements can arise based on SM channel (Lemel, R. 2021). For example, a like on Facebook brand post can indicate a level engagement that is lower than a comment and a mention in its Twitter handle. Basically, customer engagement can be conceived as three different levels: consumption, contribution and creation (Muntinga et al, 2011). Utilizing the hierarchy in consumer engagement, strategic SMM can be classified into social commerce, social content, social monitoring and social customer relationship management (Li, F et al. 2021), and each higher level with escalating consumer engagement value metrics. For instance, SM metrics in social commerce can be passive such as views, and reactive (liking in a promotion in SM brand page leading to purchase). In contrast, social customer relationship management requires metrics measuring collaboration and value co-creation. Therefore, a SM metric can contribute to variety of strategic objectives and link customer engagement to strategic goals.

Teaching social media analytics is an important part of any digital marketing and/or social media marketing curriculum today, especially for students that will be going into entry level positions in the field of social media and digital marketing. Social media analytics are important for all businesses, as they help managers understand the content that drives outcomes such as user acceptance, engagement, and ultimately consumer action. In teaching social media analytics, we aim to give students the opportunity to experience looking at real data and making strategic decisions via platforms such as Google Analytics, Sprout Social, HubSpot, and BuzzSumo. However, it is difficult to gain access to real data from companies, as that is proprietary information that is very important to the company itself. Google Analytics provides an opportunity to examine live data from their Google Merchandise Store website, which is helpful for students to start to interact with data and examine the different ways in which data can be represented.

Therefore, one of the biggest challenges professors have in teaching social media analytics today are keeping up with the changing trends and platforms in analytics and getting students comfortable with the numbers side of marketing. Seemingly, many social media marketing students are interested in the creative side of the discipline and are very savvy at creating and evaluating content based on factors such as the copy, images and videos, likeness, and overall aesthetics. However, when it comes to measuring the performance analytically, students often need a nudge into the space and experiential learning is critical at this point in their learning journey. Providing students with access to platforms such as Facebook Insights and Twitter Analytics helps them become more comfortable in reading through the analytics. Working with a real client such as a nonprofit organization provides students the opportunity to examine social media analytics and provide suggestions for the organization based on what they see in performance. Ultimately, students often excel after being introduced to social media analytics, but finding outlets for them to look at real data is challenging yet necessary because that exposure gives them the industry-ready experience that so many companies are looking for in their entry level social media and digital marketing associate positions.

One helpful approach to teaching social media analytics is to use a real-life project based on data that the students themselves own that can help students understand how social media metrics can be used. The project that will be described in detail in the conference presentation is one where students set up a blog in WordPress and then promote it over social media platforms over a period of weeks, also tracking their results in Google Analytics. The blog is a great way for them to explore organic search as well as the social media analytics on various social platforms and become familiar with using Google Analytics.

In the project, Students post on their blog in five separate weeks and then analyze the results of various differences in response to their blog content. Students test the effects of posting videos and pictures, sharing their own content, sharing original content via email and other techniques. Students discuss the results in class each week as well in a detailed reflection paper at the end of class. The overall reaction to the project among the students has been quite positive. Although the project discussed is conducted in a graduate class, a similar project has been used in undergraduate courses at St. Edward's University. The project is detailed in Dr. Zahay's blog on teaching social media analytics: http://sites.stedwards.edu/dblatz/2021/02/09/how-to-set-up-blog-analytics/

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BUILDING A SENSE OF INCLUSION IN THE CLASSROOM: THE ROLE OF A LEARNING COMMUNITY

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SPECIAL SESSION POSITION PAPER

A learning community is an intentionally formed group that seeks to support and advance the learning of each of its members on a selected topic or topics (Lening et al., 2013).

In a broader sense, a learning community is a group of people who share common academic goals and attitudes, and who interact with one another for the purpose of learning *and* using what they learned for good. This holistic approach has mostly been focused on students and retention. However, faculty can also benefit from a shared peer learning group.

For **students**, learning communities lead to improved academic performance and an increased sense of purpose and belonging. This enables students to apply what they've learned to their future careers and lives and use these learnings for fruitful purposes.

