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Special Issue: *Innovation in Marketing Education*
Guest Editor: *Debbie Thorne McAlister*

THE EDITOR'S CORNER

SPECIAL ISSUE ON INNOVATION IN MARKETING EDUCATION

Although innovation is taught in marketing courses around the world, less attention has focused on the role and prospects for innovation in marketing education. To help remedy this situation, Craig Kelley asked me to serve as guest editor for a special issue devoted to the topic. The nine peer-reviewed articles in this collection examine innovation in a variety of contexts, including the classroom, curriculum, department, and college.

The first five articles focus on innovation in the classroom, including unique approaches to the teaching and learning process. Clarke, Flaherty, and Mottner examine student perceptions of educational technology tools, including chat rooms, online lecture outlines, instructor home pages, and others. These tools are increasingly common, although relatively little research has examined their impact and effectiveness. In this study, students had differing opinions of how various technologies affect their ability to learn, get a job, and perform on the job. Gillentine and Schulz share an innovative approach to learning in the sports marketing context. Using a behavioral simulation, students are given the opportunity to operate a fantasy football league. Skills in marketing research, communication, problem solving, and teamwork are enhanced through the simulation process.

Peterson focuses on a common problem, assessing student participation. Using a course, not class, participation mind-set and the active learning approach, his article details an assignment in which students document their participation. The assignment yields creative and insightful responses from most students. Castleberry contributes a project idea that combines Web and off-Web secondary sources. With this assignment, students improve skills in finding information, assessing the validity and reliability of secondary data, coping with researcher frustration, and integrating material learned in other courses. In the spirit of entrepreneurship and retail management, Daly describes the development of student-operated Internet businesses. Students work in a committee structure to create and manage a business during this semester project. Support from upper administration adds credibility and accountability to this innovative learning tool.

Four articles focus on innovation at the curriculum, department, or college level. Andrus and Martin detail the development of an advisory council to a marketing department. Their article provides a step-by-step guide to the process, including how to recruit members, develop trust and mutual goals, effectively use member time and talent, and integrate faculty and students with council members. The authors also examine benefits and concerns when innovating with the business community. Dacko presents a study of skill development in MBA programs, with a focus on gaps that may exist between students in full-time and distance-learning programs. This study provides insights on the ways in which innovation in degree delivery affects the development of nine key skills, such as decision making, leadership, risk taking, and oral communication.

Barber, Borin, Cerf, and Swartz discuss the role of marketing in an integrative business curriculum. They examine the rationale for integrative programs, how marketing can aid the integration process, and the benefits and challenges of this type of program. A case study of one college's integrative approach provides an example that other educators may choose to follow. The last article sheds light on the systems in place to support innovation in marketing education. Albers-Miller, Straughan, and Prenshaw's study examines the infrastructure that supports and rewards teaching innovation. Their results point to a host of activities, although educators in their sample questioned the adequacy of extrinsic rewards and formal support.

I appreciate these authors' innovative work, willingness to share ideas, and commitment during the review and revision process. Reviewers' expertise and valuable feedback also enhanced the value of this special issue. The following individuals reviewed manuscripts during the fall 2000 and spring 2001:

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John Drea, Western Illinois University
Jacqueline K. Eastman, Valdosta State University
Brian Engelland, Mississippi State University
Robert C. Erffmeyer, University of Wisconsin–Eau Claire
Daniel J. Flint, Florida State University
Michael Hartline, Florida State University
Christopher Hopkins, Clemson University
Barbara Lafferty, University of South Florida
Erika Matulich, University of Tampa
Robert Moore, Mississippi State University
Lynne Richardson, Ball State University

Shelley M. Rinehart, University of New Brunswick, Saint John
Rick Shannon, Western Kentucky University
Carolyn Siegel, Eastern Kentucky University
Claire Stammerjohan, Mississippi State University
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Finally, many thanks to Mark McAlister, Editor Craig Kelley, and my colleagues at Mississippi State University and Southwest Texas State University for their encouragement and support during the special issue development process.

Debbie Thorne McAlister
Southwest Texas State University

Student Perceptions of Educational Technology Tools

Irvine Clarke III, Theresa B. Flaherty, and Sandra Mottner

In this age of rapid technological innovation, marketing professors are using various educational technology tools to assist learning in their classes. However, little is known about students' perceptions of how these unique teaching tools influence their overall experience. Consequently, marketing professors may be unsure which educational technology tools to incorporate into their courses. This study investigates how various educational technology tools affect students' perceptions in three outcome-oriented areas: overall learning, ability to get a job, and expected job performance. Student perceptions were obtained through a survey administered in a "Marketing on the Internet" course that simultaneously employed various educational technology tools. Findings reveal that students have differing opinions on the impact of these technologies on their learning, ability to get a job, and job performance. Suggestions are provided so instructors can select the appropriate educational technology tools to maximize teaching effectiveness.

Less than half a decade ago, information technology was expected to drastically change the methods of instruction used by marketing faculty (Ferrell 1995). Educators were urged to incorporate the latest innovative technologies into their marketing classes to improve instructional delivery and add relevance for students (Roach, Johnston, and Hair 1994). Today, instructors experience the effects of technological growth in both marketing education and practice. For instance, the Internet has expanded exponentially over the past several years. Never before has such a wealth of information been available to students and professors alike (Kaynama and Keesling 2000; Strauss and Frost 2001). Such changes have fueled the reengineering of academic programs to reflect changes in both the practice of marketing and the use of technology for teaching marketing.

Conventional wisdom suggests that educational technology tools, used in the marketing classroom, enhance learning and provide skills students need in their careers (Strauss and Frost 1999). However, this assumption lacks empirical testing, and little is known regarding whether the use of certain tools actually improves learning. Furthermore, it is unknown whether specific types of educational technology tools influence students' perceptions of their ability to get a job and then perform well in those jobs. Thus, there is a need to understand the relationship between the educational technologies used in the classroom and students' overall experiences. An understanding of these student perceptions (or a bottom-up view) can help in curriculum and teaching method development (Davis, Misra, and Van Auken 2000). It can also provide valuable feedback to instructors for course content, activities, delivery, and other developmental issues. Thus, the primary purpose of this research is to investigate the impact of educational technology tools on three student-perceived outcomes: overall learning, ability to get jobs, and performance in those jobs.

EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY TOOLS AND STUDENT OUTCOMES

According to the Sixteenth Annual AACSB/UCLA Computer Usage Survey (2000), one of the most compelling issues facing business schools is getting faculty and students to be as technologically savvy as their corporate counterparts. Marketing educators need to be on the cutting edge regarding the adoption and use of technology to ensure students become technically competent or "technocompetent" (Smart et al. 1999). At present, e-commerce has been cited as one of the hottest new majors on college campuses today (McGinn 2000), and marketing students will likely be involved with the Internet at some point in their careers (Siegel 2000). Rapid changes such as these have prompted faculty to make increased use of educational technology tools in their classes.

The number and variety of educational technology tools are immense. Some of these include discipline-specific newsgroups, listservs, bulletin boards, CD-ROMs, and online data services (Atwong and Hugstad 1997; Maddux, Cummings,

and Torres-Rivera 1999; Siegel 1996; Smart, Kelley, and Conant 1999). It is now commonplace for educators to include course syllabi, sample exams, and other materials on their Web sites (McBane 1997). As technology advances, professors are faced with making increasingly complex choices about which types of tools to use. In addition, many instructors carefully consider the potential effect on teaching evaluations before adding new elements into their class (Maddux, Cummings, and Torres-Rivera 1999).

Strauss and Frost (1999) posit that nine key factors influence instructional technology selection: institutional resource constraints, course content appropriateness, learner characteristics, professor attitudes and skill levels, course learning objectives, actors in learning relationships, learning location, time (synchronous vs. asynchronous), and media richness level. Thus, a primary objective to consider in selecting educational technology tools is their relevance to student performance. Student performance has been traditionally viewed as the acquisition of knowledge, or learning (Bransford, Brown, and Cocking 1999). However, colleges have long recognized students' need to find a job after the completion of their education by providing placement and other career-related services. The curriculum in business schools has been designed not only to generate student learning but to meet the needs of industry as well by imparting skills and knowledge required for business success (Mohr 2000; Monks 1995; McLelland 1994; Williams 1992).

Because multiple outcomes are desirable in a university setting, and a business school in particular, it is appropriate to measure the impact of educational technology tools used in the classroom by using more than one performance measure (Marks 2000). Indeed, multiple performance outcomes are desirable in an educational setting to give the full picture of the dimensions being examined (McCloy, Campbell, and Cudeck 1994; Williams 1992). Therefore, this research examines the student's perception of outcomes in terms of three dimensions: (1) overall learning, (2) ability to get a job, and (3) expected performance on the job. These three dimensions reflect the combined needs of the university, the students, and the industries that will hire and employ the students on graduation (Cyert and Goodman 1997; McLelland 1994; Monks 1995).

Overall learning. Learning is the process of acquiring knowledge (Bransford, Brown, and Cocking 1999). Effective use of instructional technology is related to the process of learning and the acquisition of knowledge (Seels and Richey 1994). The different characteristics of educational technology tools also affect the student's perception of the effectiveness of the tool in learning (Hazzan 1999). For instance, the characteristics of teaching tools known to affect learning include level of interactivity of the tool (Hamer 2000; Jonassen 2000; Kaynama and Keesling 2000), relationship to real-world experience (Atwong and Hugstad 1997; Kearsley

and Shneiderman 1998), amount of time involved (Henke et al. 1988; Marks 2000; Wager 1998), level of personal importance or relevance (Jonassen 2000), interaction with the instructor (Marks 2000), feedback on performance while learning (Bransford, Brown, and Cocking 1999), project-type nature of the learning (Hung and Wong 2000; Kearsley and Shneiderman 1998; Siegel 2000), and the combination of tools used (Atwong and Hugstad 1997).

Ability to get a job. Employees of the 21st century are expected to create, leverage, and turn technological information into knowledge to solve problems or produce outcomes (Galbreath 1999). The students' perceptions of their ability to get a job can be based on what they think employers are looking for in new hires, as well as what will give students a competitive advantage over other potential employees. In particular, traditional students will be seeking skills that give them an advantage over experienced employees in the job market. The ability to get a job, from the point of view of the students, is believed to be a function of networking, passing the course, and ultimately getting their degrees (Marsden 1994). This includes having the appearance of being proficient in certain technologies and having certain skills by completing the course successfully (Avis 2000). Effective teaching tools allow students to build networks, complete the course successfully, and gain proficiencies in certain skills, particularly those that are Internet technology related (Galbreath 1999).

Expected performance on the job. Students need to acquire the education and skills for professional survival in the new economy (Galbreath 1999). With the successful acquisition of technological skills and abilities, students can transfer these competencies to new problems and settings (Bransford, Brown, and Cocking 1999). An example of this transfer would be through performance on the job, including the ability to perform adequately, get promoted, and be successful. This performance can be affected by the ability and/or level of proficiency with new technologies as well as knowledge that is work related and valued by firms. Students should perceive that certain educational technology tools will enhance their abilities or proficiencies, give "real-world" knowledge, and provide access to resources (Kearsley and Shneiderman 1998).

Given the need to understand the relationships between the technologies used in the classroom and their contribution to student outcomes, we explore three research questions:[1]

Research Question 1: Are there significant differences between student evaluations of educational technology tools relative to perceptions of overall learning?

Research Question 2: Are there significant differences between student evaluations of educational technology tools relative to ability to get a job?

Research Question 3: Are there significant differences between student evaluations of educational technology tools relative to expected performance on the job?

TABLE 1
EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY TOOLS USED IN THE MARKETING ON THE INTERNET COURSE

Chat room	An Internet Relay Chat (IRC) system for weekly real-time chat sessions with the instructor and students.
Electronic discussion group	Using Majordomo's listserv, this was a closed, unmoderated online forum for instructor-to-class and class-to-class e-mail communication.
FAQ page	The "frequently asked questions" page that contained a wide variety of questions (and answers) about all course elements.
Instructor home page	The page containing links to all course syllabi, research interests, professor contact information, suggested books, and pertinent resource links.
Internet project	Students had a choice of one of nine projects that required a written analysis on an Internet marketing topic. This project required students to search the Internet for sources and present their findings online in .html format.
Lab-only classes	Class periods when students were taught technological topics in a "hands-on" computer lab setting (e.g., browsing, searching, creating/publishing Web pages, etc.).
Online homework assignments	Twenty homework problems, about some aspect of marketing on the Internet, were assigned. All assignments required Internet research. A one- to two-page typed paper was required for each homework assignment.
Online lecture outlines	A Web page with PowerPoint lecture outlines and hypertext links to sites shown during class meetings.
Online readings	Hypertext links to readings about each course topic.
Online syllabus	This page included the course description, policies, grading scale, course requirements, method of evaluation, course schedule, and links to other course components.
Online student directory page	A directory of student names, e-mail addresses, and home page addresses for student-created Web pages.
Online student grade page	Student grades listed by a four-digit code.
Technology lectures	Traditional lecture classes that entailed discussion of technology-related topics.
Web site project	This project required students to develop several Web pages (e.g., home page, a résumé page, hotlinks page, etc.) and then publish them to their Web site.

METHOD

The sample consisted of 120 students enrolled in an elective undergraduate course titled "Marketing on the Internet" at a mid-Atlantic public university. Marketing on the Internet courses, or Internet marketing, commonly include an above-average number and variety of educational technology tools. For instance, this type of class may concurrently include project-based learning activities on the World Wide Web, Internet research activities, electronic discussion group participation, Web page design and development, and the use of PowerPoint to deliver presentations (Siegel 2000; Strauss, Mitchell, and Bennett 1999). While these educational technology tools are not all necessarily confined to an Internet marketing course, it is one course in which a large number and variety are often used. Therefore, in analyzing the student perceptions of various educational technology tools, an Internet marketing course was chosen as an appropriate sample.

The course was taught by the same instructor over an academic year when students were exposed to and used 14 different educational technology tools: chat room, electronic discussion group, FAQ page, instructor home page, Internet project, lab-only classes, online homework assignments, online lecture outlines, online readings, online syllabus, online student directory, online student grade page, a Web site project, and technology lectures. Table 1 provides a listing

and brief description of the 14 educational technology tools. Figure 1 illustrates the general model of relationships investigated in this research.

On the last day of class, prior to the final exam, students completed an in-class, anonymous survey. This time frame was selected to ensure full exposure to the various educational technology tools. Due to student absenteeism during survey administration, the effective sample was 114 out of 120, yielding an overall 95% response rate. Relevant demographic data were collected to classify the sample. Respondents were asked to provide an assessment of the 14 tools employed during the class. These tools were listed in random order on the survey where respondents rated the educational technology tools on a 5-point Likert-type scale (1 = *very unimportant*; 5 = *very important*) relative to the three outcome variables. The three outcome variables were student perceptions of learning, ability to get a job, and job performance. Respondents were provided three semantic differential questions, using a 7-point scale, to assess their perceptions of these outcome variables. Table 2 presents the questions and bipolar adjectives used for the semantic differential scales.[2]

RESULTS

Table 3 identifies that most respondents were female (55%), were ages 21 to 25 (55%), and attended college as
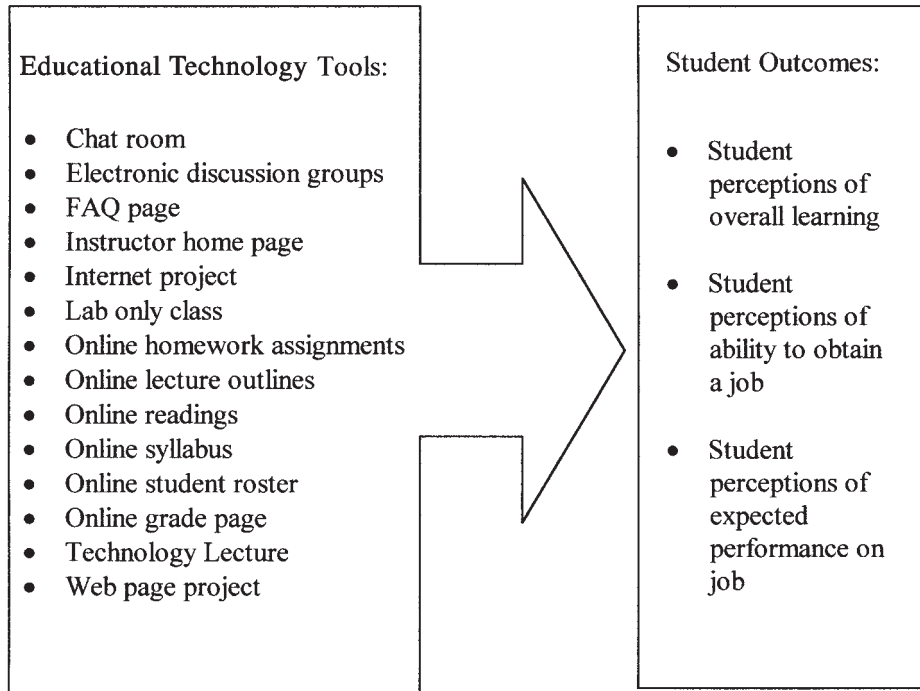
FIGURE 1:   Conceptual Model of the Impact of Educational Technology Tools on Student Outcomes

TABLE 2
SEMANTIC DIFFERENTIAL QUESTIONS TO ASSESS STUDENT PERCEPTIONS
OF OVERALL LEARNING, ABILITY TO GET A JOB, AND EXPECTED JOB PERFORMANCE

Overall learning
   After completing this course, how much did you learn overall?
      I didn't learn anything. ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ I learned very much.
Ability to get a job
   After completing this course, how well do you think it will affect your ability to get a job?
      Will definitely hurt me ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ Will definitely help me
Expected performance on job
   After completing this course, how well do you think it will affect your performance on a job?
      Will definitely hurt my performance ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ Will definitely help my performance

full-time students (80%) while working part-time jobs (44%). The overwhelming majority of students (88%) reported their grade point average (GPA) to be in the range of 2.5 to 4.0. Three to 5 hours was the most common range reported for the time spent each week preparing for class.

Mean ratings indicate that students had favorable evaluations for the course's influence on overall learning (μ = 6.2658, *SD* = 1.0635), perceived ability to get a job (μ = 5.9633, *SD* = 1.1779), and expected performance on the job (μ = 5.9771, *SD* = 1.2553). Analysis of variance (ANOVA) tests were performed to assess the individual impact of each educational technological tool on the three student outcome variables. Means, standard deviations, sample sizes, and *p*-values for the ANOVAs are presented in Table 4.

The three research questions investigated if there are significant differences between student evaluations of educational technology tools and student perceptions of (1) overall learning, (2) ability to get a job, and (3) expected performance on the job. The analyses in Table 4 reveal 27 instances when the tools had a significant influence ($p < .05$) on student perceptions and 15 instances when the tools had none. Thus, we tentatively conclude that, for all three research questions, there are indeed significant differences between students' perceived outcomes based on evaluations of different educa-

TABLE 3
SAMPLE CHARACTERISTICS

Variable	Frequency	(%)
Gender (*n* = 110)		
Male	50	(45)
Female	60	(55)
Age (*n* = 110)		
20 and younger	5	(5)
21-25	60	(55)
26 and older	45	(41)
Student status (*n* = 111)		
Full time	89	(80)
Part time	22	(20)
Employment status (*n* = 108)		
Not employed	30	(28)
Part-time	47	(44)
Full-time	31	(29)
Hours per week spent preparing for class (*n* = 110)		
None	0	(0)
1-2	21	(19)
3-5	46	(42)
6-8	26	(24)
9-12	6	(5)
13 and higher	11	(10)
Self-reported grade point average (*n* = 109)		
Under 2.00	2	(2)
2.00-2.49	10	(9)
2.50-2.99	30	(28)
3.00-3.49	35	(32)
3.50-4.00	30	(28)
Don't know	2	(2)

tional technology tools. Five educational technology tools strongly influenced all three of the outcome variables: an online syllabus, an Internet project, online homework assignments, online lecture outlines, and technology lectures.

DISCUSSION

This section reports the relationships between the 14 educational technology tools and the three outcome variables. In sum, 9 tools significantly influenced overall learning, 10 influenced ability to get a job, and 8 influenced expected job performance. A discussion of selected significant and nonsignificant relationships is presented.

Overall learning. Nine of the 14 educational technology tools were associated with high student ratings of overall learning: instructor home page, Internet project, online homework assignments, online lecture outlines, online syllabus, online student roster page, online student grade page, Web page project, and technology lectures.

While the instructor home page and online syllabus were passive tools, each may have provided meaningful structure for the learning process. The home page gave students a start-

ing point for exploring various learning resources that would be used throughout the course. The online syllabus demonstrated how various parts of the knowledge related to one another. In the technology lectures, factual information was disseminated in a rather traditional classroom setting. Because many students are quite used to learning in this format, they may have perceived the lectures to have a strong role on overall learning. The focus on "content" for this aspect of the course may have also affected learning. The goals for the Internet project, online homework assignments, and Web page project were for students to solve problems requiring the use of their existing knowledge base in conjunction with additional online research to gain proficiency in a particular technological area. The higher order thinking and interactivity associated with these tools could influence student evaluations of overall learning. The online lecture outline likely affected learning because it provided structure for the subject matter in each lecture as well as a framework for exam preparation. The online student grade page allowed students to benchmark their own progress as well as the performance of their peers throughout the course. This tool may have reinforced the fact that students either were (or were not) learning.

Five educational technology tools—the FAQ page, lab-only classes, online readings, chat room, and electronic discussion group—had no influence on student perceptions of overall learning. While the FAQ page may be a useful tool for getting answers to questions, it probably was not perceived to be useful for learning. Perhaps it was just viewed as a reference tool that may be useful at some point in the future. An intriguing finding was that both online readings and lab-only classes were not significant. It is possible that students viewed these hands-on activities as being aimed at skill building instead of knowledge building, or perhaps they did not believe that much knowledge was gained from reading a Web site instead of reading offline material (e.g., book).

Both the chat room and the electronic discussion group involved more student-to-student rather than student-to-instructor or student-to-content interaction. The stronger student-to-student contact may not have provided enough instructor feedback to give students the impression they were learning. Students may expect that they would not learn as much from the chat room or electronic discussion group because there is no direct linkage to substantive content. For both tools, but especially for the chat room, these may be viewed as fun, social, or recreational experiences that do not directly aid in the acquisition of knowledge. This may be especially true in chat rooms because the discussions tend to "disappear" when they are over, and students do not have tangible evidence of the learning experience.

Ability to get a job. Ten of the 14 educational technology tools were significantly related to students' perceived ability to find employment as a result of the class. These tools were

TABLE 4
ANOVA RESULTS OF EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY TOOLS ACCORDING TO STUDENT PERCEPTIONS
OF OVERALL LEARNING, ABILITY TO GET A JOB, AND EXPECTED PERFORMANCE ON JOB

Educational Technology Tools	Number	M	(SD)	Overall Learning	Ability to Get a Job	Expected Performance on Job
Chat room	112	1.6786	(1.0840)	.962	.039**	.454
Electronic discussion group	113	2.8850	(1.0753)	.428	.368	.454
FAQ page	114	3.0789	(1.2204)	.091*	.032**	.001***
Instructor home page	114	3.6579	(1.2108)	.040**	.130	.110
Internet project	114	3.8509	(0.9615)	.006***	.015**	.000***
Lab-only class	113	3.1416	(1.3084)	.059*	.517	.223
Online homework assignments	114	3.6447	(1.1744)	.004***	.023**	.002***
Online lecture outlines	111	4.5495	(0.8815)	.000***	.000***	.000***
Online readings	114	3.3596	(1.0570)	.069*	.036**	.010***
Online syllabus	114	4.0614	(0.9527)	.000***	.001***	.007***
Online student roster page	113	3.1062	(1.1754)	.008***	.020**	.060*
Online student grade page	112	3.5357	(1.2297)	.006***	.043**	.063*
Technology lectures	114	4.0175	(0.9406)	.000***	.000***	.000***
Web page project	114	4.7281	(0.7321)	.031**	.483	.004***

*$p < .10$. **$p < .05$. ***$p < .01$.

as follows: chat room, FAQ page, Internet project, online homework assignments, online lecture outlines, online readings, online syllabus, online student roster page, online student grade page, and technology lectures. An enlightening finding was that students who believed that the course would improve their ability to find employment also rated the chat room and the online student roster favorably. Students may have found the ability to interact with other students as a useful tool for informally networking, finding a job, or obtaining career advice from other students.

From the student point of view, passing a course and completing their degree are the two initial obstacles to landing a job (Marsden 1994). With that in mind, it is logical to understand why students may be motivated to attend to activities that may help to achieve these goals. This may explain why those who felt that the course would help them find employment also provided high ratings of the FAQ page, Internet project, online homework assignments, online lecture outlines, online readings, online syllabus, and technology lectures. These tools were specifically designed to add structure and feedback for students to pass the course. The online grade page let students know where they stood and what they needed to do to make a good grade and pass the class, which, again, is an obstacle to finding employment.

The four nonsignificant tools were the electronic discussion group, instructor home page, lab-only class, and the Web page project. The lab-only classes and Web page project, which required students to individually learn and demonstrate their knowledge of Web development technology, did not influence students' perceived ability to get a job. Perhaps marketing students do not yet quite understand the value of acquiring technological skills to improve their ability to find

employment. The majority of study respondents were younger than age 25; thus, they may not have much experience seeing what potential employers desire from job candidates. If that is the case, professors may need to emphasize the importance of acquiring various skills, especially technological skills, for employment marketability. Students who felt that the course itself would improve their ability to find employment did not rate the electronic discussion group highly. Most of the topics here pertained to course material, so students may not have been cognizant of the relationship between electronic discussions of content and ability to get a job. Finally, the instructor home page did not influence students' perceived ability to get a job. This tool was likely not relevant because it did not have many sources relating directly to career searching, résumé writing, and other topics relating to finding employment.

Expected performance on the job. Respondents who believed that the course would help their expected performance on the job also rated 8 of the 14 educational technology tools positively. The FAQ page, Internet project, homework assignment, lecture outlines, online readings, and online syllabus were among some of the significant tools for this outcome variable. What these all have in common is that they are tangible and provide a relatively permanent base of reference material. Even though these tools were provided online, they could be printed out or saved to disk for students to use at a later date—namely, after they are employed. Following this logic, students could even keep their class notes from the technology lectures as reference material as well. Perhaps educational technology tools need a tangible component for students to believe they will help them in job performance. The Web page project provided skills that could be

TABLE 5
SUGGESTED EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY TOOLS AND
ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE SPECIFIC STUDENT OUTCOMES

To Influence This Outcome:	Consider Incorporating These Educational Technology Tools:	And Take into Account These Additional Actions:
Overall learning	Instructor home page Internet project Online homework Online lecture outlines Online syllabus Online student roster Online student grade page Technology lectures Web page project	Present the tools within the traditional teaching framework (do not make an online syllabus look drastically different than a regular syllabus). Ensure that the home page is technologically advanced and requires student interaction. In class, frequently refer students to online technology tools. Assign students to teams/pairs in which they use the online student roster to contact each other to complete online homework and/or Internet projects. Provide an incentive for viewing the online lecture outlines (a "factoid" that they need for class or a pop quiz). Ensure that the technology lectures are as current and state of the art as possible. Include the Web site address of students' Web page projects on the online student roster for student critique assignments.
Ability to get a job	Chat room FAQ page Internet project Online homework Online lecture outlines Online readings Online syllabus Online student roster Online student grade page Technology lectures	Reinforce why it is important for marketing students to gain technological skills. Prepare a checklist of skills that students will need to get a job. Help them check off the list as they complete the course. Define the difference between skills that are expected for jobs today and skills that will give students a "cutting edge." Stay abreast of any new industry needs or trends pertaining to job skills required in marketers. Bring in credible guest speakers and recruiters to talk about skills they desire in new hires.
Expected job performance	FAQ page Internet project Online homework Online lecture outlines Online readings Online syllabus Web page project Technology lectures	Provide tangible evidence of the educational technology tools used in the course. Encourage students to commit themselves to continuous lifelong learning after they graduate. Help the students develop a list of resources for tracking new trends that make them more valuable to their companies over time.

viewed as providing students a competitive advantage, especially when compared with some of the more "technologically challenged" workers in the marketplace.

Six items did not have a significant relationship to students' perception of their expected performance on the job: chat room, electronic discussion group, instructor home page, online student roster page, online student grade page, and lab-only classes. Their commonality is that they are all related to the current activities associated with being an enrolled student. After the class is over, students will likely not use these educational technology tools anymore. Simply put, once class is over, there will be no need to reuse these tools to perform well on their job.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR
MARKETING EDUCATORS

For educators who may be first starting to incorporate technologies into their courses, we recommend the following five tools for the greatest overall effect: an online syllabus, an Internet term project, online homework assignments, online lecture outlines, and technology lectures. For instructors aiming for a specific type of student outcome, we propose different mixes of educational technology tools and activities presented in Table 5. Study results suggested that students might form more favorable perceptions of outcomes through the use of certain tools.

One of the most interesting findings was the nonsignificant influence of two of the educational technology tools on student perceptions. Namely, the chat rooms and electronic discussion groups, which were designed to facilitate and encourage online communication on the student-to-student level, were significant in only one instance (Chat Room × Ability to Get a Job). It is worth noting that student involvement with these elements was applied toward the participation grade. However, the nonsignificant impact of these tools implies that students may not have enjoyed or valued this type of learning. Researchers are encouraged to share their classroom experiences using electronic interaction. Given the increasing use of electronic communication, it would be help-

ful to obtain answers to questions pertaining to these student-to-student discussions. For instance, how can we best encourage electronic interaction between students? What makes students feel successful at electronic interaction? Does this form of communication help students to learn?

Data were not collected to assess students' previous exposure to and expertise with educational technology tools. It is quite possible that the degree of prior exposure and experience could influence attitudes toward educational technology tools and their associated outcomes. For instance, students with much experience creating Web pages may not have valued the Web page project as a contributor to overall learning. We encourage future researchers to assess potential effects of prior exposure to and experience with various educational technology tools in the class.

The data in this study were collected from one university and one type of class only. Thus, generalizations to other samples and settings should be made with caution. Because the sample consisted of students enrolled in a technologically based course, the respondents may have had an existing positive attitude, or upward bias, toward the use of technology in classes. Future researchers are encouraged to examine how various educational teaching technologies are perceived by students in other marketing courses besides marketing on the Internet. Further empirical testing is needed, using other samples, settings, and courses to confirm or deny these findings. It would be fruitful to examine other educational technology tools such as online bulletin boards, instant messaging, video streaming media, and so on.

It is worth noting that the technology lectures for this study included a combination of straight lectures about technology topics, in-class group activities, videos, PowerPoint presentations, and guest speakers. For future research, it would be useful to break this variable, technology lectures, down further into its subcomponents (i.e., asking about PowerPoint, videos, instructor lecture, class activities, and guest speakers separately). In addition, students can be asked about the impact of these tools directly. Items such as "the PowerPoint presentations used in the course increased my overall learning (agree/disagree)" or "the PowerPoint presentations used in the course increased my ability to get a job (agree/disagree)" might provide a clearer assessment of these relationships and understanding of the impact of each tool.

In this research, the three outcome variables were measured through students' self-assessment. These variables were not cross-validated through other means such as actual grade in the course. Furthermore, comparisons were not made between the technological versus the nontechnological tools. The current study can be extended by examining relationships between technological tools and actual, rather than perceived, outcomes of the educational process. In addition, a longitudinal study assessing actual ability to get a job and actual performance on job would help us to understand the

aforementioned relationship more deeply. While it is impossible to teach students every marketing-related application of technology in business and industry, it is possible to teach them general skills that are transferable to similar or related situations. Part of our role as educators is to know which tools are necessary. Thus, to extend this study further, we encourage educators to research these issues with business organizations so we can find out which technological skills are most desired from students.

When used effectively, technology can open doors that will not otherwise be opened, and learning definitely may be enhanced by the experience. Marketing educators must take note of these opportunities by experimenting with new technologies, discovering innovative ways they can be applied in classrooms, and then sharing what does and does not work through appropriate research and communication outlets. It is especially important to share findings associated with technology because of the rapid manner with which it changes. This is critical in marketing education because the curriculum must accurately mirror what is happening in the workplace. Used to its fullest extent, technology may be one of the most powerful tools educators have discovered. If marketing education is to continue to effectively prepare our students for life and employment, we must understand the ways that technology and other educational methodologies inspire our students.

NOTES

1. It is important to note that any findings should be interpreted within this limited course context. For example, a student's perception of his or her ability to obtain a job is somewhat different from the student's perception that a particular course will affect his or her ability to get a job. As the extant literature cited in developing these research questions operates within this context, interpretation of each research question must remain in respect to the students' perceptions of each course. The purpose of this study was not to explain students' perceptions of their overall ability to get a job. Rather, both the research questions (based on literature within the same context) and the measurement of the variables are specific to students' perceptions of these abilities relative to a particular course. Thus, a study that evaluates students' overall perceptions of their abilities may reach dissimilar conclusions.

2. The possibility exists of a disconnect between student and instructor goals. Indeed, Marks (2000); McCloy, Campbell, and Cudeck (1994); and Williams (1992) stress the importance of using more than one outcome variable in an educational setting to ensure that the goals of each stakeholder are represented. Therefore, this study used these multiple indicators to provide coverage if any disconnect did exist within this milieu. In addition, the stated and designed objectives of a particular class may affect student perception. The current literature indicates that student/instructor goals often possess great overlap (Marks 2000). Consequently, learning, ability to get a job, and job performance are identified through the literature as educational objectives for both students and instructors. Future research may wish to investigate the influence of course objectives in shaping student goals for a particular course.

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Marketing the Fantasy Football League: Utilization of Simulation to Enhance Sport Marketing Concepts

Andy Gillentine and Jeff Schulz

The use of simulation offers marketing educators many instructional opportunities that would be unavailable to students without the use of simulation. The operation of a fantasy football league offers a simulation that encompasses many of the factors that occur in day-to-day marketing operations in the sport industry. Previous studies investigating the use of role-play and simulation activities have documented higher levels of student motivation and involvement compared with traditional lecture methods. Through simulation, the student becomes an active participant in problem-solving situations rather than a passive recipient of information. Simulations also help prepare students to gain job-related skills desired by future employers. To explore the use of simulation, this article will examine the development and the advantages and disadvantages of using a fantasy football league to enhance comprehension of sport marketing concepts.

Kurt Warner's 4 touchdown passes and Marvin Harrison's 3 TD catches led the Tulsa Twisters to a 57-43 victory over the San Antonio Rustlers. The victory places Tulsa in first place of the Central Division, two games ahead of the Milwaukee Steam who are paced by Marshall Faulk's league-leading 15 touchdowns.

This narrative does not describe an all-star game or the demise of the National Football League (NFL); rather, it describes the weekly action of the fantasy football league. While dismissed by many as a silly diversion for overzealous football fans, it is nonetheless a popular pastime that has swept the United States in the past decade. Research estimates predict that more than 100 million fantasy football teams will be in existence by the end of the 2000 football season (Hiestand 1999). SportsLine.com, arguably one of the most popular Internet sports sites, receives more than 35.1 million hits daily from fantasy sport enthusiasts (Muellner 2000). Fantasy football offers participants the opportunity to make managerial decisions and to determine strategy for the fictitious teams composed of players from the NFL. While few individuals will reach positions that decide player selection and/or starting lineups in professional sports, there are other decisions regarding the marketing of a fantasy football team that can simulate jobs that many of our students will hold in the future. In addition to being an enjoyable pastime, the operation of a fantasy sport league provides a simulation that can be used as an innovative teaching tool.

The use of simulation in the classroom allows the student to obtain a level of comprehension and skill development that is seldom reached through traditional teaching methods. The use of a fantasy football league offers a simulation that encompasses many of the factors that occur in day-to-day marketing operations in the sport industry. To explore this concept further, this article will examine the development and use of a fantasy football league to enhance comprehension of sport marketing concepts. The incorporation of multiple individuals outside of the classroom and the unpredictable nature of sporting events make this project a truly innovative learning tool.

SIMULATION

A widely accepted definition of *simulation* describes it as a pedagogical method attempting to reflect actual situations through use of games, scenarios, role-playing, sociodrama, and decision-making experiences (Andes 1983; London 1970). This definition provides us with a broad base from which simulations may be developed and does not limit marketing educators to the contemporary notion that all simulations are computer based. The use of simulations primarily using human interaction (role-play) versus computer-based virtual simulations that minimize human interaction actually encourages greater emphasis on role-playing and sociodrama and the communication and leadership skills they demand. The inclusion of these and other human relations skills, in addition to academic objectives of the simulation, increases

the applicability of the skills and information learned and promotes the use of simulation as an innovative teaching tool.

ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF USING SIMULATION

Advantages

The use of simulation as a teaching tool holds many advantages to traditional lecture formats. Previous studies investigating the use of role-play and simulation activities have documented higher levels of student motivation and involvement compared with traditional lecture methods (Bobbitt et al. 2000; Newman et al. 2000). Generally, student motivation for using simulations is high because they help students experience direct application of skills and concepts learned in the classroom setting. Through simulation, the student becomes an active participant in the problem-solving situations rather than a passive recipient of information (Shakarian 1995). Students are further encouraged to explore new and innovative solutions to problems due to the low risk associated with the outcome of their decisions.

The viability of the simulation also helps the student develop the anticipation and coping skills needed for effective problem solving. Previous research indicates that the use of simulation promotes student interaction and participation, unlike traditional lecture methods that foster a sterile environment that discourages student involvement. The ability to predict consumer behavior and market changes, as well as manage unforeseeable events of business, is often viewed by employers as their most desired skill (Floyd and Gordon 1998; Mullin, Hardy, and Sutton 2000). Thus, the simulation provides the necessary training exercises needed by sport marketing students.

