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Taking K-12 to the Cloud: 
Building an Online Masters Program

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Taking K-12 to the Cloud: Building an Online Masters Program

This pilot research study focused on three overarching research questions related to the implementation of cloud computing tools in a southeast Texas university online Educational Technology Leadership master’s program and the potential transference of their use to K-12 instruction. All Educational Technology Leadership Master’s graduates were invited to respond to a survey regarding three topic areas. The first focus was to identify specific online teaching strategies utilized by educational technology master’s graduates. The second significant theme was to identify video-based and cloud computing tools used in the Educational Technology Leadership master’s program and replicated in graduates’ K-12 classrooms. Lastly, graduates responded to questions regarding the personal use of web 2.0 e-portfolios and transference into K-12 instruction. The results were primarily used to improve the survey content and process.

Background and Literature Review

According to the Sloan Consortium report, *Online Nation: Five Years of Growth in Online Learning*, Allen and Seaman (2007) found that almost two-thirds of all post-secondary institutions offered distance education courses. The researchers attributed this finding to the needs of the institutions to remain competitive and to meet the diverse needs of today’s busy adult students. Historically, teaching was defined as a face-to-face interaction between the instructor and one or more students; but with the advent of the Internet Information Age, school systems began to utilize internet-based tools to reduce face-to-face costs for education and to globally reach larger student populations in both higher education and K-12. This dramatic change created a need to implement varied teaching strategies incorporating a variety of technology tools for instruction and assessment for online learning. The literature review for this pilot research study addressed five topics: online learning, online teaching strategies, online interactions, web 2.0 tools, and electronic portfolios.

Online Learning

William A. Draves (2002) reported that significant societal changes in an Internet Age economy continue to pressure adults to engage in lifelong learning. Whether learning occurs vicariously or more formally, online learning experiences continue to particularly grow at rapid rates in higher education. In the National Online Learners Priorities Report (Noel-Levitz, Inc., 2009) higher education professionals reported that students continued to seek online learning as options as a flexible way to meet program requirements while balancing work and home commitments. To meet this demand, serving these students has become a priority for colleges and universities. According to Granger and Benke (1998), the majority of distance learners were adults beyond the traditional age of undergraduate students. They returned to education for a particular reason: to qualify for promotion, to prepare for a new job, because their employer expected it, or as a personal goal. These learners were goal oriented, (obtaining their degree or certificate), task-oriented, had busy lives already, and their education competed with jobs, childcare, and household responsibilities. Furthermore, higher education professionals (Noel-Levitz, Inc., 2009) identified additional factors that influence learners’ decisions to enroll in online programs. The factors included: convenience, work schedule, reputation of institution, cost and future employment opportunities. Moreover, Granger and Benke (1998) reported that although the distance learners brought specific skills, such as critical reading and thinking, and prior knowledge to the educational experience they still needed mentoring in time management and study skills.
**Online Teaching Strategies**

Distance learners have been identified by researchers as actively engaged and self-motivated individuals requiring instructors to investigate and implement diverse approaches to teaching and learning in an online environment (Noel-Levitz Inc., 2009). Traditionally, online teaching has heavily depended upon asynchronous, time-delayed interactions between students and instructors; whereas synchronous conferencing resources often supplement asynchronous interactions by providing socializing experiences, brainstorming, virtual office hours, and generally building connections between online learning participants and the instructor, especially within higher education settings (Branon & Essex, 2001). However, both asynchronous and synchronous interactions offered opportunities for online learners to access content in motivating and challenging ways.

Through the use of asynchronous or synchronous communication tools, engaging interactivity promoted learning (Lavooy & Newlin, 2008). Online learning environments have been touted as significant systems for collaboration to support personal dialogue, social interactions, and shared content construction (Garrison, Anderson, & Archer, 2000; Park & Bonk, 2007; Stahl, 2000). Often, online learning systems provided a series of online tools which promoted thoughtful reflection, analysis, and collaborative writing or project development by individual or groups of students (Park & Bonk, 2007). To better understand the processes of students engaged in online courses, Salmon (2000) developed a five-stage model to examine interaction and key processes which included access and motivation; online socialization; information exchange; knowledge construction; and development. The Salmon model serves as one model for analyzing and describing the manner in which instructors implemented teaching strategies to support student learning. Through conscious planning, the online instructor may become more of a facilitator and instructor-student interactions may occur on a one-to-one, small group, or whole-class basis. Furthermore, whether interaction occurs through text, video, audio, or virtually, learners are exposed to a variety of socialization and community building experiences that also promote learning (Wallace, 2003).

**Online Interactions**

Because interactivity is an important factor in online learning, this interactivity can be seen in the following four classifications (Davidson-Shivers & Rasmussen, 2006; Moore, 1989): (a) student-to-student interaction with students working together in large or small groups or in pairs; (b) student-to-instruction interaction with students working with materials provided by or referenced by the instructor; (c) student-to-learning management system with students navigating through the online instruction, completing and submitting the assignments, and tracking their progress and grades; and (d) perhaps most importantly student-to-instructor interaction with the two working and communicating together. Students gained clarity of course content including assignments when interacting with the instructor as well as getting to know the instructor personally (Thurmond & Wambach, 2004).

Both asynchronous and synchronous tools are used for communication between student and faculty (Lavooy & Newlin, 2008). Communication tools included web video and audio conferences, chats, threaded discussions, comments on assignments and in grade books, and announcements. Using a number of communication tools increases instructor interactions while also increasing the time and effort of teaching online (Bonk, 2004; Cavanaugh, 2005; Pattillo 2005). Additionally, teaching online required instructors to engage in continuous learning as “facilitating learning online required an evolving set of teaching skills that embrace Web 2.0 technologies” (Oomen-Early, Bold, Wiginton, Gallien, & Anderson, 2008, p. 267).
Web 2.0 Tools
By infusing Web 2.0 tools into the teaching and learning environment, student engagement and success has been elevated. The evolution of the Internet, the introduction of mobile devices, the use of Web 2.0 tools, the rise of virtual worlds, and the development of simulations has barely been tapped in educational settings. We expect an increasing infusion of these learning tools will continue. Furthermore, we are only beginning to understand the potential impact on teaching and learning.

De Freitas and Conole (2010) suggest the following technology trends have the potential to significantly impact education:

- A shift towards ubiquitous and networked technologies
- The emergence of context and location aware devices
- The increasingly rich and diverse different forms of representations and stimulatory environments possible
- A trends towards more mobile and adaptive and adaptive devices
- A technological infrastructure which is global, distributed and interoperable

Lemke, Koughlin, Garcia, Reifsneider, and Bas (2009) acknowledged that administrators are confused and concerned about Web 2.0 and issues of safety and security. While the administrators value the importance of Web 2.0 in the learning environment, they still have anxiety about its use in schools. Although most of the issues were not serious in nature, the researchers found that the administrators still contend that Web 2.0 should be limited and filtered. Additionally, the researchers discovered that the existing acceptable use polices in many districts did not contain references to Web 2.0. However, an exemplary use of Web 2.0 tools was found at Columbia University. Students regularly study the power of social bookmarking, wikis, blogs and other Web 2.0 tools. Furthermore, they use them extensively in their own coursework (Mejias, 2006).

The varied uses of Web 2.0 applications for education, business, and personal needs set the stage for examining its effectiveness as an education assessment tool. The need for individuals to network, but yet document learning and life events continues to compel researchers to examine e-portfolios for assessment in higher education and K-12 (Barrett, 2004; Cambridge, 2010). According to Cambridge (2010), Web 2.0 tools paired with a variety of mobile technologies are now being used to “capture a comprehensive record of an individual’s life” (p.194).

Electronic Portfolios
The uses of student portfolios are receiving attention, in the higher education literature (Campbell, 2004; Costantino & De Lorenzo, 2002), and within other professions (Cournoyer & Stanley, 2002). Research indicates that portfolios promote the integration of theory, action, self-reflection, group learning, and assessment, essential elements of professional education. The introduction of ePortfolios into higher education can be categorized as a tectonic shift in the higher education environment (Yancey, 2009). Portfolios have evolved and are recognized as a collection of personal information and artifacts for the purpose of documenting a person's achievements and knowledge in a certain area. An increasingly frequent use of portfolios is to assemble and display a person's work as part of an application process for work or educational purposes.

Ring and Foti (2003) discuss the use of electronic portfolios (ePortfolios) in higher education as a way to evaluate student learning. The ability of students to exercise their voices in presenting and representing their learning has been found to be a significant motivator for
students to do their best work (Cambridge, Cambridge & Yancey, 2009). ePortfolios provide a means for collecting assigned work, as well as students’ accomplishments in non-classroom settings, so that faculty and others can assess it and aggregate or disaggregate the results depending on the purposes of the assessment. As institutions begin to appraise the value of the education they provide, it is evident that ePortfolios have altered how faculty teach and how students learn.

According to Batson (2002), electronic portfolios have a greater potential to alter higher education at its very core than any other technology application known thus far. The creating, evidencing, connecting, and reflecting involved in ePortfolios engage students in new and beneficial ways – especially when the portfolio provides a space for student-informed participation (Yancey, 2009).

Batson (2002) reported that student engagement is a key component of successful portfolio development. The inability to get students engaged or excited about their ePortfolios will result in a poor implementation. From the students’ perspective the ability to personalize their ePortfolio contributes to their motivation to work on it throughout the year as they engage in the process (Ring, Weaver, & Jones, 2008).

The use of Web 2.0 technologies provides a pathway to employ cloud computing solutions that are powerful and flexible examples while meeting ePortfolio requirements. Technologically, the development and construction of ePortfolios must be as user friendly as common social networking sites such as Facebook or web-authoring platforms like Google Sites. In decades to come, the nature and significance of ePortfolios will be determined by the responsiveness of ePortfolios to adapt and evolve in regards to the opportunities and challenges of the emerging Web 2.0 landscape (Barrett, 2006; Xuesong, Olfman, & Ractham, 2007).

**Reflection**

Increasingly, a significant number of colleges and universities are offering courses in the general education curricula that include critical reflection. Jacoby (2011) contended that critical reflection is not a neat, structured process. Often, this process becomes messy and leads the reflecting into areas that provide more questions than answers. Faculty may find this a challenging process since the process opens questions where they are not necessarily the expert. Furthermore, as students analyze and question their experiences, critical reflection adds rigor and depth to their learning (Jacoby, 2011).

Nine different studies (Bixler, 2008; Chang, 2007; Chung, Chung & Severance, 1999; Crippen & Earl, 2007; Nelson, 2007; Saito & Miwa, 2007; Shen, Lee & Tsai, 2007) researched the aspects of learner reflection in a web-based learning environment in order to determine the extent of improved learning outcomes. The studies determined that students who used tools or features that allowed them to engage in reflective practices about their own learning, experienced positive learning outcomes. Essentially, the evidence provides us insight into the practices of self-reflection, self-regulation and self-monitoring. It is apparent that more positive learning outcomes are a direct result of these practices.

**Conclusion**

Leading in the 21st century will depend upon how school administrators, not teachers, set the tone for internet use at school. If administrators want change to happen, then they must have a vision for the future (Fryer, 2008). Administrators do not have to be techies. They know a lot about teaching and learning and learning styles. Now it is time to learn about technology tools which in this Information age are used as methods and strategies to meet the different learning styles. Then they can support the teachers, students, parents, communities and vast audiences.
Moving forward, helping the change process, meeting the needs and interest of students and teachers can only help school reform efforts while enhancing, enriching and increasing academic performance.

In conclusion, it is evident there is a vast amount of information being written and published about the way Web 2.0 tools are changing education and learning practices. These changes in practice embrace the shifting from the web as a content repository and an information retrieval mechanism to a web that enables more social mediation and user generated content. This evolving social interface of Web 2.0 offers unique ways for connecting people and sharing and discussing ideas. There is little doubt it can be used to cultivate the development of new communities of inquiry and exploration or can be used to support and augment existing communities.

**Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to investigate three specific components of the Lamar University online Educational Technology Leadership master’s program and its potential transference to K-12 instruction.

**Methodology**

The advent of Web 2.0 tools has significantly impacted the way educational technology leaders learn, communicate, and assess growth. This pilot study focused on the use of Web 2.0 tools to develop e-portfolios in an online Educational Technology Leadership (ETL) Master’s program at a southeast Texas university. The pilot study results were primarily used to gain information to improve the efficiency of the main survey.

**Research Questions**

The overarching research questions governing the ongoing 3-year study are:

- How has the participation of an ETL master’s candidate in an e-portfolio process contributed to the implementation of e-portfolio practices with k-12 students?
- What video-based and cloud computing examples did you use in your Educational Technology Leadership masters program?
- What are the best teaching and learning strategies for online learning that you used in your University master program?

**Design and Instrument**

A quantitative research design, using survey methodology was selected for this pilot study. The pilot survey instrument was developed based on a review of the literature covering the online teaching strategies, use of Web 2.0 tools, and electronic portfolios. The pilot survey consisted of two main parts. The first portion contained demographic information. The second included Likert-type items requiring respondents to choose one option that best aligned with their view on a continuum from strongly agree to strongly disagree and open-ended questions that allowed for extended responses.

Survey items were scored on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. Higher rating responses indicated the use of online teaching strategies, Web 2.0 tools, and electronic portfolios in K-12 schools. A panel of experts, including university professors and educational professionals from the field, provided face validity for the instrument.

**Data Collection and Participants**

The link to the pilot survey was distributed through email to 138 graduates of an online educational technology leadership master’s program. Forty one graduates or 30 percent responded to the survey. Included in the email was the link to the web-based survey developed and accessible through SurveyMonkey™.
Part One of the survey included demographic information about the respondents. Of the 41 participants, 17% were age 20-30, 31.7% were 31-40, 36.6% were 41-50, and 14.7% were older than 50. Of the total respondents, 82.9% were females and 17.1% were males. Thirty-six or 87.8% of the participants were Caucasian, 9.8% were Hispanic and 2.4% were African-American. Respondents represented 43.9% K-12 teachers, 31.7% non-classroom teachers, such as technology or library specialists, and 25.4% other roles. Of the 41 respondents, 46.3% had 0-10 years of teaching experience, 39.0% had 11-20 years experience, and 14.7% had over 20 years of experience.

Part Two of the survey was scored on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. Survey responses (N=41) addressed three overarching statements with several ancillary statements embedded that focused on online teaching strategies, the use of Web 2.0 tools, and the use of an electronic portfolio. Survey responses tended to cluster around the higher range with a few exceptions. The means of the Likert scale questions along with the extended questions assisted the researchers in addressing more succinctly the research questions.

**Delimitations and Limitations**

Delimitations of the pilot study included exclusion of participants other than the university educational technology leadership master’s program August 2010 and December 2010 graduates. Other delimitations included the use of only one method of inviting graduates to participate. This method included the use of current university email contact information. Graduates were sent three email requests to participate in the web-based survey developed and accessed through SurveyMonkey™. The limitation of the study included the voluntary participation, the knowledge-base of the use of web-based surveys and data were collected at one point in time and reflected the experiences and biases of the respondents.

**Data Analysis and Findings**

Mean differences of three Likert-scale statements and sub-statements were analyzed and only significant findings discussed. The analysis and findings will be delineated by topics with online teaching strategies, use of Web 2.0 tools, and use of electronic portfolio as the topics of interest.

The following statement addressed online teaching strategies. Please rate these statements regarding the use of online teaching strategies and highlighted seven areas (online learning for students, online learning for professional development, use of video tools in teaching and learning, use of web conferencing for student/faculty interaction, use of project-based learning, use of collaborative tools such as Google Docs, and use of discussion groups) to better understand the implementation of online teaching strategies. Several interesting findings surfaced such as the implementation of online learning for students, the use of web conferencing, and the use of discussion groups in the content area scored the lowest on the Likert-scale with means between 2.55 and 3.39.

These findings are contradictory to the research of Davidson-Shivers and Rasmussen (2006) that report most important to online interactions is the student-to-instructor activity. The web conferences, discussion groups, and online learning are pivotal to improving teacher-to-student interactions and need to be implemented in K-12 school districts. More effort by the graduates is needed to incorporate these strategies into the school districts. Another finding from this section is the use of project-based learning and the use of video tools for teaching and learning scored the highest on the Likert-scale with means between 3.63 and 4.07. Wallace (2003) emphasized the importance of these two strategies and they are supported by the graduates of the program.
The following statement addressed Web 2.0 tools. Please rate these statements regarding the use of Web 2.0 tools and highlighted five areas (available for staff, available for students, students use Web 2.0 in the classroom, use of Web 2.0 for teaching and learning, and support of colleagues in the use of Web 2.0) to better understand the implementation of the use of Web 2.0 tools. Findings in this section were very consistent with the means ranging from 3.32-4.24. Interestingly, the support of colleagues’ use of Web 2.0 was the highest while students’ use of Web 2.0 in the classroom was the lowest at 3.32. This somewhat contradicts each other as it seems the support for implementation of Web 2.0 is there; however, teachers are not allowing student use of Web 2.0 tools in the classroom for teaching and learning. As Lemke, Kouglan, Garcia, Reifsneider, and Bas (2009) opined, teachers and administrators understand the importance of implementing Web 2.0 in the classroom, yet they still have anxiety about fully implementing this practice. The graduates practice supports this research and more emphasis needs to be placed in tearing down this barrier.

The following statement addressed the use of electronic portfolios. Please rate these statements regarding the use of electronic portfolios and highlighted six areas (students should use a digital portfolio for assessment, use of traditional paper-based portfolio for assessment, use of digital portfolios as a form of assessment, teachers use of a professional digital portfolio, I have a professional digital portfolio, and maintenance or update of my Lamar University internship e-portfolio) to better understand the implementation of the e-portfolio. The key to successful portfolio development is student engagement (Batson, 2002). In support of Batson, a major finding from this section is the discrepancy between the highest score on the Likert-scale and the lowest score on the Likert-scale. The statement, I believe students should use digital portfolios for assessment received a mean of 4.32. The statement, students in my school or district use digital portfolios as a form of assessment received a mean of 2.63. Obviously, there is a disconnect between the engagement process of getting students involved in developing a portfolio. As teachers become more comfortable themselves in the development of a digital portfolio (M=3.97), the transference of the use of digital portfolios for both students and teachers will improve. Evidence suggests that self-regulation and self-monitoring can improve learning and teaching and more effort is needed in implementing eportfolios to incorporate these strategies into the classroom (Nelson, 2007).

Summary

All Educational Technology Leadership graduates were invited to participate in a web-based survey regarding three topic areas related to the online Master’s program: online teaching strategies, the use of Web 2.0 tools, and the use of electronic portfolios. Of the potential participant pool, 41 responded to each of the survey items. Demographically, 68% of the respondents ranged in ages from 31-50 with 82.9% female, 87% Caucasian, and 12.2% Hispanics or African American. Furthermore, the teaching experiences varied from 0 to over 20 years experience with 43.9% of the respondents employed as K-12 classroom teachers and 31.7% represented by educators in non-classroom settings such as technology specialists or librarians.

