

Journal for
GLOBAL BUSINESS EDUCATION



February 2017

Volume 16

The Journal for Global Business Education is a refereed publication of the United States chapter of the International Society for Business Education (ISBE). The U.S. Chapter is one of multiple chapters of the *Société pour l'Enseignement Commercial* (SIEC). These chapters represent different countries that are engaged in education for international business. An affiliate of the National Business Education Association (NBEA), the purpose of the U.S. Chapter of ISBE is to promote international business education among member nations through improved international educational exchange, cooperative efforts, and unified goals and objectives.

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Journal for Global Business Education

Volume 16

February 2017

ISSN: 1551-6784

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Journal for Global Business Education

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Business Educators' Contributions to the International Business (IB) Literature through NBEA-Related Publications: A Challenge to Revitalize the Literature through Development, Timeliness, and Accessibility

Dr. Carol Blaszczynski

Abstract

This study investigated characteristics of the business education portion of the IB literature from 2001-2015 in seven National Business Education Association (NBEA)-related publications. Two publications have IB content exclusively; the other five publications have IB content of less than 16%. More than half of the studied articles are sole authored. The most prolific authors for each of the studied publications were identified as well as the author ranked in the top five of most publications, who was interviewed to provide insight into how an author becomes a prolific writer of IB focus articles. The business education portion of the IB literature is diminishing in quantity and could become nonexistent unless appropriate interventions are made soon.

Introduction

The vitality of a profession may be gauged by the robustness of its literature. If the number of publications in a discipline is growing, that discipline may be viewed as flourishing. If aspects of a discipline are neglected through a diminishing number of publications or no publications, then that discipline may be perceived as being in decline (Blaszczynski & Scott, 2003). What then is the status of business educators' contributions to the international business (IB) portion of the business education literature as revealed through NBEA-related publications disseminated from 2001 through 2015?

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to determine the contributions of business educators to the IB portion of the business education literature by examining seven NBEA-related publications.

Review of the Literature

This review of the literature is organized around the history of IB in business education, the NBEA publications that are the focus of the study, and authorship characteristics such as collaboration trends and factors affecting faculty publication productivity.

IB was introduced as one of the curricular areas in the NBEA Standards (Hosler, 2000). According to Hemby and Lewis (2015), the first IB article was published in the Business Education Forum (BEF) in 1994. The critical role of IB in undergraduate education was emphasized by Colby, Ehrlich, Sullivan, and Dolle (2011), who argued that "global cultural literacy opens connections among the full array of disciplines" (p. 133). Further, "this understanding gives students fresh eyes for looking at their own culture and a better sense of what it means to be acculturated: that no one is culture-free and that everyone operates within particular, though multifaceted and complex, cultural systems" (pp. 133-134).

The following periodicals were studied. The reviewed BEF focuses on pedagogy. The refereed Business Teacher Education Journal (BTEF), formerly the NABTE Review, publishes business teacher education research. Sponsored by SIEC (Societe Internationale Pour L'enseignement Commercial) –ISBE (International Society for Business Education), the refereed International Journal for Business Education

(IJBE), formerly the Review, is devoted to IB and attracts primarily non-U.S. authors. The refereed Journal for Global Business Education (JGBE) began publication in 2001, and its content is exclusively IB in focus. The refereed Journal for Research in Business Education (JRBE), formerly The Delta Pi Epsilon Journal, was ranked the number one business education journal by vital business educators (Scott, Blaszczynski, Green, & Fagerheim, 2008) and publishes results of rigorous research investigations. The refereed Journal of Applied Research in Business Education (JARBI), formerly Instructional Strategies, publishes articles with a pedagogical focus. Finally, the refereed NBEA Yearbooks (NBEAY) are published annually according to prescribed content themes.

Blaszczynski (2001) determined that researchers should “Carve out a small area or niche in which to be an expert” (p. 120). Further, researchers should engage in writing regularly, obtain a mentor to guide them through the intricacies of the research/publication process, immerse themselves in the business education literature, and create a draft outline before beginning to write. Martinez, Floyd, and Erichsen (2011) recommended collaborating, prioritizing research, and developing a systematic stream of research to increase scholarly productivity. Scott (2008, 2003) outlined professional development strategies for business educators such as engaging in professional travel and taking developmental leaves and provided strategies IB educators can implement when researching abroad (Scott, 2004).

While several business educators have studied publications and authorship (Blaszczynski & Scott, 2004; Hemby & Lewis, 2015; Stitt-Gohdes, 2000), no other study has as wide a scope as seven periodicals.

Research Questions

Based on the literature, the following research questions about the NBEA-related publications for the 2001-2015 period form the focus of the study:

How is the business education portion of the IB literature distributed during the study time period across the seven studied publications?

How important are the IB focus articles within the studied publications?

Overall, what are the collaboration patterns used by authors of the IB focus articles?

For each publication, what are the collaboration patterns used by authors of the IB focus articles?

Who are the most prolific IB focus article authors for each of the studied publications?

Which authors have published IB focus articles in at least three studied publications?

How does an author become a prolific writer of IB focus articles?

Where do the IB focus article authors reside?

What countries have been the focal points of IB articles within the business education literature?

Overall, what is the status of the business education portion of the IB literature?

Research Methods

The researcher examined the 2001 through 2015 issues of the seven periodicals that constituted the focus of this study: BEF, BTEJ, IJBE, JARBI, JGBE, JRBE, and NBEAY to determine the publication patterns and authorship contributions to the IB portion of the business education literature.

Limitations of the Study

Some issues of the *IJBE* were not publicly available. In a few instances, some journals did not publish complete author information; as a result, some details were not available for analysis.

Findings and Discussion

The findings and discussion of the study are presented in the following paragraphs and are organized by the research questions.

Research Question 1. How is the business education portion of the IB literature distributed during the study time period across the seven studied publications? Table 1 shows an erratic distribution pattern for IB focus articles overall for the studied publications. *IJBE* is the only publication with an increasing number of IB focus articles. *BEF*, *JGBE*, *JRBE*, and *NBEAY* had a decreasing number of IB focus articles between 2013 and the end of 2015, in part because of publication irregularities. *BTEJ* had only one IB focus article very early in the study time period. No IB focus articles were published in *JARBI* during the study time period, and as a result, *JARBI* data does not appear after Table 2. Two internationally themed yearbook issues accounted for most of the IB focus articles in *NBEAY*.

Table 1

Number of IB Focus Articles by Three-Year Periods, 2001-2015

<u>Periods</u>	<u>BEF</u>	<u>BTEJ/ NABTE</u>	<u>IJBE*</u>	<u>JARBI</u>	<u>JGBE**</u>	<u>JRBE/ DPEJ</u>	<u>NBEAY</u>	<u>Total Articles</u>
2001-2003	13	1	NA	0	13	2	3	32
2004-2006	11	0	NA	0	15	3	18	47
2007-2009	12	0	2	0	13	2	2	31
2010-2012	14	0	12	0	14	0	14	54
2013-2015	7	0	14	0	3	0	1	25
Total	57	1	28	0	58	7	38	189

*Note.**Only the 2009 through 2015 issues of *IJBE* are accessible.

