The 45th Annual Marketing Educators' Association Conference
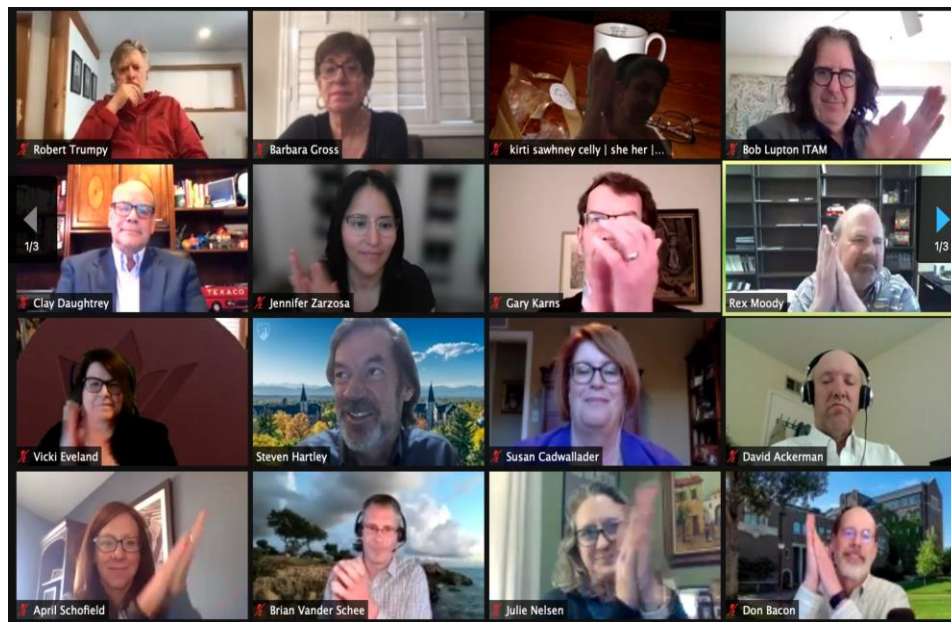# 2021 Annual Conference Proceedings

April 9-10, 2021 Virtual on the Whova Platform

EDITORS

Tony Stovall
Indiana University – Indianapolis

Julie B Nelsen
St. Catherine University

Jennifer Zarzosa
Henderson State University

Sarah Fischbach
Pepperdine University

PREFACE

This volume contains the proceedings of the 45th Annual Conference of the Marketing Educators' Association (MEA) held virtually on the Whova online platform April 9-10, 2021. This year's conference was held virtually due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Proceedings have been submitted online to the MEA conference website www.marketingeducators.org.

The conference theme continues to be, Enhancing the Practice and Scholarship of Marketing Education, which reflects the association's commitment to facing the challenges of new generations of students and ever-changing technology in continuing to provide the most effective marketing education possible. It also suggests career opportunities for marketing educators. Embracing new learning styles, new technologies, and incorporating new methods in our classrooms transform these challenges into great opportunities. The topics discussed provide a vast and exciting array of methods designed with these challenges and opportunities in mind. These conference proceedings include competitive papers/abstracts, position papers, and special session proposals. Each competitive paper was double-blind reviewed, and authors provided a full paper or an abstract for publication.

An editorial committee evaluated position papers and special session proposals and authors provided an abstract for publication. Authors, session chairs, and reviewers represent a geographically diverse group from half the U.S. states and several other nations, including India, Austria, and Lithuania. We also enjoyed several participants representing industry. The competitive papers/abstracts, position papers, and special session proposals appear in alphabetical order by the title of the presentation starting with the competitive paper winners. Anyone with a passion for teaching marketing and who is working their way through a marketing educators' career is sure to find many interesting and useful ideas in the papers and abstracts contained within the pages of these proceedings.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Marketing Educators' Association (MEA) conference and these proceedings would not be possible without the voluntary efforts of many people. We would like to thank the authors who submitted manuscripts for review and the reviewers who lent their expertise and their time by providing thoughtful feedback. Additionally, we would like to thank the volunteers serving as session chairs at the MEA 2021 virtual conference.

Special acknowledgment goes to our Presidents, Jennifer Zarzosa, Ph.D. and Sarah Fischbach, Ph.D. who coordinated and organized the 2021 45th Marketing Educators' Association Conference. Thank you for leading MEA this year!

Thank you to President Elect, Julie Nelsen and Vice President, Tony Stovall, Ph.D. whose have been intermediaries for the papers that the marketing educators submitted to this conference. The 2022 MEA Conference will be held at the Seattle Renaissance Hotel in Seattle, Washington April 21-23, 2022. Please watch the https://www.marketingeducators.org/ website for future information; papers will be due for review in mid-December, 2021.

Andy Chen, Seattle Pacific University

Miles Condon, St. Norbert College

Suzanne Conner, Georgia Southwestern State University

Shannon Cummins, University of Nebraska-Omaha

Barbara Gross, California State University, Northridge

Sean Keyani, California State University, Northridge

Sarah Fischbach, Pepperdine University

Michael Hair, Southern Illinois University Edwardsville

Rika Houston, California State University, Los Angeles)

Brian Jorgensen, Westminster College

Robert Lupton, Central Washington University

Jane Machin, Radford University

Rex Moody, Angelo State University

Julie Nelsen, St. Catherine University

Amy Parsons, King's College

Vladimir Pashkevich, St. Francis College

John Schibrowsky, University of Nevada - Las Vegas

April Schofield, Metropolitan State University of Denver

Tony Stovall, Indiana University – Indianapolis

Luz Suplico Jeong, De La Salle University

Qin Sun, California State University, Northridge

Thomas Tanner, Bloomsburg University

Sven Tuzovic, QUT Business School, University in Brisbane, Australia

Gema Vinuales, San Jose State University

Competitive Papers

Self-expansion in Marketing Education: Using the Know Me Activity to Foster Connection and Perseverance

2021 MEA Conference Best Competitive Paper Award Winner

Holly Syrdal, Texas State University

Brian A Vander Schee, Indiana University, Kelley School of Business – Indianapolis

Rebecca VanMeter, Ball State University

Parker Woodroof, University of Central Arkansas

Primary Contact Email: vandersb@iu.edu

Abstract:
The Know Me Activity (KMA) is implemented at the beginning of the semester. The impetus of this exercise is connection between students and the instructor through self-expansion. Self-expansion theory is grounded in personal relationships whereby individuals are motivated for personal growth and identify with others to gain access to their resources. In the context of marketing education, self-expansion stems from enhancing student self-awareness for personal growth as well as perceived relatedness and courage of the instructor to encourage access to expertise. The Know Me Activity (KMA) was conducted at three universities and assessed to determine its usefulness as a self-expansion exercise. Survey results indicated that students found the activity contained self-expansion characteristics, was effective, and recommended it for future use. The results of the pre- and post-test analyses also demonstrated an increase in student self-awareness, perceived instructor relatedness, and perceived instructor vulnerability. Self-expansion activities enhance relationships by design and participating in them can lead to increased student effort and persistence. Marketing educators can, therefore, have confidence in utilizing the KMA as a means for mitigating social isolation and encouraging perseverance.

References Available Upon Request

Marketing Education for an AI Driven World: Future-Proofing our Graduates

2021 MEA Conference Runner-Up Competitive Paper Award Winner

Gary Karns, Seattle Pacific University

Andy Chen, Seattle Pacific University

Vicki Eveland, Seattle Pacific University

Primary Contact Email: gkarns@spu.edu

Abstract:

Purpose of the Study:
The Fourth Industrial Revolution, AI, is underway and will produce sweeping changes to our way of life. The practice of marketing is and will continue changing as this unfolds, requiring marketing educators to change their courses and curricula so that graduates are readied for the new era's job requirements. Marketing educators must prepare (i.e., future-proof) students for this brave new world's effects on marketing work and the educational requirements it poses.

Method/Design and Sample:
This is a conceptual paper identifying AI-related shifts in marketing practice, jobs, and job requirements. It envisions possible avenues for re-shaping marketing education in response at the class session, new course, and curricular levels.

Results:
AI is expected to enable real-time contextualized customer insight generation and analytics, including text mining, at the individual and large group levels; deep customization/personalization; reimagining of STP (i.e., Segmentation, Targeting, and Positioning) with micro-targeting and tailored differentiation of value propositions; connected/smart products/platforms, services, and customer experiences including the integration of augmented and virtual reality; dynamic, predictive pricing; personalized/contextualized and automated promotion; campaign management and CRM automation; and, distribution as a service with autonomous logistics, fulfillment, and delivery.

Readying our students means that we must rearticulate our learning objectives to include: subject-matter knowledge in marketing; AI-relevant technical knowledge and skills in coding and pattern identification; predictive analytics and ML; applications of AI in marketing; and cross-functional connections with computer science, engineering, and statistics. We must develop students' higher-level problem-solving, curiosity and creativity skills; and, soft skills (i.e., EQ, communication, interpersonal, self-management, empathy, ethics, etc.).

Reimagining the curriculum certainly means, at the very least, adding a class session in one or several marketing courses in the short run. At the course-level, we could add an AI & Marketing course to the major. A more encompassing, deeper program-level commitment would be offering a marketing major with an AI minor, or vice versa. Ultimately, we may see interdisciplinary program variants that infuse AI throughout the curriculum.

Value to Marketing Education:
The paper identifies ways that AI is changing the practice of marketing and job requirements. It further identifies necessary changes to our courses and curricula so that graduates are readied for the new era. The full paper maps out learning goals, topics, assignments, and learning resources for an AI & Marketing class session to be added to a Marketing Management course for example. It also provides a design for an entire AI & Marketing introductory course and an entire Marketing with an AI minor curriculum (and vice-versa).

Keywords:
Artificial Intelligence; Future Proofing; Marketing Education; Job Requirements; Marketing Curriculum

An Item Analysis of a Retailing Management Multiple-Choice Question Bank

John Dickinson, University of Windsor

Primary Contact Email: MExperiences@bell.net

Abstract:
This study assesses three fundamental properties–difficulty, discrimination, distractors–of multiple-choice questions accompanying a long-standing retailing management textbook, Levy, Weitz, and Grewal (2019), Tenth Edition. A random sample of 479 of the bank's 1157 questions were analyzed. For difficulty, there is a preponderance of easy questions, with the mean percent correct being 79.48. 78.08 percent of the questions were answered correctly by more than 70 percent of the students. For discrimination, the mean point-biserial correlation is 0.3936 with 67.18 percent of the questions having correlations less than or equal to 0.50 and another 4.19 percent having negative correlations. For distractors, the dispersion of incorrect answers across the distractor options is just over half way (*Intuit* =0.5137) to the ideal uniform distribution. 37.06 percent of the total distractors attracted no answers. Implications are for text adopters (present and future), question developers, and toward the establishment of norms for published banks.

A Netnographic Project with a Transformative Consumer Research Lens: Teaching Qualitative Marketing Research in a Virtual Context

H. Rika Houston, California State University, Los Angeles

Shikha Upadhyaya, California State University, Los Angeles

Primary Contact Email: hhousto@calstatela.edu

Purpose of the Study:
For organizations in the 21ˢᵗ century, social media helps to build communities, share values and ideals, and connect with their respective consumer tribes in organic and never-imagined ways. Mining the organic and valuable data that emerges from social media sites, therefore, becomes an important endeavor for organizations seeking to compete and evolve successfully. While emerging research is beginning to provide better examples of how netnography can be applied in different organizational contexts, applied research that focuses specifically upon classroom pedagogy still remains scarce. In this paper, the authors describe a virtual, multi-step course learning module that introduces students to the netnographic research method through a transformative consumer research lens. Through the lens of transformative consumer research (TCR), they also demonstrate TCR's relevance to qualitative marketing research courses in addition to its relevance to consumer behavior courses as has been noted in past studies.

Method/Design and Sample:
The authors present and walk through a multi-stage applied learning exercise that introduces students to the netnographic research method through a transformative consumer research lens. The exercise was applied to multiple sections of an undergraduate qualitative marketing research class at a large public university.

Results:
Conducting this qualitative marketing research course in a completely virtual environment was challenging, but this course learning module on netnography was ideal for this setting because the method itself is native to this context. That being said, the learning module is intentionally designed with multiple steps that "walk" students through a cumulative learning process. This multi-step approach is crucial for developing the understanding, application, and critical thinking required not only for netnographic analysis, but also for the transformative consumer research perspective that is embedded within the project.

Value to Marketing Education:
While it is critical for instructors to remain intensively involved with the students and to identify those students who are struggling with the material in real time, the results are impressive. Ultimately, by the time students have completed all five of the steps in this course learning module, their exposure to a transformative consumer research perspective has raised their awareness of not only some of the key social issues of our time, but also broadened their understanding of how netnography can better connect organizations to their consumers while also improving their lives and society overall.

Keywords: netnography, transformative consumer research, qualitative marketing research, active learning

A virtual immersion into a rural periodic market: the bop market perspective

Satyam, O.P. Jindal Global University, Sonipat

Rajesh Aithal, Indian Institute of Management Lucknow

Purpose of the Study:
The article discusses an innovative virtual market immersion exercise in a course on the base-of-the-pyramid (BOP) and rural markets. Educators have been using experiential learning exercises to educate and engage with students in a better way as compared with the traditional methods (Chapman, Schetzsle, &Wahler, 2016). There has been an increase in pedagogical innovations with the adoption of experiential learning tools such simulations, role-plays, etc. However, there are limited studies on the short-term field-based learning in marketing courses despite the prevalence of richness and accessibility of marketplace settings (Schaller, 2020).

An elective course 'BOP & Rural Markets' is being offered to the management students for the last few years. There is an acute shortage of resources on low-income marketplaces, and one of the best ways to learn more is by experiencing the marketplace itself and generate bottom-up insights. Hence, we have been conducting a novel short-term market-immersion exercise to a rural periodic market for the last three years. The market-immersion exercise was not possible in the current unprecedented times of COVID-19. Hence, we designed a virtual-immersion (VI) exercise for the rural periodic market.

Method/Design and Sample:
A multi-step, active learning virtual immersion exercise was developed instead of the short market-immersion exercise. The virtual immersion exercise consists of three steps: 1) Short lecture on rural periodic marketplace; 2) Small group active learning exercise; 3) Group presentations and interactive large-group discussion. To make the learning experience more incremental, the exercise was designed as a multi-step process. The class was divided into 12 groups of 6 students each, and then a total of 30 photographs of the rural periodic market was shared with the participants. Groups were required to do a visual analysis, identify themes, and share their understanding with the class. The end result was that the participants had an opportunity to experience the context albeit virtually, but they still got to know the context of the market, understand the various stakeholders, including the seller, buyer, and the by-standers, and the discussion among the group members also helped them appreciate the context.

Results:
As the virtual immersion exercise was introduced for the first time, students were asked to subjectively evaluate the same. We have received 65 filled responses out of 73 students. Most students reported their experience very good, and keywords which regularly appeared were 'Interesting', 'good', insightful', 'engaging', and 'exciting'. One student stated, "It was the best way to learn as we can't venture outside in current times." According to students' feedback, they seem to be more sensitive towards the BOP population following their first-hand experience of the periodic marketplace.

Value to Marketing Education:
Although this immersion experience was specifically designed for the "BOP & Rural Markets" course, it can be applied across different courses, such as retail management and consumer behavior, etc., where nuances of a context need to be explained for better learning outcomes. Virtual-immersion exercises are more relevant for courses where students are not familiar with the context and field-visit is not feasible due resource constraints and practical challenges. Some key lessons for marketing educators have been brought out along with challenges and recommendations for conducting a similar exercise in the future.

Keywords: virtual-immersion, experiential learning, bop market, rural, India

Assessing Student Learning through the Use of a Fable and Analogical Transfer: A Study of the Bridging of Constructs

Stuart Van Auken, Florida Gulf Coast University

Ludmilla Wells, LgWells Marketing Consultancy

Primary Contact Email: Svanauke@fgcu.edu

The study addresses students' ability to use an Aesop fable - The Fox and the Goat - and analogical transfer to make connections between the consumer decision process and the advertising message and media components of the communication process. It demonstrates the fable's efficacy with its "Look before you leap" moral by activating the transfer from one construct to another through analogical reasoning. Comparing student responses with and without the fable's presence signify student learning. The study also demonstrates the prowess of search prompts as connectors and the contribution of the fable with these connectors. Additional study is suggested.