Several interesting findings emerged from the survey responses. First, the online learning teaching strategies component revealed a low implementation of some strategies such as web conferencing and discussion boards with K-12 students. However, respondents rated online project-based learning and video techniques as significant program content worthy of implementation in K-12 classrooms. Next, the use of Web 2.0 tools appeared to be highly supported by graduates, but it seemed there was limited use with K-12 students. Lastly,
graduates indicated strong support for the use of electronic portfolios with K-12 students, yet these data collected from the survey showed little use of electronic portfolios with K-12 students. Information gained from the pilot research study was used to inform programmatic practice and content. Furthermore, the results guided Educational Technology Leadership faculty to refine the survey content and process. The revised survey will be implemented with future graduates.

Recommendations

Based upon the survey results, there appeared to be a need to encourage program graduates to implement online teaching strategies in K-12 classrooms. Furthermore, project-based learning and the use of video tools should be expanded to include ways to share product examples with fellow graduates and colleagues in K-12 schools. Additionally, respondents expressed interest in expanding the use of Web 2.0 tools for use with K-12 students, but administrative barriers and policies restricting Web 2.0 resource access required further investigation. Lastly, graduates seemed highly supportive of electronic portfolio usage for teachers. More professional development and research may be needed to develop effective ways to transfer electronic portfolio practices to K-12 instruction.

References


Involving Parents of Students with Special Needs: How Administrators and Teachers Can Move Beyond the IEP Meeting

Harvey R. Allen
Wendy A. Harriott
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Involving Parents of Students with Special Needs: How Administrators and Teachers Can Move Beyond the IEP Meeting

The concept of collaborative partnerships between parents and schools in the design and implementation of special education programs is one of six areas contained in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), 2004 and the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), 2001 (Blue-Banning, et al., 2004). Although we have laws that support this partnership in the education of children with disabilities, researchers indicate that families are rarely actively involved in educational planning and the educational community (Geenen, Powers, & Lopez-Vasquez, 2001).

Definition of Parent Involvement

Parental involvement includes the many types of contacts parents have with school programs. Parent involvement includes parents who regularly inquire about their children at pick-up times, those who write letters in support of school funding, and those who volunteer their time during and after school. When administrators and teachers think about family involvement, they typically think about activities like parents volunteering to assist with after-school events. However, the definition of parent involvement can also be expanded to include providing opportunities for parents to spend more time with their children, learn more about children’s schooling, and participate in decision making within the school. This expanded definition of family involvement provides the opportunity to reach, engage, and support a larger range of parents and in particular, the parents of children with special needs (Kahli et al., 2006).

Benefits of Parent Involvement

In examining the level of parent participation, when schools initiate parent involvement, this is more important than family characteristics such as parental education, family size, marital status, socioeconomic level, or student grade level (U.S. Department of Education, 1994). Therefore, it is important for school leaders and teachers to promote parental involvement frequently and consistently.

In order to promote parent involvement, principals and teachers must first consider the environment. Do the school and classrooms establish an inviting climate? Does the school climate communicate that this is a place where families are valued and welcome? (Knopf & Swick, 2008). The messages conveyed to parents by the physical space, the tone of communications between school and parents, and the frequency and consistency of communication all tell families if they truly are welcome to become involved (Knopf & Swick). Further, parent involvement will occur and may increase when parents see that the school is working toward their unique interests and the interests of their children. When parents are not involved, the school, teachers, students, and the parents themselves miss out on the positive benefits involvement provides. Researchers have demonstrated a positive link between parental involvement and student learning outcomes, particularly for students with disabilities (Voltz, Sims & Nelson, 2010). In a paper prepared by The After School Corporation (TASC) in 2006, Linda Friedman, President of TASC, stated that involving parents, family members, and guardians in children’s school lives is critical to the children’s success in school. TASC also found that providing parents and family members with needed programs and services created a cohesive connection to their children’s lives and schools. This type of parental involvement helps schools better serve all students through volunteering, advising, and other program enrichment activities. Parents also need to be engaged as “co-learners” with their child in his or her program.
When parents participate in the education process, their children tend to have higher grades, better attendance, higher test scores, higher self-esteem and fewer disciplinary referrals. Schools with high levels of parent involvement receive greater community support and an improved reputation, teachers enjoy higher morale, greater professional respect, and increased job satisfaction, and parents become the school’s biggest advocates (Friedman, 2006).

Parents need to be made aware of the benefits their involvement has for their families, the school, and especially for their children. However, teachers and schools also need to recognize that children with disabilities may have even greater needs, which consume much more of the parents’ time. Most parents are busy with work, family, and other responsibilities, but the parents of children with special needs often feel particularly isolated. According to Aldridge and Goldman (2006), in order for inclusion to succeed parents must be an integral and collaborative part of a child with disabilities’ program. Creating activities that offer a chance to socialize, and especially to discuss common concerns with other parents provides an important way for identifying and integrating resources and services that strengthen not only the families of children with disabilities but all families.

Setting the Foundation for Parent Involvement

Teachers hired to work in schools often are unprepared to initiate and sustain parent involvement activities. Researchers have found that within teacher training programs, colleges do a poor job of preparing teachers to work with and communicate with parents (Ferrara & Ferrara, 2005; Flannigan, 2007). In fact, during preservice training, the focus on parent involvement is often on strategies for dealing with “difficult parents” rather than on building collaborative relationships. Further, school systems often do not provide in-service training for teachers to support strategies for working with families and parents (Gonzalez-DeHass & Willems, 2003). Thus, teachers in the schools may need assistance and guidance in establishing meaningful connections with parents.

The research on parent-school relationships states that the central problem in building relationships is found in a failure to establish trust, respect communication, and meaningful participation. Schools that serve all children with and without disabilities need to focus on the values of trust, respect, and communication. These characteristics have been identified as critical when serving all children but especially necessary for children with disabilities (Park & Turnbull, 2002). Most parents become involved with school programs when they feel welcomed and appreciated. Some parents do not know how to get involved and schools interpret the lack of parental involvement, when their efforts to contact parents fail, as parents who are not interested in their children’s academic success. Kahli et al., (2006) in the Harvard Family Research Project (HFRP), provide a variety of ways that parents and families can connect with the school. Kahli states that a foundation of trust and respect must be in place first. After trust and respect are established, then a system of consistent, meaningful communication will provide a positive educational atmosphere for student success.

Trust

Administrators and teachers attempting to establish trust should focus on the following important variables: being reliable and consistent; providing a safe educational environment; being discreet; and demonstrating commitment. Parents are much more likely to collaborate with individuals whom they believe are genuinely interested in their children and in the well-being of their children, than with professionals whom they perceive are “just doing their job” (Matuszny,
Banda, & Coleman, 2007). An established sense of trust contributes to understanding the value the school places on each child’s program. Understanding the needs of the family and addressing these needs contributes to the success and quality of the program for all learners.

Respect

The next characteristic that is another important facet of family school partnerships is respect. Recognizing the worth of each child, being nonjudgmental, being courteous, conveying a sense of equality, being accessible and encouraging to the child and his or her family, being consistent, and being sensitive to cultural beliefs and values are all phrases that demonstrate the school’s respect for each child and his or her family. Respect is developed by understanding the family’s needs, culture and individual assets (i.e., what they have to offer the school). Administrators must understand and take into consideration the needs and concerns of the families they serve. It is important to allow parents and families to have opportunities to gain ownership into what the local school is doing. Letting families know that their opinions and concerns matter is an important step in forming respectful and trusting relationships. Parents are the most important variable in their child’s success. They should be respected as individuals and teachers must be flexible in responding to their needs and value systems. When parent roles are respected, schools can work to make families’ and school’s roles complementary and reinforcing, rather than adversarial. If parents are included in decision making, if the program makes sense to them, if their goals and values are compatible with those of the school, if they are approached as individuals and are convinced that the teacher and school are interested in helping them, they will contribute their time and abilities (Berger, 2007).

Communication

A third skill to enhance partnerships among families and schools is the skill of communication. Pugach and Johnson (2002) described communication as the key to any type of collaborative partnership. It takes a lot of skill, tact, and practice to communicate effectively with parents. Parents are usually receptive to open and direct communication. Blue-Banning et al., (2004) state that effective communication can be established through sharing resources, being open and honest, communicating positively and frequently, using active listening, and creating a shared vision. Schools and especially teachers are able to provide the parent with an objective view of the child’s disability and the programs and resources that are available for the child. It is important in the beginning of the school year to ensure that all teachers approach parents in order to establish the best form of communication with each individual family (i.e., email, telephone, written notes, face-to-face meetings, etc.). Parents will be involved when/if they find a “match” between school communication modes and their own family/work schedules and preferences (Comer, 2000).

Administrators and teachers must use a variety of communication strategies, including the time and place of meetings and the means of communication (meetings, e-mail, home visits). First, it is important to assess the relative benefits of the various forms of communication prior to deciding which form to use. Messages should be clear and in language the parents can understand (Berger, 2007; Partee & Walker 2003). Staples and Diliberto (2010) describe a communication system as incorporating daily, weekly, and quarterly parent contacts depending on individual family needs and desires.

Communication should focus on the child’s well-being, development, and level of accomplishment. Communication should not just be one-way, but open two-way communication.
This communication should also solicit the parents’ input on various school decisions not just programmatic issues concerning their own child (Spielberg, 2011). A study conducted by Brigham and Weiss (2003) found that an increase in communication between families and school staff caused an increase in academic performance, an increase in students’ completion of homework, and improved student attendance. Further, Brigham and Weiss stated that when schools provided classes and training on parenting skills; improving relationships and job skills; and information on the availability of support services, community resources, recreation and social opportunities, parents became more active members of the school community. Parents can work effectively in the classroom, and then, subsequently, will extend their enhanced understanding to other members of the family, and they may even become so knowledgeable and skillful that they will then reach out and support other parents of children with disabilities.

The Plan

If you want parent involvement to be effective it is important for school principals to have a plan. This plan should include ideas.

- Include parents in a collaborative relationship from beginning to end.
- Help teachers better understand and be sensitive to the needs of families and their backgrounds.
- Include activities designed to increase and strengthen the trust and respect between parents and teachers.
- Provide many opportunities for ongoing, two-way communication.
- Appreciate and acknowledge the parents who have taken the time to attend and participate. Greet parents by name and help them to feel welcome.
- Train staff to refer parents who are facing various issues to appropriate resources.
- Value families as assets in supporting student learning.

The plan should focus on cementing a collaborative teacher-parents’ relationship, diminishing or removing the barriers, and promoting an atmosphere of trust and respect that will strengthen the parent-school partnership. (Matuszny, Banda, & Coleman, 2007).

When implementing a plan to increase parent involvement, the principal should begin the year by providing opportunities for parents and teachers to get to know each other in an informal and stress-free setting. This is also a good time for the teachers to find out who the primary decision maker is in the family. It may not be the parents; it could be the grandparents or some other key member of the family. However, regardless of whom that person is the teacher should continue to maintain communication with the parents in addition to the “decision maker.”

Establish trust by inviting parents into the classroom. This allows the teacher to share basic information, other than at “Back to School” night, about the classroom such as general plans for the school year, classroom organization, rules, procedures, and communication methods. This is also a good time for the teacher to ask families regarding how they would like to be involved and how they want to receive communication from the teacher and the school. Family members may be unable to come to the school. The principal needs to schedule meetings in places and at times that are more convenient for the parents and provide childcare (Matuszny, Banda, & Coleman, 2007). Make sure the teachers use positive communication styles and use active listening skills. The school should also share with the parents as soon as possible any new information about the child such as assessment results, successes the child exhibits, areas of difficulty, new approaches used to remedy learning difficulties, and future meetings. Parents require a variety of resources and information on the developmental stages of their child, some
may even need “parenting classes.” However, the term “parenting classes” may have a negative connotation. Therefore, there may be other topics of interest (e.g., exercise classes, first aid workshops, art workshops, outside services workshops…) that can incorporate parenting information and be promoted with a more creative title and scheduled at the most convenient times for parents (DeBord et al., 1996).

Final Thoughts

In all of the research that has been conducted the same points are made consistently, that if schools, teachers, and administrators demonstrate: that they really care about each child; that they are providing an atmosphere that values trust and mutual respect; and that they have established an effective system of two-way communication, then parents will become more involved. The research also states that the students whose parents are actively involved have better grades, better attendance and a better attitude towards education and their learning.

This research then causes the following questions to emerge: why aren’t more parents involved; why aren’t schools doing more to involve parents; and are the parents of children with special needs less involved than the parents of general education students? We are in the process of conducting a follow-up study to address these questions. We will be studying ten schools, examining their levels of parent involvement, comparing their State Report Card results and looking to see if there are differences in the level of involvement of parents of children with special needs in comparison with the parents of general education students.

References


A BUTTERFLY EFFECT OF GOOD PARENTING OVER GENERATIONS

Mary Esther Armistead
U.H.K.’s, et al

Lem Londos Railsback
Railsback and Associates
The purpose of the commentary below is to examine the proof/example from one family regarding the possibility of a butterfly effect of good parenting over generations.

The Scot-Cherokee Side: The Bakers, Gage, Deer, and Castleman

As we grew up, family stories our parents and our grandparents from both sides revealed that we were Irish, German, Cherokee, and French. And we have believed that for most of our lives. Only after we began to work on this “lesson for life” did we discover that we are not Irish, but Scot. Upon our most recent research, we have discovered that five generations ago, a serf named William Alfred Baker (He baked bread for the Scottish fiefdom on which he lived.) and girlfriend Sarah Ann Burks (also a Scot) decided to leave their homes/fiefs to get married. They traveled over to Dublin, got married there, and then left for the New World. Apparently, the fact that they had married in Dublin plus the fact that they crossed the Atlantic in an Irish ship persuaded the immigrant-processors that the couple were both Irish. The newly-weds landed in Virginia and became farmers. They reared one daughter Mary Josephine and eleven sons: Bill, Henry, Frank, Tom, Jess, Sam, Nathan, Ivy, Edward, Andrew, and Peter Calvin. As the family moved from state to state and from farm to farm, the children continued to mature and helped with the farming. When the Bakers sold their Arkansas farm, the whole family moved to a new farm in Kerr County, Texas. Henry, one of the oldest sons, married Sara “Sally” Lucinda Coker and moved her in to live with his family. The couple reared five children. Henry became a renown Texas Ranger. When she was twelve years old, Mary Josephine had fallen into a well. The numerous injuries that Mary Josephine suffered from the fall caused her to go blind and rendered her unable to bear children. A returning Confederate veteran from the Tennessee Volunteers named James Madison Gage had gone to San Antonio after the war. On regular business trips to Kerrville, Texas, Mr. Gage noticed a small teenaged girl— She was sixteen years old— who often rode with her parents to Kerrville to buy supplies. He began asking around about her, was told about her accident in the well and its results, and discovered that she and her family lived on Upper Turtle Creek Road outside Kerrville. He persuaded a friend to introduce him to Mary Josephine and her family and began a friendship. Fully aware of Mary Josephine’s condition, Mr. Gage soon asked her parents for permission to marry Mary Josephine: her parents gave their written permission. After the couple had married and moved in temporarily with the Baker family, the couple move to Menard, Texas, which in those days was located on one of the largest Texas cattle drive trails—i.e., the “Goodnight Loving Trail”—to the northern markets. Most of the other the boys continued to farm and move westward (“Go West, Young Man, Go West!”). Peter Calvin travelled north and got as far as Oklahoma where he met and married Alberta Crabtree from the Cherokee reservation in Telaquah. Peter and Alberta reared Alfred Calvin Baker, Veeny, Pearl, and Mary Edna. Alfred Calvin served in the U.S. Army as a motorcycle courier during World War I; after he was honorably discharged, he married and moved to Eastland, Texas. Veeny married a Texan named Maples. After her husband died, Veeny lived with her daughter Louise until Veeny died. Pearl married Aaron Graham and lived in Kerr County where they reared several children. One of their sons served as Kerr County Sheriff for a while. Mary Edna married Jim Deer from the reservation and moved to Mason County and nearby Kerr County to be close to relatives. Around 1900, C.E., racists in both Mason County and Kerr County hated Indians. In those days, racists often repeated the common
expression, “A good Indian is a dead Indian.” More than once in the village, Mr. Deer was verbally assaulted on the streets and in the stores. On two separate occasions, he was physically assaulted by a stranger much bigger than he in front of mobbing crowds gathered in the street. After the second assault, he begged Mary Edna to return with him and their unborn child to the reservation. Mary Edna refused and stayed in Mason County with relatives until the baby was born. Before he left, Mr. Deer made arrangements to move Mary Edna and the unborn child to Menard to live with James Madison “Dad” Gage and Mary Josephine, Mary Edna’s aunt. Mr. Deer left for the reservation in Oklahoma, but he was never heard from or about after that. The family suspected that foul play, probably motivated by Indian-hating racism, prevented his ever reaching the reservation.

After the baby, Esther Edna, and her mother arrived in Menard, Mary Edna joined in with the work of Mr. and Mrs. Gage: taking in laundry from relatives, the neighborhood, and the town. Later, “Dad Gage,” as he was affectionately called by his neighbors and customers, began an all-day delivery food service. The family made tamales at home with a special recipe, and Dad Gage delivered them all day on a regular route, carrying the load in a surrey topped with a fringe and pulled by a Shetland Pony. Dad Gage and Mary Josephine provided a nurturing home life for Mary Edna and her daughter. Dad Gage and his family also established an extended family in the form of a “home for wayward girls.” In those long-ago days, to get pregnant without the benefit of marriage was simply unthinkable in polite society: in point of fact, it was also unforgivable. Dad Gage and Mary Josephine accepted anyone of any race or creed who was in need: the nuclear Gage family provided a nurturing home life for the members of their extended family. When young pregnant Negro females began to seek help from “the Gages’ home,” several complainants began gossipy protests. Dad Gage sought out the main complaining gossiper in each group and visited with her/him to explain the pitifulness of one who claimed to be a sincere Christian but who was not. In each case, the complaining grew silent. Dad Gage and Mary Josephine accepted anyone of any race or creed who was in need: the nuclear Gage family provided a nurturing home life for the members of their extended family. Then, until the females could find a return to their families, find a safe and nurturing situation, and/or leave Texas, the Gages took care of the mothers and their children. Those who needed to stay longer in order to find new homes helped the Gages with the laundry work and the tamale business. When Dad Gage died from overwork and age, the blind Mary Josephine and Mary Edna and her friends from their church helped the young females find new situations and paid the expenses for travel as needed. Mary Edna took over to provide for her child Esther Edna and Mary Josephine.