The problem-solving nature of the simulation encourages the emergence of leaders from the participant groups. The shifting of instructor from classroom leader to a facilitator role dictates that the mantel of leadership be accepted by one of the group members, so that the group can solve the problems and tasks it will face to successfully move ahead in the simulation. This leadership development can also promote the effective use of cooperative learning strategies that educational researchers have identified as very effective in the development of successful organizations (Herreid 1998).

Unlike real-life problems and work environments, an advantage of simulation use is the ability to manipulate and/or control time in the scenario. The marketing instructor is able to add or subtract to the time allotted to deal with simulation occurrences. Another important benefit of controlling the time used in the scenario is that it allows for recent events to be incorporated into the simulation, which further adds to the realism of the scenario.

Perhaps the greatest advantage of using simulation is that successfully developed simulations can be repeated with each new class. While the organization and implementation of the simulation can remain constant, the perpetually changing core product in sport will always add new scenarios to the simulation. This degree of uncertainty will help both the instructor and new students remain excited about the simulation.

Disadvantages

While the advantages of using simulations make it temping to immediately incorporate them into marketing curricular plans, the disadvantages must be acknowledged before implementing a simulation. The primary disadvantage of simulation use is the amount of time, energy, and forethought that must go into its development. Marketing educators must be careful not to underestimate the length of time that the successful development of the simulation will take and should be discouraged from using the simulation until the entire scenario is completed. Failure to properly develop the simulation will result in low levels of student motivation and can also foster improper or incorrect learning throughout the simulation (Shirts 1992). The simulation must be developed in a manner that will augment information gained through classroom discussion, lecture materials, and text references to successfully be used as a teaching tool. The instructor must invest a great deal of time, effort, and evaluation to ensure the completeness of the simulation. An incomplete or poorly thought-out simulation will not produce the results desired by the instructor or the students.

The actual length of time needed for the operation and completion of the simulation is an additional consideration for the marketing educator. The multiple scenarios involved in the simulation will command a great deal of time from the students both in and out of the classroom. For the scenario to be as successful as possible, it is imperative that classroom discussion of decisions and actions taken by participants be consistently done. This will add to the length of assigned times for each topic to be discussed and/or included in the simulation. Unplanned and often unexpected changes in the simulation will also add to the length of time needed for successful completion.

An additional important consideration for marketing educators is the evaluation of the participants and their decisions in the simulation. Earlier research indicates that limited evaluation of simulations has been identified as a weakness in their effectiveness as an educational tool (Andes 1983; Chaudhry and Crick 1997; Fairbanks 1994; Herreid 1998; Shirts 1992). To combat this weakness, the instructor must plan systematic and consistent evaluation into the simulation. These evaluations will add to the overall length of the simulation but cannot be underestimated in terms of importance. The marketing educator must remember that despite the amount of fun the students are having participating in the simulation, it is a learning tool, and sufficient and effective evaluation must be included. While minimal risk is an advantage in

encouraging students to actively participate in the simulation, it can be a disadvantage if the risk is not elevated to a level that generates concern on behalf of the students. A useful method to monitor student assumption of risk is with the consistent evaluation of simulation performance. This risk factor further emphasizes the need to fully incorporate the simulation into all aspects of the course. To further minimize the effect of too little risk, the simulation should be a significant factor in course grading.

This brings focus to a potential weakness of simulation that results from failure to completely incorporate it into other instructional strategies. Simulations should not stand alone in their classroom use. They are of limited effectiveness if not successfully incorporated into all classroom strategies and evaluation methods. Simulations left to stand on their own tend to serve only as time-consuming diversions that do not have the effectiveness of those that are incorporated. Students tend to view stand-alone simulations as time fillers and as irrelevant material. The well-developed simulation will be included and incorporated into all class discussions and lectures and should be listed as a weekly topic in the course schedule and outline.

OBJECTIVES OF FANTASY FOOTBALL LEAGUE SIMULATION

While the overall instructional objectives of the fantasy football league simulation are multiple, three primary objectives were considered in its development. The first objective was to affirm the uniqueness of sport marketing concepts as disseminated to the students through classroom discussion and lecture. Second, the simulation was designed to help students develop an appreciation for working in teams (agencies). Last, the simulation was developed to investigate student use of telecommunications and their potential use in sport marketing. In additional to these objectives, the simulation also helped students to (1) enhance marketing research skills, (2) strengthen oral and written communication skills, (3) develop strong problem-solving skills, and (4) experience application of marketing theories and concepts. The following sections describe why the three primary objectives are salient to sport marketing curriculums.

UNDERSTANDING THE UNIQUNESS OF SPORT MARKETING

Sport organizations have a history of failing to rely on sound marketing concepts and research and rather operate with a group of marketing myths that remain consistent within the sport industry (Mullin, Hardy, and Sutton 2000). The most dominant of these myths is the belief that winning games will solve the need for effective product marketing. Despite research to the contrary, sport marketers find this myth the most difficult to dispel (Mullin, Hardy, and Sutton

2000). Sport marketing students need to understand the importance of sound marketing strategies and their proper use. Through the use of the fantasy football league simulation, students can experience the effects that successful marketing can have on the overall performance of the franchise. Students are evaluated and agencies are rated on the success of their marketing strategies without relationship to their "on-field" success or failure. It is important for the sport marketing student to understand that he or she will have little or no control over the core product. This places greater emphasis on the successful marketing of product extensions.

A second myth that students must overcome is the belief that the extensive amount of media coverage received by sport "takes care of the marketing." Although media coverage of sports has grown exponentially over the past decade, students must realize that it does not replace sound marketing plans and strategies. Students must develop an understanding of the potential damage that poor use of marketing strategies and overdependence on the sports media can have on the core product. To dispel this myth, students are presented with (fictitious and real) media reports that depict both positive and negative situations throughout the simulation. Students are required to incorporate and/or react to the situation and adjust their marketing plans and strategy, if appropriate. This process helps solidify the fact that the core product in the sport industry is inconsistent and unpredictable.

Last, sport marketing has long followed the misguided notion that due to the popularity of sport, "business will come to them" without sound marketing strategies. Students must be reminded that the *Field of Dreams* concept—"If you build it, they will come"—is a dangerous and potentially disastrous belief (Gillentine and Schulz 1998). Consistently, successful sport franchises in a variety of popular sports have suffered from poor attendance and lagging merchandise sales largely due to poor or nonexistent marketing plans (Mullin, Hardy, and Sutton 2000). Sport marketing instructors must help students understand that the sport product must be presold because it is simultaneously produced and consumed. The core product cannot be inventoried and carried over to the next day, making it paramount that the sport marketer successfully sells the entire product.

The simulation must overcome these myths and reflect core marketing concepts to meet the objectives of using the simulation in the sport marketing class. Students must be develop an appreciation of the failure to recognize these myths and be prepared to minimize the passage of these myths from one generation of sport marketers to the next.

DEVELOPING AN APPRECIATION FOR WORKING IN TEAMS

The ability to work as a member of a team or group is viewed as a valuable asset by potential employers (Doherty 1997). The use of teams or agencies in the fantasy football

simulation fosters a cooperative learning environment that can produce many desired outcomes. The agency grouping will help the students develop group problem-solving skills, enhance group communication skills, and promote the development of leadership abilities in agency members. The agency will also encourage the delegation of responsibilities, the recognition of individual strengths and weaknesses, and the development of higher quality products. In addition, the simulation helps students understand the synergistic concept of management through the use of multiple agency skills and abilities (Jones 1995).

The formation of student agencies also assists students in preparing for the challenges posed through working with others. The skills of conflict resolution, group and individual motivation, delegation skills, and communication will be of great importance to agency members. The successful completion of the simulation will require that the agencies learn to function effectively and efficiently as a team. Although learning to function as a team will pose a challenge to the students, students have consistently rated group projects as more enjoyable and support the research findings that they are more effective as a learning tool than individual assignments (Bobbitt et al. 2000; Hammer 2000; Shakarian 1995).

INVESTIGATING THE USE OF TELECOMUNICATIONS IN SPORT MARKETING

Internet telecommunications is one of the most powerful emerging technologies. The rapid growth of this communications avenue has had a dramatic impact on the way businesses operate. Conservative estimates indicate that more than 48 million individuals have a minimum of a personal e-mail address and that the Internet has risen to the top of information distribution services (Gillentine and Gilmore 1998). Thus, it is imperative that educators use and incorporate these technologies into the classroom setting.

The fantasy football simulation allows the educator a unique opportunity to use Internet communication venues in a number of ways. The fantasy football league uses an Internet Web site (http://www.Outback.com) as its basic communication tool. Through this site, all common league information, team rosters, league divisions, transactions, starting lineups, individual and team statistics, and league schedules are housed. In addition to this information, the league Web site also houses a weekly newsletter generated by the commissioner and instructor. The newsletter is used as a vehicle to disseminate information and rumors that the agencies are required to react to. The agencies are also sent individual and group information through e-mail. Students are required to maintain an e-mail account and must respond to all e-mail messages promptly. In addition to simulation material, e-mail is used inform students of all class events, assignments, and changes.

Agencies are required to develop their own team Web site and to formally present the site to class members and franchise owners. The agency will use the Web site to keep the general public informed of team events and progress. Students are required to inform the instructor of all progress on assignments through e-mail communication and to keep the owner informed of all proposals and meeting requests. For many students, the consistent use of e-mail and Web site communication is new. Instruction regarding e-mail etiquette and basic Web site construction must be included in curricular plans. Students should also be provided with a schedule of additional computer training sessions that may be available through campus resources.

DEVELOPING THE SIMULATION

The development of the fantasy football simulation should begin several weeks prior to the beginning of the NFL season. Fantasy sport simulations using different professional sports should also begin preparation well before the beginning of the corresponding season. As previously discussed, the marketing educator must allow for ample time to develop the operational base of the simulation for it to be successful. Students are not involved in the developmental stages of the simulation to ensure the spontaneous nature of the simulation for students. The following steps can be helpful in developing the simulation:

1. Selection of league commissioner. The selection of league commissioner is the first step in the development of the fantasy football simulation. The role of the commissioner is vital to the successful and consistent operation of the league. The commissioner is responsible for handling league operations, reporting roster development and transactions, reporting game scores and team standings, and communicating league concerns/needs to the owners and agencies. It is best if the league commissioner is someone other than the course instructor, nor should it be a student enrolled in the course. This allows the instructor to continue to serve as a resource person for the agencies and also increases the emphasis on effective communication with parties external to the marketing agency. The commissioner also plays a significant role in deciding the management tools used to operate the fantasy league. Many different commercial software packages are available for fantasy league operation. The commissioner and instructor will need to decide which software provides the support needed and is easiest to incorporate. The software provides an easy and efficient method of maintaining individual and team scoring statistics, team rosters, and league standings. While many leagues operate without the use of computer software, failure to use it weakens the objective of incorporating technology into the simulation.

2. Determining scoring/playing procedures. The determination of how fantasy league games will be scored is an

important step in developing the league. There are multiple methods to score fantasy football games, ranging from simplistic to very complex. In order not to distract students from the objectives of the simulation, a simple scoring method of play should be used in the fantasy football simulation. Each week, the owner selects seven players from his or her roster to serve as a starting lineup. The starting lineup must consist of one quarterback, two running backs, two wide receivers, one tight end, and one kicker. Owners also select a coach and a defense/special team. Scoring simply reflects the actual points scored in NFL games by the players. Fantasy teams are awarded 1 point if the coach wins and actual points if your defense/special team scores. Teams are divided into divisions, and schedules for play are determined by the commissioner (this is also a function available in software packages).

3. Recruiting owners. The recruitment of owners for the fantasy league is a crucial step in the successful operation of the fantasy league. The owners must be willing to be active participants in the simulation. The enjoyment of bringing the fantasy football league to life and the ability to play a role in the development of future sport professionals are the primary incentives for owners to participate in the simulation. Each owner actually pays a fee to participate in the league. The fees are used to purchase software (if necessary) and to provide rewards for teams achieving various league goals. The owners are asked to help with the enforcement of simulation objectives and must be willing to dedicate the time necessary to work with their marketing agency. It is advantageous to have a diverse group to maintain the realism of the scenarios. The use of owners unknown to the students and from outside the educational setting add to the usefulness of the owners' role. Often, additional individuals have been used as "business agents" or as the CEO if actual owners are "too familiar" to the students. The owners' time investment in the simulation is minimal but nonetheless very important. The owners are asked to interact with the students and to provide evaluation of selected project presentations (team name and logos, uniform designs, and promotional ideas and schedule). Owners are encouraged to spend additional time working with their assigned agency but are not "required" to spend more than a minimal time investment.

4. Identification of cities. A list of possible team locations must be developed prior to the draft. Cities are selected based on their population, geographic region, availability of suitable stadium site, and lack of current professional football team. Students will be required to conduct extensive demographic studies of the team location to identify strengths and weaknesses of the market. It is best to use cities that will challenge the students' analytical and research skills yet do not pose an impossible situation. Examples of cities used in the simulation are the following: Honolulu, Memphis, Tulsa, Little Rock, Albuquerque, and Portland.

5. The player draft. As in actual profession sport leagues, marketing agencies are not involved in drafting team players, coaches, and special teams or selecting franchise locations. These responsibilities are delegated solely to the team owners. The draft order is randomly selected and follows a descending-ascending order (i.e., 1-12, 12-1). The draft also allows the league commissioner (and course instructor) to further explain the simulation requirements of the students with the owners. It is appropriate to distribute examples of evaluation materials that owners will be required to use and to give tentative time schedules when they can expect contact from their agency. Students are not involved in the player draft, nor are they allowed input into player personnel decisions, to help maintain the realism of the simulation and reinforce the uniqueness of the sport product. Professional sport marketers will not have input into players chosen by team owners and/or player personnel directors. The draft reinforces the understanding that the sport marketer has no control over the core product. Understanding this principle downplays the importance of winning games in the marketing plan. The students learn to focus their plans only in those areas over which they can exert some control.

6. Development of scenarios. The commissioner, instructor, and team owners all play an important role in the creation of scenarios that will be introduced to the marketing agencies throughout the season. These scenarios will provide the agencies the opportunity to work through situations that support and use information acquired through classroom lectures and discussion. The course instructor determines the use and implementation of the scenarios. Scenario information is delivered to students through electronic delivery (e-mail) and through in-class assignments. Additional scenarios will develop "on their own" throughout the fantasy season. Input from team owners is also sought to develop and evaluate scenarios as they occur. Generally, the scenarios are developed prior to the season and may be used annually. Sources for the development of scenarios used in the fantasy football league simulation came from the following areas:

- Working for the rich and powerful
  Agencies learn to work with independent owners who have the ultimate authority in accepting or rejecting the agencies' marketing plans and strategies.
- Dealing with the win/loss record
  Agencies learn they have little control over the core product, and they must keep marketing emphasis on product extensions. The agencies must also learn to be proactive in generating a positive image of the fantasy team and product extensions.
- Unannounced roster transactions
  The sudden trade of or injury to a star player can have a dramatic impact on marketing plans. Agencies are often the last to be informed of roster moves made by owners yet must maintain a consistent product.

- The good, the bad, and the ugly
  The unknown can come in varying fashions. Marketing agencies may be presented with a positive occurrence by a player or coach or can be presented with unpleasant actions. Player arrests, fines, or ill-mannered public behavior all have an impact on the marketing strategies designed by the agencies.
- Weather problems
  Weather can be a hindrance to teams despite being good or bad. Poor weather during home games can keep fans away. Good weather can also present problems for teams in that it often encourages people to engage in other activities. The franchise location has an impact on the reaction to weather issues. The league commissioner and instructor determine the potential impact of weekly weather on the game-to-game attendance of teams.
- Attendance problems
  Game attendance is a good indicator of the successful marketing and development of any sport franchise. Fantasy agencies must be aware of their weekly attendance levels and react accordingly. The determination of game attendance is configured from a combination of location weather, agency scores on assignments, fan focus group reactions, and win/loss records. The franchise's win/loss record accounts for only a small percentage of the attendance, helping dispel the myth that winning takes care of marketing needs.
- League mandates
  The commissioner's office will distribute league mandates to all franchises at varying times during the season. Generally, these mandates deal with league-wide attendance, efforts to promote fan appreciation, new ways to encourage fan involvement, and innovative league-wide marketing techniques. These mandates serve as the basis for larger group projects.
- Sponsorship problems
  The financial stability of franchises and the fantasy football league is often determined by corporate sponsorship. The marketing agencies are asked to determine the appropriateness of individual sponsors and to identify potential sponsors both for the individual franchises and league wide.
- Sales campaigns
  Agencies will be asked to develop effective sales campaigns to develop a strong ticket base. Successful campaigns appropriately identify market segments and create effective ticket marketing strategies.

7. Creation of agencies. Through random assignment of students, marketing agencies are developed during the first class meeting. The random process and outcomes foster the need for team development activities and reinforce the need for learning to work with a diverse group of people. Typically, agencies consist of no more than three members and no less than two. Class enrollment and the number of franchises will dictate adjustments, but it is important to use groups rather than individuals as marketing agencies. The student groups should be referred to at all times as agencies to help promote a professional atmosphere. They are encouraged to create an agency name and use it on all presentation materials and correspondence.

8. Assignment of agencies. Once the team makeup of marketing agencies has been established, the agencies will be hired (assigned) to a fantasy football team and owner. The assignment to franchises is randomly done to discourage agencies from selecting owners and/or cities with which they are more familiar. The members of the marketing agency are required to meet with the team owner to gather information and ownership goals for the upcoming season and will continue to report to the owner throughout the season. All decisions regarding the marketing of the fantasy team must meet with the approval of the owner.

9. Incorporation of simulation. The simulation should be thoroughly infused into the course schedule. Scenarios are designed to augment course content as introduced through lecture and discussion. To ensure continuity between course objectives and simulation objectives, specific lecture topics, assignments, and response dates must be designated. Lecture topics help the students maintain the relationship between the simulation and course content. Examples of these topics are the following: researching the fantasy football league (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats [SWOT] analysis), segmenting the fantasy football league, developing the fantasy football league fan base, and sponsorship and the fantasy football league. Alternating class periods are designated for assignments and topics specifically focusing on the simulation. More time can be assigned as needed by the instructor. As the course progresses, the instructor will find additional segues between course materials and occurrences in the fantasy football league available. These often unexpected developments add to the innovative nature of the simulation.

AGENCY REQUIREMENTS

Each agency is required to formally present and submit the following materials to the commissioner, team owner, and fellow agencies. In addition, agencies are required to submit their proposal to a focus group and evaluate group response.

1. Design an overall marketing plan for the franchise.
2. Determine team names and colors.
3. Design uniforms and logo(s).
4. Determine promotional schedule.
5. Develop promotional materials.
6. Design and update team Web site.
7. Solve product problems as they arise.
8. Make a formal presentation of the marketing plan and project requirements.
9. Develop a written marketing plan, including summary and evaluation for instructor.
   The written project must include the following elements: executive summary, situational analysis, target market(s), problems and opportunities, goals and objectives, strategies, implementation and control, summary, and resources and references.

The development of team names and logos must be original. The use of current NFL or other professional sport teams logos or materials is forbidden. Agencies must also indicate when using other copyrighted images. Agencies are supplied with team location, team roster, team owner, stadium site, and team and league schedule. These materials must reflect the demographic research conducted by the agency and must meet with the approval of all parties. Images or names that may be suggestive in nature are not allowed, and the use of any such material in any promotional materials results in a fine levied against the marketing agency and the team owner.

Student agencies will also be asked to perform large group activities to investigate league problems and/or conduct research projects. These groups are formed by randomly assigning agencies to groups of three or more. Each large group is assigned a topic that they will research. Multiple topics or problems are used, and no group works on the same problem or issue. Topics for group work may include the development of fan appreciation events, the effectiveness of pregame tailgating events as a marketing tool, and the impact of player-fan interaction with fan loyalty. Generally, three large groups have been developed. Groups are required to plan, develop, and implement a research project. Periodically through this project, the group is required to present their progress and acknowledge difficulties it has encountered. The use of this large group assignment identifies another uniqueness of the sport industry demonstrating the simultaneous competition and cooperation needed for overall product success (Mullin, Hardy, and Sutton 2000).

STUDENT ASSESSMENT

The assessment of student comprehension and academic achievement during the fantasy sport simulation offers the marketing educator additional areas for innovative changes. Each agency is required to make a series of professional presentations regarding its marketing plans and strategies. The opportunity to make a professional presentation of research findings and marketing strategies only further prepares the student for professional employment. Grading procedures for presentations include professional appearance, quality of background research (SWOT), quality of visual aids, quality of handout materials, effective use of time, effective use of references, successfully answered questions, and overall effectiveness of presentation. These presentations are done not only for their classmates and instructors but also for the league commissioner, owners, and focus groups if appropriate. The inclusion of individuals outside of the classroom affirms the realism desired from the simulation. Additional evaluations of agency projects can be included, using experts in various areas of the simulation. An example would be the inclusion of a focus group when presenting proposed team names and logos, or a professional "Web Master" during franchise Web site presentations.

Student assessment also includes instructor evaluation of agency responses to the various scenarios that are presented during the simulation. These responses differ from those that are formally presented and generally are submitted in a formal written response. These responses can be in the form of an e-mail, memo, letter, or report dependent on situation. These written responses are evaluated by the course instructor and often by the league commissioner.

In-class examinations are also used in assessing student understanding of topics emphasized through the simulation. Exam questions should be modified to reflect scenarios used in the fantasy football simulation. This innovative modification further reinforces concepts stressed in the simulation.

STUDENT PERCEPTIONS
OF FANTASY FOOTBALL SIMULATION

While the purpose of this article is to discuss the use and development of simulation in the classroom, it is appropriate to offer some insight on students' perceptions of the use of this simulation. The fantasy football simulation has been used for three semesters in a graduate-level sport marketing course. Student response ($n = 67$) to a summative simulation evaluation using a 5-point Likert scale (see Table 1) indicates that 96% felt that the simulation was a useful teaching tool. Ninety percent of students also indicated that the simulation effectively helped them understand the intricacies of working within a team situation. An overall positive response was indicated by students in all areas included in the summative evaluation. When asked to indicate their level of computer skills at the beginning of the course, 32% of the students indicated they had little or no computer skills. At the conclusion of the simulation, no students indicated they had anything less than average skills (46%), and 54% indicated they had above-average to very good computer skills (see Table 2). All students involved with the simulation felt that the use and development of a related Web site were helpful in achieving course objectives.

Written student responses also reflected a positive perception of the fantasy football league simulation and reinforced the successful achievement of course objectives (see Table 3). When asked about changes and/or additions to the simulation, students consistently indicated they would like to receive additional computer training to further their understanding of the effective use of computer communication technology.

CONCLUDING COMMENTS

Fantasy sport offers an effective, entertaining, and innovative vehicle through which many educational objectives may be attained. The combination of entertainment, business, and competition offers participants in the fantasy sport simulation varying sources of motivation. The use of simulation appears to be a

TABLE 1
SUMMATIVE EVALUATION OF FANTASY FOOTBALL SIMULATION (IN PERCENTAGES)

	Agree	Unsure	Disagree
Usefulness as an educational tool	96	2	2
Ability to reflect current marketing trends	83	17	0
Ability to identify important issues	91	8	1
Ability to stimulate classroom discussion	83	10	6
Effectiveness of related assignments/quizzes	92	6	2
Promotes understanding the intricacies of working in a team situation	90	5	5
Development/use of Web site was helpful	97	2	1
Overall satisfaction with simulation	92	6	2
Recommend continued use of this type of simulation	93	5	2

NOTE: Responses *agree* and *strongly agree* were collapsed, as were *disagree* and *strongly disagree,* to offer a stronger statement of agreement or disagreement.

TABLE 2
STUDENTS' PERCEIVED COMPUTER ABILITIES

	Percentage					
	1	2	3	4	5	Mean
Before participation in simulation	10	21	43	21	3	2.85
After participation in simulation	0	0	46	36	18	3.71

NOTE: 1 = no computer skills; 2 = little computer skills; 3 = average computer skills; 4 = above-average computer skills; 5 = very good computer skills.

TABLE 3
SELECTED STUDENT COMMENTS REGARDING USE OF FANTASY FOOTBALL SIMULATION

I would much rather apply what we are learning (as we did) than rely solely on lecture and book information.
The course was excellent because we were able to take a product, our franchise, and experience some real-world marketing scenarios.
Using fantasy football helped made it [course content] more real.
I always enjoy coming to this class because the things we talk about are always timely and current.
We were able to express our own ideas in this class.
It [fantasy football] gave the class a sense of realism and practicality.
Marketing the FFL [fantasy football league] gives you a chance to actually do things you learn in class.
The FFL prepared us for realistic problems we may face.
I came out of this class with more than just a grade.
The hands-on aspect of the class made it very educational.
The real-life scenarios made everything clearer.
[What do you like most?] The fun involved.

specifically effective method of teaching sport marketing concepts. The emphasis on the application of marketing concepts helps prepare the students for expectations of future employers.

The popularity of sport and the dramatic growth of the sport industry make the use of fantasy sports an ideal educational tool. The inclusion of technology in the simulation allows marketing instructors to move ahead of traditional educational curriculums that have been slow to incorporate new technologies. Expansion of computer usage and design will serve to improve simulations and increase realism. The encouragement of student creativity will further the use of technology in these simulations. Preliminary analysis of student perceptions of the fantasy football simulation indicates an overall high level of satisfaction. Further analysis of student perceptions and performance will continue to clarify the effectiveness of simulation use.

Comparison of student performance between classes using fantasy sport simulation and classes using only lecture

methods will advance our understanding of the effectiveness of simulation as a teaching tool.

Faculty should be encouraged to consider the incorporation of simulations into their curriculums. The continued development of fantasy sport simulations will allow educators to use this educational method throughout the academic year. The use of multiple sports such as basketball, hockey, and baseball will enhance the use of simulation in teaching marketing concepts and identifying new and exciting scenarios. Careful consideration of the advantages and disadvantages of the incorporation of simulation should give marketing educators adequate insight into their potential use. In light of current calls for education reform and change, it is imperative for educators to seek effective experiential and interactive methods for teaching students. The use of innovative teaching tools such as simulation will enhance the learning experiences of sport marketing students and better prepare them to enter the workforce.

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Course Participation: An Active Learning Approach Employing Student Documentation

Robert M. Peterson

Documenting student participation is not an easy task, for the professor or the student. The purpose of this article is to (1) offer an approach for getting students to take responsibility for documenting their level of course participation and (2) explore the active learning framework to teaching that might best support this approach to participation documentation. Student examples are offered as an illustration of what can transpire when students are required to be the center of their learning and must document their own participation in a course. The assignment of having the students document their own learning behavior often meets with resistance and bewilderment from students. Thus, common failures and student perceptions are also highlighted.

Giving students a reasonable sense of control over their experiences increases their motivation to engage in learning tasks.
—VanVoorhis (1995, p. 4)

While participation is often part of an instructor's syllabus, sometimes accounting for 5% to 50% of a student's grade, it is often difficult to track each person's progress on this element. Increasing difficulties ensue when class size rises above 20 people. Often a professor must recall, "Did this person speak up in class?" or "Did he or she appear prepared and interested in the topic?" Participation in a course will always be a difficult item to measure. With a little creativity and an active learning atmosphere, however, this vital element of learning can be better ascertained and developed.

Class participation can mean many things, such as "being there" (as in exposure or retention rates) or "taking part" (as in doing activities) (Holdsworth 1998), but it can and should be much more. Perhaps professors should look at "course participation" as opposed to "class participation." Course participation may include readily speaking, thinking, reading, role taking, risk taking, and engaging oneself and others, and it may occur inside or outside the classroom confines. For some, the idea of participating outside the traditional class boundary is new, but this may be the ultimate in cognitive attainment (Bloom 1956). The intent is to critically think about the material, explore its meaning and usefulness in various settings, and make thoughtful contributions that advance conversation, interaction, and learning while respecting the views of others. An active learning atmosphere seems to complement the participation approach to learning. To allow students to maximize their participation, the teaching environment must be conducive. For some teachers and students, active learning is not revolutionary and has already been adopted, but common knowledge is not always common practice, and many have not exposed themselves to teaching and learning approaches.

While most studies on participation have focused on children, little is known about how active learning manifests itself in college classrooms (Fassinger 1995). The purpose of this study is to (1) offer a method for getting students to take responsibility for documenting their level of participation in the classroom and (2) explore the active learning framework to teaching that might best support this approach to participation documentation. The intent is to offer specific activities that students must perform that bolster an active learning atmosphere. The article begins with a brief review of a traditional teaching paradigm. This is followed by the elements of an active learning environment. Next, student examples are offered as an illustration of what can transpire when students are required to be the *center of their learning* and must document their own participation in class. Finally, conclusions are offered to the reader.

THE TRADITIONAL TEACHING PARADIGM

The traditional teaching paradigm "viewed the mind as an empty slate rather than a muscle that needed exercising through constant challenge" (Wright, Bitner, and Zeithaml 1994, p. 9). Many teachers have taught students using the fol-

lowing five standards (Wright, Bitner, and Zeithaml 1994, p. 10):

1. Faculty transfers knowledge to students, who are expected to memorize and recall.
2. Students are passive receptacles to be filled with information that is owned by the faculty.
3. Faculty are responsible for sorting and classifying students into appropriate categories by assigning grades—often based on a statistically derived curve.
4. Relationships between faculty and students are impersonal and interchangeable.
5. Students operate in a competitive environment where the goal is to outperform their classmates (and where faculty also work to outdo their colleagues).

The impetus for replacing the traditional paradigm with an active learning paradigm is that students will use, and therefore better retain, information taught in the classroom. One of the main teaching approaches used for the traditional educational paradigm is lecture. Butler (1992) states that "teachers in most institutions spend 80 percent of their time lecturing to students, who in turn are attentive some 50 percent of the time" (p. 3). Students are not necessarily learning information but rather learning note-taking skills (Lunsford and Herzog 1997). However, students will take ownership of information if they practice using it (Wright, Bitner, and Zeithaml 1994). Warren (1997) asks a serious question that must be considered: "Is it the responsibility of the teacher to assume all the risks so that students can feel OK?" (p. 18). Some of the world's greatest achievements were garnered when there was some level of uncertainty or risk involved (e.g., space program, polio serum, skin grafts, etc.). The same premise holds true for knowledge acquisition.

The traditional educational paradigm often contains certain attitudes developed by students in their quest for passing a course. Rather than focusing on what information should be absorbed and retained from the course, students focus on the minor details for improving their own grade. Questions such as, "How many pages does it have to be?" "Do we have to type it?" and "What's the right answer?" are typically asked in classrooms (Burk and Dunn 1996, p. 12). This narrow view of education can be dangerous when students enter the "real world." The traditional paradigm often does not equip students to think for themselves or for their employers.

THE ACTIVE LEARNING APPROACH

Active learning is "the process of making students the center of their learning" (Warren 1997, p. 16). The active learning approach is important because many business leaders have concerns about the level of skills that today's students are acquiring in college courses. An American Assembly of Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) survey claims that two-thirds of business employers feel that students need more

work in the area of management, including communication skills (Wright, Bitner, and Zeithaml 1994). Students were lacking skills in areas such as cross-functional integration, teamwork and team building, team or servant leadership, and oral and written communication, according to Wright, Bitner, and Zeithaml's (1994) findings. The active learning approach may equip students to become more effective in today's businesses by honing these skills. If the students' goal is demonstration of knowledge, as opposed to regurgitation of information gathered, perhaps more career-enhancing opportunities will be afforded them (see Table 1 for an outline of the differences between the two teaching paradigms).

We do know that if the instructor's standards are high, students will generally rise to meet those standards (Cross 1987). We must expect more from our students to prepare them for the skills they will need in the changing marketplace. Burk and Dunn (1996) suggest that active learning is what is needed so young adults can devise theories that guide them throughout their lifetimes. In addition, Talbot (1997) states that "few college teachers receive instruction in how to present intellectually exciting lectures, to lead engaging discussions, or to relate to students in ways that promote motivation and independent learning" (p. 7). Most important, research suggests that those students with initiative will succeed in life, rather than those with the highest grades (Warren 1997).

ACTIVE LEARNING REQUIREMENTS AND EXTENSIONS

The research surrounding active learning reveals that certain requirements are necessary for successful implementation. Warren (1997) suggests that "active learning requires preparing prior to each class, talking in class even if shy, seriously listening to the comments of fellow students, solving problems, and learning to live with ambiguity instead of oversimplified answers to complex questions" (p. 17). Preparation is necessary for each class, not just when exams or quizzes are given. The rationale behind this is that the learning that takes place outside the classroom is "the most significant educational experience for roughly 40% of students" (Moffatt 1989, p. 32).

Active learning requires asking students questions in a new format. Rather than prodding for the "correct answer," more subjective questions must be posed. Questions such as, "Was there anything in the readings that surprised you?" or "Was there anything with which you disagreed?" are effective jumping-off points. Burk and Dunn (1996) suggest that "defending an answer sometimes reveals to others why the position makes sense; and sometimes it reveals to the speaker why it does not" (p. 12). It is hoped that the student will learn that while the right answer is coveted, discovering the thinking and logical deduction processes involved in questioning is most important in the long run.

TABLE 1
A COMPARISON OF TRADITIONAL AND NEW TEACHING PARADIGMS

	Traditional Paradigm (Passive Learning Approach)	New Paradigm (Active Learning Approach)
Knowledge	Transferred from faculty to students	Jointly constructed
Students	Passive containers to be filled with faculty's knowledge	Active constructors, discoverers, transformers of own knowledge
Faculty role	Classify and sort students	Develop students' competencies and talents
Relationships	Impersonal relationships among students and between faculty and students	Personal interactions among students and between faculty and students
Activity type	Competitive and individualistic learning activities	Mixture of individual and cooperative learning activities
Assumptions	Any expert can teach	Teaching is complex and requires considerable training

SOURCE: Wright, Bitner, and Zeithaml (1994).

Active learning also requires instructions on how to understand various styles of teaching techniques. Warren (1997) suggests implementing a "manual" in the course, outlining teaching techniques, and explaining both the positive and negative attributes associated with those teaching styles. Because active learning will encompass fewer lectures, students need to understand these alternative forms of instruction (Schuyler 1997).

Research has indicated that the active learning approach has resulted in various outcomes. Time and again, better learning has resulted through the well-designed practice of theories associated with active learning (Johnson and Johnson 1993; Mayes et al. 1997; Young 1997). Warren (1997) suggests that students not only learn the content of information but also "improve their critical thinking, learn to manage their time, practice interpersonal, listening and speaking skills, become better writers, and gain a sensitivity to cultural differences" (p. 16). Active learning has been linked to higher student motivation (Garcia and Pontrich 1996; Stipek, Salmon, and Givvin 1998). This type of active participation has also been found to enhance student intellectual development (Balenky et al. 1986; McKeachie 1990). Lunsford and Herzog (1997) suggest that this theory engages students actively and critically in the process of learning. Jacobsen (1995) believes that active learning promotes "the kinds of activities that help the student connect the new academic subjects they are learning with other things they already know or have experienced" (p. 3).

Thus, the active learning approach, in which the student is the center of the learning, appears to yield very positive results. Perhaps harnessing this approach and using it in the important but underexplored area of classroom participation can be beneficial to both the student and instructor alike.

STUDENTS DOCUMENT
THEIR OWN PARTICIPATION

This approach is not without precedent. In the education field, student portfolios are sometimes used as a "collection of student work that tells the story of the student's efforts, progress, or achievements in a given area" (Arter and Spandel 1992, p. 36). Thus, student documentation of their own participation is a method that appears to be highly consistent with an active learning approach. What if, instead of the professor straining to substantiate student participation points, the student is asked/mandated to be active in documenting such accomplishments? The intent is to allow the students to document their progress throughout the course. Implementing this procedure entails requesting the students to offer proof of their participation level sometime after the mid-semester point. Each individual is requested to chronicle attainments in any manner one chooses. Nearly all will choose a written format as the conveyance mechanism, but some may opt to create a video or some other unique method. The students are encouraged to be as creative as possible but cautioned not to offer form over content. The intent is to measure student contribution, learning that has occurred, the ability to apply knowledge, and persuasive writing capabilities.

Most of the examples used in this manuscript originated from negotiation strategies courses taught to both undergraduate and graduate students. Depending on the course, an instructor can choose to emphasize any aspect of the assignment. For example, if used in an advertising course, layout, headers, copy, and so on would loom more important than in a marketing research course. Since the examples offered here are derived from a negotiation class, evidence of students reaching their prescribed goals was viewed most positively. Overall, students must persuade the instructor that they have understood course content while actively participating and supply the evidence to support their claims.

NOTABLE EXAMPLES OF
PARTICIPATION DOCUMENTATION

Numerous anecdotal examples of students excelling in the classroom by actively participating exist. What follows are some of the more creative and diverse student illustrations of their participation when required to be the center of their learning. Clearly, some students' examples offer more substance than others when supporting their claims of a high

TABLE 2
EXCERPTS FROM A STUDENT PRESS RELEASE

Khristie invented a creative way for the professor to remember her name by wearing a Target name badge (enduring humiliation throughout the process).

Khristie called the professor outside of class to ask how she could better her performance.

Khristie took interest enough in the class to bring in outside articles and turned an article on gender communication into a class assignment (i.e., Tannen article).

Khristie always incorporates the reading material into her homework assignments and class discussions. An example of this would be including a quote from the Dale Carnegie book in the Sept. 11th assignment and including an example directly from *Getting to Yes* in the same assignment.

level of contribution. Again, these examples were chosen with a desire to showcase the scope of responses and are not solely indicative of the "correct" method. Moreover, many students used multiple pages to generate their responses, which overwhelms the capacity to be included in this article; hence, excerpts are offered.