For college **educators**, learning communities allow for the effective and efficient transmission of knowledge and wisdom — which, of course, is what teaching is all about. Because the knowledge and wisdom being shared are amplified by *other* learnings within the community, educators inherently become even more effective. Also, belonging to a learning community means *sharing* ideas. This allows educators to improve their teaching methods and enhance their *own* knowledge of the subject matter (Hajric, 2020).

Professional learning that increases educator effectiveness occurs within learning communities committed to **continuous improvement, collective responsibility**, and **goal alignment**.

By fostering a cycle of continuous improvement to engage in inquiry, learning communities bridge the knowing-doing gap by transforming macro-level learning, including knowledge and skill development, into micro-level learning, including the practices and refinements necessary for alignment and accountability.

Collective responsibility and participation foster peer-to-peer support by maintaining a consistent focus on shared goals within and across communities. Technology facilitates and expands community interaction, learning, resource archiving and sharing, and knowledge construction and sharing.

When professional learning occurs within a community driven by high expectations, shared goals, professionalism, and peer accountability, the aligned outcome is significant for all members.

There are several concrete tools educators and institutions can implement to build engaged learning communities for both online learners and faculty members:

Create a culture of inclusivity. Instructors can establish a tone of mutual respect and community in which students feel comfortable as inclusive members of a cohort. Consistently reinforce collaborative and cooperative knowledge sharing through course communications (e.g., announcements, discussion forums). Encouraging meaningful and relevant interactions and diversity of thought creates shared experiences and supports the goal of learning *with* and learning *from* peers.

Personalized approach. Providing feedback to students in the form of audio or video—as opposed to text-only—has been proven to be more effective at conveying nuance, increase online community interactions, improve content retention (Ice et al., 2007). This fosters a deeper feeling of connectedness, improved engagement, and a stronger command of the underlying principles.

Meaning-making moments. Encourage student-to-student and student-to-faculty engagement. In online learning environments, leverage interactive tools, such as VoiceThread, within the context of asynchronous discussions to emulate the dynamic dialogue and immersive experience of in-person classroom discussions. Virtual office hours and live Zoom discussions and group meetings all offer students the opportunity to connect and reduces barriers to participation and sharing in the online environment.

Cultivate learning communities and resources for faculty. The peer-to-peer exchange of knowledge and cross-institution collaboration between faculty reinforces the notion of collective experience, richer conceptual connections, and a deepening of shared knowledge.

Collaborative learning communities among colleagues leads to two pivotal outcomes: 1) Cultivating a broad knowledge base that fosters divergent thinking to marry disparate concepts in innovative ways. 2) Fostering diversity of thought and systems thinking: an awareness that diversities are the outcome of an inner unity.

Building community in an exclusively online learning environment can work to bridge the digital divide, foster a sense of inclusion, improve engagement, and establish collaborative and collective learning opportunities, for both students and faculty, alike.

In conclusion, effective learning communities connect people and ideas across disciplines and geographies to align toward a common goal and arrive at a deeper collective awareness. This approach further improves teaching strategies while strengthening student learning achievement, too.

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TRANSITIONING FROM CORPORATE AMERICA TO ACADEMIC INSTITUTIONS: TRANSFORMING PRACTICE INTO PEDAGOGY

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SPECIAL SESSION POSITION PAPER

Deciding to become a college professor is a difficult decision. Even more challenging is transitioning from corporate America to academic institutions. Many considerations have to be considered when making an informed decision of this magnitude. It is important to better understand this transitional period as we inform the next generation of practitioners to professors. The purpose of this paper is to discuss the various concessions that an individual should consider as they transition from practitioner to effective scholars and educators. This paper will draw from the experiences of two faculty members who successfully transitioned and is grounded within the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) frameworks. Our shared experiences conclude that a loss of personal time, changes to familial dynamics, revisiting financial commitments, achieving additional training, and developing an effective transition from practice to pedagogy emerged as important factors when considering the transition from corporate America to academic institutions.