Near the outbreak of World War II, several of the local “patriots” of Menard fell back on their time-honored prejudices and racism and effectively changed the old well-known cliché of “A good Indian…” to “A good German is a dead German” and began bullying and abusing an old settler named “Mr. Shultz,” who was more than sixty years of age and who had cleaned yards to make his living. He had migrated in the early 1900’s from Germany to America. When Mary Edna heard about Mr. Shultz’s problem, she talked over the situation with Mary Josephine. Then the two of them sent word to Mr. Shultz to visit them to discuss his moving his tiny trailer over to the “Gage place.” To pay for his room and board, Mr. Shultz was expected to keep the “Gage place”–two small lots and a house with two bedrooms and a kitchen directly north of the city limits—clear of weeds. That deed was typical of the good heartedness of Mary Edna and Mary Josephine—that is, although they themselves were barely “making it” on their own and had very little “extra,” they extended their kindness to a “foreigner” who was definitely in danger and dire need.
Growing up in a loving and nurturing family and interacting with the young females of different races, the young Esther Edna, Mary Edna’s Indian daughter, developed high intelligence, a lack of prejudice, and a scientific curiosity. However, when Mary Edna attempted to enroll her daughter in public school, she was denied; after all, “Indians are Indians!” For her early elementary grades, Esther Edna attended the local Roman Catholic School. Extremely persistent, Mary Edna mobilized over time her laundry customers—several of whom were leading citizens—to finally achieve her daughter’s admission into the public school by her fourth grade. Through this effort for her daughter’s public schooling, Mary Edna served as a living model of persistence, fairness, and kindness for her daughter. Over time, Esther Edna completed high school and found work on a sheep ranch. On horseback, Esther Edna would help feed, water, and tend to the sheep. In the afternoon, she would perform two tasks. The first was to help the rancher’s wife preserve fresh garden vegetables and fruits by canning them. The second was to help the rancher’s wife to demonstrate and teach W.P.A. wives to preserve fruits, vegetables, and meat for their own families by using new and improved methods of canning. In time, Esther Edna was courted by Lem Railsback, and the two were married.

In time, a full-gospel congregation built their church just across the street from the Gage place. On Sunday mornings, the church conducted Sunday School, followed by the regular service, followed by a Sunday picnic on the wooden benches-and-tables outside the church at noon, followed at night for Sunday Evening Services. During the week, more services were held every Wednesday. By this time, our nuclear family of three—my parents and I—had moved in with Mary Edna and Mary Josephine. Our family enjoyed most of the church services; we skipped the Wednesdays. Mr. Shultz especially enjoyed the picnics. Mary Josephine would occasionally go with us to the services. I learned to like raisins in pies after an elderly Negro female from the church persuaded me that the raisins were not regular house flies.

After a while, Phelyx Sanderson Castleman from the church across the street began to court Mary Edna. Mr. Castleman served as an itinerant preacher. He also worked at chopping and selling cords of wood for fireplaces and wood stoves. He sold worms and minnows as bait to fishermen, and he sold healing salves. In springtime, he would go to farms to buy vegetables and fruits, especially watermelons. After loading the bed of his old pickup with his purchases, he would drive to the city square, park his pickup “backwards” with the pickup bed next to the curb, and sell his goods. Eventually, in 1942, Phelyx married Mary Edna. At that time, I learned to address Mary Edna as “Granny.” Because I could not pronounce her whole name, I addressed Mary Josephine as “Granny Mama.” I addressed my new step-grandfather as “Grampa.”

The German and French Side: The Railsbacks

“Railsbach” refers to those who take care of the horses left behind, especially when someone wants to ride a ferry across a river to a destination in walking distance.

Two teachers from Germany, a brother and a sister, landed in Virginia with their younger brother in the 18th Century. The two pacifist teachers had brought their younger brother to America to keep him from being “pressed”—forcibly recruited—into the Prussian military. Over time, the Railsbacks spread throughout the United States and pursued many different vocations. Several have achieved fame. Because of time restraints, only five are mentioned here to prove my point. First, Dr. L. Bruce Railsback of the Department of Geology, University of Georgia developed his “An Earth Scientist’s Periodic Table of the Elements and Their Ions.” Second, O.L. Railsback was the first to measure and articulate the “Railsback curve,” an expression of the distribution of “stretched” and “unstretched” octaves in a well-tuned piano. Third, Thomas Fisher Railsback served eight terms in the U.S. Congress for the Nineteenth District of Illinois.
We are especially proud of Tom for his service rendered on the committee constituted to impeach Richard Nixon over the Watergate mess and after Nixon’s Vice-President had been arrested for taking bribes in the basement of the White House. Tom voted to remove Nixon. Another Railsback was Verny Railsback, on whose life the movie *When the Stars Fell on Henrietta* was based. Our great uncle Verny used to work the wheat harvest every year by starting in north Texas, moving through Oklahoma, Kansas, Nebraska, South Dakota, North Dakota, and going across into the Canadian provinces to finish the harvest. He is the only person that we ever knew who had travelled through the Panama Canal twice, working as a ship’s cook. Probably, however, the most famous of our tribe is Steve Railsback, the scary-eyed guy who played in *Helter Skelter* as Charles Manson. Today, there are many Railsbacks, particularly in California, Kansas, Illinois, Indiana, Texas, Washington, Nebraska, Iowa, and Missouri.

George Wesley Railsback was our grandfather. In the 1930’s, Grampa Railsback and his son--our father--used to ride with a friend and his son in the friend’s large truck to New Mexico to buy apples and bring them back to sell in Menard. On a particular trip, the brakes on the truck failed as they were going down the famous “deathtrap” called “Sherfield Hill” in West Texas. Our father and the driver’s son were riding in the bed of the truck. As the driver hollered to his son to “Jump!” his son did jump but he held on to the tarp so that our father was covered and trapped by the heavy tarp. When Grampa Railsback saw his son trapped by the big tarp, he opened his door, crawled onto the running board, tore the tarp off his son, helped his son jump, and then rode the truck as it fell onto the rocks below the high cliff. The landing broke Grampa’s pelvis. From there on, Grampa spent most of his hours on an army cot and in pain for the rest of his life. At twelve years of age, our father quit school and begin to wash dishes at a hotel coffee-shop. He was so short that he had to stand on two Coke bottle cases in order to reach into the tubs to wash the dishes. Our father proved to be dependable, competent, and hard-working as an employee. In time, he asked the German-trained chef to teach him to cook. “Blackie” Parker, the chef, offered to teach our father to cook so long as our father would start coming to work at 4:00 A.M. and staying, without pay, until the chef’s shift was over. During each morning shift, our father would help and closely observe the chef’s activities. He could ask the chef any questions so long as he listened carefully to the chef’s explanations. As the shift would end, the chef would go home; then, our father would return back to his regular dishwashing job. That chef taught our father to cook a variety of meats and vegetables, to butcher, to “bring up” salads and desserts, to conjure up a wide variety of desserts, and to carve statues out of ice. In short, the chef served as a competent and caring mentor. So, at fourteen years of age, our father was the only working member of his family of seven persons, but he was on his way toward becoming a chef like his mentor. After a few years, the German-trained chef moved to another job for more pay in another city. So Lem, our father, went back to carpentry, roofing, saddle-making, and whatever other jobs were available. He took a temporary job of cooking for a cattle roundup near Fort McKavett, located about twenty-three miles from Menard. After lunch on the last day of the roundup, one of the cowboys offered to let Lem ride the cowboy’s horse. After a short ride, Lem slid off the horse and was thanking the cowboy and handing the reins back to the cowboy when the horse stepped on Lem’s foot and broke it. He had to walk back home to Menard. Although he was limping and was obviously injured, the few automobiles that passed just passed by him without offering a ride or any other kind of help. In spite of the lack of kindness by the strangers, our father persevered, even with the pain, and made it back to our home by the next morning.

When I was born, the doctor used forceps and tore the sides of my head, particularly around both eyes. The doctor announced to my father and his mother, Granny Railsback, that,
due to my injuries, I would probably not last through the night. Granny Railsback spent the entire night keeping cover on me to keep me warm and applying warm, moist towels to my scars. Contrary to the doctor’s prediction, I did last that night and many, many nights later. (I am now nearly 75 years of age.) Later, the scars grew into what looked like wrinkles at the outward sides of my eyes. Since wrinkles indicate age, maturity, sophistication, and sexiness, I never explained the scars.

Partial Focus on The Last Four Generations

For the purpose of this commentary—that is, that a butterfly effect can occur by good parenting over generations—we will focus only on the last four generations of our family. The Gages, the Castlemans, the Railsbacks, and our own generation.14

Gages: James and Mary Gage stayed married and worked together until they died. In the thriving town on one of the main cattle drive trails and particularly when the railroad arrived to transport the cattle to the markets, they operated the laundry business, the tamale delivery service, and the “home for wayward girls.” They treated their customers, their wards, and each other in an honest, kindly, helpful, and caring manner. After Dad Gage had passed on and Mary Josephine’s niece had taken over the reins, Mary Josephine was still consulted whenever major issues arose. Mary Josephine and her niece treated each other and the rest of us—Mama, Daddy, and me—with respect and love. I remember sitting next to Granny Mama with her hand on my head or over my shoulder while Mama read aloud a story. Often, Granny would tell a story to us. Sometimes, we would just listen to a story or music on the radio. Those were wonderful afternoons!

Castlemans: During the late forties, my mother and father, Grampa Castleman, Granny, Granny Mama, Mr. Shultz, and I lived on the old Gage place. Although we never had much money, we always had plenty of food (We ate lots of squirrels.) and love. Because my mother, who quit her job after she got married, and my grandmother could alternate between getting the daily chores—going downtown to quilt-making for the W.P.A. program, cleaning other families’ homes, still taking in washing and the regular daily house duties—and looking after me, I received attention throughout the entire day. Because they would help me learn new words, I grew an advanced vocabulary. Both would bring home magazines discarded from the quilting job and from the homes that they would clean. From those magazines, they would find pictures of individuals, animals, and festivals/events, cut the pictures out with scissors and paste the selected items onto sheets of thick paper. Then, they would bind the papers into a volume. In the tutoring sessions, I would be shown a page with a picture. As I studied the picture, its name would be repeated several times. As I studied the picture and heard its name many times, I would repeat the name several times. Then, a page would be turned, and a new picture would be shown. After I had “mastered” the names of all of the items in the book, Mama and Granny would print in large letters the name of each picture just below the picture. Then, a new round of seeing and hearing would begin with the printed name covered by hand or card. After I had correctly named the item in the picture, the hand or card would be moved to reveal the printed name. Again, the printed name would be pronounced several times. I would listen to the pronunciations, study the picture and listen carefully, and study intently the printed name. Several sessions each day of this hearing, seeing, and viewing printed names, combined with many, many riddles, mind puzzles, poems, and other phonemic awareness activities, I had developed a wide vocabulary and the basic ability to read the names of the items by the time that I was three and one-half years of age. I also listened to radio serials like the Green Lantern, a fish that endured many problems and solved them all. I listened to the heroic cowboy Tom Mix and to music by “Pappy” Leo Daniel and the “Light Crust Doughboys.” My new Grampa used a jig saw to create a shape of each state
and a large square wooden frame in which to set them in their respective locations. He painted each state with a color that contrasted with those of its neighbors. Then, he placed on each state a large dot in the appropriate location and then printed/painted in small letters by that dot the name of the capital of the particular state. In playing with this device—dumping all of the pieces onto the floor and replacing each state in the proper position until all of the states tightly fitted into the frame, while saying aloud each piece’s state name and capital—I could name, without looking at a map, each state and its capital by the time that I was four. Storytelling was also part of the sessions. In those days, I had developed a wide vocabulary, I had begun to read the names of already known items, I had begun making long sentences, and I had developed a giant curiosity about our world. I was truly blessed. In time, one of the members of our extended family, Mr. Shultz, passed away. When a restaurant owner from Sonora offered my father a full-time cooking job with more pay, he, my mother, and I moved to Sonora and began living in a tourist court.

Railsbacks: While we lived in Sonora for several years, my sister Mary Esther was born. Then, we moved to Ozona to a better paying job for a short while. Finally, we moved to Brady—only thirty miles from Menard—where Daddy “moved up” to begin working as a chef. We lived out in the country in a small house that Daddy and Grampa Castleman had built. We used a “two-holer.” We packed water from across the busy highway which ran from the Army Air Force training center to town. One day, one of the racing recruits ran over my pet duck and literally squashed him in many directions across the highway: I was heartbroken! My father complained to the base’s commanding officer and to the county sheriff about the racing along the highway. Finally, when nothing was done about the racing, my father sat by the side of the highway several evenings after work and threw heavy metal rings/washers into the air into the path of the approaching cars. After three cracked windshields, traffic slowed.

In our new home in the country, Mama got up early to milk the cow and to churn butter; she would sell two pounds for 70 cents. Daddy got up early to work a long, hard day. When Mary got to about three years old, I began using the old picture books that Mama and Granny had created for me in Menard to start teaching Mary the names of the items in the pictures and, eventually, their printed names. I passed along to Mary a lot of verbal activities that I had learned. And we listened to the same radio programs and music that I had previously enjoyed in Menard. Every once in a while, Mama would take us on a picnic on the big ranch just across our back fence. She had made arrangements with the good neighbor, Bob White, so that we could use his grassy land around the windmill for picnics whenever the cattle were not around. On those picnics, we learned the names and habits of all sorts of wild animals and domesticated animals and we learned about different farm crops, methods of farming—e.g., the rotation of crops, farm tools, and different fertilizers. On those days when the picnics lasted into the night, we learned many of the constellations in the Northern Hemisphere from our mother’s pointing to them and explaining their names and stories.

When I got ready to go to public school, we moved to town into a home with an indoor bathroom, running hot and cold water, and a big barn. I loved school from the First Grade through the Twelfth Grade. When I was in the First Grade, I would leave for school and walk the four blocks to my school. On many mornings, my sister would cry because she could not go to school with me. Later on, in upper elementary school, whenever I would bring homework to our new home, I would complete it and then show it to my sister and carefully explain the tasks and their solutions. Whenever our mother had to go to stores downtown, she would leave my sister Mary with our neighbors across the street and take me to the stores with her. On those trips, she
would buy a comic book and/or a “Big Book” for me. (A Big Book was a paper book printed in a larger format with illustrative pictures and larger font designed to be read aloud by youngsters.) I would use the Big Books and the comic books as my textbooks. I would read aloud to my sister the stories while she looked over my shoulder. Then, through various activities she continued to grow in her phonemic awareness. Our mother and I continued reciting for Mary the “One, two, buckle my shoe…” and many similar verbal devices. At other times, my sister wanted to know why she couldn’t just sit there quietly beside me and watch everybody.

Our father lived an honorable life. He really believed in honesty, justice, fairness, and the Constitution of the United States. In several, rather dramatic instances, he staked his future by standing up for fairness and justice. A particular instance still stands out. A local Negro laborer had been arrested and placed in jail because a local wife had accused him of raping her young daughter. Rumors flew through the village quickly, and a conglomerate of “men” began to plan an assault on the jail with the eventual hanging of the prisoner in the jail itself. When our father heard about the plan, he attempted to talk the “leaders” out of their intended violence. When he learned that the mob would not change their minds and, in fact, had already planned the attack for that very night, he finished work, drove quickly home, retrieved from storage the .22 caliber pistol that his brother had used in a gunfight in Menard, and drove back to the jail. He warned the sheriff, who began locking the outside gates and retrieving rifles and ammunition. When the mob arrived at the jail after dark, the sheriff and our father held the mob at bay. After the sheriff explained in explicit detail from a second story window—Our father was at the fourth window over on the same floor.—the likely consequences of the mob’s “rushing” the jail, the enthusiasm of the mob gradually subsided. Eventually, after more than an hour, the would-be hangers drifted away. At the eventual trial, revelations indicated that the little daughter had been playing outside and had never been touched. Instead, apparently, the wife had revealed herself to the laborer several times on different days while he was working in her garden. On a particular day, she had squatted down and pulled up her dress to show that she had no panties on. When the laborer quit working and quickly moved into the garage, the wife had followed him and grew upset when he rejected her advances. Her anger prompted her lies to her neighbor, her neighbor’s rapid tongue stirred the “men” of the village, and a genuine tragedy was narrowly averted. Of course, the poor victimized Negro laborer was sent to prison on some pretext (Remember, this was the 1950’s in Texas!), but, as I remember, the laborer was pardoned within a year. He returned home and quickly moved his family to another town.

My father and a partner, a former “flyboy,” bought a café and began operating it. When our father was warned of his partner’s excessive drinking and losing at local poker and dice games, our father confronted the partner. So much money was missing that the necessary operating capital had disappeared. Since my father didn’t have any operating capital himself to buy out his partner, he settled for a few items of equipment and left. Then, he went to West Texas to work chef jobs and, eventually, to own and manage “Railsback’s Café” in far West Texas. The distance to West Texas that we began to regularly travel, the expenses incurred for the travel, the regular bills, the maintenance of two residences, and personal differences—Both of our parents were extremely strong-willed!—eventually took their toll. Our parents separated and later divorced. In spite of their differences and difficulties, however, both our parents provided for us well and showered us with love.

In her mid-50’s, Esther Edna was the housekeeper for Captain B.T. Davenport, a retired U.S. Customs agent and one of the survivors of the Glenn Springs Raid in the Big Bend area of Texas. In her early 60’s Esther Edna supervised the grounds-keeping crew for the Hill Country
Arts Foundation. At that time, the H.C.A.F. was the only theater group in Texas that held an annual “summer stock” production. A famous celebrity would play the major role and volunteer theater students from Texas colleges and universities and locals would constitute the rest of the cast. Besides maintaining the expansive grounds of the outdoor theater, Esther Edna and her crew would store certain “props” in her garage, prepare special meals for the cast, hold parties for the casts and invited audiences, and make and repair and protect stage costumes. Until her last days, Esther Edna remained active, involved, helpful, compassionate, and independent, as shown by her performing a role one summer in one of the larger productions at H.C.A.F.

Mary Esther and Lem Londos: In high school, I participated in Ready Writers, band, basketball, track, and football. In the summers, I played in the CenTex Black and Tan Baseball League. In the summers, my sister and I attended church camp. Between my Junior and Senior years of high school, under Ike’s Universal Military Training Act—which required an obligation for eight years—I joined the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve and went to Basic Training at San Diego. I had planned to go “active” directly after my graduation, but I won a music scholarship to go to college. When I asked my Captain in San Angelo for advice, he pointed out that “Son, if you have a chance to go to college now, you go. After all, you can always go into the military at just about any time.” I went to college and graduated and then took a job teaching. I sent my sister to college, and she graduated and began teaching. Two years ago, I retired from the university, after fifty years of teaching. My sister retired from Texas schools in 1992 after teaching for ten years in Texas and went with her husband—who was serving as the superintendent of schools in Presidio, Texas, at the time—to Alaska where she taught until both she and her husband retired.

