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ABSTRACT

This document contains 21 presentations from a conference on business and marketing education. The following papers are included: "Business and Marketing Education: In Tune with the Times" (Clarice P. Brantley); "Portfolio Assessment--A Sure Winner" (Ann Bullock); "The Effect of the Year 2000 on Web Page Maintenance" (Linda Carr); "School-to-Career: A Sure Winner" (Mary M. Cauley); "Social Security and the Year 2000" (Rosemarie R. Downie); "A Spin on Your Images" (Mary W. Evans); "Winning Teaching Strategies" (Lillian R. Greathouse); "Gender Differences in Nonverbal Communication" (M. A. Griffin, D. McGahee, J. Slate); "Improving Marketing Education via Information Management" (Ellis A. Hayes); "Computer-Based Classroom Communications in the 21st Century" (Hilary O. Iwu); "The ABCs of Electronic Presentations" (Dorothy L. R. Jones); "The Relationship between Employee Productivity and Tele-Working: Implications for Workforce 2000" (Ewuuk Lomo-David); "Mastering Business Etiquette: Holistic Active-Learning Projects for the Graduate Business Communication Course" (Mary Jean Lush); "Jobready: Moving into the 21st Century" (Loretta Martin); "Cutting-Edge Business Communication Technologies" (Beryl C. McEwen); "Computerized Skills Assessment for Business: The Importance of Standardized Hiring Procedures" (Lori Reed); Cross-Cultural Communication in the Classroom in the New Millennium" (Evette Richardson); "Gender Discrimination in Computer Technology from the Cradle to Career Choice" (Brenda Sheets); "Curriculum Development for the Web" (Bonnie Skelton); "Teaching and Learning Styles of Community College Business Instructors and Their Students: Relationship to

Student Performance and Instructor Evaluations" (Shelia Tucker); and "Streaming Audio/Video, MS Camcorder, and Distance Education: A Winning Combination" (Ivan Wallace). (MN)

Making the Year 2000 A Sure Winner

Proceedings of the 16th Annual Atlantic Coast Business and Marketing Education Conference

Raleigh, North Carolina
February 19-20, 1999

Proceedings of the Sixteenth Annual Atlantic Coast Business and Marketing Education Conference

February 19-20, 1999

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Business and Marketing Education: In Tune With The Times

Clarice P. Brantley

Escambia County School System

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Incorporating music into the business and marketing education programs may revive lapsed academic standards and help prepare American students, particularly business and marketing education enrollees, to compete globally. Music, a universal communication tool, may be used as a foundation to:

motivate many students who might not otherwise be interested in academic achievement

increase speech fluency

develop spatial reasoning

boost human brain power

help students organize the way they think

create relevancy between course content and careers

tune the curriculum with historical and global links

develop team work

Just as listening to your favorite music may make you feel better, research shows that playing music in the classroom can positively affect student achievement. A new book, "The Mozart Effect," by Don Campbell, has condensed the world's research on all the beneficial effects of certain types of music.

The College Entrance Exam Board Service in 1996 conducted a study on all students taking their SAT exams. Students who sang or played a musical instrument scored 51 points higher on the verbal portion of the test and an average of 39 points higher on the quantitative section. Major corporations such as Shell, IBM, and Dupont, plus hundreds of schools and universities use music to reduce learning time and to increase retention of new materials.

Music provides a stimulating background that assists students in applying their learning from abstract to the real, from paper to practice. This moves the knowledge from short-term to long-term memory.

Business and marketing educators have numerous opportunities to carefully and thoughtfully put the Mozart Effect into practical use.

Portfolio Assessment—A Sure Winner

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When individuals hear the word portfolio, many different images comes to mind. Artists think of compiling, throughout their career, their best work (e.g. paintings, pottery, portraits, sculptures) for review while a portfolio for teachers often reflects upon gathered samples of a young adolescent's work showing strengths and weaknesses. While the artist's describes each painting in writing giving details about artistic design, the adolescent reflects on each piece of work included, telling what he/she liked and disliked about the work or why it is included. The young adolescent's work may be in a particular subject such as marketing or business skills or based on a specific skill, such as learning about computer software. The teacher uses the work samples and reflections as information to evaluate the student's progress. Both of these images are correct representations of portfolios, because they both have several specific components:

1. Portfolios have a specific **purpose**. The artist's portfolio shows their artistic abilities and the student's portfolio shows his/her strengths and weaknesses.
2. Portfolios are developed for a specific **audience**. The artist's audience is a potential employer, and the student's is the teacher and, possibly, the student's parents and/or the student.
3. Portfolios contain work samples, commonly called **evidence**. Evidence is the "stuff" or "things" that are put into the portfolio. The artist's evidence would be the paintings, pottery, portraits, and sculptures. The child's evidence would include work samples from the class.
4. Portfolios have **reflections**. Both the artist and child would have written thoughts on the evidence contained in the document.

These two examples show a product can look different but still be considered a portfolio. A portfolio is more than a manila file filled with assignments or work and a scrapbook of memorabilia. Campbell, Cignetti, Melenyzer, Nettles and Wyman (1997) stated a portfolio is an organized, goal-driven collection of evidence. There are three different types of portfolios: ***progress, produc,t*** and ***showcase***. While each type is compiled for a different audience, all of them have a developer, a purpose, a specific audience, and a reflection section on the evidence. A person chooses whether to develop a process, product or showcase portfolio based on the *purpose* for development. The purpose, otherwise identified as the 'why' of portfolio development, is the driving force determining the organizational design of the portfolio.

It shows a person's growth or ability in an area over a period of time. The purpose of a process portfolio is to evaluate a person's progress in one or more areas over a given period of time. It is a specific set of evidence developed over a short period of time to meet a desired outcome. This type of portfolio is similar to a project. Each person developing a product portfolio have identical pieces of evidence. Product portfolios are often created for 'grades' in school or by people seeking a specific license or competing for a specific award. Anytime people need to be compared using the same criteria this would be an accurate choice. It is a collection of a person's best work chosen by that individual. These portfolios are often used for job interviews

or competitions. The purpose of this portfolio is for a developer to showcase his/her best work in one or more areas.

Teachers may choose to use any or all of these types of portfolios with their students. For each type, decisions about organization, structure, content and assessment are based on the *purpose* of the portfolio. In the business and marketing education classroom, a portfolio may be a powerful tool that may aid in informal and formal assessment, student self-evaluation and teacher evaluation, and for job interviews or internship placements.

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THE EFFECT OF THE YEAR 2000 ON WEB PAGE MAINTENANCE

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The world is transforming at an alarming rate in both content and speed from an industrial society to an information society. The Internet is the essential technology in this transformation. The Internet is changing the very fabric and architecture of society and the global economy. The speed at which this is occurring sometimes stuns the consciousness. No other technology in history has grown at such a rapid pace.

With the Internet changing so rapidly and everything being tied to computers, the year 2000 problem could be the biggest problem that the modern world has ever faced or it could be a blessing. All of us know that computers are run by operating programs, and in the case of mainframes, hundreds or thousands of operating programs. Those operating programs contain date-fields, sometimes hundreds in each program. The programs must be able to interact with one another, and in order to do that their date-based programming must agree on what the date is. Until recently, programmers always wrote dates with the 1900 of the 20th century assumed, not written into the program. However, computers know what you tell them, nothing more. So when the 21st century arrives, the 2000 starts popping up in those operating programs. Some say computers will shut down. One reason is the "double-octal zero" or double zero of the year 2000. Those double-zeros represent more than a date-code, as they are also part of old basic code that tells the computer that there has been an error and it needs to shut down. Although the data is running, the computer crashes and the data erased.

Now that may be a problem and that is why every major hardware and software vendor has a web page dedicated to Y2K issues that stem from the double-zero problem. Some sites start with a definition and end with links to solution providers. Others are mere portals to Y2K resources on the web. These vendors know that mainframe and desktop computers may either shut down or begin spewing out bad data sometime before or during the year 2000. In addition to the expulsion of bad data from computers, pre-programmed computer chips may begin to shut down the systems they automatically control in the industrialized world.

What does this mean to the individual who maintains a web site? For a moment, reflect back onto the duties of a web master. This is the individual who makes sure the files and file directory structures are placed onto the Web and are running properly at all times. A web master is the one who constantly checks links and programming codes for server and location changes. Since coded documents and their related graphic components are linked in specific ways, any changes or additions that are made to existing documents or directories could affect or alter their relationship to one another. The most common result is that links are broken, images are mixed, or pages do not load properly. User feedback, usually by e-mail, can assist in flagging these types of problems so they can be promptly resolved.

Keeping the above web master duties in mind, one should remain aware that these general utility programs that check our web page links and programming codes involve dates most

likely to be affected by the millennium bug. In fact, to test systems some have recommended advancing the clock by 13 hours at a time until the date passes well into the next century. In addition, any web sites that support different time zone formats should be tested. Also, do not forget those third party vendors or web site links that route your pages to other sites and equipment that verifies compliance on the Y2K issue. Check both the internal database system as well as the local area network on the storing of those two-digit dates to make sure the Y2K problem will not impact the servers.

With the increasing popularity of the Internet, more and more web sites are being used as serious marketing tools. This means that Internet protocols and Internet software will need to be analyzed against millennium problems. Almost all web masters use electronic mail in some form or another on their web site pages. This is an often-overlooked area for typical Year 2000 problems. Most currently used e-mail standards require a four-digit year and are thus not prone to typical Y2K problems; however, some SMTP mail exchanges and message formats might use two-digit years. In addition, make sure your Request For Comments (RFCs) were modified in 1989 when the four-digit years were recommended to be changed. The real solution to the Y2K problem is to use four-digit year fields for applications such as counters and hardware systems. Whether the straight forward or sliding window approach is used, the problem needs to be addressed.

Although there may be some problems that need to be overcome, most millennium problem experts expect the Y2K to produce an explosion in the implementation of Internet-based technologies. In spite of this amazing process, these gurus believe the Year 2000 Problem will provide a major acceleration of this transformation. As older, centralized mainframe computing systems are brought to their knees by the ravages of the millennium bug, they may be replaced with decentralized (distributed) systems as represented by a global network of personal computers.

But, you ask, "Won't the Internet itself be affected by the Year 2000 Problem?" The answer is yes, the Internet, as currently configured, is certainly vulnerable to the effects of Y2K. Since it consists of computers, many of which have Y2K problems with both hardware and software, it may experience failures. Additionally, the Internet is used to make many large databases available to users online. Many of these databases contain dates that are contaminated with two-digit years.