This concept of transition from industry has been studied in various contexts and disciplines (Bell, 2015; Garcia, Bonner, Nelson, Yuen., Marone, & Browning; 2021; Wisneski, 2013). The findings suggest that the most challenging aspects include receiving professional feedback, the organizational hierarchy structure and performance metrics. Adjusting to these new metrics of professional development can be challenging as the proverbial target is moved from one position to another. Terminology such as tenure, adjunct, associate professor, lecturer are all foreign terms to those outside of academia. However, learning the language of academia is just one aspect of the transitional process. Another steep learning curve is the organizational culture of this new academic environment. The autonomy of teaching at higher education institutions can create a disjointed view of who are my superiors and their role in overseeing my performance. Although all of these variables are important considerations, less attention has been given to the personal transformation that takes place prior to teaching your first class.

The loss of personal time in pursuant of obtaining a terminal degree is undervalued. Oftentimes individuals are not afforded the opportunity to commit to their academic endeavors full time. Many individuals are committed to some form of gainful employment in order to achieve their doctoral degree. The question becomes where one finds the time for higher education. Inevitably the answer comes at the cost of free time. No longer are you able to totally disconnect from your professional endeavors after the day is done. Those who choose this path of practitioner to professor find themselves dedicating their free time to paper writing, conducting research, or taking after hours course work. All of which occur after hours. For many the impact is a feeling of constant busyness or lack of true relaxation. Graduate school demands that you substitute the here and now for the possibility of future aspirations. This trial of will take a toll on one's psyche as you continuously wage war on your inclination for relaxation. The goal is to commit to the value of this process by either learning to enjoy this constant busyness or to fully embrace the notion that this too shall pass; that the ultimate prize (doctoral degree) will be the key to unlocking your academic aspirations.

We believe those individuals who are able to transition from practitioner to academia bring with them the unique ability to teach future generations using their real-world experiences as examples for the material they are teaching. These individuals tend to have deep networks as well, which can prove to be beneficial for students as they start looking for full time employment after graduation. These are two reasons why we believe that it is important to encourage those interested in teaching to make the transition from Corporate America to academia. Despite the challenges that exist for those that make this transition, it is not only possible but also very rewarding to be able to teach students how to learn from your experiences while working as a practitioner.

Academia is doing their part in making this transition easier for those interested in teaching after many years of being a practitioner. A new track in many business schools is designed for working individuals that have reached upper levels of management over a lengthy career in Corporate America. Alongside the traditional PhD program, which could take 5-7 years to complete, institutions are now offering a doctoral degree program called “Doctorate of Business Administration” (DBA). A DBA is still considered a terminal degree and allows an individual to apply for tenure track positions within academia, but it is designed specifically for individuals interested in transitioning from practitioner to academia while maintaining a full-time position in the working world and typically only takes 3 years to complete.

One of the clearest distinctions between academia and corporate culture is organizational structure. A part of the onboarding process for corporate employees is awareness of administrative hierarchy. Oftentimes, the corporate employee is made aware of the chain of command - which individuals are my supervisors and subordinates. However, in academia these lines are blurred. The informality of academia where each faculty member is their own subject matter expert, it can be difficult to decipher true authority. The autonomy of a subject matter expert, in many cases the expertise being in the field of pedagogy, can interfere with the governance of administration. Furthermore, the multiplicity of organizational structure regarding various department chairs, deans, faculty heads, and committees can cause confusion for all as to who the ultimate decision maker is and how to proceed properly. A way in which to connect these two disciplines is to relate common corporate titles with those of their academic equivalent (Angolia, Pagliari, & Easterling, 2015).

Another aspect to consider when making the decision to move into academia, to consider the path of promotion. In the corporate arena, advancement is oftentimes based on a criteria of quantifiable performance standards. These standards can include organizational cost savings, perceptions of quality, speed of delivery, and generating additional revenue. The route of promotion is strikingly different. The standards for tenure and promotion as it is called centers on the three following areas - 1) research, 2) teaching, and 3) service. These areas are loosely defined, contain unclear expectations, and can be defined in order of significance depending on the institution. This lack of clarity and ambiguity can be difficult to navigate. Adding to this anxiety is the probationary period (up or out) from tenure track to full professor. This process can be problematic as one tries to achieve their academic aspirations. Hansen (2008) provides guidance on how to successfully navigate this process including finding collegiate mentorship, seeking to understand departmental initiatives, and creating a unique niche for your academic research.