*Note.****Journal for Global Business Education* (*JGBE*) was not published in 2013 so only two issues were available during this three-year period. The 2015 issue of *JGBE* was actually published in Spring 2016 and is excluded from the study because the study cutoff date was December 31, 2015.

The IB focus articles have an inconsistent distribution pattern across the seven studied publications during the study time period in part because of irregular dissemination of some publications. When publications become less reliable and are distributed irregularly, the most strategic authors will find new, more dependable outlets for their work elsewhere since they usually need to demonstrate a sustained record of publications for such things as retention, tenure, promotion, periodic performance review, and special research designations with such benefits as reduced teaching load and financial rewards (J. C. Scott, personal communication, August 13, 2016). The fact that IB focus articles are very rarely found in *BTEJ* suggests that business teacher education has not been significantly internationalized, impeding the ability of practicing and prospective business educators to incorporate international business content into their courses. As business teacher education programs have shifted increasingly to colleges of education, their students have increasingly been deprived of broad-based business content, especially access to increasingly prevalent international business content and courses

in colleges of business. Since JARBI is oriented toward practicing teachers, it could be an ideal publication outlet to bolster IB content and related methodology. If utilized, this publication opportunity would help to address the existing IB content shortcomings in JARBI and strengthen business teacher preparation for effectively transferring international content.

Research Question 2. How important are the IB focus articles within the studied publications? Table 2 shows that the percentage of IB focus articles within the studied publications varies considerably from 0.0% in JARBI to 100.0% in IJBE and JGBE. While the overall percentage of IB focus articles in the studied publications is 17.9%, the respective percentages for BEF, BTEJ, JARBI, JRBE, and NBEAY are lower. The overall percentage of IB focus articles in the studied publications is enhanced by IJBE and JGBE with their total international focus. As stated earlier, some of the studied publications have not been disseminated on a regular basis in recent years; in fact, some databases describe the publication frequency of some of these publications as irregular. Further, some of the studied publications are not accessible in full text format, which reduces the ability of scholars to cite the work of IB authors in business education. Some publications are available through website access; however, while password protected access or embargoing the current year is a standard practice, researchers outside of business education do not then have access to those publications, limiting the value of the research results to those in related disciplines. As shown in Table 2, five of the six journals are listed in Cabell’s Business Directory, which helps to increase visibility of the journals; however, a few of the periodicals have relatively high acceptance rates—perhaps because of receiving few submissions—which negatively affects the reputations of the journals.

Table 2

Percentage of IB Focus Articles in NBEA-Related Publications and Related Accessibility Information, 2001-2015

<u>Journal</u>	<u>Issues Per Year</u>	<u>Total No. of Articles</u>	<u>No. of IB Focus Articles</u>	<u>% of IB Focus Articles</u>	<u>Publication Indexed in Cabell’s?</u>	<u>Acceptance Rate</u>	<u>Accessible by Website or Database</u>	<u>Publication Full Text Availability /Dates</u>
<i>BEF</i>	4	406	57	14.0%	Yes	30%	Titles via Education Full Text	NA
<i>BETJ/NA</i>	1	84	1	1.2%	Yes	40%	No	NA
<i>BTE</i>								
<i>IJBE</i>	1	28	28	100.0%	Yes	44%	Website for Members only	
<i>JARBI</i>	3	54	0	0.0%	Yes	57%	ABI Inform Global	2011-2015
<i>JGBE</i>	1	58	58	100.0%	No	NA	ISBE website	2001-2015-16 except 2004
<i>JRBE/DP</i>	2	180	7	3.9%	Yes	30%	ERIC; Education Full Text	1970-2011
<i>EJ</i>								2013-2014
<i>NBEAY</i>	1	247	38	15.4%	NA	NA	WorldCat: Chapter titles of	

Totals	NA	1,057	189	17.9%*	most volumes
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Note. This weighted percentage reflects the total number of IB focus articles in the seven journals divided by the total number of articles in these journals (189/1,057).

Note. NA = Not applicable

Since only two of the studied publications have total focus on IB content, that IB content is unevenly distributed across the studied publications. This suggests that IB content has varying degrees of importance within the studied publications. Since international business is one of ten curriculum content areas in the NBEA standards, IB content should regularly appear in each of the studied publications. Further, that IB content should complement the NBEA international curriculum standards.

Research Question 3. Overall, what are the collaboration patterns used by authors of the IB focus articles? Table 3 shows that, overall, 50.8% of IB focus articles in the studied publications are sole authored. About 36.0% of the IB focus articles in the studied publications have two authors, and 9.5% of the IB focus articles in the studied publications have three authors.

Table 3

Collaboration of Authors on IB Focus Articles

Type of Authorship	BEF	BTEJ/ NABTE	IJBE	JGBE	JRBE/ DPEJ	NBEAY	Total Articles	% of Total
Sole	36	0	12	23	1	24	96	50.8%
Joint-2 authors	19	1	11	22	2	13	68	36.0%
Joint-3 authors	1	0	4	9	3	1	18	9.5%
Joint-4 authors	0	0	1	2	1	0	4	2.1%
Joint-5 authors	0	0	0	2	0	0	2	1.1%
Joint-6 or more authors (PCBEE)	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0.5%
Total	57	1	28	58	7	38	189	100.0%

About half of the published IB content articles have sole authorship, and half of the published IB content articles have multiple authorship. Most business education research collaborations involve two or, at most, three authors. The more sophisticated the research design is, the more countries the research incorporates, and the more divergent the collaborators' backgrounds are, the more likely that having four or more authors is reasonable and justifiable.

Research Question 4. For each publication, what are the collaboration patterns used by authors of the IB focus articles? Table 4 shows that sole authorship predominates in BEF and NBEAY, and joint authorship predominates in BTEJ, IJBE, JGBE, and JRBE. Generally speaking, the more scholarly and higher ranked the publication, the greater the likelihood that the article will have multiple authors; for example, JRBE, which is ranked number one by vital business educators (see Scott, Blaszczyński, Green, & Fagerheim, 2008), had only one sole authored IB focus article during the study time period.

Table 4

Collaboration of Authors on IB Focus Articles by Publication

Type of Authorship	BEF		BTEJ/ NABTE		IJBE		JGBE		JRBE/ DPEJ		NBEA	
		%		%		%		%		%		%
Sole	36	63.2%	0	0.0%	12	42.9%	23	39.7%	1	14.3%	24	63.2%
Joint-2 authors	19	33.3%	1	100%	11	39.3%	22	37.9%	2	28.6%	13	34.2%
Joint-3 authors	1	1.8%	0	0.0%	4	14.3%	9	15.5%	3	42.9%	1	2.6%
Joint-4 authors	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	3.6%	2	3.4%	1	14.3%	0	0.0%
Joint-5 authors	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	2	3.4%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Six or more authors (PCBEE)	1	1.8%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Total	57	100.1%	1	100%	28	100.1%	58	99.9%	7	100.1%	38	100.0%

Note. Some totals are not 100.0% due to rounding.

Perhaps the rate of sole authorship in BEF and NBEAY is higher than for the other studied publications because the articles are built around literature reviews rather than conducting original investigations. Joint authorship tends to be associated with more robust, complex, and investigative academic research work that appears in the top-ranked, refereed publications.