A Systematic Review of Scholarship on Learning with E-Texts: Students' Characteristics, Learning Approaches, and Learning Outcomes Introduction

Sanga Song, Indiana University East

LaCalvince (Cal) Simpson, Indiana University East

Primary Contact Email: ss103@iu.edu

Abstract:
We aim to systematically review the growing body of research in this area by employing the 3P model as our framework to analyze the learning process of students who use e-texts in higher education. We performed a search using the PsycINFO, ERIC, and Academic Search Complete databases using a combination of terms related to e-texts, academic outcomes, and higher education. Among 176 results, we selected a total of 18 studies on e-texts related to the 3P factors for the review. Enhanced learning performance and satisfaction when using e-texts result from the interrelationship between students' characteristics and their different learning approaches during the learning process. Our review shows that when it comes to learning efficiency, students' individual characteristics and approaches are more important than the textbook format. This study provides insights for faculty and publishers on improving students' learning experiences when using e-texts.

Covid and Client-based Projects- Using Course Concepts to Solve Pandemic Problems

Kristen Schiele, California State Polytechnic University, Pomona

Primary Contact Email: krschiele@cpp.edu

Abstract
In March 2020, the Covid-19 pandemic caused major disruptions in higher education. A rapid move to distance learning caused faculty to adapt and try to maintain academic continuity in online settings. Most universities have remained online this year, which has required faculty to rethink how to engage students in meaningful learning experiences. In this paper, we discuss client-based projects as an example of virtual "hands-on" experiences. For this project, student teams worked with a restaurant who suffered due to quarantine restrictions on in-person dining in California. Using course content to solve pandemic problems allowed students to think critically about strategies to overcome real obstacles and prepare them for job market after graduation. The future landscape of education remains uncertain, as we move into the "next normal" it is important for faculty to demonstrate relevancy and impact in the classroom in order to provide quality education for our students.

Did I select the right programme? What creates and what heals cognitive dissonance of first year marketing students.

Andreas Zehetner, University of Applied Sciences Upper Austria

Primary Contact Email: andreas.zehetner@fh-ooe.at

Purpose of the Study:
This study builds on cognitive dissonance (CD) theory and informs about causes of CD and reduction strategies of first-year marketing students. Since Festinger's (1957) seminal book '*a theory of cognitive dissonance*', the construct of cognitive dissonance is known to the scientific community. However, few studies have yet comprehensively researched the causes of cognitive dissonances as well as possible remedies to reduce those from a student perspective. The retention of students is an important topic for marketing educators. Experiencing mental discomfort with the decision made can lead to dissatisfaction, evaluating alternatives, drop-out and negative word-of-mouth (Wangenheim 2005). The purpose of this study is to better understand what creates cognitive dissonance among freshly enrolled students and what a university or a business studies programme can do to reduce first-year marketing students' cognitive dissonance.

Methods:
29 first-year graduate marketing students were asked about their feelings of discomfort with their decision in a self-reflection essay (Klimova 2014). Also, they could provide suggestions of how

to reduce their mental discomfort. Qualitative Research was used, and data was analysed by applying thematic content analysis (TCA) (Braun and Clarke 2006; Anderson 2007). Data was processed with MAXQDA (2020).

Results:

The findings show that expectation-delivery issues, lack of communication and feedback, and regret because of missing or misleading prior knowledge were the main causes of CD. To reduce CD, respondents suggested a realistic relationship of promise and delivery, honest pre-purchase information, improved feedback systems, better relationships of new and existing customers, and objective criteria to compare competitive offerings. Persons who deliver the services should lower barriers, motivate, inform about expectations and be 'better connected' to the service customers.

Conclusions for Marketing Education:

The study provides value to marketing education on an organizational rather than on a content-related level. As the promise-delivery gap (Oliver et al. 1997; Bawa and Kansal 2008) was one of the main reasons of cognitive dissonances, marketing educators should clearly and honestly provide teaching contents and expected outcomes, as well as realistic workloads already in the recruiting phase. Secondly, the relationship of students and teachers was mentioned as a means to reduce cognitive dissonances (Gruber et al. 2012). Marketing educators should act "customer oriented" and try to understand and manage the worries of their first-year students and provide regular feedback to them (Mulliner and Tucker 2017). Thirdly, reinforcing students' decisions by providing testimonials, allowing contacts to graduates and sharing success stories helps students to find information that is consonant with their decision (Schewe 1973). Lastly, reducing hierarchical barriers between students, teachers, and programme administration allows students to better integrate in the programme, which makes possible alternatives less attractive.

Limitations:

The results are limited to a European sample as financial considerations in other locations (e.g. North America) or private schools would likely be very different/larger concerns for students. Also, the structure and nature of marketing education and related programmes is not standardized, hence generalization to other programmes requires some caution.

Keywords: Marketing education, cognitive dissonance, student dissatisfaction, student retention,

Publication bibliography

Anderson, Rosemarie (2007): Thematic content analysis (TCA). In *Descriptive presentation of qualitative data*, pp. 1–4.

Bawa, Anupam; Kansal, Purva (2008): Cognitive dissonance and the marketing of services: Some Issues. In *Journal of Services Research* 8 (2).

Braun, Virginia; Clarke, Victoria (2006): Using thematic analysis in psychology. In *Qualitative research in psychology* 3 (2), pp. 77–101.

Festinger, Leon (1957): A theory of cognitive dissonance: Stanford university press (2).

Gruber, Thorsten; Lowrie, Anthony; Brodowsky, Glen H.; Reppel, Alexander E.; Voss, Roediger; Chowdhury, Ilma Nur (2012): Investigating the Influence of Professor Characteristics on Student Satisfaction and Dissatisfaction: A Comparative Study. In *Journal of Marketing Education* 34 (2), pp. 165–178.

Klimova, Blanka Frydrychova (2014): Self-reflection in the course evaluation. In *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences* 141, pp. 119–123.

MAXQDA. Version 2020 (2020). Berlin, Germany: Verbi Software.

Mulliner, Emma; Tucker, Matthew (2017): Feedback on feedback practice: perceptions of students and academics. In *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education* 42 (2), pp. 266–288.

Oliver, Richard L.; Rust, Roland T.; Varki, Sajeev (1997): Customer delight: foundations, findings, and managerial insight. In *Journal of Retailing* 73 (3), p. 311.

Schewe, Charles D. (1973): Selected Social Psychologica Models for Analyzing Buyers. In *Journal of Marketing* 37 (3), pp. 31–39.

Wangenheim, Florian V. (2005): Postswitching negative word of mouth. In *Journal of Service Research* 8 (1), pp. 67–78.

Educating the Pandemic Marketing Leaders: A classroom activity to improve student leadership skills through experiential learning

Ron Conlin, Pepperdine University

Primary Contact Email: ronald.conlin@pepperdine.edu

Abstract

The technology boom is causing a rapid change in jobs and Marketing and Communication majors are particularly impacted by this dramatically changing employment landscape. Some of the fastest growing jobs for these majors include social media manager, mobile app developer, SEO and SEM analyst, content marketer, bot developer and artificial intelligence worker. Some of the most in-demand jobs today did not exist ten years ago (Department of Labor, 2017). Because of this rapidly changing employment situation and continuous technological change, marketing and communication students must be prepared for jobs that do not yet exist.

Students must also be prepared to become leaders. In a study examining leadership skill requirements for sales and marketing jobs, the most important skills identified were "persuasion,

active listening, and critical thinking (Conlin, Fraizer, Nobles, 2019). The authors argue that these skills are critical regardless of rapid technological change. The emphasis here is on leadership skill rather than leadership traits (i.e., "He/she is a born leader") because skills can be developed and improved upon.

Exploring Zoom Teaching Effectiveness During Pandemic: The Student Perspective

Qin Sun, California State University, Northridge

Primary Contact Email: qin.sun@csun.edu

Extended Abstract

Purpose of the Study:
This study intends to evaluate the potential impact of Zoom synchronous teaching on student learning in the Covid-19 pandemic situation. This study extends the literature on marketing education by exploring student satisfaction as a subjective evaluation measure of teaching effectiveness in the pandemic remote learning environment with respect to several relevant factors in the literature such as self-efficacy, perceived challenge, perceived value and emotional engagement. The extant literature looked at the online education as an complementary alternative to higher education, while this study intends to investigate a different context of online education as students are forced to learn remotely online due to the pandemic and their perception of online learning especially the synchoronous online learning through Zoom might be different from that in the past. Therefore, it is worthwhile to investigate the learning value and challenges Zoom could bring to marketing education. Flow theory serves as the theoretical foundation of this study.

Method/Design and Sample:
An online survey was developed, and data was collected from seven undergraduate marketing classes in Spring, Summer, and Fall 2020 at a public university in the Southwestern region of the United States. A total of 209 valid responses were received. The hypothesized relationships were tested using a multiple regression in SPSS.

Results: As the sudden transition to online teaching and learning causes various emotional responses among students, students experienced more challenges, and their perception of learning value was severely lowered, which led to lower satisfaction among students. At the same time, Zoom teaching effectiveness varies with student self-efficacy and emotional engagement. The more experienced the students were with Zoom meetings, the more satisfied they were with the Zoom teaching, while the more emotionally engaged students showed higher

satisfaction with Zoom classes.

Value to Marketing Education:
This study shows the student evaluation of Zoom as an online teaching platform, which offers different insights from the existing studies on F2F classes and online learning. In particular, emotional engagement contributes positively to satisfaction with the Zoom class, which helps bridge a literature gap to expand the understanding of emotional engagement in virtual online learning. When students feel more emotional support in the virtual learning environment, they are more willing to participate in the Zoom activities and their emotional connection with the class helps boost their overall satisfaction with the Zoom class. Based on class observations, when the students received instructor empathy during their virtual learning, they were more emotionally motivated and cognitively focused. This is consistent with the extant literature to encourage the direct emotional expression among students to stimulate better learning experience especially in the remote online learning environment under pandemic.

Keywords: Zoom synchronous teaching, Student satisfaction, Perceived value, Perceived challenge, Self efficacy, Emotional engagement

The Impact of Live Cases on Student Skill Development in Marketing Courses

Shannon Cummins, University of Nebraska-Omaha

Jeff S. Johnson, University of Missouri-Kansas City

Primary Contact Email: scummins@unomaha.edu

Abstract:
Live cases (also known as client-based projects) are projects wherein students interface directly with an outside organization to solve real business problems as part of coursework. Service learning or community-based learning are also synonymous with live case pedagogy. Each refers to a didactic teaching method that integrates academic learning and reflection with community partner engagement. Ideally, in these pedagogies, the partnership is reciprocal. Students benefit from real-world learning and networking and the partner organization garners insights and work-product. Marketing scholars are prolific in terms of integrating experiential and live case methodologies into the classroom. Many of these scholars have detailed their own experiences using live cases to bolster learning and improve real-world applicability. Yet, there remains no large-scale examination across courses, universities, or instructors of the learning benefits to students of implementing live case pedagogy. This paper addresses this gap by surveying a large and diverse international sample of marketing faculty that utilize live cases to understand the perceived benefits of live case education on development of a range of student

skills. Our sample allows us to empirically assess student skill development and test predictors of skill development to provide quantifiable insight into this important pedagogical technique.

References Available Upon Request

Independent Study: Understanding the Pharmaceutical Industry

Julie B Nelsen, St. Catherine University

Erika Wallace, St. Catherine University

Primary Contact Email: jbnelsen@stkate.edu

Abstract: An undergraduate Healthcare Sales student wanted to understand the pharmaceutical (pharma) industry better to determine if the industry was a good fit. She approached her professor to gain support for an independent study to understand better the history and challenges of selling in the pharma industry. Once completed, the pair recognized this information's value and collaborated in editing the document to share these findings to provide this entry-level salesperson's guide to understanding the pharma industry. Six semi-structured interviews of pharma professionals showed three primary areas of knowledge and ethics required of the entry-level pharma industry salesperson. These suggestions are for the salesperson to 1) focus on patient safety, 2) establish trust-based relationships, and 3) comply with industry guidelines. The study concludes with an overview of three prominent industry guidelines: the PhRMA Code, the Sunshine Act, and the Fair Balance practices.

Keywords: Pharmaceutical Industry, Entry-level Sales Representative, Healthcare Sales, Pharmaceutical Sales, Qualitative Research, Unstructured Interviews, Undergraduate Collaborative Research

Introduction

A senior undergraduate student pursuing a Healthcare Sales major recognized a drop in University sales program graduates seeking pharmaceutical (pharma) sales roles. Curious about the trend and the industry's guidelines and regulations, the student approached her professor to gain support for an independent study to understand better the history and challenges of selling in the pharma industry. Once completed, the pair recognized this information's value and decided to collaborate to edit the document to share these findings at a national academic marketing conference.

Mention the term "pharma" outside of the industry, and concerns like drug prices, prescription drug misuse, the potential dangers of vaccines, or corporate greediness come to mind (Parrish, 2019). With the power to save so many lives, it is crucial that the pharma industry has the publics best interest in mind and gain public trust. However, it is more complicated than

that. The pharma industry represents one of the few sectors where direct promotional marketing, often referred to as the sales process, operates under multiple guidelines.

Tarnished Pharmaceutical Industry Reputation. Despite the positive intentions of most pharma companies, a few firms' actions produce mistrust, and the entire industry's image suffers. The industry's damaged reputation closely ties to perceived firm failures (Martinez, Breslauer, & Gosk, 2019; Lambert, 2019) and reported financial gouging (Smith, 2016; Meller & Hauwa, 2019). In Gallup's 2019 ranking of industries, McCarty (2019) found that the pharma industry ranks as the most poorly viewed industry by Americans'; it ranked last on a list of 25 sectors. The study found that Americans are more than twice as likely to negatively rate the pharma industry (58%) versus positively (27%). The industry's 2019 rating marked the pharma industry's lowest since the study began in 2001 (Akhtar, 2019).

Many blame all pharma industry companies for behaving unethically, thus tainting the industry and its employees. One study benchmarked the sentiment of electronic newspaper media coverage between 2014 and 2016 to investigate the potential relationship of media to the public perception of the pharma industry and found that overall, the press represented pharma companies similarly across newspapers (Pampulevski et al., 2020). Most articles assessed were deemed neutral. However, the analysis of all nonneutral articles found that multiple topics were evaluated as negative, except for financial or profit related articles. (Pampulevski et al., 2020).

It is easy to dismiss the industry as monsters because of the stigma. Yet, the sector still retains an appeal. Pharmaceuticals save lives. A career in pharma sales offers one of the fastest-growing opportunities, with a 300% growth rate in the last decade and a relatively high national average salary (G.I. Jobs, 2020). The industry offers growth, variety, and security (Martin, 2017). Why should recent graduates think twice about the pharma sales industry? Pharmaceutical compliance pressures have never been higher, but is it that complicated? This study explores what an entry-level pharma sales representative should know about the pharma sales process before pursuing a career in the industry.

Literature Review

Brief Pharmaceutical Industry History. The pharma industry traces back to humankind's beginning and the need to heal and soothe (Bender, 1965). In the past, medical practitioners attempted what is now considered absurd. For example, bloodletting, which required cutting a sick person's blood vessels open to bleed out (Fox, n.d.). Over time, education and treatment improved, and now doctors cannot legally or ethically perform medical procedures like bloodletting anymore.

America's first pharmacy opened in 1752 in Philadelphia (Bender, 1965). The pharmacy's opening led to many other opportunities for stores dedicated entirely to medications and treatments for illnesses. In 1849, Pfizer company's founding represented the next major event for the pharma industry; its immigrant founders expanded their company during the Civil War because of the demand for painkillers and antiseptics (Walsh, 2010). Pfizer's expansion opened many doors for pharmacies across the United States with significant pharma breakthroughs in the 1900s with the discoveries of insulin and penicillin (Walsh, 2010). Things looked up for the industry as it flourished with significant findings.

Then, in 1961, the industry faced significant drawbacks. Thalidomide, a medication initially created as a sedative but often used to treat common conditions such as nausea in

pregnancy and flu-like symptoms, linked to significant congenital disabilities when pregnant women ingested the drug; it took more than five years to make the connection (Science Museum, 2019). The Thalidomide scandal created new guidelines for prescription drugs and the need for testing to show their same side-effects and efficacy (Walsh, 2010).