In conclusion, the transition from corporate America to American academics has been both challenging and rewarding. From personal sacrifice to organizational confusion and academic achievement, the move from the professional sphere to academia has been wonderfully challenging. The transitional process can be problematic but very fulfilling in so many ways. The guidance that I can provide to those considering the move is three-fold. First piece of guidance is to understand, to the best of your abilities, the requirements of tenure and promotion process. The more you know the specifics of the order of significance (research, teaching, service) the more equipped you will be to handle the extra stress associated with the up or out designation. Second, consider the commitments outside of the day-to-day teaching requirements. Many individuals are surprised by the tasks required to maintain in good standing within your institution. Lastly, realize that the differences between the two, however confusing and unfamiliar they might be, afford one of the best professional lifestyles possible. Although you might find comfort in a yearly review, knowing who manages who, and being evaluated based on financial contributions to the organization, being an academic allows you to leave an indelible mark on the next generation of professional while being able to research topics that grow you professionally and personally.

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HOW CAN WE GET EXPERIENCE IF YOU WON'T HIRE US WITHOUT EXPERIENCE?

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SPECIAL SESSION POSITION PAPER

As the job market becomes more competitive, employers are demanding more experience from students. However, not all students are able to secure multiple internships before graduation. Client-based projects provide students with hands-on experience working with a client including collecting and analyzing data, working with budget and time constraints, incorporating client and instructor feedback into recommendations, and understanding workload and time required to complete projects. These types of projects enable students to gain the valuable experience employers are looking for, especially when they may be lacking internship or work experience. Drawing upon Bloom's taxonomy (Anderson, Krathwohl & Bloom, 2001), client-based projects encourage students to apply key concepts to real-world problems and promote critical thinking by analyzing and evaluating data. Students also learn that in practice, oftentimes the issue can be messier and more nuanced than a perfect textbook example, and that decision-makers may not always have access to all the information they would want in order to make a decision. They can make mistakes and receive feedback from both the instructor and client in a learning environment. Instructors also benefit from client-based projects by establishing partnerships with local and national employers, showcasing the caliber of their students, and elevating the reputation of the university overall. We demonstrate how client-based projects can provide students with hands-on real-world experience to help fill the gap of actual work experience. We summarize two classroom approaches, a services marketing course and a brand management course, to address students' challenges of minimal work experience valued by employers.

Dr. Eaton brings live clients into the classroom to work with students on an intensive new service design project, where the students develop new service processes to help address client goals. Examples of past client goals include:

- Increasing the value proposition to customers to gain additional market share
- Introducing new, complementary offerings to grow share of wallet
- Increasing workplace benefits (such as complimentary on-site services) to reduce employee turnover
- Redesigning existing processes to enhance efficiency

For a successful and valuable experience for both the client and the students, it is important to find a client with goals that are compatible with the overarching learning requirements of the class. Additionally, when crafting the assignment document for students, the professor should also build flexibility into the requirements to allow the project to adapt to a variety of client situations, industries, and goals. To find appropriate clients, Dr. Eaton reaches out to organizations that already have an existing relationship with the school and offers to partner with them on the class project. Dr. Eaton initiates these conversations with potential clients several months before the start of the course to allow time to discuss the client goals and student deliverables to ensure a good fit. When Dr. Eaton and the client agree that they would like to proceed with the project, Dr. Eaton asks for the client to commit to the following:

- Project kick-off: For the project kick-off, the client attends the class and presents to the students, providing a company history, a description of the goals they would like to accomplish with the project, and constraints or guardrails (such as budget limitations, things to avoid, or other limitations).
- Project proposal: A few weeks into the term, the students produce 1- to 2-page proposals for the new service process that they would like to suggest to the client. The client provides written feedback within one week. The proposal phase gives the client the opportunity to veto any ideas that would be nonstarters, help students make an early course correction, or provide suggestions and other information.
- Client Q&A: Midway through the design phase of the project, the client attends class and meets with the project teams in rapid succession to answer questions about their service design as they are developing it. In addition, Dr. Eaton requests the client answer questions via email through the term—students will email their questions to Dr. Eaton, who then aggregates the questions and forwards them on to the client. Dr. Eaton will then post the client's answers to the course website for the entire class's benefit.