The professor wanted everyone in the class to learn each other's names as quickly as possible. The ability to address comments to others in the class by using that person's name is a professional approach to active learning. To complete this name-learning objective, one student was very innovative with her tactic to get others, and the professor, to recall her name. For 2 weeks, the student wore her old name badge from when she used to work for a discount retailer. Everyone quickly learned her name, and the class began to take on shades of a "seminar" learning format with students addressing comments and politely challenging remarks mentioned by others. Course evaluations have consistently noted that "actually getting to know others by name in the class" is something they like and miss from other courses.

This same student developed her own press release concept to showcase how she was actively learning (excerpts in Table 2). She shared with us her story of being pulled over by a police officer and cited for exceeding the speed limit. She also recounted her failed attempts at negotiating her way out of the predicament. In addition, the student mentions finding a highly relevant article for class that was actually turned into a homework assignment. This *Harvard Business Review* article pertains to the different ways men and women communicate, and it continues to be assigned in the course. Moreover, she quoted the course reading material in her written assignments, which may sound ordinary but required astute thinking in this particular case. These examples of truly becoming "involved" in the class and using the materials in daily life are indicative of a student embracing the active learning environment.

On a more personal approach, one student used the opportunity to articulate how new behaviors and cognitions led to a more functional relationship with his spouse. The student's ability and willingness to share such a personal story about himself show the potential of the active learning paradigm.

One goal of learning is to be able to use and draw on this knowledge to improve one's life and those around you. This student used material from class to change his approach to potentially confrontational discussions with his wife. Arguably, this exchange and behavior could be classified as high on Bloom's (1956) taxonomy of cognitive objectives. One of the benefits of asking the student to articulate his participation is that he chose the opportunity to relive, thus reinforce, the positive learning experience he helped create for himself. A brief portion of his comments is contained in Table 3.

One of the best examples of active learning and participation is to have a student take the skills taught in class and readily apply them to the professional world. Creating a mock exam was the choice made by one student to demonstrate his level of participation. His first test question (see Table 4) has a possible answer, labeled "C," that is truly a step forward in active learning. Here, the student was so motivated that he "actually applied some of the material" he learned in the previous lesson to his job. Again, this is a great example of active participation leaving the confines of the classroom and being used where it is generally intended, the professional world. A book assigned in the course, *How to Win Friends and Influence People*, resided in his hip pocket as evidenced several times on campus by the professor. In the end, the student self-scored the exam and, not surprisingly, he earned a 95%.

The final example (see Table 5) is comparable to the first, as it is a news release but with a more professional industry focus. The student offers a statement that is characteristic of an active learning approach: "Participation is an action whereby an individual engages in the learning process." He mentioned that serious preparation prior to class, exactly what Moffatt (1989) noted earlier, aids in knowledge acquisition. Remarkably, the student negotiated a 12% wage increase and earned a promotion during the semester. Again, the sample for this research is a negotiation class; hence, the example offered is considered highly valued in this domain. He starts by offering a list of things that he thinks participation includes, then presents several supporting examples. In the final analysis, a comment from another worker about the student summarized a high level of participation by, in effect, stating that he had internalized the skills taught in class and

TABLE 3
EXCERPT FROM A PERSONAL EXPLORATION

I took your lecture on "negotiating on issues not positions" to heart. When my wife and I would have a disagreement in the past, I usually held my position, whether I was right or not (i.e., saving face). Now I express my desire to separate the people from the problem and it works amazingly. She wanted to buy something I felt we did not have the money for. Instead of launching on her like I often have done, I asked a series of questions to understand her intentions. We ended up not buying the item, not because we got in a fight and someone had to win, but because I calmly addressed the issue and did not take a negative position during the conversation.

TABLE 4
PSEUDO-PARTICIPATION EXAM

Which statement BEST identifies your feelings toward the negotiation course?
  A.   This is the most informative class I have taken at the university.
  B.   I have a sincere interest in learning the course objectives; hence it is why I have attended every class meeting and participated in class discussion.
  C.   I have actually applied some of the material I have learned in class to my daily life, such as the way I deal with customers at work. For instance, I always take that extra step to help customers because they will leave the store with a positive attitude.
  D.   All of the above

Answer: C

used them in the field. In fact, the final line of the press release stated that he "has put this course material to use in its most valued environment, the 'real working world.' "

SHORTCOMINGS TO STUDENT-DOCUMENTED PARTICIPATION

While some students wrote business memos and did an outstanding job of detailing their accomplishments, many students fell short on their first attempt. The most prevalent weakness in the documentation written by students is the listing of traditionally passive learning behaviors. While attending class, showing up on time, turning in assignments, and making relevant comments during the course are encouraging activities, they are mere table stakes in an active participation environment. Being a warm body in class is no more productive than showing up for work and suggesting that you are a contributor just for making an appearance. Many students state they "make comments" or "answer questions" when called on. These actions can lead to an active learning climate. For example, making a comment that brings the dialogue to a higher plane of discussion due to intimate knowledge, prior preparation, or prompt critical thinking is highly desirable and would be a prime illustration of active learning and participation. But without the support of details, the claim is vacuous and ineffective. See Table 6 for a list of indicators students noted that are less active than desired.

The second area of concern in the documentation process is the lack of support for the students' claims. Several people suggested that they have "worked hard to learn the material and incorporate it into their life" or asked "questions in class" and stopped the documentation trail right there. They offered

no actual evidence, no examples; only claims were stated. Were these provoking questions that brought the class to a higher level of thinking or understanding, or was this just an opportunity to say something? The distinction is critical, as one demonstrates a contribution, while the other does not. Still other students sell themselves short and do not include all the positive things they have done, learned, or improved on personally.

All is not lost for many students who, once they understand that they have little to offer as evidence of course participation, take the opportunity to write a personal challenge and fulfill it. In this case, students normally make a mediocre showing during the semester and attempt to spin it into something very positive. Once it is pointed out that their performance to date is subpar, they are encouraged to outline a course of behavior that will exhibit a higher level of course participation. Improvement is evident in nearly all these cases, but to date, not a single person has offered an update to the instructor on his or her progress during the semester.

GRADING PROCESS

Because this course participation approach seems to be new to most students and presents them with an expectation of documentable contributions, a preview of typical participation behaviors/cognitions is reviewed at the outset. The students are asked what they think these behaviors are worth as far as a grade is concerned, given the negotiation theme of the course. A discussion ensues, and the participation goals for course contribution are agreed on. Grading student participation documentation is similar to many other evaluation processes professors perform. If the students do not provide justi-

TABLE 5
PARTICIPATION TAKEN INTO A PROFESSIONAL DOMAIN

"If the measure of participation is adequate preparation outside of class, attending class well prepared for the night's material, evaluating the implications or meaning of the evening's material as it pertains to one's current work environment, and taking the relevant material from the classroom back to the individual's work setting and putting it to use through practical application, then I have fully participated. Let me offer several examples. . . .

I support the contract negotiator for the Hospital and Medical Group owned by the parent corporation. On several occasions over the past few months, the negotiator [Monica] has commented on how my demeanor has changed with regard to negotiating with payers. Monica has commented on several occasions, "You were green and pure when you started, but you have changed; you've developed something of an edge.""

TABLE 6
PASSIVE ATTEMPTS AT
PARTICIPATION AND LEARNING

Attend class
Turn in assignments on time
Attend all group meetings
Talk in class (unsupported claims)
Good listener, so does not often speak in class
Work well with others

fication for their statements, similar to any essay exam, they do not receive full credit. But since participation is generally observable in some form, the professor can play the role of motivator and supporter and point things out to them in class that would support a strong case for participation. Using this approach, various methods can be employed to assign grades; some include the checklist, holistic, and analytical methods. The specific grading procedure adopted is open to controversy, but the key is to inform the students what are the valued behaviors and how they will be evaluated.

If students sell themselves short, the professor can note that information on their papers, and they can receive some credit for actions performed but failed to highlight. This may be done for two main reasons: (1) most students are still learning how to fully participate and document in this type of setting, and (2) the professor does not relinquish control over the final participation grade to what the student has submitted in writing. Beyond control, there may be a question of credibility. One may wonder if a student is spending more time attempting to "beat" the system by making up stories regarding how he or she has embraced the knowledge acquired rather than just doing the learning requested. Because of the active learning environment created, individual personalities are more noticeable. Thus, when students relate stories, one can get a feeling for their level of credence. To date, no students have been pursued or challenged regarding the candor of their stories shared in class.

There are different time frames that can be used to access student outcomes (Stiggins 2001). Assessment can occur daily, weekly, monthly, or at the course's end. In this study,

verbal review occurred in class throughout the semester while written student documentation was required in the 12th week of a 16-week semester. This allows students another month to make any necessary adjustments to their actions or strategy. Again, if they have performed poorly to date, they can outline a personal challenge and take the next month to prove themselves. One of the key benefits of this evaluation process is stronger student "buy-in" of their course participation and grade. Various student perceptions are chronicled in the following section that lend support to the notion that the students felt they had more at stake and thus contributed more and gained more overall from the course.

STUDENT PERCEPTIONS

To gain additional feedback, beyond what was gleaned from the actual student papers, students were asked to offer their voluntary opinion on this atypical participation approach. Most stated that they wrote what they thought were contributions to this learning environment and offered examples to support the claims—in essence, "packaging my accomplishments," wrote one student. Regarding the value of this participation, the general theme was very positive. Nearly all comments were the same thematically: "it forced me to be honest with myself," and "because I was asked [forced] to reflect on the course I am more likely to remember and use the tools that were learned." One student noted, "It's just another assignment, but only if you have done your job during the course of the semester." The purpose is to tell a story of a student's growth, proficiency, and accomplishments across the semester (Tombari and Borich 1999). In other words, this approach is not difficult as long as you have attempted what was requested of you throughout the semester. The key to this approach is as follows: students must understand what is being asked of them and be convinced of the professor's sincerity that this approach be embraced.

Overwhelmingly, the students liked the opportunity to influence their own participation grade with comments such as, "Participation tends to suffer from recency effect, but this broadens the base from which you [the professor] make the determination," "I felt I was being listened to," and "I think students really know what their value is and it is tough to

inflate their grade when asked to honestly appraise themselves." Most important, the emphasis on the active participation approach dictated changes in student behaviors, including the following: "I was more conscious of participating throughout the course," "Other members in the course spoke more often and I benefited from knowing their experiences," and "I felt I was going to get due credit for the risks I took in class."

Not all students were enthralled or initially embraced the approach; in fact, a few were quite recalcitrant. One student noted her feelings very poignantly:

> I have a difficult time justifying requirements that seem to be either "showboating" or irrelevant to the traditional objective associated with participation. In the end I have paid for this class and have to live with the results of whatever participation approach I have chosen. . . . I am paying [you] to be impressive. . . . I actually thought about this class (the materials, myself, and other players) much more than I would prefer at times. The professor has been exceedingly annoying and made me very aware of myself in the process.

At first glance, there appears to be a teaching impasse. But if both parties (student and faculty) are willing to risk a little, the return can be impressive. The last two statements are actually music to an educator's ear; the student had fully inserted herself into the course material and was obsessed with the class content. The student, at that time, did not like what was happening but in the end became a vocal supporter of this method and the professor as well. Written feedback on student work is always important, but it is imperative in this type of assignment. The only way to redirect a student's interpretation of the situation is by "active participation" from the professor. This student received a one-page reply from the professor that included the following excerpt: "You embody what student life is truly all about. You think, are eager to attempt new things, do not perform tasks mindlessly, challenge those who challenge you, reach inside your world to toy with different ideas, and find learning an activity that so infuriates and stimulates that it consumes your waking moments." This type of exchange supports the notion that student-centered education holds value (Lester and Perry 1995) and sometimes is difficult to manage.

CONCLUSIONS AND LIMITATIONS

From a pedagogy perspective, student-centered documentation of participation appears to have fomented the desired outcomes—preparation to participate, active partaking in course discussions and exercises, applying course information immediately outside of course confines in personal and professional situations, and offering students the opportunity to take ownership and enumerate their participation levels in the course. The student is now empowered to compose a self-portrait demonstrating higher order thinking and achievement beyond the traditional professorial participation recording methods (Wolf, LeMahieu, and Eresh 1992). This article has attempted to add to the active learning literature by introducing a new method for accounting for participation that places the student at the center for chronicling results. In the end, participation outcomes appeared to be more fully realized, based on written and verbal student expressions. Students offered comments about themselves and others, and they were overheard saying how they have "never seen Travis talk in class so much; he's really a nice guy and knowledgeable."

Like any novel classroom requirement, multiple impediments face the students. Not all of the learning, however, will be done by the students: the professor may need to rethink and restructure lectures that allow for student exchanges and constantly remind students of the participation expectations. Since many students have become professional note takers, this unique participation documentation approach makes some students act like scared deer in the instructor's headlights. Most have never been exposed to this pedagogical obligation and have no conceptual map from which to draw.

In short, change is seldom embraced in full force. Some of the brave students will test the water by figuratively dipping a toe in and feeling the temperature. Some will wait on deck to watch others go first, while still others will refuse or not be able to take the plunge at all. Many international students tend to feel uncomfortable with this approach. Often they have acquired drastically different learning styles with a tendency to listen, avoid direct eye contact, and agree with the group to achieve harmony. To challenge another's opinion or even offer an opinion at all is new ground for many. However, to document participation levels, these students have a responsibility to bring forth their expertise, share cultural perspectives, and contribute in a verbal way.

This approach to participation documentation may not be appealing to all instructors for personal reasons, or class size may prohibit this method. The setting for this study was an upper-division elective course, which may have an effect on outcomes when compared with other environments. Moreover, the professor sought and valued highly persuasive attempts when conveying student participation evidence. This content may seem boastful to some or perhaps difficult to grade, but independent, active thinking is what is required in many negotiation settings and thus desired by the instructor. When used by other educators or in different classes, new themes may emerge.

With any new validation technique, various results will emerge. To suggest that opposition occurred to this approach would not be an understatement. Similar to the participation requirement, Lunsford and Herzog (1997) found that two patterns emerged from their study testing students in an active learning environment. The first group consisted of students who found the active learning process comfortable, while the

second group comprised students who maintained a level of resistance to the approach. One student stated, "It scares me to think that I am responsible for my own learning" (Lunsford and Herzog 1997, p. 81). What should scare academics even more is that such a belief might prevail in our educational institutions.

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Using Secondary Data in Marketing Research:
A Project That Melds Web and Off-Web Sources

Stephen B. Castleberry

A marketing research project that is designed to answer research questions based on secondary data is described. The project incorporates Web sources without denigrating the traditional off-Web sources of secondary data. First, a review of the literature highlights the importance of becoming a knowledge worker in the new economy, the value of projects in marketing research courses, and the need to incorporate off-Web sources in projects. After project objectives are provided, the project is completely described. Project problems and some possible solutions are offered, followed by a brief discussion of the evaluation of the project. The project could be adapted for other courses in marketing.

Few people doubt the often-repeated mantra: information is power in the 21st century. Gary Hamel, corporate CEO and best-selling author, put it this way: "We have gone from an industrial economy to a knowledge economy" (Hamel 1999, p. 4).

How can an individual (e.g., a university marketing student) best position oneself in this new environment? Jeremy Rifkin (1995) suggests that "knowledge workers," those in our society who "use the most recent information technology to identify, process, and solve problems," are being elevated "to center stage in the global economy. They are fast becoming the new aristocracy" (p. 175). These knowledge workers are "the creators, manipulators, and purveyors of the stream of information that makes up the postindustrial, postservice global economy" (p. 174). Rifkin assigns them credit and responsibility for keeping our high-tech economy running.

How do these knowledge workers get information? In marketing research, it is understood that there are two basic information collection methods: primary and secondary (McDaniel and Gates 2001). By conducting primary marketing research (e.g., surveys, focus groups, experiments, observation research, in-depth interviews), decision makers can in effect create new knowledge to add to their information array. This is one area in which knowledge workers need to develop skills.

Secondary Data Sources

However, the rules of efficiency espoused in most marketing research textbooks (e.g., Churchill 1999; McDaniel and Gates 2001) suggest that primary research not be the first step. Conventional wisdom sums it up this way: "Before undertaking any primary research study, marketers should complete an exhaustive search of existing or secondary data" (Cross 2000, p. 97). In essence, why create new knowledge using primary data collection if that knowledge already exists and can be found using secondary sources?

Knowledge workers must develop skills in recovering many sources of secondary data. These include, for example, the use of internal databases and information systems, government documents, industry and trade association publications, news sources, and published studies and articles. Historically, these sources were generally found in hard copy or on CD-ROM disks.

Much of the secondary information just listed is now available on the Web. The next generation of knowledge workers (our marketing students) must learn how to access these Web sources in an efficient and effective manner. In most marketing programs, the marketing research class is where these Web research skills will be developed and fine-tuned. The skills will then be applied in other courses and, of course, in the student's professional marketing career. How best to teach those skills is the subject of the next section.

The Use of Projects and Hands-On Experiences

According to Bridges (1999), the marketing research course is historically an unpopular one. Students often complain of the statistics and data analysis portion of the course and see the subject material as being relatively boring, especially when compared with more exciting marketing courses

such as advertising. What can be done to improve students' perceptions of the course? Results of focus groups and surveys found that more hands-on experience and computer work are what students want (Bridges 1999). In fact, when asked for the preferred class time allocation, students suggested that 29% of the course should be hands-on and computer work.

Marketing professors are responding to this preference by making greater use of hands-on projects and activities (Smart, Kelley, and Conant 1999). These experiential learning exercises, so called because learning and knowledge are created through experiences (see Kolb 1984), are receiving a great deal of press in the marketing education literature (e.g., Bobbitt et al. 2000; Graeff 1997; Titus and Petroshius 1993; Williams, Beard, and Rymer 1991). The use of experiential learning exercises seems to reflect the sentiments of one writer who said, "A school is not a factory. Its raison d'être is to provide opportunity for experience" (http://annabelle.net/topics/school.html). Using projects and hands-on exercises to teach Web marketing research skills thus seems to be a wise investment.

It is not surprising that many marketing educators have already embraced the use of information technology assignments and projects in their classrooms to teach skills (e.g., Atwong and Hugstad 1997; Miller and Mangold 1996; Rubel 1996; Siegel 1996; Siu 1997). As Rudenstine (1997) commented, "The Internet has distinctive powers to complement, reinforce, and enhance some of our most effective traditional approaches to university teaching and learning" (p. A48).

Marketing professors should not jump into experiential exercises and projects, however, just because everyone else is doing so, or without a great deal of thought and planning. As one well-respected educator stated, "Trainers who use experiential approaches run the risk of designing programs that may delight their creators but give nightmares to the actual participants" (Becker 1998, p. 78). Thus, any marketing research projects should be developed with the participants' needs in mind. To avoid student nightmares, Becker suggests two general principles: (1) empathize with your students by asking yourself, "Would I like to go through this myself?" and (2) make sure the proposed exercise is essential to the goals of the training.

Is the Web "Everything"?

While the Web is growing daily in terms of the secondary information available, an important question must be addressed: should marketing research professors view the Web as replacing all traditional sources of secondary marketing research information? Should projects assigned only include the Web?

One practitioner lamented,

> Many students and scribes seem to think that once they have scoured the Web, they've done all the homework they need to do. Web research is so easy, and off-Web research so hard, that the search for knowledge tends to cease at the boundaries of cyberspace. (Manes 1999, p. 210)

Leibovich (2000) echoes this sentiment: "When the Internet emerged, educators had to teach their students how to determine the authenticity of a site. Now they have to teach students how to refine their searches—and when to look offline for information" (p. G1). She claims that for many students, "the idea of roaming library stacks is as quaint as the thought of writing with a quill pen. Even though libraries are organized and easily navigated, students prefer diving into the chaotic whirl of the Web to find information" (p. G1).

There are many reasons to include skill development in off-Web information sources in a marketing research project: the material that is available off-Web simply may not be on the Web; the Web site (e.g., Forbes) often does not include the images and tables of print media; at other times, the Web only includes the tables without the accompanying discussion (e.g., TableBase®); material is often on the Web today/gone tomorrow, so it can be hard for someone to later verify information; many of the fee-based Web sources (e.g., *Standard and Poor's Industry Surveys*) may already be available for free in the library in hard copy; and sometimes it can be much easier to find the hard copy of material in the library than it is to find the correct URL on the Web. In summary, there are times when efficiency and effectiveness dictate that knowledge workers access off-Web sources (e.g., Neal 2000).

The challenge is to develop a marketing research project that incorporates the Web without throwing out the traditional off-Web sources of secondary data.

THE PROJECT

The project described here has been developed over an 8-year period. For the past 5 years, the Web component has been an integral part of the project while not denigrating the importance of off-Web sources.

Project Objectives

The project actually seeks to achieve a number of objectives. The goals are to have the student achieve the following:

- Discover the large wealth of information, both Web and off-Web, that is available to them. Students usually have no idea how much information is waiting to be plucked.
- Learn where to find information needed to answer specific research questions. Before engaging in the project, students claim they have often been overwhelmed by the amount of information they can find on a topic but still are unable to find a specific piece of information. Again, they must be taught and experience the usefulness of both Web and off-Web resources.
- Understand the relationship between secondary and primary data. At times, the information needed cannot be found just

by scanning secondary data sources, and a primary data search must be conducted to fully answer the research questions. The project helps students see this linkage.

- Develop skills in assessing the validity and reliability of secondary data. Students must learn that simply finding a source of information is not the end of their task. Their initial reaction is usually relief that they found an answer to their research question. They must also evaluate that data and the source to make sure they are accurate, current, and unbiased (Dyer 2000).
- Learn how to cope with researcher frustration. It seems that the projects assigned either result in too much data to look at or too little data that are helpful. Either situation results in frustration. Yet that is exactly how it is in the real world. Students must learn to carefully and methodically sift through the pile of data in the first instance or be persistent and patient in looking for information in the second instance. This seems to be one of the hardest skills for students to learn.
- Further develop communication skills. When presenting the findings of the project, students are able to further refine their oral and written communication skills. After the communication, students are provided constructive feedback on what they did well and the areas on which they need to work.
- Integrate material learned in other courses, both cross-functional and within marketing. Integration across courses and disciplines is something that is continually called for in management education (e.g., Bobbitt et al. 2000; Louis 1990; Lunsford and Henshaw 1992; O'Hara and Shaffer 1995; Ramocki 1994).

These objectives are designed to achieve results not only in the marketing research class but in other venues as well (e.g., other classes, their career). In fact, the objectives were developed after consulting with other marketing faculty as to whether these skills are covered in earlier classes, as well as what skills will be needed in the student's upcoming classes. This project is capable of improving quantitative analysis and computer skills (Ramocki 1987) in addition to generating more student involvement and action (Malhotra, Taschian, and Jain 1989).

Administering the Project

Before discussing project administration, it might be helpful to see how the project fits in with other semester activities. In addition to traditional class lectures and exams, students are involved in three major projects:

Project 1: secondary data acquisition and evaluation,
Project 2: developing the methodology and instrument for a survey, and
Project 3: inputting and analyzing data using SPSS and writing a formal written report.

The three projects are interwoven throughout the semester with the lectures and exams. The class size is limited to 36 students.

An example of the secondary data project from one semester is provided in Table 1. In all semesters, the project is based on a product or service that has real competitors in the marketplace. According to the project scenario, this new product is being introduced to the market within the next few months, and managers need information to help in their decision making.

Before handing out the project assignment, students are engaged in a traditional classroom lecture on secondary data. Topics covered include sources of secondary data as well as how to evaluate those sources for accuracy, authority, objectivity, currency, and coverage. Examples are provided that clearly illustrate that all sources are not equally trustworthy. The lecture concludes with a discussion of how to conduct hidden company research (i.e., for nonpublicly traded firms) using secondary sources.

At the end of the class lecture, the project is assigned. Students are allowed to work as individuals or in a team of up to three students. It is made clear that expectations are greater for teams.

Note from Table 1 that the project requires the student to provide information in six basic areas. First, students are required to locate the recent sales history for the industry. This is often a more difficult task than it would seem. Quite often it is easy to find something close (e.g., sales history in tons or cases, instead of dollars, or just one or two data points). In those instances, students are encouraged to keep digging and see if they can find a better source of secondary information that will more closely match the requirements of the project. Students who are accustomed to taking classes with assigned cases, which usually include lots of tables of data and information, learn that in the real world, it is often very hard to find the information needed.

Second, students must identify the major competitors and indicate their relative size. For some projects, this is easier than in others. Students must deal with the complexities of the results of mergers and acquisitions as they look at information that scans a wide time frame (e.g., last year's competitor becomes this year's partner, thanks to a merger of the two firms). Students are also required to identify which competitors are direct and which are indirect, providing an opportunity to use concepts they learned in the principles of marketing course.

Third, students must identify environmental influences that could affect the success of the new venture. Here, students must find information about current federal, state, and local laws; laws that are being proposed or discussed as possibilities; international treaty and tariff rules; cultural factors; and trends and fads. Students are able to draw on concepts they learned in business law, economics, principles of marketing, and liberal education courses, among others. There is generally a wealth of information in this section, and the challenge for the student is to not become overwhelmed.

Fourth, students must forecast dollar industry sales for the next 5 years. Sometimes they can find a secondary informa-

TABLE 1
EXAMPLE OF PROJECT

Project Objectives
  • Discover the large wealth of information, both Web and off-Web, that is available.
  • Learn where to find information needed to answer specific research questions.
  • Understand the relationship between secondary and primary data.
  • Develop skills in assessing the validity and reliability of secondary data.
  • Learn how to cope with researcher frustration.
  • Further develop communication skills.
  • Integrate material learned in other courses, both cross-functional and within marketing.

Background
  Global Seeds is a brand new marketing firm started in September 2000 to market genetically modified seeds (developed by Global Seed Research Trust of London, England) around the world. The first offering is a genetically modified corn seed with the inclusion of DNA from camels, which makes it unbelievably resistant to drought. Plants formed from these seeds can go completely dormant for up to 2 months without a drop of water, with no damage to the plant or to the ultimate productivity of the plant.

The Project
  You are to conduct a complete and exhaustive search of secondary data sources to answer the following research questions. Use *all* sources at your disposal, including but not limited to those listed in your textbook and the handouts provided by Library Resources. Remember: This is not a Web-only assignment. Also use appropriate off-Web sources. Your presentation must follow the outline provided.

I. Sales History
  What is the annual dollar sales history for 1995-1999 for this industry (the world agricultural seed industry)?

II. Competitors
  Identify the major competitors (both firms and their specific brands) in this industry and indicate their relative size. Include both direct (genetically modified corn seed) and indirect (nongenetically modified corn seed) competitors.

III. Environmental Influences
  Identify any environmental influences that would affect the success of this new venture (e.g., existing and proposed legislation, cultural factors, trends, etc.).

IV. Industry Forecast
  What is the dollar market forecast for the world seed industry (not just for corn) for the years 2000-2005? In other words, what is the dollar estimate of total world revenues for seeds? Most important, tell me exactly how you arrived at those figures. You must supply this information; it is not acceptable to say that you could not estimate this. Make any realistic and necessary assumptions.

V. Segments
  What groups (e.g., geographic, usage, etc.) would you recommend as a target market for Camel Corn? Tell me why you suggest the target market(s) you do.

VI. Product Forecast
  What would you forecast the worldwide 2000-2005 revenues (in dollars) to be for this brand-new product, Camel Corn? [Hint: Look at what portion of the industry dollar forecast you think Camel Corn will capture with this product.] Tell me how you arrived at those figures. You must supply this information; it is not acceptable to say that you could not estimate this. Make any realistic and necessary assumptions.

VII. Primary Research
  What other information would Camel Corn need to know that you could not find in your secondary research? [In essence, tell me what kinds of information Camel Corn would need to collect using primary research.]

VIII. References
  Include a typed, comprehensive list of all references you found that explores this topic. [Hint: Keep a clear, complete record of every citation you uncover.] On the overheads and in the handout, always include reference citations where appropriate.

Hints:
  Start work on this project now.
  Be prepared to provide me with a status report on this project when required.
  Do not plagiarize. Always provide a complete citation of any source that you quote or paraphrase.
  Academic dishonesty in any portion of the academic work for a course shall be grounds for awarding a grade of F for the entire course.

tion source that provides at least part of this information. Again, as often as not, the information they find is incomplete or stated in the wrong units of measurement—for example, train car loads instead of dollars, although nondollar estimates can be very useful for forecasting. However, the challenge is to see if the student can find *exactly* what the manager is asking for. If students cannot find all this information, they are required to make an estimate. Students are encouraged to use the tools they learned in other courses (e.g., production and operations management courses, sales management, principles of marketing) to derive a forecast. It is encouraging to watch a student develop an elaborate mathematical model, learned in another course, to make these estimations. However, even students who have not yet taken the other courses can use simple averaging to arrive at some estimate of the forecast.

Fifth, segments that could be used as target markets must be identified. For consumer products, some indication of this

can come from off-Web secondary sources such as *Simmons Study of Media and Markets*, which provides information on usage and attitude patterns by many demographic variables (Simmons Market Research Bureau 1985). For industrial products, segmentation is usually based on type of usage, amount of usage, type of buying process (new task, modified rebuy, straight rebuy), and so on. Census information is often helpful in this section to identify the location and size of various demographic groups. Also, information from the third section of the paper (e.g., trends, fads, cultural factors) helps to define viable segments. The key is that students identify segments based on secondary data sources, not merely on intuition.

Sixth, students must develop a 5-year forecast for this new product or service. Indicators for how a product such as this may sell often come from articles, tables, and annual reports describing similar new products launched in the marketplace in the past. Students can also break down the industry sales forecast (section 4) into the expected sales that the different firms might experience based on past sales history for those firms and their brands.

After collecting these six basic pieces of information, the project requires the student to identify what primary research is necessary. This section forces students to think about the relationship between primary and secondary data. For information they could not find, primary data collection may be the only alternative, assuming of course that the benefits of the information collected in the primary study are worth more than the costs of collecting that information. Note that students are not asked to actually conduct the primary research, merely to list what that research should seek answers to.

Once the students have a good grasp of the parameters of the project, it is time for them to learn to use the secondary sources of information at their disposal. To facilitate this, the class meets with the business librarian, who provides hands-on instruction in a computer lab in the use of Web and off-Web resources and helps those who are less computer literate get up to speed (e.g., saving files, cutting and pasting between applications, etc.). One librarian has developed an award-winning Web site to help marketing research students; it can be found at http://www.d.umn.edu/~jvileta/ mktgresearch. html. This Web site includes both Web and off-Web sources. In the lab, students develop skills in how to come up with keywords to use in researching various secondary sources, how to conduct narrowed searches on the Web using traditional search engines (e.g., Alta Vista), what the various subscriber databases (e.g., Lexis-Nexus, ABI Inform) include and how to best use them, and what off-Web resources their library has for the project.

Now that students have been exposed to the various sources, it is time for them to actually start the project. It is helpful to spend a class meeting in the library early on, forcing the students to start the project. Yes, some will still procrastinate and try to complete the project at the last minute,

but at least they will have all started the project early and have some sense that progress has begun—this seems particularly important for this kind of project, which can seem overwhelming until one just starts it. The early meeting in the library also helps students discover the basic problems they are going to have. During this library meeting, the instructor should walk among the students, encouraging them to look at off-Web sources, helping students who are trying to find things on the Web, and answering questions about the project. Although it is impossible to work with each and every student in this session, students see the instructor providing assistance and realize that the instructor really does want to help them succeed in the project. In the next classroom meeting, a discussion ensues of the problems they encountered during the library visits and possible solutions.

At this stage, students are assigned to work on the project outside of class. In class, we begin covering text material related to Project 2, and students work on Project 2 during class time. However, the first few minutes of each class session are provided as an opportunity for the class to ask questions or discuss problems with the secondary data project (Project 1).

Several weeks after the classroom visit to the library, students are required to submit a written status report for the secondary data project. This report includes a complete listing of all references found to date (to make sure they are working diligently on the project), what percentage of each section they have completed, and what problems they still have. After reviewing this information, the instructor leads a class discussion about the issues presented. This seems to be a better approach than simply asking, "Does anyone have any problems with the project?" By this time, some students fear that other class members must be further along than they are, making them somewhat reluctant to voice their concerns. After discussing all concerns, the class once again meets in the library. This provides an opportunity for the instructor to offer hands-on help with Web problems as well as to explain how to interpret some off-Web source that a student might not understand.

While sometimes the project has been presented to the instructor in written form, it is generally preferable that an oral presentation of the findings be made because of the opportunity for the students to respond to follow-up questions about what they found and why they did what they did (e.g., forecasting, segments chosen). These oral presentations are restricted to a 10-minute time limit to teach students how to be extremely concise, realize the importance of practicing the presentation carefully to strategically cover all sections of the project, and use handouts to cover and reinforce items that cannot be discussed fully in a short presentation.

Recall that one objective of the project was for students to improve their communication skills. Thus, the grade reflects their oral communication skills and effective use of handouts and supporting material. While most of these skills have been

developed in other courses (e.g., lower-division public speaking and communications courses), this material is also covered in a lecture several weeks before the project is due. Most marketing research textbooks have a chapter or large section in the text that clearly explains how to effectively engage in an oral presentation. Students are also provided with examples of projects from prior classes (e.g., handouts, copies of overheads, videotapes) so they can see how others approached the project. The examples are provided after our initial library visit.

Students are encouraged to submit their presentation (the written report or the handouts/copy of overheads) 1 week before the due date for feedback and suggestions. Usually only two or three avail themselves of this opportunity.

Finally, it should be noted that all students must turn in their presentation materials on the same date/time. For oral presentations, that includes a hard copy of their overheads (or PowerPoint slides) and any handouts that they would normally give the decision maker during or at the conclusion of their oral presentation. The instructor informs students that when she or he sits down to watch their actual presentation, it must follow what they handed in exactly (i.e., there is no opportunity to add additional items or findings after the materials are handed in). These policies and procedures ensure that all students are fully prepared to give their presentations at the same time, thus making it less likely that later presenters have an unfair advantage over those who have to present first. It also allows the instructor to see exactly what all students have found and thus compare their sources and successes at finding the required information, even before the first oral presentation begins.

Students give their presentations during regularly scheduled class time but in a different room from the one assigned for the class. The only observer is the instructor. This allows the rest of the class members (who are not currently giving their oral presentation) to be working in their teams on Project 2.

PROJECT PROBLEMS
AND SOLUTIONS

Students Frustrated Because
They Cannot Find Information
to Answer Research Questions

One solution to this problem is to inform the students that it will probably be impossible to locate every piece of information required. Explain that is simply the way it is in the real world. While it would be nice to go to a free secondary source and retrieve the information, sometimes the information just does not exist.

Next, give them a strategy to follow if they cannot find the information. My experience is that students have often only looked at Web sources, and they are encouraged to look at both Web and off-Web resources. Students sometimes seem reluctant to use off-Web resources, perhaps because off-Web sources do not appear as current and fresh as Web sources (e.g., the copy your library owns of *Standard and Poor's Industry Surveys* might be 2 years old). Explain that although the off-Web resources might be a little dated, they can still provide a piece of information that can be used to help predict what the actual numbers are.

With regard to Web sources, it is sometimes necessary to help students refine their skills in using search engines and the subscriber databases that the library has access to. An attempt is made to reinforce lessons learned from the seminar offered by the business librarian.

Students are also told that they are not alone in their difficulty in finding things on the Web. Empirical research conducted at Ohio State University has shown that finding correct information that is actually on the Web can sometimes be almost impossible (Dye 1999). Dye (1999) found the correct answer to a research question only 27% of the time, while the wrong answer was discovered 9% of the time. Sixty-four percent of the time, the Web pages listed by the search engine were actually out of service.

Students are instructed that resources are growing each day. For example, the Web adds several thousand new sites every day (Fleischman 1996). While it may not help them with this project, it is important for them to realize that in future projects, perhaps on the job, the same kind of information might be available.

Students Frustrated at
Finding Too Much Data

While it is frustrating to find no data, it can be equally frustrating to find too much information. Hamel (1999) concurs, lamenting that often while doing research, "We are drowning in data but not producing any great insight" (p. 3). This is more prone to happen if the project was chosen on a particularly hot topic (e.g., genetically modified crops, any product that has been shown to harm the environment) for which a lot of discussion and information is available. To prevent some of this frustration, the instructor can talk about this issue when the project is first assigned. Students need to be taught to secure information that is complete but not necessarily exhaustive. For example, it is not important for them to get 15 articles, all of which say essentially the same thing. Students also need to be taught how to identify which items need to be photocopied versus just writing down the key point discovered. Students often fall into the trap of wanting to photocopy everything and then do not actually need a large percentage of what they have copied due to redundancy and nonapplicability. Finally, students are reminded not to collect information that is merely interesting but does not actually answer one of the research questions.

Even though these items were discussed in class when the project was handed out, it helps to remind students both dur-

ing in-class discussions and office conversations. Many students do not seem to learn the material until they have to struggle with completing an actual issue and project, which is one reason the project was designed in the first place.

Key Books Go Missing or Are Checked Out

If there is an off-Web source that has the answer to one or more of the research questions, there can be a desire on the students' part to secure that information and then hide the book somewhere in the library so that other students cannot locate it. In that way, they hope to be the only one with the correct answer and somehow get a better grade. Fortunately, this has only happened a few times. One solution would be to put the book on reserve. That seems to defeat the purpose, however, of having the students discover the resource on their own.

The instructor can attempt to avoid this situation by telling students that all reference sources cited are going to be carefully looked at. If one student is the only one to find a particular source, the instructor can go to the library and try to locate it. If unable to do so, the instructor would be very suspicious of that student.

Some books that the student needs may be checked out. The solution is to remind the students to start the project early, rather than waiting until the last minute.