In my teaching career of fifty years, from a very fast count, I estimate that I have taught directly approximately 14,538 students. Each one of those 14,539 students likely had a mother, a father, an average of two siblings, 2 grandmothers, and 2 grandfathers. Each of these members of a student’s family were indirectly influenced/affected by me—e.g., changing family plans because the student had to complete homework, going on field trips because of my assignments, helping with homework, and a plethora of activities stimulated by my teaching. So, if we factor in the eight family members per student, (14,538 students X 8 family members per student), we can estimate in good faith that my teaching has affected approximately 116,304 individuals. Similarly, in Mary’s career of twenty-four years, from a very fast count she estimates that she has taught 1,134 students. Factoring in the same number of family members per student for the same reasons indicated above, we can estimate in good faith that Mary Esther’s teaching for twenty-four years has affected approximately 9,072 individuals. In both careers, 15,672 students have been taught well, for the most part, and that approximately 125,376 individuals have been affected. We believe/hope that only a small percentage of that total of students may not have benefited from our teaching. If we assume that one-half of one per cent of the total number of individuals did not receive positive effects from our teaching, then we can assume that around 627 individuals did not receive positive influence/affect from us. Then, en toto, 124,749 individuals have been positively affected by the two of us in our careers.

At the onset of this commentary, we mentioned the “butterfly effect.” By that, we are referring to the theory that under the appropriate conditions, the fluttering of a single butterfly’s wings could initiate, reinforce, and exponentially increase the powerful effect strong enough to cause a tsunami to crash onto China’s coastline. The analogy of the power of a single butterfly’s fluttering of wings can be compared in parallel to the multiplying effect/influence of a single teacher’s teaching over a career. The two siblings—Mary Esther and Lem Londos—were reared within a context of love and sacrifice and strong character over three generations to achieve a
positive effect for 124,749 individuals. Such a momentous effect appears to prove the value of loving, striving, supportive, and intelligent families—that is, the butterfly effect of good parenting over generations.

An Afterthought

After our commentary, do you truly believe that we have proved our point today—i.e., that good parenting over generations can cause a tsunami effect of positive behavior? If you do, then extrapolate with us from our findings. If a professor teaches 25 students/class; & if that professor teaches 4 classes/semester, that professor affects 100 students/semester. In a regular fall & spring school year and ignoring the possibility of teaching 2 summer semesters, that professor affects 200 students/school year. If we use the same number of relatives/student that my partner and I did for our calculations, that professor positively affects 1,600 persons/year. Over a career of 20 years, that professor affects positively 32,000 persons. If each of the 320+ presenters at this conference positively affects 32,000 persons, then, en toto, over time, we are positively affecting 10,240,000 persons. In other words, we and other groups like us are finely tuning and civilizing America. PASS THE WORD!!!

SOURCES


1 Source for our “lesson for life” and for this commentary included Mary Esther’s research from our family bible—with all sorts of names and dates inscribed—e.g., “Mary Edna,” “Esther Edna,” “Mary Esther,” et al; research from various private sources like DOROTHY COX’S “RAILSBACK LINES” from RAILSBACK DESCENDANTS ASSOCIATION and from “THE COMPLETE REGISTRY OF THE RAILSBACKS IN AMERICA”; research from internet sources like “ANCESTRY.COM” and the comprehensive and detailed “Railsback Family History Facts 1920-Ancestry,” at http://www.ancestry.com/facts/Railsback-family-history.aspx, and other relevant items; and dozens and dozens of face-to—face and telephone interviews.
2 “Former Ranger Hen Baker became a legend in his own way,” http://webcache.googleusercontent.com/search?q=cache:VEPh8q2K9jJ:wkcurrent.com/fo...
3 Menard Historical Society issued a volume years ago on the History of Menardville—i.e., modern Menard. In that volume was a photograph of Dad Gage and a surrey pulled by a Shetland pony: the surrey was loaded with tamales. Today, the book is out-of-print. We have made the request for someone on the Historical Commission of Menard to, somehow, locate an old copy of the volume. We are waiting and will wait patiently.
During the Great Depression, President Roosevelt established many innovative government-assisted programs wherein citizens could improve their socio-economic skills. The canning project was one of those programs. Mr. Castleman was born in Sanderson, Texas. As a young man, he worked as a teamster, driving a large wagon filled with necessities and pulled by horses from one location to a market and back. On one occasion, he picked up a load of casks filled with whiskey in San Antonio and delivered it to a bar in Fort Stockton in far-off West Texas. As an argument among patrons exploded, gunfire filled the bar. Ducking behind a giant whiskey cask for protection, a bullet crashed through the thick wooden walls of the whiskey casks and almost hit Phelix’s head. At that moment, Phelix realized that the giant wooden cask of whiskey afforded no protection. At that very same moment, Phelix “caught” religion and, shortly thereafter, became a “born-again” Christian. He never had another drink.

If a reader visits the famous “Judge Roy Bean, Law West of the Pecos Museum” in Langtry, Texas, close to the Rio Grande, the reader may view an ancient photograph on the north wall inside of Phelix and Judge Roy Bean, standing with their arms around each other’s shoulders in front of an old tricycle with the tall front wheel. Before he had turned his “Jersey Lilly Saloon” into his courtroom, Bean had also worked as a teamster in San Antonio.

As it was explained to me by my step-grandfather, a cord of wood—i.e., a well-stacked woodpile—is 4 feet wide X 4 feet high X 8 feet long.

According to “Railsback Family History Facts 1920-Ancestry,” at http://www.ancestry.com/facts/Railsback-family-history-ashx, Railsback may be an “Altered spelling of German Railsback, a habitational name of uncertain origin, probably a reduced form of Raigelsback, from Middle High German reigel “heron” + bacj :trean,” “Creek,” or an altered spelling of Reulback, a habitational name from a place so named in the Rhon Mountains in Hesse. Family pass-downs favor the version of the skilled horse men at the ferries who took care of the livestock.


To develop a better understanding of the enormously positive nurturing that I received during my early years, the reader should read “Mr. First Teachers,” Hawaii Summer Seminar Perspectives Journal, Vol. 42, pp. 55—67.

In specific, our great aunt and uncle, grandparents, and mother on one side and our grandparents and father on the other side on the other side. My sister and I make up the fourth generations.

Today, a tourist court is referred to as a “motel.”

Believe it or not, that was one of the old jails that actually held a hanging device on one of the top floors. Usually, the large crowd of gawkers would spread out into the large open space of that floor to watch as the trap door would drop to hang the tied and gagged convicted felon. Over time, as the large crowds disappeared—i.e., as the public’s interest in public executions died down—regular hangings on that floor were discontinued.

Our uncle was ambushed by an intended assassin in Menard. Both died. That incident was known as “the last gun battle in Menard.” In those days—the 1940’s—Menard was no longer a major cattle trail, but the culture was still rough and highly volatile. The Negroes used to call Menard “The Free State of Menard” because anyone could do anything, they believed that he/she could get away with.

That incident was typical of our father. The time and space constraints herein prohibit my telling of additional dramatic stands that he took. He was one of the bravest and kindest persons that I ever knew.

Texas Monthly Magazine publishes an annual list of the No. 1’s—that is, the best business, leader, organization, etc, in the State of Texas. In its 1979 list, Railsback’s Café is cited as “…the best mom and dad café” in the state.


In those days, a “black and tan” league indicated that Negroes and Hispanics could play in the league.

The first time that I ever borrowed money from a bank—I was 16.—a local Negro shoeshine man signed my note.
The Mind Body Connection, Technology and Healthy Aging

Randy Basham
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Abstract
Social scientists and those working in the applied social service delivery industry are confronting imminent and escalating health needs for the elderly, especially in the developed countries. A combination of emergent biotechnology advances and engineering technology; offer potential solutions to the problems of maintaining physical and social functioning and the capacity for extended contributions of senior members of the society. Understanding recent research findings pertaining to mind-body interactions and the role of social support in maintaining optimal health and disease prevention is likely to become increasingly important to the facilitation of successful aging in place. Identifying and utilizing available and developing preventative and restorative health technologies are critical to maintaining a healthy aging segment of the affected countries populations.

Introduction
The concept of “a sane mind in a sound body” is as old as ancient civilization, such as tenets adopted by the early Roman and Greek civilizations (Pilates & Miller, 1945). Both mental balance and skill development and retention require something of health within the human body. Conversely, the health of the human body and its longevity and optimal functioning are increasingly being found to be associated with stability, focus and overall emotional health of the human mind (Hall, Blumenthal, & Altman, 1996). As human beings age, both mental and physical functioning and independence can be sustained over time, by attending earlier in life to the mind body connection. However, an emerging concern is that as people age their capacity to perceive or discern subtle changes in physical or emotional states may be not as acute as in earlier life (Mendes, 2010). Thus, a need for personal and external technological supportive devices may be considered to augment these perceptions and also to be used for self monitoring and regulation of essential mind and body synergistic functions and further used as external monitoring systems for concerned care providers to promote healthy aging. Depression, anxiety and debilitating emotions are attenuated by physical activity and social support systems. Further, aging markers are generally delayed, in the absence of sedentary lifestyles. Many of the chronic illnesses associated with aging are also improved by consistent physical activity and social contact. Yet, for many elderly, the concept of aging in place is often coupled with limited routine physical tasks and limited social connections.

Literature Review
The past few decades have seen a proliferation of interest and research on the mechanisms that promote optimal health and well being across the human lifespan though a holistic construct often referred to as the mind body interaction, or connection. For the most part, this body of research is focused on aspects of a newly developed field of study provisionally titled as psychoneuroimmunology (Hall, Blumenthal, et al., 1996), as well as emerging aspects of biotechnological advances and engineering advances. Essentially, this emerging scientific-sub specialty is concerned with the determinants of who gets ill and who remains well under a variety of health risks, or threats. This area of research is especially well suited to inform social scientists concerned with maintaining optimal health and functional independence of a proliferating aging population (Read, Green, & Smyer, 2008). Important aspects of the mind body connection, available in the literature, as related to healthy aging, include behavioral changes to prevent or manage health concerns, the development of suitable recreational pursuits and emotional coping philosophies, as well as sustaining social
support and physical contacts (Hall, Loehr, & Groppel, 1996). Many of these aspects can be supported, or enhanced, through various informational computing and interactional technologies emerging from within the engineering sciences. These monitoring and safety technologies show promise of providing support for extending the functional capacities and quality of life for substantial portions of the emerging elderly population (Basham & Kang, in-press).

**Projected Health Needs of the Elderly**

Though rapid technological advances have occurred in the United States and many developed nations, these advances have not translated well to serve rapidly aging portions of the population. At least five chronic and persistent health problems were identified more than a quarter century ago that affect a large portion of the elderly population; these are: osteoarthritis, dementia, osteoporosis, hearing impairment and urinary incontinence (Technology and Aging in America, 1985). These problems could be improved by behaviors that could delay the onset of these debilitating and socially isolating conditions, and by the adoption of monitoring, educational, and social networking technologies and the promotion of self care and improved social support programs that could be distributed through differing media formats.

Successful ageing according to Rowe and Kahn (1997) require that the elderly attempt to avoid disease and disability, sustain a high level of physical and cognitive function and strive to sustain engagement in social and productive activities. Maintenance of functioning becomes more important when considering that the number of elderly is rapidly increasing, proportional to other areas of the population, especially in developed countries of the world. It is likely that these seniors will need to care for themselves longer and attempt to contribute to their respective societies for a larger portion of their latter years. The number of available care providers relative to the population will likely be less than in previous years. Younger members of the population will be needed to sustain other important functions of their respective societies, as the elderly are expected to age in place.

However, the maintenance of optimal health requires that the elderly have access to transportation and medical services and preventive care to avoid debilitation. They will likely require opportunities to sustain physical recreation to avoid issues related to sedentary lifestyles and to continue to engage in various mental challenges. They will also have social needs, and prior studies have suggested that social isolation and depression are common concerns for the elderly. Further, so that the elderly continue to feel relevant, they will likely be needed in terms of accumulated lifetime experience and training, to continue to advise or teach younger members of the society and maintain a relatively high level of social and post retirement occupational productivity.

In terms of aggregate estimates of health needs for the elderly, there are a number of alarming demographic trends in developed and developing countries, that suggest that there will be insufficient manpower to attend to the anticipated health needs of the population, and in some instances, insufficient numbers of available trained young people to adequately sustain some essential social and occupational roles. Technologies of various types may serve to bridge the gap between need and capacity both to society and to the affected elderly.

See Table 1 (below)

**Emerging Biotechnology Advances**

There are a number of advances that involve aspects of biotechnology, relative to the mind body connection, that are likely to affect aging and longevity, the experience of aging, and functional
capacity of the elderly. Recent trends in genetic testing and advanced disease detection make the prospect of unanticipated debilitating disease symptom, such as Alzheimer’s disease, less likely. As a result of these early detection strategies, genetic markers for specific ailments permit the planning of therapeutic and medical regimens necessary to limit the longer term and debilitating negative effects of identified illnesses on specific aging persons and populations at risk. In some instances even the likelihood of emotional illnesses can be anticipated and planned for, such that the quality of life for many seniors may be improved.

The cloning of various tissues and organs in recent years increases the supply of available bio-transplantable material to allow the replacement to some degree of damaged human structures, such that functionality and quality of life can be resumed after the affects of disease or injury have occurred. To be restored or renewed may have a profound effect on how the elderly retain the capacity to pursue a healthy senior lifestyle. Activity, both social and physical, may be intensified and enjoyed.

Controversial advances in stem cell therapy, may allow the recipients of these therapies to entirely eradicate, a number of disease processes and resume a higher level of overall functioning and health. The process though has been heavily critiqued as morally and socially unjust as stem cells are known to be harvested for the most part of human embryos which may have been able to pursue independent and viable life. The possibility of artificial replication or creation of stem cells in future may increase the likelihood of available therapies for the aging. See Figure 1 (below).

More relevant to the mind body connection and healthy aging though, are the emergent findings from studies of the lives of Centenarians, or those who have lived health, productive and often happy lives beyond 100 years. We are learning much from their work and physical routines, nutrition, lifestyles and coping styles, or mind body connections, as well as what aspects of their genetic make-up aided in their capacity to age successfully (Motta, Mauger, & Malaguerna, 2002).

Emerging Engineering Technology Advances
There is something of a synergistic and reciprocal relationship between the mind and body that psychological research and engineering scientists are just beginning to confirm. Emotional and psychological response is tied to tactile experiences, or visualization of weight versus light, smooth versus rough and hard versus soft, or the presence or absence of human touch (Ackerman, Nocera, & Bargh, 2010). That is, human beings are affected emotionally and in other subtle physical responses, of which they are often unaware based upon various sensory and environmental inputs which affect judgment and decision making. Technological advances for maintaining optimal mind body functioning for the elderly will need to address the physical environment, safety, social supports, medical care, recreational and social needs and others, for the elderly, to sustain optimal functioning, especially for those aging in place and with few social supports, or access to personal care providers (Geller & Zenick, 2005).

Enhancing the mind body connection therefore requires attending to the overall environment needs that the elderly, whether aging in place, engaged in Naturally Occurring Retirement Communities (NORC’s), developing non-conventional residential arrangements with other aging, or not aged friends, or extended family, and others generally fall into a very few categories, relative to aging services. These usually involve safety technologies, health and
wellness technologies, social networking and communication technologies, and various aging services provided, or distributed, through technology (Alwan & Nobel, 2008). There are an ample number of emerging engineering safety oriented technologies that are intended to promote personal security, increase independence, and increase the responsiveness, of the environment (smart home technologies), or enable service providers to identify elderly need and distribute services to the residence (Alwan & Nobel, 2008). Examples of these include fall detection and prevention technologies, wearable technologies, technologies that are embedded in the environment (mobility aids, smoke detectors, etc.), door locks, and wander management systems, and tracking (State of Technology in Aging Services, 2011), or RFID (Radio Frequency Identification) systems (Shoval et al., 2010).

Though various health and wellness technologies have been used for decades to enable longer and more productive living through preventing, or managing chronic illnesses, there is also a recent proliferation of technology improvements (Pare, Jaana, & Sicotte, 2007) that provide services to restore function with, or following acute episodes of health symptoms, or in managing the delivery of care (Alwan & Nobel, 2008). Examples of these could include wellness monitoring technologies, wearable health monitors, environmental monitors that are passive, combinations of these (Glascock & Kutzik, 2006), telemedicine and tele-health technologies (Barlow, Singh, Bayer, & Curry, 2007), video phones and two way video stations, medication compliance technologies, cognition training and retraining software, assessment technologies and reminder and orthotic technologies (State of Technology in Aging Services, 2011), accessible medical information through RFID portal terminals, or monitors (Hsu, Yang, Tsai, Cheng, & Wu, 2007). See Figure 2 (below).

Additionally, social networking and communication technologies can assist elderly, especially those without children, or few connections, to overcome social isolation, or loneliness and resist depression often associated with poor health outcomes (Alwan & Nobel, 2008). A number of prior research studies and anecdotal cases studies have demonstrated longevity, improved immune responses and greater survivability to diseases like cancer (Spiegel, 1993) and heart disease (Cousins, 1979). Some examples of these social contact technologies include social networking technologies, or social connections technologies, phones, including cell phones, monitoring for level of social connection activity, elderly oriented, email, web access systems, video phones (State of Technology in Aging Services, 2011) and two way conferencing (i.e. Skype, etc.) (Lai, 2008).

Aging oriented services that are delivered through technology also provide for the meeting of multiple needs through the interconnectivity of various devices designed for safety or health needs (Niefeld & Kasper, 2005). In so doing they offer a greater level of living and provide a method to access needed services (Alwan & Nobel, 2008). These technology driven service programs may also include access to caregiver networks and orienting technology, or information, to various aging services stakeholders (State of Technology in Aging Services, 2011). Furthermore, service programs that combine mind/ body/spirit oriented social, emotional and lifestyle components and provide for other psychosocial oriented issues may see improvements among those experiencing severe and chronic health problems (Marshall, Walzer, & Vernalis, 2004).

See Figure 2 (below)
Extending Contributions of the Aging

In part, because of the rapidly expanding elderly populations within developed and developing nations and the changing proportion of elderly to young people, there is a growing need to extend the productivity, functioning, and other contributions of the elderly to their respective societies. Proportionally there will be fewer caretakers and younger familial care providers. There will be pressing need to have those immigrating from lesser developed nations trained to fill labor and industry roles relative to servicing the technology based societies of the developed countries, such that there may be less immigrant elder care providers than preferred, or needed. Therefore, the elderly will need to make best use of knowledge gained in recent years about the importance of the mind body connection to overall health, functioning, and longevity in order to increase their knowledge and quality of self care and prevention and to remain contributing members of the respective societies for a longer duration.