- Final presentations: At the end of the term, the client attends class to watch students present their ideas and to provide feedback. Internally, the students present to each other first and evaluate each other's work. Based on these evaluations, the top four teams go on to present to the client.

In Dr. Montoya's brand management class, students conduct a comprehensive brand assessment. Brands that are either new to the market or currently experiencing market challenges tend to offer the most engaging projects for students. Dr. Montoya identifies the brand months in advance of the course which then allows the project to be tailored to the client's specific needs. For example, students are asked to visit stores as part of the project for consumer product brands. The project is divided into four smaller assignments with the final recommendations presented to the client at the end of the semester. Each assignment serves as a milestone for the students, and the instructor provides feedback along the way. The project assignments are as follows:

- Assignment 1: A brand overview including an assessment of environmental factors, brand elements, pricing, competition, and positioning. Students also consider retail and merchandising strategies, if applicable.
- Assignment 2: A review of the brand's integrated marketing communications and digital strategies. This includes social media, the brand's website, and smartphone apps.
- Assignment 3: Students conduct consumer research on the brand. The research methods typically include a survey, focus group, or interviews. The instructor reviews all research instruments in advance.
- Assignment 4: An assessment of brand development strategies including brand/line extensions, cobranding, and alliances. Students also review branding guidelines.
- Final Recommendations: Students draw upon their research from their assignments and submit a written summary, and presentation, of their recommendations to the client. Instead of asking students to resubmit updated versions of their assignments, they only submit their recommendations in this final paper.

The client is asked to attend the class on three occasions including the project kick-off, an informal Q&A session, and final team presentations. Student questions are filtered through the instructor to help manage communication with the client throughout the semester. The instructor also schedules team check-in meetings throughout the semester to help guide students, and to identify potential team or client issues.

In sum, client-based projects offer students a hands-on experience with a company. Students gain valuable real-world experience working with market data, evaluating customers' behavior, and making informed recommendations to a client. These projects can help students with minimal internships close the experience gap, providing them with a context to discuss their business acumen on resumes or during interviews.

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STUDENTS: IF YOU'RE NOT NETWORKING, YOU'RE NOT WORKING

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SPECIAL SESSION POSITION PAPER

As marketers and faculty, we bring our industry experiences, professionals associations and connections, real world insights, service learning opportunities, and even "consulting" opportunities into the classroom to enrich both the classroom and our students' experiences and learning. Furthermore, through our experiences and networks, we offer students opportunities to meet and network with professionals in their majors and desired careers or professionals who may need their skill set upon graduation—by inviting our connections to the classroom in real time or virtually.

We know knowledge, skills, abilities (KSAs) are what students use and apply in their careers, we also know they need to get a foot in the door. We believe the connections we provide help with knocking on and opening doors.

Initiative One—In this initiative, a professor at a private university was developing a new course for a Doctorate in Business Administration degree program, which was in development at the university. The first goal was to provide a new innovative approach to learning. A second goal was to afford students an opportunity to network with business owners/leaders in the community and start a working relationship through discussing the organization, challenges, and possibly provide free consulting services in the form of recommendations. The third goal was to provide an opportunity to be published.

When creating the Strategic Marketing Decisions course, an assignment was developed for students to move beyond reading a case and developing recommendations to studying a company first-hand, meeting with the owner(s) or leader(s) and developing an original case study based on their findings. The case used a similar format of Introduction, Body, and Conclusion. In addition, students created Learning Objectives using Blooms Taxonomy and a teaching note with case questions, level of difficulty, and possible answers. The process aided moving students from a student role into an instructor one and a consultant to an organization.