Before the Thalidomide scandal, drug companies faced few regulations when putting new medications on the market (Ellis, 2016). After the scandal, no drugs for human use could earn approval based only on animal testing. Governments worldwide began to adapt to this new law, and drug companies underwent more intense testing when putting new medications on the market (Science Museum, 2019). Although many adverse outcomes have occurred in the pharma industry due to the Thalidomide scandal, much good came from it, and medications now face more strict regulations to be approved for human use.

Pharmaceutical Industry Sales and Marketing. Life-saving drugs emerged over the centuries; the development of new medications also came with new rules and regulations on marketing and selling these drugs (Tompkins, 2018). Today, pharma sales representatives hold more of an educator role in working with their healthcare providers. They serve their providers as product experts to ask questions and learn about available medications (Tompkins, 2018).

Nir Kossovsky (2019) found six unique reputational factors that elevate or aggravate a pharma company's name: ethics, innovation, safety, sustainability, quality, and security. If a company, or the collective industry, does not live up to expectations, its reputation suffers. This perceived mismatch between expectations and actions resulted in established formal guidelines for the pharma industry. In the last two decades, the pharma industry and regulators introduced new codes, rules, regulations, and laws to address unethical behaviors and protect patient rights (Kossovsky, 2019).

Study Significance. While a mainstream online media search shows articles outlining what an entry-level pharma salesperson needs to know, the researchers found no academic research documenting this information. Fugh-Berman and Ahari (2007) outlined the physician-controlled process of consumer drug access. These researchers also report the recruiting of physician "thought leaders" to become informal or formal drug spokespeople, which ultimately improves the sales representative and provider relationship and increases market share. Other research focused on the need for pharma sales representative regulation (Case, 2020) or the factors that influence increased prescriptions such as conferences, seminars, gifts, and medicines (Rathod & Palkar, 2018). Nowhere did the researchers find any studies to support the entry-level pharma professional. This paper addresses that literature gap.

Method

To better understand the pharma industry, the researchers used qualitative unstructured interviews with pharma industry representatives to learn about the impact of pharma guidelines on the sales process. An interview consent form was created (See Appendix A) and signed by interviewees prior to the interviews. The research goal was to answer the question: What should an entry-level sales representative know about pharma sales and marketing guidelines before joining the industry? The researcher interviewed six current industry employees to answer this research query and to understand their experience with industry codes, rules, regulations, and

laws. This is what qualitative researchers refer to as a purposive or expert sample to represent the pharma industry (Lavrakas, 2008)

These unstructured interviews took place via phone calls, video calls, or questionnaire completion to understand the pharma industry. Unstructured interviewing

differs from traditional structured interviewing in two important ways. First, although the researcher established initial guiding questions (See Appendix B), no formal structured instrument or protocol was required. Secondly, with unstructured interviews, the interviewer may move the conversation in any direction of interest that evolves through the interview process (Trochim, n.d.). The researchers selected the unstructured interviewing method because it allowed the interviewees to share their insights on the industry and how it personally altered their roles. It also allowed flexibility to follow tangents when topics of interest emerged. Following the interviews, analysis of the interview transcripts took place to determine what the prevailing answers were to what an entry-level sales representative should know about pharma sales and marketing before joining the industry.

Findings

Interviews took place with the pharma industry representatives in March 2020. The interviewees' roles included pharmacy technicians, directors of sales, and marketing managers. Three common themes emerged regarding what an entry-level sales representative should know about pharma sales and marketing before joining the industry. These three themes are that pharma representatives should 1) retain an emphasis on patient safety in all interactions, 2) establish a trust-based relationship with clients to achieve patient safety, and 3) become well-versed in the codes, rules, regulations, and laws. The researchers explore those themes further in this section.

Focus on Patient Safety. The pharma industry is strictly regulated because patient safety needs to be considered as a top priority. One of the interviewees states, "We are driven to serve patients. Regulation requires that we balance benefit and risk messaging. It can be challenging; however, FDA regulation protects patients" (Subject 3, personal communication, March 8, 2020). The dedication to serving patients was evident throughout the interviews. Interviewees referred to how far the industry evolved, resulting in better patient safety. These changes made patient risks more transparent to review and determine willingness to accept the associated medication risks. Another interviewee stated the necessity of these regulations because patients do not recognize the expense or risky of certain medications. "If the industry did not make these industry changes, pharma would be a different world, and things could still be hidden from patients" (Subject 4, personal communication, March 12, 2020).

Establish Trust-based Relationships. The interviewees believe pharma sales representatives should build relationships with their healthcare providers to educate and guide providers with medication information. To be a successful, sales representative relationships with customers' matter. One interviewee stated, "building relationships with healthcare providers is essential in educating and earning trust as a representative" (Subject 4, personal communication, March 12, 2020). Healthcare providers are incredibly busy with patients and administrative tasks, so their limited time with representatives needs to be worthwhile and beneficial to their practice, or it could make or break the ongoing relationship. Another interviewee stated that being genuine and believing in your product makes all of the difference in provider relationships. If a representative does not believe in a product, why should the medical

provider? The interviewee continued to explain that "we are all people, and there is no reason to boast or overextend your product. If you, as a sales representative, can relate to them and show them the value you and the product bring, then there will be an ease for the healthcare professionals to trust you and listen to where you can add value and help them within their profession too." (Subject 2, personal communication, March 14, 2020).

Comply with Industry Guidelines. Pharmaceutical sales representatives should be well-versed in the codes, rules, regulations, and laws to ensure compliance and provide ethical information for healthcare professionals. The pharma industry introduced new codes, rules, regulations, and laws over the last two decades which dramatically changed the industry for sales representatives.

One interviewee stated that it was a hard transition for them and that "going from few standards to being wholly buttoned-up took a great effort" (Subject 3, personal communication, March 8, 2020). These new standards also prompted doctors to avoid representatives due to the reporting required when doing so. Sales representatives lost access to providers after the Sunshine Act. Although all interviewees mentioned these new guidelines impacted their careers, each deemed it essential for their firms to put the patient first. These guidelines also gave smaller pharma companies a chance in the playing field. This prevented larger companies like Pfizer or Bayer from using their money to overpower the industries' small players.

If a sales representative is not well versed in the pharma sales and marketing guidelines, it could destroy their career. It is not uncommon to hear of salespeople who broke the law in provider relationships. These individuals can be fined, jailed, and lose their job, depending on the circumstances (PhRMA, 2019). It is essential for new representatives to fully understand the codes, rules and regulations, and laws that apply to them in their careers.

Future pharma representatives need to know how the industry evolved. Many patient-guidelines were designed to give consumers the safety and reassurance they need to lead healthy lives emerged. Many pharma companies follow the standards set in place to stay compliant, to educate healthcare professionals on the life-saving medications that are new to the market. Without pharma sales representatives, many healthcare providers would be unaware of new medicines, and they might neglect their patients by not educating themselves.

Discussion and Future Research

The three themes found in interviews with pharma professionals indicated that entry-level pharma salespeople need to: focus on patients, establishing trusting relationships between healthcare professionals, and understand the pharma sales guidelines. Throughout the research, these were evident themes amongst all interviewees. Here the researchers discuss the importance of these themes to the industry and highlights three pharma sales guidelines important to a pharmceutical sales representative.

Theme One: Focus on the Patient

Patwardhan (2016) clarifies that physicians feel overwhelmed by the amount of information presented to them. It is hard to distinguish scientific fact from a biased opinion. That is why sales representatives need to have a patient-focused approach as they enter the healthcare providers' space and educate them on their product (Patwardhan, 2016). As sales representatives,

these individuals influence many people's lives, and if intentions are not patient-focused, more harm than good can result.

Theme Two: Establish Trust Based-Relationships

One interviewee emphasized the importance of eliminating unnecessary information that leads to unclear perceptions (Subject 6, personal communication, March 6, 2020). A pharma representative must make connections and build trust with providers because time is limited, and efficiency is required. As another interviewee noted, "you should try and relate to them and see things from their perspective. It will make all of the difference" (Subject 4, personal communication, March 12, 2020). Additional comments include that pharma salespeople need to "eliminate obstacles to build relationships" and "keep it short and sweet" (Subject 1, personal communication, March 4, 2020). To be successful in today's industry, one interviewee noted pharma sales representatives "need to be honest, be real, be prepared with balanced information, be prepared with literature, and know who the key opinion leaders are" (Subject 2, personal communication, March 14, 2020).

Theme Three: Pharmaceutical Sales Guidelines.

The interviewees stressed that the PhRMA Code of 2002, the Sunshine Act of 2010, and Fair Balance practices correspond to government and industry standards to protect patient health and safety. These directives steer companies and their employees to create an ethically rooted sales operation. The researchers discovered how these standards provide ethical criteria for sales representatives to interact with healthcare providers.

PhRMA Code. The PhRMA Code is a voluntary code created in 2009 to ensure that pharma representatives ethically sell to healthcare providers, and patient care is always of the highest priority (PhRMa, 2019). The relationships between healthcare professionals and sales representatives need to inform, educate, support, and obtain feedback and advice from healthcare professionals (PhRMA, 2008).

The PhRMA Code includes three major pharma sales representative directives around providing meals, prohibiting entertainment, and offering pharma company support with continuing medical education. If a sales representative provides healthcare professionals with a meal, there must be documented scientific value and clinical information surrounding the medication involved with the meal. The PhRMA Code prohibits entertainment and recreation provided to healthcare providers from sales representatives. Pharmaceutical companies can no longer entertain their clients as tickets to sporting events or vacations are against the rules since these activities did not benefit patient care (Baltz, n.d.). Pharmaceutical companies may still provide continuing medical education for providers financially to support learning and improve patient care (PhRMA, 2008). Although this code is voluntary, clear ethical guidelines lead sales representatives and their firms to keep interactions patient centered.

Sunshine Act. The Sunshine Act, implemented by Congress in 2010, made the interactions between medical salespeople and health care providers more transparent by requiring the documentation of "transfers of value" between salespeople in both medical devices and pharma to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (Novartis, 2017). Sullivan (2018) states that collaboration amongst healthcare professionals and manufacturers in the medical industry benefits everyone because innovation happens in designing and delivering new life-saving medications and devices. He also noted that this could also lead to conflicts of interest

that skew research, education, and providers' decision-making if monetary value is involved (Sullivan, 2018). While financial ties do not always lead to inappropriate behaviors, transparency measures provide insights into healthcare professionals and medical sales representatives' relationships. Company disclosures, to show transparency, include the provider name, business address, National Provider Identifier number and specialty, date of payment, the association of drug, device, biological, or medical supply, and the form of revenue and nature of the fees (Sullivan, 2018).

The Sunshine Act created a rigorous compliance process for medical sales companies to protect individuals who receive their products. These measures give individuals peace of mind that medical manufacturing companies' incentives do not skew the treatment received. Providers learn, following the guidelines, about new drugs and devices on the market.

Fair Balance. The FDA also requires pharma companies and sales representatives to provide "Fair Balance" to providers and consumers (FDA, 2020). Fair Balance includes content on a drug's most significant risks, and those risks must be shared including content and presentation of its benefits (FDA, n.d.). Rollins (2016) shares that "Fair Balance" needs to be presented in any medical promotional item, even a 140-character tweet on Twitter. The FDA researched the pharma industry people's responses to medical sales advertising and found the need for guidelines to understand how to exist in multiple environments without consequences (Rollins, 2016).

Currently, the countries of New Zealand and the United States are the only participants in the requirements of Fair Balance (Rollins, 2016). The FDA provides as many precautions as possible for pharma companies. Although many individuals within the industry find this rule a little bit daunting, it is for society's greater good (Rollins, 2016). People should be aware of all implications of a medication or device before moving forward with a treatment method. Fair Balance ensures people receive both good and bad information on a treatment method.

Future Research

There is opportunity for future research on this topic. Although the Sunshine Act, PhRMA Code, and "Fair Balance" efforts guide people in the right direction, some companies and their sales representatives still act unethically. Between 2% and 12% of physicians, according to Medicate, even receive some form of payment for choosing a specific pharma solution (Patwardhan, 2016). Patwardhan (2016) also suggests it is impossible to get a total grasp of the pharma industry. Continued efforts are still needed to understand the industry and point people in an ethical direction. The required social distancing due to COVID-19 made remote support the new normal for pharma sales; its impact on the industry would also be valuable to research.

Conclusions

In answer to the research question: "What should an entry-level sales representative know about pharma sales and marketing guidelines before joining the industry?", the industry representatives interviewed indicated that the entry-level pharma salesperson needs to: 1) focus on patient safety, 2) establish trust-based relationships, and 3) comply with industry guidelines. Knowledge of these three themes is essential to entry-level sales representatives because there are many misperceptions of the pharma sales industry, especially with entry-level employees.

The researchers hope that this information serves as a guide for entry-level employees contemplating a career in the pharma industry.

The PhRMA Code, Sunshine Act, and "Fair Balance" practices are all newer implementations to the pharma world designed to promote transparent and ethical relationships between healthcare professionals and pharma companies. Without the industry's evolution to protect patients, skewed treatment methods could exist solely based on providers' incentives (Patwardhan, 2016). These new laws, codes, and regulations benefit patients worldwide and ensure they receive treatment based on their exact needs.

Abstract available upon request.

References

Akhtar, A. (2019, September 7). Big pharmacy, government are America's top hated industries. *Business Insider.* https://www.businessinsider.com/big-pharmacy-government-are-americas-top-hated-industries-2019-9

Baltz, M. (n.d.). The new PhRMA Code and the potential benefits of compliance. *Butler Snow* http://www.butlersnow.com/wp-content/uploads/pdfs/attorney_publications/the-new-pharma-code-and-the-potential-benefits-of-compliance.pdf

Bender, G. (1966). *Great moments in medicine a history of medicine in pictures.* Detroit, MI. Northwood Institute Press.

Case, R. (2020). Professional ethics, professionalization, and regulation of pharmaceutical sales. *Integrity, Transparency and Corruption in Healthcare & Research on Health, 1*, 105.

FDA. (n.d.). Drug advertising: A glossary of terms. Fair balance definition. https://www.fda.gov/drugs/prescription-drug-advertising/drug-advertising-glossary-terms#F

Fox, P. (n.d.) *Weird and downright ridiculous medicines that were once completely acceptable in society*. https://boredomtherapy.com/weird-cures-in-history/

Fugh-Berman, A & Ahari, S.. (2007) Following the script: How Drug reps make friends and influence doctors. *PLoS Medicine 4*(4): e150. https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pmed.0040150

G.I. Jobs. (2020, December). Is pharmaceutical sales a good career path. https://www.gijobs.com/is-pharmaceutical-sales-a-good-career-path/

Ellis, L. (2016, July 14). Snapshots of the American pharmaceutical industry. *Harvard School of Public Health.* https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/ecpe/snapshot-of-the-american-pharmaceutical- industry/

Kossovsky, N. (2019, February 18). What the Purdue pharma case teaches us about reputational tornadoes. *Pharma Exec.* https://www.pharmexec.com/view/what-purdue-pharma-case-teaches-us-about-reputational-tornadoes

Lambert, J. (2019, May 12). 'Bottle Of Lies' exposes the dark side of the generic-drug boom. *NPR.* https://www.npr.org/sections/health-shots/2019/05/12/722216512/bottle-of-lies-exposes-the-   dark-side-of-the-generic-drug-boom

Lavrakas, P. (2008). *Encyclopedia of survey research methods (Vols. 1-0).* Sage Publications. doi: 10.4135/9781412963947

Martin, R. (2017, October 30). Why work in the pharmaceutical industry? *Hyperec.* http://news.hyperec.com/post/why-work-in-the-pharmaceutical-industry

Martinez, D., Breslauer, B. and Gosk, S. (2019, May 10). Tainted drugs: Ex-FDA inspector warns of   dangers in U.S. meds made in China, India. *NBC News.* https://www.nbcnews.com/health/health-news/tainted-drugs-ex-fda-inspector-warns-dangers-u-s-meds-n1002971

McCarthy, J. (2019, September 3). Big pharma sinks to the bottom of U.S. industry rankings. *Gallup.*   https://news.gallup.com/poll/266060/big-pharma-sinks-bottom-industry-rankings.aspx

Meller, A. & Hauwa Ahmed, H. (2019, August 30). How big pharma reaps profits while hurting everyday Americans. *Center for American Progress.* https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/democracy/reports/2019/08/30/473911/big-pharma-reaps-profits-hurting-everyday-americans/

Novartis (2017). *Physician payments - Sunshine Act.*https://www.pharma.us.novartis.com/corporate- responsibility/physician-payments-sunshine-act