Students Tend to Want to Be Hand-Held

This can be one of the most frustrating aspects of any project that is not 100% structured and easy for students to complete. It seems that students in their college experiences have often been given projects in which the answers, even though perhaps a little difficult to produce, nonetheless were guaranteed to exist. The project described here does not have that guarantee.

Since many are experiencing this real-world phenomenon for the first time, they understandably want to be provided with more assistance, which the instructor should be happy to provide. What the instructor should not do, however, is perform the research for them. It is important to teach the students the value of struggling to come up with the answers on their own.

A related issue is the students' use of library staff at the reference desk. While the instructor should certainly have no problem with students using this staff to help the students learn how to use and understand a resource or to locate a book, the instructor should frown on the staff essentially doing the research for the student. This is difficult since the staff seems to want to actually locate the information the student is searching for. This issue can perhaps best be approached by talking with the library staff about the project and asking them to assist but not actually do the work for the students. This has worked fairly well over the years.

Access to Computers and the Web

This used to be a bigger issue than it is now. Each year, more labs are opened, and more and easier access to the Web is available. Still, depending on the timing, it can be difficult for students to have the access they need. As a result, students are given 5 weeks to complete the project.

Student Cheating

Cheating on the college campus is widespread (Allen, Fuller, and Luckett 1998; Phillips and Horton 2000) and has even been labeled an epidemic (Nonis and Swift 1998). It is equally troubling to know that those who cheat in college are more likely to cheat later in their lives (Roig and Ballew 1994).

Consistent with the advice advocated by Phillips and Horton (2000) to reduce cheating, I have a written policy on cheating in general (and plagiarism in particular), stated clearly in the syllabus and on the project itself.

The bulk of cheating occurs across school terms, instead of within the term (Karlins, Michaels, and Podlogar 1988). Therefore, efforts should be made to reduce the recycling of work turned in by students in previous semesters. As a result, the instructor should change the project each and every semester, making intersemester cheating impossible.

To help reduce within-semester cheating, during the question-and-answer portion of the oral presentation, the instructor can ask specific questions about sources cited. For example, if a student claimed to have looked at Hoover.com, the instructor can ask the student to relate what that Web site looks like, what kinds of information is available on it, and so on. If the student does not remember, the instructor can ask similar questions about other references. Just knowing that the instructor is going to do this probably keeps many students from cheating.

Instructor Cannot Find Answers to the Research Questions

As mentioned earlier, sometimes the answers cannot be found. In that case, the instructor simply has to find the best sources available to answer the research questions. Of course, the instructor can make it easy on himself or herself by first locating good information and then assigning a project topic that asks for that information.

In addition to conducting some research personally, the instructor may also use the students' status reports to help identify good sources of information for the project.

Instructor Must Keep Up-to-Date on Constantly Changing Resources

This does take time. Search engines change their protocol. Databases that are subscribed to by the university are added, dropped, and changed constantly. Off-Web sources are continually added and old ones deleted or replaced by better ones.

While it would be easy to simply state that instructors of marketing research are morally obligated to keep up with the field they teach in, it is understood that the time to do so must come from somewhere. Most instructors do not want to have their knowledge and skills outdated, but time pressures make keeping up that much harder.

It is suggested that instructors work with their library staff to keep them up-to-date on changes. Many universities have assigned library staff by functional area, so an instructor may already have an expert at his or her disposal. I have found them to be quite helpful over the years and willing to teach whatever needed to be learned. Also, universities' information technology units and special teaching development units usually offer free seminars to help keep faculty up-to-date with regard to technology and teaching-related issues. These seminars include topics such as changes in search engines, how to use specific subscriber databases, how to use new off-Web resources in the library, and so on. Once the instructor has learned the basics, it is much easier to keep up with the incremental changes that occur.

EVALUATION OF THE PROJECT

An evaluation of the effectiveness of this project takes several forms. The primary mechanism is a confidential evaluation form. The first six items of this form are from Bobbitt et al. (2000), while the remaining six items are project specific. Students generally feel the project is useful and that the objectives have been accomplished. The project does take time, with students reporting spending an average of 25 hours on the project (standard deviation of 9.7 hours).

Responses to an open-ended question for this project ("Please make any comments you wish") include such statements as the following:

- I found the project to be a very good learning experience for a number of reasons. First, I learned how to utilize many sources that I didn't even know existed, sources that I should have learned to use long before winter quarter of my senior year. It was a good exercise in gathering details, something that many of us often overlook, as we always tend to look for the "quick fix." I learned much about my topic and how to gather research—this practical application is by far a greater learning exercise than listening to theory in class.
- I learned about things in the library that I never knew were there.
- The project blew me out of the water at first. It seemed like a ton of work, but once you got the hang of it—it was a great experience.
- Maybe you could make the topic a bit more easier to find information on being that it is probably the first time a student has done this.
- I thought it was a very good project. I am a senior and I barely knew how to use the library. It made me a lot more comfortable with using the library.

- What I learned will be helpful in the future.
- Good that I used what I learned in other classes (Operations Management).
- Learned a lot. Found out that there is an unbelievable amount of information out there. Liked aspect of knowing that I'll be able to use libraries and Web more effectively now.
- Frustration . . . but definitely a learning experience. Taught me quite a bit about the resources available.

Finally, unsolicited feedback from alumni provide further evidence that the project has met its stated objectives. Comments include statements such as the following:

- Rather than just make us memorize some worthless facts or numbers, you gave us real-life situations that in the "real world" mean a heck of a lot more. I feel that the style you teach really lets the students be prepared for life.
- I liked it even more than other classes because it was so tough. . . . Your class has taught me how to learn.
- [After describing a difficult work situation]. . . . So this is the real world? Believe me, your class was the only thing that even began to prepare me for what it would be like.

SUMMARY

A number of authors (Chonko 1993; Lamp, Shipp, and Moncrief 1995) have criticized the exclusive reliance on traditional methods of information dissemination (e.g., use of classroom lectures only). As marketing research instructors, we must not merely talk about how to do marketing research, but we must also help students develop their own research skills.

The project described has successfully developed marketing research students' skills in melding Web and off-Web sources for secondary data collection. It is hoped that other marketing research instructors will benefit from such a project.

The approach suggested in this article could also be adapted for other courses as well. A similar project could be assigned in courses such as principles of marketing, consumer behavior, advertising, business to business, and other courses.

Atwong and Hugstad (1997) predicted that "marketing graduates who can operate deftly in a computer-mediated environment should gain a competitive edge over those who are less sophisticated in adapting to this rapidly growing environment" (p. 44). It is hoped that the project described will help our students become adept knowledge workers in the 21st century.

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Student-Operated Internet Businesses:
True Experiential Learning in
Entrepreneurship and Retail Management

Shawn P. Daly

Using the Internet, students can create and carry through to completion their own business plans, from product development to marketing and promotions to operations. As measured by student satisfaction and content analysis of student reflection papers, this new technique is an effective way to study "real-world" entrepreneurship and retail management, especially in terms of developing Internet skills. Side benefits include increased fund-raising and membership for student organizations, increased community interaction, and free publicity for the host institution. The author provides observations and recommendations concerning the successful operation of student-operated Internet businesses.

Avery significant educational trend in recent years has been the rise of experiential learning—students learning by "doing" the task or process they are studying. The idea that students' learning is a process grounded in experience, often embodied in Kolb's learning cycle, has become a central tenet in business education (Vince 1998). Coursework exercises that aim to provide students with direct "experience" have become commonplace in marketing (e.g., Gremler et al. 2000). Often these experiences take the form of computer-based simulations. In retail management, simulations such as *Vision* (Bovinet 1996) provide a realistic backdrop for student decision making. Entrepreneurship educators have been especially receptive; one commentator made the observation that simulation has become "institutionalized" (Katz 1999).

Comparing Student-Operated Businesses and Other Experiences

Clearly, simulation has its benefits, including a taste of the excitement and anxiety involved in setting up a new business (Robinson 1996). But simulation and other classroom-based experiential exercises such as role-playing lack the crucial elements of real relationships and consequences (Bilimoria 1998). These very real consequences (actual risk capital) and real relationships (vendors, suppliers, customers, governmental authorities, financial bodies, etc.) provide a dimen-

sion of reality lacking in simulation (see Table 1 for summary).

Potentially, students could be provided with more, that is, by involvement in an actual business. One option taken by some educators has been to join the business and marketing planning processes of companies, either through classroom activities or a small business institute (Hatten and Ruhland 1995; Nikiforuk 1997). Students are exposed to problems in real life, but they act as consultants with only a limited stake in the success or failure of their plans.

Thus, an even better solution is to allow students to set up and operate their own actual businesses—truly learning by doing! There can be no more "experiential" learning opportunity than going out in the real world and selling a product conceived, promoted, and delivered by the students' own labors. Historically, student-operated businesses have been run outside the curriculum, through such organizations as Students in Free Enterprise and Junior Achievement. Examples abound of institutionally supervised, student-operated businesses (e.g., Bosch 1997), but owing to the very long-term nature of start-up and operation, these usually occur outside the curriculum, even outside the university institution.

Comparing Online and Traditional Student Businesses

The online business moves beyond the traditional student-operated business in two key ways: providing students experience in Internet skills and experience in operating a business

TABLE 1
COMPARISON OF ONLINE BUSINESS AND OTHER EXPERIENTIAL EXERCISES

Experiential Exercises	Real Consequences	Real Relationships	Internet Skills	Systematic Training
Role-playing	No	No	No	Maybe
Simulation	No	No	Maybe	Maybe
Consultancy	No	Yes	Maybe	Maybe
Traditional business	Yes	Yes	Maybe	No
Online business	Yes	Yes	Yes	No

with very challenging customer demands. Much has been made of the use of the Internet in business education. From assisting information gathering and communications (Natesan and Smith 1998) to facilitating international student collaboration (Van Ryssen and Godar 2000) to creating online marketing courses (Kaynama and Keesling 2000), the flexibility, simplicity, and reach of modern telecommunications have changed the way education is delivered. Each of these developments has taken advantage of different characteristics of the Internet.

Participation in the online business has the advantage of bringing together a wide variety of Internet skills in a single project package. Natesan and Smith (1998) describe some of the key skills required of Internet marketers. Those that are especially appropriate in the context of the online business are as follows: the Internet as a tool of mass communications, search and retrieval, problem solving, and, most especially, promotion. Of similar consequence are the indicators of familiarity and usage of information technology, including PCs and the Internet, modems, multimedia, information support services, and desktop publishing (Jones and Berry 2000).

The online business also has the advantage of teaching technology skills through what has been characterized as the "minimalist" approach (Lambrecht 1999). In the minimalist approach, four principles of learning are in play: action oriented, anchored in the task domain, error recognition and recovery, and do not "spell out everything." The more traditional approach is a systematic tutorial approach where step-by-step, sequenced instruction leads to comprehensive coverage. Lambrecht (1999) suggests that the minimalist approach is certainly complementary to the systematic approach used in most computer science classes—and may be superior for many students.

The key disadvantage of the online business as a semester-long project is that it is not systematic, in the sense described by Lambrecht (1999). Learning can be very "haphazard" in that students self-select both the products or services to sell and the means through which they promote their Web site. This stands in direct contrast to a more systematic treatment of retail management or entrepreneurship, in which many different industries and methodologies might be surveyed through readings, case studies, or role-plays. The online business is potentially too focused on the Internet and Internet-related skills and experiences. While it is true that non-Web-based tools are used in promoting the online business, a large proportion of time will be spent in developing and using the Internet—perhaps more so than many businesses use.

Our Start-Up Decision

Our department and the university (a private institution in the Great Lakes region of the United States) determined that the potential for improving students' Internet skills far outweighed the systematic education limitations of the online business. Thus, the decision was made to create a system for developing and running student-operated businesses in spring 1999. We proceeded because we concluded that the other courses in our program (marketing communications, personal selling, and other upper-division courses) provided sufficient systematic coverage of the promotional skills and other retailing/channels knowledge required of marketing students. Thus, the "serendipitous" experiential nature of learning outcomes could be tolerated within our curriculum. The vice president for academic affairs provided working capital of $500 and use of the institutional Internet server as host. The retail management course was chosen as the vehicle for developing the Web-based business. All of the following observations and recommendations about organizing and overseeing an Internet-based student-operated business are based on our experiences over the past 2 years with these retail management classes.

ORGANIZING THE STUDENT-OPERATED BUSINESS

While the Internet and e-commerce have made business start-up much easier and less time-consuming, a 15-week semester is still a relatively short period in which to develop a business idea from conception all the way through to implementation. As such, the classes have been greatly helped along by providing a committee structure, detailed task lists, and approximate timetable from which to operate (see Table 2). The committees are as follows: finance/legal, product line, supplier negotiations, Web design, advertising, PR and promotions, operations, write-up and presentation, and secretary.

Students select three committees on which to serve. This allows students to choose intimate involvement in tasks they enjoy or desire to learn more about. It also lets the students balance their personal time commitments across the semester (early, middle, and late in Table 2). Note that these committees have different levels of workload (low, medium, and high in Table 2). Therefore, the instructor must form committees of different sizes (three to six, typically) to balance individual student workload across committees.

These nine functional committees work extensively outside the classroom. During classroom time, the committees report, gather advice, and finally seek approval for their future committee plans.[1] The focus of these meetings is to facilitate the necessary communications required to carry out the marketing concept in this class-based organization. This is embodied in the author's course syllabus objective: "Utilizing various tools from marketing and management to develop a retailing system designed to satisfy customers in the face of external demands from competition, channel demands, and the company's mission and capabilities."

Classroom time is used almost completely for these meetings with very little formal lecturing. The role of the instructor then becomes one of adviser and consultant, rather than instructor or lecturer. When the committees have questions and difficulties, the instructor is available to assist when necessary by making suggestions and recommendations. One of the most important suggestions has been to "read the book." That is, whatever text the instructor chooses will almost certainly have material surrounding the students' queries. We have found that the instructor must observe the flow of the work and suggest that the students are not diligently examining the text or other course materials for additional insight. Later, when the students still have content or process problems, the instructor can intervene with more concrete suggestions and bring up further questions for the students to investigate.

The students in each section of the retail management class have had very wide latitude in choosing what product or service they will initiate and the general marketing strategy they will take. The first couple of classes have chosen to sell various gift baskets. At the time of this writing, the students are strongly considering selling the university's branded T-shirts, trinkets, and other paraphernalia (the university bookstore has no Web presence).

Instructor

The first key item is to gain administration approval and support. Students bother many different personnel from across the campus and the wider community; some staff members will welcome the student interaction, and some will be perturbed. If the highest levels of the organization are not committed to the project, this will be a severe problem. Our vice president for academic affairs has gone so far as to volunteer to require our students to report to him as to how money is spent. This provides real-life "upper-management" feedback for the students.

In addition, the marketing club's (or other long-lived organization's) participation is crucial for success. As the semester only runs for 15 weeks, another organization outside the class is required to run the Web site after the semester ends—and over breaks in the academic calendar. And, of course, the student-operated business needs working capital. Each loan to the class and the marketing club is returned to the university upon the generation of profits. The funds for our start-up came from the Office of Academic Affairs, but it could also have potentially come from community groups and organizations. For example, our finance club received funds for its real-life investments from an organization outside the institution.[2]

The other key task, as in any other course, is the choice and preparation of educational materials for the course. To date, we have used two different types of resources: a text (Hanson 2000; Mason, Mayer, and Ezell 1994) and manuscripts (Medes and Spence 2000; Pawlowicz and Spence 2000). The text has served as a more general resource, with background information concerning the e-commerce and the Internet, plus strategic ideas surrounding online marketing issues such as customer service, branding, and generating traffic. The manuscripts have been an invaluable font of specific information while setting up the business and providing useful checklists, how-tos, and other operational details.

Finance/Legal Committee

The finance/legal committee is responsible for filling out the required legal paperwork and monitoring the business finances. This includes a wide range of activities to meet various rules and regulations both inside and outside the university institution. The crucial external issues include becoming a legal entity, registering a business name, proving tax-exempt/nonprofit status, retaining a vendor's license, and creating a bank account. Our institution required the marketing club to have external accounts, a distinct tax identification number, and a business name to keep the business operations separate from the institution.

Meeting internal rules and regulations is also important. These include any administration approvals, running the ideas through the Department of Student Affairs, and formalizing the marketing club liaison. During our first business operation attempt, another student organization was engaged in selling a reasonably similar product via direct mail. As such, the Department of Student Affairs of our university prohibited the retail management students from actually selling their baskets that semester.

Product Line Committee

The product line committee is concerned with determining the product line/mix and pricing. One of the very key groups,

TABLE 2
SUGGESTED BUSINESS ORGANIZATION STRUCTURE AND PURPOSE

Committee	Tasks	Timing	Workload	Problems and Pitfalls	Recommendations	Educational Purpose (Course Connections)
Instructor: act as adviser and consultant	Handle legal and administrative issues beyond the students' purview. Point out potential problems and new directions.	Throughout	Medium	Institutional and organizational issues from wayward or overzealous student activities Getting students to fully engage course materials	Gather university staff, faculty, and administration approval and support ahead of time.	Run interference for student committees. Ensure content coverage.
Finance and legal: fill out legal paperwork and monitor finances for business.	External: legal entity, business name, tax-exempt/nonprofit status, vendor's license, bank accounts Internal: administration approvals, student affairs issues, marketing club liaison	Early/late	High	Legal issues around institutional involvement Entanglements with other student organizations Long-term marketing club buy-in	Remain watchful for unanticipated legal or bureaucratic difficulties. Work actively with marketing club and/or other student organizations.	Management: external oversight and justification Entrepreneurship
Product line: determine product line/mix and pricing	Market research, segmentation, positioning, branding, merchandising, and pricing	Early/middle	High	Making exact product and pricing specifications due to inexperience	Coach and guide students through group process and product price selection.	Product development Market research Brand management Consumer behavior
Supplier relations: choose vendors and handle details	Data collection, vendor screening, negotiations, contracts, relationships	Early/middle	Medium	Loss of face and reputation for the university due to inadequate student reaction to vendor concerns	Monitor both student self-selection to committee and documents and presentations made outside classroom.	Marketing channels Personal selling
Web design: develop the business Web page	Host choice, Web page framework, written material integration, Internet marketing	Throughout	High	Inadequate or limited technological skills in the student population	Investigate student technology skills; intervene with university training.	e-commerce
Advertising: create materials for advertising	Fliers, direct mailers, television or radio spots, other promotional items	Early/middle	Medium	Creatively engages in too big thinking and too little detail work	Provide concrete internal deadlines and deliverables.	Marketing communications Advertising
PR and promotions: design and carry out promotional plans	Publicity, events planning, media, timing and scheduling, external institutional, and organizational contacts	Middle/late	Medium	Ambitious plans with too little supporting follow-up	Promote external contacts that provide students with deadline and loss of face pressure.	Marketing communications Public relations
Operations: construct and carry out processes for filling orders	Order taking, fulfillment, packaging, shipping, and customer service	Middle/late	Medium/ high	Waits until last minute to make arrangements Allows product/vendor choices to create a difficult process	Point out operational hazards continuously during product development.	Operations management: ordering, inventory, scheduling.
Write-up and presentation: produce reports for university administration	Final/interim reports to administration on financial status Final oral presentation to administration reviewing project status and successes	Early/late	Low/ medium	Attracts lower performing individuals Waits until last minute to start preparations	Monitor both student self-selection to committee and documents and presentations made outside classroom.	Oral and written communications skills PC skills: presentation graphics, word processing, and spreadsheets
Secretary: track group assignments	Class meeting minutes Student contact information	Low	Throughout	Reliance on a single individual	Screen potential secretaries for reliability.	Management: project management and review

the product line committee must touch on many different activities, including segmenting, positioning, branding, merchandising, pricing, and market research. The strategic items of segmenting, positioning, and branding have been handled in more of an intuitive method, whereby segments (and their response to branding) were developed from information already at hand. Market research usually has consisted of the study of competitive products and Web sites. All students in the class were charged with informal "focus group" responsibilities—go ask potential customers about the marketing strategy items under discussion in each week's meetings. Note that each of the strategic background and decisions has very significant input and direction from the students' classmates during classroom meeting time. Thus, their burden may be somewhat less than it appears on the face of it.

We have observed that it is often difficult to get this committee to settle on exact specifications and pricing in a timely manner. This occurs due to their inexperience in two respects: teamwork and marketing training. First, students' other marketing classes do not require detailed pricing and product selection, so they are hesitant to be specific. Second, the product line committee's early position in guiding group process sometimes makes them less effective in driving the organization. That is, their inexperience at facilitating meetings and guiding the student organization toward final decision making requires the instructor to demonstrate meeting leadership and then back off as the product line and other committees, such as Web design and operations, develop their own sense of leadership and take over.

Supplier Negotiations Committee

The supplier negotiations committee handles choosing vendors and relations with vendors. The key activities of this committee are to collect data on potential vendors, conduct vendor screening, engage in negotiations, and finalize contracts. This requires the members of the supplier negotiations committee to personally visit potential vendors to discuss the price and availability of the required products. The committee then reports to the class its findings on the appropriateness of alternatives, ultimately recommending suppliers for the various items required in the business's products. These students are then responsible for developing and negotiating the final terms of contracts with the suppliers (delivery, terms, pricing, etc.).

Later in the semester, we have also put the supplier negotiations committee in charge of "relationship management." That is, while not directly involved in receiving goods from the suppliers, they must keep in touch with vendor management and make sure the process is going smoothly and that no problems have cropped up in vendor-operations dealings. This is because the members of the committee have met repeatedly with vendor management (rather than the operations people that the operations committee members see).

Instructors should note the potential problems involving students dealing with people and organizations outside the institution, especially if students perform poorly or present a bad face to the community. We have been fortunate in our experience so far that students have self-selected with good characteristics for this role: articulate, responsible, and professional.

Web Design Committee

The Web design committee develops the business Web site. This includes not only the framework of Web pages and content but also the order processes associated with the Web page, plus marketing that occurs through the Internet (e.g., posting to search engines and cross-site advertising deals). During the first part of the semester, the Web design committee must find a host for the Web site, either within the university or on the outside. Key decision criteria include cost, service, speed, and flexibility.

Once a host has been chosen, the structure and flow of the Web site must be developed. That is, the layout of the pages within the Web site, their general content, and the interconnections between the pages must be determined. Also included at this stage is the "personality" of the Web site matching the brand personality (Aaker 1997). Obviously, this requires close work with the advertising and PR and promotions committees, which provide the copy.

One of the most crucial tasks for the Web design committee is the creation and operation of the payment system. Taking orders and accepting payment through credit cards require the coordination of university computer network administration, the university finance administration, the Internet host, and the credit card payment service. We found that changes had to be made in both university computer and finance systems to make credit card payments possible. Plus, the credit card payment collection service company we worked with was not used to dealing with nonprofit organizations, which further complicated paperwork and coordination.

In the short span of our business (less than 2 years), the Web site hosting environment has changed dramatically. In early 1999, the decision was made to host the site on the institutional server, requiring the retail management students to essentially teach our staff how to deal with order taking and credit card purchases. Today, the Web site is hosted by bizland.com (one of many possible companies), which provides a wide range of services, including order taking and credit card sales for very nominal fees. The service provided by bizland.com has proved superior to that of the university. Plus, the students learn about the importance of make/buy decisions and contracting out portions of their operations.

The primary difficulty we have observed with the Web design committee is at start-up—the availability of enough people with good Web skills distinctly varies from class to class. The retail management in operation at the time of this

writing needed class time devoted to Microsoft FrontPage and the design and writing of Web pages. We expect that as e-commerce becomes more established in our curriculum, this difficulty will disappear on its own. This will occur partially through the rise of more sophisticated services, such as bizland.com, and also the increasing use of technology in the curriculum (e.g., our university launched an electronic commerce specialty in fall 2000).

Advertising Committee

The advertising committee creates the materials to be used in advertising and promoting the business, including fliers, direct mailers, posters, and other promotional items. In addition, it is responsible for creating the copy and picture content for the pages of the Web site. Past committee members have chosen to produce one-page and multipage fliers for campus, community, and direct mailing purposes. Other promotional items have included giveaways and sale items such as T-shirts and buttons. Combined with some new material, they have cut and pasted from these developments to create the material for the Web site.

As one of the most creatively focused committees, advertising is very popular with students and is well populated. Unfortunately, our experience with the advertising committee has been mixed. The students have developed big ideas (e.g., television ads and radio spots) but sometimes come through with too little detail work. That is, they love the creative end but hate the production side—beware of them promising much and delivering little. This committee (along with the PR and promotions committee), more than any other, requires firm deadlines and deliverables from the instructor.

PR and Promotions Committee

The PR and promotions committee designs and carries out promotional plans, including publicity, events, media timing/scheduling, and other institutional/organizational contacts and meetings.[3] Over the course of time, this committee has engaged in a wide variety of events, from lotteries to booths at the county fair to marching in parades. It has also organized publicity campaigns in the local newspaper and worked on regional outlets such as television, radio, and larger city newspapers. Since the committee has contacts with local media, we have historically chosen to have the PR and promotions committee responsible for timing and scheduling paid advertisements in the media.

Just as the advertising committee, the PR and promotions committee is very popular—and our experience very similar. Students plan large campaigns (e.g., aimed at their hometown newspapers, plus local television and radio reports) but sometimes come through with too little detail work. That is, they love the thinking and planning but hate carrying through. Push the students to make the initial contacts: once the students have been pushed into dealing with community busi-

nesses and organizations (media, service organizations, etc.), the students feel pressure to perform to avoid the loss of face with these external people and organizations.

Operations Committee

The operations committee constructs and carries out the various processes required to fill orders, including order taking, fulfillment, packaging, shipping, and customer service. The students in this committee develop the internal paperwork required to track orders through the process. Relationships and paperwork must be developed with the operations people at suppliers and shipping companies as well. When orders come through the Web site, orders must be placed with the suppliers, and materials must be picked up, combined appropriately, and shipped out. This committee is also responsible for quality control, checking orders for the appropriate combination of products and completeness.

One of the key experiences of the operations committee (and the rest of the class vicariously) is exposure to the difficulties of production and operations. Armed with this knowledge and experience, the student marketers will move into real life with a clearer understanding of the possible difficulties and limitations of operations. This will help them avoid lapsing into incompatible "thought worlds" from the manufacturing and operations people in their new jobs. The differing view of the firm and its functions causes marketers to be all too ready to make unreasonable demands on operations personnel and systems (Dougherty 1989).

Two intertwined problems have repeatedly cropped up with this group. Since they have little work early in the semester, they tend to wait until the last minute to make appropriate arrangements. In turn, they allow other committees to choose products/vendors that make for a difficult order fulfillment process (e.g., many different vendors or vendors in different places or single-item vendors). The instructor must be careful to point out these potential hazards and push the committee to create a step-by-step process by the middle of the semester.

Write-Up and Presentation Committee

The write-up and presentation committee handles communications with the vice president for academic affairs (or any other outside party from which funds have been received). These reports include initial and final reports, along with interim reports, especially if additional funds are required from that office or party. These interim reports describe the progress the class has made in paying back the loans. Based on *pro forma* income statements and balance sheets, projections are made as to future returns on the university's investment in the Web site operations. At the end of the semester, an hour-long formal presentation is required to the university community as a whole, with specific invitations to important officers, such as the president and vice presidents of academic affairs, business, and development.

These oral and written communications to external people and organizations have proven to be wonderful means to put "real" pressure on the students to perform—both as a classroom unit and this committee in particular. This pressure is crucial because a strange effect has developed more than once: this committee attracts lower performing individuals. The group procrastinates and sometimes produces reports that project an image not representative of the group's efforts. Given the importance of these communications to the continuing support of outside parties, instructors may want to screen the membership of this committee.

Secretary

The position of secretary (a voluntary rotating position) takes care of tracking committee assignments and maintaining a record of student contact information. This is primarily done through classroom meeting minutes. The detailed notes describe the decision processes and final outcome action plans and deliverables for the coming week or two. These notes have proven invaluable in the development of the written and oral communications of the write-up and presentation committee.

While we do not operate by Robert's Rules of Order, the classroom meeting minutes have proved to be an invaluable tool. Every second or third week, there is a disagreement over decisions made or due dates or projected schedules that the minutes serve to adjudicate. The students also learn to get in the habit of minute taking and creating deliverables that will serve them well in the future. From an instructor feedback/grading perspective, the minutes also provide data for the timeliness and effectiveness of the committee's activities.

The only difficulty with the secretary position is relying on a single individual. At times, the secretary has been unable to fulfill the duties due to absence or other personal problems. Late, missing, or skimpy minutes slow the progress of the entire organization—without the deadline pressure of the minutes, students have tended to avoid the hard work required to carry off the business start-up in such a short period of time. Thus, instructors need to moot volunteers for the position on the basis of past knowledge of their reliability.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

During the 2 years of this undertaking, we have used a number of assessment methods, including student course evaluations, course reflection papers, and course debriefings. The combination of methods provides data on the summary effectiveness of the course (student satisfaction) and develops both quantitative data (content analysis on reflection papers) and qualitative data (course debriefings) on the relative success of the new teaching method. Thus, we gained insight into areas that needed improvement for the next time the course is taught and the e-business extended.

Perhaps the most compelling statistic comes from the course evaluation questions concerning project effectiveness and satisfaction with the course. On a 4-point project effectiveness scale (*very effective*, *effective*, *somewhat effective*, *ineffective*), the students reported a mean rating of 1.1, very significantly more effective than the mean of projects in the rest of the School of Business at our university (see Table 3). In addition, on a 4-point class satisfaction scale (*very satisfied*, *satisfied*, *dissatisfied*, and *very dissatisfied*), the students reported a mean rating of 1.2, showing them to be very significantly more satisfied than the mean for other classes in the School of Business at our university.

One means of receiving feedback was through informal sessions held in the middle and at the end of each semester. In these sessions, typically lasting about 45 minutes, the students talked about a wide range of issues related to the course and the student-operated business project in particular. They were seemingly very open and honest in their responses, providing both positive and negative feedback on the structure, process, and content of the semester's activities.

In their reflection papers, students were instructed to make observations and draw conclusions about what they learned during the semester. I have settled on the following three-stage process: observation, analysis, and consequence. The observation phase is the recollection of experiences and outcomes of the course (past actions). The analysis phase is the actual reflection, in which the student considers the causes of the events (reflection). Finally, the third stage is consequences, in which the student focuses on future circumstances when the newfound knowledge could be applied (future actions). Weekly journaling was strongly recommended to facilitate writing the paper (Fisher 1990).

A content analysis was conducted on the final course reflection papers using a taxonomy of the seven learner-centered guidelines for creating a learner-centered environment: encourage cooperation among students, encourage active learning, give prompt feedback, communicate high expectations, respect diverse talents and ways of learning, emphasize time on task, and encourage student-faculty contact (Gremler et al. 2000). These guidelines were chosen because of their relevance for experiential education. I conducted the content analysis; the results are detailed in Table 4.

These results clearly group student observations around the seven learner-centered guidelines into three categories of high, medium, and low occurrence levels. Given that the stated intention of the reflection papers was for students to discuss what they learned in the course, we take this to mean that the high-level citation categories (active learning and cooperation among students) and medium-level citation categories (prompt feedback, high expectations, diverse ways of learning, and time on task) were well supported with this method. The last category (student-faculty contact) was much less supported in the content analysis.

TABLE 3
ASSESSMENT CRITERIA OUTCOMES

	e-business			School			
	M	SD	Sample Size	M	SD	Sample Size	Difference Significance
Project effectiveness	1.1	0.3	42	2.6	1.5	2,122	< .001
Overall satisfaction	1.2	0.6	42	1.7	0.7	2,122	< .001

TABLE 4
ASSESSMENT CRITERIA OUTCOMES
(IN PERCENTAGES)

Learner-Centered Concerns	Content Analysis: Any Reference (n = 42)	Content Analysis: Total Citations (n = 324)
Cooperation among students	92.9	24.1
Active learning	100.0	23.1
Prompt feedback	59.5	16.4
High expectations	50.0	9.3
Diverse talents/ways of learning	47.6	10.2
Time on task	42.9	14.2
Student-faculty contact	26.2	3.7

Encourage Cooperation among Students

Since almost all the coursework during the semester was achieved in student groups, the opportunity for cooperation among students was immense. The reflection paper content analysis confirms this: student-student cooperation had a plurality of total citations (24%) and was referred to by 93% of the students. Many of these students discussed the importance of learning and sharing the experience with their peers. Not all such references were positive, with a few students complaining about social loafing. This type of complaint is very common in team exercises (Deeter-Schmelz and Ramsey 1998); qualitatively, the level of complaints did not seem abnormally high in comparison with other course reflection papers. In many ways, we believe a low level of such complaints may be important and useful experiences for the students.

Encourage Active Learning

The course design is clearly intended to be an active learning exercise, so we expected the students to recognize and seize the opportunity to experience the various processes and tasks involved in setting up and operating the Internet-based business. The reflection paper content analysis confirms this as well—references to "real-world" learning captured the second highest incidence of total citations (23%), and every single student mentioned the topic! In addition, classroom debriefing indicated that students felt the many project tasks (formulating "real-life" Web pages, advertising, operations, and project management) were valuable in their learning process and were directly applicable to their future careers. These student observations follow that of Lawson, White, and Dimitriadis (1998) on active learning in technology.

Give Prompt Feedback

The first of the medium category of content analysis categories, the students expressed a feeling of ambiguity, in terms of the clarity of assignments and grading. Most students (60%) made some reference to this in their reflection papers, totaling the third highest total citations at 16%. These were rhetorical questions concerning their lack of confidence and direction: What activities do we need to accomplish? How will the vice president for academic affairs react to our profitability? How do we know we have a "good" Web site/flyer/promotions strategy? While others argue that ambiguity is a crucial part of experiential learning (Dennehy, Sims, and Collins 1998), this is clearly a concern that must be dealt with.

Communicate High Expectations

Having the "real-life" burden of performance weighed on the students—while external expectations secured only 9% of the total citations, exactly 50% of the students mentioned it at least once. These citations were usually in reference to meeting the expectations of the vice president for academic affairs or the community organizations involved in the projects—and not once any instructor expectation! We believe this is solid evidence for the continuing involvement of community and administration personnel and organizations in the students' business operations.

Respect Diverse Talents and Ways of Learning

By its very design, the voluntary committee structure of the student-operated business allows for students to freely choose the tasks in which they wish to be most heavily involved. Conversely, by asking them to place themselves on multiple committees, combined with the everyday discussions of all tasks, the students still get exposure to the entire gamut of activities of the business. Thus, we were not surprised when 48% of the students mentioned this in their reflection papers, gathering 10% of the total citations.

Emphasize
Time on Task

Increasing student motivation and interest in course material was also achieved but not consistently across students. The reflection paper content analysis showed that this category garnered the second lowest number of students (43%), for a total of 14% of the citations. While no students indicated they were less motivated or put in less effort, most students never discussed time and effort in their papers at all. We assume this means the effort level for the majority was similar to other courses of comparable status within the curriculum. On the course evaluation form, students are asked to report their time spent per week on the course outside the classroom. While the mode is very clearly 3 to 6 hours, 17% reported 9 hours and above. These high-intensity students almost universally made extended open-ended comments praising the project. We take this to mean that while no students were "turned off" by the project, perhaps as many as one fourth were "turned on."

Encourage Student-
Faculty Contact

Far and away this category was the least mentioned by the students in their reflection papers, with only 4% of the total citations and only 26% of the students making any reference to this in their papers at all. With so little formal lecturing and so much classroom time devoted to meetings, the design of the course may cause the students to see or feel very little student-faculty contact. However, there is anecdotal evidence that this project has also increased student contact with faculty members other than the primary faculty directly responsible for the retail management class. Other faculty members in the School of Business have indicated that students return to their "favorite" faculty members for advice on specific aspects of the project, either technical, methodological, or organizational/behavioral.

Other Outcomes

In addition to these seven areas, we have also found that student-operated businesses have other side benefits. Students have gained not only through their increased learning but also through increased fund-raising and membership for student organizations. The marketing club has doubled in size and for the first time has begun attracting students from other majors. In 2000-2001, the marketing club is relying on the business as its only fund-raising activity—eliminating car washes, raffles, and the like. The students also benefit during their job search by networking with local employers through vendor relationships and by building their portfolios/résumés with real-life Web site, advertising, and operational experience.

There have been calls in the literature for projects that integrate community, institution, and students through real-world learning (Bilimoria 1998). Our students have very consciously focused—totally without faculty prompting—on using local suppliers. While in some cases these have been large, international retailers (e.g., Mal-Wart or K-Mart), more often the students have chosen local specialty stores to give their offerings differentiation from nationally available products. Naturally, the community has been very receptive to this effort, which fosters economic activity in our immediate community, a very rural agricultural area. We hope that an entrepreneurial spirit of microenterprise will develop over time as well (Stevenson 2000).

The students' activities also serve to bring the community into direct contact with the institution. As we have shown, community executives and proprietors serve to reinforce classroom learning. But they also become more likely to support the institution and its activities, for example, through speaking engagements in classrooms and student organizations. The economic development aspect of the student-operated business also creates goodwill in the community for the institution. In addition, in their efforts to promote the Web site, the students generate a stream of advertisements, promotional materials, and public relations events that generates free publicity for the host institution.

Remaining Issues

Process-Outcome Ambiguity

The foremost difficulty discovered in the foregoing evaluation is a deep sense of student ambiguity in the direction and outcomes from the course. In the present session of the retail management class, we are actively trying to use the feedback techniques offered by Larsen (1998). Of her recommendations, we are focusing on feedback regularity, scripting, and feedback seeking. To seek feedback and to provide a script, we are using the debriefing system described by Dennehy, Sims, and Collins (1998). They divide debriefing into four stages, following Kolb, Rubin, and Osland's (1990) model of experiential learning: feeling, watching, thinking, and doing. We plan to use the questions they provide for each debriefing stage.