Through connections with journals, the professor was able to create an assignment where the completed case was ready for publication to one of three journals. The cases were a collection of organizations with different levels of issues and possible recommendations. After reviewing and grading the student's work, the professor made a recommendation on each case as to being most appropriate for undergraduate or graduate level courses. The students were able to use this information when submitting the case for possible publication.

Developing a novel case was an opportunity for students to achieve the highest level of work by creating an original assignment. They met with an organization and made a professional networking connection offering free consulting services. In addition, students were able to submit their completed case for possible publication to one of three journals adding to their academic credentials. If pursuing adjunct teaching, students were able to note consulting services as a professional qualification and if published the case would be an academic qualification adding to their curriculum vitae.

*Initiative Two—Major accrediting agencies (i.e., CHEA, AACSB and ACPSB) have requirements for tracking and improving job placement rates. These accreditors also have requirements for professional development and currency within discipline. Additionally, business accreditations require business colleges/departments to have advisory boards evaluate curriculum content for relevance workforce needs. A description of a regional program to accomplish this is the Visiting Professors Program (VPP). The VPP is designed to be win-win for participating companies visiting professors—and by extension, professors' students and departments. Through the VPP, faculty and companies are matched based on teaching and expertise and company's needs. The company gets an external set of eyes on their marketing efforts and a presentation based on the professor's expertise. Professors are given access to a variety of contacts within the company, including hiring managers, recent hires, insight into the KSAs required of employees to achieve marketing objectives, and confidential information about the company's strategies. Nondisclosure agreements are signed by all parties.

In the best of circumstances, full time faculty are removed from the workforce by at least four years. This phenomenon is called the faulty practice gap (Brinson, Adams, & Wilcox, 2019; Lange, Rosengren, Colliander, Hernant, & Liljedal, 2018). Faculty internships have a history within business literature to keep faculty skills current and classrooms relevant. For instance, Kulesza (1994) described faculty internships in automotive production; Christopher, Schertzer, & Schertzer (2013) reported the value of faculty internships in accounting, and Stephens & Gibson (2010) reported their value across business disciplines.

These contacts become a part of a professor's network and can be used for speaking engagements, job networking for students, internship placement, advisory boards, and sounding boards for curriculum development. The VPP is designed to enhance and leverage the network of regional academe and local business (Marmaros, & Sacerdote, 2002; McCorkle, Alexander, Reardon, & Kling, 2003). Through the VPP, professors enhance their skills and bring to the classroom current, high level marketing content. They leverage new relationships to benefit students, the curricula, and accreditation. Companies access a professor's expertise and a student pipeline with KSAs tailored for the market.

Initiative Three—In this initiative, professors at a private, undergraduate university took a scaffolding approach to offer students multiple methods and opportunities to become more proficient at professional networking, a practice that causes many students anxiety, at least initially.

Students are assigned networking assignments in their sophomore, junior, and senior years, with each assignment shifting more of the "management" of the networking session to the student. An informational interview assignment is assigned in a sophomore level class. Students are guided to an online alumni directory, and the course instructor also identifies several members of their own network for students to interview. Sometimes students express hesitation in making the initial contact, so the instructor will assist them in crafting an introductory email or voicemail. Students are also provided sample interview questions. Next, in a junior level class, students are assigned an assignment to attend a networking event hosted by the university's career services office. The instructor and career services team leverage alumni and personal networks to set up these events. Students learn to network in a group rather than one on one. In addition, they are instructed to guide part of the question and answer (Q&A) component of the session. Finally, in a senior level class, students are responsible for initiating contact and interviewing an industry professional as part of a larger research project. Thus, the student develops the questions and structure of the interview.

Through these multimethod approaches to networking, students become more comfortable initiating conversations and building networks on their own. Since these assignments are strategically included throughout the curriculum, students gain experience in networking over their college career, bolstering their confidence in such activities. Further, through completion of the class assignments, they have already started developing their own networks.

These initiatives have helped students develop the skills to manage their own professional networks. More detail about the initiatives will be provided by the authors at the panel session. In addition, the authors are happy to share specific materials with anyone interested.