Research Question 5. Who are the most prolific IB focus article authors for each of the studied publications? Table 5 shows that for BEF, James Calvert Scott ranked position 1, and four other authors shared ranked positions 2 through 5. Table 5 also shows that for BTEJ, Robert Lupton and V. Wayne Klemin shared ranked positions 1 and 2; since there were no other IB focus articles in BTEJ, there are no other ranked positions. Table 5 additionally shows that for IJBE, Peter Slepcevic-Zach and Michaela Stock shared ranked positions 1 and 2. Table 5 further shows that for JGBE, Carol Blaszczynski ranked position 1. Table 5 also shows that for JRBE, James Calvert Scott ranked position 1. Table 5 finally shows that for NBEAY, Les Dlabay ranked position 1. Three authors of IB focus articles appeared in two publication ranking lists, and only one additional author appeared in four publication ranking lists.

Table 5

Rankings of Most Prolific Authors Across the Studied Publications

Author	BEF	BTEJ/NABTE	IJBE	JGBE	JRBE/DPEJ	NBEAY
Blaszczynski, Carol			3/4	1		
Cardon, Peter	2/3/4/5					2/3/4
Carnes, Lana	2/3/4/5					
Dlabay, Les	2/3/4/5					1
Glenn, Joanne M. Lozar	2/3/4/5					
Green, Diana J.					2/3	
Greimel-Fuhrmann, Bettina			5			
James, Marianne				2		
Klemin, Wayne V.		1/2				

Lupton, Robert		1/2							
Riebenbauer, Elisabeth				3/4					
Rosewarne, David D.								2/3	
Scott, James Calvert	1						3	1	2/3/4
Slepcevic-Zach, Peter				1/2					
Stock, Michaela				1/2					
Waldman, Lila							4/5		
Zhao, Jensen									2/3/4
Zhu, Pinfan							4/5		

Note. To be listed in this table, authors must have at least two articles in the publication except for the BTEJ/NABTE Review, which has only one co-authored IB focus article.

Note. Rankings with virgules or forward slashes (/) reflect individuals sharing the same rank.

Note. A maximum of five ranked authors are identified for each publication.

A relatively small number of authors of IB content articles are prolific. They tend to dominate the literature only because there are so few authors writing in this specialty area. Most of those writers tend to write for a few of the studied publications rather than writing for most or all of them although all of these authors are capable of writing for all of the studied publications. Many of these same authors have published non-IB content articles in these same publications. Since most authors are creatures of habit, they tend to publish where they have been successful in the past; where the publication outlets are widely known, regularly visible, and easily accessible; and where their institutional reward systems sanction publication.

Research Question 6. Which authors have published IB focus articles in at least three studied publications? Table 6 shows that eight IB focus article authors had articles published in three or more studied publications. Carol Blaszczyński, Peter Cardon, and James Calvert Scott authored for four different studied publications, and Les Dlabay, Carol Larson Jones, Robert Lupton, Margaret O'Connor, and Judee Timm authored for three different studied publications. In terms of adjusted authorship, which reflects the total number of articles divided by the total number of authors (Knight, Hult, & Bashaw, 2000), these eight authors are rank ordered in the following sequence: 1, Les Dlabay; 2-3, Margaret O'Connor and Judee Timm; 4-5, Peter Cardon and James Calvert Scott; 6, Carol Larson Jones; 7, Robert Lupton, and 8, Carol Blaszczyński. All eight of these authors published in JGBE, and seven published in NBEAY. Only one of these authors published in IJBE.

Table 6

Authors of IB Focus Articles in Three or More Studied Publications

Author	BEF	BTEJ/ NABTE	IJBE	JGBE	JRBE/ DPEJ	NBEAY	Total Articles	No. of Authors	% of Total Articles	Adjusted Author- ship
Blaszczyński, Carol	0	0	4	9	1	1	15	29	21.1%	0.52
Cardon, Peter	3	0	0	2	1	2	8	11	11.3%	0.73
Dlabay, Les	3	0	0	1	0	4	8	8	11.3%	1.00
Jones, Carol Larson	1	0	0	2	1	0	4	6	5.6%	0.67
Lupton, Robert	0	1	0	1	0	1	3	5	4.2%	0.60

O'Connor, Margaret	1	0	0	1	0	1	3	4	4.2%	0.75
Scott, James Calvert	14	0	0	5	6	2	27	37	38.0%	0.73
Timm, Judee	1	0	0	1	0	1	3	4	4.2%	0.75
Total	23	1	4	22	9	12	71	106	99.9%	

Note. The total is not 100.0% due to rounding.

IB focus articles were written by a modest number of authors and published in three or more of the studied publications. Most authors use a limited range of publication outlets for reasons already discussed. In contrast to the rankings in Table 5, the adjusted authorship ranking reflects the theoretically proportionate contribution of each author to a published work. Adjusted authorship values individual effort rather than collaborative effort. To be successful in an academic environment, most authors need to demonstrate the ability to author solely and collaboratively in accordance with their employing institution's reward system. Because institutional reward systems vary, it is not surprising that the listed authors have widely varying adjusted authorship measurements.

Research Question 7. How does an author become a prolific writer of IB focus articles? To better understand how an author of IB focus articles becomes prolific, the researcher interviewed in depth the author with the largest number of IB focus publications.

James Calvert Scott reported that prior to becoming an IB focus author, he had traveled extensively overseas and was naturally interested in other countries and their cultures. He serendipitously found himself as the right person in the right place at the right time. He was interested in international matters and working at a research-intensive doctoral-granting educational institution when educational institutions were under pressure to internationalize their curricula and student experiences. He spent 1989-1990 as a visiting fellow at a British polytechnic that later became a university and returned many times in the following years. About the same time, the American Assembly of Collegiate Schools of Business was emphasizing international business and offering international business summer courses at the University of South Carolina, which he attended in 1992. Additionally, he needed to develop both undergraduate and graduate international business communication courses to strengthen his college's reaccreditation application. About this time, he also attended Eastern Michigan University World College's workshops about international business communication. Such experiences gave him the wherewithal to develop the international business communication courses. With these experiences, he was appointed the college international business coordinator, which involved developing relationships with overseas colleagues and institutions and included international travel (personal communication, August 13, 2016).

During a number of short-term and long-term faculty exchanges overseas, he explored all possible opportunities and built extensive networks in the UK during a time when that country was becoming better integrated with the European Union. Although he perceived himself as no better prepared than other academics for international activities, perhaps he was better able than most to perceive possible collaborative opportunities and to develop them to fruition. Over time, he developed authoring relationships with overseas business faculty in a variety of departments, including accounting, management, and organizational behavior; a businessman; a linguistics faculty member who had business background at another British higher educational institution; and business librarians at his home and overseas host educational institutions. He also wrote with an overseas visiting professor at his home educational institution. These nine authoring relationships yielded numerous publications, including a number that appear in the studied publications. Additionally, he authored with a carefully selected doctoral student who had significant international experiences. Further, even when he traveled overseas for personal purposes, he endeavored to find ways to gather information that could be incorporated into future IB articles. Ultimately, his efforts resulted in more than two hundred

professional publications, including many with international content (J. C. Scott, personal communication, August 13, 2016).