Group versus Individual Evaluation

The second issue, that of group versus individual evaluation, is much trickier. The core items we discovered were the usual concerns of social loafing and that the instructor did not truly understand the relative contributions of the individuals in each committee. Historically, to discover the contributions of each individual, many instructors have used student surveys to gauge student performance (e.g., Deeter-Schmelz and Ramsey 1998). We have used an evaluation survey based on a competence scale developed in the marketing channels literature (Kumar, Stern, and Achrol 1992).

The difficulty comes from severe student reticence in filling out the forms. Our reaction in the past has been that when a particular class has been very opposed to the survey, we

have not used this measure of student performance, relying solely on subjective instructor evaluation. Clearly, this has not been effective, as demonstrated by the student feedback reported above. Our intention in the present session is, in spite of student protests, to give the Deeter-Schmelz and Ramsey (1998) evaluation form twice during the semester to provide additional input to the feedback and grading process.

Self-Selection of Student Committee Assignments

Clearly, there are pros and cons to allowing students to self-select their committee assignments. The advantages are that students may be more motivated to work hard in areas in which they are interested. In addition, we have tried in the past to encourage the students to choose areas that are not their individual strengths, so they can get new experiences and training in their areas of weakness. They may also choose groups that facilitate their learning: common time schedules, interests, and locations. Of course, the disadvantages are in many ways the obverse of the former. Instead of choosing an area of weakness, they may choose what is easy for them. The students will also likely choose to work with their friends, very possibly clumping by academic ability and motivation (an effect that the write-up and presentation committee has exhibited).

The alternative is to assign students to groups. By avoiding any clumping effects, it may assist both individuals in working on their individual strengths, plus it will make it far less likely that committees are left with only very strong or very weak students. Unfortunately, the experience at our institution in other courses is that students infer derogatory faculty motives from the assignment process. Historically, we have focused on the positive motivation effects and avoided the negative motive inference effects and allowed the students to self-select into committees. In the future, we are going to experiment with assigning students to groups to avoid the clumping effects.

Bringing/Finding Required Skills

Five areas of skills are crucial for the success of the e-business: technology, finance, operations, marketing, and presentations. Our experience is that in technology, operations, and finance, a sufficient depth of these skills may be missing in the normal group of marketing students. Quite frankly, we were lucky that within the first group of students, there was a core group of five students with truly superior Internet/PC technology skills. Blinded by this accidental happenstance, it has taken us further experiences to realize that most marketing students at our institution do not have sufficient Internet skills to run a Web site themselves. We have since added an e-commerce concentration in our marketing department. As this program has many more technology courses in the curriculum, we believe the next wave of students should not have this difficulty.

Similarly, the answer to the missing finance and operations skills may lie in the curriculum as well. These are covered in our program, but historically the retail management course has been taken as one of the very earliest marketing electives, as early as the first-semester sophomore year (principles of marketing is a freshman-level course). We have not added additional prerequisites or placed a required number of credit hour limitations on enrollment. But through course registration advising, we have informally pushed the retail management class later in the students' course of study.

Course Materials: "Read the Book"

Another difficulty encountered during each of the classes has been the difficulty to get the students to read the associated course materials. The first cycle used a standard retail management text (Mason, Mayer, and Ezell 1994), which described many of the standard retailing issues not of concern to the e-business: location, store management, service management, generating foot traffic, and so on. While there is some discussion of relevant issues in this text (merchandising, branding, etc.), the students found the value limited due to its indirect focus. The next time, an e-business text was used (Hanson 2000). This time, the students found the text to be too "strategic," with a focus on "big" e-business. Given the entrepreneurial flair of the enterprise at hand, our students responded very well to a manuscript (Medes and Spence 1999) since it was far more operational in focus. Full of wonderful details about e-business start-up, the most recent class has found further work by these authors even better (Pawlowicz and Spence 2000).

In hindsight, the classroom process probably encouraged the disuse of course materials by not introducing them through formal periods of lecture. That is, a very reactive mode was used: when the students complained about their lack of knowledge in a particular area, only then were the course materials brought into play by the instructor. In the future, very direct and distinct attention will be focused on pertinent information in the course materials as or before the need arises. This more active role on the part of the instructor should also serve to raise the very low perceived student-faculty contact scores found in the content analysis.

Recommendations

Make Sure Students Have the Required Skills (or Are Available)

Sit down well before the e-business start-up and determine if the students have the required skills to initiate and carry through successfully. If not, will they be able to fill the remaining holes relatively easily from a readily available university or other sources? Or will the curriculum require modification?

*Build and Maintain
Good Relationships
with Administration and Staff*

Staff members in student affairs, development, and other offices across the university are not used to dealing with student queries and issues. Prior to the e-business start-up, explain the importance of the project for student learning and the value to the institution as a whole.

*Provide Structure but Do Not
Force Plans and Activities*

The 15-week period is short and does require some structural support for the student-operated business. The students wish some amount of lecturing and discussion of tools and techniques used in starting, operating, and managing their e-business. But by the same token, the instructor must act only as an adviser, not as a manager. The value of the learning is less than systematic, but that is okay.

*Encourage Alternative Product
Ideas and Marketing Activities*

We have found that the (initially) off-the-wall ideas become the most valuable: conducting PR campaigns in the students' hometowns, developing TV ads, consumer-personalized products, and so on. Perhaps this is the reason the most highly motivated students spend so much time on the class.

*Develop Plans for Dealing
with Student Concerns*

The student-operated business is so far outside the norm for coursework in business schools that it causes concern on the part of the students. As we have described above, ambiguity manifests itself in both the grading and feedback processes. Regularly deal with these issues through concerted efforts at feedback.

*Create Deadline Pressure
as Early as Possible*

Almost all the student groups have either procrastination problems or overly ambitious plans. Push for concrete, early deadlines and deliverables. Also, use the "threat" of outside pressure from university administrators and suppliers, media, and so on. Threaten consequences and the loss of face—we have used the threat that no "A" will be awarded unless products are actually sold during the semester!

CONCLUSIONS
AND FUTURE WORK

Our experience with Internet-based student-operated businesses has clearly demonstrated their effectiveness. Providing students with a truly real-world experience has met and often exceeded our initial expectations. Simply put, the students feel they learn more and more effectively and have concrete experience to show potential employers. The students interact with each other, faculty, staff, and the community at very high levels. And the community benefits from increased economic activity and the development of the entrepreneurial spirit in local students. Given the broad range of experiences, the project is appropriate for a wide range of courses. This includes not only retail management and entrepreneurship but also electronic commerce, marketing channels, marketing communications, and especially a capstone marketing management class.

The increased effort is not really that much higher on the part of the instructor. Our observation is that instructor effort is more redirected and refocused than moved to a higher level. Much more time is spent on individual counseling than the conventional lecture-discussion or case analysis class. However, it is true that more time must be spent nurturing relationships between community, staff, and administration. As Bilimoria (1998) argues, this is a good investment of faculty time anyway.

But what is the next step for our student-operated business? As the business grows and has a wider reach and more capital, we are anticipating that it will move into activities that are more difficult and complex. For example, until now, each new retail management class has chosen to sell various forms of the "gift basket." That is, by selecting and offering new assortments of items to consumers, this has avoided the need for carrying inventory and has simplified ordering procedures. Perhaps in the future, vertical integration might make the project more profitable educationally, financially, and for the community. At the time of this writing, the most recent retail management class is preparing to ask the vice president for academic affairs for an a new loan to expand their product line and engage in television advertising.

Where else might the business go? In parallel with the expansion of activities, we are just beginning to investigate the possibility of broadening our collaboration. This could take the form of interdisciplinary collaborations, combining the class with other courses either in marketing or other School of Business curricula. Examples might include marketing channels or supply chain management classes; accounting, finance, and operations management; or even classes in other schools of the university, including communications and design. International collaborations are increasingly popular in marketing classes (e.g., Lawson, White, and Dimitriadis 1998; Van Ryssen and Godar 2000); perhaps other universities, customers, and cultures could be brought into the process. Ultimately, perhaps the project could self-fund students and/or faculty visits to these other sites. And in their more wild speculative moments, the students have discussed scholarships and donations from a foundation funded from the student-operated business profits.

NOTES

1. Our institution has very small class sizes (usually fewer than 20 students); thus, all students can meet as a single body during class time and discuss every issue together. In larger classes (20-40 students), we would recommend breaking the classroom into groups of committees. Even larger classes might be handled by having multiple product lines developed simultaneously.

2. At its maximum, the marketing club owed the university $1,500.

3. Some would argue that the concept of integrated marketing communications (e.g., Belch and Belch 2001) implies that the advertising and PR and promotions committees should be merged. We wholeheartedly agree these functions are not separate but part and parcel of the same activity. The reason they are not together is that it would create a committee with far and away the most work (see Table 2). The weekly classroom meetings serve to coordinate and unify these activities serving a common product image.

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The Development and Management of
a Department of Marketing Advisory Council

David M. Andrus and Dawne Martin

Colleges of business administration are under continuing pressure to make their curriculum and faculty research more relevant to the business community. At the same time, resources are either declining or not keeping pace with growing enrollment at many institutions. This article addresses the formation and governance of a department of marketing advisory council based on the experiences of a marketing department at a large midwestern public university. An innovative approach for building trust and commitment with advisory council members, while increasing a department's human, intellectual, and financial resources, is outlined using relationship-marketing principles as a foundation. Examples of bylaws, activities, annual meetings, and methods of ongoing communication to ensure the success of a departmental advisory council are provided. Finally, some caveats and pitfalls associated with developing and managing an advisory council are discussed.

Decreased financial support from state legislatures for public higher education has placed increasing pressure on public institutions to partner with external constituents to maintain and improve quality at the college and unit level (Cavusgil 1996; Eastman and Allen 1999). Advisory councils are seen as a formal mechanism to develop relationships with the business community to counteract the lack of support from legislatures. A dean of a college of business administration typically performs the leadership and management role for these organizations. In this role, the dean serves as an avenue to support diverse functions such as fund-raising, reaccredidation, faculty research, recruitment and consulting, student internships, student scholarships, and program assessment.

Few advisory councils exist at the unit level in colleges of business administration (Hecht et al. 1999). Kress and Wedell (1993) maintain that functional areas in business administration would be better served if each had its own advisory council. Industry executives would voice their needs to faculty on important issues as well as provide research and work opportunities for students and faculty. A more relevant educational experience would be provided to students by integrating suggestions from council members into the curriculum.

The development of a departmental advisory council represents a major innovation due to the inherent differences between a college advisory council and a departmental council. College advisory councils are often composed of well-known executives of major corporations. While these executives provide powerful insights into business issues for a college, they generally are not heavily involved in the operations of a department. A department of marketing advisory council is an innovative approach for enhancing the educational experience for students and the effectiveness of faculty. Departmental councils can aid with various issues such as curriculum design, teaching assistance, student recruitment, and financial support.

A gap in the literature exists in terms of specifying guidelines for council bylaws, activities, membership selection, a meeting agenda, and communication and correspondence with council members. A framework is developed, based on relationship-marketing principles, for creating and managing an advisory council at the unit level with a focus on departments of marketing. A list of activities and bylaws for managing such an organization is presented within this framework. An example of correspondence with council members and some strategies for soliciting members are also provided.

The information in this article is based on the successful experiences of a department of marketing at a large midwestern state university spanning 4 years and working with 38 member firms. Other departments of marketing and academic units in general can easily implement the proposed framework. These innovative materials can be adopted and adapted for the unique objectives of a particular department and university.

David M. Andrus is a professor and head of the Department of Marketing, College of Business Administration, Kansas State University. Dawne Martin is an assistant professor in the Department of Marketing, College of Business Administration, Kansas State University.

REVIEW OF PREVIOUS LITERATURE

The following literature review presents criticisms of business education and higher education in general, information about the American Assembly of Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) and the Association of Collegiate Business Schools and Programs (ACBSP) requirements and interaction with the business community, benefits of advisory councils, advisory council characteristics, and faculty perceptions of advisory council value. Much of this literature is descriptive in nature. It does not thoroughly identify the methods of creating an effective advisory council.

The Need for Advisory Councils

Critiques of college graduates in general and business students specifically include the inability to communicate clearly and work in teams (Oblinger and Verville 1998). Several criticisms of faculty in higher education include emphasizing research over teaching; being isolated in the ivory tower and studying irrelevant, esoteric issues; resisting accountability and performance standards; and hiding behind a privileged status of tenure to oppose needed changes (Limerick 2000). Much of the disparagement directed at higher education could be diffused or solved with the assistance of council members (Chonko and Caballero 1991; Kilzer and Kennedy 1990; Stanton 1988).

An advisory council can serve as a public relations representative to address these criticisms with the important constituencies of a department of marketing. The business community can champion the cause of higher education and be an advocate for a particular program. An academic perspective of controversial issues presented by executives may have more credibility with the public and appear less self-serving than the same information communicated by faculty members.

Ensuring that college of business administration faculty provide a current perspective in teaching and research programs about the business community is given high priority by the AACSB and the ACBSP. The AACSB requires in Policy FD.3 that accredited colleges of business administration establish a mechanism for faculty to observe business practitioners so that relevant ideas are applied in teaching and research. The ACBSP requires in Standard 3.1 that colleges of business administration demonstrate linkages with business practitioners and business associations. The ACBSP exhibits a strong preference for advisory councils at 4-year institutions when considering programs for accreditation.

Since the faculty's composition and qualifications are critical to delivering business programs and fulfilling missions, both the AACSB and ACBSP expect colleges of business administration to have opportunities for faculty to interact with the business community on functional area topics. Contact with the business community on functional area topics can be accomplished by interacting with advisory council executives. Such interaction can be beneficial to faculty and students at the unit level of a department of marketing. In summary, an advisory council can aid public relations, provide credibility, help with meeting AASCB and ACBSP requirements, and assist the department in meeting teaching and research goals.

Experiences with Advisory Councils

Departments benefit from advisory councils by helping programs stay innovative, relevant, and applicable to nonacademic settings (Dorazio 1996; West and Petroshius 1998). There has been a growing interest in the development of advisory councils at the unit level within colleges of business administration, but few schools have created councils or developed experience at managing such organizations. Little research was conducted on advisory councils in general. Two studies that focused on marketing programs in particular as well as other research profiled some characteristics and council member selection criteria of these organizations (Dorazio 1996; Kress and Wedell 1993; Metzler 1991; Kilzer and Kennedy 1990; West and Petroshius 1998). This research found that marketing advisory councils were relatively new, with a small number in existence for 5 years. In addition, most councils were small, with an average of 12 members who were appointed for 3-year terms and met twice during the regular school year at the university campus. Council members tended to pay their own expenses and were viewed as making valuable contributions. According to Kress and Wedell (1993), most departments of marketing searched for high-level marketing executives who had bachelor's degrees.

A number of articles have detailed the experiences with advisory councils from many different colleges and types of universities. For example, the School of Computer Science at Carnegie Mellon University instituted an advisory council in 1989 that ensured that its graduates were meeting the needs of the employers (LaPlante 1991). In Carnegie Mellon's case, the advisory council's primary task was to propose new curricula.

Research by Kress and Wedell (1993) indicated that marketing faculty were mixed in their assessment of council contributions. Faculty will obviously have to see a departmental advisory council as a valuable component of an academic program, or the chances for creating and implementing useful partnering activities that benefit all parties will be greatly diminished or nonexistent. Successful councils often require widespread involvement from faculty throughout the year and can require a significant time commitment from a department head. Council members often want to interact with faculty during the year at luncheons and similar meetings. Faculty and academic administrators want to see a return on their time investment, as do council members. These benefits need to be continual and readily apparent to both groups to maintain a long-term relationship.
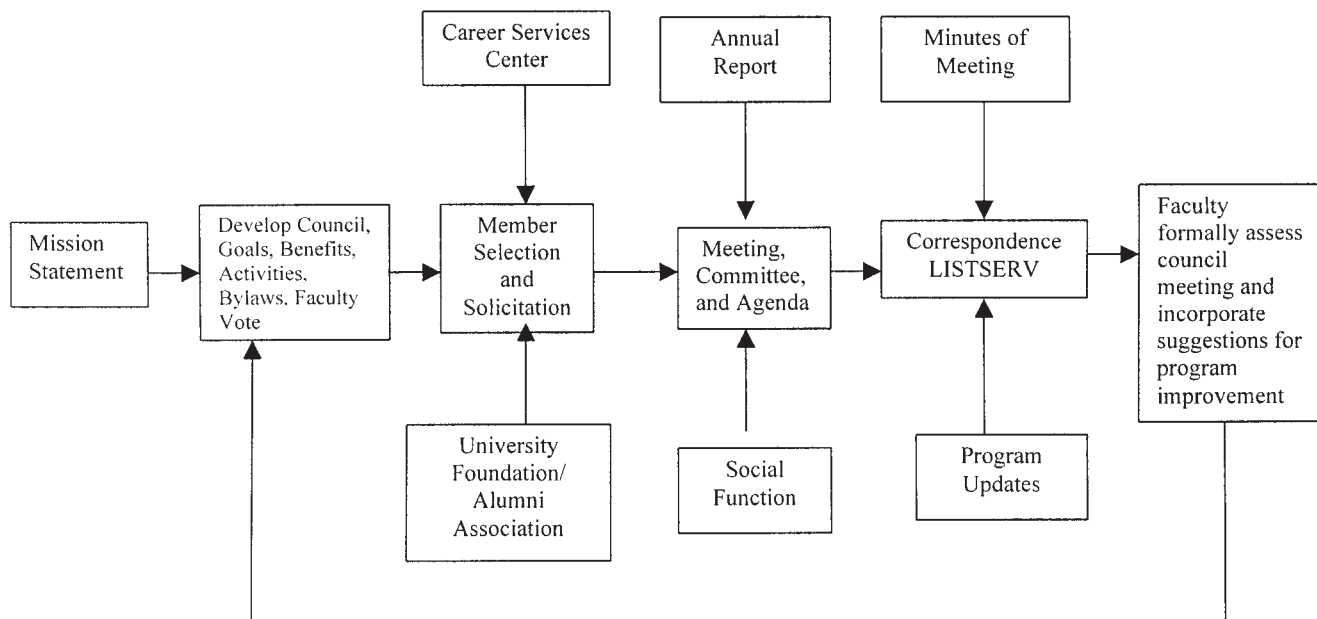
FIGURE 1:   Advisory Council Management Framework

Marketing faculty reported that funds raised, internships and projects for students and faculty, and a business perspective of marketing were the greatest value obtained from an advisory council (Kress and Wedell 1993). Faculty and student recruitment, professional development assistance, and conference organization were viewed as unimportant council functions. The value of a council to a department can extend far beyond these activities and largely depends on the goals of the faculty and the leadership of the department head.

BUILDING AN ADVISORY COUNCIL
AND RELATIONSHIP MARKETING

Building an advisory council is really about building relationships and partnerships. Building trust and commitment between business and academicians requires communications, shared values, and relationship value (Morgan and Hunt 1994). Advisory councils are successful when they provide for continual communication and interaction resulting in the development of shared values and vision for the department.

Parvatiyar and Sheth (2000) offer a relationship-marketing framework for reviewing the process of building and maintaining a departmental advisory council. The process includes formation, management and governance, performance evaluation, and evolution. A framework for creating and managing an advisory council at the unit level is displayed in Figure 1.

Developing an advisory council is an evolutionary process in which the council functions become more sophisticated. The true benefits of the advisory council develop over time through increasing commitment by both faculty and council members. Understanding this evolutionary process will assist others in developing successful advisory councils, avoiding many of the pitfalls.

Formation requires creation of a mission statement, developing goals, activities, and bylaws. Formation also includes selecting members for a council. The annual meeting, social function, and ongoing correspondence are functions of the management and governance of the council. A discussion of member selection, a description of the annual meeting with a detailed agenda, and an outline of a social event that accompanies the annual meeting are provided. Next, typical correspondence with a council during the year and an efficient method to communicate with council members are presented. Finally, evaluation and evolution involve the incorporation of council suggestions for program improvement with faculty assessment of council recommendations.

Department heads will have the primary responsibility for creating and managing their council. This represents an expanded assignment from the traditional role of the department head and is consistent with the expansion of this position in general (Hecht et al. 1999). Throughout the discussion, caveats are presented from the experiences and observations at one state university to help others avoid costly

mistakes. While these warnings apply to faculty in general, department heads wishing to begin such a council should pay special attention to these suggestions to avoid mistakes.

FORMATION OF THE
ADVISORY COUNCIL

Relationship formation requires significant investments of time and effort to detail the purpose of the relationship, selection of partners, and how the governance of the advisory council should be handled (Parvatiyar and Sheth 2000). An outline of specific steps taken in the formation stage to ensure the success of an advisory council is presented. As with other organizations, the advisory council needs a mission statement, bylaws, and a plan for member recruitment and selection. Each of these activities is discussed in detail to guide a department head in creating an advisory council.

Developing a Mission
Statement, Goals, and Bylaws

The first step in forming a council is to identify the mission, goals, and benefits to be accomplished by partnering with executives from the business community. The department head should prepare a preliminary mission statement and bylaws and then share these documents with the faculty and founding members. The mission will state the reason for the existence of the council. The bylaws document will specify the goals, benefits, and governance of the council. A formal list of a council's major activities will describe the actions that support the goals. This process should also include input from the dean, faculty, student leaders, and department heads with their own councils in the college of business administration, as well as other relevant constituents. After the council is formed, the members can formally vote on the mission and bylaws. The chances for fulfilling the activities in the charter will greatly increase if all participants agree at the outset and share the same vision for the council.

The department head should complete the initial work for several reasons. The first reason is the need to comply with university policies and guidelines regarding unit fund-raising and activities outside the scope of education, service, and research. In addition, the department head needs to work with the dean of the college of business administration to reduce the potential for conflicting goals and overlap in council memberships. Finally, faculty time is more appropriately used in the member recruitment and governing stages of the advisory council relationship process.

It is critical to receive the approval of the dean before pursing the development of a council and to keep the dean abreast of the current activities and operations of the council at the unit level. Without a dean's support, a unit-level council will not work. A dean will typically be very supportive of unit-level councils because they diversify fund-raising responsibilities and offer a strategic alliance for accreditation efforts and public relations. Most deans will have a great deal of experience at interacting with business executives on a council and can guide a department head in the early stages of development. If the dean is inexperienced with fund-raising or has not developed an advisory council for the college, the university foundation or similar fund-raising operation at the institution is often a good source of expertise for the department head.

It is important to note that at this stage in the development process, a council is not a board of directors but serves in an advisory capacity (Kirk 1985; West and Petroshius 1998). This fact needs to be clearly communicated to executives and faculty at the outset. The role of the council is to support and consult with the department in an advisory capacity to help improve the academic program. This does not mean that every suggestion that council executives make will be enacted (LaPlante 1991). It is important to let council members know that their input is valued and will receive serious consideration and analysis by faculty.

Faculty members benefit from the advisory council in many ways. Business executives can offer a unique view of both the skills that students should have and the types of learning experiences that help develop productive and competent marketing professionals. Faculty may find that the advisory council offers additional opportunities for research support, consulting, and internships. Advisory council members and faculty need to know what to expect from the relationship in terms of advice and time.

As with all mission statements, the general purpose for the existence of the council should be made clear. A short, generalized statement will most likely work best. If the mission statement is too specific, it can limit a department's flexibility in adapting and responding to the rapidly changing environment of higher education. A narrow mission can also limit the expansion of future council activities. Once a draft mission statement is developed, the faculty should vote on the mission statement.

Suggested activities and objectives for this group could include presenting the viewpoints of the business community and informing the faculty about innovations and trends likely to influence marketing education. Indeed, sound advice from marketing professionals is one of the most important reasons to form a council (Kruckeberg 1999). At a minimum, the council should initially function to increase the department's outreach and interaction with marketing executives and solidify the relationship with the university and assist in the department's efforts at raising discretionary funds.

Faculty Involvement
and Council Formation

After the department head, the department faculty will have most of the responsibility for interacting with the coun-

cil members. It is therefore vital to seek faculty consensus about the formation and operation of a council to garner future support as the activities of the organization expand. If all parties involved do not want to spend a considerable amount of time with council members throughout the year, then a council should not be formed.

Some faculty will have better interpersonal skills at interacting with business executives than other professors, and some will enjoy this interaction to a greater extent. Despite the fact that preferences for interacting with council members will vary across faculty, a department head must stress that it is critical for the entire group to participate in the implementation and management of this undertaking. This will help a department head distribute work evenly and maintain a democratic culture in the department. Since benefits from the advisory council accrue to all faculty members, and equity in faculty work allocation affects morale, all members should play a role in the development and management of the advisory council. A department head may use positive influence techniques such as stressing the benefits of a council to motivate recalcitrant faculty members who do not wish to participate (Wilson 2001). Once such an organization is created, it would be very difficult and embarrassing for the institution to disband the council for a lack of interest and commitment. This abandonment of an established council could have long-lasting negative consequences for a university.

Selecting and Approaching
Potential Council Members

The next step in the process is the identification and selection of potential advisory council members. The size of the council will depend on the council mission and other issues of effectiveness. Membership invitation should be at the discretion of the head of the department of marketing since this person will have primary leadership and management responsibilities for the council.

Membership on the council should be limited. The council studied at the state university illustrated in this article began with 15 members and expanded to 38 firms. Some companies had more than one executive who represented the firm on the council. Therefore, more than 40 firm representatives on a unit-level council might prove difficult to manage as well as limit contact between faculty, students, and council members. Fewer than 10 members can make the time and effort to start and manage a council difficult to justify. Kruckeberg (1999) recommended that the number of firms be limited initially with some alumni as members because students often relate well to the viewpoint of a recent graduate, while faculty appreciate the experienced perspective of senior executives.

At the state university studied, membership terms were 5-year periods, with annual renewals. When all 40 memberships were filled, a waiting list was established. An attrition rate of three to five firms annually was experienced due to company budget reductions, layoffs, and mergers and acqui-

sitions with other firms. The issue of member attrition thus requires a department head to recruit firms throughout the year to maintain a target size of corporations on a council.

Companies can be sought from diverse industries to join the council so that a broad set of perspectives about the field of marketing is represented. The firms chosen should closely align with the department's mission. If a department emphasizes retailing or distribution, for example, it would obviously want to include a disproportionate number of companies from the retailing or distribution industries.

It is important to account for the group cohesiveness that will prevail within the advisory council when selecting members. Members need to interact well with others and be supportive of university educational goals to provide program enhancements. Potential members who are combative or have poor interaction skills may be more disruptive than helpful.

Many business executives are honored when asked to join such a council. There will, however, be some rejections from potential members, often because executives are unable to make the time commitment to support the program. It is best to have the advisory council consist of marketing professionals who are leaders in their field, have a sincere interest in the department and university, and are willing to contribute to the accomplishment of the organization's objectives. One tactic is to limit membership to marketing executives or academicians of significant standing. Company executives can be asked to suggest whom they think would best represent their firm early in the solicitation process.

Locating Potential
Members

There are several sources of information for selecting executives to contact about the council. Faculty, alumni associations, and university foundations are good sources for locating potential members because they can identify successful executives who are graduates or donators to the university. Once a council has started, current members can suggest additional companies to join.

As much as possible, faculty and the department head need to cultivate relationships with local and regional businesses. When the institution is in a small college town, this avenue for recruiting is quickly exhausted. One method of expanding the prospect pool is to develop relationships with firms recruiting on campus. Career centers can identify both firms that hire marketing students and individuals at those firms who might contribute to the department. Faculty members may be encouraged to meet with representatives of these firms over lunch. The faculty member has an opportunity to learn about a company and industry, while the recruiter begins to develop a relationship with the faculty member and the department. Another approach is developing relationships through local or statewide memberships in trade and professional organizations. In general, the key issue in identifying potential council members is finding some tie to the college or university.

Overlapping Memberships

Since most deans will already have a council at the college of business administration level, it is important to create nonoverlapping memberships. Overlapping memberships have a high potential for creating conflict within a college of business administration, especially over fund-raising. Soliciting financial support from the same firms or individuals can make council members angry and think they are being taken advantage of by giving more than they are receiving from the partnership.

Unit-level councils in a college of business administration with nonoverlapping memberships can expand the total number of relationships that the academic community has with the business community. This can give the college of business administration and the department broader perspectives about industry trends that will affect the discipline and foster an environment of excellence in higher education. Coordination of solicitation activities among departments and with a dean will increase the total number of partnerships and financial support for the university.

Approaching Council Candidates

Once a potential member is identified, the department head should telephone the candidate to explain the purpose and nature of the council. Interest in joining the council can be assessed at this time. If the candidate expresses interest, the department head can mail information about the department and university. A sample of the correspondence to send to potential members is displayed in Table 1.

One suggestion is to have the letter focus on the benefits of the council and the rationale for joining, along with a copy of the council activities and bylaws. Examples of activities and bylaws are shown in Tables 2 and 3, respectively. These documents specify the actions, goals, and policies of the advisory council. The mailing can be followed by a second telephone call to council prospects 1 week later to answer questions and further assess interest.

A department head can identify several benefits that council members will enjoy. These benefits are particularly important when soliciting members during the early phase of recruiting. A recent study by Little, Tuckman, and Humphrey (2000) showed that executives joined boards for a number of reasons. These included giving back to the community, sharing expertise with student and faculty, and increasing business contacts. Companies that recruit on campus also like to have access to students through the advisory council activities. Council members can expect a number of short-term benefits, including a listing on the department Web site, opportunities to speak in classes, and postings of job announcements on a student electronic mail list. Long-term benefits such as enhanced employee recruiting, the ability to positively affect higher education, and access to faculty are often equally important.

On approval by the department head, a prospective member is invited to join. Some departments may require an annual contribution that is solicited via a formal request. The amount of the contribution should be determined in consultation with the dean, other department heads, and founding executive members. Many firms will respond to the initial request, and the contributions may come from either a corporate account or a personal account. Contributors should be promptly mailed a letter of appreciation with an invoice that lists a tax identification number. A second letter should be mailed 2 months later if a firm has not responded to the initial request. This often generates the remaining donations within a month.

The department can use the marketing advisory council contributions to offset the direct costs associated with the business and the meetings of the council. The annual meeting can cost several thousand dollars to implement. Most of the cost is associated with luncheons, room rentals to conduct meetings, and a social function such as an evening banquet or a catered tailgate party prior to a football game the next day. Any remaining funds can be used to enhance the teaching, research, and service programs of the department. An accounting of all proceeds should be provided to the council at each of its annual meetings. Companies might offer to fund the luncheon, banquet, or tailgate party at the annual meeting if their sponsorship is officially recognized.

MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE OF THE ADVISORY COUNCIL

Once the mission and bylaws are developed and the initial members are recruited, it is important to focus on the management of the council, as well as the individual relationships with each member. This requires decisions about the degree to which parties will share governance responsibilities, the nature of the relationship, and roles to be played. According to Parvatiyar and Sheth (2000), governance issues should include role specification, communication, development of common bonds, planning, motivation, and monitoring procedures. The bylaws are the primary governance document. Mechanisms for communication and developing common bonds, trust, and commitment are critical to the success of the advisory council. Developing commitment requires identification of benefits, both individual and shared, and ongoing interaction between the faculty and council members.

The advisory council requires commitment from the department head, faculty, and business executives. There are several methods of building trust and commitment within the advisory council. Commitment forms for faculty members as they see the benefits of having an advisory council from which to draw business experience, funding, and other career opportunities. For the advisory council members, commitment increases as they become more involved in the council

TABLE 1
INVITATION LETTER TO SOLICIT MEMBERS

Dear Executive:

The Department of Marketing at State University takes great pride in its strong relationship with alumni and the business community. We rely on you for both personal and financial help. External support helps us create a high-quality program that provides some of the finest graduates in the country.

The department has developed a more formal mechanism for communicating and working with external constituents. The informal approach of the past is not sufficient to meet the growing needs for outside input and assistance. We have, therefore, established a Marketing Advisory Council. This organization provides an essential link with both the business community and our alumni. The advisory council has been developed for the purpose of improving marketing education at State University. The advisory council shares our commitment to maintaining an excellent program, and its members are willing to devote their time and energy to help us meet the challenges of continuous improvement. This group will serve in an advisory capacity in those situations mutually agreed on as important developments/programs for the Department of Marketing.

It is my pleasure to invite you to become a member of State University's Marketing Advisory Council. Through your personal support and knowledge and your organization's relationship with us, you are in a position to play an important role in the development of our program.

I have enclosed a copy of the advisory council bylaws for your review. This will more fully explain the organization and role of this council within our department. The annual membership dues are $_____, made payable to the Department of Marketing. The tax identification number is _____. We have had the good fortune of having firms such as _____ join the advisory council.

The invitation to join the advisory council is both an honor and recognition of your commitment to our department. I encourage you to give serious consideration to becoming a member and look forward to working with you in the future.

If you have any questions or concerns, please give me a call at _____ or e-mail me at _____. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Enclosures

TABLE 2
A SAMPLE LIST OF ACTIVITIES FOR A MARKETING ADVISORY COUNCIL

Present the viewpoints of the business community and inform the faculty about innovations and trends likely to influence marketing education.

Increase the department's outreach and interaction with marketing executives, solidifying their relationship with State University.

Assist in the department's fund-raising efforts and identify areas where the department has expertise to offer executive development programs.

Attract prominent marketing executives to the campus as guest lecturers.

Create a group of marketing leaders from industry who are willing to contribute time and expertise to enhance the quality of marketing education at State University.

Assist with summer or semester-long faculty and student internship programs or work experiences and assist with research projects by identifying possible research topics, suggesting possible funding sources, and making contacts that can aid the researcher's efforts.

Present the viewpoint of the department to professional, industrial, and governmental groups and promote the image of the Department of Marketing.

Assist in recruiting well-qualified students to major in marketing and provide encouragement to students already in the discipline.

Assist in recruiting outstanding faculty members for the department.

Review and provide advice about the department's curriculum, programs, and courses.

activities, such as the annual meeting and committees, and as they begin to see results from their work.

The activities, interaction, and benefits provide a gradual commitment that evolves in both faculty and council members. The more they are involved in the governance and interaction, the more benefits are reaped, and stronger commit-ments are developed (Cavusgil 1996; Linrud and Hall 1999). A sampling of the benefits of an advisory council is displayed in Table 4. Annual meetings, electronic mail list communications, departmental newsletters, and advisory council committees all serve to increase members' interest and commitment to the council.

TABLE 3
BYLAWS OF A MARKETING ADVISORY COUNCIL

ARTICLE I: NAME AND MISSION
   The name of this organization shall be the Department of Marketing Advisory Council.
   The mission of the advisory council is to provide a forum for the interaction between the business community and the Department of Marketing to improve marketing education at State University.

ARTICLE II: MEMBERSHIP OF THE COUNCIL
   A council member must be a marketing executive or an academician of significant standing. He or she must show a willingness and commitment to contribute time and expertise to accomplish the goals of the council and the department.
   A council member relinquishes his or her membership when he or she fails to pay his or her annual contributions for 2 consecutive years. Extenuating circumstances should be brought to the attention of the head of the Department of Marketing who can make an exception to the procedure.
   A member's account will be designated as delinquent if his or her contributions are not received by the time of the council's annual meeting.
   Membership on the Marketing Advisory Council is limited to 40 firms. Membership terms are 5-year periods, subject to annual renewals. When all 40 memberships are filled, a waiting list will be established.

ARTICLE III: CONTRIBUTIONS AND MEETINGS
   Membership contributions are $____ annually, payable to the State University Foundation. The contributions may come from either a corporate account or a personal account. The department will use contributions to offset the direct costs associated with the business and the meetings of the council. Remaining funds will be used to enhance the educational, research, and service programs of the department. An accounting of all proceeds will be provided to the council at the annual meeting.
   The council will hold its annual meetings on a Friday during the month of September on the campus of State University. The meeting will normally commence in the morning and will conclude with a social function.
   A majority of the council will constitute a quorum. A majority present and voting at a meeting at which a quorum is present shall decide all questions.

The head of the marketing department should initially serve as chairperson of the council. The council chairperson may be reassigned to council members after the critical first years of council development. Perhaps the major value underlying these activities is to form a group of industry leaders who are willing to contribute time and expertise to enhance the quality of marketing education at the university. The nature of these contributions will vary as higher education changes and the council evolves in its relationship with the department.

Annual Meeting

The council holds its annual meetings on the campus of the university. An agenda should be provided to the council 3 months prior to the meeting. A sample agenda is displayed in Table 5. This notice is very important to council members so they can plan their schedules in advance and attend the meeting. Most members have to take a day from work to attend the annual event, so it is important to use the meeting time judiciously. In addition to the faculty and deans, an annual meeting may average 50 executives in attendance, with some firms sending several representatives. The total attendance at the annual meeting may be approximately 70 people, depending on the size of the council and department.

An annual report can be presented to the council that contains information about the members, council expenditures, faculty profiles, research abstracts, and a profile of the curriculum. The annual report can list a roster of current students, enrollment trends, graduation statistics, student placement information, scholarship recipients, and a description of current marketing student organizations. The report can also contain the results of a student satisfaction survey.

A social function can occur the evening after the meeting or the next day with the council, deans, the faculty, student officers of the marketing club, and other guests as the participants. The social function can average 100 people in attendance. During the early stage of developing a council, members should be polled about what would be the most desirable social function with a list that could include a formal banquet at the local country club, a golf tournament, or a tailgate party before a football game. This simple function takes considerable planning by the department head and coordination with various groups such as an athletic ticket office or local country club. An informal, fun activity will often be critical to the success of the meeting.

Advisory Council Committees

Committees representing major areas of concern and interest are a good way to increase commitment of advisory council members while maximizing the benefits of the council to the department. Committees can deal with specific, important dimensions of a department such as a curriculum and teaching committee, student scholarship and employment committee, and faculty research and consulting committee.