Pampulevski, V., Giaquinto, J., Rametta, M., Toscani, M., Barone, J. & Nadal, J. (2020). Sentiment of   media coverage and reputation of the pharmaceutical industry. *Therapeutic   Innovation and   Regulatory Science, 54*, 220–225. https://doi.org/10.1007/s43441-019- 00048-8

Parrish, M. (2019, March 18). Pharma's damaged reputation: Can the industry fix its image problem? *Pharma Manufacturing.* https://www.pharmamanufacturing.com/articles/2019/pharmas-damaged-reputation/

Patwardhan, A. (2016). Physicians-pharmaceutical sales representatives' interactions and conflict of   interest: Challenges and solutions. *The Journal of Health Care Organization, Provision, and Financing, 53*, 1-5. Doi: 10.1177/0046958016667597

PhRMA. (2008, July). *Code on interactions with healthcare professionals*.

http://phrma-docs.phrma.org/sites/default/files/pdf/phrma_marketing_code_2008-1.pdf

PhRMA. (2019, October 2). *Code on interactions with healthcare professionals*. https://www.phrma.org/en/Codes-and-guidelines/Code-on-Interactionswith-Health-Care-Professionals

Rathod, M., & Palkar, A. (2018). Promotion of Pharmaceutical Products through Doctor. *Journal of   Management and Science, 63*. https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Rajesh_Tiwari17/publication/346400091_Skill_Hierarchy_Motivation_Model_for_University_Teachers_In_Indian_Higher_Education/links/5

fbfd6fda6fdcc6cc66b7706/Skill-Hierarchy-Motivation-Model-for-University-Teachers-In-   Indian-Higher-Education.pdf#page=66

Rollins, B. (2016, February 10). Still the great debate – "fair balance" in direct-to-consumer prescription drug advertising. *International Journal of Health Policy and Management, 5*(4),   287-288. Doi 10.15171/ijhpm.2016.17

Science Museum (2019, December 11). *Thalidomide.* https://www.sciencemuseum.org.uk/objects-and-   stories/medicine/thalidomide

Smith, G. (2016, July 6). Price gouging and the dangerous new breed of pharma companies. *Harvard Business Review.* https://hbr.org/2016/07/price-gouging-and-the-dangerous-new-   breed-of-pharma-companies

Sullivan, T. (2018, May 6). Physician payment sunshine act: CMS proposed rule overview. *Policy Med.* https://www.policymed.com/2011/12/physician-payment-sunshine-act-cms-proposed-rule- overview.html

Tompkins, J. (2018, October). The changing face of pharma sales. *Pharma Times.* http://www.pharmatimes.com/magazine/2018/october_2018/the_changing_face_of_pharma_sales

Trochim, W. (n.d.). *Qualitative Methods.* https://conjointly.com/kb/qualitative-   methods/

Walsh, R. (2010, October 1). *A history of the pharmaceutical industry*. *Pharma Phorum.*

https://pharmaphorum.com/articles/a_history_of_the_pharmaceutical_industry

Katie's Closet: An On-campus Experiential Learning Project

Julie B Nelsen, St. Catherine University

Mary Henderson, St. Catherine University

Pa Kou Yang, St. Catherine University

Primary Contact Email: jbnelsen@stkate.edu

Abstract

Two faculty and one undergraduate student embarked on an applied learning experience to determine the feasibility of starting a free professional clothing shop for University students called Katie's Closet. All aspects of conceptualizing and testing the Katie's Closet pop-up-store concept began from a feasibility study. With the support of faculty mentors, the undergraduate student researched, analyzed, and executed the project. The action research project started with informational interviews and a focus group for gathering qualitative data on the student population's needs. These findings led to more research to explore potential collaborative partnerships with other University departments. Competitive benchmarking also supported developing the entrepreneurial project concept and offered insightful information to help with the start-up. The data provided the foundational knowledge to create and market a Katie's Closet pop-up store on campus. This article is a collaborative effort written by both the undergraduate student intern and her faculty mentors.

Keywords: Applied Learning, Internship, Action Project, Applied Research, Collaborators, Experiential Learning, On-campus Marketing, Entrepreneurism, Undergraduate Student Research

Introduction

     At the beginning of the school year, an energetic, first-generation student approached the faculty teaching the Business Practicum (internship) course seeking ideas for an internship that would meet her needs as a double major in Business Administration and Marketing. As a full-time student, part-time worker, and full-time spouse and mom of two needed a flexible and challenging position. Another student at the University recently mentioned that she and other students needed affordable or free professional women's clothing for interviews and internships. This student experienced challenges in getting clothing from the local Dress for Success non-profit and wanted something more accessible to secure professional attire on a student budget.

     With this concept in hand and a student in need of an internship, the two Business department faculty quickly collaborated with the student to formulate a job description, internship deliverables, and success measurements. The potential Intern was motivated to support University students seeking internship or job experiences by having professional

clothing available for them free of charge. She was also inspired by her own challenges finding professional attire on a budget.

Literature Review

Because this project incorporates many areas of knowledge, the literature review scans a variety and combination of subjects, including career readiness, experiential learning, economic insecurities, retail options, and the free-store concept. It also reviews the prominent theories tied to this study. Nowhere in the literature review did the researchers find a study outlining the launch of an on-campus, pop-up-shop free clothing store.

Career Readiness. College students pursue their education for various reasons, including expanding their knowledge of a subject area, earning a degree for intrinsic reasons, and getting a good job after graduation. In an article discussing the connection between higher education and careers, the authors state,

First, education pushes young adults to get good jobs and sustain steady, dynamic lives, which seems to continue to the next generation. Furthermore, as society becomes more complex, higher education is needed to keep up. Thus, higher education is often identified as the key to ending the poverty cycle due to creating opportunities for students to enter the workforce and increasing social mobility (Lane, Rankin, Capps, Rann, & Basel, 2019, p. 38).

To pursue their college education, students need the financial means to pay for their tuition, housing, food, and other necessities. While professional clothing is necessary for students' internship and job search during their college years, it may not be affordable due to these additional expenses. Lane and co-authors (2019) further state, "As economic hardship and food insecurity become a prevalent issue on college campuses, it follows that students may lack financial resources to obtain professional clothing necessary to obtain and maintain internships and employment opportunities." The unfortunate irony is that professional clothing is a critical component in the interview process to earn the internships and jobs that will set the student up for a promising future. Therefore, clothing is a barrier to the workforce, potentially preventing students from financially supporting themselves.

Experiential Learning and Mentorship. On American college campuses, various departments support and mentor students to achieve success during their college years. Oldfield (2007) writes about the benefits of current first-generation students sharing insights with incoming students, "...such stories can help poor and working-class first-generation college students recognize that they can surmount the challenges they face, especially if they avail themselves of services designed to smooth their path." Through mentorship and services, students are supported during their academic experience. Schlee and Karns (2017), in a content analysis of job listings, established the importance of internships, experiential learning, and relevant work before graduation.

Economic Insecurities. While some of these services are academic, many of these campus services concentrate on insecurity issues instead. Watson, Malan, Glik, and Martinez (2017) write about the impact of food insecurity on college students stating, "A prevailing attitude was

that the university placed too much importance on academic performance and research efforts and not enough on prioritizing struggling students and a holistic student experience" (p. 136). Their research showed that students also needed practical knowledge about food"…ranging from a required general education course to pop-up cooking demonstrations on campus" (p. 136).

According to Dresler and Tutt (2019), food insecurity threatens self-concept, which, in turn, impacts physical and mental health. While clothing insecurity is likely not as severe, clothing insecurity also influences self-concept, especially when seeking and retaining employment. Many students face economic challenges, including a lack of access to professional attire (Lane et al., 2019). An exploratory study found that workplace attire affects self-perception of outgoingness, competence, authority, ingenuity, and client perceptions of quality (Karl, Hall, & Peluchette, 2013). Access to professional clothing could alleviate one worry for students dealing with insecurities.

Retail Option: Permanent Space. St. Joseph University in Philadelphia went the permanent route with a student-managed, on-campus, for-profit coffee shop. Snyder (2018) writes, "All team members at the Experiential Learning Cafes receive experience through the daily operation of the cafe, marketing initiatives, and community outreach." Belmont University in Nashville also offers opportunities for students to develop and operate a business on campus. According to their website, Belmont provides "Approximately 3,400 square feet of prime retail space...for students to use to develop retail or services businesses" (Belmont, n.d., para. 2). Rice University students operate a bike rental and repair shop (Rice, n.d.). The types of opportunities may vary, but the principle is the same - to offer students valuable work experience by developing or running a business during their college years.

Retail Option: Pop-up Shop. With an apparent need and no permanent spot for a store, how can universities offer a product or service? Cobb, Born, Shaffer, Cao, and & Jelenewicz (2019) found the pop-up concept to be "a novel, low-risk, high-impact way retail format adopted by brands seeking to reach consumers in innovative ways, to incubate a new idea, build brand awareness, and to educate consumers." Kidder (n.d.) pointed out that pop-up shops offer a great learning experience for students; she noted it is "less about sales and more about the learning process in setting up a pop-up store itself and the relationships built through it" (para 7).

The University of Minnesota Duluth (Melton, 2020) put a new spin on the Free Store concept in May 2020 when they launched a store "designed to provide students with the goods that will enhance their living areas" (para. 1). Again, this idea address student's insecurity matters. Developing a pop-up store as part of a class project or internship experience on a college campus provides a valuable applied learning experience for students as part of their academic programs while also meeting students' needs for professional clothing needed for internship and job interviews.

Free Store Concept. Katie's Closet is another example of a student-run business on a university campus. In this case, it is a free store designed to provide students with professional attire, so they are prepared for internship and job interviews. Lyons (2019) calls the free-store concept a part of the cooperative culture movement spreading across the United States. Weil (1999) writes about the value of thrift shopping. She states, "While the wide-scale interest is a

relatively new phenomenon, the business itself is not. It's a good bet that the first used-clothing transaction took place in a cave." (p. 3) While thrift shopping may have been in existence for many years, it appears to be a newer phenomenon on university campuses.

Theoretical Influences. Kolb (1984) established the experiential learning theory (ELT) after reading and being inspired by the work of Lewin (1946), a gestalt psychologist credited with coining the term 'action research' (Masters, 1995). Action research is a type of self-reflective investigation undertaken by participants to improve the wisdom of their actions and their consideration of those practices and the circumstances in which the activities are carried out (Carr & Kemmis, 1986). Agyei (2019) defines action research as a study method for practitioners to obtain and support fieldwork to solve problems.

Kemmis and McTaggart (1988) caution that the approach is only considered action research when it is collaborative. Kolb's ELT possesses a holistic perspective that includes experience, behavior, perception, and cognition; the learning cycle comprises four stages: concrete learning, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation (Kolb & Kolb, 2009). Active learning occurs as the learner progresses through the cycle (McLeod, 2013). Service-learning studies suggest that this type of education benefits the student (McNatt, 2019).

Context

The Katie's Closet project supports University students looking to dress professionally for interviews for internships and jobs which will launch their careers. The project concept is similar to Dress for Success (n.d.). Katie's Closet allows University students to access free professional clothing on campus – comparable in format to the University's existing on-campus Food Shelf. Dress for Success is a non-profit global organization initially founded in 1997 to empower women toward economic independence via professional attire, a support network, and development programming (Dress for Success, n.d.).

The student did not know what to expect by accepting this internship opportunity since it was an entirely new concept for the University. She took responsibility for this project from start to finish. She said she took the risk of accepting the internship because "I wanted to challenge myself. I am also proud of myself for taking this opportunity and making it happen to help students" (personal conversation, September 4, 2019). At the first meeting, the student officially accepted the position and helped craft her job description and an initial task list.

Although she accepted this internship, the Intern had a few concerns. She wanted this project to be successful for both herself and the students benefiting from the products and services. The Intern also had concerns regarding her shyness. She expressed that she found it challenging to speak in front of groups, especially when delivering a presentation. However, she was determined to communicate effectively and confidently, although she recognized this would push her out of her comfort zone.

Project Research

As a part of her learning objectives, the student conducted a feasibility study to determine whether to proceed with the project in the short and long term and to establish the next steps to

continue the project if deemed feasible. In this role, the student reported to one faculty as an internship site supervisor and simultaneously took the other faculty's practicum class.

The student showed exuberance in getting involved in the project to help her sister students. Her first responsibility was to gather research information to understand the project. She set plans to meet with the faculty supervisor weekly and scheduled one-on-one meetings to monitor progress toward goals. She began by organizing a project plan with tasks and due dates.

Mission and Vision. To set the stage for the project, she began writing and obtaining feedback on Katie's Closet's mission and vision statements. The agreed upon mission for Katie's Closet is "to empower our students to achieve economic sustainability by providing professional work attire to launch their careers," and its agreed upon vision is to create "a world in which all women achieve economic security and are treated with dignity and respect." This clarification of mission and vision statements marked the start of the Katie's Closet project.

Focus Group. To determine the project's feasibility, the Intern also ran a focus group in a Strategic Marketing class. With the help of her supervisor, the Intern developed a list of open-ended questions to ask students. She conducted the focus group during class time to gather as much information as possible. While nervous about speaking in front of a larger audience, the Intern challenged herself because of this project. This focus group allowed her the opportunity to practice before starting one-on-one informational interviews with specific students. The focus group was a success; student input provided insights into the needs and challenges of students seeking affordable professional clothing.

Informational Interviews. The Intern contacted and conducted interviews with several students known to have experience with similar projects such as a prom dress giveaway and a food pantry to gain additional insight. The intent was to determine what ideas to incorporate from other systems into Katie's Closet project. By examining what worked and did not work for other projects, a set of best practices accumulated.

Project Feedback. The opportunity to talk with students regarding this concept helped establish the next steps. The focus group and interviewees shared that financial challenges impact the ability to purchase career clothing as a college student. Therefore, if the University offered this service, the students indicated they would utilize it. Another critical question that the Intern asked was, "What types of clothes would you look for?" Some nursing students said they were looking for nursing scrubs. Students with other majors replied that they look for professional clothes for interviews or wear in a professional setting. Another important question asked was, "What will make you feel comfortable to come to a Katie's Closet event? Students replied that they would like to have helpers guide them who were knowledgeable and help them find properly fitting outfits that promoted self-confidence.

Mystery Shopping. The Intern also planned to mystery shop at the local Dress for Success and document the experience to determine ease, accessibility, and what needs still need to be met. Mystery shopping attempts did not go well. She reached out to Dress for Success to see if she could become a client. At first, she called the receptionist to ask, and the receptionist said they do not open the store for public customers. To use their services, she had to complete an application to become a formal client. After much difficulty, she learned that using Dress for

Success required a referral and a potentially a long, complicated process. This mystery shopping experience reinforced that Katie's Closet needed to be obstacle-free for students.

Project Execution

Collaborators. As the project gained momentum, collaboration opportunities with other University departments presented themselves. One of the goals for this project was to be environmentally sustainable and encourage sustainability by promoting clothing reuse. The Intern explored partnering with the Apparel Merchandising and Design (AMD) Department to help with the inventory organization, promoting the used-clothing movement, and personal styling. Delta Mu Delta, the Business honor society program, also reached out to the Intern because of their interest in collaborating to start up Katie's Closet. Having collaborators to work with increased the Intern's excitement and success of the project.

The AMD Department allowed Katie's Closet to borrow their racks and hangers to organize the clothes. AMD also suggested for the next semester that the program offer an internship from both the Business and AMD departments to lead the next phase of Katie's Closet. The two students could collaborate on this project, with the Business student managing the project, and the AMD student organizing, merchandising, and styling the clothing.

Marketing. A volunteer collaboration by the Intern with another student resulted in the production of a Katie's Closet logo. The simple logo allowed the project to move forward; a future intern will pursue a University sanctioned logo in the future. After making the logo, the Intern also created flyers. After many attempts, the Intern recognized she could use others' talents to get this step done as well—the recruited volunteers made a flyer requesting clothing donations. After the supervisor reviewed and approved it, the Intern printed multiple copies and distributed them around campus. She also emailed the faculty and staff at the University. She asked her internship supervisor to help spread the word on social media to get donations and let them know about the project. These efforts were successful by securing additional contributions. After the flyer about clothing donation went out, we received another 100 clothing items. People expressed excitement about this project and wanted to help the University students be successful in their careers. Later, under the Intern's direction, a volunteer created a second flyer to promote the Katie's Closet Pop-Up Shop event.