Maintaining Physical and Social Functioning

Maintenance of immune system functioning and generally keeping the body supple and well toned, as well as, engaging in consistent social contact with caring friends and family are essential ingredients for optimal elderly functioning. Balancing between sedentary lifestyles with too little stress and those of overexertion and too much stress is important to fighting off illnesses and avoiding debilitating injuries. There are any number of health studies that point to maintaining a positive outlook, limiting stress (physical and emotional) and avoiding over excess, or over consumption and improved functioning in general and for the elderly specifically. Participation in group level social and community programs are known to increase overall vitality for the elderly. Several of the previously mentioned biological and engineering technologies may be applied to sustain functioning for the aged over time.

Mind-body Interactions and the Role of Social Support in Healthy Aging

Social support has been demonstrated to be a major predictor of health and longer life. Several well-controlled prospective studies have demonstrated that social support, beyond other covariates such as health behaviors, health service utilization, health risk behaviors and level of prosperity, are associated to have a major affect on the health and longevity of the elderly (Uchino, 2004). Positive communication with social network members, which aides people in the process of staying healthy or coping with life’s problems, is referred to as social support. Social support also involves reciprocation in social exchange behaviors, companionship, or close relationships. Though support is only one way in which, well being and the mind-body connection are improved through more general social relationships (Berkman, Glass, Brissete, & Seeman, 2000).

Implications

Much effort is needed, over the short term, of the next few decades, to apply advances in biotechnology, technology, essential concepts associated with the promotion of optimal health, through the mind-body connection systematically so as to improve independence and functioning. Accessing and utilizing the knowledge and resources developing from these technical advances, and associated research may be expected to preserve the quality of life for the elderly and greatly extend their capacities as valued contributors to their relative societies. The elderly are a valued portion of the society of which they are members, whose contributions
and capacity may be extended to the benefit the whole of the respective society, through the strength of technological advancements common to both developed and developing countries.

**Discussion**

Aging and technology are directly and reciprocally related to one another other. The development of new technologies over a lifetime can dramatically change the experience of life and of aging. New environmental stresses to adapt are then placed on both mind and body. Biological and health technologies may however enhance, or extend life, or the experience of life. Other social, transportation and communicative technologies may modify the subjective experience of independence and social connectedness and support potentials of aged. The demographics of aging may also provide the impetus to create new and innovative technologies, to sustain the functionally and contributions of a valued and experienced segment of a society. Though dramatic shifts in population demographics toward the elderly are increasing and are most notable in developed and developing countries, the phenomena is gradually occurring across numerous nations and globally. The popular concept of aging in place, in one’s home or community, creates demands for more forms of adaptive technologies both from the biological technology domain and from the engineering, technology, domain of scientific discovery to sustain. The physical, communicative and social needs of the elderly are less easily met and require the adoption of additional technological advances. The synergy of these advances, their acceptance and use can contribute greatly to enhancing the mind body connection and healthy aging.

**References**


Table 1: Number of elderly as percent and dependency ratio per country (in select years)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Elderly per population %</th>
<th>Aged dependency ratio %</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>2040</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>16.3%</td>
<td>26.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>16.9%</td>
<td>30.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>17.0%</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
</tr>
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<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>20.8%</td>
<td>33.9%</td>
</tr>
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<td>France</td>
<td>20.6%</td>
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<td>Netherlands</td>
<td>18.5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
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<td>46.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Figure 1: Therapeutic Cloning From Stem Cells: Model
Figure 2: Emerging Technologies to Support Healthy and Extended Aging

RFID chip

Sensor nodes,
Pacemakers,
Remote medical
Infusion devices
Medical information
transmission links

Acoustic monitoring
GIS/GPS monitoring
Environmental sensors
Automated devices
Data managers

Cognitive Retraining Software
Knowledge Legacy Programs
Occupational Networks
Health and Wellness Programs

Social Media
Interactive Entertainment
Tele-video Social Networks
Family or Care Provider, On Call
and Monitoring

Safety and Security
Technologies
Wearable Activity
Monitoring Devices

Phone and Internet Data linkages
MBAA Assessment

Mark S. Bellnap
Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University
Purpose of the Spreadsheet

Faculty, staff and others spend much time collecting, aggregating, compiling, recording, and analyzing assessment data. The purpose of this excel spreadsheet is to develop a template to be used in the Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University (ERAU) Master of Business Administration Aviation (MBAA) program for assessment. The intent is to develop a spreadsheet template that requires manual input from blackboard course graded activities and other sources, but will greatly reduce the existing time necessary to collect and analyze the appropriate data. The result is more time available to faculty, staff and others to evaluate, analyze and interpret the assessment data.

Description of the Spreadsheet

The spreadsheet is an assessment tool that increases the effectiveness and efficiency in the MBAA assessment process. This tool could also serve as a model to be used by other ERAU programs.

The starting point in the process was to map the graded activities to each of the course outcomes, program outcomes and the university mission. The mapping of each of the course graded activities involved reviewing the gold template MBAA online courses. Each graded activity was reviewed and those activities with clear links to course outcomes, program outcomes, and university outcomes were identified.

For the ground courses, the individual instructor of record, mapped the graded activities to the course learning outcomes, and provide that information to the assistant MBAA chair for inclusion in the spreadsheet. If there is no clear link then this graded activity was not included in the assessment. This assessment was quantitative in nature.

In addition, survey questionnaires were used to provide a qualitative assessment of how well the MBAA program is meeting the MBAA vision, mission, and program outcomes and how well the MBAA program is achieving the university mission. This questionnaire was completed by MBAA students, MBAA faculty, and MBAA administrators.

The quantitative results show the percent achievement. 80% or higher is viewed as success. 80% is equivalent to a “B” in the class. The qualitative results will also show a percent achievement. 60% or higher is viewed as success. 60% on the questionnaire indicates agree with the achievement of MBAA outcomes and the MBAA program achieving the University mission.

Statistical tests were used as well and imbedded in the spreadsheet. A Kruskal Wallis H test determines if a statistically significant difference exists between the faculty, students, and administrators responses to the survey questionnaire. In some instances, an instructor, who is not the course of record instructor, will also grade a gradeable in the course. A Wilcoxon Matched Paired T test will compare the grades of the two instructors, who grade the same document, to determine if a statistically significant difference exists in the two grades.

The spreadsheet summary available for administrators and other interested parties will how a quantitative and qualitative success rate as well as whether statistically significant differences
exist. This spreadsheet takes into account and assessment needs of the university, Department of Business Administration, and MBAA course courses. In addition, this spreadsheet has the potential to benefit other ERAU programs and departments serving as one model for assessment. Furthermore, this spreadsheet has reduced the workload associated with assessment data collection, compiling, and recording, thereby giving faculty and administrators more time to pursue other ERAU projects.

**How the Outcomes for this Spreadsheet Align with Overall Student Learning Outcomes and Desired Program Outcomes.**

The first link between the student learning outcomes, program outcomes, and the spreadsheet purpose is the effectiveness of MBAA assessments. Effectiveness focuses on how well we are achieving each of those outcomes. Therefore, with the mapping we can clearly quantitatively and qualitatively assess all outcomes.

The second link is between the efficiency of MBAA assessments or less time spent by MBAA faculty and others inputting data into databases for assessment analysis. Efficiency focuses on the time management within the MBAA Program faculty and spreadsheet increases efficiency allowing the faculty more time for assessment analysis or other duties.

The matrix below provides the four MBAA Program Outcomes, the weighted per cent of assessed material relating to each program outcomes, and the success rate for each of the four MBAA Program Outcomes for the 2009/2010 academic year. The sum of the weighted assessed material will equal 100% and the composite success rate based upon the weighted learning outcome weighted per cent is also provided.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Outcomes</th>
<th>Learning Outcome Weight Per Cent</th>
<th>Learning Outcome Per Cent Success</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Business Competencies</td>
<td>44.6%</td>
<td>90.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Skills</td>
<td>17.2%</td>
<td>86.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Problem Solving</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>92.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>4.9%</td>
<td>86.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Total/**Composite Success Per Cent</td>
<td>*100.0%</td>
<td>**90.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**How Success is Determined for each Program Outcome**

Let us look at learning outcome one for the MBAA Course 518. Let us assume that in Module 1 the Discussion Question, in Modules 3 and 5 the case studies, and in Module 8 the Video Discussion all were mapped to learning outcome one. We would then determine the total points possible of all of these gradeables and determine the total points earned. The total points earned would some per cent of the total points possible. This would be the weighted average. Since these are actual points and grades then 80%, a minimum “B”, would be considered successful.

Now let us look at the MBAA Program Outcome One. Let us assume that in MBAA 517 Module 4 the Discussion Question, in MBAA 635 in Modules 5 and 7 the case studies, in MBAA 514 Module 6 the case study all were mapped to MBAA Program Outcome One.
We would then determine the total points possible of all of these gradeables and determine the total points earned. The total points earned would some per cent of the total points possible. This would be the weighted average. Since these are actual points and grades then 80%, a minimum “B”, would be considered successful.

Now let us look at the University Mission One to program outcomes. Let us assume that in MBAA 517 Module 7 the Discussion Question, in MBAA 514 in Modules 2 and 6 the case studies, in MBAA 523 Module 6 the case study all were mapped to University Mission One. We would then determine the total points possible of all of these gradeables and determine the total points earned. The total points earned would some per cent of the total points possible. This would be the weighted average. Since these are actual points and grades then 80%, a minimum “B”, would be considered successful.

In terms of the questionnaire, each question on the questionnaire is linked directly with an MBAA Program Outcome or a specific ERAU Mission. The mean of the numeric responses gives a weighted average. The success rate is determined to 60% or above. 60% or above is a response that agrees with statements that state that the MBAA Program Outcomes or that specifics of the ERAU Mission are being achieved.

**How this Data is Used for Continuous Improvement**

Generally speaking, in those areas where there are high success rates, we will want to continue, promote, and extend those areas between courses. For example, if research skills have a high success rate in MBAA 518 we analyze and evaluate what in terms of research is taking place in this course. The analysis may result in expanding these successful techniques to other courses.

There will be instances in which the success rate is not successful. We will then try and determine the cause of the problem and then fix it. For the 2009/2010 academic year eleven findings and corrective actions were identified.
Ramblings of an Ancient Pit Boss

David Ross Britton
Violet Bunny Education Consulting
I went to Reno to look for a job after my parents moved there. The fact that I lost my job and had been evicted had nothing to do with my decision, I am an adventurer. My dad was working for Harrahs and he suggested that I go see Helen, the HR director and see if there was a job for me. Helen told me that they need security guards and janitors. I told Helen that I was too smart to be a security guard, didn’t know about janitors. I got a job at Harrahs as a keno writer. I took a basic test, something, human resources copied from a book, I supposed. The test was simple and I got 100% correct, which elicited excitement with the office help. None had gotten 100% and so I assumed I was the only genius there, and would soon be in charge. I interviewed and went to Keno school, and learned how to use a brush and ink to mark tickets, marking up many shirts while learning. I had committed all of the payouts and way tickets to a tape recorder that I would listen to during the day, and would let run in a loop while I was sleeping. When I took my payout test, I was able to list all of the payouts, which seemed to be somewhat of an oddity. The keno boss told me that no one had ever taken the test and gotten 100%. Now I knew I was destined for greatness working at Harrahs. I took my place alongside the other writers in the main casino on Virginia Street at a wage of $12 a day. The work was easy, the writers friendly, and you could buy a white shirt for $2.85 at the western store – a frequent occurrence.

I volunteered for every shift, took overtime in stride, I do not remember anyone ever asking me if I wanted to work overtime. One overtime shift of 10 hours, I wrote 1610 tickets, which was, at the time, a record. However, the next day, the keno boss dressed me down in front of the crew for holding my paper by the corner while marking the tickets. The boss wanted the tickets flat on the counter, no exceptions. It did not matter to him that I had written a record number of tickets, it was an opportunity prove his control.

The reason for holding the paper up at the corner was when marking spots we could get long tails on the spots, and make fancy conditioning in the margins. The boss did not like the fancy tickets, and was unimpressed with my production rate – he threatened to fire me. A theme that would occur many times over the next thirty-years, there are a hundred waiting for your job, we don’t need you. I tried to date a few of the girls that worked at the casino, without success. None of them wanted to be seen with a keno writer; we were messy little trolls with no real skills and usually covered with black ink spots. The girls dated table games dealers. I decided to be a table games dealer.

My interest in table games took me around the corner to the Golden to watch the dealers. The allure of the Golden was that insiders said that it was a flat store. I did not know what a flat store was, but a 21 dealer explained that the dealers cheated. I do not recall that we used shoes in those days, and a hand deck was deadly for the player, in the hands of a mechanic. Some mechanics were skilled in dealing a deuce, or second card down in the deck, but some could pull a card from anywhere, did not matter whether the top, middle, or bottom. The burn card was a live card rolled over the deck, not a colored plastic card used later. Sometimes the dealer would roll more than one card and keep them handy for use if needed. The dealer always knew what the next two or three cards down from the top were, by the use of a bubble peek, or by exposing the card with the index finger so that it would raise in the back high enough to see the value. I am sure that there were a dozen other ways to peek, but as I learned to deal cards, these two were easiest for me.
Some of the dealers could do card location, knowing where certain cards were in the deck, and would shuffle the cards into a position good for the house or the player. It was easy to pin the deck so that players thought they were cutting the deck, but were not. A later change in dealing procedure had the player insert the plastic burn card into the deck to prevent pinning. However, you could just quickly move the deck into the plastic burn card so that the player thought they were making the choice of the insertion.

The dealer that explained the flat store also taught me how to deal the deuce, hop the deck on a cut to put the cards back in the same order, and switch out my hole card. I practiced, but never got any good at the deuce, but I did find that I had a knack for location and shuffling cards into the position in the deck wherever I wanted them. I was skilled to the point that I could deal for hours and never deal an ace, unless I needed one. The most amusing thing was that you could get away with all sorts of rules violations while the players watched. Often you could deal the deck, not shuffle, cut the deck, and deal again. Fortunately, for the players, I never had much chance to deal 21.

I was skilled enough in keno that I began to work a one-person desk in the Terrace Room where there was a bar and restaurant. A bit about the restaurant – employees could get ham or bacon and eggs, toast, coffee, and juice for less than twenty-five cents. My memory is hazy, but I think the actual cost was seventeen cents. The highlight of my day came when Bill Harrah would come up the back stairs, say hello, and sometimes take a minute or two to ask how things were going. I was more impressed by his ownership of the Harrah Automobile Collection than I was of his casino ownership. My Dad was working at the Collection and I had the opportunity, on several occasions, to step over the ropes and actually sit in some of the cars. No Bugattis or Duesenbergs, mind you, but I had a favorite, a 1947 Chrysler Woody Station Wagon. I have been lusting for the last 45-years to own one.

We had keno runners who would go around the bar, and restaurant and pick up tickets from guests eating or drinking, and then would quickly return the tickets before the start of the next race. The runner that worked the Terrace Room, which happened to be a very good toke job, was the girl friend and later wife of the keno boss’s son. The son was already a craps dealer and so even talking to a writer was beneath his station, except to be rude and sarcastic. He referred to me as puss gut. Another of the runners in the Terrace Room was a blue-eyed natural blond that I was in love with. She had, however, other ideas and although we dated a few times, really had no interest in a relationship.

Craps was the game for me. I was still a keno writer at Harrahs when recruiting for craps school came. I put in my name and within a day or two, the keno boss told me that he knew that I had applied for the school. He said that I would never get into the school because I was too fat, and they only wanted the pretty people in the pit.

I started craps school, unpaid of course, and attended school daily. We would go over to the old bank building at the corner of Virginia and Second Street and get clackers from the vault to fill the check racks on the craps. A thousand clackers in a bag weighed 40-pounds and were awkward to carry. The embossed coins used in the slots and on games, that were not U.S. silver
dollars were referred to as clackers because of the sound they made when falling into the slot machine trays. Since slots have gone to paper in, paper out, contemporary players will never know the cacophony of the sound or the look of delight on little old ladies faces when everyone turned to see who got a drop.

One of the little old ladies that spent most of their free time in a casino was my mother. An inveterate roulette player, she enjoyed the game, one of the worst for player odds, and frequently borrowed a few dollars from me so that my father would not know she had lost another paycheck. Whenever I was missing something, a camera, skis, etc., I knew that I could find my stuff in a corner pawnshop. Most of the time my mother did not have the money to bail the items, so I guess I was lucky to get the pawn ticket.

One night my mother came home in a taxi. The taxi driver got out and started taking something from the trunk of the cab. My mother had won $5,000 on a slot and had brought all of the clackers home in buckets. She also had gotten lucky on roulette and had won another $8,000. She made me take an oath to guard the money for her and not let her gamble the money away. However, that did not apply to the $5,000 in coin – she decided to take that back for her playing stake and the cab driver reloaded the buckets into the cab.

At about 2:00 AM my mother called and told me that she had lost the $5,000 and needed money to play. I told her that she said for me to guard the money and not let her lose it. She argued that she only needed $2,000 to continue playing roulette. I bring the money to her in Harrahs main club. I did and went back to bed. About 4:00 AM she called again, said she had lost the money and could I bring her $3,000; she was sure her luck would change. I told her no and that the money was on the table and she could come and get it. The next day, all of the money was gone.

I went into the craps pit in the new Harrah’s expansion, the old Golden Hotel. My first supervisor was a floor-lady who had broken in to dealing during the war and had an immense amount of experience. She helped me in every way, wanting her fledgling dealers to be a success. I started using the circus calls that I had learned from visiting various casinos and actually had fun, though stressed. My supervisor told me that I was working too hard and to take it easy and try to relax; however, I was much too nervous. We had some fun with the calls, the seven out became six-one all done, seven-two all through and four-trey went away. Combinations that rolled soft on the hardways, when we could get away with the call, easy ways were flaccid ways.

One of the guys that worked in the vault at Harrahs, the vault was still in the old bank building, got into a drunken fight at the Cal Neva and took a shot at the guy with whom he was fighting. After the arrest, the police went to his house and in the closets, he has thousands of dollars in nickels, dimes, and quarters that he had been stealing from the vault.

I worked at Harrahs long enough to gain sufficient skill to work the dime game in the Main Casino, facing Virginia Street. One of my supervisors was later an owner in the Circus Circus and went on to a worth of millions. Security in the pit was lax, in fact, when closing a game we had to take all of the chips off the game and return them to the cage. On closing once, our Floorperson did not have sufficient chip racks and put the leftover chips in his pocket. In later
years, this would have been an instant termination and loss of work card. Tips, tokes, or zooks as we called them, were slim or none. I remember getting $20 for a shift and going on a drunk, as the usual was one or two dollars.