In essence, to be a prolific author of IB focus articles, this case study suggests that a researcher needs to take advantage of every experience and to find a way to incorporate it in some way into another IB focus article. Networking widely and being receptive to a wide variety of authoring possibilities increases the likelihood of being a productive author.

Research Question 8. Where do the IB focus article authors reside? Table 7 shows that authors of IB focus articles residing in the Western region of NBEA predominate, accounting for 27.6% of the total number of IB focus articles, overrepresented proportionately to its population. While the North Central region of NBEA is represented proportionately to its population, the Eastern, Mountain-Plains, and Southern regions are underrepresented proportionately to their populations. Authors of IB focus articles without NBEA membership, primarily those outside of the United States, Canadian provinces, and their territories, typically reside in Europe and are SIEC-ISBE members.

Table 7

NBEA Regional Affiliation of Authors of IB Focus Articles

<u>Region</u>	<u>BEF</u>	<u>BTEJ/ NABTE</u>	<u>IJBE</u>	<u>JGBE</u>	<u>JRBE/ DPEJ</u>	<u>NBEAY</u>	<u>Total Articles</u>	<u>Total %</u>	<u>% of U.S. Population</u>
Eastern	13	0	0	3	0	4	20	6.6%	19.7%
Mountain- Plains	4	0	0	20	0	4	28	9.3%	14.7%
North Central	13	0	1	29	0	13	56	18.6%	19.2%
Southern	17	0	5	10	1	22	55	18.3%	25.6%
Western	25	2	6	27	12	11	83	27.6%	20.8%
Not Available*	6	0	37	11	5	0	59	19.6%	NA
Total	78	2	49	100	18	54	301	100.0%	100.0%

Note. *Regional affiliation applies to NBEA members only.

Note. NA = Not Applicable.

Note. 2015 US population statistics from the United States Census Bureau website were used to calculate the regional population percentages.

Although all regions of NBEA had authors of IB focus articles, the overall distribution was not proportionate to population. Authors residing in the Western region of NBEA contributed a disproportionate number of articles. Many of these authors reside in the coastal states of California and Washington, which tend to have progressive orientations and extensive import/export links. Authors residing in the North Central region of NBEA contributed proportionately to their population. A number of authors from this region tend to reside in the industrial heartland states such as Illinois. Why authors residing in the Eastern, Mountain-Plains, and Southern regions of NBEA are underrepresented as authors of IB focus articles is puzzling, especially when many of the Eastern and Southern states have coastline and import-export links. Authors who maintain SIEC-ISBE membership rather than NBEA membership tend to reside in European countries and typically publish in the totally globally focused publications, IJBE and JGBE.

Research Question 9. What countries have been the focal points of IB articles within the business education literature? Table 8 shows that a wide variety of countries have been the focal points of IB articles within the business education portion of the IB literature. Countries found on the continents of Asia, Australia, and Europe tend to have more coverage than countries found on the continents of Africa, North America outside of the United States, and South America.

Table 8

Country of Focus of IB Articles

<u>Country(ies) of Focus</u>	<u>BEF</u>	<u>BTEJ/NABTE</u>	<u>IJBE</u>	<u>JGBE</u>	<u>JRBE/DPEJ</u>	<u>Total</u>
Arabic Nations	0	0	0	1	0	1
Argentina	0	0	0	0	2	2
Australia	0	0	0	0	3	3
Austria	0	0	7	0	0	7
Czech Republic	0	0	0	1	0	1
China	4	0	0	7	2	13
Ethiopia	0	0	0	1	0	1
Finland	0	0	2	0	0	2
France	1	0	0	0	0	1
Germany	1	0	2	4	0	7
Hungary	0	0	1	0	0	1
India	0	0	0	0	3	3
Japan	0	0	0	0	3	3
Lithuania	0	0	1	0	0	1
Malaysia	0	0	0	0	2	2
Poland	0	1	0	0	0	1
Russia	2	0	0	0	0	2
Slovak Republic	0	1	0	1	0	2
Sweden	0	0	1	0	0	1
Thailand	0	0	0	1	0	1
Turkey	0	0	1	0	0	1
Ukraine	0	0	0	1	0	1
United Kingdom	2	0	0	1	5	8
United States	0	1	30	11	3	45
Multiple	47	0	13	40	0	100
Total	57	3	58	69	23	210

Note. NBEA Yearbook articles are excluded from this table because much of their content applies to most or all of the countries.

While many different countries have been the focal points of IB articles within the business education literature, some continents have received more coverage than others. While, overall, Asian, Australian, and European countries are reasonably represented, a few countries such as France and Italy are underrepresented. Countries on the continents of North America except for the United States, South America, and Africa are seriously underrepresented. Curiously, no author has significantly addressed either Canada or Mexico, which would seem to be a natural fit for U.S.-based authors. It appears that sometimes authors write about their native or nearby countries, perhaps because they feel more confident addressing them. As the business education portion of the IB literature matures, its focus should become less parochial and more truly global.

Research Question 10. Overall, what is the status of the business education portion of the IB literature? The status could be characterized as being in the early stages of development. Although IB has been a

curriculum content area for many years, it has not been fully embraced by most business educators and by business teacher educators and business teacher education programs have not been adequately preparing teachers for this curriculum area. Because the literature is in the early developmental stages, its direction and vitality are tentative. Under certain circumstances, the literature could stabilize and flourish, or it could fragment and disappear. Disappearing could be related not only to the paucity of international content background of most practicing business educators but also to the fact that many current IB writers and leaders are at or near retirement age.

What should be done to address the literature issue so that IB can succeed within business education and develop toward maturity? Basically, necessary actions fall into the hands of NBEA and SIEC-ISBE members to fully and actively embrace IB, develop appropriate related teacher training programs, provide relevant literature to update and train practicing and potential business educators, and develop future teachers, leaders, and researchers so that IB within business education becomes fully accepted and respected.

Also, the IB publications within the business education literature need to be strengthened in the following ways: (a) have consistently knowledgeable and skilled editors; (b) have competent and time-sensitive reviewers; (c) have workable publication processes to obtain, review, revise, edit, and finalize the manuscripts for printing; (d) have the publications printed and distributed in a timely manner; and (e) have the publications listed in the appropriate directories, such as Cabell's, and indices, such as Business Source Premier, so the publications become better known and more widely recognized. Business education leaders need to work on increasing the visibility of business education publications so they are known, used, and cited. Without visibility, authors of business education publications will have little or no impact since others will not know this body of literature exists.