Pop-Up Shop Preparation. The Intern selected a pop-up-shop event time and date of 11:45-1:00 pm on November 19, 2019. This time was selected because this is a free period at the University in which students have no classes. The pop-up shop flyers were created, printed, and distributed around campus two weeks before the event. More than 300 clothing items were donated, so it took substantial time to take inventory and sort the donations. The Intern found this to be the most exciting part of her internship. Items donated included professional suit sets, blazers with pants, and blazers with skirts. Katie's Closet also received blouses, pants, skirts, and blazers, all in different lengths, and some accessories like scarves, belts, and shoes.

To prepare for Katie's Closet's first pop-up shop, the Intern developed a list of different jobs that volunteers could help with and secured student volunteers. The plan called for three people to help take students around looking for and styling clothes, and one person to help with checking students in as they arrive at the event. Another student was recruited to check students

out of the shopping experience with their selections; this individual also assisted the intern track outgoing inventory. At least three more helpers were needed to help organize clothes on the tables and rack before opening.

Clothes Sorting. Since we received so many clothing donations, the sorting and inventory were planned for Friday, November 15, before the event. Five additional volunteers helped sort, assess, and inventory the donated items. The students sorted and tracked the donations via a spreadsheet by type, description, size, length, color, quality, and clothes condition. In total, volunteers prepared 199 clothing items for display at the pop-up-shop; three boxes of clothes could not be inventoried at that time due to time constraints.

Pop-Up Shop Event. Volunteers moved the clothing over to the selected pop-up shop location. More than ten volunteers showed up to set up, and the clothes were organized by type and size. Volunteers made sure the room was arranged to allow for physical accessibility so students could easily look around for clothing. Two clothing racks were borrowed for hanging the suit sets. As the event got closer, the Intern assigned people to tasks and explained their roles. One student from the AMD department helped with styling and outfit selection; Business Department students served as retail clerks or troubleshooters. Event welcome signs directed students to the event. To document the first Katie's Closet event, a volunteer took pictures. When the event started, a line of fifteen students eagerly waited at the event entrance.

Conclusions

Katie's Closet launch was deemed a success. In one 75-minute pop-up shop, 75 clothing articles, including pants, skirts, blouses, blazers, and suit sets, were selected by shopping students. Almost every student attending the event chose an item before leaving. Several students acquired five pieces; the maximum amount allotted for our event. During and following the event, the Intern received positive feedback on this project and emails from alumnae, faculty, and students volunteering to support the next event. The Intern recognized in her practicum journal that she underestimates herself too much and that she is proud that she pushed through the challenges to develop a successful finished project. She specifically noted that her communication, organizing, and leading skills improved through this process. The Intern also noted in her journal, "This has not been easy, but I took on the challenge and made it happen. Through the collaboration of many, this launch has been successful." The project results in knowledge that Katie's Closet is a feasible on-campus concept. A need exists for the product and service, and the University can meet that need to help students feel confident as they embark on professional roles.

The interning student remarked on other learnings. She noted that starting something from the bottom up is not easy; it involves a lot of work. Second, she reflected that everything is not perfect. There will be times that things go well, and there will be times that things will not go so well. Learning from mistakes is essential. Another critical learning takeaway for her was that taking risks may lead to additional opportunities.

The intern used the knowledge and skills learned from her other courses and applied them to this project. She used her marketing research skills to determine the project's viability. She used her interpersonal skills from marketing and management coursework to improve her

communication with collaborators. Marketing knowledge helped inform audiences about the offering. She also applied her Microsoft Word, PowerPoint, and Excel skills learned in various courses to meet the project's demands. She summarized, "Through this project, I was able to apply knowledge learned from all of my courses." She now feels more confident in talking with people and speaking in front of large audiences. She also reflected on the pride she felt in supporting the University mission, which is to "educate women to lead and influence," as she thought this internship experience helped prepare her to lead and influence, while also equipping herself and her colleagues with the necessary professional attire to launch their careers

Incorporating a service-learning component for students into the Practicum course or an internship experience requires advanced planning, dedication, and time. It can be a challenge for the faculty serving as a site supervisor as the time commitment can be substantial, especially at the beginning of the semester. Students in these roles need considerable guidance and ongoing communication. Despite the additional effort, the rewards are immeasurable. The learning outcomes from service-learning allows students to gain confidence in their abilities and complete a quality project that makes a difference. From the faculty perspective, witnessing the student realize the difference they can make in their community and their world is rewarding in and of itself.

References

Agyei D. (2019) From Needs Analysis to large-scale implementation: Using Collaborative design to support ICT Integration. In: Pieters J., Voogt J., Pareja Roblin N. Collaborative Curriculum Design for Sustainable Innovation and Teacher Learning. Springer.

Belmont. (n.d.). Student-run businesses. https://www.belmont.edu/business/centers/entrepreneurship/student-businesses.html

Carr, W. & Kemmis, S. (1986) Becoming Critical. Education, knowledge and action research, Lewes, Sussex. Falmer.

Cobb K., Born E., Shaffer B., Cao H. & Jelenewicz S., (2019) The collective: Embedding sustainability into the curriculum via the development and testing of a sustainable pop-up store, International Textile and Apparel Association Annual Conference Proceedings 76(1).

Dresler, E. & Tutt, H. (2019). Food insecurity, customer to volunteer transition and self-concept repair: a free store example. Marketing Management, 17-18, 35. https://doi.org/10.1080/0267257X.2019.1683596

Dress for Success. (n.d.). About Us. https://dressforsuccess.org/about-us/

Karl, K., Hall, L., & Peluchette, J. (2013). City employee perceptions of the impact of dress and appearance: You are what you wear. Public Personnel Management, 42(3), 452–470. https://doi.org/10.1177/0091026013495772

Kemmis, S. & McTaggart, R. (1988) The Action Research Planner. Geelong, Victoria. Deakin University Press.

Kidder, S. (n.d.) 3 different ways in which pop up stores and education mix. The Store Front. https://www.thestorefront.com/mag/3-different-ways-in-which-pop-up-stores-and-education-mix/

Kolb, D. (1984). Experiential learning: Experience as the source of learning and development. New Jersey. Prentice-Hall.

Kolb, A. & Kolb, D. (2009). Experiential learning theory: A dynamic, holistic approach to management learning, education and development. The SAGE Handbook of Management   Learning, Education and Development, 42-68.

Lane, J., Rankin, A., Capps, G., Rann, S., & Basel, J. (2019). Closing the gap between college students' professional attire needs and career readiness. The International Undergraduate Journal for Service-Learning, Leadership, and Social Change, 8, (2), 36-44. https://opus.govst.edu/iujsl/vol8/iss2/3/

Lewin, K. (1946). Action research and minority problems. Journal of Social Issues, 2(4), 34-46. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4560.1946.tb02295.x

Lyons, R. (2019). Creating cooperative culture. Rutledge, 183, 76. https://search.proquest.com/openview/0757e9c5d1060f594d14bae320616dfe/1?pq-origsite=gscholar&cbl=48912

Masters, J. (1995) 'The History of Action Research' in I. Hughes (ed) Action Research Electronic Reader, The University of Sydney. http://www.behs.cchs.usyd.edu.au/arow/Reader/rmasters.htm

McLeod, S. (2013). Kolb - Learning Styles. Simply Psychology.www.simplypsychology.org/learning-   kolb.html

McNatt, D. (2019). Enhancing public speaking confidence, skills, and performance: An experiment of service-learning. The International Journal of Management Education, 17(2), 276-285.

Melton, L. (2020). First ever FREE STORE! University of Minnesota Duluth. https://conservancy.umn.edu/bitstream/handle/11299/213597/FirsteverFREESTORE.pdf?sequence=1

Oldfield, K. (2007). Humble and hopeful: Welcoming first-generation poor and working-class students to college. About Campus, 11 (6), 2-12. https://doi.org/10.1002/abc.188

Popovich, D., & Brooks-Hurst, E. (2019). Assessing the perceived effectiveness of a marketing research service learning project: THE MR-SL Scale. Marketing Education Review, 29(3), 164-181. https://doi.org/10.1080/10528008.2019.1621679

Rice. (n.d.). Student run businesses. https://studentcenter.rice.edu/student-run-businesses.

Snyder, J. (2018). Student-run coffee shop opens on campus. www.sju.edu

Watson, T.D., Malan, H., Glik D., & Martinez, S.M. (2017). College students identify university support for basic needs and life skills as key ingredient in addressing food insecurity on campus. California Agriculture, 71(03), 130-138.

Weil, C. (1999). Secondhand chic finding fabulous fashion at consignment, vintage, and thrift stores. New York: NY. Pocket Books.

Marketing Education and Teaching Through Synchronous Online Written Discussion

Board: Responding to the COVID-19 Pandemic and Beyond

David S. Ackerman, California State University, Northridge

Barbara L. Gross, California State University, Northridge

Primary contact email: david.s.ackerman@csun.edu

Abstract:
The COVID-19 pandemic necessitated a midstream shift to remote delivery of higher education during the spring 2020 term. To maintain continuity in instruction, instructors were forced to innovate. This research examines the use of one such innovation, synchronous online written discussion board as the primary mode of teaching by one instructor of a senior-level undergraduate Marketing Strategy course. Both before and after the transition to online instruction, the primary class activities were analysis of marketing cases and a marketing strategy simulation game.

Open-ended questioning in Qualtrics was used to explore student perceptions and feelings about this mode of instruction. Survey participation was voluntary (n=31 respondents among 77 enrolled students). Themes that emerged, in students' own words, are summarized below. Positive themes are numbers 1-7. Negative themes are numbers 8-11.

1. "Don't have to depend on team members." A dominant positive theme was that students liked being less dependent on others for information. Since the online discussion board yielded complete written records of class discussion, students could revisit the discussion to obtain and review information for assignments and exams.

2. "Can go back and look at what was discussed in class since it's all there in a transcript." A related benefit was that students had accurate records of every comment from every student and the instructor.

3. "Helped for getting ahead on assignments." With transcripts available, students did not need to take notes during class.They had time to think of and raise questions about assignments.

4. "Gave more time to study." Having the class discussion accessible helped students with time management. Students mentioned having more time to study.

5. "Everyone participated." Synchronous discussion board encouraged more participation and engagement in class discussions. Students who were reticent to speak in the face-to-face class especially appeared to benefit.

6. "Interesting." Students said that the number of students participating and the diversity of opinions and perspectives stimulated their interest.

7. "Novelty." Part of student interest was attributable to the novelty of this mode of instruction.

8. "Frustrating technology." Mentioned most as a negative was frustration with the interface of the discussion board software. Specific problems were temporary, but technological glitches frequently occur in an online classroom.

9. "Learned better in the face-to-face classroom." Some students expressed that they had learned better in-person and they prefer a face-to-face environment. This is unsurprising as face-to-face instruction is the familiar modality.

10. "Preferred seeing other people around." College is typically a social experience. Attending class in-person facilitates meeting others and cultivating relationships. Students missed this.

11. "Added more grading criteria." Using synchronous discussion board clarified who was and was not participating, adding pressure. Some students perceived online discussion as just another assignment to be completed.

The extent of students' prior experience with online discussion boards was positively correlated with their satisfaction with using synchronous written discussion board as the primary mode of instruction (r^2=.41). This suggests that the positive experiences reflected in most comments may actually increase over time and with greater experience among the student population.

Predictors of Students' Learning Outcomes in Online Team-based Marketing Courses during the COVID -19 Pan demic

Minjung Park, Metropolitan State University

Jayoung Koo, Associate Professor of Business Administration, Augsburg University

Primary Contact Email: minjung.park@metrostate.edu

Purpose of the Study:

This study investigates the predictors of student course evaluation and course grades in online team-based marketing courses during the COVID -19 pandemic.

Method/Design and Sample:

The study participants were undergraduate students enrolled in online sections of a variety of team-based marketing courses including Principles of Marketing, Marketing Communications, and International Marketing at two different universities located in the Midwest of the United States. The participants completed the questionnaire online. The data was collected about two weeks before students received their final course grades to control a possible confounding that their course evaluation might be influenced by their final course grades.

Results:

A total of 83 students participated, and the mean age of participants was 22.8 years and ranged from 18 to 57 years. Separate multiple linear regression analyses were conducted to examine the predictors of course evaluations and course grade. Results of the multiple linear regression indicated that there was a significant regression equation, (F (4, 78) = 12.71, $p < .00$, $R^2 = .40$). The individual predictors were examined further and indicated that team satisfaction ($\beta = .55$, $t = 5.65$, $p = .00$) was a significant predictor and instructor engagement ($\beta = .18$, $t = 1.89$, $p = .06$) was a marginally significant predictor of course evaluations. Regarding the predictors of course grade, the results indicated that conscientiousness ($\beta = .31$, $t = 2.88$, $p = .01$) and number of course visit ($\beta = .24$, $t = 2.22$, $p = .03$) were significant predictors in the model (F (5, 77) = 3.95, $p < .01$, $R^2 = .20$). Course evaluation and course grade were not related.

Value to Marketing Education:

The results showed that the predictors of course evaluation are different from those of course grade. Specifically, course evaluation was explained by relationship factors including team satisfaction (relationship with the teammates) and instructor engagement (relationship with the instructor), while course grade was predicted by individual factors related to self-discipline including conscientiousness and the number of course visits. Therefore, instructors should be knowledgeable regarding strategies to facilitate team interactions and instructor engagement to increase course satisfaction. Also, to increase the course grade, instructors should encourage

their students to visit the course management sites often and use performance-enhancing interventions that may help students become more organized to submit their assignments timely. Contrary to our prediction, the results showed that higher course evaluation was not associated with higher course grades. This finding is different from the previous research that was conducted before the COVID-19 pandemic in that there is a positive correlation between course evaluation and course grade. During the pandemic, college students are struggling with stress and time use. The students who participated in the current study could have also experienced this when they took the class. These differences between their current and previous learning experience might explain our findings. Further studies need to be conducted to confirm and interpret the findings of the current study.

Keywords: online course, COVID-19, learning outcomes, team learning

References Available Upon Request

Starting a Sales Center: Advice from Peers

Shannon Cummins, University of Nebraska-Omaha

Cindy Rippe, University of North Georgia

Primary Contact Email: scummins@unomaha.edu

Abstract:
Growth in demand for qualified salespeople has resulted in an increase in both university sales programs and the numbers of schools that want to transition their programs into sales centers and institutes. There are few published articles providing direction on how to plan and launch a sales center despite this task generating increased complexity given the global pandemic. The purpose of this research is to examine the views of existing and aspiring sales center directors and gain deeper insights into the tactics and techniques used for successful sales center creation and management. This work uses a survey and interviews with both current sales center directors and those interested in starting a sales center to compare aspiring centers' concerns with the experience and advice of existing center directors.

Using Research to Match United States Virgin Island Employers' Job Skill Requirements with Marketing Curriculum and Course Development at the University of the Virgin Islands

Lydia M MacKenzie, University of the Virgin Islands

Primary Contact Email: lydia.mackenzie@uvi.edu

Abstract:
At the same time the United States Virgin Islands (USVI) government is seeking to stymie the flight of highly skilled personnel ("brain drain") from the islands, marketing major graduates from the University of the Virgin Islands (UVI) are seeking on island employment. Therefore, the need exists to identify what USVI employers are looking for in marketing employees to ensure the UVI marketing curricula is adequately preparing marketing majors for future employment by UVI employers. This study sought to determine what skills and abilities were sought by prospective USVI employers for marketing majors from UVI and whether those required skills were similar or different from those sought by employers in other parts of the world, particularly the U.S. mainland, thus benefiting those UVI graduates who were interested in employment outside of the islands. Results of the research will be used by the UVI School of Business to review and improve the marketing major curriculum. Research was conducted in two phases: Phase I involved scraping of a government website (USVI Department of Labor's ViEWS) and analysis of posted marketing-related job descriptions; Phase II was a student research project in a Marketing Research course, Fall semester, 2020 at UVI, that surveyed business owners located on the islands. Results indicate that similar to other academic employability research sources, USVI employers seek graduates with soft skills (generic, vs. technical) such as communication skills (oral and written), IT/computer skills, problem-solving, analytical skills, and ability to work in teams. The UVI School of Business (SOB) will use the results to review and improve the UVI marketing curriculum and course development.