The Internet is also fragile in that the entire infrastructure depends on the proper operation of centralized databases of Internet addresses. If the computers containing these databases are disrupted, the entirety of the Internet could be disrupted as well.

Nonetheless, when power and telecommunications are restored, as they will be, the Internet is to spring back to life, continue at breakneck speed, and create a few blessings along its revolutionary path. It is also technically possible (and maybe even likely) that a Y2K compliant, "austere" Internet that is independent of both the electrical and the commercial telecommunications grid may be developed.

The Internet will play two critical roles in the history of Y2K. First, during the period leading up to the great date rollover, the Internet will be the most effective way to provide information about how to prepare for the Year 2000 Crisis. Preparing for Y2K cannot be done effectively without being on the Internet because that is where the valuable data are.

Secondly, both before and after the peak of the crisis, the Internet will be the cure for many of those old Y2K infected systems. All of them will not get fixed before January 2000; that will take

several years. For many companies, the only path to survival will be to convert those old systems to Internet-based technologies. Some will not make it but many will and; it will help to change the world in ways we can hardly imagine.

In summary, many horror stories have been heard. The year 1999 will bring havoc. Alternatively, will it? In reality, no one knows what is going to happen. What can you do? Be prepared. Each individual should be responsible for the web sites they maintain and think of ways the pages might be affected by Y2K, the year 2000 problem, or the millennium bug. Make an effort now--not ten months from now, when it is likely to be too late--to mitigate any potential impact.

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SCHOOL-TO-CAREER: A SURE WINNER

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How can we best prepare our students for the transition from school-to-career? What resources are available to assist students in their transition? What can we do to help assure that our students will be "sure winners" in their careers? How can we better help students to see the connection between learning and work?

Seemingly, there are more questions than answers related to school-to-career issues. However, now more than ever before, students need to be able to leave school prepared for the world of work. International competition, the Internet, and the global use of technology all suggest that the economy of the 21st Century will create new challenges for employers and workers. It might be possible to survive in this new, global economy by creating low-wage, low-skilled jobs, but America has chosen to compete in this arena by creating high-performance workplaces. These new forms of organization and management cannot succeed without additional investments in the skills of workers. In the 21st Century workplace the Nation's workers will need to be better educated to fill new jobs and more flexible to respond to the changing knowledge and skill requirements of existing jobs.

Education and training are pillars in constructing a competitive nation. So, as we review school-to-career issues, we find that they are also tied to educational reform. According to a report by the Commission on the Skills of the American Workforce (1990), "America may have the worst school-to-work transition system of any advanced industrial country." Germany and other European countries, for example, have had youth apprentice-ships for students since around the Middle Ages. Although tech-prep has become a popular buzzword, the curriculum of the typical American high school is still geared toward preparing students for four-year colleges and universities. The sad thing is that too many students leave high school without the vocational or the academic skills they need to succeed in the work-place or in postsecondary education. School-to-career transition programs can be very helpful, but they require school restructuring (Hull and Parnell, 1991).

In trying to adapt to this restructuring, we need answers to such questions as: What will it take to get a student from school to work and into a successful career? What kinds of resources must educators provide? New jobs will increasingly require a more educated work-force; and educators will be required to provide curriculums with a broader, deeper and more flexible set of portfolio skills for an easier transition from school to work.

Paris (1995) has developed a model that identifies six strategies for improving school-to-work transition for all students:

1. Developing an applied and integrated curriculum

Restructuring of education should focus on programs that integrate academic and vocational skill development. To best serve the needs of students and employers, educational institutions must address employers' needs for both general and industry-specific training, as well as the students' needs. In a recent employer survey, over fifty-seven percent reported that restructuring and the introduction of new technology have increased the skill require-ments for non-managerial employees (National Center on the Educational Quality of the Workforce,

1995). What does that mean to educators? Employers are increasingly seeking employees with a portfolio of basic skills (reading, writing, and computation); organizational skills (interpersonal communication, analytical, self-management, and creative thinking); technical skills (computer, telecommunications and manufacturing technologies); and company-specific skills (knowledge and skills relevant to a specific company's products and services and the company's delivery modes). Some students have special needs such as curriculums and teaching styles that serve them best. Many students seek careers for which formal education/training may be completed in a relatively short period of time. Opportunities to apply classroom learning should be integrated into the regular curriculum.

2. Implementing classroom-based developmental career guidance

Generally, students' knowledge of careers is very limited. For example, some students believe that doctors and nurses fill the only occupations in the medical field. Students need help clarifying their personal goals and understanding the importance of related education and training. Individual and group occupational counseling programs combined with employer encouragement regarding the types and levels of education and training necessary to be successful in selected careers should be available to students. A lack of information or a lack of a single source of information may mask the range of opportunities that are available to the student and can often have lifetime discouraging effects on that individual.

3. Developing work-based learning opportunities

Students need hands-on work experience while they are still enrolled in school. How can they know if they really want to pursue a certain field if they do not really understand what is required to be successful in it? Relatively new initiatives that have surfaced to help develop work-based learning opportunities include learn anytime, anywhere partnerships; manufacturing extension partnerships; one-stop delivery systems; and America's Learning Exchange. Other time-honored programs that serve a similar need and continue to strengthen the workforce are Cooperative Education programs, youth apprenticeships, internships and other types of experiential learning opportunities that provide students with opportunities to apply in the workplace the knowledge and skills they have learned in the classroom. In addition, students learn new skills and knowledge in the workplace. They are also able to ascertain if the skills they possess match the skills that employers need while students still have an opportunity to make adjustments.

4. Creating occupational curriculum articulation between K-12 and postsecondary education

According to the U.S. Department of Education (Paris, 1994), the number of occupational programs available to students and actual enrollments in vocational programs are declining. In 1995, 40 percent of people 16 years of age or older and not enrolled full-time in school participated in some form of adult education; one-half of them were enrolled in work-related courses (Kwang, Collins, Stowe, and Chandler, Nov. 1995). Students need to be able to see the connection between school and work. Greater articulation arrangements need to be developed between secondary and postsecondary educational institutions.

5. Working in partnership with business, industry, labor, and the community

Education is not the only institution that needs some restructuring. American businesses and industries also need to rethink their institutions and move toward high-performance, high-skill,

high-pay organizations. Educators and employers need to form partnerships to develop programs that will enlighten students about the career opportunities that are available and the skills needed to be prepared for them.

6. Providing professional development activities

Professional development activities are the connecting activities from school to work. These connections include providing for special liaison between education and businesses, industries, community service organizations, and government organizations; matching students with employers; providing for staff development and technical assistance, and establishing communications among all components of the process. These activities help students to develop the knowledge, values, expertise, and work ethics they need to be prepared for the future workforce.

Some federal initiatives have been revised and some new ones have been initiated to help smooth the transition for students from school to work. These include both post-secondary education and other training programs and workforce development initiatives. Among the educational programs are the Hope Scholarships; Lifetime Learning Credit; Pell Grants; Student Loans; Federal Work-Study programs; Learning Anytime, Anywhere Partnerships; Montgomery G.I. Bill; and Veterans Educational Assistance program. Initiatives under workforce development include Exclusion for Employer-Provided Educational Assistance and Workforce Investment Act of 1998, One-Stop Delivery Systems, Adult Education and Literacy, America's Learning Exchange, and Manufacturing Extension Partnerships. These initiatives should prove to be sure winners.

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Social Security and the Year 2000

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The entire information technology community faces a Year 2000 (Y2K) problem, which is unique in the history of computer processing. The Social Security Administration (SSA) was one of the first organizations to devise a solution to the Y2K problem. Every aspect of Social Security's mission, in some way, depends on information technology. That perspective underscores why the agency has gone to such great lengths to insure that it will be ready for the new millennium.

In an effort that began in 1989, nearly 2800 systems employees, including 700 programmers, have been or are involved, in some way, in preparing for the year 2000. SSA has 308 separate computer systems which are critical to its ongoing mission. As of December 28, 1998, all 308 systems had been tested and validated by a panel of independent experts as Y2K compliant. The ability of these systems to work with SSA's partners, the Department of the Treasury, the Federal Reserve System, and the Postal System were certified as well. The system works and is secure, making SSA confident that all its benefit payments will continue uninterrupted in the new century.

The Social Security Administration is proud of what it has accomplished in securing its systems for the year 2000. SSA was the very first government agency to start work on the Y2K problem. It has been a leader and a model in this arena ever since.

The House Government Reform and Oversight Subcommittee on Government Information, Management, and Technology periodically grades government agencies on their Y2K readiness. Chairman, Rep. Steven Horn, R-Calif., noted at a recent White House ceremony that SSA has received an "A" in his committee's last three report cards.

The new millennium is less than a year away and many individuals have begun planning their celebrations. The Social Security Administration wants this to be a carefree celebration for it's recipients and beneficiaries alike. This wish underscores the importance of the announcement made December 28th that checks will keep coming in the year 2000. SSA is ready!

A SPIN ON YOUR IMAGES

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Putting a spin on your images may add excitement to your web pages, marketing presentations, or multimedia shows. PictureWorks Technology, Incorporated out of Danville, California. offers software for spinning objects, creating panoramic pictures, or quicktime movies.

Spin PhotoObject software brings still pictures to life through rotation and animation effects. One can animate web pages, visualize products, enhance learning, stimulate presentations, create photo slide shows and time lapse animation, and share PhotoObjects with e-mail. For marketing purposes, the Spin PhotoObject may be used to sell products and services on the Internet or to burn CDs. It can be used to easily create an interactive catalog---one may rotate toys, clothing, furniture, jewelry, hardware, music, software, flowers, and much, much more! Individual needs and creativity are the key to the effectiveness of this multimedia tool. Individuals may also make training sessions smoother by rotating and animating visuals to break down complex concepts, use time lapse photos, or simply provide visual instruction. When using photo animation, ideas are brought to life when presenting objects, events, or training material . It is as easy as getting images, aligning them, cropping the photo object, and then creating the PhotoObject of your choice---movie, QuickTime VR, or an animated gif.

Spin Panorama software helps anyone create a super-wide panoramic image and/or a 360 degree QuickTime VR movie in four steps: get the photos, stitch the overlapping images together, crop the desired scene, and then create a "super-wide" angel picture or a 360 degree QTVR movie. This multimedia tool is effectively integrated with e-mail, business presentations, or websites. It does not take great skill or high costs to be able to put the spin on your images. Like most areas, individuals may advance the costs and skill involved, depending upon the level of achievement. The movies are a form of virtual reality where others can visit places through computer software rather than actual travel. There are many possibilities for this intuitive software. Panoramic pictures are great in reports, newsletters, banners, and other printed materials.