Each committee should be composed of a faculty member and a subgroup of council executives. Committee communication can be through e-mail but may include on-site meet-

TABLE 4
A SAMPLE LIST OF THE BENEFITS OF A MARKETING ADVISORY COUNCIL

Departmental benefits
    Incorporate business executive viewpoints in planning and curriculum design.
    Assist with informing state government about resources and salary issues.
    Assist with public relations through media coverage.
    Enhance financial resources.
    Enhance the accreditation portfolio for the AACSB and ACBSP.
Faculty benefits
    Increase teaching resources through guest speakers, company cases, and business interaction with students.
    Increase opportunities for faculty research with council member firms.
    Add to the financial resources available for technology, conference travel, and research expenses.
    Increase the opportunity for faculty to participate in consulting projects.
    Increase the opportunity for faculty development.
Student benefits
    Increase opportunities for student job placement and student internships.
    Increase interaction with executives to enhance business etiquette.
    Enhance opportunities for students to work on projects with businesses.
    Increase business environment understanding with speakers for student clubs.
Council member benefits
    Contribute to the education of future employees.
    Influence the development of future curriculum for the university.
    Enhance access to students for job recruiting.
    Interact with other business executives.
    Recognition through the Department of Marketing Web site.

NOTE: AACSB = American Assembly of Collegiate Schools of Business; ACBSP = Association of Collegiate Business Schools and Programs.

ings if the members are close to the university. The committees can also meet during the annual advisory council meeting.

Setting realistic expectations for the committees is very important. Committee members need to have a firm handle on the constraints under which a department of marketing operates. Council members also need to understand that the university has a broader educational mission than specific job training and that faculty need to provide academic as well as career-specific curriculum. It is important to inform council members that their suggestions may require additional financial support from their company because many public university programs receive limited funding from state legislatures.

Committee chairmanship should reside with a faculty member. The faculty will have to educate the committee members on university constraints, as well as steering the committee in directions that are consistent with departmental goals. The committees should identify annual goals to enhance the department and develop tactics to accomplish these suggestions. At the annual meeting, goals and action items from each committee can be presented to the entire advisory council.

Communication with Council Members

Ongoing communications with council members also serve to enhance commitment. Council members can be contacted throughout the year through e-mail, letters, faxes, luncheons, campus visits, company site visits, and the telephone.

Most communication occurs over the telephone and with faxes. The department head will spend a considerable amount of time interacting with council members and keeping them abreast of accomplishments in the program and new developments. In the early years of developing a council, the department head will devote a great deal of effort to recruiting members and launching the new organization. As experience is gained with managing the organization, the level of work decreases.

E-mail is a principal means of communication for some executives who travel extensively and cannot be reached by telephone. Departments can create a council electronic mail list for council members to distribute standardize news items. A faculty member can be assigned to moderate the council e-mail list, review incoming e-mails, and then distribute them to faculty and/or other advisory council members based on content and intent. The council e-mail list is also a valuable tool for bringing business reality to the classroom when council members send and review company mini-cases for students to analyze and develop recommendations. Discussions with advisory council members can generate an extensive list of topics they would like to explore. Sample topics are detailed in Table 6.

The purpose of the council e-mail is to enhance ongoing communications as well as build commitment and trust between the advisory council and faculty. On issues requiring quick attention, council members can be mailed short response sheets that can be faxed to the department secretary indicating attendance at the annual meeting, social function,

TABLE 5
A SAMPLE AGENDA FOR AN ANNUAL MEETING

Marketing Advisory Council Meeting
Friday, September at State University

Time	Event	Speaker
9:30-10:00	Coffee and Informal Conversation	
10:00-10:15	Welcome of Guests, Introduction of Faculty, Department Overview	Dr. A, Head
10:15-10:30	Dean's Welcome and College Update	Dean B
10:30-11:00	A Day in the Life of the Faculty	Dr. C
11:00-11:15	Company and Member Profiles	Company Representatives
11:15-12:00	Faculty and Company Input on Building Relationships: Scholarship and Employment Committee, Research and Consulting Committee, Curriculum and Teaching Committee	Dr. D, Marketing Faculty and Advisory Council Members
12:00-1:15	Luncheon	Union Ball Room
1:15-1:30	Support Opportunities	Dr. E, Director of Development, University Foundation
1:30-1:45	Placement Report; Recruiting Students	Dr. F, Assistant Director of Career and Employment Services
1:45-3:30	A Student Perspective of the Recruitment Process and Career Aspirations	Marketing Club Officers and Advisory Council Members
3:30-3:45	Break	
3:45-4:00	Future Relationship Development and Directions for the Advisory Council	Dr. A and Advisory Council Members
	Saturday, September	
4:00	Catered Tailgate Party—State University Corporate Area	
6:10	Football Game—Group seating with the Department Advisory Council	

TABLE 6
IDEAS GENERATED THROUGH
AN ADVISORY COUNCIL

Courses to add to the curriculum
  Digital commerce
  Working 101: How to begin your career
  Developing entrepreneurship skills
Issues and skills to add to the curriculum
  Work expectations, authority, and responsibility
  Leadership skills
  Change management
  Productivity tools and techniques
  Legal ramifications of workplace behaviors
  Written communications
Developing relationships with council members
  Longer, project-based internships
  Company research projects for both faculty and students
  On-site company visits for faculty and students
  Earlier recruiting contacts with students
  Company mini-cases in the classroom
  Listserv, chat room, and bulletin board discussions

hotel reservations, and similar information. The key feature of all communication with council members is to keep the information short, relevant, and easy for busy executives to deal with if a response is requested (Sharpe 1999).

Other forms of ongoing communication can include access to a student e-mail list and faxed response sheets. The student e-mail list for marketing majors can play a significant role in advisory council operations. This mode of communication can be used to post job announcements, summer internship opportunities, speaker presentations, and interview schedules for students.

The department head will need to visit company headquarters as the partnerships evolve. Firms will often pay for faculty site visits that are beneficial for faculty professional development. Professors acquire a better understanding of the actual marketing activities of a company from the visit and gain knowledge about current marketing practices to share with students in the classroom. The executive host is enthusiastic about informing professors about their company and eager for faculty to help identify prospective employers for full-time and summer internship positions.

Enhancing Department
Financial Resources

Although there are many benefits to an advisory council, financial needs make the council especially important in fund-raising. Several factors will assist a department head in fund-raising activities with council executives. Effective solicitors of council donations are highly knowledgeable about their program, show a sense of commitment to the insti-

tution, and have a great deal of passion for higher education. It is wise to ask for a particular amount of funding for a specific program in the form of a written proposal. Companies will make contributions for their own reasons and not necessarily from the needs and wants of the department. The interests of both groups frequently correspond, and an astute department head will be able to identify, articulate, and capitalize on these mutual points of interest.

Donors prefer to give to a successful department that has a well-developed mission, is fiscally responsible, and has talented faculty. The department head must articulate a clear vision to executives and demonstrate how that vision will have a positive impact on the lives of students and faculty. Programmatic outcomes are important to council members. Larger dollar requests require a greater amount of time to receive the donation. Departments that want to create a council are committing to a long-term partnership, and fundraising is a strategic issue that can require several years to develop effectively.

As the organization evolves and partnerships develop, another successful fund-raising tactic involves a larger donation to the department head's Fund for Excellence. The department head's Fund for Excellence can be used to support faculty research and teaching beyond the annual donations. Council members realize that excellence, in both teaching and research, is the major criterion by which important constituents, such as employers, parents, and students, evaluate the stature of the department. The department head can inform council members that continued professional development activities help maintain or enhance the faculties' intellectual capital. Excellent faculty members produce high-quality graduates who will be desirable employees for firms. This serves as a motivation for firms to contribute more to help a program improve and accomplish its mission.

Contributors to the department head's Fund for Excellence should be recognized at the annual advisory council meeting. The awards can be publicized through the university news services. These major donors should be announced on the department of marketing Web site, faculty newsletters, and alumni newsletters. This information should be announced in classes and on the student e-mail list. A plaque should be presented to the major donor at the annual advisory council meeting.

EVALUATION AND EVOLUTION THROUGH FEEDBACK

Periodic assessment of the performance and value of the advisory council is important to maintaining and enhancing the program. The department head, faculty, and council members should assess the advisory council and its mission, goals, and activities. Assessing the council and strengthening relationships with council members should provide for the evolu-

tion of the advisory council to an entity that provides increasing value and plays a bigger role in departmental planning.

The department head should hold a faculty meeting within 2 weeks after the end of the annual advisory council meeting. Formal assessment of the event should be shared, thoroughly discussed, and reviewed for possible improvements in the program and opportunities that should be pursued. Tactics for implementing appropriate suggestions should be identified, and a time frame for their management should be defined. An explanation should be provided for council suggestions that the faculty believe cannot be enacted. Faculty feedback will be crucial to a department head at this meeting. The executives will talk to many faculty members and make recommendations that are not shared with the department head or other faculty during the course of time they spend together. It is important that everyone in the department knows what council members discuss so a complete analysis and synthesis of the conversations can be performed.

CONCLUSIONS

A framework for creating and managing an advisory council at the unit level was presented, as well as some warnings about pitfalls to be avoided. Advisory councils at the level of a department are new and require much effort to initiate and manage. The rewards from this effort are substantial and far outweigh the costs.

Financial constraints will likely plague public higher education for years to come. Advisory councils at the unit level can donate money to create discretionary funds to assist departments with their aspirations for quality marketing education. Faculty travel to conferences, computer equipment, software purchases, and research project support are a few of the factors that can be enhanced with financial contributions from the business community.

Over a 4-year period at one midwestern state university, the department enjoyed several positive improvements in the program that resulted from an advisory council. Council members reported a high level of satisfaction with the partnership. Benefits continue to occur as the relationship with the council evolves and faculty commitment and interaction with the executive partners grows.

Executives from the business community often have a strong desire to aid marketing academicians and thus welcome the opportunity to develop partnerships. The council executives can add a great deal of value to a marketing student's academic experience. Department heads, however, need to be aware of the cautionary notes for forming and managing a council. Despite the difficulties, these types of partnerships will increase in the future to enhance marketing education at universities.

FUTURE RESEARCH

There is still much to be learned about the role of partnerships between business practitioners and the academic community. Questions remain about successful fund-raising techniques for the head of a marketing department, factors that influence faculty participation with executives, and tactics for furthering relationships with an extant council. Other research opportunities deal with issues about the role of council executives in curriculum development, as well as faculty consulting and faculty residencies at a company for professional development. Regardless of these issues and challenges that faculty face, advisory councils are a promising component of higher education for those in the academic marketing profession.

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Narrowing Skill Development Gaps in Marketing and MBA Programs: The Role of Innovative Technologies for Distance Learning

Scott G. Dacko

Increasingly, universities are offering a marketing education to a diverse, international student population through formats including both full-time and distance-learning MBA programs. At the same time, universities are increasing their reliance on technology innovations to enhance students' global learning experience. Ultimately, a key measure of success of such programs and technological approaches is the extent that participant needs for business skill development are being met. This article proposes that the role of technological innovation in facilitating or hindering business skill development in a distance-learning MBA program can be better understood by (1) understanding how and why student needs for marketing and business skill development can differ within and across MBA programs and (2) how technological innovations can contribute to—or potentially limit—the development of specific skills desired by marketing and business students.

Accountability for developing transferable skills in business education has received growing attention in recent years as business schools worldwide face increasing competition, student demands, and scrutiny from local, national, and international governing and accrediting bodies (Melton 1997). Ultimately, individuals pursuing an MBA at a university rely on their institution and program to develop key skills useful in their careers. Obtaining a marketing education as part of an MBA program involves developing strong analytical skills and written and communication skills, for example, as well as gaining an up-to-date, theoretical, and practical knowledge of the domain of marketing.

A major trend in global business education today is the expansion of alternatives to full-time MBA programs, including part-time distance-learning and evening programs. Distance-learning MBA programs in particular are experiencing rapid growth (cf. Clark 1998; Larsen 1999; Murphy and Dunkin 1999; Potashnik and Capper 1998); the number of students in distance-learning MBA programs is now exceeding the number of students enrolled in full-time programs at many universities. At the same, technologies are being increasingly leveraged at these schools to provide even greater outreach (Daniel 1996; Knapp and Glenn 1996; McAleavy and Parr 1997; Tiffin and Rajasingham 1995). In major distance-learning programs worldwide, students are increasingly international since the design of distance-learning programs readily invites a global perspective and provides an international focus—particularly since the Internet creates greater ease in crossing political boundaries. Whether a university's distance-learning program is in the United States, Europe, or Asia, a vital and common set of issues is therefore raised: what gaps in skill development are found in distance-learning MBA programs relative to full-time MBA programs? Given the increasingly prevalent role of technology in business education—and distance-learning education in particular—how might technology facilitate or hinder closing the gaps in skill development among program participants? Between program participants? The implications of technology innovation on student skill development are increasingly important to educational administrators, academicians, and students. Even staff members who clearly excel as both teacher and researcher (Andre and Frost 1997) may not necessarily be emphasizing the development of appropriate skills if preoccupied with developing curriculum content alone. Since there is often a steep learning curve associated with distance-learning technologies, increased attention must therefore be given to skill development in terms of both content and the use of technology in distance-learning marketing and MBA programs.

SKILLS DEVELOPED IN AN MBA PROGRAM

Growing interest in managing skill development by educational institutions and governing bodies worldwide in general

Scott G. Dacko is a lecturer in marketing and strategic management at Warwick Business School, University of Warwick, Coventry, United Kingdom.

TABLE 1
MAJOR SKILL DEVELOPMENT STUDIES IN MANAGEMENT EDUCATION

Author, Organization (Year)	Findings
Porter and McKibbin, AACSB (1988)	Surveys conducted on graduate business school programs at 60 universities examine the development of nine key skills and personal characteristics. Findings show major deficiencies in all areas, especially risk taking, initiative, and computer skill development.
Association of Graduate Recruiters (1995)	Surveys and focus groups of 400 businesses and graduates identify the 10 most important attributes sought by businesses, with results ranging from oral communication skills to foreign language competence.
McClean, Reid, and Scharf (1998-1999)	Conceptual research categorizes transferable skills into four broad areas: cognitive skills, social skills, self-management skills, and learning-to-learn skills (knowing how one learns in different contexts).
Graduate Management Admissions Council (2000)	53% of business school students surveyed at 67 universities and colleges pursue an MBA to develop management knowledge/skills; 62% of students surveyed express satisfaction with management knowledge/skill development.

NOTE: AACSB = American Assembly of Collegiate Schools of Business

has led to increased interest in understanding participants' views of skill development in business programs in particular. Table 1 presents some of the research results in this area. Under the auspices of organizations such as the American Assembly of Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) and the Graduate Management Admission Council (GMAC), numerous research studies continue to be conducted to better assess the motivations of business school applicants and the satisfaction of business school students and graduates. For example, a major GMAC (2000) survey found that the second most common reason cited by business school students for pursuing an MBA was to develop management knowledge/skills (53%). Increasing the applicants' career options (74%) ranked first. Similarly, the survey respondents' second most common area of satisfaction with an MBA program was the development of management knowledge/skills (62%), preceded again by increases in the applicants' career options (75%).

Quantitative research on the emphasis and successful development of specific skills in an MBA program has received less attention, however, than its importance relative to other MBA program characteristics, such as the potential for increasing earning power or the opportunity for improving personally (GMAC 2000). One exception is a 1988 study by the AACSB examining nine key skills and personal characteristics developed in MBA programs to determine to what extent they were being emphasized (Porter and McKibbin 1988). In the study, students were asked to indicate to what extent their programs emphasized the development of analytical, computer, and decision-making skills; initiative; leadership/interpersonal skills; oral communication; planning/organizing; risk taking; and written communication. Results found that analytical skills rated first, with 62% of the respondents indicating "emphasized very much." Decision making and planning/organizing followed with 51% each, followed by written communication (42%), oral communication (28%),

leadership/interpersonal (26%), initiative (21%), and computer skills (14%). Risk taking (8%) was at the bottom.

Another study on skill development, reported by the Association of Graduate Recruiters (1995) and conducted by the Personal Skills Unit and the University of Sheffield, identified the 10 most important attributes that employers seek from graduates. The skill and personal characteristics identified, in order of importance, were oral communication, teamwork, enthusiasm, motivation, initiative, leadership, commitment, interpersonal skills, organizing, and foreign language competence. The study is useful in that it offers the perspective of potential employers of MBA graduates and also found that many of the top 10 key skills were those that were carefully examined in the Porter and McKibbin (1988) study.

Given the rapidly changing needs of participants enrolled in MBA programs today, one may always question whether a given set of key skills are *the* skills that administrators, teachers, and student participants collectively believe should be emphasized in their MBA programs. Certainly, the diversity of MBA programs worldwide will deter the development of a universal consensus among researchers on the key skills to be developed or even their appropriate degree of emphasis. For some universities, a list of skills to be emphasized might be expanded to include skill in managing a global business or financial reporting, for example. Nevertheless, examining the skills in the AACSB's Porter and McKibbin (1988) study are useful in that they are highly *transferable* skills among numerous aspects and functions of marketing, management, and business in general. McClean, Reid, and Scharf (1998-1999) cite earlier skills research to suggest that transferable skills ultimately fall into broad areas, including cognitive skills (e.g., solving problems, using information), social skills (e.g., working with others as leaders, communicating), self-management (e.g., initiative, risk taking), and learning-to-learn skills (knowing how one learns in different contexts and being able to apply the appropriate styles). As such, the

development of the nine transferable skills studied by Porter and McKibbin can be viewed as relying much less on the acquisition of explicit knowledge or content from any one specific track of an MBA program (e.g., international business or finance) than on building-block experiences gained from exposure to and participation in any of a broad range of learning activities and exercises.

The rapid worldwide growth of alternatives to full-time MBA programs such as distance-learning education programs now raises the question of whether participants in these programs are developing these same key skills to a greater or lesser extent than traditional full-time programs. More than ever before, the challenge of improving program quality and developing key skills now applies to students who are diversely situated around the globe. What differences are observed when distance-learning and full-time programs are compared? Given differences in skill development observed between programs, what are the implications for marketing students? How can technology play a key role in skill development areas needing significant improvement?

OPPORTUNITIES AND PROBLEMS IN SKILL DEVELOPMENT VIA DISTANCE LEARNING

Clearly, the possibilities for using new and developing technologies to address the gaps between current and desired skill development emphases, both within and across programs and across country borders, have never been greater than today. In particular, international institutions offering participants a distance-learning marketing education as an integral part of their MBA education can increasingly draw on new methods to meet participants' increasingly demanding program expectations. Yet, distance-learning programs can create both problems as well as opportunities for skill development (Hamilton 2001). Problems in developing leadership/interpersonal skills and oral communication skills may arise since distance learners have far fewer in-person opportunities to interact with colleagues—both inside and outside of class—to discuss what they have learned. Access to a university's often extensive computer resources is diminished as a result of students being further away from campus, possibly leading to less computer skill development. Other researchers suggest that the benefits of taking courses on campus rather than off campus include greater development of problem-solving skills, along with the benefit of mentoring and networking with professors (Hamilton 2001).

Still, opportunities abound for making the distance-learning experience richer than traditional learning experiences: new technologies provide the potential for customized curriculums to suit the needs of individuals and to possibly enhance the development of analytical decision-making skills and risk taking. The greater latitude that distance learning potentially affords its participants in planning their traditional and technology-based (e.g., Web-based) learning activities may develop greater initiative and planning/organizing skills among distance learners.

Toward understanding the opportunities and problems in skill development via a distance-learning education, this study examines nine key skills and personal characteristics and assesses the extent of their development in the context of an international distance-learning program relative to a full-time MBA program. Perspectives on the *current* emphases as well as their *desired* emphasis are carefully examined. Insights into the potential underlying causes for skill development differences are also presented in the context of the role of technological innovations that may be used for improvement. Data from a major study at a leading European business school are used as a means to develop the issues in this research and illustrate a means of comparison of skill development emphasis in various business school programs.

In conducting this research, six major aspects of innovation in marketing education are therefore addressed. First, the study examines the distance-learning environment—a rapidly evolving, worldwide innovation in marketing and business education. Second, the study emphasizes greater use of technology, which is providing new opportunities for participants to learn more effectively. Third, the study examines the relationship between curriculum and program effectiveness and stakeholder needs, in which the relationship is examined primarily from the participants' perspective but also from the employers' perspective. Fourth, the study emphasizes effective learning and teaching in large classes, where large classes in this case are very large since they are provided through a distance-learning program. Here, the emphasis on effectiveness is on skill development in particular since skill development continues to increase in importance. Fifth, the study emphasizes innovation in curriculum content, which is at the level of program options, activities, exercises, and tasks—all of which can be combined to enhance the student learning experience. Sixth, the study emphasizes unique approaches to marketing curriculum development and change, where it will be shown that it may be beneficial for distance-learning participants to assume greater responsibility in customizing their learning experience for maximum benefit in developing their marketing and business skill needs.

METHOD

A skills emphasis survey was conducted of students currently enrolled in or recently graduated from the full-time and distance-learning MBA programs at a leading European-based university. The university's MBA programs are similar in structure, format, and content to many American university MBA programs, and each program enrolls students of high academic standing and business potential. The full-time MBA program is 12 months in duration, involving three terms (9 months) of coursework involving lectures, discussions,

case studies, and group projects, followed by an independent summer project and dissertation. Participants are required to take a one-term introductory course in marketing, which is followed by an optional marketing strategy course that is taken by most participants. The distance-learning MBA program is designed for comparably qualified participants who cannot attend the university in person on a full-time or part-time basis and is of the same rigorous standard as the full-time program. Participants in the distance-learning MBA program enroll in similar courses, which also include a required introductory marketing course followed by a required advanced marketing course. Distance-learning participants are also required to complete an independent project and dissertation of the same scope and rigor as for the full-time program following their coursework. Students are provided with paper copies of readings, case studies, and assignments and then remotely and independently submit periodic written assignments via mail or e-mail throughout the year. Students are also required to attend on-campus lectures for 8 days once a year, after which time students take written examinations on campus. Distance-learning participants have considerable latitude in the timing of completing their dissertation project and program, which ranges from $3\frac{1}{2}$ years minimum to 8 years maximum. Like their full-time counterparts, applicants to the distance-learning program applicants are also selected on academic standing and business potential and not on their ability to access the World Wide Web. Recent surveys find, however, that approximately 88% of all distance-learning participants access and make regular use of the Web, which includes a distance-learning program Web board where participants can post and access messages, questions, answers, and information relating to course materials. To ensure greater access to technology innovations being developed and offered by the distance-learning program today, all new applicants are now required to have regular Web access.

All currently enrolled full-time MBA participants received an e-mail survey in late summer, near the end of the academic program. Distance-learning program participants and graduates received surveys either in person during a campus visit or by mail since some individuals did not have e-mail addresses. Each participant was asked to respond to questions in two major areas. First, participants were asked to indicate on a scale of 1 to 6, where 1 = *emphasized very little* and 6 = *emphasized very much*, to what degree are each of the following skills and personal characteristics *currently emphasized* in their (i.e., full-time or distance-learning) MBA program: analytical, computer, decision making, initiative, leadership/interpersonal skills, oral communication, planning/organizing, risk taking, and written communication. Second, participants were asked to indicate on the same scale to what degree each of the same skills *should be emphasized* in their MBA program. As supplemental information, participants were also asked open-ended questions about their area of business

interest as a means to identify participants with an interest in marketing specifically and to compare responses with participants not interested in marketing. Distance-learning program participants were also asked their age, sex, and nationality, while such information for full-time participants was available from student résumés.

RESULTS

Of the 251 full-time participants, 194 replied to the e-mail surveys for a response rate of 77%. Paper surveys were returned by 228 of the 297 distance-learning participants for a response rate of 77%. When asked an open-ended question to indicate their area of business interest—an indication used to determine marketing interest—46% of full-time participants cited marketing as an area of interest, whereas 54% did not cite marketing (e.g., finance, strategy, operations). Among distance-learning participants, 40% cited marketing as an area of interest. In both cases, marketing was the most commonly cited area of interest—an indication of its perceived importance in participants' business careers. The average age of full-time and distance-learning participants was 31.5 and 34, respectively; the percentage indicating female for each was 25 and 28, respectively; and the percentage claiming a nationality from where the university is situated was 47 and 41, respectively. None of the demographic differences between programs are statistically significant.

Figure 1 shows the results of the survey of participants of both the full-time and distance-learning MBA programs. Table 2 shows the numerical results and the degree of significance of differences among the findings when comparing the two programs. For each program, an analysis of variance was also performed to establish the extent of differences in views between participants expressing an interest in marketing and those expressing nonmarketing interests. Results of the analyses find that none of the differences between individuals with marketing and nonmarketing interests are significant at $p < .05$. Given this insignificant difference and since participants in all MBA programs obtain a marketing education through marketing-specific coursework and do not formally declare a concentration in any single functional area, the results for all MBA program participants are presented in the figure and subsequent tables.

Figure 1 and Table 2 are useful to show the magnitudes of the values indicating degree of emphasis on skill development for both distance-learning and MBA programs. The skills of Figure 1 are arranged in the order from highest to lowest current emphasis on skill development for the distance-learning program, whereas Table 2 skills are from highest to lowest emphasis in the full-time program. The results indicate that the highest current emphases in distance learning are on developing analytical and written communication skills as well as planning and organizing, followed by decision making and initiative. Full-time programs place the

TABLE 2
A COMPARISON OF EMPHASES ON SKILL DEVELOPMENT:
DISTANCE-LEARNING VERSUS FULL-TIME MBA PROGRAMS

Skill Development Area	Currently Emphasized			Should Be Emphasized		
	Full-Time	Distance Learning	Significance of Difference	Full-Time	Distance Learning	Significance of Difference
Written communication	4.31	4.48	(.177)	4.32	4.54	(.049)*
Oral communication	4.16	3.06	(.000)***	4.99	4.34	(.000)***
Planning/organizing	4.16	4.43	(.030)*	4.76	4.99	(.009)**
Analytical	4.14	4.82	(.000)***	4.96	5.29	(.000)***
Leadership/interpersonal	3.89	3.45	(.000)***	5.14	4.84	(.003)**
Decision making	3.77	4.10	(.003)**	5.14	5.16	(.612)
Initiative	3.67	3.90	(.270)	4.80	4.70	(.444)
Computer	2.57	1.84	(.000)***	4.02	3.27	(.000)***
Risk taking	2.54	2.83	(.018)*	4.07	3.96	(.531)

NOTE: Responses range on a scale from 1 (*emphasized very little*) to 6 (*emphasized very much*).
*$p < .05$. **$p < .01$. ***$p < .001$.
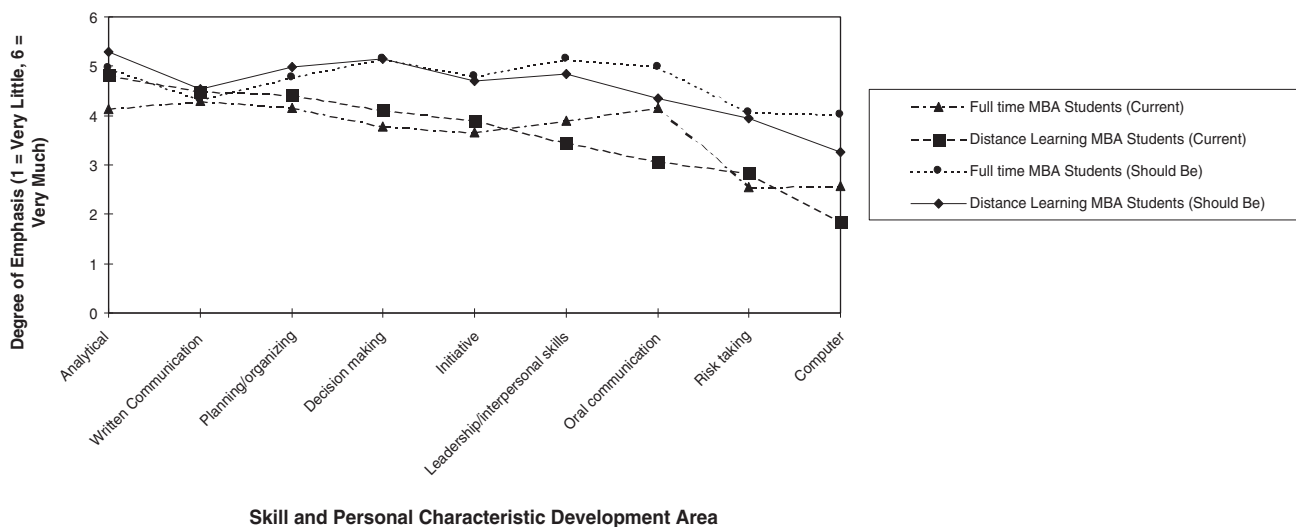
FIGURE 1:   MBA Program Emphasis on Skill Development: Distance Learning versus Full-Time Programs

highest emphasis on written communication skill development and at a level that is not significantly different from the distance-learning program. Full-time programs also place a high overall emphasis on oral communication development as well as planning/organizing and analytical skill development. Finally, both programs place the least emphasis on computer skill development. Both programs would like to see significantly greater emphasis on developing all skills, with the exception of written communication skills.

Table 3 shows the results for the skill development emphasis in the distance-learning MBA program relative to the full-time program. Given values of 100 for skills as they are currently emphasized and should be emphasized in the full-time program, values below 100 indicate proportionally less current and desired emphasis in the distance-learning program, respectively, whereas values above 100 indicate proportionally greater emphasis. Values are calculated based

on the scaled responses. The results indicate that, with the exception of initiative and written communication, participants in the distance-learning program perceive the program to emphasize significantly greater analytical, risk-taking, decision-making, and planning/organizing skill development and significantly less development of leadership/interpersonal, oral communication, and computer skills. At the same time, distance-learning participants also perceive an even greater need to develop analytical, planning/organizing, and written communication skills than full-time participants.

Why are these differences in skill development observed between full-time and distance-learning programs? Clearly, if distance-learning participants work more independently than their full-time counterparts, they should be less likely to develop leadership and oral communication skills—findings that are supported in Table 3. What about differences in emphasis on development of other skills such as analytical

TABLE 3
SKILL DEVELOPMENT EMPHASIS IN
DISTANCE-LEARNING MBA PROGRAM
RELATIVE TO CURRENT FULL-TIME
MBA PROGRAM EMPHASIS (BASELINE = 100)

Skill Development Area	Skills Currently Emphasized	Should Be Emphasized
Analytical	120***	108***
Risk taking	117**	98
Decision making	111**	101
Planning/organizing	107*	107**
Initiative	107	98
Written communication	105	106*
Leadership/interpersonal	84***	93**
Oral communication	65***	84***
Computer	53***	76***

NOTE: "Skills Currently Emphasized"—a value above 100 indicates that the skill development area receives proportionally greater emphasis in the distance-learning program than in the full-time program (e.g., 120 = 20% greater emphasis); a value below 100 indicates the reverse (e.g., 53 = 53% of the emphasis). "Should Be Emphasized"—a value above 100 indicates that distance-learning participants desire proportionally greater emphasis on the skill's development than that desired by full-time program participants; a value below 100 indicates the reverse.
*$p < .05$. **$p < .01$. ***$p < .001$.

TABLE 4
SKILL DEVELOPMENT EMPHASIS
DEFICIENCIES/SURPLUSES BY
PROGRAM (DESIRED EMPHASIS = 100)

Skill Development Area	Distance-Learning MBA Program	Full-Time MBA Program
Computer	48.3	59.2
Leadership/interpersonal	65.9	74.0
Risk taking	66.9	54.4
Oral communication	67.4	84.6
Decision making	75.8	71.4
Initiative	81.9	76.2
Planning/organizing	87.8	91.2
Analytical	90.2	81.9
Written communication	106.2	113.8

NOTE: All differences between current and desired emphases are significant at $p = .000$ except written communication, which is not significant at $p < .1$. "Distance-Learning MBA Program"—a value below 100 indicates the skill development area receives proportionally less current emphasis in the distance-learning program than that desired by distance-learning participants (e.g., 48.3 = 48.3% of the emphasis desired); a value above 100 indicates the reverse (e.g., 106.2 = 6.2% more emphasis than desired). "Full-Time MBA Program"—a value below 100 indicates the skill development area receives proportionally less current emphasis in the full-time program than that desired by full-time program participants (e.g., 59.2 = 59.2% of the emphasis desired); a value above 100 indicates the reverse (e.g., 113.8 = 13.8% more emphasis than desired).

and risk-taking skills? Aside from differences in actual program-specific skill development experiences, might some differences also be due to differences in participant expectations? This issue will be examined in the discussion of the benefits and limitations of technological innovations.

Table 4 shows the results in terms of the perceived deficiency or surplus emphasis on skill development by participants *within* each program. Again, values are calculated based on the scaled responses. With the exception of skill development in written communication, the deficiencies calculated from the differences between the degree that skills are currently emphasized and the degree that the skills should be emphasized are significant for both programs. Participants in each program indicate that development of all skills should receive *greater* emphasis ($p = .000$), with the exception of written communication, where the differences are not significant ($p = .939$ for full-time and $p = .424$ for distance learning). Thus, in both programs, current emphasis in developing computer skills is perceived as highly deficient—providing less than half of what is expected by distance-learning participants in particular.

Finally, Table 5 shows the results in a form enabling comparison with American full-time MBA program data. Results of data collected on full-time MBA programs in business schools nationwide (Porter and McKibbin 1988) show the percentage of respondents indicating a high current emphasis on developing each of nine key skills. Data for the emphases that should be given to skill development are not available. Although the American data are already 12 years old, the results still tend to suggest that American full-time MBA pro-

grams tend to place relatively greater emphasis on developing decision-making and computer skills, whereas a European full-time program places relatively greater emphasis on developing oral communication skills and leadership/interpersonal skills, and a European distance-learning program places relatively greater emphasis on developing analytical skills, initiative, and written communication skills.

DISCUSSION: TECHNOLOGICAL INNOVATION IMPLICATIONS FOR A DISTANCE-LEARNING MARKETING EDUCATION

The above findings are discussed and explained in greater detail in this section with the aim of identifying technological innovation opportunities for emphasizing skill development in a distance-learning marketing education to a greater degree. Each of the nine key skills is discussed in turn, and conclusions are drawn regarding issues of implementation.

Computer Skills

Distance-learning participants consider emphasis on computer skill development to be receiving the least attention within the program as well as relative to the full-time program. Varied participant circumstances and remote and diverse geographic locations are clearly challenges that raise issues of available and equal access to computer equipment and software for greater computer skill development. To the extent that a distance-learning program can require access to

TABLE 5
SKILL DEVELOPMENT EMPHASES: A COMPARISON WITH
AMERICAN FULL-TIME MBA PROGRAMS (IN PERCENTAGES)

Skill Development Area	Current Emphasis			Should Be Emphasized[a]	
	European Distance-Learning Program	European Full-Time Program	American Full-Time Program	European Distance-Learning Program	European Full-Time Program
Analytical	69.7	46.6	62	87.7	74.9
Written communication	57.0	50.5	42	57.0	48.9
Planning/organizing	54.4	41.4	51	75.4	64.7
Decision making	38.2	27.7	51	80.3	80.7
Initiative	26.8	26.2	21	61.4	65.2
Leadership/interpersonal	19.3	35.1	26	67.1	76.5
Oral communication	13.2	45.0	28	46.1	77.0
Risk taking	7.9	5.8	8	29.8	32.1
Computer	0.4	3.1	14	16.7	34.2

NOTE: Percentage of respondents indicating a high emphasis on skill development by responding on the upper one-third of the scale (1 to 6 scale for European survey, 1 to 3 scale for American survey).
a. Data for American programs are not available.

a standard PC and/or the Internet or World Wide Web as a requirement of program admission—a practice that is increasingly adopted at top schools and very recently adopted by the university in this study as well—such barriers are greatly reduced. Students are then in a much greater position to develop their computer and/or Internet skills via assignments involving computer software and hardware (Jana 1999). Assignments involving learning standard statistical software packages, using marketing simulations (e.g., MARKSTRAT, PharmaSim, or AutoSim), using CD-ROM-based multimedia marketing software (Roberts, Shaw, and Grigg 1999), performing computer file transfers, and accessing and manipulating online documents and interactive multimedia programs become increasingly possible. At present, the distance-learning program of this study does not provide learning opportunities to participants in any of these areas, whereas full-time participants at least have the benefit of access to the university's computing resources, services, and training on their own initiative. To the extent that students are required to make short-term, periodic campus visits, opportunities for developing and scheduling required or optional computer software and hardware training can be explored. Time and cost constraints can be mitigated to the extent students are prepared via computer training materials provided at a distance.

Oral Communication

Clearly, opportunities are often severely limited for distance-learning students to develop their oral communication skills when compared with the speaking and presentation opportunities afforded their full-time counterparts. Even when distance learners attend the annual large-class lectures on campus, a lack of time prohibits the use of student presentations in their coursework. Students work independently for the most part as a result of their widely scattered locations. Costs of communication are greater if communicating by

telephone or traveling for in-person meetings. Table 3 indicates that distance-learning students view oral communication skills development as receiving substantially less attention than full-time students (35% less), yet view development of this skill as needing significantly more emphasis than most other key skills. To be sure, technological solutions exist, including use of videoconferencing, either site to site or PC to PC, yet equipment availability and equal access remain issues as are equipment purchase costs and operating costs. Nevertheless, for institutions able to provide access to adequate facilities, videoconferencing can be successfully used (Dillon 1998; Hill 1999) and is becoming increasingly accepted as a means of enhancing participation and affording students opportunities to develop communication skills (Mason 1994; McAleavy and Parr 1997; Schwartz 1998).