Conclusions

Based upon the findings of the study, these conclusions are drawn:

1. While IB focus articles are diminishing in five of the studied publications, they are increasing in IJBE. Perhaps the processes of IJBE could serve as a model for the other studied journals to follow to increase their viability and timeliness of production. Unless interventions are taken soon, the needed literature may disappear (Blaszczynski & Scott, 2003).
2. IB focus articles should not be limited to the globally focused journals, IJBE and JGBE.
3. The rate of sole authorship in the studied journals is in line with that of other refereed publications. CITE
4. The IB literature is dominated by a handful of IB scholars who have published IB content in three or four of the studied publications.
5. Prolific authors are able to use most of their experiences (professional travel, developmental leaves, and teaching abroad) to generate IB focus articles. The ability to network widely and to be open to opportunities that arise is critical to becoming a prolific IB author.
6. Authors living in the Western Region of NBEA have dominated the IB focus literature and are overrepresented proportionately to their percentage of the US population.
7. Many countries have been the focal points of the IB articles within the business education literature. Countries in Asia, Australia, and Europe appear to have more adequate coverage than countries in Africa, North America (outside of the United States), and South America.

Recommendations

Based upon the conclusions, the following recommendations are made:

1. Steps should be taken to increase the number of IB focus articles in BEF, BTEF, JGBE, JRBE, and NBEAY. Perhaps these periodicals could learn from the processes used by IJBE, which have

increased the number of articles per volume and consistently disseminated those issues in a timely manner.

2. Efforts should be made to encourage IB colleagues to publish widely in a variety of business education publications. Perhaps NBEA and ISBE leaders could (a) provide sessions to assist business educators in developing IB knowledge and (b) provide members with additional networking opportunities that would foster research collaborations.
3. Business education department/division leaders could encourage faculty to participate in sabbatical leaves abroad, travel abroad to increase international experiences, and fund conference attendance abroad to deepen IB and intercultural knowledge and experiences.
4. These strategies could lead to developing connections that could foster working relationships that could potentially lead to publications. Further, business teacher education programs should include much more international business content and methodology to increase the teaching breadth and depth and marketability of their students.
5. Ideally, members from all NBEA regions should be encouraged to write IB focus articles to increase the depth and breadth of the IB content area in business education publications.
6. IB authors and prospective IB authors should be encouraged to write about countries on the continents that have been underrepresented in the business education literature: Africa, North American with the exception of the United States, and South America.
7. Editors and other leaders of the organizations that produce the publications studied in this investigation should ensure that their publications (a) are produced in a timely manner to aid business education colleagues in upgrading their understanding about teaching content and methodology and in their pursuit of tenure and promotion, (b) are indexed by appropriate directories, and (c) are accessible in leading databases. Editorial boards need to weigh carefully the tradeoffs between nurturing a new or revitalized publication and reducing its reputation with high acceptance rates. Perhaps development of business educators in the IB content area could assist in more submissions, which in turn could reduce the acceptance rates and increase the reputational rankings or ratings of those business education journals, especially among those in allied disciplines.

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Modeling the Standards for Online Student Performance

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Abstract

This research examines the effect of modeling the expected behaviors on student learning. Western Web University students complete their accelerated, online degrees programs in order to enter various fields of the fast-growing segments of the job market or develop their existing careers. While the program's content is relevant, some gaps in pedagogy and student-faculty engagement may ultimately hinder student success. There are concerns that instructional practices of online faculty may not always mirror the standards applied to everyday activities in the classroom and, therefore, jeopardize achievement of student learning outcomes. This study identified weaknesses in instruction and the strengths found in the engaged online classroom and analyzed their effects on students' learning. Best practices are highlighted for future implementation.

Introduction

In traditional classrooms and in online environment, instructors are viewed as educational leaders who transform the minds of their students, in addition to delivering the course content. According to Maxwell (1998), "A leader is one who knows the way, goes the way, and shows the way" (p. 4). There are basically two options when it comes to impacting student learning. We can adopt the "do as I say" method, or we can grow our students by modeling the expected behaviors.

The purpose of this study is to review the expectations of faculty as adopted by Western Web University and to expand upon the concepts by applying the standards to the everyday activity in the classroom. The virtual world challenges the relationship between sender and receiver. The faculty member that provides consistent interaction in the appropriate format becomes a trusted leader and a mentor.

Problem Statement

Online learning and teaching offers the most innovative ways to engage with students. Often, in online classes, instructors communicate with students on a more regular basis than in traditional, face-to-face classrooms. The Western Web faculty members reach out to online students at least three times a week through discussions. This is in addition to their feedback to students' assignments, weekly postings of instructor guidance and announcements, and individual email exchanges.

Instructor interaction during the course of the class is the catalyst to relationship building and overall student retention. It is unclear, however, how the aesthetic behavior of the instructor plays into fulfilling the critical thinking and other scholarly expectations of students.

Significance for Higher Education Mission and Core Values

There are specific, structured expectations of students and the work they produce during the course of studies. In the online platform, the virtual instructor is the primary contact and role model for defining and demonstrating the expectations. If the instructor is not modeling the expectation, will this contribute to the behaviors of students and the quality of their work? Research conducted by Kim and

Sax (2011) shows that faculty-student interactions impact the student learning experience and they have positive effects on students' educational aspirations. These researchers tested the connection between faculty performance and student learning in the online environment; and this study identified critical gaps that may lower student achievement.

Throughout the learning journey of the student, it is the role of the instructor to model the template of expectation. Growing the critical thinking process is accomplished through feedback, example setting, and the utilization of all available classroom tools. When properly implemented, it is expected that the student will develop a sophisticated desire to grow and explore the theories and concepts. The findings of this study will inform recommendations for practice and assist in the design of the Model for implementation in online teaching, with the special focus on developing critical thinking and analytical skills in students, preparing them to become effective decision-makers – both in business and in their personal lives, be competitive in this highly demanding marketplace, and successful in all aspects of life – academic, professional, and personal.

Significance for Student Learning Outcomes

This study predominantly addresses Learning Outcomes that are common for institutions of higher education and related to:

1. Developing skills and abilities that provide for lifelong learning by helping students to develop better engagement and communication needed for stimulation of lifelong learning and intelligence. This will help them become more successful in academic, professional, and social environments, as well as personal relationships.
2. Demonstrating the ability to read and to think critically and creatively
3. Demonstrating the ability to communicate effectively in speech and in writing.
4. Demonstrating the ability to communicate effectively through the use of technology.

Theoretical Foundation

A theoretical foundation for this study is based on Dynamic Learning, a relatively new idea that underscores purposeful learning. It suggests that successful transfer of knowledge occurs through the shared responsibility for learning between instructors and students (Hussein, 2013). What instructional methods do we utilize to make the online students learning purposeful and meaningful? Do these methods always work? If yes, how do we know that learning actually occurs? If not, why not? These are some of the questions that practitioners keep asking on a daily basis. These practical questions also guide this study.

In traditional teaching, instructors “pour” information into students' minds hoping that learning somehow occurs (Hussein, 2013). For the Dynamic Learning to be successful, two conditions must be met. First, it requires instructor-student engagement. Second, it calls for students' efforts to gain knowledge. In other words, successful transfer of knowledge occurs through the shared responsibility for learning between instructors and students.

This study is also grounded in Holmberg's (1983) Communication Theory that highlights the value of personal interactions between instructors and learners in distance (online) education. Among the seven postulates of this Theory, one illuminates the idea that “feelings of personal relation between the teaching and learning parties promote study pleasure and motivation” (Holmberg, 1983, p. 2).