Both of these software packages provide a new realm to traditional software packages. With a little time, finances, and practice one may put a spin on images, too. Visit PictureWorks on the web at www.pictureworks.com or call them at 1-800-303-5400.

Winning Teaching Strategies

By Dr. Lillian R. Greathouse

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The SCANS Report (June 1991) laid significant groundwork for basic skills, thinking skills, and personal qualities required of students if they are to be successful in the work world. Gloeckner, et. al. (1992) compiled a listing of what they refer to as New Basic Skills. These skills, which closely correlate with those specified in the SCANS Report, are

- Learning to learn
- Reading, writing, mathematics
- Communication
- Adaptability
- Personal management
- Group effectiveness
- Influence
- Technology
- Science
- Home/Family management and relationships

Some of today's teaching methods do not optimally help students develop these skills. Teachers need to consider updating strategies and even using new ones. Some suggestions and brief descriptions of some strategies follow.

Brainstorming: Give students a particular topic. Solicit their suggestions without providing judgment on their ideas. Have students choose the "best" ideas, discussing each in detail. Then, determine the "best" idea through a vote. Students learn to respect diverse opinions and to see the value of combining ideas to develop the best one.

Cooperative Learning: Provide students a group structure in which to learn, making students responsible for the learning of all members of the group. Teachers need to carefully determine how cooperative learning activities are assessed. Students learn the value of teamwork and quality control.

Concept Attainment: On individual slips of paper, provide students with characteristics of a particular concept. On a board or wall, indicate categories (such as yes or no). Have students place the characteristics under the appropriate category, indicating whether or not the concept has each characteristic. Students learn the parts of a concept, using logic to identify the characteristics.

K-W-L (Ogle, 1986): Students individually assess their knowledge of a topic of discussion by writing down "What I think I Know," "What I Want/need to learn," and later "What I Learned." Students learn to better "connect" with knowledge previously learned. This strategy assists

them in developing skills for lifelong learning.

Non-directive teaching: Divide students into teams seated in circles with one person in the center. The number of students may vary but no more than eight students per team are recommended. The person in the center is the only one who can talk. Others can move to the center chair by the person in the center tapping someone or someone from the outside circle tapping the person in the center. Students learn to better listen, and all students get an opportunity to talk.

Nominal group strategy: The teacher presents a question. Each student responds on paper. Students are placed in groups of 2-10. Each person indicates the response to the group. A group discussion takes place and the group prioritizes the responses. Students return to a class as a whole. Each group indicates its responses and priorities. The class then combines the responses and prioritizes them. All students actively participate. They also receive practice in prioritizing.

These are just some of the many ideas for getting students more actively involved in their own learning. Teachers are encouraged to continually read articles, listen to presentations, and participate in pertinent listservs to share with other teachers.

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Gender Differences in Nonverbal Communication

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A study was conducted at Valdosta State University in Valdosta, Georgia, during Fall Semester, 1998, to determine students' perceptions of gender differences in several areas of nonverbal communication. Specifically, the areas of eye contact, gestures, smiles, personal space, touch, and interpretation of nonverbal cues were examined.

To collect data, a survey instrument was administered to 387 undergraduate students in 18 sections of classes. In addition to demographic information, the students responded to 28 items. Data were analyzed using the SPSS statistical package.

Who established more eye contact? The females surveyed thought they do; 67.5 percent agreed that females typically establish more eye contact than men do. Burgoon, Buller, and Woodall (1996) concluded that North American women engage in more eye contact during conversations than men. Ivy and Backlund (1994) suggested that women (more often in a subordinate role) make more eye contact than a person in a dominant position. In addition, Ivy and Backlund found that women were more comfortable giving eye contact than men (1994).

Who used more gestures? The majority of the females surveyed (74.5 percent) felt that they typically use more gestures than a male. However, the opinions of experts in literature were mixed. For instance, Hanna and Wilson (1998) felt that women used fewer gestures than men. These authors also stated that women use fewer gestures when they are with other women but more gestures with men. However, Burgoon, Buller, and Woodall (1996) felt that the difference was in the types of gestures used rather than in the frequency of use.

A very large majority of the female respondents (83.7 percent) felt that they typically smile more often than a male does. However, almost everyone surveyed said they would automatically return a smile if someone smiled at them first. Our experts agreed with the survey findings. Hanna and Wilson (1998) not only said women smile more than males, but they were also more attracted to others who smiled.

Who required more personal space? Fifty-six percent of the female respondents felt they require more personal space than a male. However, all the experts in literature agreed that males used more personal space than females.

When asked who touches more, 57.8 percent of our female respondents agreed that they touch others more than a male does. However, the experts had mixed opinions on the subject. Hanna and Wilson (1998) felt that women touch others less than men do. But Burgoon, Buller, and Woodall (1996) conclude that women give and receive more touches than men (except when initiating courtship). They explain how touch is considered a feminine-appropriate behavior and a masculine-inappropriate one. Mothers touch female infants more than male infants, and female children desire and offer more nonaggressive touch than male children. Another important point made by Burgoon, Buller, and Woodall is that touch initiation may depend not on gender alone but also on the intentionality of the touch, the age and relationship

of the participants, and the setting where the touch occurs. Of course, teachers must be very careful about touching students in today's school environment.

Which gender was able to interpret nonverbal cues better? Of the female respondents, 73.7 percent agreed that they can interpret another person's nonverbals better than a male. From the review of literature, all experts agreed that, in fact, females are better interpreters of nonverbals. Burgoon, Buller, and Woodall (1996) described women as being more sensitive communicators. And Ivy and Backlund (1994) conclude that women more actively communicate the importance of relationships by using a number of verbal and nonverbal channels.

Teachers should be aware of gender differences in the classroom to help students develop an awareness of nonverbal communication–particularly what is appropriate nonverbal behavior in the workplace.

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Improving Marketing Education via Information Management

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In addition to economic climate and competitive conditions, technology is vitally important in understanding the future direction of consumer market trends (Smith & Clurman, 1997). Marketing information systems, like other information systems, are consequential to the process of systematically and actively managing and leveraging an organization's stores of knowledge (Laudon & Laudon, 1997). Marketing information may be broadly classified as follows: marketing intelligence—information that flows into the firm from the environment; internal marketing information—information that is gathered within the firm; and marketing communications—information that flows from the firm outward to the environment (McLeod, 1995). Interest and participation in marketing intelligence have increased dramatically over the past decade in response to competitive pressures.

The Expeditious Environment of Information Technology

Given the dynamism and uncertainty of the contemporary technological environment, Rajagopalan, Singh, and Morton (1998) proposed a model to assist managers in making detailed capacity and technology acquisition decisions. They cited a lack of research for such detailed models not only in uncertain technological environments, but in more predictable ones as well. With this model, they contend that it is optimal to purchase, dispose, and replace capacity in amounts equal to the demand increments for an integral number of periods. They further contend that it is optimal to dispose excess capacity only in periods when a new technology appears; and to replace used capacity only in acquisition periods, or when capacity is in any case going to be acquired for future demand increments. Related problems of moderate size could be solved on a personal computer with a regeneration point-based dynamic programming algorithm.

Ballou et al (1998) investigated the impact on an information system of a changed environment, and the efficacy of options for addressing such changes. An information manufacturing model was used to determine value, quality, cost, and timeliness of information products. This was done with the rationale that many product quality control concepts and procedures can be applied to the need for improved information products. In the model, information attributes were analyzed within a matrix relating data units and system components. A prospective information manufacturing system could then be adjusted on the basis of the attributes' measures. The model utilized customer determination of the value attached to information products. It enabled study of changing factors in the external environment (such as government regulations) that may affect an information system's requirements.

Thomke (1998) focused on product design in demonstrating how the economics of experimentation has been shifting by the use of new and improved computer simulations and rapid prototyping. In the quest to reduce total development cost and time, product design experimentation—and related learning via trial and error—can be conducted in modes using the

simulation and prototyping methods. Optimal switching points between these modes are determined, and the product design progresses in a more economical fashion. Implications for managers in the product development component in the marketing mix include an observation that getting a prototype right the first time is often not the most beneficial strategy for experimentation; rather, that optimal switching more than exceeds the repercussions of further adjustments. Paradigm shifts of this nature are sometimes made possible by improved information through technology and improved techniques for managing such information.

Morwitz and Schmittlein (1998) examined the effectiveness of managers' decisions related to designing a test and interpreting test results both conceptually and empirically for direct marketing offers. Management judgment for routine decisions central to the design and analysis of direct marketing test was found to be accurate. However, decision makers in general were found to use heuristics that relate to the specific direct marketing decisions at hand, resulting in bias. Such limitations may not diminish with increasing experience or expertise, increasing the stakes of learning from appropriate models. The study found that increased profits for new direct marketing offerings can result from an interplay of management judgment and statistical models. The models, moreover, are not linked to possible turnover, acquisition, or alienation connected with experienced managers. Finally, they are well suited to the direct marketing notion of quick, detailed feedback and commitment to a pragmatic testing/learning cycle.

There is significant movement toward the enhancement of products that may function better by being placed hand-in-glove with the Internet. Examples include self-monitoring or interactive heaters, air conditioners, cars, dishwashers, vending machines, sound systems, copiers, medical equipment, lawn sprinklers, and even Lego building blocks (Weber, 1998). Kiosks have become more versatile selling tools; now including technologies such as videoconferencing applications, printers, video cameras, telephones, Internet and intranet connectivity, receivers for satellite broadcasting, fax, flat-screen displays, wireless networks, and digital video disk drives (Hapgood, 1998). Given potential savings in lieu of additional sales persons equipped to provide comparable information to advance a purchase decision, the devices add a viable option to sales management techniques. A recent development in Web advertising technology has marketers anticipating much higher response rates than from the "click-through" banners that lead to the advertisers' sites. Known as "live" banners, the ads allow browsers to examine or even buy products without clicking through to the commercial sites. Although more expensive to develop and somewhat slow on lower-baud modems, the live banners have been hailed as more akin to direct marketing versus a "take-it-or-leave-it decision whether to click through or not" (Bulkeley, 1998, B23). The opportunity to carry a more creative multimedia message may also help boost inquiry rates well beyond a meager 1.5%, which is barely half that of two years earlier.