After a year or two, at Harrahs, do not really remember, I went to the Palace Club. One of the dealer’s mothers ran the whorehouses out in Wadsworth. He was married to a diminutive Asian girl who worked at one of the houses and would come in occasionally to visit. This association led to me meeting Yellowstone Red, who had taken over Mustang Ranch with a few enforcers with shotguns. It seems that Joe Conforte was not paying his tribute to whatever gang he was associated with, and so the Ranch was taken over by the enforcers and all of the proceeds of sales (sex) until the pot were even.

When I went to the Palace Club, I hired on as a keno writer, but got some craps shifts and eventually became a full-time craps dealer. For a while, I would work craps and the keno, two shifts, five days. The keno shift was on graveyard and we would mainly go to the break room and sleep, seldom having a customer. I met some dealers who really were check handlers, and very experienced, mistakenly dated the boss’s girl friend, and then left town for a few days to let things quiet down. When I came back, I hired on at the Horseshoe as a three game dealer. Sometimes, on grave, there would be a 21, craps, and roulette open, and only two or three dealers. We would have to jump onto whichever game someone wanted to play.

My mentor at the Horseshoe was actually mentioned in the Green Felt Jungle. He was a casino boss in the San Francisco Bay Area during WWII, and worked games in the San Francisco Bay area for the mob. Sam had worked, before coming to the Bay, for Frank Nitti, managing table games. Sam told me that Nitti would come through the casino each night and take the day’s receipts from Sam’s back pocket. Sam was afraid that someday he would be robbed and that Mr. Nitti, not known for his compassion and even temper, might take umbrage, and shoot Sam. Sam saved enough money from his take to offset the day’s casino receipts, so that if he were robbed, that he could replace the lost money and avoid death. Upon Sam recounting this story, I had to agree that it seemed a prudent plan.

Each year we would go to the Nevada Club to get the Club ashtray. Maurice Fitzgerald, the owner, would be behind the cages, handing out the trays. Fitzgerald would ask you how many days in February, and if you didn’t know the answer, or did not know if it was a leap year, he would refuse to give you a tray.

I met my wife to be at the Horseshoe. She had been a doctor’s wife and had come to Reno to establish her six-week residency and get a divorce. We hit it off and planned within days to marry – the start of an eleven-year hell. She was an alcoholic and pill popper who never did think me smart, or a good earner. She resented my friends and family, tried to commit suicide on two occasions, and made friends with several of her workmates, if you understand my meaning.

We left Reno and headed for Las Vegas, initially taking an apartment in the Naked City, known for the showgirls’ sun bathing in the nude. Eventually we moved into an apartment on Koval Lane, that was behind the Bonanza, where Bally’s stands today. Koval had a huge ditch that was part of the flood control. I would guess that the road dipped into the ditch to a depth of eight-feet,
perhaps more. Every rainy season, some foolhardy person would try to cross the ditch in their car when it was filled with water. From our second floor apartment, we could watch the fire department’s rescue squad throw out ropes and cables, and men suiting up to go into the water. We would speculate, and sometimes bet on whom the idiot was that would do such a foolish thing. The underpass at Charleston was also a good spot to watch the fire department in action on rainy days. There was a large open field behind the Bonanza, and we built a small racetrack with jumps and berms to practice racing our motorcycles.

My first audition was at Milton Prell’s Aladdin Hotel and I made many mistakes, really nervous and lacking big money game experience. In Vegas, the layouts were different from Reno, the field payoffs were different, and there were more kinds of bets. I had not seen dollar amounts so large, and so many players on a game; I was completely lost. I had a friend who was working at the Aladdin and advised me to go downtown and get some experience. I hired on at the Mint in Glitter Gulch. There was a Fremont experience but not overhead with lights and music. The experience was bums, and thieves, and hookers, loan sharks, money players, and drunks. Some of the money players could get thousands on the finger, and looked like they shopped at Kmart. Downtown was a place where a guy on roller-skates would roll up and call a bet, where people with dirty shoes got out of Mercedes limos, and hookers defined the term railbird.

Along with Whistler, Spinner, Tyrone, and the Coronel, we had a vast collection of characters. John was from Louisiana and had government contracts that paid well. Once he won all of the black checks the Mint had, and refused to give them up, taking them in a suitcase back to Louisiana. Once a big Mexican guy and I do mean big, six-foot-seven and three hundred fifty pounds, claimed a bet that I knew was not his and so I refused to pay. He pulled a knife and told me to pay (it was over a twenty-five cent bet), or he would cut me. I called pit boss Bruce over and told him that the guy claimed a bet and was going to cut me. Bruce said you started the fight; you finish it, and then walked away.

The worst day was when an old man and old woman, overalls and her in a gingham dress, started betting hundreds in the field. He lost over thirty-thousand while the old woman stood in the background crying which turned to sobbing. It turned out that they had just sold their farm and the money was the proceeds. They were moving to California to be near their children and the old man had lost all of the money then had. The woman appealed to the shift manager to give them back some of the money; he gave them a tank of gas to get out of town.

In a craps game, one of the rules is that the shooter must shoot the dice to the end of the table so that they bounce off the rubber. This is to keep someone from trying to control the dice. I have a shooter that would loft the dice about halfway down the table and I will tell him to hit the end. After three or four times, being told to hit the end, he became exasperated with me. He shouted; don’t never tell no nigga how to shot dice. We invented this game. I’ll shoot the dice anyway I want; you don’t never tell no nigga how to shot dice. The he looked me in the eye, said fuck you, and walked away.

We had a pit boss we called the Rat Man, who had beady little narrow eyes, and a sharp nose. We actually called him, however, Rat Man, because he was constantly getting the dealers and supervisors into situations and then denying that he was involved. One time I had a player asking
for money and I turned to Rat Man, waved and held up five fingers, meaning I had a player that
wanted five-hundred in credit. I pointed at the guy and Rat Man shook his head yes. The casino
manager came by a while later and asked me where’s the guy that got the money. I told him the
story – as it turned out the guy was 86ed from the casino and was not even supposed to be in the
casino, much less credit. Rat Man denied okaying the credit. I was later told that the casino
manager had punched Rat Man in the chest. The player was up about three-hundred, with eight-
hundred in the rail and on the layout. We took it all, the player complaining that we could not
take the winnings, but we have a simple rule we follow. If you can’t lose, you can’t win. He
could not get credit, therefore he could not lose and we were not letting him walk with the
house’s money.

Where many of the buildings are today, open dirt fields stood. I learned early never to lock my
car, first day and it was broken into. Between the Mint and Horseshoe, there was an alley where
we parked our motorcycles. The Main Street Station was a Holiday Inn, and across the street
from the Mint and Horseshoe were the Golden Nugget, Club Bingo, and the Lucky Strike.
Further down were the Pioneer, The Las Vegas Club, and the Union Plaza. There were little
joints, in downtown, I had no reason to enter and cannot remember their existence. I do
remember that Sassy Sally’s was the Carousel Club. My recollection of the Carousel was that it
had a good snack bar, and was cleaner than most.

One of our boxmen has worked in Steubenville, Hot springs, and Port Arthur. He use to tell a
story about two guys coming to shoot craps, in Port Arthur, and after the come out roll, one of
them made a late bet to try to cover up a switch of the dice. The box catch the dice in midair, and
with hardly a change of tone, said, “We all shoot with the same dice here.” An understatement
that kept the two guys from being beaten and dumped in an alley.

I went into the Horseshoe almost every day; I would cut through to get to the Mint next door. The
Horseshoe was dark, smoke filled and quiet compared to the Mint. I remember the smell of
rancid beer, and once told a friend that I thought there was a drop of beer in the rug of every beer
that the Binion’s ever sold. When I walked through the Shoe, it seemed like everyone in the
casino was suspicious of your intentions. The box and floor would follow your progress; the
security would follow your path. The Golden Nugget did not smell like beer, it just smelled. I
don’t think they had a good cleaning of the place since it opened.

The Mint had air curtains for doors, an innovation by Harrahs in Reno, and one day the
maintenance staff were putting up the glass doors and locking them shut. I remember that day in
1968 a march down Fremont Street. I was told the City police had tried to block the marchers
from coming from the Westside, the area where blacks lived, but the march went forward. I
stood behind the doors of the Mint and watched, dozens, it could have been hundreds, or
thousands, march down Fremont Street. I had no idea why they were marching and what Jim
Crow was, and who MLK was. I did not learn until later that blacks could not stay on the Strip
and downtown hotels, and the only blacks on the Strip, in the casino, were janitors. I had never
even thought about equal rights and discrimination In the 60s and early 70s; I had never seen a
woman dealer on the Strip. The only women were cocktail waitresses and hookers – sometimes
one and the same.
The Mint held the Mint 400 desert race. During the week of the race, the casino and hotel where packed with players, drivers, thieves and gawkers. The racecars would be lined up on Fremont, in front of the Mint, and we would walk up and down the street, looking at the cars and trying to prove the tourists that we were an integral part of the race. Most of the players were nickel-dime. I guess they spent all of their money on the cars.

From the Mint, I went to the Flamingo, double-crossed by a person I thought a friend, who could have gotten me a supervisor’s job with a word to the casino manager. Instead, I ended up dealing craps and sometimes roulette. I quit after a month and went to the Riviera. My supposed friend said that I made him look bad; this was after he would not recommend me for a supervisor’s job.

The Riviera was the hottest craps job in town. Dean Martin was a part owner, and there were celebrities at the table many times. I dealt to Forrest Tucker, Johnny Carson, Arnold Palmer, and Lee Marvin. Great toke job and no time to stand around as on other jobs I had had. Boredom was out at the Riv.

I first began to take notice of my surrounding when the pit boss would come to the table with a lot of cash and proclaim this is Mr. Rs marker. Later, with lots of cash, this is Mr. Bs marker. Except, we had no lammars on the game and these guys had not played on the shift. It finally dawned on me that there was money laundering going on. Things got more interesting when I was dealing on third base and I heard, click, clack, clack, and clack. The boxman had put a handful of green chips inside his coat pocket and was having trouble letting go. The chips were dropping one or two at a time into his pocket. Soon after I saw, another boxman a chip into his sleeve, with a motion much like snapping your fingers. I figured out that Rich the floorman was in on the scam because he just happened to have his foot on the boxman’s chair each time the theft took place. Later I found that one of the boxmen had a paid for house in the D.I. golf course, worth about 200K and another of the boxmen had built several condominiums in Park City for cash. Another of the dealers gathered enough cash from dealing at the Riv to go upstate and open a casino.

The Thunderbird was one of the early properties with a casino in front, facing the Strip, and a motel in the rear. One of the dealers lived at the Thunderbird, and he would go across the street to his room on his breaks. As it turned out, he went to smoke hashish and was loaded most of the time. One night this guy was dealing to a customer and handed off a stack of black chips. The player, befuddled by the chips, asked the pit boss why he was given the chips. It seems that the dealer was stealing the chips by handing them off to an agent, or A as they were called. He was so loaded on smoke that he handed the chips off to the wrong guy – his A was two players away. I never saw the guy again.

One evening our regular pit boss was complaining about the high prices of houses on the Sahara Golf Course and how he did not make enough money to buy a condo there. The pit boss was about 40 years-of-age and had just married a cocktail waitress who was about 22. According to our pit boss she spent a lot on clothes, wanted a new car, and a home on the golf course. After this complaining went on for half the shift, one of the dealers, struggling to get through college and working another job on his day off, had had enough. He was on the stick on our game and with great disgust threw the stick on the table and then exclaimed, this is the only job in the
world were a guy with a third-grade education can complain about making a buck and a quarter a day. The dealer was soon out the door, fired.

One of the craps shooter got into an argument with Tommy, the shift manager, and called Tommy an ignorant motherfucker. Tommy called security to have the guy tossed. Two security guards grabbed the guy by the belt in back, creating a considerable wedgie, grabbed each arm and took the player towards the door. When security came back, Tommy was furious with the guards and threatened to fire them. Why, one asked – what is wrong. Tommy said that I told you to throw the guy out; I didn’t say open the door first.

An owner of a cement plant and airport builder, from Texas, came to the game with $900,000 in cash and bet $500 on every number, every way possible. He lost $500,000 during my shift and was still playing when my shift ended. There were always big money players at the Riviera, and was the biggest craps game in town. When the show would break and Dean Martin would come out of the showroom doors, he did not sneak out through the kitchen as others did, the games would begin and go well into the graveyard shift. Action was good when Engelbert Humperdinck was in the show room. Humperdinck stayed back stage in a trailer provided for him. As far as I know, he never left the property during the run.

It one day dawned on me that every black employee I saw was on a cleaning crew. The only black person I ever saw at the bar was a very tall hooker who dressed in some sort of African looking outfit, complete with feathers, and sometimes a simulated spear. She was very popular with some of the bosses, and I discovered that there seemed to be a correlation between stealing and the attention the bosses gave her.

We did have women cocktail waitresses, but they were not allowed to work inside the pit as they were in Reno. In my later years as a boss, I tried to have the cocktail waitress banned from inside the pit while I was working, because they always seemed to be in the way of big action. Hoping for a tip from a big player, most would hover over the table blocking my view of the action.

When screen and stage stars such as Sammy Davis Jr. were in town, if they need a hotel room, they had to go to the Westside, probably the Moulin Rouge. Apartheid was definitely the rule when I worked on the Strip in the late 60s and early 70s.

When we went to work at the Riv we had to enter the loading dock and walk through the kitchen. There was usually a lot of water on the floor and you had to step carefully. The Riv was a big strip operation but the restaurants had a C rating which is the worst for cleanliness. When we got off work, it was another trip through the kitchen and out through the parking lot. The Riv has been built over the lot now, but we parked behind the building then, and exited on Paradise or Circus Circus Drive. Behind the Riv was an open field, now the site of the Las Vegas Hilton. About once a month, some of us would meet a van, parked on Paradise, filled with shoes, shirts, suits, jewelry and etc. We never bother to ask the guys with the van where the stuff came from, we were only interested in silk shirts for eight-dollars, and cheap alligator shoes.
Once the International opened, we went to stage shows with Elvis, Streisand, Ike and Tina Turner, and Redd Foxx. Once the Hilton acquired the property, construction began on another wing starting the shape of the building today.

I remember the opening of the Circus Circus. It was exciting to see the circus acts and we went to the midway to throw baseballs and shoot at ducks. I remember the women riding horses that were hanging from the ceiling, trapeze acts, and a guy that jumped from the ceiling to a small pad that was mounted in the floor. The pad was accessed by opening doors in the floor, and the doors stood at a forty-five degree angle. It looked like two knives, ready to cut the guy into two pieces if he missed the pad.

We would go to the Silver Slipper for boxing night, some of the notorious corner boys – loan sharks, would be there betting on the boxers and offering to loan money to anyone who need more for wagering. The Castaways had a nice restaurant and we went there often. We liked to shoot craps at the Bonanza, where Bally’s stands today. The Bonanza had a movie theater where I saw Robert Redford in Downhill Racer. The Hacienda had good lounge shows, and some nights you could sit with Judy Bayley, the Hacienda’s owner, to talk and see the act. Judy was always friendly and gracious.

The lighting of the Stardust sign was a major event; we made a trip to see, at the time, the most spectacular sign on any casino. We made another trip to see the Strip in darkness, Howard Hughes was feuding with the culinary union, and the union went on strike. Hughes owned the Desert Inn, Sands, Silver Slipper, Castaways, Frontier, and Landmark, and with no union contract the lights on the strip shut down.

In 1971, I headed to Lake Tahoe for a week’s vacation and spent the next nine-years working there. When I went into the Sahara Tahoe, I found many of the same people I worked with at the Mint. When I saw white shirts (dealers) sitting the box and walking the floor, I knew the Sahara was short of qualified supervisors and I was hired the minute the casino manager and I talked. I went back to Vegas to settle affairs and sell my house. I never did like Vegas, and was happy to be leaving. I started at the Sahara Tahoe in June of 1971 and on my first day of work; there was a major snowstorm. I almost did not make the shift, I was no longer equipped to drive around, or even dress properly with snow.

The Sahara was the loosest job I had had. The dealers did whatever they wanted, rules notwithstanding. When I complained that a dealer was not following procedure, the usual comment from my boss would be, good dealer, leave him or her alone. I was watching crap games for the first-year of employment and I was reminded minute-by-minute that I was not in Vegas. I saw many variations on dealing procedure, sometimes as though the dealer made it up as they went along.

Within a few days, I began to understand the culture, when one of the dealers asked me if I wanted to buy some good bush (ganja, weed, herb, hemp). On the external showroom stairs, the ones that were an escape route in case of emergency, many of the dealers would sit in plain view of the Harvey’s Club hotel windows, and smoke dope. The dealers offered marijuana, hashish, hash oil, a panoply of pills, and just about any mind-altering substance you can imagine.
They were into sharing the dope, and where to get it. I can only remember two incidences where arrests were made for dope, in all of the time I worked at the lake. Perhaps there were many, but were out of my notice. One cocaine arrest was the son of my shift manager, whom I worked with everyday. The shift manager went to Harrahs and got a friend to give him a $10,000 marker, which he used for bail, for his son. The marker was illegal, it was an unauthorized loan, and Harrahs upper management, most likely never knew that the company had made a no interest, illegal loan, that was outstanding until the case went to trial and the bail was refunded. Another was a bit more interesting, a dealer on the day shift, who was stopped on his way over Echo Summit, by the California Highway Patrol, and upon search of his car had several grams of coke and 70-pounds of marijuana. I do not know the outcome, but I did note that the dealer continued on the job for some time.

Dope might have been a factor in several deaths. One dealer died in a parachute jump, falling without opening her chute. Another overturned her car chasing her boyfriend. Another shot herself over her problems with her boyfriend. One dealer was on a solo sailing trip from Newport to Mexico, and his empty boat drifted ashore in Half Moon Bay, California.

We had some players at the Sahara with conduct that would not have been tolerated on the Strip. One of the dealers was a tall, natural blond, and very attractive. One player from Oregon that was in the timber business, and had a large credit line would come to play frequently, and would often harass the dealers when loosing. On a particularly long losing streak, he asked the dealer if she could still deal with his dick in her mouth. The casino manager was standing beside me during the incident, but when I looked around, he was at the other end of the pit. The casino manager’s preference was letting the dealers be abused over possibly losing the player.