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THE MARKETING CAPSTONE CONSULTANCY (MCC): USING A SELF-EXPANSION PROJECT TO FOSTER OTHER AWARENESS AND CAREER COMPETENCY

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TEACHING INNOVATION COMPETITION TEACHING NOTES

The instructor of the marketing capstone course coordinates with an instructor who teaches an introductory level business or marketing class. The assignment for the intro class must require a marketing component and should be appropriate in length to be completed in four weeks as a team written submission. The consultants are instructed to focus their efforts on advising for the marketing section of the assignment for the meetings that take place in weeks 1 and 3 of the assignment. The capstone students are challenged with the idea that a true test of whether they have mastered a subject is their ability to teach it to others in a way that is accessible and understandable to those less familiar with the subject matter. The MCC project gives them the opportunity to do just that. The capstone students select a partner to form a consulting firm, just as marketing professionals would self-select a business partner. The firm creates a name and visual identity using a logo or brand image. The capstone students are provided with the instructions for the assignment given to the client students to set the context for the first meeting.

The consulting team liaison schedules the two, 30 to 60-minute virtual meetings with the client team. Students can use one of many free video conferencing platforms such as Zoom, Cisco Webex, Skype, or Microsoft Teams. The first meeting is scheduled within one week of the introduction and the second meeting during the week before the client assignment is due. This will help the clients get initial direction and adequate time for revision, based on advice garnered from the second meeting. The objective of the first meeting is for the consultants to establish credibility and rapport with the client team. Clients are also afforded time to ask questions regarding strategy and execution of their assignment. During the second meeting, the consultants reflect on the work product they see completed to date. Being careful to not complete the assignment for the client team, the consultants are instructed to focus on providing insights from prior marketing courses in a way that fosters critical thinking and a collegial relationship.

The client team may provide feedback after the first consultation meeting to highlight how the consultants performed. This gives each of the consultants an opportunity to adjust for the second meeting. Feedback provided by the client team after the second meeting can also be used in the written reflection. The purpose of the client feedback is for the consultants to become aware of how effective they were perceived and how they can revise their approach in future to further develop career competencies. Each capstone student is assigned to write a two to three-page, double-spaced reflection on the experience. The students should answer the following questions, (1) What did you learn from the MCC experience? (2) What competencies did you gain? (3) How did your consulting firm help your client team improve its output? (4) If given the opportunity, what would you do differently next time? Students are instructed to also submit their consulting meeting notes along with the written reflection.

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BRINGING THE STORE TO THE CLASSROOM: INTEGRATING VIRTUAL REALITY (VR) INTO MARKETING EDUCATION

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TEACHING INNOVATION COMPETITION TEACHING NOTES

Marketing educators have been using a variety of learning activities to teach students marketing concepts. These include audit projects, photography projects, videography, and retail laboratory, to name a few. While these activities foster active learning, the increasing interest in VR among millennial students and businesses provides a compelling reason to incorporate immersive learning into marketing education. For instance, a survey conducted by Deloitte in 2019 reveals 35% of millennials are highly interested in VR. Likewise, the 2020 Gartner report points to the increasing popularity of immersive technologies in higher education; by the end of 2021, almost 60% of U.S.-based higher education institutions will be using VR to create an enhanced simulation and learning environment. With the advent of immersive technologies, many businesses have embraced the creative potentials of VR for marketing activities. These include customer education (read: Lowe's Wants to Use a VR Holoroom to Teach You Home Improvement in Popular Mechanics by Dhal 2017), revamping shoppers' experience (read: Harry Potter New York sets opening date for magical shopping experience by Tuttle 2021) and training sales representatives (read: Walmart trains employees for holidays using virtual reality, by Mirabelle 2017), to cite a few.