Information sources and systems fit prominently among major factors in marshalling a firm's marketing direction. The construction of a powerful marketing database is no longer limited to firms with substantial-to-large budgets. Smarter marketing is accompanying the technology in firms, many of whom are doing a better job of targeting customers. One example of a transformation in retailing is the emergence of automobile selling via the Internet. The images of once-stodgy "store brand" jeans have been enhanced by creative ads and Web sites. Marketing partnerships are on the rise, apparently feasible when marketing information indicates a potential for any of the following: credibility enhancement; synergy; natural fit; or resource divergence. Managed health care, for example, has not only steadily increased advertising expenditures; it has expanded the promotional mix by collaborating with other businesses such as retailers (Galuszka, 1997).

The wide-open boost of information brought on by the Internet has compounded threats as well as opportunities regarding the conversion of knowledge into profit. Both inside and outside the company, information resources affect cost cutting, production schedules, responsiveness to clients, and market trend spotting. The ultimate business advantage, according to General Electric Chairman Jack Welch, is "an organization's ability to learn, and translate that learning into action rapidly" (McWilliams & Stepanek, 1998, p. 170). Recommendations for harnessing the information explosion include the following: using a knowledge audit to pinpoint and disseminate the firm's intellectual assets; cataloging employees' expertise within an online directory; collaborating on problem-solving using online discussion groups; tweaking marketing strategies on the basis of software that tracks use of the firm's Web site; and making knowledge sharing an integral part of employees' performance evaluations (McWilliams & Stepanek, 1998).

Role of Information Systems Components in the Marketing Discipline

Education for marketing should emphasize the need to properly anticipate, communicate, and coordinate its role in the organization's overall information technology plan. In addition to project-centered involvement, this role should include active participation in efficiency initiatives related to remote networking, direct faxing, file conversion, easier printing, less training time, more organized graphical user interfaces, multitasking, neat network filing, and faster servers/computers.

Marketing classroom applications may reflect information technology development stages through the use of process models, case studies of anticipated or installed business designs, and analysis methods and criteria. With increased focus upon such strategies within the learning hierarchy, the marketing student can be better prepared for the myriad challenges of anticipating and meeting consumer demands.

Marketing students may be encouraged to seek information systems components in their study choices. In the marketing curriculum, an emphasis on technical skills used in collaborative projects can better prepare students for the types of advancements noted in this paper. In addition, an appreciation of interconnectivity in both the marketing mix and overall activity of an enterprise necessitates greater understanding of the informational processes upon which they depend.

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COMPUTER-BASED CLASSROOM COMMUNICATIONS

IN THE 21ST CENTURY

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Introduction

Teaching and meeting the academic needs of students are the primary responsibilities of educators. In order to meet the academic needs of students, educators need to first understand the students. One of the best ways to more clearly understand the students is through communication.

Communication may be defined as the act of striking together—collaborating—in an attempt to share something with others. It is the act of transmitting information or the process of exchanging information by signs, symbols, or behavior. Communication can also be defined as an exchange of thoughts, ideas, or messages, by speech, gestures, listening, reading, or writing

Purpose

The purpose of this presentation is to increase the teachers'/students' interest in, and commitment to, constructive verbal and computer-based communication as a teaching/learning tool in the classroom. This discussion is analyzed in three sections:

1. Benefits of Computer-Based Technologies in a Classroom Environment,
2. Different Computer-Based Technologies Utilized in the Classroom, and
3. Traditional Face-To-Face Communication.

Benefits Of Computer-Based Communication

Computer-based classroom communication is critical to the success of any classroom instruction in the 21st. Century. Classroom technology helps to increase students' understanding of subject matter, enables students to learn at their own rate, and fosters cooperation which breaks down socio-economic, ethnic, and gender barriers. It also fosters a one-on-one teacher-student interaction, enables students to learn by discovery, and helps build rapport between students and teacher. Classroom technology minimizes the teacher's burden and changes the role as a dispenser of knowledge to that of asking questions and guiding students. It also decreases boredom, increase interest, and expands students' communication skills. Experience in the use of technologies may help students apply the knowledge and skills learned in school to work situations.

Computer-Based Technologies

Several technologies help make instruction fun for both students and teachers. The following are examples:

Compressed video. Students anywhere in the world may be reached by means of this technology. Several universities utilizing this technology have increased student enrollment significantly.

Course Info. This is a web-based instructional delivery system to reach students regardless of place or time—any time, any place.

Electronic mail. This technology provides student-teacher virtual office hours, electronic mail delivery, and remote question and answer sessions.

Internet. One resource that may be used to gather information is the Internet. The Internet is a global network comprised of millions of interconnected computers that store an extraordinary amount of information, which is accessible from any computer connected to the Internet.

PowerPoint. This software enables the teacher to organize and design text and graphics to create colorful professional presentations on the computer screen.

TV and video presentation. The television or video in a classroom setting is a vehicle for entertainment and learning. The TV and video blend music, images, color, and voice into segments that help keep the class and the lesson moving toward a desired outcome. In a business communications class, video presentations in the areas of resumes, cover letters, and interviews are very rewarding. Other technologies include radio, overheads, and interactive multimedia.

Web page and digital photography. It is fascinating for students to be able to create their own web pages, obtain information from others' pages, or use digital cameras to show images of themselves on their screens.

Word processor. Word processing is entering text from the keyboard into the computer and then manipulating it electronically. One reason for creating word processor documents is to communicate information.

Traditional Face-To-Face Communication

Computer-based classroom technologies should not be applied to the detriment of the traditional face-to-face communication. The computer cannot replace human beings. Therefore, the traditional communications are to be used in the 21st century and beyond. The following 12 skills of good communication are essential to the success of any classroom instruction.

Communication Skills

1. Be a good listener. To achieve this, stop talking, pay attention, be patient, ask questions, and have eye contact with the audience.
2. Use simple vocabulary.
3. Develop nonverbal skills just as you develop skills in the use of words. Develop a positive attitude. Be sensitive to cultural differences. Develop appropriate eye contact during a conversation.
4. Know that you will be judged by what you say, not what you mean.

5. Criticize constructively and privately.
6. Appreciate individuals with different views, color, religion or accent.
7. Give a five-minute warning before stopping an activity.
8. Gain a friend by establishing communication with the individual. Keep a friend by maintaining the communication.
9. Use technology--computers, fax machines, and TV--to minimize boredom and increase student communication skills.
10. Teach students to have faith in themselves.
11. Praise students when things go right.
12. Call students by their names.

Conclusion

Because of its importance, computer-based classroom communication is the wave of the 21st century. However, attempts should be made to ensure that technology supports the traditional method rather than diminish it.

The ABCs of Electronic Presentations

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Introduction

Computers and presentation software have made it easier than ever to develop electronic presentations that are compelling and entertaining. Consequently, many professionals are creating some presentations with a profuseness of glamour but inundated with information overload, poor readability, inappropriate color, pointless graphical and clip art adornment, and copyright infringements. Some of the basic guidelines to follow to avoid these pitfalls.

The ABCs

A. Avoid loud backgrounds and graphical elements and clip art for mere adornment.
B. Begin with an effective introduction.
C. Capitalize only at the place of emphasis.
D. Document all appropriate references.
E. Enhance the professional image of each slide by using consistent fonts/typefaces and appropriate color.
F. Find out who is the target audience.
G. Group similar concepts but only one idea or concept per slide.
H. Highlight the message and not to repeat everything you plan to say.
I. Invest the time to proof, proof, proof.
J. Justify and pinpoint the exact purpose. Know whether it is to inform, recommend, or persuade.
K. Keep it legal. Make sure that you have permission. Check copyright guidelines.
L. Limit the number of words per slide.
M. Make clip art and graphical elements relevant.
N. Never mix horizontal and vertical formats.
O. Organize information using clear and concise statements or questions.
P. Prepare the conclusion with the same diligence as you prepared the
Q. Quote someone famous, identify a dramatic statement, or present a call for action to deliver a memorable conclusion
R. Reinforce the central idea. Say more than you show.
S. Set the tone with the introduction
T. Tie the background into the body of the presentation in both style and content.
U. Use white space as a design element.
V. Verify accuracy of information.
W. Work to make sure that each transition effect does not distract or annoy.
X. X-out all excess verbiage. Major concept should be grasped in 20 seconds.
Y. Yearn to keep the audience involved and interested.
Z. Zip it up with a memorable conclusion. Use the conclusion to review the main points.

Conclusion

Electronic presentations are excellent mechanisms for showing and involving others. However,

the key to creating dynamic electronic presentations is good planning. Plan effectively by utilizing the ABCs outlined above. In doing so, presentations will be improved and confidence and comfort levels will be increased.

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THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EMPLOYEE PRODUCTIVITY AND

TELE-WORKING: IMPLICATIONS FOR WORKFORCE 2000

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INTRODUCTION: Teleworking or telecommuting or work-at-home is a programmatic compromise between employer and employee regarding a change of work venue from a central corporate site to employee home or other workplace called telecenter. The telecenter may be owned and operated by an independent company. Researchers, over the years, have explored teleworking, now a practice in several major companies. The establishment and acceptance of a telework program in any company is usually based on mutually beneficial outcomes to both employer and employee. These outcomes have ranged from an increase in productivity to a better quality of work life to savings in production costs. According to Spillman and Markham (6) businesses benefit from the establishment of teleworking because of increase in employee productivity, improvement in inter-employee morale, reduction in employee turnover, availability of more spaces in the office as employees move work away from the office and to their homes. Teleworking also gives rise to the employment of a diverse pool of employees and generally improves the quality of work life and family life. Advantages such as reduced expenses on office space, and reduced employee absenteeism as espoused by McClay's investigation (3), in the development of work-at-home safety programs are in concert with Spillman's and Markham's findings (6). In an Australian study entitled "Analysis of Telecommuting Experience," Tamrat, Vilkinas and Warren (7) found that telecommuters and their supervisors believe that employee productivity increased due to the establishment of a telecommuting program in their company. The study further suggests that the success of a telecommuting program is influenced by the cooperation of participants who welcome flexibility, accept change, and embrace new work environments. The personal productivity of employees also increased alongside with reduction of operating costs when a telecommuting program was instituted. According to Goodrich (1), a corporate productivity of 15-30 percent was reported for a company in a survey of 50 managers associated with telecommuters. A study of firms in North Carolina, as recorded by Risman and Tomaskovic-Dewey (5), found that productivity alongside with reduced cost of production and increases in employee satisfaction were associated with telecommuting. In an article titled "Telecommuting: Putting Policy into Practice," Reilly (4) suggested that an increase in productivity is associated with employees in a telecommuting. The productivity of employees increased when they become teleworkers, according to Kelly (2) in the Futurist. She however, cautioned that although increases in productivity of 100 percent have been recorded, about 20 percent increase in productivity is the norm.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY: The purpose of this study was to determine the relationship between productivity and factors that constitute interest in becoming a teleworker. The research question to be answered is: will prospective telecommuters of the 21st Century work harder and efficiently to increase productivity so as to avoid the effects of variables in employee safety-in-transit concerns and variables in prospective employee personal financial concerns?