One player had shirt tailed on a plan carrying his buddy. The player had had money but had lost all due to excessive gambling, business conditions, and several ex-wives. He was no longer asked to play, and so had to catch a ride with his buddy, who had been invited to the casino. This guy, let’s call him Dick, one of his favorite words, borrowed a hundred from his friend and started to play craps. After the several of the biggest dukes (hands), we had ever experience and eight or nine hours of play, he had about 40-thousand in the rail. Dick took the money over to the baccarat pit, and after an all-nighter, had over 400-thousand in winners off the original borrowed hundred. Dick wanted all cash, which took a while, and went to his room. In the morning, Dick was nowhere to be found. We at first thought he had been kidnapped or murdered because of the money. After searching the entire casino and hotel, someone had the presence of mind to call his home in Texas; Dick answered the phone. Dick had decided that he would hop a plane home with the money. He agreed to come back to the casino and so we sent a private jet to pick him up, hoping of course, to get back the winnings. Dick arrived, ate, drank, enjoyed the hookers, went to shows, and enjoyed his stay. After three days, the casino manager asked him if he was going to play, as we were another five or 6 thousand down paying his expenses. Dick came up to the crap table, waited for his turn to shoot, put a twenty-dollar-bill on the pass line, shot the dice and lost the twenty. He then said, you boys must have your dicks in the sand, I’m not stupid, and then he went home. During my years at the Lake, I never saw him again.

I do not think it an overstatement that I worked with some of the dumbest shift managers, with the least amount of people skills and knowledge of a casino, as I did at the Lake. They were all
out of Harrah’s and knew some rules, but nothing of game protection. Joe was more interested in his personal acquisitions and would give the joint away to get, what he termed gifts, from the players. It was rumored that he had to have a room in his house to store all of the booty that he collected from players. Joe would trade fresh peaches for hotel rooms and show tickets. Jimmy was a little short guy, always on the defensive. He was always judgmental and ready to fight about something. He once went to a manager friend of mine and told him that I was telling stories about my friend’s personal life, which was not true. He must have enjoyed the confrontation until it turned to him and trying to support the lie. He was an underhanded, judgmental, backbiting little bastard.

Then there was Paul who I do not think knew much about any of the games, as he was always somewhere else when problems arose. He had been a shift boss at Harrahs at the Lake prior to coming to the Sahara. We had a high-limit player who was exceeding the betting limits and cheating a dealer who was mentally impaired. I changed the dealer and informed the player that he was exceeding the house table limit. The player went to Paul and told him that he would not pay his $30,000 marker unless I was fired. Paul gave me a week off for doing his job, I had called him several times before I took action, but he would not come to the pit or talk with the players. My first duty in any casino is to protect the employer’s assets, not protect an ignorant shift manager. I was the scheduler, and made up the schedule for the shift and turned in the payroll daily. I signed my time card an hour of overtime daily, until I got my forty lost hours back.

When a good player wanted a whore, the Sahara would put up the cost. I always got a kick out of having the player sign the invoice for travel money. Sophomoric, I know, but I delighted in asking the player if he enjoyed his trip. During this time, the Del Webb Corporation got into trouble with the Feds for the misuse of funds, and kickbacks to the beer company. I do not know when the practice stopped, but I do know that the whore issues were alive in 1976 when I was still taking players to the cage to sign for travel money.

In 1978, I opened a dealer’s school at Stateline. It was a modest affair with one craps, and four 21 tables. I instantly had a full roster of students and starting with one instructor. My instructor, Miriam, was a young lady, who incidentally loaned me a few dollars to get started, and who had a very bad mouth. She was fond of saying, what the fuck are you doing if the students made a mistake. She decided that she was not cut out to teach and withdrew. I then hired Joanne who seemed to be doing okay. After the first year, I moved the school into bigger quarters and hired a friend to manage during the evening. He hired Dana and I began to see students in the courses that exceeded the number of paid tuitions. It seems that Dana was keeping some of the money and Stan was inviting his friends to train free. With a few changes in management, the school started to earn money and so I expanded into Reno.

After six months, I only had five students in Reno and the school was draining revenue from the Tahoe School. I had brought Joanne from Tahoe to manage the Reno school and that lasted until I caught a student practicing cheating. I asked Joanne if she knew what the student was doing and she said yes, but did not know how to make him stop. We parted company. I hired Jim to teach then, only to find out that he was recently out of prison for spousal battery. Fearing a loss of my school license, I closed Reno and concentrated on Tahoe.
The Tahoe School registrations were rapidly declining, we had trained for the Park Tahoe (Caesars), Sahara Tahoe, and many of the smaller casinos. The Park had not built the hotel because of revenue problems and the dealer market was maturing. The school was going broke and I was starting to feel the pinch in my personal finances. I closed the school and went to Atlantic City and Harrahs.

In 1980, I went to Atlantic City to work at the not yet open Harrahs Marina. I was there to train dealers but soon found that some of my supposedly old friends wanted the training job and started to slander me whenever possible. I trained but was constantly undermined and so began to go through the motions, doing as little as possible.

Harrahs, before opening had a casino manager and other management that could not be licensed because of the Del Webb scandal. The acting casino mangers had hired security guards that had worked at the Sahara Tahoe as casino shift managers; there wasn’t three years casino experience between the bunch. Some of the men I had trained and now they were my supervisors. When the acting casino manager could not be licensed, Jim became the new casino manager, and Chuck the assistant. On play night, when the public is allowed to play for fun, the casino ran out of play chips and could not complete the test night. The positions reversed, Chuck became the casino manager, and Jim the assistant. Chuck promptly fired Jim

I quit and went to the Claridge as a casino shift manager. The troubles for the Del Webb corporation were still an issue and the Gaming Enforcement was debating the licensing of Robert Johnson. A New York Times article from July 2, 1982 reads:

The commissioners rejected a move by the State Division of Gaming Enforcement to oust a former Webb chairman, Robert Johnson, as a principal in the ownership of the casino. Division officials had objected to Mr. Johnson’s participation on grounds that the Webb Corporation had hired prostitutes for gamblers in Nevada, received kickbacks from a brewing company and reportedly donated "laundered" money to Nevada political campaigns … (Anonymous, 1982, para. 3).

There were dozens of former and present Del Webb employees who were still being affected by the past corporate practices. I was fired for being on first name terms with a guy who had run games for the mob. That is a story for another time.

References:

Evaluation of a Principal Preparation Internship Program: Principal/Mentor Perceptions of Effectiveness

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Evaluation of a Principal Preparation Program Internship:  
Principal/Mentor Perceptions of Effectiveness

The purpose of this research project was to examine an 18 month on-line principal internship program and its relationship to interns’ success on three domains and nine competencies as perceived by one thousand principal/mentors.

**Background**

In the past decade, the technology of online learning has matured. Smith and Mitry (2008) found that online higher education can be offered in the form of equal-quality and equal-standard learning as an economically viable option for students. In 2007, a university located in Texas implemented an online master’s degree program in educational leadership leading to principal certification with an internship as the culminating project. To date, over three thousand students have completed this program. During the internship, students are offered the opportunity to apply knowledge and develop content skills in a field-based educational setting.

Throughout the principal internship, a self-paced eighteen month program, interns performed campus and district leadership activities based upon state and national educational leadership standards. During the internship, reviews were conducted by professors and the principal/mentor at intervals which coincide with course work and learning tasks to provide the intern with guidance. The accumulation of internship hours began with the first course and ended with the eleventh course. In the campus-supervised portion of the internship, students developed a plan based upon several self-assessments in collaboration with their chosen principal/mentor. Students used a set of skill activities found in the practicum textbook as a guide in developing the plans. The interns’ principal/mentor was expected to meet regularly with interns to discuss experiences and facilitate the interns’ activities. In addition, the principal/mentor critiqued projects and coached the intern in areas targeted as needing improvement. Lastly, principal/mentors completed a final evaluation survey concerning the interns’ eighteen months of activities relative to the Educational Leadership Constituents Council (ELCC) national standards.

**Literature Review**

Topics for this literature review included the following: program evaluation and monitoring, critiques of internship programs, principal as the instructional leaders, and principal as the school manager. Owen (2006) strongly suggested that program evaluation with monitoring was associated with two major trends in current public policy: the increase in accountability for non-profit sectors and the emergence of performance-based management as the means for fulfilling that accountability. Owen asserted that this development created a wide range of implications for management. Owen purported that the evaluation process should be seen as a way to build on knowledge and produce a rigorous empirical inquiry system which helps in the design and application of policies and programs. Owen maintained that evaluation should be worth the investment of time and money if the knowledge gained is reliable, responsive to the needs of policy and programs and ultimately to the stakeholders. The growing accountability movement dictates that programs must be concerned with performance measurement and assembling evidence to show results. It was with these tenets of program evaluation in mind that this study was undertaken.

Criticism of school leadership preparation has a long history. Murphy (as cited in Martin, Wright, Danzig, Flanary, and Brown, 2005) asserted that, “Perhaps the only thing more
depressing than an honest appraisal of current educational administration programs is the knowledge that so little progress has been made in resolving the deeply ingrained weaknesses that have plagued training systems for so long “.

**Principals as instructional leaders.** Shipman, Queen, & Peel (2007) asserted that current research stresses the importance of the principal as the instructional leader but the reality is the principal’s main focus is day to day managerial concerns As challenges to universities arise via regulatory agencies, as well as, national and state standards, educational leadership preparation programs must redefine their knowledge base and processes for training future leaders.

Crystal Machado and Daniel Cline (2010) implied that the changing demographics of the United States and the importance of inclusion coupled with the fast pace of technology has created the need for contemporary school leaders to prepare to support the breadth, depth, and quality of education that students need for survival in our linguistically and culturally diverse environment.

**Principals as school managers.** Lunenburg and Irby (2006) explained that principals must be involved in developing coordinated services, to include community volunteerism toward a variety of school needs and the development of coordinated services extending from schools to families. Shipman, Queen, and Peel (2007) supported this premise, asserting that the principal was the single most important factor in determining the extent of parental and community involvement in the modern public school.

Guthrie and Schuermann (2010) stressed the importance of strategic planning with respect to administrative leadership, noting the need for emphasis on systematic and systemic review and possible redeployment of the institution’s resources. Preparation programs must develop educational leaders with the knowledge and ability to promote the success of all students by collaborating with families and other community members, responding to diverse community interests and needs, and mobilizing community resources.

In defining effective school principals, Lindley (2009) asserted that although some distinguish leadership from management, effective school principals do both. They lead by doing the right thing, and they manage, in that they focus on doing things right.

**The Study**

This study was designed to evaluate a principal preparation program from the perspective of the principal/mentor. The results of this study were based on a survey of 1000 principal/mentor evaluations of interns in a principal preparation program. Principal/mentors were asked to complete an evaluation instrument developed to address the three domains and nine competencies of state standards, as well as the Educational Leadership Constituents Council (ELCC) national standards for principal preparation programs. Open-ended questions identified participants’ recommendations for program improvement and identified areas of concern. Evaluation items (n = 9) were scored using the state Professional Development and Appraisal System (PDAS) scoring system has three classification categories: exceptional, proficient and minimally proficient. Total evaluation scores demonstrated a pronounced negative skew, meaning most respondents received high overall evaluation scores. Face validity of the survey instrument was established by a panel of experts consisting of university professors and professionals from the field.
Research Questions
Seven questions were developed for this study.
1. Was the program information delivered successfully as ranked on the three domains and nine principal competencies as defined by the State Board of Education?
2. Which of the nine principal competencies did the principal/mentors perceive to be most successful, and which were perceived to be the weakest?
3. What was the perception of the principal/mentors concerning the overall delivery of the program information regarding all of the principal competencies?
4. What were the perceptions of principal/mentors regarding program implementation concerning Domain One: School Community Leadership?
5. What were the perceptions of principal/mentor concerning Domain Two: Instructional Leadership?
6. What were the perceptions of the principal/mentor concerning Domain Three: Administrative Leadership?
7. What were the principal/mentors’ recommendations for program implementation?
8. What were the principal/mentors’ recommendations for future program development?

Research Design and Data Collection
This exploratory study was conducted using a non-experimental design based on recommendations from Gravetter and Forzano (2009). Survey research methodology was selected as a convenient format to assess participant perceptions at one point in time. A sample of convenience was asked to respond by electronic delivery. Respondents were principal/mentors of students enrolled in an online principal preparation program in Texas.

Sample Characteristics and Response Rate
A total of 1000 surveys were randomly selected for review. Respondents were principal/mentors for student interns throughout Texas. Principal/mentors were selected by the student intern to assist with development and implementation of an 18 month activity based internship. The activities were based on 38 listed possibilities located in the intern’s textbook. These activities were directly related to the three domains and nine competencies of the state standards, and correlated to the ELCC national standards. The final evaluative survey was completed by the principal/mentor.

Data Analysis
Descriptive statistics were used to present the characteristics of respondents and identify participants’ rankings of effectiveness on the nine competencies. Qualitative responses were analyzed through data reduction methods based upon recommendations in Owen’s (2006) program evaluation model.

Limitations and Delimitations
Basic assumptions underlying this study included the premise that participants were familiar with the principal preparation program and state standards based on three domains and nine competencies, as well as ELCC national standards. The limitations of this study were commensurate with survey research methods. Data were collected at one point in time and reflected the experiences and biases of participants where responses were voluntary. Geography was a delimiting factor whereas participants were only from Texas so that this study would not generalize to locations outside of Texas. This study was delimited to education professionals working with enrolled candidates in the online principal preparation program at the Texas university of interest.
Findings

Findings will be discussed with respect to the research questions.
1. Was the program information delivered successfully as ranked on the three domains and nine competencies as defined by the State Board of Education?
   As presented in Table 1.1 (See Appendix A), program delivery of information for the three domains indicated disagreement when the principal/mentors compared the individual competencies. Ninety-one percent (n=910), the majority, of mentors ranked interns as exceptional and eight percent (n=80) ranked interns proficient on Competency 3, which addresses acting with integrity, fairness, and in an ethical legal manner-ELCC 5. Eighty-two percent (n=820) of mentors agreed that interns were exceptional while seventeen percent (n=170) ranked them proficient on Competency 7, which addresses application of organizational, decision-making, and problem solving skills-ELCC 2 and 3. Eighty-one percent (n=810) of mentors rated interns as exceptional, whereas nineteen percent (n=190) were ranked proficient on Competency 2, which addresses communicating and collaborating with all members of the community and responsiveness to diverse interests and needs-ELCC 4, 6. Seventy-eight percent (n=780) of mentors ranked interns as exceptional, while twenty-two percent (n=220) ranked the interns as proficient on Competency 4, which includes facilitating the design and implementation of curricula and strategic plans and alignment of curriculum-ELCC 1, 2. Seventy-two percent (n=720) of mentors ranked interns as exceptional, whereas twenty-eight percent (n=280) ranked interns proficient in Competency 1, which addresses shaping campus culture by facilitating the development, articulation, implementation, and stewardship of a vision. Sixty-eight percent (n=680) of mentors ranked the interns as exceptional, while thirty-two percent (n=320) ranked them proficient in Competency 5, which includes advocating, nurturing, and sustaining an instructional program and a campus culture that is conducive to student learning and staff’s professional growth. Sixty-seven percent (n=670) of mentors agreed the interns were exceptional in this area, while thirty-three percent (n=330) ranked them proficient in Competency 9, which addresses applying principles of leadership and management to the physical plant and support systems. Fifty-seven percent (n=570) of mentors ranked the interns as exceptional, whereas forty-two percent (n=420) rated interns proficient in Competency 8, which includes applying principles of effective leadership and management in relation to campus budgeting, personnel, resource utilization, financial management, and technology use. Fifty-four percent (n=540) of the principal/mentors agreed the interns were exceptional, and forty-six percent (n=460) perceived the interns to be proficient in Competency 6, implementation of staff evaluation and development of systems to improve the performance of all staff members, models for supervision and staff development, and applies the legal requirements for personnel management. It appears that program information was successfully delivered as evidenced by rankings on the nine competencies and three domains.
2. Which of the nine principal competencies did principal/mentors perceive to be most successful, and which were perceived to be the weakest?
   As shown in Table 2.1 (See Appendix A), ninety-one percent (n=910), the majority, of interns were ranked as exceptional on Competency 3, indicating that the majority of interns performed internship activities with integrity, fairness, and in an ethical manner. Eight percent (n=80) were ranked proficient, while significant improvement was needed by ten students (1%). Fifty-four percent (n=540) of the principal/mentors ranked the interns as exceptional on Competency 6, which refers to implementation of staff evaluation and development of systems,
models of supervision and staff development and personnel management. Forty-six percent (n=460), approximately half, were ranked as proficient, indicating they possessed an adequate degree of knowledge and skills; however, additional experience in this area could be beneficial to stakeholders.

3. What was the perception of principal/mentors concerning the overall delivery of program information regarding all of the competencies of the state standards?

As presented in Table 3.1 (See Appendix A), seventy-two percent (n=720), the majority, ranked the overall delivery of the program information regarding all competencies of the state standards as exceptional. Twenty-six percent (n=260) rated the overall delivery as proficient, while two percent (n=20) ranked the student interns minimally proficient. Though three-fourths of ratings were exceptional, the need to review curriculum addressing the competencies receiving proficient and minimally proficient ratings should be considered.

4. What were the perceptions of principal/mentors regarding program implementation concerning Domain One: School Community Leadership?

As noted in Table 4.1 (See Appendix A), most principal/mentors ranked the program as successful in implementing the knowledge and skills related to Domain One: School Community Leadership. Eighty-one percent (n=810), the majority, of interns were ranked exceptional in understanding the competencies in this domain, while nineteen percent (n=190) of interns were ranked proficient in understanding of the knowledge and skills related to campus culture, school community collaboration and communication, as well as, principal actions regarding integrity, fairness, ethics, and legal manner. As noted in the literature, preparation programs must develop educational leaders with the knowledge and ability to promote the success of all students by collaborating with families and other community members, responding to diverse community interests and needs, and mobilizing community resources (Guthrie and Schuermann, 2010).

5. What were the perceptions of the principal/mentor to program implementation concerning Domain Two: Instructional Leadership?

As shown in Table 5.1 (See Appendix A), principal/mentors ranked the program as being less effective in implementation of information related to this domain, which addresses the knowledge and skills needed by the instructional leader. Seventy-one percent (n=710), the majority, of interns were ranked as exceptional in understanding the competencies related to this domain. Twenty-eight percent (n=280) of the student interns were rated proficient in this area, while one percent (n=10) were ranked minimally proficient, indicating the need to examine the curriculum and internship experiences that address the knowledge and skills specifically related to instructional leadership. The literature supported the importance of principals as instructional leaders, citing increasing standards and mandates of regulatory agencies (Shipman, Queen, & Peel, 2007).

6. What were the perceptions of the principal/mentor regarding program implementation of information concerning Domain Three: Administrative Leadership?