Keywords: brain drain, website scraping, employability research, soft skills

INTRODUCTION

The result of human capital flight, or brain drain, has a deleterious impact on economies around the world; driving the brain drain typically is the lack of employment, low salaries, and high cost of living. Those with high levels of education, training, and/or skills find it beneficial to relocate to nearby geographies that offer greater employment opportunities. The USVI is no stranger to this issue. According to Minto-Coy (2011) "the global economic recession and the inability of local organizations to provide enough jobs for skilled individuals have resulted in high rates of migration from different islands in the Caribbean". Since 2005, the USVI has experienced negative population growth with many citizens moving to other geographies; it is projected that the negative growth rate will continue far into the future ("country meters", n.d.). Limiting the brain drain from the USVI is increasingly becoming a focus of the USVI government while at the same time it is believed that many of the University of the Virgin Islands' business graduates would prefer to remain on the island after graduation. For those seeking employment in the

USVI, as well as those seeking employment on the U.S. mainland, it is imperative that the UVI School of Business prepare its graduates with the necessary skills and abilities that are sought by potential employers in the USVI (and elsewhere.

Brain Drain from the USVI

In a phenomenological study that conducted a snowball sampling of ten top leaders in the USVI government, research questions focused on the cause and impact of the brain drain on the USVI along with recommendations to decrease the flight of human capital from the territories (Jeffers-Knight, 2015). Major themes in the qualitative study identified the cause as lack of opportunities for educated individuals in the USVI, the impact due to the imbalance of the workforce with too many older people, and the recommendation to increase the budget and effort for young individuals to go to college (Jeffers-Knight, 2015).

In 2018 seven gubernatorial candidates were asked to articulate their plans to encourage young Virgin islanders to stay in the territory and for those who left, to return (Staff, 2018).

Also in 2018, lawmakers approved a free-tuition policy bill, giving some Virgin islanders a full-ride at the University of the Virgin Islands (Knight, 2018).

On October 20, 2020, RTK Park, a partnership between the private sector, the government of the U.S Virgin islands and the University of the Virgin Islands, announced a new workforce development initiative, Vista+, whose goal is to bring Virgin Islanders back home and retain and attract home tech and STEM-related Virgin Islands talent (Virgin Island Free Press, 2020).

Employability Research from Employer Perspectives

Marketing strategy begins with the identification of the target audience and researching its needs and wants. Knowing what skills and abilities potential employers are looking for in a marketing major is becoming more and more important as the high cost of a college education is putting pressure on universities from students and parents as well as is the impact of changing growth of new technologies such as digital and social media marketing. In addition, "The rise of employability research accelerated with the global financial crisis of 2007-2011 and the weak job market that has followed" (McArthur, Kubacki, Pang, & Alcaraz, 2017)

Several researchers approached their research on the topic of skills and abilities sought by employers by examining marketing job advertisements. In an exploratory study, advertisements were downloaded from seek.com.au for entry-level jobs in Australia over a two day period in March, using the keyword of "marketing"; the evaluation process yielded a list of thirteen skills that included communication, numeracy, general IT computer, interpersonal, problem-solving, analytical, research and information gathering, occupation, administration, tertiary qualifications, foreign language, work experience, and employee attributes (McArthur et al., 2017). The most frequently demanded soft skills were superior communication skills, particularly writing, teamwork, capability to network and establish business relationships, interpersonal skills, IT and

computer skills; personal attributes sought by employers included motivation, time management, attention to detail, and a positive attitude (McArthur et al., 2017).

Schlee & Karns (2017) reviewed job postings from Indeed.com and LinkedIn for entry-level marketing jobs that required a 4-year college degree; the most frequently listed technical skills sought by prospective employers were MS Office, Excel, other software, project management, database skills, data analytics and web analytics while oral communications (oral and written) lead the list of general/transferable skills and personal attributes, followed by teamwork, working independently, detail-orientation, time management, making presentations, multi-tasking, and problem solving. Specific to database skills, marketing professionals need to thoroughly understand and utilize data analytics that go beyond reporting and metrics to include knowledge of data management principles and analytical strategies for marketing management decisions (Sweetwood, 2016; Dahstrom et al., 2017; Erevelles et al, 2016 as cited in Schlee & Karns, 2017).

Saeed & Rashidi (2017) analyzed 375 advertisements of marketing jobs; oral and written communication, leadership, and teamwork (generic skills) was preferred by employers while industry knowledge and sales management were rated as the top technical skills. Sixteen marketing executives then ranked competencies with oral communication and problem solving being most desirable, followed by leadership/teamwork, ethics, and detail orientation (Saeed & Rashidi, 2017).

Monster.com, a job-recruiting website that helps job seekers and employers, created a list of skills and abilities (unranked) that are sought by employers in potential marketing employees; included on the list are interpersonal skills, good oral and written communication skills, numeracy and analytical ability, creativity and imagination, influencing and negotiation skills, teamwork, organizational ability, IT skills, business and commercial acumen, and drive and ambition ("What skills", 2019).

On April 12, 2019, NACE (National Association of Colleges and Employers) published their annual job outlook survey, conducted from February 27 to March 29, 2019; the survey was sent to 921 NACE employer members with 155 responding. Top ten attributes that employers sought on a candidates resume were communication skills (written), problem-solving skills, ability to work on a team, initiative, analytical/quantitative skills, strong work ethic, communication skills (verbal), leadership, detail-oriented, and technical skills (National Association of Colleges and Employers, 2018). Employers rated critical thinking/problem solving, teamwork/collaboration, professionalism/work ethic, oral /written communications as the top four most essential competencies – not changed from the previous survey (National Association of Colleges and Employers, 2019).

Alumni, Marketing Executives, Business Professionals

Beyond employers, research was completed using alumni, marketing executives, and human resource professionals. Using the Delphi method of research, data from an online survey that

included twelve human resource managers and 15 marketing managers identified through LinkedIn went through three iterations of ranking 20 skills as being most critical for entry-level marketing graduates (Yeoh, 2017). In the final reiteration, application of marketing concepts/tools, verbal and written communication skills, creative problem solving, research aptitude, and knowledge of company's products rose to the top of six ranked skills (Yeoh, 2017). Based on an analysis of 11 peer-reviewed articles and job-related web sites such as Career Builder, a table was provided that summarized skills recognized by academics and employers for marketing entry-level jobs (Yeoh, 2017). See Appendix A.

As part of the AACSB accreditation, using an online survey, Garner, Gove, Ayala, & Mady (2019) sought the input of 2000 alumni from the University of North Georgia's College of Business to determine what skills employers needed in new business graduates and what areas of the core curriculum are deemed relevant to the preparation of students for the workforce and what areas are missing. Consistent with what has been revealed in much of the aforementioned literature, results indicate the value and importance of verbal and written communication, presentation skills, persuasive communication, leadership, problem-solving, and teamwork; alumni also indicated such courses as calculus, elementary business statistics, international business, and computer information systems were outdated or no longer useful (Garner et al,, 2019). As a result, recommendations included ensuring the business communications course be in control by the College of Business, more analysis of the meaning of problem-solving, and carrying out in-depth analysis syllabi for all courses (Garner et al., 2019)

Using a mailing list of 1200 members of the Direct Marketing Association of Washington, D,.C. , 108 surveys were returned (Vermilion & Peart, 2011). Analytical skills, communication skills (oral, written, presentation), information technology, teamwork, and problem solving were identified as skills needed by marketing graduates with the most important being oral communications, written communications, presentation, team, and leadership. Considered more important than market specific skills of marketing research, sales, promotion, personal selling) were that of general skills (analytical, communication, IT, teamwork & problem solving) (Vermilion & Peart, 2011).

Curriculum Changes to Address the Challenges

While there may be some faculty resistance for curricula changes, higher education schools and universities acknowledge the need to respond to the challenge of developing employable graduates who possess the skills and abilities sought by potential employers. To address the task, several universities have implemented changes to the marketing curriculum. Anderson and Lee (2017) report on the pedagogical success of using a literature review-based assignment that include well-designed tasks that engage participation through a group approach that addressed skills sought by employers.

One approach to the growing use of electronic resources and increased employer demands for interpersonal and communication skills was the development of a first-year undergraduate curriculum at the University of Auckland Business School to include a team-based learning

(TBL) approach that helped to develop academic and professional skills (Carrie, Mulla, Patterson, Kilkolly-Profit, Brookes, Sima, & Agee, 2017). Staff perceptions indicated a belief that TBL was perceived to be better than lecture-based teaching methods; students believed that TBL was more helpful in developing their communication, thinking, and inquiry skills (Carrie, 2017).

Addressing the need to for graduates to be employable in the new digital era, Loyal Marymount University developed a digital-first curriculum program, titled the M-School, which included four focused curriculum and "career pathways" within the marketing major and included experiential and project-based learning; one of its goals was to foster creativity, critical thinking, communication, and collaborative skills within all four pathways (Rohm, Stefl, & Saint Clair, 2018). Quantitative and qualitative assessment confirmed the need to integrate digital within existing courses; achievement of learning objectives for the M-School program was measured by students' evaluations from 2015-2017 and compared to overall average within the College of Business Administration resulted in M-School program responses at 4.86 (on a scale of 1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly disagree) compared with 4.43 for the College of Business Administration from 5,290 students (Rohm et al., 2018. In addition, an annual assessment of industry placement rate of-M students was made six months after graduation by examining students' LinkedIn profiles beginning with 2015 graduating with M-School; ninety percent of M-School students show full-time employment within the marketing field (Rohm et al., 2018).

Addressing the need for student expertise and experience in the ever-changing world of digital technology is the growing use of simulation in marketing curricula. Drawing a sample of 308 students from 13 class sections of a Principles of Marketing course, Woodham (2017 compared students' simulation performance using a software simulator Marketplace Live with course performance; the result indicates that those with high GPA's spent more time with the simulation, a higher level of effort resulted in better results for those with lower GPA's, and better simulation scores related to better performance on the final exam (Woodham, 2017).

Simulations allow students to apply knowledge they are gleaning from other modalities used in the classroom, thus improving their learning experience. Bolton, Chapman, & Mills (2019) discuss their use of a comprehensive marketing simulator (LINKS), the role of faculty in a simulation, and best practices for use of simulation in the classroom. They recommend that the instructor serve as a continuous coach using short briefings, meet with student teams at the beginning of the simulation but also work with them round-by-round, and be clear about the difference between technical and instructional support by providing physical, digital, and social resources (Bolton et al., 2019).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research to identify what USVI employers are looking for in marketing major graduates was completed in two phases: Phase I involved "scraping" of a government website (ViEWS) and analysis of posted marketing job descriptions; Phase II was a student research project in a

Marketing Research course, Fall semester, 2020 at the University of the Virgin Islands that sought to identify skills and abilities sought by USVI employers for marketing personnel.

Phase One

Kerin & Hartley (2020) created a list of marketing career descriptions, based on seven categories: Product Management & Physical Distribution, Sales, Nonprofit Marketing, Global Marketing, Advertising & Promotion, Retail, and Market Research. Using the list, an IT professor at the UVI School of Business scraped the ViEWS website (https://www.vidolviews.org/vosnet/Default.aspx) from September 2019 to Feb 2020, resulting in 393 raw data files. Duplicates, incompletes, and those that did not require a bachelor's degree were deleted resulting in 59 files. Each file was then used to view full job descriptions on the VIeWS website, resulting in six ads for marketing, five for sales, and three for operations. Coding for themes was used to identify and analyze the data.

Phase Two

Three marketing majors at UVI, enrolled in a Marketing Research course, Fall semester, 2020, completed a literature review and prepared a client research proposal:

Research Proposal for the USVI Chambers of Commerce & VI Small Business Development Center

- **Purpose**
  o Many marketing major graduates of UVI would like to find suitable employment in the USVI; in his initial address as the new governor (Bryan) described the harm of a "brain drain" and a need to retain citizens in well paid positions

- **Research objective** – What are the skills and abilities sought by employers for marketing majors, who graduate from UVI to ensure that the marketing curriculum is providing the students with the proper skills and abilities they will need to help the employer achieve strategic and tactical goals

- **Type of study** – descriptive study

- **Target population and sample** – Population is VI businesses, organizations, governmental agencies, etc. that hire Marketing majors; the sample are members of the two VI Chamber of Commerce organizations and businesses as identified by the Small Business Development Center of the VI

- **Sample design and data collection method –** Convenience sample (a non-probability sample in which the researcher uses the subjects that are nearest and available to participate in the research study); data collected via an online questionnaire.

· **Research instrument –** Currently under development – prior to launch of the questionnaire, it will be field-tested for validity (HR managers/Marketing Managers) and pilot tested for reliability (local of business owners).

· **Potential Managerial Benefits** –changes to the Marketing major curriculum that will ensure the required skills and abilities of Marketing majors as sought by prospective VI employers are being addressed.

RESULTS

Phase I

A hybrid coding approach was used by first using the skills list provided by Monster.com to create themes, and then adding more themes as new data was uncovered from the web scraping exercise. Fourteen marketing full job advertisements (including sales and operations) from the USVI ViEWS website were evaluated. As displayed in Table I, the top five skills sought by USVI employers in advertisements for marketing jobs (6 mentions) are communications (oral and written) skills, teamwork, strategic thinking/planning, organization and project management skills, and manage marketing activities. When combined with sales and operations ads (8 additional mentions), analytical skills, communication skills (written, verbal), computer skills, teamwork, strategic thinking/planning, organization & project management, and manage marketing activities represent the top six skills. See Table I. These are similar results reported by researchers who also reviewed marketing job advertisements (McArthur et al.; Schlee & Karns, 2017; Saeed & Rashidi, 2017).

Phase II

Using the chart utilized by Yeoh (2017) as an example, the marketing research students created a chart listing their literature review sources and ranking of skills sought by employers. Communication skills (oral and written), critical thinking, interpersonal communication, social skills, teamwork, creativity, and social skills are at the top of the list. See Appendix B.

Key findings from the online survey (22 respondents) include:

When presented with a list of fifteen skills (complete with full skill descriptions), USVI employers chose (unlimited) those skills they looked for when hiring USVI marketing personnel; the top five skills were critical thinking, work ethic, creativity, social skills, and professionalism. See Chart One. USVI employers were then asked to rank (from extremely important to not important) the list of fifteen skills or abilities when selecting a marketing employee, choosing only one selection for each skill or ability. The top five chosen were work ethic, positive attitude, critical thinking, communications (oral and written), and professionalism; interesting to note that critical thinking skills were not in the top five, but communication skills were. See Chart Two.

When asked to rank the eight skills/abilities from 1 to 8 with 1 being the least important for entry level USVI marketing positions, deemed most important was critical thinking, communications (oral, written, interpersonal), analytical and research, creativity, and teamwork. See Chart Three.

When asked to select skills for entry level, mid-level, and senior level skills that were most important for marketing hires to be successful in their jobs, employers chose people skills, personal skills, communication, and teamwork to be the most important, a slightly different ranking then displayed in the previous chart. See Chart Four. The marketing research students completed a limited literature review; when compared to the academic researchers cited in their research, except for team work which ranked higher, USVI employer skills rankings was closely aligned with what researchers described in their research reports (Angela, 2011: Chonko & Roberts, 1996; Doyle, 2020, Pate, 2020; Sonny, 20; Yeoh, 2019 as cited in Joseph et al, 2020). See Chart Five.

CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

While not always ranked, the required skills noted by USVI employers are similar to those found in the published literature, namely communication skills (oral and written), creativity, critical thinking, teamwork, and IT/analytical skills (Garner et al., 2019; McArthur, et al.,2017; Schlee & Karns, 2017; Saeed & Rashidi, 2017; Vermilion & Peart, 2010; Yeoh, 2017). Based on the primary and secondary research results, whether UVI marketing majors seek employment on island or off island, it would behoove the UVI School of Business Curriculum Committee, working closely with each SOB program/department and the UVI NEXT process to develop a criteria evaluative chart/process and the skill descriptions described in the UVI Marketing Research online survey (question seven) to ensure that communication skills (oral and written), creativity, critical thinking, teamwork, and IT/analytical skills are being stressed in each of the business courses/programs/departments, as well as technical skills. Specifically, due to the importance of communication skills (oral and written) an audit should be conducted of the Business Communication course to ensure that strong written and oral communication skills are being taught by qualified personnel. The sample size for both phases of the study were small; increase the length of time using the web scraping technique and explore the possibility of modifying and improving the survey to include a focus on all business students (not just marketing majors), post-Covid 19, to increase the number of respondents, gaining the input of a forged strong relationship with the USVI business community. Continue to encourage marketing majors to register for elective courses such as the IST 465 Business Intelligence and Data Analytics to strengthen analytical skills. Begin exploration, need for a social media/digital marketing course at UVI

REFERENCES

Anderson, D., & Lees, R. (2017). Marketing education and the employability challenge. *Journal of Strategic Marketing, 25(2),* 128-137. Doi 10.108/0965254x.2016.1182576.