RESEARCH METHOD: A pre-tested survey instrument was completed by 1,098 students taking classes in a random sample of 250 colleges and schools of business of all the 676 member U.S. based academic institutions of the American Assembly of Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB). A total of 1,021 (93%) usable questionnaires constituted the data used for the study.

The survey design was based on a 3-point Likert type scale (where 1=Of no importance, 2= Of little importance, and 3=Of great importance) that included demographic profiles of respondents. For the purposes of this study the scale was collapsed into 1=important and 2=not important.

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS: SPSS 8.0 for Windows was used to analyze the data. More than half (55%) of the respondents were females. Most of the respondents were students with a major in Business Administration. Almost half (48%) of the respondents indicated interest in telecommuting after graduation from college in the 21st Century. Almost 35% of the respondents indicated interest in working in the Finance/Insurance industry while 20% would prefer to work in Communication and Office Equipment.

Safety In-Transit Concerns: Responding to the survey, a large number of respondents (95%), indicated that avoidance of the anxiety associated with daily struggle with highway traffic was the most important. Almost 90% of respondents thought that highway catastrophes are an important factor when considering teleworking for the 21 century.

Interrelationships of Increase in Productivity with Prospective Employee Safety-In-Transit Concerns

As indicated in Table 1, Chi-square value showed a significant correlation between "increase in overall productivity" and "disconcerting daily struggle with highway traffic to and from work," at p=.000. A correlation was also found between "increase in overall productivity," and the following variables: avoidance of "highway muggers to and from work," at p=.001, "police citation/arrest to and from work,"at p=.017, "highway car-jacking," at p=.023. Increase in overall productivity and highway catastrophes did not show a significant correlation.

Table 1

Interrelationships of Increase in Overall Productivity with

Prospective Employee Safety-In-Transit Concerns

Variables	Chi-Square Value	Probability
Disconcerting daily struggle with highway traffic to and from work	71.76	.000***
Highway catastrophes	4.24	.375
Police citation/arrests to and from work	11.98	.017*
Highway muggers to and from work	18.36	.001**
Highway car-jacking to and from work	11.33	.023*

*p< .05, **p< .01, ***p< .001

Prospective Employee Personal Financial Concerns: A large number of respondents (90%) taught that saving money on gas is important when considering teleworking. Saving money on childcare expenses is considered to be important by 82% of respondents as opposed to only 58% who taught that saving money on work attire is important.

Interrelationships of Increase in Overall Productivity and Prospective Employee Personal Financial Concerns:

The Chi-Square values prevalent in Table 4 show there is a significant relationship between "overall increase in productivity" and "saving money on childcare expenses" at p=.000. A significant relationship existed between "increase in overall productivity," and the following variables: "saving money spent on gas," and "eating home prepared food and saving money spend on fast foods." A significant relationship did not exist between "increase in overall productivity" and "saving money spent on work attire" or "saving money spent on cologne/perfume."

Table 2

Interrelationships of Increase in Overall Productivity and Prospective

Employee Personal Financial Concerns

Variable	Chi-Square Value	Probability
Save on childcare expenses	43.81	.000***
Save money spent on work attire	7.84	.097
Save money spent on cologne/perfume	9.34	.053
Save money spent on gas	11.34	.000***
Eat home cooked food and save money spent on fast foods	27.43	.000***

*p≤.05, **p≤.01, ***p≤.000

Conclusion: Teleworking is very much entrenched in the fabric of corporate America therefore future employees and managers should understand its effects. A concrete understanding of teleworking is offered by this study from the stance of prospective employees. The safety in-transit factors believed to significantly affect productivity are: avoid the disconcerting daily struggle with highway traffic to and from work, avoid police citations/arrests, avoid highway muggers to and from work, and avoid highway car-jacking to and from work. The personal financial concerns factors significantly affecting increase in productivity are: save on childcare expenses, save money spent on gas, and eat home cooked food and save money spent on fast foods. Employees accept teleworking because of the added general increase in quality of life emanating from the avoidance of over dependence on safety concerns both on the highway and while at home. Also, employees welcome the possibility for saving money on childcare expenses, eating home-prepared lunches and avoiding fast food restaurants.

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Mastering Business Etiquette: Holistic Active-Learning Projects for the Graduate Business Communication Course

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Introduction

In today's global business environment, understanding the nuances of etiquette and protocol and the ability to apply them in appropriate situations is essential for career success. Individuals tend, through conditioning, to harbor certain biases (even if only subconsciously). Therefore, a solid grounding in cultural customs and protocol of other countries as compared to those in the United States (as well as those regional differences in this country) should facilitate interpersonal interaction and degree of success for the employee, the business, and the country (Baldrige, 1993; Sabath, 1998; Brody & Pachter, 1994; Thomsett,1991).

Discussion of the development and implementation of an etiquette component into a graduate business communication course, various learning opportunities assigned to the students, results of student efforts on those assignments, and perceptions of the course design and value toward future workplace success follow.

Course Development

One goal of the School of Business at Delta State University (DSU) is to ensure program graduates enhanced marketability and success in the world of work. DSU is a regional institution situated in the heart of the Mississippi Delta. Most DSU students have lived in the Delta all their lives, and many have not had the opportunity to travel outside the region. Further, the area is rural, with agriculture being the largest industry. School of Business faculty, having recognized the need to broaden the perspectives of its students, identified several program areas where additional knowledge and training would benefit graduate students. Communication and business etiquette/protocol were two of those areas. Since a business (managerial) communication course was already included as part of the program, the faculty looked for innovative ways to reinforce and supplement existing course content and to include the etiquette component.

Learning Opportunities

Of course, lecture is a mainstay of curriculum delivery. However, especially at the graduate level, curriculum must include challenging assignments which incorporate real-world relevance and result in maximized learning experiences. Therefore, students were provided opportunities for student-driven, client-based assignments which would result in production of authentic product prototypes, opportunities to apply one-on-one and team-based communication and etiquette skills learned, and which might provide line items for their resumes.

As an example, one collaborative assignment provided for students to create a company which

produced and marketed etiquette games. The teams were responsible for developing their company identity, assigning roles to various company *employees*, designing and making an etiquette game prototype, and creating an electronic presentation to demonstrate and market the product. Further, to ensure that students had learned and could apply the rules of business etiquette/protocol, the entire class collaborated to arrange a formal business luncheon or dinner. They selected an appropriate location, made arrangements for an appropriate menu and entertainment, created and delivered professional invitations, and created table place cards and a program for the presentation component. University administrators, faculty, and business/industry representatives were invited to attend the luncheon/dinner and serve as potential customers (and evaluators of team efforts). Specific class members were selected by their peers to perform duties of host, hostess, and master of ceremonies for the dinner/presentation.

Results of Student Efforts

Seven classes have enjoyed the revised managerial communication course. Etiquette games produced included electronic games and board games. Target markets selected varied by age and corporate focus, depending upon game design and content. Specifically, the games were marketed to enhance an organization's domestic and international business communication efforts or to provide a tool for personal development of communication/etiquette/protocol skills.

Perceptions of Course Design and Future Workplace Value

Project evaluators were favorably impressed with the various games' quality, as well as the students' professionalism and precision during the dinner/presentation component. Evaluators (95%) indicated a belief that prototypes could be refined and actually marketed. Student's attitudes about the project changed as the projects progressed. When the assignment was first given, many students indicated that they could see no relevance in having to know about etiquette or even multicultural interaction. However, once immersed in the team process, they began to realize the subtle influence cultural understanding and knowledge of etiquette/protocol play in successful business endeavors. Following the formal luncheon/dinner, students felt confident they could successfully meet communication and etiquette/protocol challenges encountered in the business environment. Further, many course completers later confided in faculty that opportunities to actually use the multicultural communication and etiquette/protocol skills were encountered in their jobs and that they were very happy to have gained and honed those tools during the managerial communication class.

Summary

As Baldridge (1993) notes "In today's world, it makes good economic sense for a corporation to care about the adjustments made by its executives and their families who are posted to other countries. It's not only their morale that is at stake, but [also] their performance on the job and their happiness as well. The issue is not only whether they have managed to adjust to their new lives, but also whether they have learned to live as *good global citizens*"(p. 235). Incorporating multicultural communication and etiquette/protocol components has proven to provide a value-added effect for students taking DSU's managerial communication course. From both the content and interpersonal interactions required during the projects, students grew personally and professionally. They encountered and overcame real-world, relevant business challenges, and they also benefited from the understanding that they can successfully accomplish seemingly *impossible* tasks. Therefore, they have confidence that they can meet the challenges encountered by *good global citizens* and *competent organizational employees*.

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JOBREADY: MOVING INTO THE 21ST CENTURY

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Seventy-four local school-to-work partnerships have been created in communities across North Carolina over the past four years. These partnerships consist of public school educators, community college and university personnel, parents, employers, Chambers of Commerce, Workforce Development Boards, Economic Development Committees, and other community agencies and groups. These partnerships include representatives from 97 of our 100 counties.

The goals established by these local groups include providing all students with opportunities in school- based, work-based, and connecting activities. The activities extend from Kindergarten through post-secondary education. These include career guidance and information, contextual learning, career majors, and experiences such as job shadowing, internships, cooperative education and apprenticeships.

Several challenges are present for these local partnerships as they move into the 21st century. There is the challenge that comes with the end of federal funding for these activities. North Carolina receives its fifth and final year of funding in October 1999. Over the past three years over $20 million in grant funds has been awarded to these partnerships. Those funds have employed coordinators and Job Brokers to help connect the business community with the education community, provided staff development for educators, purchased software for career guidance and decision making, communicated the school-to-work message to the various stakeholders, and developed curriculum.

There is the challenge of finding sufficient numbers of employers who will open their doors to students to experience the work place before graduation. In a 1996 survey, local partnerships reported over 7,000 employers involved with school-to-work. A year later that number had increased to more than 9,000. To reach the goal of a work-based learning experience for all students, many more employers need to participate.