Review of the Literature

The question of quality in higher education is of paramount importance. O'Neill and Palmer (2004) defined quality in higher education as “the difference between what a student expects to receive and

his/her perception of actual delivery” (p. 42). This concept is consistent with the consumer-driven enterprise, in which students’ satisfaction with their learning experience becomes an important consideration, especially given the enrollment growth of online learners and the level of competition among the institutions of online learning. Institutions of higher learning increasingly recognize the value of being responsive to the constituents they serve. This is evident in institutional strategies aimed at student retention in this progressively competitive market of online learning.

A foundation to understanding the interactions between learners and their environment was laid by Tinto (1992; 1994) who originally advocated for collaborative learning and building learning communities that impacted student retention and success. A decade later, realizing a disconnect between theory, research and practice, Tinto (2006) moved his attention from theory to action by focusing his work on the conditions within institutions rather than on the attributes of students themselves, their experiences or private lives; as well as student attributes, such as personality, drive, and motivation. Tinto and Pusser (2006) highlighted the “aspects of institutional environment that shape student success and are within the capacity of institutions to change” (p. 5), including institutional commitment and faculty expectations, support, feedback, and engagement.

Other researchers (Bean & Metzger, 1985; Umbach & Wawrzynski, 2005) were particularly attentive to the effects of faculty on student learning. According to Micari & Pazos (2012), “The relationship between college students and their teachers has been shown repeatedly to have an impact on the quality of students experience and learning” (p. 41).

Research shows that the positive effects of faculty-student relationship are seen in student learning outcomes, post college career satisfaction, an increase in cognitive skills, and an overall satisfaction with their college experience (Kim & Sax, 2011). University standards define specific expectations of faculty and in turn faculty has specific expectations of student performance as defined by University protocols. The question that lingers: Does the aesthetic presentation and behaviors of faculty impact the quality of student response and presentation?

Being an engaged instructor and a leader in the classroom is very different from moving through the course as a facilitator. Gueldenzoph Snyder, L. and Snyder, M. (2008), go a few steps further and offer specific strategies for integrating critical thinking skills in the classroom and modeling the behavior for students. These authors suggest that instructors should “think of their students not as receivers of information, but as users of information” (p. 97) and that instilling critical thinking skills in students should be the goal for all instructors.

Bailie (2014) defined three primary constructs related to the administrative expectations of faculty in the online format. These expectations include: communication, presence/engagement, and responsiveness/timeliness as important aspects of student success. While there is extensive research in the areas of faculty-student relationship outcomes, there is limited discussion on the content presentation, behaviors of the instructor, and the impact on aesthetic development of the student, or if it even matters.

According to David and Glore (2010), design and aesthetics are also important criteria in the digital age of visual imagery and the deployment of the online classroom. The deliverance of a balanced platform of learning provides the student with the model necessary to excel in their learning journey. Style and substance should be partners in the foundation of the classroom. The challenges of the online classroom along with the technical deployment sometimes distract from the learning goal (Lorenzo, 2010).

There is little research discussing the relationship of scholarly and professional decorum exhibited by the instructor and the response by the student. Faculty owns their presence in the classroom and should model the online behavior standards, professional and scholarly interaction, and ethical protocols. Does the presentation behavior of faculty impact the response of the student?

Research Methodology

Method of Inquiry

This mixed-method research utilizes both qualitative and quantitative techniques. The purpose of the study was achieved through the review of literature and data analysis. The literature review findings were triangulated with the appropriate documentation, such as Western Web academic policies and the rubrics used as an assessment tool in faculty performance evaluation during the annual peer-review process. Further, researchers analyzed the faculty responses to the questions posed in the three-day online Faculty Forum on the subject “Dynamic Learning Approach” that took place between September 15 and 17, 2015. The Forum was conducted in a manner similar to the traditional focus group, in which all participants had a chance to answer the questions asked by moderators.

Researchers looked at some of the faculty behaviors, their actions in the online classroom, and discussed the message they may be sending to the student. Prior research conducted in the traditional, face-to-face environment (Kim & Sax, 2011; Micari & Pazos, 2012) showed that faculty-student relationship impacted the student learning experience. The face-to-face method includes social interaction with the student as defined by their specific learning style. Real-time interaction through visual, audio, or kinesthetic alignment is easily achieved in the traditional setting and also provides the ability to realign teaching methods as best suited to the immediate needs of the student. The online dynamic may or may not provide that same opportunity for relationship building and supportive learning based on learning style, especially in the asynchronous platform. We explored the evidence of whether the online faculty maintained the faculty-student relationship. Testing the assertion of whether this relationship impacts student learning in the online environment is being recommended for future research.

The review of faculty perceptions of the most effective instructional methods in online environment that emerged from the three-day Faculty Forum allowed us to identify common themes in instructional practices and classify them. To explore the toxic effects of low faculty-student engagement in the classroom on student success, these researchers attempted to address these areas crucial to overall online teaching and learning:

- (a) Pedagogical – for enhancements for instructional strategies
- (b) Managerial – for enhancement of administrative issues and curriculum delivery
- (c) Social – for furthering engagement and achieving strong faculty-student interactions

The expectation was that there is a strong connection between the faculty actions and the quality of participation by the students and, hence, the quality of their learning.

Data Analysis

The data collected from the Faculty Forum postings were further analyzed and compared to the actual practices of faculty in the classroom. The identified themes were triangulated with the assessments resulted from “visiting” the online classrooms. Researchers reviewed discussion responses, gradebook feedback, announcements, instructor guidance, and evaluated the “appearance” of the course content

and the time spent by the faculty and students in the classroom. The review was limited to classes taught within one program (Organizational Behavior and Leadership) in the School of Business. A random sample of classes to visit was drawn from those being only taught by associate faculty. While the content of all courses is standardized, the methods of instructions utilized by associate faculty present a wider variety of techniques, which adds to richness of the data. However, sampling the courses taught exclusively by associate faculty presents another limitation for this study in terms of our ability to generalize the findings.

There are five specific constructs that faculty must exhibit to demonstrate high performance. Student-centered learning is given much attention during the Western Web University's annual peer-review process. The peer-review rubric includes five categories: (a) fostering critical thinking; (b) instructive feedback to students; (c) communicate high expectations; (d) establishing relationships; and (e) sharing instructor expertise (Anonymous, 2012).

Each of the rubric's categories has a place in learning and teaching and should be appropriately implemented in the classroom and help achieve successful student outcomes. Without these important actions, the student has no reason to strive for excellence academically or prepare for successful employment. Most businesses are successful because they developed trust among all stakeholders – their employees, customers, and suppliers. Because building trust is valued so highly in the world of business, college instructors, as Huddy (2015) concludes, “should model and utilize techniques to build trust within the classroom to prepare students to emulate this behavior when they are in the workplace” (p. 96).

The study utilized these five criteria (or, factors) of faculty evaluation as variables in Phase 1, the quantitative part of this study. The factors used in this study represent patterns of faculty behavior regarding their involvement with students and their perceptions of modeling behavior in the classroom. Because of the size of the sample, we elected to use these factors as the basis for creating scales for the analyses in Phase One.