In the future, interactive digital television may be a viable high-tech approach adopted by major programs, whereas greater use of audioconferencing (Winders 1988) and Web-based telephone networks may become more prevalent as lower-tech, low-cost, and small-scale alternatives. Other lower-tech solutions exist as well and include tape-recording student presentations made off campus and subsequently mailing cassettes, encouraging off-campus opportunities for verbal data collection by students for marketing research projects (e.g., recorded personal interviews with businesspeople and/or experts), and videotape-recording student presentations made during campus visits. Assignments in marketing courses could include students conducting mock sales presentations or group role-plays as part of marketing case studies. Such individual and group presentations can be the equivalent of oral assessments for distance learners. Participation in online chat sessions may simulate the experience of oral communication but is of course dramatically different in dynamics than presenting one's case face-to-face and before a live audience. Nevertheless, more and more news organizations invite individuals to participate in live online discus-

sions. Distance learners can be tasked to participate in such online discussions with the aim of increasing skill and confidence in conveying one's thoughts in real time.

Leadership/Interpersonal Skills

Distance-learning participants also have fewer opportunities to develop their leadership and interpersonal skills relative to full-time program participants who interact through in-class and outside-of-class study groups and projects. The remote locations of distance learners result in higher communication costs and provide limited opportunities for engagements and interactions with peers (Tweney 1999). Distance learners recognize the reduced emphasis (16% less) on developing these skills relative to full-time students and perceive a need for greater development of these skills. Given that all business students are to a great extent developing leadership and interpersonal skills via their growing knowledge of management, human resources, and marketing methods (including approaches for customer interaction), opportunities also exist for leveraging leadership/interpersonal skill development through the use of business scenarios and simulations. Computerized scenarios and simulations of customer sales negotiations or sales force motivation, for example, can be increasingly effective tools in the future to the extent they reflect some of the complexities of human nature in confined business settings. Near-term technological approaches include participation in and/or moderation of online forums (Hammond 1998) and chat sessions (Enright 1999) to approximate aspects of leadership in interpersonal interaction, as well as offering and videotaping leadership training sessions and exercises during on-campus visits. Videotaping sessions aimed at improving interviewing and/or facilitating skills may also benefit many students. Participants may be tasked to assume a leadership role in conducting a focus group of consumers. Or participants could be matched with current/retired businesspersons made available by the business program for personal dialogue online so that participants can receive more intimate and perhaps critical feedback on their leadership abilities in the context of their career path.

Written Communication

Written communication is not an area that distance learners see a need to emphasize any further. The survey results show that distance learners not only believe they are developing skills in written communication to a great extent, but they also believe they *should* be developing these skills to a greater extent than their full-time counterparts. After all, distance learners use written assignments, essays, and examinations as the principal—and sometimes only—means of communication within the program. Thus, in the area of written communication, an opportunity exists to develop synergies with other skill development areas to capitalize on its prevalence. For students with Web and e-mail access, e-mail exchanges

(Hulme 2000), bulletin board postings, and chat session (Hammond 1998), participation can further develop both writing and computer skills. Sending periodic drafts of reports via computer, fax, or mail can develop planning and organizing skills. Summarizing in writing the decisions made in computerized marketing simulations can facilitate marketing decision-making skill development. Requiring a written summary of one's participation in an online chat session with an expert can also facilitate oral communication skill development.

Initiative

Although the emphasis that the distance-learning program places on developing individual initiative is not found to be significantly different from that for the full-time program ($p = .270$), it is certainly possible that a distance-learning program's loosely structured timetables and assignments lead to initiative playing a greater role in successful outcomes for its participants (Tapsell 1999). The view of distance learners is that initiative should still receive greater emphasis, suggesting opportunities for involvement in a variety of optional activities that may cater to the individual interests of participants. Optional computer-based assessments, online research and data collection, and Web board participation are all examples of areas that could reinforce the role of initiative in successfully accomplishing goal-oriented tasks while developing skills in other areas as well. Encouraging participants to identify and subscribe to a variety of appropriate online information sources (e.g., receiving personalized e-mail notices) to understand industry or market developments, for example, may develop initiative as well as decision-making skills.

Planning/Organizing

Distance learners believe that the distance-learning program provides a significantly greater (7% greater average) current emphasis on developing planning/organizing skills compared with full-time program participants. Again, it is likely that the loosely structured timetables and assignments require a greater effort in personal planning and organizing. The finding that distance learners would still like to see somewhat greater attention to the skills' development suggests they may be eager to learn new approaches to planning and organizing tasks as well as organizing and structuring the presentation of information. Activities such as Web page design and implementation and online research may be feasible marketing projects for students with Web access who seek to develop their planning and organizing skills. Evaluating the benefits of new personal organization or project management software may also be a feasible option to any student with a standard computer. A significant opportunity to develop planning and organizing skills can involve the planning of one's curriculum and assignment schedules. Although there are unique time demands placed on every distance learner, participants can still be required to engage in personalized

advanced program and project planning activities over the long term.

Decision Making

The difference in emphasis on developing decision-making skills is also significant between distance-learning and full-time MBA program participants; distance learners perceive greater (11%) emphasis on the development of this skill relative to their full-time counterparts. Given a common focus on management decision making and problem solving as promoted in a school's MBA program curriculum, perceptions of the participants based on their backgrounds and experiences are likely to be influential in explaining the difference observed. Distance learners—more isolated from their fellow business peers—may be less confident than their full-time counterparts in their initial decision-making capabilities and may thus view the distance-learning program as helping to strengthen their capabilities and solidify their views on how to make good business decisions to a relatively greater extent. Nevertheless, both programs' participants would like to see greater emphasis on developing decision-making skills. Here, increased use of computer simulations can significantly enhance development of decision-making skills (Sparkes 1984), particularly when students are able to retrace their steps in their decision-making processes and evaluate their mistakes, as is the case in student use of simulations at some universities today. Distance learners with ready access to a standard PC and/or the World Wide Web can clearly benefit from participating in such marketing simulations by enhancing the development of marketing decision-making skills. In addition, independent marketing research projects involving decision making using Web-based data may further benefit decision-making skill development in a largely unstructured setting (Henry 1994). Combining initiative and decision-making skills, participants can also be made at least partially responsible for actually designing their distance-learning curriculum. To the extent that options are made available by business program teachers and administrators, participants can make decisions to create and experiment with customized programs that would be most beneficial to their skill development.

Risk Taking

Distance learners believe that the distance-learning program provides a significantly greater (17% greater average) current emphasis on developing risk-taking skills compared with full-time program participants. Perhaps this view is supported by the fact that assignments for distance learners often involve individually selecting preferred courses of actions based on relatively less complete or thorough information and discussions as compared with group-based assignments for full-time students. Or it could also be the case that distance learners have a potentially greater starting level of risk averseness relative to full-time students (who have typically given up their jobs to return to school), suggesting a greater perceived emphasis on risk-taking skill development. Whether or not both explanations apply, distance learners also see a need for greater emphasis on developing risk taking. Again, participation in computerized marketing simulations, in which students can internalize trade-offs in taking action with varying degrees of uncertainty or imperfect information and acquiring better information at a price, can do much to facilitate development of skills in risk taking. At present, computer simulations such as MARKSTRAT are not used in the distance-learning program and are available but not required in the full-time program. Increasingly, however, such software is available for distribution in downloadable form from the World Wide Web. To be sure, other activities can be developed by academicians to develop risk-taking skills such as those involving business negotiations and scenario planning in marketing strategy. Finally, greater use of computer-based assessments that provide feedback on risk evaluations (e.g., statistical probabilities) can further help develop risk-taking skill. In the university of this study, such innovations are actively being pursued.

Analytical Skills

Distance learners believe that their program places significantly greater (20% average) emphasis on developing analytical skills as compared with the views of full-time program participants. Perhaps it is the fact that a distance learner's greater emphasis on reading and writing—as opposed to potentially passive lecture attendance—encourages greater skill in analytical thinking. Or perhaps it is that distance learners have the opportunity to engage in more independent—and hence potentially more critical—thinking as compared with full-time students who frequently participate in group projects. Although there is a significantly greater emphasis on analytical skill development in distance learning relative to a full-time program, distance learners still perceive a need for a slightly greater emphasis. Given the complexities of many marketing situations and the need for sound analytical skills of marketers to make sense of them, immersion in controlled scenarios of varying scope complexity—through that afforded by many computer simulations today—may be useful to further develop students' analytical skills. Finally, opportunities exist to further develop distance learners' analytical skills through activities that develop other key skills. Participants can be required to analyze the direction and use of online chat sessions with experts as well as the benefits obtained from receiving customized e-mail notices from news, business, and consumer organizations, for example.

The above analyses show that greater emphasis can and should be placed on the development of each of the above nine key skills through specific technology-based approaches. Explanations based on current teaching methods and participants' expectations and backgrounds are provided to explain the results obtained. In the following section, overall conclu-

sions are drawn concerning a marketing education through distance learning.

CONCLUSIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

The results of the study show that distance-learning and full-time participants not only differ in their views of the degree of *current* emphasis on developing certain skills, but participants between the two programs also differ on the degree of emphasis that *should* be placed on developing certain skills. For example, in comparison to full-time participants, distance-learning participants perceive a need for relatively greater overall emphasis on analytical and planning/organizing skills development. This finding supports the view that distance-learning participants, although they may be statistically similar in demographics to their full-time counterparts, have a different set of needs and expectations than full-time participants that must be understood and met if participant satisfaction is to be maintained or increased (Hodgson 1994). The above views on skill development by individuals expressing an interest in marketing are not significantly different from the views of individuals expressing interests other than marketing.

A set of technological innovations, ranging from the relatively accessible (software on a disk) to the more advanced (carefully moderated Web boards), have been proposed as means to achieving greater emphasis on developing key skills and personal characteristics, ranging from computer and oral communication skills to leadership/interpersonal skills and risk taking. The technological innovation approaches proposed are those with characteristics that can provide considerable leverage to developing the particular skills relative to the often scarce resources of time, effort, and money.

A comparison of distance-learning and full-time European program results with American full-time program data finds that American programs may be placing greater emphasis on developing computer skills yet appear to be placing less emphasis on developing written communication skills relative to that of a European distance-learning program. Differences such as these suggest the need for greater discussion and sharing of methods and approaches—including the effective use of technological innovations—to develop skills in business and marketing students increasingly situated in distant geographic locations around the globe. In particular, a greater global understanding will facilitate the development and dissemination of high-quality standards for business schools such as those being continually developed by the AACSB (2001).

Additional research is also needed to further address the needs of employers. In addition to the employer-based research by the Association of Graduate Recruiters (1995) on skills desired, the study conducted by Porter and McKibbin (1988) also examined 50 employer views of skills that should be emphasized in business school programs. Although results varied depending on whether respondents were in human resources or small business managers, considerable mismatches between employer desires and full-time MBA students' views of current emphasis were observed in the skill areas of leadership/interpersonal skills, initiative, oral and written communication skills, and computer skills. It is therefore suggested that future research on skill development efforts in distance-learning programs incorporate employer views to a greater extent in helping to evaluate the effectiveness of new technology-based skill development initiatives.

Making It Happen: Issues of Implementation

A discussion of the role of technological innovation in developing key skills in distance-learning MBA programs is not complete without discussing issues of implementation. Overall, it can also be argued that business academicians involved in distance-learning programs must give more explicit attention to skill development, rather than implicit attention. With greater explicit attention to skill development, distance-learning instructors will be better able to establish more comprehensive teaching objectives (Bligh, Jacques, and Piper 1975), adopt appropriate technological approaches and media (Garger 1999; Heinich, Molenda, and Russell 1989; Rowntree 1994; Smith 1998), offer needed supporting facilities (Theakston 1999), and develop appropriate instructional packages (Kember and Murphy 1994; Laurillard 1993). By explicitly discussing skills and personal characteristics, distance-learning students can also begin to assess their own level of understanding of these skills and personally examine the effectiveness of various technological innovations for enhancing skill development.

The issue of possible distance-learning student assessments of skill proficiency is certainly difficult given a lack of definition of appropriate measures of competence and a lack of consensus on appropriate levels of competence. It seems likely that certain disciplines have carefully examined and developed a sound understanding of these skill areas (e.g., leadership and risk taking in the field of psychology, oral communication in broadcast journalism, computer skills in computer science). The opportunities are therefore considerable for transferring such knowledge to the development of the above nine skills in a distance-learning MBA program and incorporating appropriate technological innovations to aid in their assessment.

Drummond, Nixon, and Wiltshire (1999) note in their study of problems of implementing good practices for developing personal transferable skills that "simply informing institutions or individuals about what they should be doing has not and will not produce the desired outcomes" (p. 13). Instead, the authors argue, more meaningful and widespread progress will be made through "sector-wide development programs" that *support* people in making things happen, not telling them what should happen. Systematic approaches for

evaluating new technological innovations for their appropriateness to enhancing skill development are therefore desirable and have been found to be effective (cf. Cuthell 2000; Littlejohn, Stefani, and Sclater 1999), whereas implementation without appropriate support mechanisms can lead to unacceptably high failure rates (Lake 1999). Considerable up-front thought, effort, and planning will likely be required for appropriate transfers of knowledge to occur (Banas and Emory 1998; Koch and Fisher 1998), but the ongoing costs are likely to be small in comparison.

Overall, a process-oriented approach to integrating technology-enhanced skill development learning experiences and content into a distance-learning MBA program curriculum appears most desirable. Outcomes related to proficiency in key skills and development of desirable personal characteristics are not always separable from their learning processes. Given that a distance-learning MBA education is a complex yet invigorating process, MBA teaching staff can also facilitate developing key skills and personal characteristics of participants by increasing participation in and responsibility for their own use of technological innovations in their curriculum. Issues to be addressed in future research include determining to what extent students and staff perceive a need for trade-offs in technological approaches aimed at enhancing the development of different skills, as well as the extent to which students and staff would perceive increased/decreased overall time and workload demands if the aims are to have greater overall emphases on developing key skills through the incorporation of specific technological approaches.

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The Role of Marketing in an Integrative Business Curriculum

Clifford S. Barber, Norm Borin, Douglas C. Cerf, and Teresa A. Swartz

In recent years, many business schools have developed integrative programs in response to a number of internal and external factors. Although the exact nature of these programs varies, a significant common element is a desire to impart to students appreciation, knowledge, and skills for cross-functional business situations. This article focuses on marketing's key role. With its rich history on drawing from and contributing to other academic disciplines, marketing is in a powerful position to serve an important role in guiding and binding together other areas in an integrated program. The article provides guidance and background to marketing academicians, which allows them to add integrated components to existing classes and/or programs or begin the design of an integrated program.

Integrative business courses and curricula have received significant attention in recent years (Hamilton, McFarland, and Mirchandani 2000; Heinfeldt and Wolf 1998; Pharr et al. 1998). Whether motivated by research on student learning models, insights from industry representatives, or academic discussions, a number of business schools have responded by offering integrative curricula. These have taken a number of forms ranging from single introductory business classes to significant integration in undergraduate or graduate programs. The purpose of this article is to examine the role of marketing in integrative efforts. Integrative programs are considered in some detail, first addressing why integration is appropriate in business education. Next, a discussion of the nature of integration provides perspective on the key issues that need to be evaluated during the design of an integrative program. Finally, a case study of an integrative approach to the business core curriculum is presented. At the center of the case study is an in-depth look at marketing's role. The article concludes with a discussion of the benefits and challenges of pursuing an integrative business education. Before examining integrative business programs, however, a quick look at the future of marketing education is presented.

THE FUTURE OF MARKETING EDUCATION

"Marketing is serious business—and, increasingly, serious business is about marketing," states Sergio Zyman (1999, p. 232) in his call to business practitioners to recognize the critical role marketing plays in business success. His plea that "marketing is a function that belongs to everyone in the company" (pp. 198-99) is one that some academicians have been making for years (e.g., Webster 1998). Yet, have we altered our approach to marketing education to reflect this broad perspective? In their look at marketing education, Smart, Kelley, and Conant (1999) report the perceptions of 107 of the discipline's most "well-regarded educators." In response to inquiries about the greatest challenges that marketing education faces in the next 10 years, 38% of the comments received relate to challenges facing the marketing discipline itself. Based on comments reported, however, it is not clear that the majority of those in the discipline have grasped the need for a broad-based approach to marketing education. Instead, the focus seemed to center on protecting one's turf, rather than expanding it to all. The question then becomes, How can we expand marketing to all? We believe the use of integrative programs is an approach that holds significant promise.

WHY INTEGRATIVE PROGRAMS?

The rapidly changing business environment, input from corporate America, and research on effective student learning pedagogies are just a few of the many factors that have created an impetus for changes in business education. Integrative

learning is consistently mentioned when academicians discuss needed changes in pedagogy and curriculum. In their landmark 1988 report, Porter and McKibbin identified cross-functional teaching approaches as one of the six key areas that required immediate attention from business schools. An American Assembly of Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB 1996) task force found that "many faculty adopt a disciplinary focus. A linear environment exists with little interaction between functional units either within the business school or with units outside the business school." The task force also found that although faculty do well on theory testing and construction, the greatest needs exist (among other things) for improvement in multidisciplinary methods and new teaching technologies. "Individual schools must concern themselves with the interaction among disciplines in business."

The advantages of integrative teaching/learning have been viewed as so important that many accrediting organizations have either directly or indirectly suggested that colleges address this topic in their program(s). The AACSB's (2000) Business Accreditation Standard C 1.3.E states, "The curriculum should integrate the core areas and apply cross-functional approaches to organizational issues." The guiding principles of the Association of Collegiate Business Schools and Programs (ACBSP 2000) encourage faculty to experiment with new pedagogies as often as possible while "promoting new and more effective teaching methods in business education that improve what students learn and how they learn." Doyle Z. Williams, University of Arkansas business dean and chair of the AACSB Accounting Accreditation Committee, supports those accounting programs that have become more integrative ("Revisions to Accounting" 1999). Finally, results from the 1998 Survey of Global Education Best Practices revealed that faculty must learn to think cross-functionally ("Survey Finds Corporate/College Alliances" 1998).

Many schools are addressing the lack of integration in various ways, including two common endeavors: business/education collaboration efforts ("Corporate Interest" 1995; "Survey Finds Corporate/College Alliances" 1998) and undergraduate (Perottie et al. 1998; Watkins et al. 1998), MBA ("MBA Program" 1995), and Ph.D. curriculum revisions ("Remaking Doctoral Education" 1996). A closer examination of integration follows.

THE NATURE OF EXISTING INTEGRATIVE BUSINESS PROGRAMS

A number of accredited business programs around the country have or are offering portions of their programs with an integrative theme. A number of approaches are used to achieve varying amounts of integration in these programs.

The four elements that best describe and differentiate integrative programs are (1) the span of integration, (2) the degree of integration, (3) teaching methods used to implement the integration, and (4) the level at which the program is offered. All of these areas are interrelated. This section identifies key design decision points for faculty considering an integrative approach.

The Span of Integration

There are three general models for the span of integration: (1) integration across disciplines (e.g., integration of engineering and business), (2) integration of functional areas within business (e.g., integration of marketing, management information systems, and finance), and (3) integration within a functional area (e.g., integration of financial reporting issues with tax and auditing issues in an accounting program). While each offers an expanded view, only the first two break down functional silos. An integrative program can include any number of the models of integration.

The Degree of Integration

The degree of integration is relative and is best viewed on a continuum. On one end of the continuum (low integration), the course content is divided into functional modules. These modules are designed into a logical flow, with faculty individually teaching the modules in their respective disciplines. The amount of integration can be increased by assignments and projects that draw from more than one module. On the other end of the continuum (high integration), class time is not allocated to any particular discipline, and faculty do not divide the class into mini-functional modules (although one might argue that at any given moment, a specific discipline may be the focus). All classroom time is integrative time, when multiple faculty members are present and team-teach material that affects multiple disciplines simultaneously. For example, a business professor, an engineering professor, and a sociology professor jointly teach a case on the management of technology, with all present in the class for the case presentation and discussion. Programs exist that implement levels of integration all along this continuum. The number of courses included in the program affects the degree of integration, as does the number of disciplines involved.

Teaching Methods Used to Implement Integration

Various teaching methods and tools are used to increase the amount of integration. For a program at a given point on the continuum, the level of integration is increased through the use of teaching tools such as team teaching involving faculty with varying areas of expertise, cases with a multifunctional focus, student team projects with broad focus, and multidisciplinary simulations, just to name a few. Changing

one component may have a bigger impact than one might think. For example, a case used in the past may take on new richness when team-taught with faculty from different disciplines. Team teaching helps students to realize that faculty approach the same case differently, depending on their discipline orientation. Other activities that are common to integrative programs include large team-prepared written reports, formal team oral presentations, product or service design and development, simulations, exercises that develop interpersonal skills, and guest appearances and participation by executives.

Integrative programs usually combine courses and therefore allocate larger blocks of time for longer periods of time to the program than is allocated to any one individual course. Consequently, an environment is created that provides an opportunity for more thorough implementation of the teaching methods and activities previously described. For example, in the program we will highlight, students are in class 14 hours per week for two quarters, which provides the opportunity for students to work on team projects that span six courses. This environment fosters the opportunity to more thoroughly develop team skills compared with the shorter period of time allocated to an individual class.

Level of Program

Integrative programs also differ on the level at which they are offered in both undergraduate and graduate programs. At various schools, integrative undergraduate business programs are offered at one of the following levels: (1) the junior level core, (2) as part of the concentration/functional major, or (3) as part of a capstone course(s). In graduate programs, the integration tends to be within the core.

In summary, although integrative programs come in many different formats, the overriding purpose is the same—to develop appreciation of and skills for cross-functional business decision making. We now turn our attention to one university's program and focus on marketing's role within it.

ONE UNIVERSITY'S INTEGRATIVE CORE PROGRAM

Overview

Six predominantly junior-level business core courses were included in this approach to integrative business education, known as the Integrative Core Program (ICP). Each represents a course typically taught independently in a functional silo. These courses, along with a course fulfilling the international requirement and the traditional business strategy and policy course, complete the upper-division business core requirement for the B.S. in business administration degree. Prior to the introduction of the integrative core program into the college's curriculum, the primary integrative experience received by students was in the strategy and policy course.

The strategy and policy course by nature is an integrative course; however, because each section has a single instructor and is a single course, the degree of integration is significantly less than in the ICP.

Each course in the upper-division business core represents 4 units of academic credit, with 40 hours of in-class contact. (The university operates on a 10-week quarter system, with 186 units required for the B.S. in business administration degree. Students complete a concentration that requires a minimum of 28 units, typically in one of the functional areas, for example, marketing.) The six functional courses constituting the ICP represent 24 units of academic credit, 240 hours of in-class contact, plus additional lab time. This integrative approach spreads the instruction out over the "traditional" first two quarters of the junior year. The ICP class met each morning 4 days a week (Monday-Thursday) for 4 hours on 2 days and for 3 hours on the in-between days. This schedule was followed both quarters.

Program Design

The ICP was managed and taught by a team of seven faculty members. (All faculty willing to participate were included. Concurrently and independently, a different group was addressing integration in the MBA program.) It took the faculty team 1 year of meeting on a weekly basis (4 hours per week) to design the program. Even then, details of the second quarter were flushed out during the first quarter the program was offered. Substantive, not major, changes to the program were made after the first running of the program. After the second running of the program, the design changes were minor.

Once the faculty team was formed, time was spent identifying and reviewing existing integrative offerings. Then the team addressed philosophical and pedagogical issues. Included here was group agreement about what constituted integration and what the nature of the major projects should be. In addition, the team identified what it believed to be the core 75% to 80% of common content for all sections of the courses represented in the ICP. Finally, overriding themes were identified, with topics grouped accordingly. More information on these last two steps is provided later (see Mapping the Curriculum).

Integrative Sessions

Each day's session was divided into functional and integrative components. Early on in the design phase of the program, the faculty team made the commitment to integrate and team-teach 50% of the sessions. The belief was, and still is, that all the learning could not take place in an intensive, completely integrative environment (i.e., that some functional specific time was needed). However, to ensure that the default model did not occur (i.e., everyone divided up their material and the time, just spreading what was traditionally taught

over 20 weeks instead of 10), the group committed to having an integrative session every day.

One key question is, "What constitutes an integrative session?" While different definitions and approaches are adopted by others, the team defined it as a session including multiple faculty from different disciplines, which looked at a topic from two or more perspectives. For example, a session looking at the macro business environment might include three faculty members. A finance professor might illustrate how activity in foreign and domestic markets affects a firm's ability to raise capital, while a law professor might stress the role of government in trying to influence these markets. The marketing professor might illustrate how these activities then affect the customer and his or her ability to buy. The same topic could also be explored in a functional session, with a more singular focus. Because of the nature of the ICP, even in the functional setting, both students and faculty were more likely to raise issues related to the impact on other areas. Because students are taking all the core functional courses at the same time, they are able to appreciate their integration. Two examples of the weekly schedule are provided in Table 1.

Evaluation and Grading

Grading is always an issue in any course, and an integrative program is no exception. To receive credit for completing the six business core courses, students in ICP were required to successfully complete both quarters of the program and earn grades of C or better in the various functional areas. Functional activities were graded solely by the respective faculty; for example, marketing was responsible for grading a marketing exam. Any student receiving less than a C in one of the functional areas had to retake that specific functional area to receive a grade for the program. While students received one overall grade for each quarter, that grade was a composite of grades earned in the various functional areas, plus integrative exams, cases and assignments, and participation. For example, integrative exams were developed and graded by different faculty. Also, a major project was required. This was also graded by multiple faculty. The faculty team then came together and discussed their individual evaluations for an integrative graded activity and together arrived at the student's earned grade for the activity. Approximately 40% of the overall grade was based on integrative activities and/or assignments.

Faculty Issues

As previously stated, the ICP was managed and taught by a team of seven faculty. One faculty member also served as the group coordinator. Included on the faculty team was a professor from accounting, even though accounting was not one of the six courses included in the ICP. (Core accounting courses are offered at the sophomore level.) While not teaching functional sessions, the accounting professor was part of many integrative sessions and the business plan project. Integrative

sessions were normally taught by two faculty members, who were active in the entire class session. On occasion, three or more faculty team-taught the integrative session. Functional sessions were taught by one faculty member. For the most part, faculty involvement was consistent across the 20-week program.

Faculty members were given credit for teaching two courses per section over the two-quarter program. This is double the credit faculty receive when they teach an individual functional course. Faculty received the additional credit in recognition of the amount of team teaching, coordination, grading, and student involvement required in the program.

The primary incentives for faculty to participate were intrinsic. First, integration is part of the college's mission, and most believed in the integrative concept. Next, faculty were interested in being involved in an innovative program. In addition, involvement in the ICP allowed faculty to report active participation in an innovative program on their annual workload and merit review reports.

MARKETING'S ROLE

Mapping the Curriculum

A critical first step is to identify the "common core" curriculum. The common core is the 75% to 80% of each functional course that is not instructor dependent. For marketing, the question is, "What topics should everyone cover?" The common core was placed in a matrix, where columns represented individual courses and the cells represented topics. Of interest was overlap and synergy of topics among the courses. Two key observations emerged. First, a few broad common themes were identified that included most topics, regardless of discipline. These themes were the changing business context, products and services, operating the business enterprise, and monitoring the business enterprise. Second, because marketing was involved directly or indirectly in every theme, it was in an excellent position to play a lead role in introducing students to the enterprise and the interrelatedness of its key operations. This is not surprising given the history marketing has in borrowing from and contributing to other academic disciplines.

By focusing on the common core within the individual courses, there was opportunity to address other topics that are not currently included in the college's traditional business core. For example, more team-building activities were included, as well as material in human resource management that typically is available only through elective courses.

A major project was the focal point for learning. After considering a number of different options, the development of a business plan for a new start-up operation was used. The business plan fit the college's "hands-on" approach and philosophy. In addition, development of a business plan is consistent with the general themes identified for the core material. Gen-

TABLE 1
EXAMPLES OF THE WEEKLY CLASS SCHEDULE FOR THE INTEGRATIVE CORE PROGRAM

	Quarter 1—Week 2			
	September 27	*September 28*	*September 29*	*September 30*
Theme Integrative faculty Integrative session: topic and assignment	The Changing Business Context Borin/Bertozzi The Changing Business Context Integrated Look at Business Environment Etzel, chap. 1-2	Cerf/Bertozzi/Dobson An Integrated Problem: Acid Rain Case (Harvard Case) See Acid Rain handout	Glasgow/Cerf The Business Plan Project Group activity Major Business Plan Project Assignment handout Lottery to determine business plan product category Lasher, chap. 1-3	Barber/Borin Integrated Look at Changing Business Environment: Trends and Forces in Selected Industries Operations Strategy Harley Davidson Case Harley follow-up article Read prior to class Krajewsky, chap. 2: Prepare short memo (typed) that answers questions from BSB case (p. 60).
Functional session: topic and assignment	Finance: Working Capital Management Brealey, chap. 18.1-18.4 Problems: 18-1, 18-2, 18-4	MIS Lab: Excel, Shelly, Projects 1 & 2 (due September 30) Computer lab room 307	MIS: The Info Systems Revolution, The Strategic Role of Information Systems Laudon, chap. 1-2	MIS Lab: Excel, Shelly, Projects 3 & 4 (due October 7) Computer lab room 307
Functional session: topic and assignment	OB: Introduction to Organizational Behavior Activity: Analyzing Joyce Johnson's System (pp. 34-35) Cook, chap. 1		Finance: Working Capital Management Brealey, chap. 18.5-18.8 Problems: 18-9, 18-10, 18-11, 18-13	

	Quarter 2—Week 2			
	January 10	*January 11*	*January 12*	*January 13*
Theme Integrative faculty Integrative session: topic and assignment	Managing the Mature Enterprise Glasgow/Barber Job design (continued) Case: Motivation at NUMMI (Cook, pp. 251-252) Read case and answer questions before class—turn in individually typed answers at the beginning of class	Bird/Cerf International Issues Coca-Cola in Japan (Irwin series video)	Borin/Barber Advertising and Promotion Etzel, chap. 18 Assignment due	Cerf/Dobson Financials in an example business plan Decorator's Art Gallery, Lasher, pp. 194-220
Functional session: topic and assignment	Fair employment practices, part 1 (Bertozzi) Handout	Finance: Risk Brealey, chap. 8; continued problems 14, 20, 22, 23	Fair employment practices, part 2 (Bertozzi) Handout	POM: Facility layout Krajewsky, chap. 10; problems 1, 6, 11
Functional session: topic and assignment	MIS lab: Access project 3 Assignment		OB: Perception Learning and Attribution Cook, chap. 5; bring last quarter's Keirsey papers to class	

eral product categories (e.g., mountain bike, zero-emission vehicle, day sailor sailboat, bakery) were provided from which student teams had to select one of the categories to enter, either as a brand-new start-up company or else as a new division of an existing firm. Selection occurred at the begin-

ning of the first quarter and was limited to no more than three teams working in any one product category.

The business plan was overlaid with the general themes for the course. Table 2 provides a topical map of the marketing core material, the general program themes, and the corre-

TABLE 2
MAPPING OUT MARKETING IN THE INTEGRATIVE CORE PROGRAM

General Theme	Business Plan	Marketing Topics
The Changing Business Context	Mission and goals	*Business environment*
	Competitive advantage	*Marketing research and information*
	Environmental scan	*Consumer markets and buying behavior*
		Business markets and buying behavior
		Market segmentation
Products and Services	Product concept	*Product planning and development*
	Target market	*Quality*
	Business strategy	Product mix strategies
		Brands, packaging, and other features
		Services
		Price determination
		Pricing strategies
Operating the Business Enterprise	Production operations plan	Promotional tools
	Organizational structure and staffing plan	Promotional strategies
	Promotion plan	*Channels of distribution*
	Distribution plan	Retailing and wholesaling
	Financial analysis	
Monitor	Contingency plans	Evaluation

NOTE: *Italics* denote integrative topic.

sponding elements of the business plan. As is evident, marketing topics fit well into the program structure. Furthermore, many of the marketing topics provided a major focus for integrative sessions, as noted by their *italics* designation in the table. Marketing's role in these sessions is further explored in a later section.

**Marketing and
the Business Plan**

The business plan assignment was divided into two main parts: situational analysis and operating plans. Topics included in the first part correspond to those in the top two cells under Business Plan in Table 2; those topics in the bottom two cells were included in the second part of the plan. Part one of the plan was due at the end of the first quarter, while part two was due toward the end of the second quarter.

Marketing played a major role in the business plan assignment. Critical to the success of any plan is the foundation on which it is built. This foundation was laid in the situational analysis, which drew heavily from marketing topics. Given the nature of the assignment, two especially critical elements were the competitive analysis and market analysis. Both required a strong understanding of the marketing material. Specifically, students were required to not only understand the concepts but also apply them. For example, all used a variety of secondary research sources, including syndicated market data such as Simmons, published industry analyses such as Dun and Bradstreet, and primary data collected through interviews of those in the industry. Once these data were collected, analyses and interpretation were required as each team assessed its current situation and identified which market to enter. Some of these topics were discussed during market-

ing's functional sessions, while others were team-taught or drew extensively from another faculty member's session. For example, financial reporting was tied in closely with material presented in the finance sessions. The schedule of sessions was developed to maximize these synergies.

**Marketing and
Integrative Sessions**

Over the two quarters, marketing was involved in well over half of the topics discussed in integrative sessions. This included topics from marketing as well as the other disciplines covered in the ICP. To further illustrate, using marketing topics as a focus, Table 3 provides examples of marketing's involvement in a variety of integrative sessions. (While extensive detail of these sessions is beyond the scope and intent of this article, the table provides a good overview of the various marketing topics and nonmarketing faculty's roles.) For example, a 30-minute edited clip of a popular movie classic was used as an integrative session that explored the general theme of the changing business context and, more specifically, the marketing topic of the business environment. Through class discussion, students identified examples of external environmental forces that had a significant impact on the main character and his business endeavors. Identification of the examples of environmental influence occurred in small groups first; these groups then shared their findings with the entire class, and a broader discussion ensued. Faculty involved in this integrative session included marketing, management, and law.

Another integrative session on the business environment used a case and readings on a major U.S. manufacturer, which saw its market share drop significantly. Again, the role of var-

TABLE 3
EXAMPLES OF MARKETING INTEGRATIVE SESSIONS

Marketing Topic	Nonmarketing Faculty	Integrative Topic
Business environment	Management Law	External environmental forces (video case study)
Marketing research and information	MIS Librarian	Data sources and data-gathering techniques
Consumer markets and buying behavior	Operations Packaging Executive	Nature of markets (Harley Davidson case study)
Product development	Design engineer Owner/CEO	Product and market development (in-class design of product)
Quality	Operations Executive	TQM, cost of quality, and ISO 9000 (Toyota case study)
Services	Management Operations	Manufacturing versus services, customer service (Mac Temps case study)
Pricing strategies	Accounting	Target costing (Sony Walkman case study)
Channels of distribution	Operations	Channel management (in-class simulation: The Beer Game)

ious environmental factors was analyzed in depth as students dissected cause and effect and potential courses of action. Faculty involved in this session were from marketing, management, and operations.

Either of these sessions could have occurred in a traditional marketing principles class, but the richness of discussion and the depth of focus would have been missing if only a marketing faculty member had been present. In addition, students attain a better understanding that the external business environment affects all aspects of the firm's operations, not just marketing.

Integrative sessions used a variety of formats, a variety of people (ICP and non-ICP faculty, guest speakers from industry, etc.), and a variety of topics. Common to all was the goal to ensure a broader look at a topic than normally achieved in any one of the traditional classes. As a result, students receive a better understanding of the role of marketing in the firm. The same can be said of the other disciplines represented.

Marketing and Other Faculty

The marketing ICP faculty team member also had a responsibility to help other ICP faculty to reframe their thinking, moving beyond their traditional silos. In striving to achieve a marketing focus, marketing faculty worked with other ICP faculty to identify related course materials, which demonstrate marketing's role within other functionally specific topics (e.g., helping operations faculty identify manufacturing examples that tie in customer interface with production). While not as major of a role as the others previously discussed, this endeavor was critical if the other faculty members were to take a broad view that includes marketing.

BENEFITS OF AN INTEGRATIVE APPROACH TO BUSINESS EDUCATION

Through our experience with our own integrative core program and after talking with others, we have identified a number of benefits for different stakeholders. The exact nature of the benefits and the degree to which they are present will vary depending on the extent of integration the program pursues and those participating.

Marketing faculty participating in an integrative program have an increased level of cross-functional interactions. This benefit snowballs. For example, marketing faculty find they do a better job relating to functional issues outside their own area of expertise. Outside of an integrative class, marketing faculty are more likely to bring a broader scope of issues to the forefront in classroom discussions and lectures. Faculty research projects and general camaraderie develop among the marketing and nonmarketing faculty participating in an integrative program. Furthermore, marketing faculty may begin to co-teach existing courses, where co-teaching had not occurred before, or explore offering new courses that involve an integrative component.

Bringing faculty together also results in a higher level of teaching. Faculty members are able to observe other styles and approaches, hence learning from one another. In addition, many faculty have a stronger commitment to "performing well" with their peers present versus individual teaching.

There are a number of benefits for marketing students participating in an integrative program. Students develop a strong network of friends as a result of taking an "extended" course together. We observed that students remain close long after the ICP ends. Students reported that these bonds contin-

ued after they graduated. From their perspective, the intensity of the experience helped them to form lifelong friends. Second, marketing students gain an appreciation for other disciplines. Students comment that they developed a clear understanding and appreciation of how the functional areas affected one another. In addition, marketing students are introduced to topics and experiences that are not available under the traditional format.