There is the challenge of increasing the number of students who complete a college prep or a college tech prep course of study. For the class of 1997 that was 60%; the 1998 seniors had a 66% completion rate. Over 65% of the jobs in the 21st century may require less than a four year degree but at least one or two years beyond high school. About 20% of the jobs may require a baccalaureate degree.

Local partnership leaders are rising to the challenge of incorporating school-to-work principles in the state's education reform initiative, the ABC's. These leaders are rising to the challenge of sustaining momentum to reach the long-range goals. One such goals is a school-to-work system that is institutionalized in our current public education system.

Cutting-Edge Business Communication Technologies

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Effective business communication is, and will continue to be, a vital part of all business processes. Commonly performed business activities like accounting, marketing, management, planning, research, and training all require a great deal of business communication. Unfortunately, business communication is treated as if it were a process in and of itself. But communication is what keeps business moving. It informs customers and clients, allows colleagues to collaborate and share information, and keeps the community aware of the many products and service options that are available.

Technology has had a tremendous impact on how business communication occurs. The tools that are available have progressed from basic written documents delivered by "snail mail systems" ranging from the Pony Express to the current US Mail. These tools have also included express mail, fax, and plain old telephone service. It is interesting to note that most current literature no longer lists these traditional methods when discussing communication technologies. So what are the communication technologies that our students should be prepared to use in the business environment? This paper is to share some of the current "cutting-edge technologies" and also mention some of the older technologies that are still in common use and some of the technologies that are on the horizon.

Current business communication technologies, called "now-tech" by the Web Technology Group, University of Illinois (1998) include:*Web pages.* Commonly referred to as the World Wide Web (WWW) provides access to informational resources and services—being offered and being sought—on the Internet. Web sites may be restricted to internal organizational use only by creating an intranet. Also, external consumption may be limited to select clients or customers by establishing an extranet.

Web-based forms. These forms provide simple, electronic formats for inserting information for automatic submission, so providing rich, current, and diverse sources of information.

Text chat. This system provides a synchronous medium for online communication. Team members may conduct online conversations in private or semi-private spaces.

Internet pagers. They operate similarly to regular pagers and allow users of similar systems to remain in constant contact with each other. Privacy may be had by blocking specific users and by placing a DND (do not disturb) sign.

Document sharing. Team members can use the Internet infrastructure to synchronously or asynchronously share documents. One of the simplest forms is to attach the document to an e-mail or fax it over the Internet.

Web forums. These enable users to share ideas and work as a team in a structured environment. Communication can be either synchronous or asynchronous.

Streaming media. This is a WWW application in which multimedia files are delivered to a user's computer using a continuous download procedure, allowing the user to access the file as it is being downloaded.

Push. This technology allows files to be delivered to the user's desktop, with or without consent. Push files are usually triggered when the Web pages to which they are linked are accessed.

Voice conferencing. This system allows voice communication from point to point. A typical voice conference is only half-duplex, allowing only one person to talk while the other listens, as with a walkie-talkie. Some systems offer the ability to go into a telephone conference call.

Electronic meeting rooms. Through groupware technology organizations can conduct meetings and work sessions in a virtual meeting room.

Video conferencing. This is an online video and audio based conference that is usually done point to point or between two participants. Advanced systems can handle several simultaneous connections, thus facilitating broad information sharing.

Video phone. This technology allows users to conduct "face-to-face" telephone conversations. The system can also be programmed to send specific images at set times, allowing for remote supervision.

CU-SeeMe. This technology offers an integrated video/audio conferencing system with multi-party capabilities, allowing geographically dispersed team members to use the Internet to complete project work.

Older technologies, "Retro-Tech"are those technologies that have been around for a while and are still being used today. These include e-mail, electronic mailing lists, listservs, news-groups, bulletin boards (bbs), telephone, fax, and "snail mail."

Futuristic technologies, "Future-Tech" are those technologies that are emerging and will probably be in use in the near future. Some examples are habanero, vrml communications, java communications, and other high band-width communications.

What are the implications of communication technologies for the business workforce of the future and for the educators who prepare them? Probably the greatest impact is the overwhelming need for educators to help students develop effective communication skills--reading, writing, speaking, and listening. Students must be helped to develop clear, and concise writing skills, using cutting-edge communication technologies. Awareness, familiarity, and expertise in as many of the current and future technologies as possible will help our students enter the workforce with greater skill and confidence, and a great deal more to leverage when seeking a job or a promotion. These technologies are particularly useful when one considers the growing trend toward telecommuting and telework.

Communication is at the heart of all business activities. Preparing students for the workforce of the future must include training in relevant "Now-Tech" and an introduction to "Future-Tech."

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Computerized Skills Assessment for Business The Importance of Standardized Hiring Procedures

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In this day and age of a "sue-happy" society, individuals need to think twice about decisions and procedures used in hiring. There are many issues to consider.

■Are you using a standard format for each interview?

■Do you ask each potential employee the same questions?

■If you have multiple sites for your business, do you use the same procedures for each office or does everyone "do their own thing"?

■Do you assess an applicant's skills before hiring or simply go by a "gut-feeling"?

■Do you use or want to use a personality test?

■When offering a candidate a job, do you use a standard job offer letter for each employee, signed and agreed to by both parties?

■Do you have a policy manual to refer to if company policies and procedures are challenged?

■Have you ever made a hiring decision, you later regretted?

These are all important questions. In creating an image for your company, uniformity in your hiring procedures is imperative. You do not want a candidate to initiate a lawsuit because of feelings of unfair treatment. If you take pro-active measures before this situation arises, you may help protect yourself and your company against unfair hiring disputes.

There are many tools available to assist you in establishing standardized hiring procedures.

■ Develop within your own company, a **standard interviewing process**. What is it you want to know about potential candidates? Design a list of questions you want to ask. Then use that list for each person. At the top of the list write their name and the date of the interview. Keep that copy in a safe place, so if anyone comes back to question why they did not get hired you can refer to the reasons and answers on this sheet. If you have more than one company site, all locations should use the same process.

■ If you are including testing in your interview process, make sure you use the same tests for each applicant and each position. There are many products on the market to assist you with this. A popular tool used in many Human Resource departments is computerized assessment. (You can review an example of one of these programs at www.opac.com). This saves your Human Resources Director or administrator valuable time because the assessment is automatically administered and scored on the computer. This process also helps define a candidates skills to see if they are capable of handling the job,

therefore, assisting you with your hiring decisions.

There are several different personality tests available. Some tests are more comprehensive than others. The American Psychological Association is a good resource for a list of tests available. You may research this on their Web site at www.apa.org. (Just a few suggestions are the Hogan Personality Test, NEO, and Humetrics.)

■ When offering an applicant a job, it is important to use a standard offer letter. This should state the hours expected to work, the salary or hourly wage, state the fact there is a probationary period and they will be reviewed in 90 days, list the job duties applicants will be expected to perform, and to whom the candidates will report. If you are a "at will" company, state that as well. (This means the length of their employment is not guaranteed, they are free to quit at any time with or without cause, and the company is free to terminate them at any time with or without cause.)

■When creating a Policy Manual, try to think of every possible type of situation that could occur or has occurred and write what the company policies are regarding these situations. For example, maternity leave, illness, discipline measures, etc.

These are just a few ideas for creating standardized hiring procedures.

Best wishes for happy-hiring in 1999!

Cross-Cultural Communication in the Classroom in the New Millennium

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Introduction

To establish equity pedagogy, teachers must adjust to accomplish the desired academic achievement of all students, especially those from diverse backgrounds. Each teacher must evaluate his or her own cultural background to recognize how his or her biases affect interactions with students from different cultures. Knowing something about different cultures will help teachers understand ways students express themselves. Problems and solutions must be identified to provide a comfortable learning environment for each student.

Cultural Background of Students

The first phase involves identifying the cultural background of each student. This leads to examining the needs of each student. Decide which communication techniques may be offensive to certain students. Be prepared to eliminate any "redflag" words, which might offend someone. Instead focus on words that are more conducive to the learning process of all students.

Cross-Cultural Communication Problems

To identify cultural diversity problems in the classroom, the second step is to pinpoint the types of problems that exist, which include the following:

Language–A major cross-cultural communication problem is a lack of language equivalency. Words with two or more meanings produce different results for different people. Each culture must be able to decipher the context in which a word is being used. For example, run means to move fast; to compete for office; a score in baseball; fading of colors, etc. It would be presumptuous to think "run" has the same meanings in other cultures. Language differences are also based on our concepts, experiences, and views. Students from different cultures obviously may have different views.

Two-word verbs have different meanings. An added problem is that some two-word verbs have noun and adjective forms. For example, feedback and feed back. The teacher's responsibility is to make certain each student understands the difference, as well as recognizes when to use each form.

Values–Values are based on what is acquired by a culture. Japanese value deference (yielding in opinion). The Japanese child cannot be stigmatized for practicing his or her culture. Others in the classroom should be aware of this cultural value. Quakers value silence. Yet North

Americans value openness. North Americans may be viewed in a negative tone by students from a culture where silence is valued. Everyone in the classroom needs to be aware of certain cultural differences, to effectively communicate.

Handshakes–Gestures with different meanings impact the communication process in the classroom. North Americans use a firm handshake to express sincerity or other positive attributes, while Middle Easterners and Orientals use a gentle grip. A firm handshake is an offensive gesture for someone from a different culture who lacks the meaning of why North Americans give the firm handshake.

Eye Contact–North Americans use direct eye contact to suggest interest, attentiveness, trustworthiness, etc. The lack of direct eye contact suggests dishonesty, lack of interest, ineffective persuasiveness, etc. On the other hand, Japanese and Koreans prefer indirect eye contact, to avoid sending impolite messages. The teacher has to be tuned in to the message being sent by a student who exhibits direct or indirect eye contact. The communication process is enhanced when there is a high level of understanding between the teacher and the student.

Nodding "Yes" or "No"–Americans are accustomed to using the up and down nod of the head to mean "yes," and the side to side nod of the head to mean "no." However, for Bulgarians and some other cultures, the nods are reversed in meaning. Consider other cultures when using these kinds of gestures.

Solutions to Cross-Cultural Communication Problems

The best way to counteract cross-cultural communication problems is to identify solutions. Some suggestions to alleviate cross-cultural communication problems in the classroom follow:

Group Work–Include group work, which will afford students the opportunity to learn from each other. Students learn to enjoy working with people from other cultures by interacting on given tasks. Some students prefer to share life experiences in a small setting, rather than openly to the entire class. This type of activity may help to close the cultural gap.