Research Design

The design of this study follows the Critical Theory that evaluates and critiques society and culture. Usually applying knowledge from the social sciences and the humanities, critical theory is often associated with quantitative research. Critical theory's focus on questions of whose experience is measured and who does the measuring was taken into account when conducting this study. For brevity, the main points of this research design are summarized below:

Instrument Design: Documentation study, assessment, and faculty forum (focus group).

Sample Size Studied: Documents (course guides, syllabi, grading rubrics, assessment templates and students' assignments) for 32 randomly selected courses taught within undergraduate business programs at Western Web University.

Total Numbers: There were 30 participants in the Faculty Forum of September 15, 2015, including 27 respondents and 3 moderators out of 286 invited faculty members.

Participation rate: 10.4 % (30/286).

Findings of the Study

We conducted the study in two phases. The first phase involved an exploratory factor analysis (EFA) based on five faculty performance factors. In the second phase, we used three categories of items that

addressed faculty-student engagement and promoted the concept of Dynamic Learning: pedagogical, managerial, and social.

Phase 1: Exploratory Factor Analysis

The data for this study were obtained from the 2015 peer review evaluations of the part-time faculty teaching at the School of Business at Western Web University. This evaluation process was based on application of the Peer-Review Rubric internally-developed at Western Web University. The assessment criteria on the rubric embrace five factors (or, assessment areas) used in our exploratory factor analyses. These factors, actually, find common roots in the Chickering and Gamson's (1987) seven principles of good practice in undergraduate education. Crews and Wilkinson (2015) underscore effectiveness of these seven principles in evaluation of quality teaching.

We, also, maintain that the below five factors of the Peer Review Rubric (Anonymous, 2012) – like the Chickering and Gamson's (1987) seven principles of good practice – lay the foundation for modeling the standards of performance by faculty, as they are grounded in these values:

1. Fostering Critical Thinking (CT) – “inspiring in students a quest for further knowledge”.
2. Instructive Feedback to Students (F) – “providing students with specific and challenging feedback to expend their learning”.
3. High Expectations (HE) – “defining and communicating clear expectations, encouraging active engagement”.
4. Establishing Relationships (ER) – “promoting a collaborative community of learners through active relationships”.
5. Instructor Expertise (SE) – “encourage student comprehension and application through the sharing of instructor knowledge and experiences” (Anonymous, 2012, pp. 2-10).

We applied quantitative measures to the exploratory factor analyses (EFA) of the peer review Rubric items, which resulted in interesting observations. The sample of 32 part-time faculty members represents 3.9% of the population of 808 part-time faculty at the School of Business at Western Web University. The total number of 869 faculty teaching at the School of Business in 2015 includes 808 (92.9%) part-time instructors. On average, each part-time faculty member had a 1.62 course-load in School of Business; and 58.78 is an average number of courses taught at Western Web.

As Table 1 shows, the sample includes 14 (43.7%) part-time instructors with the Master's degree. Eighteen (56.3%) instructors in the sample hold a Doctorate – this fact alone speaks to the instructional quality of part-time faculty at the School of Business. As illustrated in Table 2, out of 64 reviewed courses, 46 (71.8%) were undergraduate and 18 (28.2%) – graduate level courses. As a side note, only instructors with doctorate degrees are assigned to teach graduate-level courses. Yet, a majority of courses taught by the Ph.D. holders were the undergraduate-level courses. The question that arises and, perhaps, is worth further exploration, is why the Doctoral faculty select to teach the 5-week, undergraduate-level courses? Another question that would be fair to ask is whether undergraduate students' learning improves when instructors with Doctoral degrees teach their courses?

Table 1

Part-Time Faculty Education Characteristics

<u>Education</u>	Sample		All part-time faculty	
	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
Master's	14	43.7		
Ph.D.	18	56.3		
Total	32	3.9	808	

Note: The total number of 869 faculty members teaching in the School of Business in 2015 includes 808 (92.9%) part-time instructors.

Table 2

Courses Taught in 2015 by the Sample Part-time Faculty

	Courses Reviewed	
	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
Undergraduate	46	71.7%
Graduate	18	56.3%
	64	

Note: The Sample of part-time faculty consists of 14 instructors with Master's degrees and 18 instructors who hold a Doctorate.

With regard to the quality of teaching, these researchers found out that the overall average score of 2.67 described the associate faculty performance. The scores were assigned using the 5-score Likert scale – from 0 to 4, with the scale described as follows:

- 4 - Distinguished
- 3 - Proficient
- 2 - Developing
- 1 - Introductory/Beginning
- 0 - Not Observed

Table 3 contains the comparison numbers for associate faculty's assessment of teaching in all five evaluation criteria (factors). These numbers demonstrate that the faculty holding the Master's degrees scored higher – in each category – than their colleagues with the doctorate and higher than the sample average. Further tests of differences and associations need to be conducted in order to determine if any statistically significant differences are present for all five scales. These researchers will conduct these tests separately, as an extension of the current study, with the purpose to answer the question whether the relationship exists between faculty members' level of education and the five scales (Rubric evaluation items).

Table 3

Faculty Performance Scores, Teaching Load, and Experience (Courses Taught) Comparison by Education

<u>Participants</u>	<u>Load</u>	<u>Taught</u>	<u>CT</u>	<u>IF</u>	<u>HE</u>	<u>ER</u>	<u>SE</u>	<u>Average</u>
All average	1.62	58.78	2.75	2.34	2.69	2.81	2.75	2.67
Ph.D. average	1.61	53	2.50	2.17	2.56	2.78	2.67	2.53
Master's average	1.64	66	3.07	2.57	2.86	2.86	2.86	2.84

Note: Scale items coded with two capital letters represent the following factors used in the peer-review evaluation Rubric (Anonymous, 2012):

1. Fostering Critical Thinking (CT) – “inspiring in students a quest for further knowledge”.
2. Instructive Feedback to Students (IF) – “providing students with specific and challenging feedback to expend their learning”.
3. High Expectations (HE) – “defining and communicating clear expectations, encouraging active engagement”.
4. Establishing Relationships (ER) – “promoting a collaborative community of learners through active relationships”.
5. Instructor Expertise (SE) – “encouraging student comprehension and application through the sharing of instructor knowledge and experiences” (pp. 2-10).

Fostering Critical Thinking. Scores for Fostering Critical Thinking (3.07 on the scale from 0 to 4) appear to be the highest among the part-time faculty with the Master's degrees. At the same time, the critical thinking score is the fourth highest (or, the second lowest) among the doctoral faculty. Given the University's commitment to nurturing critical thinking in their students, these results should inspire future research into answering the question why such differences exist and how they could be addressed in practice.

Instructive Feedback to Students. Both groups of associate faculty (Master's degree holders and those with the Ph.D.) showed the lowest results in this area, with the scores of 2.57 and 2.17 (on the scale from 0 to 4), respectively. Instructive feedback is one of the ways for the faculty to engage with students and to model the standards of student performance. This is in spite of the fact that the faculty overwhelmingly supported the idea of faculty-student engagement during their participation in the Faculty Forum (Western Web, 2015b).