Bolton, R. N., Chapman, R. G., & Mills, A. J. (2019). Harnessing digital disruption with marketing simulations. *Journal of Marketing. 41(1),* 15-31. Doi: 10.1177/027347531.883417.

Carrie, D.G., Mulla, P., Patterson, A., Kilkolly-Proffit, M., Brooks, R., Sima, H., & Agee, T. (2017). Adding value to first-year undergraduate marketing education: Team-based learning as a strategic response to changing modern educational environments. *Journal of Strategic Marketing,25(2),* 138-151. Doi: 10.1080/0965254X.20167.1182577

Country Meters. Retrieved from https://worldpopulationreview.com/countries/united-states-virgin-islands-population.

Garner, B.R.., Gove, M., Ayala, C., & Mady, A. (2019). Exploring the gap between employers' needs and undergraduate business curricula: A survey of alumni regarding core business curricula. *Industry and Higher Education, 33(6),* 439-447. doi: 10.1177/09504222|9876498

Jeffers-Knight, S. (2015). Government senior executives' perceptions of brain drain on leadership in the USVI. Retrieved from https://scholarworks.waldenu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1544&context=dissertations

Joseph, J., Smith, K. & Sprauve,S. (2020). Marketing research final project: Client report for Mr. Ted Guiterrez. Retrieved from file:///Users/lydiamackenzie/Desktop/skills%20and%20abilities%20research%20project/Marketing%20Research%20MKT%20426%20Final%20Project%20(5).docx%20-%20Microsoft%20Word%20Online.html

Kerin, R.A., & Hartley, S.W. (2020). *Marketing: The core.* New York, NY: McGraw Hill Education. https://www.odu.edu/content/dam/odu/offices/cmc/docs/nace/2019-nace-job-outlook-survey.pdf

Knight, A.(2018, December 28). *UVI free-tuition policy gets final senate ok.* Retrieved from https://stthomassource.com/content/2018/12/28/uvi-free-tuition-policy-gets-final-senate-ok/.

McArthur, E., Kubacki, K., Pang, B., & Alcaraz, C. (2017). The employers' view of "work-ready" graduates: A study of advertisements for marketing jobs in Australia. *Journal of Marketing Education39(2*), 82-93. doi: 10.1177/0273475317712766.

Minto-Coy, I. D. (2011). Social partnerships and development: Implications for the Caribbean (Caribbean Paper No. 12). Retrieved from http://www.cigionline.org/sites/default/files/Caribbean%20Paper%20No.12.pdf

National Association of Colleges and Employers. (2018). Job outlook 2019 spring update. Retrieved from https://www.odu.edu/content/dam/odu/offices/cmc/docs/nace/2019-nace-job-outlook-survey.pdf

Raghuraman, A. (2017). Entry-Level Employees' Views of the Skills Gap in Digital Marketing. Retrieved from https://scholarworks.rit.edu/theses.

Rohm, A.J., Steffl, M., & Saint Clair, J. (Sept, 2018). Time for a marketing curriculum overhaul: Developing a digital-first approach. *Journal of Marketing Education, 41(1),* 47-59. doi: 10.1177/0273475318798086.

Saeed, K., & Rashidi, Z. (2017). Essential employability skills for marketing careers: Gap analysis of education and profession. *Pakistan Business Review, 19(2),*302-319. doi: 1022555/pbr.v19i2.1448

Schlee R.P., & Karns,, G.L. (2017). Job requirements for marketing graduates: Are there differences in the knowledge, skills, and personal attributes needed for different salary levels? *Journal of Marketing Education,n39(2),*69-8. doi: 10.1177/02734475317712765

Staff source. (2018, October 28). What the candidates say: How can the territory avoid brain drain? What will you do about GERS? *The St. Thomas Source USVI.* Retrieved from *https://stthomassource.com/content/2018/10/28/what-the-candidates-say-how-can-the-territory-avoid-brain-drain-what-will-you-do-about-gers.*

Vermilin, L.J., & Peart, J. (2011). Marketing skills: Lessons from the practitioner community. *Proceedings of the Academy of Marketing Studies, 16(1),* 21-25.

Virgin Islands Free Press. (2020, October 5). *RTPark hopes job archive will begin to reduce "brain drain" in the territory.* Retrieved from https://vifreepress.com/2020/10/rtpark-hopes-job-archive-program-will-begin-to-reverse-brain-drain-in-the-territory/.

What skills are marketing employers looking for. (2020, February). Retrieved from https://www.monster.ie/career-advice/article/what-skills-are-marketing-employers-looking-for-ie

Woodham, O. P. (Sept, 2017). Testing the effectiveness of a marketing simulation to improve course performance. *Marketing Education Review, 28(3),* 203-216 doi 10.10528008.2017.1369356

Yeoh, P. (2019). A critical assessment of skills and knowledge for entry-level marketing jobs: A delphi study. *Marketing Education Review, 29(4). 242-265. doi:10.1080/10528008.219.1661258*

Table 1
Examples of Non-technical (soft) Skills from the Literature

Soft skill	Schlee and Karns (2017)	Berger (2016)	Fast Company (2016)	Marketing Profs (2015)	Savitz-Romer, Rowan-Kenyon, and Fancsali (2015)*	Career Builder (2014)	International Youth Foundation (2013)	Robles (2012)	Gray et al. (2007)[+]	Pedagogy for Employability Group (2004)	Larson and Wissman (2000)
Sampling frame	Analysis of entry-level job postings from Indeed.com and Linkedin to understand the relationship between marketing skills and salary levels[@]	LinkedIn survey of 291 hiring managers in the U.S	Not available	Not available	Survey of higher education institutional officers (147) and employers (103)	Survey of 2,300 hiring managers and human resource professionals	Literature review and interviews with executives from global companies; practitioners from the Mozilla Foundation; executives and researchers from professional associations	Interview of 49 business executives	Survey to compare the opinions of marketing managers, academics and student	Not available	Community college deans (15) and community college faculty (15) in Kansas
Communication (oral)		X	X			X	X[a]	X	X	X	X
Communication (written)	X		X						X		X
Emotional intelligence				X							
Organization		X					X[a]			X	
Teamwork	X	X	X**	X		X	X[a]	X	X	X	
Initiative				X							
Punctuality		X									
Critical thinking		X					X[a]				X
Social skills		X					X[a]		X		X
Creativity		X					X[a]			X	
Interpersonal communication		X						X			
Integrity							X[b]	X			
Adaptability		X	X*								
Friendly personality		X									
Courtesy								X			
Responsibility				X			X[b]	X			
Positive attitude						X	X[b]	X			
Professionalism							X[b]	X			
Flexibility						X	X[b]	X	X	X	
Work ethic	X			X		X	X[b]	X			

(Continued)

TABLE 1

Examples of Non-technical (soft) Skills from the Literature

Sampling Frame	Literature Titles A	Literature Titles B	Literature Titles C	Literature Titles D	Literature Titles E	Literature Titles F	Ranking
	A CRITICAL ASSESSMENT OF SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE FOR ENTRY-LEVEL MARKETING JOBS: A DELPHHI STUDY	An Innovative Introduction to Business Course marketing the Skills That Marketing Majors (and Others) As Business Majors Will Need for Success	8 Traits Employers Are Really Looking For	Key Traits Employers Look For In Upcoming Marketing Stars	Important Marketing Skills that Employers Value	The Top Skills Companies Need Most in 2020—And How to Learn Them	If the skills/abilities were listed use (X) If ranked in the literature- Please include the ranking. Use NUMBER 1 HIGHEST & 20 Lowest, None use 20.

Soft Skills	Skill Category	Poh-Lin Yeoh (2019)	RANK A1-#	Chonko and Roberts (2015)	RANK B1-#	Angelrose (2011)	RANK C1-#	Sonny Ganguly (2015)	RANK D1-#	Alison Doyle (2020)	RANK E1-#	Deanna Pate (2020)	RANK F1-#	Ranking Mean
Teamwork	Teamwork	X	15	X	5	X	1	X	3	X	13	X	7	7
Critical Thinking	Critical Thinking	X	9	X	1	X	2	X	5	X	9		20	8
Communication (Oral) (Written)	Communication	X	2	X	2	X	20	X	20	X	2	X	4	8
Interpersonal Communication	Communication	X	20		20	X	6	X	7	X	4	X	4	10
Creativity	Problem Solving	X	20	X	20	X	4	X	4	X	14	X	1	11
Social Skills	People Skills	X	20		20	X	3	X	6	X	17	X	7	12
Leadership	Teamwork		20	X	7		20		20	X	6	X	5	13
Analytical Skills	Critical Thinking	X	9	X	20		20		20	X	8	X	6	14
Research Skills	Technical	X	9	X	20		20		20	X	8	X	6	14
Work Ethic	Professionalism	X	13		20	X	11	X	14	X	15	X	12	14
Adaptability	Personal Skills	X	20		20	X	5	X	10	X	18	X	14	15
Flexibility	Personal Skills	X	20	X	20	X	5	X	10	X	18		14	15
Positive Attitude & Service Orientation	People Skills	X	20		20	X	8	X	8		20	X	20	16
Professionalism	Professionalism	X	20		20	X	20	X	13	X	5	X	20	16
Time Management	Organizational	X	10		20		20		20	X	11	X	20	17
Negotiation	Marketing Domain		20		20	X	12		20	X	10	X	20	17
Organization	Organizational	X	20	X	20		20		20	X	3	X	20	17

() Number Rating from 1-20 / use 20 if rating not provided & (X) Indicate soft skill found in literature

Table 1

	Number of mentions in job advertisements			
	Marketing -6 ads	Sales- 5 ads	Operations- 3 ads	Total
Skills				
Strong work ethic	1			1
Analytical ability	2	2	3	7
Interpersonal skills	1	1	1	3
Communication skills (written, verbal)	6	3	3	12
Computer skills	2	3	1	6
Ability to work independently	2			2
Effective working relationships – teamwork	6	2	4	12
Strategic thinking/planning	4	3		7
Attention to detail				0
Multi-tasking			1	1
Organizational & project management skills	3	3	1	7
Creativity			1	1
Problem solver	1			1
Manage budgets	1			1
Manage marketing activities	3	2	1	6
Knowledge of local markets	2			2
Consumer needs assessment	2			2
New product development	1			1
Time management	1		2	3
Customer service		1	2	3
Research	1			1
Leadership	1	2	1	4
Negotiation		1		1
Track record in sales		2		2
Inventory management		2	1	3
Detail orientation			1	1

Chart One

What skills do you look for when hiring VI Marketing personnel?

Chart Two

How Important is each skill & ability in selecting a VI Marketing Employee?

Chart Three

Please rank each skill or ability from 1 to 8, for entry level VI Marketing positions.

Legend: Least Important, Most Important

Chart Four

Select "A", "B", & "C" next to the skills that is important for Marketing hires to be successful in their jobs.

Legend: A (Entry Level), B (Mid Level), C (Senior Level)

Chart Five

Soft skills VI Employers look for in Marketing personnel vs. Employers in secondary research.
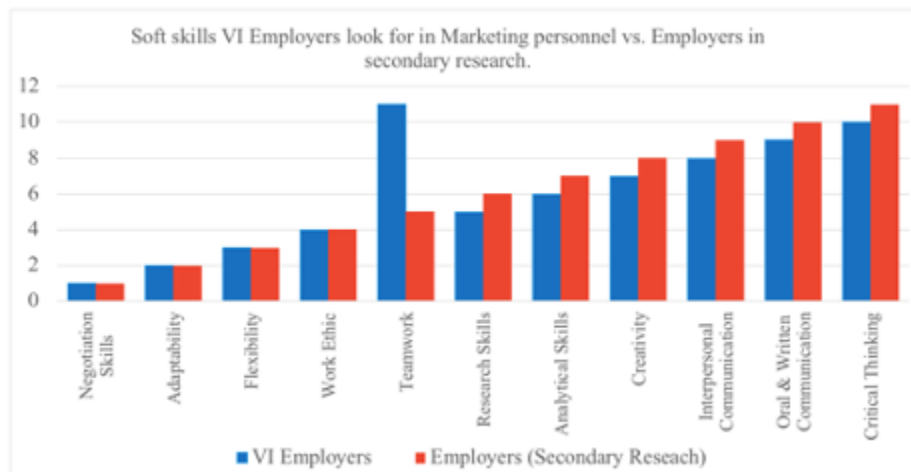
Virtual Service-Learning in Community-Based Social Marketing Course

Shikha Upadhyaya, California State University, Los Angeles

H. Rika Houston, California State University, Los Angeles

Primary Contact Email: supadhy4@calstatela.edu

Purpose of the Study:
Service-learning projects offer students content-relevant practical experiences with positive professional outcomes. While these service-learning courses are designed to be conducted face-to-face, virtual service-learning has provided an opportunity for community partners and students to collaborate online. This paper shares various strategies in developing and managing service-learning projects in a community-based social marketing course to provide opportunities for students to engage with community partners.

Method/Design and Sample:
Traditionally, service-learning projects in this course required students to personally visit community partner's office sites multiple times during the semester to collect data and attain a deeper understanding of the day-to-day flow of operations. However, due to the global pandemic's circumstances, the service-learning projects were adapted to be conducted virtually.

Results:
This paper shares insights on virtual service-learning projects and the nature of engagement between the students, community partners, and the instructor. CANVAS learning management system was used to provide well-structured access to course content and Zoom, a web communication tool used to schedule meetings. Despite the inability to meet face-to-face, the students and the community partners worked closely – virtually – and achieve designated deliverables. In the next section, we discuss various steps taken to develop and manage service-learning virtually.

Value to Marketing Education:
Students become more mindful and engaged in their communities if they had exposure to service-learning projects (Astin et al. 2005). According to a recent survey conducted by the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U, 2018), business executives and hiring managers emphasize the importance of applied and project-based learning experiences working with community organizations. Service-learning in a virtual setting has been instrumental in continuing community-engaged student projects despite various limitations created by COVID-19. These virtual service-learning projects have been successful in invoking a sense of civic responsibility among business students through engagement with local community partners on content-relevant projects. It is important for virtual service-learning instructors to provide structured content and guidance to ensure the virtual engagement process moves seamlessly and all parties involved are clear on the expectations.

Keywords: Virtual, Service Learning, Community Partners, Social Marketing

Who should teach career preparation and career readiness skills?

Pamela Ansburg, Metropolitan State University of Denver

Clay Daughtrey, Metropolitan State University of Denver

Rhonda Eaker, Iliff School of Theology, University of Denver

Jason Lopez, Metropolitan State University of Denver

Lori McKinney, Metropolitan State University of Denver

Jacyn Meyer, Metropolitan State University of Denver

Ranjidha Rajan, Metropolitan State University of Denver

Rachel Sinley, Metropolitan State University of Denver

Primary Contact Email: daughtre@msudenver.edu

Abstract:
To address ROI and the value of a college degree questions, many universities are developing career preparation and readiness programs to assist students in getting jobs after graduation. Programs were being planned at one urban, mid-western university and it was determined that a baseline of current career preparation and readiness activities was needed. Faculty were surveyed to determine whether they engage in career preparation training for students, how they are doing it, and to learn who they thought was responsible for it. Results found that 77% of faculty thought the role of higher education institutions was to teach career preparation and 74% of faculty felt it was personally their role to do so. Even though faculty felt it was their role, they did not believe it was their responsibility. Universities can use this information to help plan career preparation programs and know that faculty will be allies. Overcoming barriers and ideas on how to teach career planning activities are also included.

Position Papers

Academic Integrity Graphic Novel

Sarah Fischbach, Pepperdine University

Abstract

Academic Integrity is not the most engaging discussion with students and is often not addressed in-depth until there is a violation. Many researchers suggest the need for students to understand academic integrity in order to become ethical business professionals however there is a lack of resources on how to truly engage these conversations. This study provides five academic integrity graphic novel mini case studies. Graphic novels have been used as viable tools for increasing enjoyment and engagement. The study is currently under data collection and may add to the important and difficult conversation.