Technology and Visual Aids–Use technology and visual aids to share examples from the real world of different cultures. Show videos that include scenes from different cultures. Have students discuss significantly different aspects of the videos.

Words with Clear Meanings–Use examples that translate American idioms into terms understood by everyone. Some examples include—Egg on–provoke; up a tree–in trouble; tie the knot–get married. If meanings are not clear, students may not understand the intended message. To have effective communication, the intended meaning must be received.

Parental Involvement–Plan special activities that include parents. Explain that parental involvement is a tradition in American education. Invite parents to visit the classroom, when specified topics are discussed. Allow parents to share information about their culture. Plan a lunch with dishes from different cultures.

Summary

Strive to provide an equally conducive learning environment for each student. Be prepared for cross-cultural communication in the classroom in the new millennium. Recognize the different cultures represented in the classroom, identify potential communication problems, and plan strategies to eradicate such problems. Incorporate whatever techniques are necessary to

provide the best possible learning environment.

Gender Discrimination in Computer Technology

from the Cradle to Career Choice

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Statement of the Problem, Partial Solutions, and Purpose

Specialists in women's issues are becoming increasingly concerned that females frequently avoid the use of computers for entertainment, study, and careers. Cultural biases that espouse computers as unattractive or difficult for women not only prevent many females from making full use of their intellectual potential in the various computer disciplines but also intensify the world's critical need for additional computer professionals. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, computer careers comprise 10 of the fastest growing occupations from 1996 to 2006—these are occupations that men alone cannot fill.

A review of the literature cites examples of gender discrimination occurring in early childhood, through the adolescence periods of high school and college, and inside the work place. Although the problem is widespread, numerous corporations, organizations, universities, and other entities are beginning to address the problem by sponsoring programs that publicly support women's interest in computing. For example Hewlett-Packard, Digital Equipment Corporation, Sun Microsystems, and Microsoft, along with others, are fostering company forums and national conferences whose primary focus is women's issues in the work place. The National Science Foundation is funding the Center for Research on Parallel Computation which offers motivational programs for grades K-12 students, educators, college students, technical professionals, women, and minorities. Sponsored by the Association of Computing Machinery (ACM) Committee on Women and Minorities is a list called Women in Computing Academic Resource (WCAR). This list is a formal assimilation of universities that are addressing women's issues in computing and implementing programs on campuses to eliminate gender prejudices. There are several additional programs available that offer valuable resources for females of all ages.

It is the purpose of this presentation to encourage business educators to discuss with their students not only the cultural biases facing women in the technological fields but also to explore viable solutions to rectify sexist issues in the business community. Hopefully, this academic concern will accomplish several goals. First, having an understanding of the pettiness and inanity of gender biases may attract more women to accept the challenge of a technical career. Secondly, student awareness of the biases in the male-dominated office culture may prompt male students, once they are professional employees themselves, to assist in creating a more suitable computing work environment for women. Finally, once students become parents, they can assist in breaking down gender biases and encourage and award their female children to engage in the study of computers, mathematics, and science. These enlightened parents could be instrumental in restructuring old norms that will allow the sexes more open-mindedness in their perception of computer technology.

CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT FOR THE WEB

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Introduction

The World Wide Web (Web) is one of the greatest phenomena of modern time. Individuals of all ages and organizations of all types are anxious to gain information from it, be entertained by it, and to become part of it. When people access the Web, they use software packages called Web browsers that enable them to access, view, and navigate through the documents. Web pages are formatted by the browsers, which interpret a language called HyperText Markup Language (HTML).

Not too long ago, developing documents to be published on the Web was a very time consuming and often frustrating task. It required hours of coding and testing using HTML. Many organizations and individuals often hired computer programmers to develop Web sites. Newer versions of applications software, such as Microsoft Office 97, incorporate HTML file conversions that make it much easier to create Web documents. Applications software, when coupled with full Web development software packages such as Microsoft FrontPage 98, makes Web site design, development, and maintenance user-friendly enough that organizations and individuals may undertake Web publishing tasks with little-to-no help from professionals. Many employers expect workers to possess Web development and maintenance skills in addition to traditional technological skills. The business education curriculum is an ideal place for students to acquire those skills.

Microsoft Office 97 Web Publishing

All of the major components of Microsoft Office 97 (Word, Excel, Access, and PowerPoint) allow documents to be saved in HTML format and published on the Web. Wizards provide step-by-step instructions for converting documents to HTML. The Office 97 Web toolbar allows previewing of HTML documents in a browser directly from Office 97.

Linking and embedding concepts are essential to Web development and can be taught using Office 97. Linking and embedding are used to create integrated documents using Word, Excel, Access, and PowerPoint. The integrated documents may be converted to HTML and incorporated into Web sites.

A standard link, such as a link from Excel to Word, establishes a two-way connection between the source program and the destination program. The two-way link allows the user to update information from either program and have it reflected in the other. However, in order to ensure database integrity and enforce database security, all updates to an Access database must take place within Access. For example, a merge application between Word and Access creates a one-way link in which any changes made to the merged data in Word will not be made to the data in Access. Linking is useful when working with information that changes frequently, such as databases, financial data, and charts/graphs based on varying information. All linked files must be saved in the same folder.

Another useful technique for creating integrated documents using the Microsoft Office 97 suite is embedding. Objects embedded within documents do not change when the source document is updated. The objects are duplicated rather than linked from the source. Embedding is easily accomplished using the copy/paste feature. Embedded objects that do not need to change, such as graphics, sound, and charts/graphs based on static information, add interest to a document. Since there is no established link between documents, they do not need to be saved in the same folder.

FrontPage 98 Web Publishing

Developing attractive and functional basic Web sites using FrontPage 98 is almost as easy as using a word processor. Because FrontPage 98 integrates well with the Microsoft Office 97 software suite, documents created for other purposes using Office 97 may be added to a FrontPage 98 Web site, thereby saving many hours of data entry time.

Basic FrontPage 98 Web pages may be developed and tested using a disk-based Web that utilizes the computer's hard drive. The testing of the more advanced features on a Web site, such as user-defined forms and searches, requires a server-based Web that uses web server software. A disk-based Web is accessed using a drive letter on the computer whereas a server-based Web is accessed using a URL with "http:" protocol.

If business education classes do not have access to a server-based Web, students may use the disk-based Web approach to design sites that incorporate multimedia (text, graphics, sound, and video) elements. When coupled with Microsoft Office 97, FrontPage 98 provides a new and exciting learning experience for students. Students enjoy the class and are motivated not only because of the multimedia content but also because they see how they can become part of the "intriguing" Web.

Conclusion

Since many of the software tools that are already used in business education classes are capable of producing documents in HTML format, it makes sense for business educators to take advantage of the phenomenal interest in the Web. Integrating Web development into the business education curriculum is a way to "freshen up" traditional business courses and perhaps even capture the attention of non-business students.

Teaching And Learning Styles Of Community College Business Instructors And Their Students: Relationship To Student Performance And Instructor Evaluations

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Business educators traditionally look for ways to make their instruction more relevant and meaningful for students. Among business educators, numerous teaching styles are used, and in some cases the teaching style of the instructor does not match teaching styles preferred by all students. Henson and Borthwick (1984) asserted that instructors may teach using the same methods such as lectures and discussion groups, but their teaching styles can still be different. For example, in using the discussion group method, one instructor's teaching style might be "child centered--a task structure is provided by the instructor with the students given options according to their interests" (p. 6). Another instructor's teaching style might be "task oriented--specifically planned tasks associated with some appropriate materials" (p. 6). Conti (1985) suggested that one teaching style might not be appropriate for all students and situations. He found that the teacher-centered style produced the most student learning when preparing students to take the General Educational Development test. This is in contrast to the learner-centered mode of instruction as proposed by the adult education literature as being the most effective mode of instruction with adult learners.

According to Vogt and Holder (1988-89) business education majors are likely to be linear learners. They prefer structure and need help in organizing. As opposed to lectures, harmonious group projects, and well-defined goals, business education majors prefer direct experiences.

PURPOSE OF STUDY

In the field of business education, research has not been reported that addresses the match between the teaching styles of business instructors and the learning styles of their students. This match is of concern for improving learning in specific business education content areas such as keyboarding, word processing, and office technology.

The purposes of this study were to identify the teaching styles of business instructors and the learning styles of their students in specific content areas, to determine if a match existed between the two, and to determine if relationships existed between style match and student success as indicated by course grades and final exam scores and between style match and student evaluations of instructors.

Methodology

The participants were 5 business instructors and 99 students from two community colleges in Southwest Virginia. The ages of the student participants ranged from 18 to 62 with the average age being 35. The non-probability, incidental sampling technique was utilized. Students completed an instructor evaluation form. Instructors provided students' course grades, final exam scores and grade point averages. The Canfield Instructional Styles Inventory and the Canfield Learning Styles Inventory were used to identify the teaching styles of business

instructors and the learning styles of their students. Analysis of variance was used to determine the existence of relationships between students' success as indicated by course grades, final exam scores, and evaluations of their instructors and a match between teaching style and learning style.

Findings

The instructors favored the Organization, People, Direct Experience, and A-Influence scales of the Canfield Instructional Styles Inventory, implying that they present material to their students in a clear, logical, and organized manner. Opportunities are created for students to interact in activities that relate to real-world experiences. Their least preferred instructor scales were Competition, Numeric, Reading, and D-Influence. On the Canfield Learning Styles Inventory, the student participants favored the Organization, People, Direct Experience and B-Expectation scales, implying that they like clearly organized and meaningful course work that requires hands-on or performance situations. Further, they like interaction with the instructor and classmates involving activities closely related to real-world experiences. Their least preferred scales were Independence, Numeric, Reading, and D-Expectation.

In this study, 36% of the students' preferred learning styles matched the instructors' preferred teaching styles. The outcomes of the analysis of variance revealed that there was no significant relationship between learning style/teaching style match and student success as indicated by course grades and final exam scores. Further, there was no significant relationship between learning style/teaching style match and higher evaluations of instructors. However, there was a significant relationship between course grades, final exam scores, instructor evaluations, and GPA as would be expected. Students who were categorized as high achievers according to GPA scored higher on course grades and final exam scores and evaluated instructors higher than those categorized as low achievers.

Discussion

The participants in this study were all within the moderate ranges on the scales as defined by the Canfield instruments. There were no instructor or student participants in the extreme areas on the scales. Since the average age of the student participants was 35, this may be due in part to the fact that learning styles have been mediated as a result of life experiences.