From an instructional perspective, VR could simulate a virtual store or a mall environment that affords flexibility in outlet design and atmospherics that could be otherwise difficult to create or manipulate in a natural learning environment. Such flexibility offers marketing educators possibilities to illustrate a large variety of concepts in a simulated learning environment wherein students can gain the benefits of experiential learning without the disadvantages and difficulties that come with planning and carrying out field trips to the mall and stores. There is mounting evidence suggesting that incorporating VR into education increases students' motivation and engagement with the material, improves learning outcomes (Merchant et al.,2014), and increases students' ability to retain and recall concepts (Sung et al., 2021).When immersed in a VR store environment, students could be tasked to identify the attributes of the shopping environment (i.e., elements of atmospherics) and categorize them into dimensions (Bloom's taxonomy of cognitive learning). Doing so would engage students in a cognitive learning process that would improve their ability of comprehension and analysis. Likewise, when immersed in a VR environment, students would feel excitement and gain awareness of their learning environment (Bloom's affective learning domain), which in turn boost their intrinsic motivation. Furthermore, when instructed to shop in a VR store environment, students would interact with their environment to perform a set of tasks such as gazing at the shelves, assorting products, and moving around the aisles. In doing so, they engage in a psychomotor learning process whereby they learn skilled movements and tasks (Bloom's psychomotor learning domain), boosting their ability to apply the concepts (self-efficacy).

The current innovation consists of a VR-store app developed to teach students the product mix dimensions (i.e., width, length, depth, and consistency). The VR simulation aims to elicit student recognition and comprehension of the product mix dimensions and appraisal of the product mix decisions (e.g., stretching a product line, deepening a product mix, etc.). The VR-store app was developed using an affordable VR camera to shoot a 720 video in a real store environment ("Where I'm From" apparel store, located in the Belden Village Mall, in North Canton, Ohio) that was then imported into Unity platform to convert it into a smartphone app (VR Store (Where I am From) - YouTube). Students would then download the VR store app on their smartphone and slide it into a VR headset (cost $5). The VR simulation lasts approximately 40 minutes and takes place after a lecture of 35 minutes covering chapter#7 on products and brands management, focusing on product line and product mix decisions. When immersed in the VR simulation, students are instructed to identify products (e.g., pulls, shirts, etc.) on the displays (layouts) and categorize these into dimensions of product mix (e.g., length, depth, etc.). Then, students are asked to determine the most viable product mix decision that would lead to a sales increase. The implementation of the VR simulation follows four key steps:

1. A brief review of key concepts: product mix dimensions and product mix decisions:
2. VR initiation and demo demonstration: setting up VR simulation
3. Wrapping up: debriefing & linking the VR simulation to the lesson objectives and learning outcomes.

4. Assessment: take a short quiz of 10 minutes, and let students reflect on their VR learning experience.

A true experimental design was used to assess whether there will be any gain from learning concepts using the VR simulation. Students were randomly assigned to one of the following groups: group#1 includes students who attended the lecture but didn't participate in the VR simulation (control group). Students from this group were asked to leave the class immediately after the lecture and take a short quiz at the computer Lab. Group#2 consists of students who attended the lecture and took part in the VR simulation (treatment group). Students took a quiz, at the end of the VR activity. The effectiveness of the VR simulation was assessed by comparing students' performance (quiz scores) across group#1 (lecture only condition) and group 2 (VR simulation condition). The quiz tests student's comprehension of the concepts of width, length, depth, consistency and application of product mix decisions. Overall, the t-test results show that students who took part in the VR simulation have overwhelmingly earned better scores in the quiz and gained a better understanding of the learned concepts and better skills and ability to make the right product mix decisions.

The current VR simulation could be adapted to teach students concepts related to consumer behaviour, retailing, and marketing research. For instance, the VR simulation could be extended to map out different stages of the consumer purchasing process (e.g., comparing alternatives, etc.). Likewise, this activity could be used to illustrate many elements of the store atmospherics (e.g., display, layout, decoration, etc.). Besides, the VR simulation could be used to teach students how to design and conduct lab experiments in the marketing research class. In sum, the proposed innovation affords a flexible and adaptable teaching tool to many marketing classes. It is not surprising to hear students expressing enjoyment and interest in the VR simulation (e.g. *"I enjoyed the VR simulation, these kinds of activities stick with me",* "*The VR was fun and a great way to learn concepts", "My favorite part in this class is the VR simulation").*

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