Bringing Influencers into the Classroom: Marketing Ethics, Consumer Behavior, and Strategy

Marie Segares, St. Francis College

Abstract

Though almost 40% of Generation Z seek out and make purchasing decisions based on social media influencers, influencer marketing is still emergent in marketing education. This position paper identifies three undergraduate marketing topics where an exploration of influencer marketing could be used to engage students in learning while also addressing Generation Z's preferences.

Covid and Client-based Projects- Using Course Concepts to Solve Pandemic Problems

Kristen R. Schiele, Cal Poly Pomona

Abstract

The Covid-19 pandemic and quarantine restrictions have caused a major disruption in higher education. Since March 2020, faculty have adapted to maintain academic continuity during an unprecedented time. In Fall 2020, most universities were required to remain online and a "new normal" began to emerge as faculty re-envisioned their goals for quality online education. The pandemic has also diminished employment in many industries, especially for recent college graduates. Due to the uncertainty of the current job market, client-based projects in courses can

be a powerful tool to provide students with real-world experience that may give them a competitive advantage over their peers. In this paper, we discuss a project for a Digital Marketing course that took place in Fall 2020. For this project, students created digital marketing plans and social media content for Heartland Café and Mart, who has faced many hardships due to California quarantine restrictions on in-person dining in restaurants. Using course content to solve real problems allowed students to think critically about strategies to overcome obstacles using digital marketing, engage in active learning, and virtually engage with a team. Although the future landscape of higher education remains uncertain, as we move into the "next normal" client-based projects offer faculty a way to demonstrate relevancy and impact in the classroom in order to provide quality education for our students.

Developing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Competency in Students: A DEI Dialogue Assignment

Cecilia Ruvalcaba, University of the Pacific

Abstract

Incorporating knowledge of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) in marketing education is important as students will be dealing with the diversity of consumers and society. This work provides a DEI Dialogue assignment used to develop student's diversity, equity, and inclusion education. Through a combination of virtual asynchronous and synchronous learning activities, the assignment takes students through the experiential learning cycle, provides for collaborative learning, and increases DEI competence.

Enhancing Integrated Direct Marketing Education: A Direct Effect with Client-Based Projects

Dorene Ciletti, Point Park University

Heather Snead, United States Postal Service

Abstract

Marketers have access to numerous channels to reach their target audiences. Real-world business challenges related to integrated marketing and channel selection, particularly direct mail marketing as a desired and effective marketing channel, provide an opportunity to prepare students through an innovative, client-supported project and competition. In this position paper, we explore the role of the Direct Effect® initiative and its competitive live-client project format in introducing and building integrated direct marketing capability for students.

Fear: The Final Frontier for Teaching in a Pandemic

Kristen R Schiele, Cal Poly Pomona

Jun Myers, Cal Poly Pomona

Luei Lin Ong, Cal Poly Pomona

James Jared Oakley, Cal Poly Pomona

Robert Fabrize, Cal Poly Pomona

Abstract

There is very little left to describe the disruptive impact of pandemic crisis in academia, yet attending the fear in classroom environment as psychological counselors or emotional Sherpas was something marketing faculty had not envisioned it would become their central role. At least it was in my experience that our students needed guidance and leadership from the faculty to pass through very confusing and anxiety-inducing times. Many dimensions of classroom teaching, as well as lives of our students became uncertain almost over couple nights for an unknown future. This fact alone is very hard to deal with, yet as in many schools, our university kept calm and carried on. Continuing responsibilities, however flexed left students wandering how their learning, grades and future careers would be impacted by this turbulence.

Faculty at these times, had to take up the role of emotional leaders by presenting calm, showing up, being present to fears, attending to uncertainties and assuring students that from personal to institutional levels, all academia would do their best to protect them, and develop policies to have them least impacted by the negative consequences of the ongoing crisis. At earlier stages of the crisis, showing up, just being present, keeping the classes going and having as smooth of a transition to virtual as possible was the necessary first step. On later days, the emotional guidance required a little deeper understanding and working around students who lost their family members, their financial stability and sense of external security. At this level, many faculty has and still is attending students on a personal level and trying to untangle the complexities of the new normal. Hopefully, all our efforts have and still is helping many students stay in the program and keep learning.

Impact of Individual Trauma and Stress on Decision-making and Communications on Marketing Education Competencies

Robert Lupton, Central Washington University

Laura Williamson, Central Washington University

Elizabeth Fountain, Central Washington University

Abstract

The literature is clear that people process information differently and that cognitive processing is affected by trauma and stress. Specifically, Mayer (1996, 1997, 2001, and 2015) claims that people seek to make sense of the world by building coherent mental representations. Other authors Catherine Briere and John Scott (2014) and Peggy Pace (2003) write that due to trauma or neglect experienced during childhood, there may be a lack of connectivity between isolated neural networks which represent separate selves and self-states, which affects cognitive processing. Also, Bremner (2006) notes the significant impact of stress on the mind and its ability to process. Because people process information differently and cognitive processing is impacted by trauma and stress, behaviors based upon that processing will be affected. These issues have become increasingly important to educators given the global COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on society as well as individuals. As such, in this time of the COVID-19 global pandemic, and given the significant impact stress and trauma can have on the cognitive processing, and the impact of the cognitive processing on marketing management, this study intends to concern itself with determining if there is a correlation between stress and trauma and two critical marketing management skills, namely teamwork and communications.

Make them recoil, to improve recall? The effects of shocking and controversial examples in marketing lectures

Joel Petry, Southern Illinois University Edwardsville

Christine Winter, Southern Illinois University Edwardsville

Michael Hair, Southern Illinois University Edwardsville

Abstract

In this position paper related to innovative teaching methods, the possible benefits and potentially negative outcomes resulting from the use of controversial and shocking examples in marketing courses are explored. The authors review relevant literature related to the effects of shock and controversy on student cognition and discuss how lecture material of this type can influence memory, cognition, moral norms, and ethical behavior. Guidance for future studies is elicited.

Phenomenology of the Initial Pandemic Experience: The Student Perspective

Mariam Beruchashvili, California State University, Northridge

Abstract

This research focuses on examining the phenomenology, or the "lived experience" of the pandemic from a student perspective. More specifically, the project examines students' emotional reactions and adaptive coping with the life-altering circumstances ensued by the pandemic. We utilized qualitative methodology to accomplish our research aim. At the start of the pandemic in the spring semester of 2020, data were collected in a large section of an elective marketing course in a large public university located in the South-Western U.S. The class was taught as a large lecture of 130 students, most of them graduating seniors. Some of the most notable preliminary findings relate to a spectrum of emotions that students reported experiencing regarding their professors' response to the switch to VI. Many of these reported emotional states were negative in nature. Among a significant portion of students, the overarching sense was that of betrayal. Students felt that many of their instructors "abandoned" or "let them down" by completely "checking out" or disengaging from their classes. Students felt that they were left to their own devices as the instructors stopped lecturing and did not use zoom; converted the entire course material into self-pace assignments; did not communicate with students promptly or left many of their email inquiries simply un-answered. Students felt ignored and not cared for by these professors. Some students even expressed the existential questioning of the value of the education they were receiving curated by the instructors who "jumped ship" at the first opportunity. Students were particularly critical of going "asynchronous" and felt that in the time when they needed guidance and comfort the most, some instructors chose to close up and not attend to their professorial duties. Students also reported such free-form modification to many of their courses as adding to their overall stress and even as worsening of their mental health.

The Retail Scavenger Hunt: Immersing Students in a Retail Setting

Pam Richardson-Greenfield, Radford University

Abstract

In consumer-packaged-goods companies, frequent store checks are a critical component to the brand teams' understanding of retail strategies, competitive initiatives, and threats, and how to enhance the consumer experience (of purchasing their products). This research describes the process of executing a Retail Scavenger Hunt (RSH), a field-based, active learning activity designed to provide students critical exposure to a retail setting. With dual executions—either instructor-led or self-directed—the RSH was found to be an effective teaching tool and added value to the material taught in class and in the textbook.

Stacking to Completion: Exploring the Value Propositions of Stackable Certifications

Elizabeth Fountain, Central Washington University

Laura Williamson, Central Washington University

Robert Lupton, Central Washington University

Behishta Reha, Central Washington University

Abstract

This special session explores the opportunities and challenges of stackable certifications including in the areas of marketing education. This special session will also focus on student-led research to stackable certificates, reporting on the investigation that will be underway during winter and spring terms. The outcome of the investigation will be a set of recommendations to incorporate industry-driven certifications into its bachelor's and master's level curricula including programs and courses offered by the department in the marketing fields.

Student and mentor career conversations: What were the top takeaways?

Clay Daughtrey, Metropolitan State University of Denver

Robert Farmer, Metropolitan State University of Denver

Frank Veltri, Boise State University

Mick Jackowski, Metropolitan State University of Denver

Laura Sawyer, Erskine College

Abstract:

Higher education mentoring programs have increased in number and type over the past 20 years. Some of the more common formats for such mentoring programs have included peer to peer, faculty to student, alumni to student and business professional to student. Studies have focused on best practices to develop programs and on the benefits of these programs, but none could be found that researched what students learned from the mentorship experiences. In this study, researchers attempted to fill this gap by analyzing student reports which revealed their top takeaways from the interaction with their mentor. A content analysis was conducted on 106 student reports and the top three themes that emerged were confidence, job awareness and networking. These results show that students have interest, are concerned about and or/need to develop these areas. This information is helpful to educators who can develop educational experiences that help increase confidence, explain day to day tasks of a job, and help students

learn to build their professional networks.　　Student and mentor career conversations: What were the top takeaways?

A Systematic Review of Scholarship on Learning with E-Texts: Students' Characteristics, Learning Approaches, and Learning Outcomes Introduction

Sanga Song, Indiana University East

LaCalvince Simpson, Indiana University East

Abstract

The increasing use of electronic textbooks, or e-texts, in conjunction with the dramatic rise of online learning practices in higher education, especially during the current pandemic, has led to a growing interest in effective student learning with e-texts. We aim to systematically review the growing body of research in this area by employing the 3P model as our framework to analyze the learning process of students who use e-texts in higher education. Our study consisted of a systematic review of 18 peer-reviewed articles published between 2010 and 2020 in English model provides a holistic overview of presage-, process-, and product-level factors of e-texts. Enhanced learning performance and satisfaction when using e-texts result from the interrelationship between students' characteristics and their different learning approaches during the learning process. This study provides insights for faculty and publishers on improving students' learning experiences when using e-texts.

Virtual Reality and the Pedagogical Impact on Student Performance and Class Satisfaction

Ronda Mariani, Bloomsburg University

Monica Favia, Bloomsburg University

Thomas Tanner, Bloomsburg University

Abstract

The use of virtual reality (VR) in education has gained momentum throughout recent years. However, most studies examined VR in the classroom with a focus on STEM education. The purpose of this study is to assess changing pedagogical approaches not only in education as a whole but specifically its application towards business disciplines such as digital marketing. This study will examine whether the presence of VR learning opportunities impact student performance outcomes and promote positive class satisfaction. Comparisons will be made between the effects of traditional asynchronous online learning and VR asynchronous online learning and whether theoretical knowledge was retained deeper with the presence of VR, leading to better performance outcomes and positive student satisfaction.

Special Sessions

Developing student's collaborative skills through effective teaching with business simulations

Charlena Miller, George Fox University

Nicole Coomer, George Fox University

Paul Shelton, George Fox University

Collaboration improves academic achievement, student attitudes, and is particularly effective for improving retention of traditionally under-represented groups (Prince, 2004). Employers recognize the potential contribution of collaboration, yet they admit that achieving collaboration remains elusive (Gino, 2019). Although business executives and academicians express the need for business students to increase these soft skills that are involved in collaboration, (England et al., 2020), a shift needs to occur from viewing collaboration as a value to a set of skills that can be taught (Gino, 2019). Experiential methods of instruction, such as simulations, are increasingly relied upon to stimulate the learning and development of hard skills. However, simulations present the opportunity to enhance student learning and experience of the soft skills of collaboration (Levant et al., 2016). This presentation provides educators with examples and methods that demonstrate how to teach with a marketing research simulation in a hybrid, remote, or in-person environment to engage students in a high level of competition that simultaneously fosters the skills that generate collaboration. This collaborative focus shifts competition from a "win-lose," to an "all-rise-together" attitude. Learning how to be competitive and collaborative generates an eagerness to share one's "failures" with the class because of the benefit of genuine collaboration to solve issues, identify obstacles, and improve one's results.

Keywords: collaboration, marketing research, simulation, soft skills.

Far and away, but Nearpod: Technology to Overcome Virtual Challenges

Sarah Mittal (St. Edward's University)

During Fall 2020, I was faced with a commonly felt faculty conundrum…how can I engage students virtually? Many have struggled with not just attendance but the engagement of those who do attend zoom/virtual sessions. I decided to test out a tool to solve these issues—Nearpod. I plan to discuss the benefits of Nearpod, as well as answer faculty questions about challenges and lessons learned. I used the tool during each synchronous session (and had some

asynchronous assignments) to guide students through the course materials—while engaging them every 2-4 slides.

Hosting a Virtual Intercollegiate Competition

April L Schofield, Metropolitan State University of Denver

Mick Jackowski, Metropolitan State University of Denver

Clay Daughtrey, MSU Denver

Tom Miller, Metropolitan State University of Denver

Intercollegiate competitions have become popular components of university sales programs. For the 2021 calendar year, the Sales Education Foundation's website lists nearly 20 intercollegiate events, in addition to smaller and intramural competitions many universities host. Sales competitions are beneficial for the students, universities, and corporate sponsors involved. Presenters in this special session will outline how a faculty team developed a virtual intercollegiate competition and the benefits of hosting a virtual event. While this session will focus on a sales competition, concepts can be applied to other intercollegiate events.

Inspiring Entrepreneurs: Teaching Digital Marketing Skills Using Wix

Nancy Richmond, Ed.D., Florida International University

Anna Pietraszek Ph.D., Florida International University

Joelle Berbano Academic Partnership Manager, Wix

Starting a business in college is far from straightforward with coursework, extracurricular activities and college life being like a full-time job. However, many entrepreneurially minded students want the marketing tools needed to start their own business, which can help them make money while preparing them for their future careers. Starting a business requires a student to gain skills in problem solving, demonstrating a strong work ethic, taking initiative and creativity (NACE, 2020), which are all skills employers are seeking in future job candidates. Crittenden and Peterson (2019) noted that marketing students are being educated in an era of digital disruption, and marketing educators must now utilize and deliver an educational experience that incorporates digital technologies seamlessly.

This special session will demonstrate how educators in the classroom can engage in digital learning activities while including website solutions for small business ventures. The

presentation will contain examples of tweets, video and websites created by aspiring student entrepreneurs in marketing classes. Both academics and members of the education team at Wix.com will share best practices and lessons learned from integration of digital skills into the classroom experience. The special session will discuss how to display social media, design online content, promote a business, present your work, open a store and start a blog using Wix.

Findings demonstrate that students were able to gain skills in writing, technology, analytics, reflection, and integration of real-world experience. There will be an opportunity for attendees to share their own digital experiences and to ask questions during this special session. Anyone interested in learning more about creating a website is encouraged to attend.

References Available Upon Request

Pandemic and What Happened? The "New" On-line Classroom Experience, and What Now?

Olga Di Franco, Cal State Fullerton

Diana Sifford, Cal State Fullerton

Christopher T Kondo, Cal State Fullerton

As the COVID-19 pandemic hit, we experienced major changes in our personal, professional and academics lives. As faculty, we had to transition from the in-person classroom environment to online teaching, learning new technologies and pedagogies on the fly. Quite literally, many of us felt that we were building an airplane while in-flight. But now, with one or two full semesters of online teaching under out belts, we can reflect on our experiences. How did we do? What did we learn? What aspects were instrumental in creating a positive teaching and learning experience? How did we learn to communicate not only the foundations for marketing but the excitement around such a dynamic and fast-moving field in this new distant learning structure? How did our students brave this new world and experience? The purpose of this special session is to share our teaching experiences in the hopes of sharing what may work best when teaching our marketing students who can not only benefit from the online environment, but effectively transfer their new learning and marketing skills to our rapidly evolving and fast moving post-pandemic business environment.

Redesigning an Online, MBA Marketing Research Class as an 8-week Offering

Gopala Ganesh, University of North Texas

This session is a detailed recollection of the experience of compressing and teaching an online Advanced Marketing Research and Analytics class for MBA students, switching from a full-semester, 14-week format to a highly compressed 8-week format. It was taught for the first-time during Fall 2018 and has been repeated every Fall since then.