Finally, the learning environment was significantly better than the traditional core. The longer time period and continuity of the student groups helped develop an atmosphere that was more conducive to learning. Marketing faculty could use materials that they normally would not have the time for in the non-ICP core. They also could revisit topics at a later time period if necessary. Learning was also enhanced by the increased comfort level between faculty and students that developed over a longer time period.

CHALLENGES OF AN INTEGRATIVE APPROACH TO BUSINESS EDUCATION

A number of challenges associated with an integrative approach can be identified for a variety of stakeholders. Rather than generate an exhaustive list, we will focus on three major challenges: funding of an integrative approach, commitment to an integrative approach, and faculty retention. Arguably the largest challenge faced is funding the cost of designing, maintaining, and delivering an integrative program. This is particularly true when normal funding models measure inputs (e.g., student credit hours), as opposed to measuring outputs (e.g., benefits/successes of the program to the student). The additional cost is less of a challenge if those who fund these programs are convinced of the outcomes and are willing to pay for them.

Another significant challenge is to get marketing faculty to share a commitment to and enthusiasm for an integrative program. First, one has to secure a marketing faculty member to join the team charged with the design and delivery of the program. This is not always an easy task. After that, it is often difficult to get nonparticipating marketing faculty to "see" the benefits. While the participating marketing faculty may "experience" the benefits firsthand, providing objective evidence to others not involved is often a challenge. Unfortunately, assessing outcomes of an integrative curriculum versus a traditional curriculum is difficult to accomplish. For example, the Educational Testing Service's standardized "Business II" test does not include integrative questions, only functional items. As a result, if nonparticipating marketing faculty members are not well informed about the program, support from them may be lacking.

Faculty retention presents another challenge to implementation of integrative programs. Consider the challenges faced by the participating marketing faculty that include the following: an extensive time commitment, the need for joint faculty curriculum development, potential for lack of recognition by the formal and informal faculty reward system, the risk of lower student evaluations, the required willingness to teach on a team of faculty with other faculty in the room, and the lack of total class control because it is shared with other faculty. If the time required to teach in the program does not lead to burnout, a lack of recognition and reward for the effort and risk undertaken to participate in the program might.

As with the benefits, the degree to which any of the challenges occur is dependent on the nature of the integrative program and the people involved. Clearly, all these issues need to be thought through with a plan of action to address each if an integrative program is to succeed.

CONCLUSION

Marketing can play a key role in achieving integration within the business core curriculum, which may occur in a variety of ways and to varying degrees. The integrative program presented in this article demonstrates that there are ample opportunities for marketing to take an active, central role—whether through integrative class sessions, the use of a business plan as a major integrating project, or even through faculty leadership. At issue is the following question: will marketing step up and accept the challenge to lead the integrative curriculum bandwagon? Ultimately, the answer may lie in the more direct question: do the benefits to the marketing faculty and marketing students outweigh the costs?

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Exploring Innovative Teaching among Marketing Educators: Perceptions of Innovative Activities and Existing Reward and Support Programs

Nancy D. Albers-Miller, Robert D. Straughan, and Penelope J. Prenshaw

This study examined the perceptions of innovative teaching activities and critical support and extrinsic reward mechanisms among marketing academicians. A review of the marketing education literature and exploratory research yielded 21 specific types of educational innovation, 4 types of support for innovation, and 2 types of extrinsic rewards for innovation. Analysis of data collected from an Internet questionnaire indicated that the specific forms of innovation can be adequately described by six dimensions. Faculty adoption of innovation is positively associated with both support and extrinsic rewards. A comparison of the perceived and desired levels of credit for the six dimensions of innovation show incongruence between the levels of support and reward faculty see as desirable and those provided by their respective institutions. More specifically, faculty perceive the reward and support systems to be lacking. A discussion of the key research findings and some suggested directions for future research are provided.

Colleges of business and those teaching within them are facing increasing pressure to offer innovative programs to meet changing demands from industry, government agencies, alumni, students, and accrediting organizations. While the relative importance of teaching as one of three important dimensions of faculty job descriptions—teaching, research, and service—varies from school to school, the call for innovation has become a recurring theme. This article explores marketing faculty perceptions of educational innovation and the effects of two important facilitating mechanisms: institutional reward and support.

Among the three dimensions of professional activities for which academicians are evaluated, research exploring scholarship evaluation has received the most attention in the marketing and business literature. Numerous studies have examined the relative value and/or associated rewards assigned to publications in various academic journals (Browne and Becker 1979, 1985, 1991; Fry, Walters, and Scheuermann 1985; Hult, Neese, and Bashaw 1997; Koojaroenprasit et al.

1998; Luke and Doke 1987; Pierce and Garven 1995; Straughan and Albers-Miller 2000). The relationship between teaching productivity and related reward mechanisms is much less heavily researched within the marketing and business literature. Although some business research has linked teaching contributions with faculty reward and support systems (Bilimoria 1999; Hodgkinson 1998; Hommes 1997), none has appeared in marketing journals. Most of the research on faculty rewards and teaching can be found in literature from primary and secondary education or the general higher education literature (e.g., Claudet 1999; Dean, Acker-Hocevar, and Laible 1997; Grisham 1997; McKinnon, Sinclair, and Nolan 1997; Vermeulen et al. 1996). Perhaps because service consists of a relatively small portion of overall job evaluation, to date we could find no research examining service activities and reward systems. Furthermore, at many universities, service activities are allocated explicitly by academic rank, leaving the picture difficult or possibly impossible to generalize.

Motivations for innovative teaching are many and varied in nature. These motives may be intrinsic, driven by factors such as altruism (e.g., Hannan, English, and Silver 1999) or personal/professional enrichment (Amabile 1983; Crawford 1978). Alternatively, the motives may be extrinsic, driven by such factors as desire for tenure, promotion, and merit rewards (Claudet 1999; Hannan, English, and Silver 1999; Lazerson, Wagener, and Shumanis 2000; Smart, Kelley, and Conant 1999) or demands from various internal and external constituencies (Capozza 1999; Hamilton, McFarland, and Mirchandani 2000; Hannan, English, and Silver 1999).

The present study was conducted in two phases. The objective of the first was to understand teaching innovation

Nancy D. Albers-Miller is an associate professor at University of North Texas, Denton. Robert D. Straughan is an assistant professor in the Department of Management, Williams School of Commerce, Economics, and Politics, Washington and Lee University, Lexington, Virginia. Penelope J. Prenshaw is an associate professor in the Else School of Management, Millsaps College, Jackson, Mississippi.

from the perspective of the marketing academician. How does the marketing academy view innovation in the classroom? The second stage follows from Bilimoria's (1999) call for an explicit link between reward and support systems and teaching contributions. Thus, the second phase of this study empirically examines the perceived relationship between adoption of innovation and perceptions of university support and rewards for those activities. If we can better understand marketing academicians' perceptions about teaching innovation, as well as reward and support systems, we can better serve all constituents.

INNOVATION IN EDUCATION

Herbert E. Philips (1981) defines education innovations as "a practice which is worthy of emulation and has not yet been put into use by a significant number of colleges." In other words, innovation is, in a sense, a function of both *desirability* and *diffusion*. All else being equal, the former characteristic is positively related to innovativeness, and the latter is negatively related to innovativeness.

The call for innovation within the marketing academy is not new. A decade ago, the American Assembly of Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) incorporated flexible standards based on a self-defined mission as an expected part of the accreditation process. This reflected the view that innovation and diversity within the framework of the individual college's mission are not only desirable but also expected. In addition, calls for innovation and adaptation have come from business professionals tired of the "ivory tower" syndrome, from government leaders looking to justify funding, and, even indirectly, from the ever-present media rankings (Bearden, Ellen, and Netemeyer 2000).

Ideally, one's development as a teacher in higher education might come from some combination of three sources. As with initial research training, the molding of teachers might come from formal doctoral training. Yet in practice, this does not appear to be the case—at least with respect to marketing educators. The graduate education that most marketing academicians receive emphasizes research skills as opposed to knowledge of teaching methods and curriculum design. Bearden, Ellen, and Netemeyer (2000) explored perceptions of the doctoral training that aspiring marketing academicians receive and the anticipated changes in the coming years. In their study, 11.4% of respondents (doctoral program coordinators) called for "more emphasis on teaching." Their respondents indicated that "training to teach" was among the areas most needing emphasis in the future. In their discussion, Bearden, Ellen, and Netemeyer cited the relegation of teaching to secondary status as one of the overriding concerns in doctoral education today. Hershey, Gargeya, and Eatman (1996) provided additional empirical evidence that business faculty believe that their doctoral training leaves them underprepared for their future teaching responsibilities. There are no doubt exceptions to these programmatic shortcomings. However, if general training of educators is lacking, it can be inferred that doctoral candidates in marketing are receiving little or no formal guidance on innovative course content and pedagogical developments.

A second source of knowledge on innovation in education is nonmarketing academic literature. Within the literature on general higher education and primary and secondary education, the concept of innovation has been addressed in detail. Various studies have examined the general concept of innovation (e.g., Baxter 1990b; Hall and Loucks 1981; Philips 1981), the process of developing and implementing innovative methods and curriculum (e.g., Dean, Acker-Hocevar, and Laible 1997; Lueddeke 1999; Wright, Knight, and Pomerleau 1999), faculty reactions to innovative initiatives (e.g., Sparkes 1990; Williams 1993), student responses to innovation (e.g., Baxter 1990a; Mac an Ghaill 1992; McKinnon, Sinclair, and Nolan 1997), and the many factors that may moderate or facilitate innovation (e.g., Adey 1997; Cunningham 1998; Ghaith and Yaghi 1997; Lueddeke 1999; Simpson 1990). In addition, numerous case studies and anecdotal articles (e.g., Capozza 1999; Ebert-May, Brewer, and Allred 1997) have addressed the concept of innovation either directly or indirectly. However, all of this work appears *outside* of the marketing literature.

Taken as a whole, this body of literature, from the general education disciplines, could (and perhaps should) provide significant insight into innovation within marketing education. There is, however, a sense that the amount of exposure that the average marketing academician has to this general education literature is minimal at best.

A nationwide survey of a convenience sample of marketing academicians provided some insight. In practice, marketing professors do not closely follow this literature. Of the 36 professors who responded to our informal inquiry, 44% did not read any education-related publications. While the remaining 56% did read education literature, only 8% indicated that they did, at least occasionally, read articles published in non-marketing-related publications to gather information about education topics. This is the area where the material on innovation appears, and yet marketing faculty are generally not following this literature. The people most likely to mention publications from outside of the field of marketing typically held some type of administrative position, such as chair or dean. The most commonly mentioned publication outside of the marketing literature was the *Chronicle of Higher Education*. The remaining respondents who read education-related material mentioned a variety of marketing-specific publications, including marketing education journals, general marketing journals, specialty marketing journals, and nonacademic publications or forums—all areas where information on innovation is generally not available.

Disappointingly, only 3% of the overall respondents indicated that they used the third source of knowledge, marketing education journals, regularly. Naturally, other sources of information on innovations might prove useful, including Internet sites, instructor's manuals, and conference workshops. There is some indication that currently the bulk of information on innovation in teaching reaches scholars through these informal channels.

Thus, because doctoral programs underemphasize formal training of teachers and despite a wealth of material on innovation in the general education literature, the formal concept of educational innovation remains a mystery to marketing academicians. Therefore, the first phase of this research must identify and understand the concept of educational innovation from the perspective of the marketing academician. Only then can the relationship between participation in innovative activities and relevant reward and support systems be explored in the second phase.

REWARD AND SUPPORT FOR INNOVATION

Many studies conducted in other academic areas have examined the propensity of faculty to engage in innovative educational activities and methods for encouraging faculty participation (Adey 1977; Claudet 1999; Cunningham 1998; Ghaith and Yaghi 1997; Lueddeke 1999; Shue and LaCroix 1998). Many of these studies have suggested that innovation is most likely to occur when there are appropriate reward and support programs in place (Claudet 1999; Dean, Acker-Hocevar, and Laible 1997; Graue and Smith 1996; Grisham 1997; Hodgkinson 1998; Hommes 1997; McKinnon, Sinclair, and Nolan 1997; Olson 1989; Polite 1994; Vermeulen et al. 1996). It is reasonable to hypothesize that faculty in the area of marketing will be motivated to participate more frequently in innovative practices when there are reward and support systems in place. Hence, we hypothesize the following:

Hypothesis 1: Educational innovation will be positively associated with institutional reward for innovation.
Hypothesis 2: Educational innovation will be positively associated with institutional support for the innovation.

SURVEY DEVELOPMENT AND SAMPLING PROCEDURES

To accomplish the goals of this study—identifying innovation in marketing education and examining the relationship between adoption of innovation and faculty reward and support systems—a number of steps were necessary. First, items perceived to be innovative in marketing education must be identified. Second, relevant support and reward mechanisms must be identified. Third, the extent to which innovative con-

cepts and approaches have been diffused among marketing academicians must be explored. Fourth, the perception of current reward and support mechanisms must be identified. Finally, the degree to which faculty believe the activities should be rewarded and supported must be identified.

Identifying Teaching Innovations in Marketing

To explore educational innovation in marketing, it was first necessary to identify those activities that are considered innovative. In keeping with the spirit of Philips's (1981) approach to defining innovation in education, an activity was considered innovative if the technique was potentially of value but not commonly employed by faculty. In other words, the technique was considered "more innovative" if few people had adopted the activity and was considered "less innovative" if many people had adopted the activity.

To generate a reasonably thorough list of innovative teaching activities, academic journals such as the *Journal of Marketing Education*, *Marketing Education Review*, *Journal of Management Education*, and *Studies in Higher Education* were reviewed. The activities reported in the literature were used as a starting point. Interviews were then conducted with marketing academicians. Based on other activities that they viewed as innovative, a modified list of 24 activities thought to encompass educational innovation was created.

Feedback suggested that 2 of the 24 items were overlapping (a new course and a new course on emerging issues). Respondents suggested that the latter was encompassed in the former. The latter was dropped from the analysis. In addition, another item was only applicable at some of the universities of interest to this study. Executive education programs were not available at all universities, so this was also dropped from the analysis. Table 1 indicates the 22 innovative teaching activities identified and employed in this study.

Identifying Reward and Support Procedures

Identical procedures were used to identify potentially relevant support and reward mechanisms. Four types of support were identified as relevant. These were (1) reduced teaching loads or release time, (2) decreased class size, (3) increased graduate assistant support, and (4) grant support. With respect to rewards, credit toward promotion and tenure and credit toward merit pay increases were the relevant mechanisms.

Questionnaire

Given an understanding of those activities viewed as innovative and the reward and support mechanisms that are potentially relevant, data on faculty perceptions of these concepts could be collected, and empirical exploration of the interrelationships between these concepts could be conducted. Data

TABLE 1
INNOVATIVE TEACHING ACTIVITIES

Teaching Activity	Innovativeness Score
A new course not previously offered	1.75
A new course preparation (e.g., a new course not previously taught by a faculty member but previously offered by another faculty member)	2.75
A distance education course delivered fully on the Internet	0.65
Web support materials for a traditionally delivered course	1.63
Electronic communications systems for students to use (e.g., Web conferencing, chat rooms, group e-mails)	1.29
Distance education courses using real-time video technology	0.67
A student organization not previously available	0.81
A course that integrated across functional areas within business	1.01
A new interdisciplinary course that is integrated across business areas and other academic disciplines	0.78
A new course covering marketing applications of emerging tools and technology (e.g., data mining, GIS)	0.77
A new course on emerging research methods	0.68
A new course-specific case or project	1.70
A new assessment procedure (such as course portfolios)	1.04
An untried teaching method	1.32
Comprehensive internship or job placement programs for your students	0.85
Student development activities (e.g., independent study, formal one-on-one mentoring, collaborative research with students)	1.88
Seminars to share pedagogical insight with colleagues at your university	1.10
A study-abroad program	0.92
Faculty teaching development programs (e.g., coaching, mentoring, resource sharing)	1.05
A new case or project working with local businesses or organizations	1.47
A new course tailored to industry-specific needs	0.66
A new program tailored to industry-specific needs (e.g., new concentration, new degree plan)	0.61

NOTE: A score of less than 1.0 indicates that very few faculty members have adopted the activity. A score of less than 2.0 indicates that less than half of the faculty members have adopted the activity.

for this study were collected electronically using a Web-based survey. The questionnaire was divided into five pages. This was done to minimize hypothesis guessing and to minimize the appearance that the questionnaire was excessively long. Pilot tests of the instrument indicated that the five-part structure accomplished both. As subjects completed each section, they were asked to click on the "Continue" button at the bottom of the Web page, which automatically took them to the next section of the questionnaire. When all five sections were completed and submitted, respondents were automatically forwarded to a Web page that thanked them for their participation.

The first section examined respondents' attitudes toward the credit that should be given to various teaching activities. Respondents were encouraged to respond based on their individual opinions rather than institutional "opinions." Respondents were asked to express their opinions on a 1- to 5-point scale ranging from *very little credit* to *a great deal of credit* for the identified activities.

The second portion of the questionnaire asked respondents to address two questions. First, they were asked to express how often they had personally engaged in the given activity and then to estimate how many colleagues at their respective universities had used the activity in teaching. Personal engagement was measured on a drop-down menu with the options of "never," "once," "2 to 3 times," "4 to 5 times," "6 to

7 times," "8 to 9 times," or "10 times or more." University-level diffusion was also measured on a drop-down menu with the options of "none," "very few," "less than half," "more than half," "most," or "almost all."

The third and fourth sections contained the same questions for the first half (page 3) and the second half (page 4) of the teaching activities. For these questions, the respondents were asked to report the actual policies, procedures, and practices at their respective university. Respondents were asked to consider six possible rewards for engaging the teaching activity, including the following: release time or reduced teaching load, reduced class size, additional TA/RA/GA support, grant funding, credit toward merit, and credit toward promotion. For each of the activities, the respondent indicated the tendency at his or her university to reward a faculty member with each of the six methods on a slide bar scale of *never*, *rarely*, *sometimes*, *usually*, or *always*.

The fifth and final section asked for the respondents' demographic information. These demographic measures included information on academic rank, administrative responsibilities, age, sex, years of academic experience, and allocation of time to teaching, research, and service. Respondents were also given a space where they could provide open-ended comments of their choosing. Two additional questions asking respondents to name their institution and the institution where they received their highest degree were also

included. Respondents were clearly told that these final two questions were optional to prevent concerns over anonymity.

Sample and Procedures

The questionnaire for this study was administered to a national sample of U.S. marketing academicians. A comprehensive listing of faculty members at AACSB accredited colleges and universities across the United States, as noted on a publicly available Web site (McBane 1999), was developed from university Web pages and Hasselback (1999). Once this database of faculty names was complete, a random sample was taken to serve as the contact pool.

Using the list of marketing academicians and their e-mail addresses, an introductory e-mail was sent to those in the random sample. The e-mail introduced the principal researchers, asked for participation in an academic research study, and stated the purpose of the research. Those contacted were also asked to contact the researchers if their job responsibilities did not include either teaching/research in marketing or a marketing-related area. Those who fit the profile were asked to direct their Web browsers to a Web site that contained the questionnaire.

After adjusting for bad addresses and those that self-selected out because they did not fit the profile (involved in teaching/research in marketing), the contact group included 605 academicians. These faculty included individuals employed at colleges and universities across the United States. A total of 126 responses were received (response rate = 20.83%). Because of a technical error and respondent dropout, this final response rate somewhat underrepresents the percentage of people willing to participate. A comparison of the first third of those responding and the last third of those responding yielded no statistically significant differences on any variable. It can be inferred from this that nonresponse bias is not present in the data (Green, Tull, and Albaum 1988; Rivers and Dart 1999; Singh 2000; Weeks and Nantel 1992; Zikmund 1994).

To guard against the presence of statistically significant demand characteristics, all responses of those individuals who provided open-ended comments regarding either the general topic of education research or the design of the study were removed from the original data set to create a restricted data set. A comparison of all means from this restricted data set with similar means from the full data set revealed no statistically significant differences. Thus, there is no statistical evidence to suggest the presence of demand characteristics in the current study.

The responses represent a variety of academic programs. Respondents included faculty members at 91 colleges and universities in 37 different states. Under the previous Carnegie classification, the colleges and universities ranged from Baccalaureate I to Research I (for an explanation of the Carnegie classification system, see Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching 1994). Under the new Carnegie classification, 67 of the universities are considered doctoral/research universities.

EXPLORATORY ANALYSIS

Innovativeness

Each of the 22 teaching techniques was examined to see if respondents considered the activity to be innovative. Innovation was measured based on respondent perception of how commonplace the activity was among their colleagues at their respective universities. For each of the items, the respondent was asked to indicate the percentage of faculty who engaged in the activity on a scale of 0 to 5, described as *none*, *very few*, *less than half*, *more than half*, *most*, or *almost all*. An average score of 2.0 or less would indicate that the activity had been adopted by less than half of the faculty members at AACSB schools across the United States. An average score of 1.0 or less would indicate that respondents perceived that very few faculty members used or engaged in the technique.

Most of the 22 items were considered to be very innovative by the respondents. Only 1 item was not considered to be innovative by the respondents. Not surprisingly, new preparation of a course previously offered by others was considered to be rather commonplace. All of the remaining 21 items identified as innovative have an average score of 1.88 or lower (see Table 1).

Factor Analysis

The faculty perceptions of the innovativeness of the 21 activities determined to be innovative and of interest in this study were subjected to a factor analysis. This analysis was necessary to determine the underlying latent structure of the respondents' perceptions of innovation. Using a minimum eigenvalue of 1.0, principle components analysis yielded six factors. The six factors explain 66.25% of the overall variation. After varimax orthogonal rotation, all 21 appeals loaded cleanly (0.58 or greater) on one of each of the six factors. Table 2 shows the factor loadings.

Factor 1 represents innovation within the traditional classroom experience. This factor accounted for 24.09% of the variance explained (3.35). Developing Web support materials for a traditionally delivered course, creating electronic communications systems for student use, creating new course-specific cases, participating in student development activities such as independent study or mentoring, and developing new projects working with local-area business all loaded on this factor. Not surprisingly, this factor was perceived as the least innovative of all the factors. Responses suggested that more than a few faculty members participate in these types of activities. That said, it is worthy of note that respondents still believed that less than half of the faculty engaged in these activities (mean = 1.60; between the scale descriptors of *very few* and *less than half*).

TABLE 2
FACTOR LOADINGS

Teaching Activity	Loadings
Web support materials for a traditionally delivered course	0.63
Electronic communications systems for students to use (e.g., Web conferencing, chat rooms, group e-mails)	0.72
A new course-specific case or project	0.69
Student development activities (e.g., independent study, formal one-on-one mentoring, collaborative research with students)	0.69
A new case or project working with local businesses or organizations	0.72
A student organization not previously available	0.66
A new assessment procedure (such as course portfolios)	0.70
An untried teaching method	0.72
Seminars to share pedagogical insight with colleagues at your university	0.58
Faculty teaching development programs (e.g., coaching, mentoring, resource sharing)	0.60
Comprehensive internship or job placement programs for your students	0.67
A study-abroad program	0.72
A new course tailored to industry-specific needs	0.62
A new program tailored to industry-specific needs (e.g., new concentration, new degree plan)	0.75
A new course not previously offered	0.70
A course that integrated across functional areas within business	0.75
A new interdisciplinary course that is integrated across business areas and other academic disciplines	0.86
A distance education course delivered fully on the Internet	0.66
Distance education courses using real-time video technology	0.81
A new course covering marketing applications of emerging tools and technology (e.g., data mining, GIS)	0.64
A new course on emerging research methods	0.86

Factor 2 represents innovations used outside of the traditional classroom but within the university environment. This factor accounted for 18.99% of the variance explained (2.63). Developing a new student organization, developing new assessment procedures, providing pedagogical seminars for colleagues, engaging in faculty developing programs, and using untried teaching methods load on this factor. The activities associated with this factor are in the early stages of diffusion. The respondents believe that very few faculty members engage in the activities described by this factor (mean = 1.07; slightly more than the scale descriptor of *very few*).

Factor 3 represents innovative activities performed off campus or with off-campus organizations. This factor accounted for 16.98% of the variance explained (2.36). Developing job placement programs or internship programs, creating study-abroad programs, and developing new courses or new programs to meet specific industry needs were all associated with this factor. Respondents believe that these innovations are quite uncommon (mean = 0.76, between the scale descriptors of *none* and *very few*).

Factor 4 represents a dimension of new course development (courses not previously offered before). This factor accounted for 15.53% of the variance explained (2.17). Developing a new course, creating a course that integrates across business areas, and creating a course that integrates across business and other academic areas load on this factor. Respondents believe that substantially less than half of the faculty are performing these types of activities (mean = 1.18, between the scale descriptors of *very few* and *less than half*).

Factor 5 represents a dimension of technological innovations. This factor accounted for 14.74% of the variance explained (2.06). Creating a course fully delivered on the Internet, developing a course using real-time video technology, and creating a course covering emerging tools and technology loaded on this factor. Respondents indicated their belief that very few of the faculty have engaged in these activities (mean = 0.70, between the scale descriptors of *none* and *very few*).

Factor 6 represents research education innovativeness. This factor accounted for 9.67% of the variance explained (1.34). Only creating a course on emerging research methods loaded onto this factor. Respondents also believed that very few of the faculty have engaged in this activity (mean = 0.68, between the scale descriptors of *none* and *very few*).

DATA ANALYSIS
AND RESULTS

Regression Analysis

Given an understanding of what was considered innovative among marketing educators, it became possible to consider the relationship between innovation and reward and support mechanisms. The hypotheses were tested using regression analysis. Support provided for innovation was measured based on an average of the extent to which the four types of support were provided to facilitate any given innovative activity. Reward provided for innovation was measured based on an average of the extent to which credit toward merit

or credit toward promotion was perceived as being provided to reward any given innovative activity. The regression model was developed as

$$\text{Adoption of the Teaching Innovation} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{ Reward} + \beta_2 \text{ Support.}$$

The overall regression model was significant at the .01 level. Both the reward (parameter estimate of .08) and support (parameter estimate of .28) variables were positive and significant at the .01 level as well. These results strongly indicate a relationship between innovative activity and the degree to which reward and support mechanisms are in place.

Analysis of Reward and Support Systems

Once the relationship between innovation and reward and support systems was established, it was reasonable to examine actual reward systems relative to the credit faculty thought should be given to implementation of innovations. Data on reward for innovation were examined in two parts: how much credit did faculty think should be given for a specific innovation, and to what extent was the credit perceived as in place?

Clearly, there could be great discrepancies between what faculty thought should be given credit and what was actually rewarded and supported. In the first page of the questionnaire, faculty indicated how much credit should be given to each activity (5-point Likert-type scale from 1 = *very little credit* to 5 = *a great deal of credit*). The activities were generally perceived as worthy of credit, but some items were valued more greatly than others. All of the activities scored within the range of 2.27 and 3.51. For example, faculty thought that new course development activities deserved more credit. Specifically developing "a new course not previously offered" was rated at 3.48, "a course that integrated across functional areas within business" was rated 3.47, and "a new interdisciplinary course that is integrated across business areas and other academic disciplines" was rated at 3.51. Some activities were considered valuable but to a lesser degree than those mentioned above. Specifically developing "a new assessment procedure (such as course portfolios)" was rated at 2.27. None of the activities were perceived as worthy of very little credit.

That said, the results of perceived actual reward and support systems were most discouraging. Actual rewards and support were rated on a 5-point scale labeled 0 = *never*, 1 = *rarely*, 2 = *sometimes*, 3 = *usually*, and 4 = *always*. None of the mean responses rated greater than 1.0 (*rarely*). Overall, the most commonly used approach of encouraging innovation was using reward methods versus support methods. Offering credit toward merit scored 0.55 (between the scale descriptors of *never* and *rarely*); offering credit toward promotion was the next most common (mean = 0.44, also between the scale descriptors of *never* and *rarely*). The support methods—release time (mean = 0.25), reduced class size (mean =

0.09), additional graduate assistance (mean = 0.23), and grant funding (mean = 0.20)—were rarely used.

Individually, some types of activities were rewarded and/or supported to a greater extent than others. The most heavily rewarded activities were new course development (mean = 1.80, between the scale descriptors of *rarely* and *sometimes*) and Internet course development (mean = 1.41); these two activities were also the most heavily supported. New course development was the most supported (mean = 2.35, between the scale descriptors of *sometimes* and *usually*). Internet course development scored a mean of 1.89.

Likewise, some activities were rewarded and supported to a lesser degree. The activities least likely to be rewarded were developing a new course-specific case or project (mean score = 0.56, between the scale descriptors of *never* and *rarely*) and providing seminars to share pedagogical insight with colleagues (mean = 0.59). The activities least likely to be supported were the development of a new student organization (mean = 0.16, very close to the scale descriptor of *never*) and faculty teaching development programs (mean = 0.15, also very close to the scale descriptor of *never*).

The means for reward and support were examined factor by factor. Not surprisingly, the most heavily supported and rewarded factor was factor 4, which represents a dimension of new course development (mean reward = 1.43, mean support = 1.62). The least rewarded factor was factor 2 (innovations used outside of the traditional classroom but within the university environment) with a mean score of 0.78, followed closely by factor 1 (innovation within the traditional classroom) with a mean score of 0.79. The least supported factor was factor 2 (mean = 0.27), followed by factor 1 (mean = 0.45). The mean reward and support values by factor can be seen in Table 3.

These relationships are very clearly represented in Figure 1. Figure 1 seems to indicate clearly that faculty members perceive that innovation should be rewarded to a much greater extent than it actually is rewarded. Perhaps the most telling evidence of that feeling is that faculty adoption of innovation seems to lag just behind the perceived actual reward system. Only adoption of the innovations in factor 1 deviates from the trend. The deviation might be in part explained by one respondent's comment that "keeping their job" is the reward for doing some types of activities.

DISCUSSION

The objective of this study was twofold: to understand what is considered to be innovative from the perspective of marketing academicians and to further our understanding of the relationship between the adoption of innovation and perceived faculty reward and support systems. This study does both. The exploratory element of this study reveals 21 activities viewed by marketing academicians as innovative educational techniques. In addition, this study empirically validates

TABLE 3
MEAN REWARD AND SUPPORT VALUES BY FACTOR

	Reward	Support
Factor 1: Innovation within the traditional classroom	0.79	0.45
Factor 2: Innovations used outside of the traditional classroom but within the university environment	0.79	0.27
Factor 3: Innovative activities performed off campus or with off-campus organizations	0.95	0.65
Factor 4: New course development	1.43	1.62
Factor 5: Technological innovations	1.20	1.41
Factor 6: Research education innovations	1.03	0.73

NOTE: Scores less than 2.0 indicate that the activity is rewarded/supported rarely to sometimes. Scores less than 1.0 indicate that the activity is rewarded/supported never to rarely.
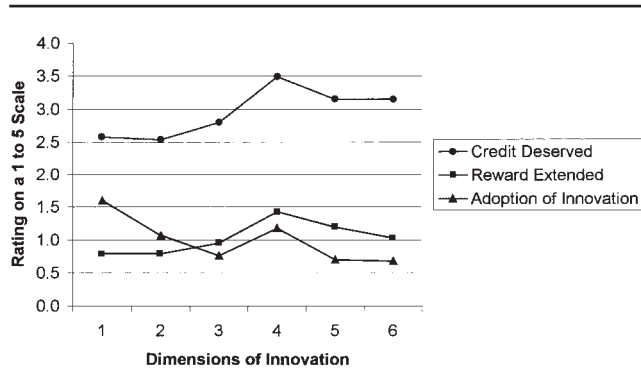
FIGURE 1:   Perceptions of Faculty Rewards for Innovation

the direct relationship between the adoption of marketing educational innovation and the perceived level of external reward and support.

The extent to which faculty think the identified activities should be rewarded is evidence of the activity's desirability. That, along with the fact that these activities have not been adopted by most marketing faculty, qualifies them as innovative. These 21 activities can be categorized into six dimensions of innovation in marketing education:

- innovation within the traditional classroom,
- innovations used outside of the traditional classroom but within the university environment,
- innovative activities performed off campus or with off-campus organizations,
- innovative new course development,
- innovative use of technology,
- innovative development of research education.

These dimensions of educational innovation provide valuable insight into the variety of activities viewed as innovative. Naturally, this is valuable to education researchers interested in further exploration of the topic of classroom innovation. It is, however, also of use in a more "applied" way. By under-

standing the variety of ways that we, as academicians, can seek to innovate, we become more proficient in our craft. Furthermore, we also gain a deeper appreciation for the ways that *others* innovate in the classroom.

This study also statistically supports the relationship between adoption of innovation and extrinsic reward and support systems. Contradictory to calls from the education literature, accrediting organizations, public and private foundations, and the academy in general to offer reward and support for innovation in the classroom, this study revealed that faculty perceptions of the actual rewards provided for engaging in innovative activities fall well below the credit that faculty think should be given. While past research indicates some progress in innovation, the present results suggest that intrinsic sources of motivation and reward will have to feed the innovation process for the time being. It is possible (although this cannot be determined from the present study) that some marketing professors are *not* engaging in some of these innovative practices because the intrinsic rewards alone are not sufficient motivation.

Some open-ended comments from the respondents provide insight into individual opinions of the incongruence between the rewards deemed appropriate and actual institutional practices. Many respondents were concerned about the entire evaluation process and the resulting rewards. One respondent commented that "our university is a communist system—same raises for all, no merit and no rewards for exemplary effort." Another explained that even in a university that is primarily teaching focused, "promotion is based purely on teaching evaluation and the number of publications." The individual continued, "Any innovation that takes place in the classroom is based on the professor's fulfillment for providing new things for the students. It is not extrinsically rewarded most of the time." Yet another explained,

My school is unionized. The union contract makes it virtually impossible to differentially reward a faculty member for anything. Many of the activities you listed are expected activities. Their absence can hurt a faculty member but their presence will have little positive impact on the faculty member.

Others expressed concerns about how reward and support are awarded. One respondent wrote,

> Credit is distributed inequitably. It is politically driven and not related directly to the level of contribution. For example, two faculty members could engage in exactly the same activity (e.g., deliver a study-abroad program or lead their discipline in new curriculum efforts), and one would receive merit and promotion credit for the activity, and the other would not.

These comments, as well as the empirical results of the present study, suggest that extrinsic rewards are being underused as a means of stimulating necessary innovation.

LIMITATIONS

It is rare that researchers are fortunate enough to collect data from a sample of highly trained, skilled, and experienced respondents. Although the general response to this survey was favorable and numerous respondents indicated strong interest in the results of the research, a few respondents and others in the sample provided very valuable feedback on some potential limitations of our study and suggestions for future research.

Although the survey was pilot tested, the data collection method served as a source of limitation. The survey format, server problems, initial technical errors, length of the survey, and respondent fatigue may have introduced levels of systematic error. Furthermore, many of the addresses in the database (17.26%) were undeliverable. Many of the addresses included in the database belonged to individuals who did not fit the respondent profile (10.41%). Although great care has been taken to screen the data for potential problems, these issues may serve to limit the generalizability of the study.

While the previously mentioned qualifications of the sample are attractive, there were also some unfortunate drawbacks of working with such a sample. The study may be limited by the high level of demands on the time of the individuals in the sampling pool. A small number of potential respondents (less than 1% of the sample) indicated that they were simply too busy to participate in the study. It seems reasonable that others felt that they were too busy to respond as well. In addition to time constraints, there is conceivably a self-selection bias from faculty that places exceptionally high value on research and relatively low value on teaching. These phenomena may have introduced some level of bias into the data.

It is also worth noting that the research conducted did not attempt to provide a comprehensive exploration of the antecedents of innovation among marketing academicians. The focus of the present study was on extrinsic institutional motivators only. Extrinsic motivators from sources outside the institution, such as external grants, were not included. Numerous potential intrinsic motivators, such as the personal satisfaction that comes from improving student learning, were not measured and included in the study. In addition, extrinsic demotivators, such as fear of retribution for a failed attempt at innovation, were not included. Clearly, the present study presents only a portion of the picture.

While the results provide insight into faculty perceptions, they provide no insight into the views of students, administrators at various levels (i.e., departmental, college level, and university level), recruiters and employers, and numerous other constituents. This single-level perspective may offer a blind man's view of the elephant. For example, administrators may perceive that the current levels of reward and support are much greater than faculty consider them to be, or administrators may concur with faculty on the level of current support but may believe current levels of reward and support are sufficient. In other words, the disparity between the perceived credit deserved and the current credit offered may be much less for administrators.

FUTURE RESEARCH

Future research must validate these exploratory findings through confirmatory factor analysis at least and structural equation modeling at best. Taking the present findings at face value, several suggestions for future research may be made. The calls for more innovation in the classroom are clear. Given the current finding that extrinsic motivators are significant predictors of innovation and that current levels of reward and support are deemed inadequate, it will be interesting to note any changes in reward and support structures for such innovation over time. Past education research, the results of the present study, and basic organizational behavior theory all point to the need for better support for key initiatives such as these. Time-series analysis of trends in this area is warranted.

In addition, as noted previously, more comprehensive exploration of the variety of antecedents of innovation is warranted. Perhaps both qualitative and empirical methods would help to lend insight into the numerous factors that might influence the adoption of innovative educational methods and practices.

Another source of insight, a bit closer to home, that might warrant exploration is the vast marketing literature on the diffusion of innovation. It would be interesting to explore the applicability of those models and theories on the diffusion of innovative educational practices among academicians.

In addition, explicit research into the various dimensions of classroom innovation would provide a greater depth of understanding. These questions naturally lend themselves to a variety of research approaches. Case studies of innovative practices, conceptual expansion of models of innovation, and additional empirical investigation could all provide valuable insight.

Exploring some or all of these questions within different populations of interest would be valuable. How do students,

administrators, and/or recruiters view innovation? What are administrators' views of support and reward systems for classroom innovation? Are they adequate at present? What changes do they deem necessary?

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