Recommendations for Further Research

This study should be replicated in other educational institutions with a larger population to compare with the findings of this study and previous research. The courses used in this study focused primarily on courses involving the learning of computer applications. Instructor teaching styles may be different for business classes that do not involve total hands-on computer usage. Thus, a similar study should be conducted using other business courses such as office administration, writing for business, introduction to math, editing, and accounting to determine if differences exist in learning styles and teaching styles between content areas.

Conclusions

Inquiry into teaching styles and learning styles are considerations for business educators. Research on the implications of teaching style/learning style match are variables that need further study for future planning in the areas of curriculum development. Such study may serve to enhance the teaching and learning process so as to more effectively meet the needs of

individual learners.

Streaming Audio/Video, MSCamcorder, and Distance Education: A Winning Combination

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Introduction

In response to North Carolina General Assembly HB 230 (1995) the Department of Business, Vocational, and Technical Education (BVTE) began a pilot project with Carteret Community College and Craven County Community College fall semester, 1996. The project goal was to deliver cost-effective undergraduate degree programs to students who would otherwise not have access to that educational opportunity. Furthermore, these goals were to be accomplished by (1) *utilizing distance delivery strategies* and (2) *offering programs based upon needs identified in "underserved" areas.*

As a result of a needs-based analysis, the BVTE pilot program was developed in Information Processing/Administrative Services (ASIP). The ASIP program is a four-year BSBE program based on developing communications skills, management skills, administrative office skills, and computer skills. Consequently, the program was a natural progression for students coming from community college programs in business administration, business technology, and administrative office technology. With approximately half of the major courses in the program being hands-on computer courses, the information processing program was ideally suited for electronic delivery. Twenty-five students participated in the pilot.

Technology Components of the Pilot Program

After exploring various methods of delivering the program to the remote sites, the Internet seemed like an ideal delivery system for the project since it is an inexpensive medium that can provide interactive desktop video conferencing in real time as well as asynchronous delivery. Therefore, the pilot program was designed to take advantage of Internet technology to provide instruction for the students at the remote sites in Morehead City and New Bern

The Host Computer

Initially, the primary Internet tools used in the project included a web server, an e-mail server, a file transfer protocol (FTP) server, and a CU-SeeMe reflector site. A Pentium™ computer equipped with requisite server software served as a central file distribution system for the project.

Web Server

Web server software made it possible to provide access to basic instructional materials that are necessary for the program. Consequently, a homepage provided student access to the course syllabus, other basic information pertinent to the course, weekly assignments, and any general information that needed to be disseminated among the class participants..

E-Mail Server

A second function of the host computer was to provide e-mail service for the students. Consequently, e-mail server software provided e-mail accounts and service so that students could easily maintain communications with the course instructors as well as other students. Each student was provided with a copy of e-mail software to facilitate communication from home, work, or the remote sites.

FTP Server

An FTP server enabled students to easily download and upload files that were necessary for completing their assignments. For example, PowerPoint presentations and other document files were prepared by the instructors and placed on the server for students to download. The students could then peruse the presentations or documents on their own or in a group as part of the formal instruction that the instructor provided on a weekly basis. Also, the FTP server made it possible for students to transmit data files of completed class assignments back to the instructor at the university where In-Out boxes were set up on the server for file exchange.

CU-SeeMe

One final Internet component in the project was CU-SeeMe. CU-SeeMe provided several features that contribute interactive resources to the project.

The first, and most essential component, was interactive audio and video. A multimedia computer at each remote site was equipped with a Quick Cam video camera that provided the instructor with live audio and video during the class sessions. The instructor's multimedia computer was also equipped with a video camera. This provided for live interactive activity among the students and the instructor.

A second component of the CU-SeeMe software was a *"chat"* feature that allowed the participants and instructor to type messages back and forth. This feature was extremely useful in situations where technical difficulties with the audio-video components made it necessary to rely on the chat feature to communicate.

The third feature of CU-SeeMe was the White Pine Board (*white board*). The white board is a bulletin board program that operates with "Paint"-type tools and transmits its contents to all sites. Files can be loaded into the white board, text and graphic objects can be pasted onto the white board, or the white board can be used like a chalkboard to type and draw on.

Finally, CU-SeeMe provided several options in communicating among sites. For example, it provided a direct connect for two computers, which is similar to one person calling another by phone. For interaction among three or more classrooms (or sites) a reflector site was established enabling up to eight computers to participate in desktop video conferencing.

Other Components

Finally, each site was equipped with a high-intensity LCD projection system that projected the computer display onto a screen so that all students could see the instructor, students at the other sites, the chat window or white board. The students were encouraged to actively use CU-SeeMe to ask questions of the instructor and to interact with the other students in group dynamics. A combination scanner, printer, and fax machine was also available at each site.

In conjunction with the communications technology, several software programs were used to facilitate instruction. For example, by using the revision tools in Microsoft® Word, instructors could show changes that should be made in documents for business communication courses or document processing courses. CDs for Windows® 95/98 and Windows® 95/97 Office were used to demonstrate procedures for using applications software, and MSCamcorder was used to record activity on a computer screen, complete with sound annotations, to provide instruction in microcomputer applications courses. PowerPoint presentations were transformed into web pages or placed in the FTP Out Box for distribution. Video clips were developed by the instructor and placed in the student out boxes for distribution as well. A CD writer made it possible to digitize an entire lecture or activity and create a CD that could be electronically or physically delivered to the remote sites.

Administration of the Program

The pilot was administered by the ECU Continuing Studies office with a remote office on the Carteret campus. The administrative staff, consisting of a director and an administrative support person, managed the project. The director traveled to the Craven campus twice a week and once a week to the ECU campus.

The pilot was designed to provide all students the opportunity of completing their program within a three-year time period. Two BVTE content courses were offered each semester including each of the two summer sessions. Instructors who participated in the program worked as a team and periodically visited each site to ensure that a personal student/teacher relationship was maintained. In conjunction with the core content courses, one other required course (such as management, psychology, etc.) was provided each semester by other ECU departments. Finally, if the pilot students had not yet completed their AS degrees or if they were lacking required freshman or sophomore courses, they had an opportunity to take those classes concurrently at their community colleges while taking ECU courses.

New Cycle Evolution of the Project

The success of the pilot resulted in a new cycle being started Spring Semester, 1999, with Pamlico Community College and College of the Albemarle (COA) at Manteo being added to the service area. Twenty-five new students were admitted to the program. As a result of attempting to meet the needs of the students and developing curriculum materials that would preserve the integrity of the degree program, faculty continuously experimented with new delivery strategies as Internet technology improved. Consequently, one new development of Internet technology that was implemented during the pilot duration was streaming audio and streaming video. Microsoft® Camcorder (MSCam) was also developed so that it could be utilized in the delivery strategies.

Streaming Audio/Video

While both traditional WAV audio and AVI and MPG video had been used as part of the pilot, these formats were not really appropriate for the Internet delivery at modem speeds considering that 1 minute of radio-quality WAV format sound requires 1.4 kb or storage space and 10 seconds of postage-stamp sized video at reduced frame rates of 3-5 frames per second (fps) requires 1.4 kb of storage space. Simply stated, larger file formats require longer transmission times. Since swift Internet transmission is dependent upon special text file formats

and compressed graphics formats, new audio and video formats were necessary and ultimately developed to compress sound and video files for Internet delivery. Consequently, RealAudio (RM), has been developed for Internet delivery. It allows the user to begin listening or/or watching just as soon as enough data has been received to ensure that a continuous stream of sound or video will play uninterrupted. *(Without streaming technology, previous sound and video formats only provided for files to be transmitted from one location to the other and then played when the last byte of data had arrived. This means that if it takes 5 or 10 minutes to transmit the file, the user has to wait until the file arrives in its entirety before the user is able to play it. With streaming technology, the user waits only momentarily before the file begins playing.)* Consequently, streaming technology provides for audio and video files to be incorporated into the web pages where they are served by a RM server to numerous users simultaneously. Another use of the RM files is that both audio WAV and video AVI or MPG files can be encoded from either a live source or file for FTP distribution. Consequently, 30 minutes of audio can be compressed into 1.4 kbs of space compared to the traditional 1 minute of WAV audio requiring the same space. Thus, RM files can be linked to PowerPoint presentations and distributed via FTP that now provide complete audio annotations. Students simply download the files and have a detailed lecture, a complete lecture outline, and sound or video annotation. Students can also produce their own audio or video reports that are posted on the web as routine class assignments using the RM streaming technology.

Transition from Site Cluster Groups to Independent Student Study

With the advent of steaming audio and streaming video and their incorporation into the delivery system combined with the fact that many students have acquired computers at home, the initial cluster groups eventually transformed into a system whereas students could stay at home and continue their coursework asynchronously as opposed to working synchronously in real time. (The instruction is put on line, students retrieve it and respond, at leisure.) In the new cycle, CU-SeeMe has been abandoned because of its expense and replaced with NetMeeting which is provided with Windows 98 as part of the operating system. Consequently, students can still achieve video conferencing with instructors for question-and-answer sessions or advisement by going "online" at designated class time. Chat and white board functions are also provided by NetMeeting.

Since the dynamics of the new cycle required less cluster time at the remote sites with smaller audiences, the projection systems have been replaced with 36" Gateway Destination XTV™ systems at each of the four sites. The new systems use remote mice and keyboards which provides for interaction by all students by simply passing the keyboard or mouse around the room if an activity requires students to convene at the remote sites. However, since the majority of the students work at home and are dependent upon "at home" instruction, another strategy was developed for courses that require the operation and use of the various computer programs used in the curriculum. MSCam is now utilized more extensively than before by allowing the instructor to capture and annotate procedures used for computer manipulation, compressing the screen video into EXE files, and serving the files on the web server for download. Students, download the files and instantaneously receive demonstrations of any process necessary for learning to manipulate Windows software programs. For evaluating homework, the MSCam is also used to capture a critique session from the instructor.

Conclusion

The BVTE program has provided the opportunity for ECU, Carteret, Craven, Pamlico, and COA Community Colleges to become partners in an exciting venture. Using new Internet technology

has truly been an exiting and challenging experience for the instructors as well as the students. By participating in this program, the BVTE faculty has gained valuable experience in developing and delivering distance education courses using Internet technology. Since junior/senior level courses for the entire Information Processing/Administrative Services curriculum have been developed to use the distance education technology strategies, classes can now be offered to regular students on campus and at home as well using the same strategies and technologies. Components of the graduate program as well as the teacher education licensure programs of the BVTE Department now include distance education delivery to facilitate increasingly diverse student needs throughout the state.

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