On one hand, the low score for “Instructive Feedback” seems to be contrary to the principles of quality in higher education and assertions that an educational leader is the one who “knows the way, goes the way, and shows the way” (Maxwell, 1998, p. 4). These low scores for Instructive Feedback to Students are in agreement with the low ratings given to the “Give Prompt Feedback” requirement found in the survey conducted by Crews and Wilkinson (2015). These researchers conclude that “conducting quality reviews of their online courses” (p. 72) may bridge the gap between the general prescriptions by Quality Matter (QM) for good teaching and specific standards of quality, which should embrace both pedagogy and online course design. The findings of this study also support conclusions made by Joseph, Yakhou, and Stone (2005) that students' expectations of faculty and institutional expectations of faculty do not always align with the faculty behavior patterns as expected by Administrators. That brings us to the question of what is quality in Higher Education. This is yet another query for the future researchers to tackle.

High Expectations. While faculty's influences on student learning and development are expected in each of the five peer review evaluation criteria (factors), communicating clear expectations and encouraging active engagement make all the difference in developing students' cognitive skills and fostering their creativity and innovation (Kim and Sax, 2011). In the area of High Expectations, instructors holding Master's degrees scored at 2.86 – higher than the faculty members with the Doctorate (2.56) and better than the overall average (2.69) in this category.

Establishing Relationships. Promoting a collaborative community of learners through active relationships inspire students' quest for further knowledge (Western Web, 2012). This research revealed relatively high scores in the category of "establishing relationships) at 2.86 and 2.78 for the instructors holding the Master's and the Ph.D. degrees, respectively. As captures in Table 3, an average score for this assessment category was 2.81 points. Practicing active faculty-student engagement and applying the concepts of Dynamic Learning, may produce better results in establishing positive relationships and help faculty members grow as "socializing agents" (Kim and Sax, 2011) who develop students both academically and professionally.

Instructor Expertise. The score for sharing Instructor Expertise (2.86) among instructors with the Master's degrees was found to be the highest, as compared to 2.67 (Doctoral faculty) and 2.75 (overall average). Future research may shed some light on possible reasons for such outcomes. In a subsequent study in the future, these investigators plan to conduct the ANOVA calculations. As a minimum, such testing may reveal whether statistically significant differences exist in support of the peer-review Rubric's premise that sharing instructor knowledge and experiences encourage student comprehension (Western Web, 2012).

Phase 2. Faculty Forum Summary of Findings

The data collected during the Faculty Forum were further analyzed and compared with the actual practices of the faculty in the classroom. Three common themes in instructional practices were classified as: pedagogical, managerial, and social.

Pedagogical

Throughout a three-day online faculty forum, reoccurring dialog defined the process of 'pouring' knowledge through lecture and written material as no longer an applicable manner of content delivery. The virtual world of today's student dictates a learner-centered approach through exploration and application of purposeful content pertinent to the career path and needs path of the receiver. Most faculty members agreed that while theory and historical matter shapes the behaviors and is important to understand, it is equally important to partner with the student in a give and take knowledge exchange of the content as relevant to current and future organizational challenges.

Managerial

Forum responders recognize that the student-centered learning approach requires a change of mindset and behavior within the online classroom. Formalized structure provides a proper level of accountability; however, it also has a tendency to stifle creativity given the inability to change-up the learning process. Innovative design and creative input challenges the abilities and desires of the designer, instructor, and the student. Forum discussion indicated a desire to be able to manipulate the delivery of content to suit the needs of the learners. The concept of moving the online classroom from

static to fluid corresponds with the challenges students face in the real world. Meaningful application allows the student to experiment with possible solutions for organizational problems. Faculty agreed that problem solving skills are invaluable to the manager within the global workplace and requires a fluid application for exploration.

Social

The desire and propensity to share real-life experiences and purposeful knowledge with the student was a common theme during the forum. Faculty attributed their greatest success to the times when they were able to connect to the student and generate recurring dialog and interaction. This bonding process requires time and energy and the identification of commonalities and needs of the learner. Most participants believe that the enhancement and fluid actions of the classroom will provide an even broader platform for relationship building and knowledge sharing. A new interactive approach will set the stage for new engagement practices and permission for the student to explore and apply rather than read and dump.

Faculty Forum Conclusions

The engaged instructor recognizes the value of relationship building and personalized interaction with the learner as a catalyst for successful outcomes and confidence building efficacies. Ever seeking a platform for enhanced learning experiences, the members of the forum continually explore new and evolving learning systems that keep pace with the real and virtual world the student encounters. This is in accord with David and Glore (2010) who suggest that design and aesthetics play a significant role in the perception and urgency of content. When substance and style are delivered in a balanced format, the receiver ascertains the expectation first hand and will likely use the example as a template for presentation development.

Connecting to the online student requires a balance of behaviors and instructional practices - this is another important outcome of the Faculty Forum discussions. Experts in online teaching and learning (Baile, 2014; Joyner, Fuller, Holzweiss, Henderson, and Young, 2014) also agree that presence, awareness, communication, timeliness, and engagement facilitate an open and explorative relationship between instructor and student - thereby, encouraging and developing the learning process.

The Faculty Forum participants recognize that static content is no longer purposeful as learning is dynamic. The designers, the instructors and students alike must work in harmony to develop the most programmatic structure for successful exploration and application of pertinent content and supposition. This idea support the premise illuminated earlier by Gueldenzoph Snyder and Snyder (2008) that several factors contribute to effective delivery of knowledge and developing critical thinking skills in students, which include the “application of the content, the process of learning, and methods of assessment” (p. 91). Active faculty-student engagement in the classroom and instructors’ modeling the standards of behavior that encourages critical thinking are also vital to the process of engaging students in active learning and greater success – academic, personal, and professional.

Potential Impact on the Field of Inquiry

There are many dimensions to facilitating successful outcomes in the online classroom. This study highlights the importance of being the role model in the learning process. Western Web University has graduated tens of thousands of students. Therefore, findings and recommendations from this study may

be used for informed decision-making in other schools across the country. It is these researchers' hope that the findings of this study will help online colleges and universities in adjusting their curriculum and assessment practices for the purpose of improving student success and meeting the expectations of employers, other stakeholders, and the larger community.

Implications for Practice

The findings of the study may be useful to online universities to:

- make informed decisions
- improve their business curriculum
- develop the skills and competencies that students need in order to enter the highly competitive job market
- motivate collaboration of faculty, administrators, and student advisors for the benefit of students' success.

Conclusion

Several research studies examined an impact that modeling of the expected behaviors by the faculty members has on students' learning. As we see from the best practices in online teaching in recent years, a real "paradigm shift" is happening in online teaching and learning right now. What seemed to be revolutionary just a couple of years ago - moving from a static lecture and "pouring" information into students' minds (and hoping that learning somehow occurs) - to facilitating active, project-based, meaningful and engaged learning - has now become a norm.

Today, we see a distinct interest in online classes that offer the most innovative ways to engage with students. For online learning to be successful, two conditions must be met. First, it requires instructor-student engagement. Second, it calls for students' efforts to gain knowledge. In other words, successful transfer of knowledge occurs through the shared responsibility for learning between instructors and students. These researchers hope that their colleagues will find a few takeaways that influence instructional policy, help energize faculty actions, and empower our students to grow and explore.

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