As presented in Table 6.1 (See Appendix A), principal/mentors ranked the program as being less successful in implementing the information related to Domain Three: Administrative Leadership. Sixty-two percent (n=620) of interns were ranked as exceptional in understanding the competencies in this domain; however, thirty-seven percent (n=370) of the student interns were ranked as proficient in this domain while one percent (n=10) were ranked minimally proficient. This appeared to indicate the need to examine the curriculum offered in course work relating to management issues, which included budgeting, personnel, resource utilization and technology use, as well as safety, support systems and effective learning environment. The importance of
principals as skilled managers was supported in the literature by Guthrie and Schuermann (2010), who stressed the importance of skills in strategic planning, systematic review, and allocation of resources.

7. What were the principal/mentors’ recommendations concerning program information implementation?

All respondents replied to the open-ended questions. Recommendations included the need for more emphasis on legal issues, specialized instructional programs such as special education, budgeting, and staff development implementation. The recommendations were supported by responses to question six, which indicated that interns could benefit from more information and experience with the competencies in domain three. The recommendations were also supported by responses to question five, which indicated interns could benefit from additional information and experiences in the competencies of domain two, which included the effective implementation of staff development and instructionally focused programs including special education.

8. What were the principal/mentors’ recommendations for future program development?

Respondents indicated the need for more communication between principal/mentors and professors in the online program and closer supervision by university professors. It was suggested that a face-to-face orientation for principal/mentors at the beginning of the program could be beneficial as an orientation tool.

Summary and Conclusions

Results of the survey indicated some concern in two areas: competencies three and eight, since one percent (n=10) of interns were ranked as minimally proficient on each. Although this is a small percentage, an examination of the curriculum could improve student performance. Implementation of Competency 3, which addressed acting with integrity, fairness, and in an ethical legal manner, was ranked as exceptional by most respondents, while Competency 6, which addressed implementation of staff evaluation and development of systems to improve the performance of all staff members, models for supervision and staff development and apply the legal requirements for personnel management, was rated least successful.

Areas of concern expressed through open-ended responses were the need for direct communication between principal/mentors and professors and the lack of university supervision, issues commensurate with the nature of online delivery models. Suggestions included altering the model to include either face-to-face or technology based communication for mentors at the beginning of the program to facilitate an orientation. Campus budgeting, resource allocation, and staff development implementation were noted as areas of concern, indicating that interns could benefit from more in-depth information and field-based experience in these areas. These concerns were supported by survey responses for competencies six, where almost half were ranked proficient, and competency eight, where forty-two percent were proficient and one percent was minimally proficient.

In general, the online program appeared to be well received, as more than three-fourths of survey participants expressed praise while voicing few concerns. As Owen (2006) suggested, the evaluation process should be seen as a way to build on knowledge and produce an inquiry system that is responsive to the needs of policy, programs, and the stakeholders. With this in mind, the researchers examined the findings and made recommendations.
Recommendations

Based upon the findings from this study, the researchers made the following recommendations:

1.) Emphasize how to apply principles of effective leadership and management in relation to staff development implementation, campus budgeting, personnel management, and resource allocation and utilization by examining the curriculum to include more in-depth knowledge and skill enhancement activities;
2.) Explore and implement strategies to improve communication among program participants;
3.) Conduct follow-up research to investigate the success of program graduates to determine their success as school leaders in the field after a three year interval.

References
Murphy, J. (2001). The changing face of leadership preparation. The School Administrator, 11(58), 14-17.
Appendix A

Table 1.1
Respondent’s ranking of the three domains and nine competencies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competencies</th>
<th>n=1000</th>
<th>Exceptional</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
<th>Minimally Proficient</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Domain One</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>720</td>
<td>280</td>
<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>810</td>
<td>190</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>910</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domain Two</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>780</td>
<td>220</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>680</td>
<td>320</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>540</td>
<td>460</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>820</td>
<td>170</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domain Three</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>570</td>
<td>420</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>670</td>
<td>330</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2.1
Ranking of the competencies highest to lowest

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competencies</th>
<th>n=1000</th>
<th>Exceptional</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
<th>Minimally Proficient</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>910</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>540</td>
<td>460</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.1
Ranking of overall delivery of program information regarding all nine competencies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competencies</th>
<th>n=1000</th>
<th>Exceptional</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
<th>Minimally Proficient</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 thru 9</td>
<td>720</td>
<td>260</td>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
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</table>
Table 4.1
Principal/ Mentors Ranking of Domain One: School Community Leadership

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domain One</th>
<th>n=1000</th>
<th>Exceptional</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
<th>Minimally Proficient</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>810</td>
<td>190</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.1
Principal/ Mentors Ranking of Domain Two: Instructional Leadership

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domain Two</th>
<th>n=1000</th>
<th>Exceptional</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
<th>Minimally Proficient</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>710</td>
<td>280</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.1
Principal/Mentors Ranking of Domain Three: Administrative Leadership

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domain Three</th>
<th>n=1000</th>
<th>Exceptional</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
<th>Minimally Proficient</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>620</td>
<td>370</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Increasing the Communication Capabilities of Mentally Handicapped Students: Preliminary Report

Beverly Doyle
John N. Mordeson
Nelson C. Fong
Creighton University
Abstract: Students attending a private school were evaluated to determine their ability to communicate. Based on the results of the evaluation, students were provided with hand held communication devices and taught to use them to express their needs and ideas. Their communication skills were reevaluated to determine if the electronic communication devices enhanced their overall language test scores and their ability to express their communication needs.

Keywords: Go Talk, a hand-held electronic communication device, Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test, children, special needs, analytic hierarchy process, Guiaasu method. Yen method, Dempster Shafer, set-valued statistical method, precedence relation method.

1. Introduction

Students attending a private Catholic school in Omaha, Nebraska, which serves students with special needs were evaluated to determine their ability to communicate. Based on the results of the evaluation, students were provided with hand held communication devices and taught to use these to express their needs and ideas. Their communication skills were reevaluated to determine if the electronic communication devices enhanced their overall language test scores and their ability to express their communication needs.

Kaye [3] states that “computer technology and devices of this sort have a tremendous potential to broaden the lives and increase the independence of people with disabilities.” The students who were chosen for this study did not have the access or capability to use computer technology or electronic devices due to their handicapping conditions. The students in this study were boys and girls ranging from 11 to 17 years of age with disabilities such as motor problems like cerebral palsy, autism, Down syndrome and severe learning disabilities and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder.

2. Procedures

The course was conducted from March through May 2010 with 20 sessions, 1 hour each, twice weekly. During the session, a speech and language therapist and a classroom teacher provided lessons and assistance to the participants. The speech and language therapist assessed all students with the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test [7], and their ability to use the Go Talk, a hand-held electronic communication device to assess their ability to express emotions such as happiness, anger, and sadness [1,9]. In addition, their needs and wants were assessed to determine if they could communicate their needs for food, and to use the restroom. The last area that was explored was their desire to socialize, via recreation, dances, and basketball. Table 1 describes the model.

Based on the results of the assessment, individual educational programs were planned with goals set to improve each student’s communication skills. Go Talk communication device was programmed individually for each student based on their needs.

Students were instructed as to how to use the communication device, and the therapist and teacher encouraged students to use them. Specific lessons included modeling of how the device could enhance the ability of the user to have his or her needs met.

The goal of this paper is to use techniques fuzzy mathematics to develop metrics for measuring communication skills of the students, (11). The goal was to document the growth of language skills of students over several years. The authors conducted surveys of 5 staff members (experts) of the school to identify their perceptions of the importance of the factors making up the overarching goal G, communication skills. The three factors making up the overarching goal namely, GH1 Emotions, G2 Needs/Wants, and G3 Socialization, were ranked by the staff as
to their importance. Each of the factors has its own subfactors: For G1, G11 Happiness, G12 Anger, G13 Sadness; for G2, G21 Food and G22 Bathroom; for G3, G31 Recreation, G32 Dance, and G33 Basketball. These factors were also ranked by the staff.

We use the Analytic Hierarchy Process (AHP) [7], the Guiasu method [2], the Yen method [10], a Dempster-Shafer method [4], the Set-valued Statistical Method [5], and the Precedence Relation Method [5] to construct linear equations involving the factors as independent variables and the overarching goal as the dependent variable. These methods also allow us to construct linear equations involving the subfactors as independent variable and the factors as dependent variables.

This paper serves only as a preliminary report. A full report will be provided once more test scores are obtained and coded so that they can be substituted into the linear equations to determine a number representing the communication skills of the student.

3. Results

Table 2 indicates the pretest scores and the ability of each student to communicate via Go Talk. The table also indicates the post test results after instruction had occurred for 20 sessions. The students had fewer skills before Go Talk than after they had it. The statistical analysis agrees with this conclusion.

4. The Equations

AHP

Each expert $E_j$ assigned a number $w_{ij}$ to each factor, $G_i$, $i = 1,2,3;j = 1,...,5$, as to its importance with respect to the overarching goal. The row average, $w_i$, of each row of the matrix $W - [w_{ij}]$ is determined to form a $3 \times 3$-matrix $R$ whose ij-th element is $w_i/w_j$. The columns of $R$ are then normalized in order to form the $3 \times 3$-matrix $N$ whose ij-th is $w_i/\sum_{i=1}^{3} w_i, I = 1, 2, 3$. This row vector yields the weights for the factors for the linear equation of the overarching goal in terms of the factors.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>E1</th>
<th>E2</th>
<th>E3</th>
<th>E4</th>
<th>E5</th>
<th>Row Avg</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>G1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Guiasu Method

When the columns of the matrix $W$ are normalized, we can consider that each column of the resulting matrix $N$ to be a probability (credibility) distribution for each expert. These probability (credibility) distributions are probabilistic with the focal elements being singleton sets consisting of a factor. The row averages provide the Guiasu weights, one for each factor.
\[
\begin{array}{cccccc|c}
\text{Cols.} & E1 & E2 & E3 & E4 & E5 & \text{Row Product} \\
\text{Normalized} & & & & & \text{Avg} & \\
G1 & \frac{3}{9} & \frac{3}{9} & \frac{3}{9} & \frac{3}{9} & \frac{3}{9} & \frac{3}{5} \\
G2 & \frac{4}{9} & \frac{4}{9} & \frac{4}{9} & \frac{4}{9} & \frac{4}{9} & \frac{3}{5} \\
G3 & \frac{2}{9} & \frac{2}{9} & \frac{2}{9} & \frac{2}{9} & \frac{2}{9} & \frac{2}{5} \\
\end{array}
\]

**Yen Method**

In the matrix \( W \), we divide each element of the column by the column’s maximal entry. We thus obtain the following matrix from which we derive a linear equation for \( G \) by finding the row averages.

\[
G = \frac{1}{3} G1 + \frac{4}{9} G2 + \frac{2}{9} G3
\]

**Dempster-Shafer Method**

In the matrix \( N \) defined in the Guiasu method, we take the product of the entries of each row. Normalizing the resulting column yields the coefficients for the factors for the linear equation determining \( G \).

\[
G = .19 G1 + .79 G2 + .02 G3
\]

**Set-Valued Statistical Method**

We next use the set-valued statistical method for determining the coefficients of the linear equation expressing \( G \) in terms of \( G1 \), \( G2 \), and \( G3 \). A description of the method can be found in [5].

\[
\begin{array}{cc|cccc|c}
 & E1 & E2 & E3 & E4 & E5 & \text{Row SUM} \\
G1 & 2 & 2 & 2 & 2 & 2 & 10 \\
G2 & 3 & 3 & 3 & 3 & 3 & 15 \\
G3 & 1 & 1 & 1 & 1 & 1 & 5 \\
\end{array}
\]

We next determine \( m(Gi) \), the average frequency of \( Gi \), \( i = 1,2,3 \). Normalizing these averages yields the coefficients for the linear equation. A description of the method can be found in [5].

\[
M(G1) = \frac{1}{15}(10) = \frac{2}{3}, \quad M(G2) = \frac{1}{15}(15) = 1, \quad M(G3) = \frac{1}{15}(5) = \frac{1}{3}
\]

\[
G = \frac{1}{3} G1 + \frac{1}{2} G2 + \frac{1}{6} G3.
\]

**Precedence Ration Method**

We now use techniques from [5] to determine the coefficients for the linear equation. For each expert \( E_k \), let \( Gi \) denote the value of the \( ik \)-th entry of the matrix \( N \) defined in the Guiasu method. Then for each \( k \), we define a preference relation \( p_k \) on \( \{ G1, G2, G3 \} \) as follows:
For $k = 1, \ldots, 5$. Let
\[
\alpha_{ij}^k = \begin{cases} 
1 & \text{if } r_{ij}^k > .5, \\
0 & \text{otherwise}
\end{cases}
\]

For $k = 1, \ldots, 5$. Let
\[
r_{ij} = \frac{1}{5} \sum_{k=1}^{5} \frac{k}{ij} \text{ if } i \neq j,
\]
\[
= 0 \text{ otherwise}
\]

Let $R = [r_{ij}]$. Then
\[
R = \begin{bmatrix}
G1 & G2 & G3 \\
G1 & 0 & 0 & 1 \\
G2 & 1 & 0 & 1 \\
G3 & 0 & 0 & 0
\end{bmatrix}
\]

Let
\[
c_{ij}^t = \begin{cases} 
1 & \text{if } r_{ij} \geq t, .5, \\
0 & \text{otherwise}
\end{cases}
\]

for $t \in [0,1]$. Let $R^{(t)} = c_{ij}^t$. Then $R^{(t)} = r \forall t \in [0,1]$. We see that we delete $G3$. We then obtain.
\[
R^{(1)} = \begin{bmatrix}
G1 & G2 \\
G1 & 0 & 0 \\
G2 & 1 & 0
\end{bmatrix}
\]

Thus we delete $G1$. This yields the following precedence order:
\[
G^2 \ G^1 \ G^3
\]

Hence
\[
G = \frac{1}{3} G1 + \frac{1}{2} G2 + \frac{1}{6} G3
\]

Belief functions, Yen’s Method

In this section, we apply Yen’s method [10] to arrive at the degree of belief of certain subsets of tests selected by the experts. Yen’s method involves various measures of subsethood and extends Dempster-Shafer theory by defining a measure of subsethood $I(A,B)$, the degree to which the fuzzy subset $A$ is included in the fuzzy subset $B$.

Fuzzy models permit us to estimate how much explanation our theories have captured based on an analysis of the expert opinions. There are a number of methods for doing this. We demonstrate some of them using our same five experts. Dempster-Shafer’s belief function by defining a measure of inclusion $I(A,B)$, the degree to which the fuzzy subset $A$ is included in the fuzzy subset $B$ by using the following formula:
\[ \text{Bel}(B) = \sum_{A \in \text{FP}(X)} I(A, B)m(A), \]

where \( m: \text{FP}(X) \to [0,1] \) is such that \( \sum_{A \in \text{FP}(X)} m(A) = 1 \) and where \( \text{FP}(X) \) denotes the set of all fuzzy subsets of \( X \).

Let \( X \) be a nonempty set and \( A \) and \( B \) be fuzzy subsets of \( X \). Let \( t \in [0,1] \) and \( A^t = \{ x \in X \mid A(x) \geq t \} \). Then \( A^t \) is called a level set or a t-cut of \( A \). Define \( \overline{A}: X \to [0,1] \) by \( \forall x \in X, \overline{A}(x) = 1 - A(x) \). Then \( \overline{A} \) is known as the standard complement of \( A \).

We begin with a consideration of an approach by John Yen. Yen’s method addresses the issue of managing imprecise and vague information in evidential reasoning by combining the Dempster-Shafer theory with fuzzy set theory. Several researchers have extended the Dempster-Shafer theory to deal with vague information, but their extensions did not preserve an important principle that the belief and the plausibility measures are lower and upper probabilities. Yen’s method preserves this principle. Nevertheless, we use various measures of subsethood to determine different belief functions. We do this to compare the results of the beliefs with Yen’s method. Five of the eight methods give close to the same result.

Yen’s method is developed under the assumption that the fuzzy focal elements are normal. If the fuzzy focal elements are not normal, he normalizes them as follows: Let \( A \) be a fuzzy focal element that is not normal. Define \( \hat{A}: X \to [0,1] \) by \( \forall x \in X, \hat{A}(x) = 1/kA(x) \), where \( k = \max[A(x)lx \in X] \). Then define the basic probability assignment \( m\hat{A} \) on \( \hat{A} \) by \( m\hat{A} = km(A) \).

Define the focal elements as follows:

\[
A_i(\{G_1\}) = \frac{3}{9}, \quad A_i(\{G_2\}) = \frac{4}{9}, \quad A_i(\{G_3\}) = \frac{2}{9}, \quad I = 1, \ldots, 5.
\]

We normalize these focal elements as in [14] to obtain

\[
\hat{A}_i(\{G_1\}) = \frac{2}{3}, \quad \hat{A}_i(\{G_2\}) = 1, \quad \hat{A}_i(\{G_3\}) = \frac{2}{4}, \quad I = 1, \ldots, 5.
\]

In [10], the following formulas are derived for computing the belief function and the plausibility function for a fuzzy subsets \( B \), where the sums are taken over the fuzzy focal elements \( A \), and where \( \text{Im}(A) = \{t_0, t_1, \ldots, t_n\} \):

\[
\text{Bel}(B) = \sum_{A} m, (A) \sum_{t} \left[ t_i - t_{i-1} \right] x \inf_{x \in A_t} B(x),
\]

\[
\text{Pls}(B) = \sum_{A} m, (A) \sum_{t} \left[ t_i - t_{i-1} \right] x \sup_{x \in A_t} B(x),
\]

Thus for the normalized fuzzy focal elements, \( \hat{A}_1, I = 1, \ldots, 5 \), we have

\[
\text{Bel}(1_{\{G_1\}}) = \frac{1}{5} \left( \frac{3}{4} + \frac{3}{4} + \frac{3}{4} + \frac{3}{4} \right) = \frac{3}{4},
\]

\[
\text{Bel}(1_{\{G_2\}}) = \frac{1}{5} (1 + 1 + 1 + 1 + 1) = 1,
\]

\[
\text{Bel}(1_{\{G_3\}}) = \frac{1}{5} \left( \frac{1}{2} + \frac{1}{2} + \frac{1}{2} + \frac{1}{2} + \frac{1}{2} \right) = \frac{3}{4}.
\]

We note that \( \text{Pl}(1_{\{G_1\}}) = \text{Bel}(1_{\{G_1\}}), I = 1, 2, 3. \)

5. Statistical Analysis

Null Hypothesis: The distribution of the post-test is the same as the distribution of the pretest scores.

Alternative Hypothesis: The distribution of the post-test is not the same as the distribution of the pretest scores.
\( n = 7, df = 6 \)
Mean pair-wise difference = 4.0
Standard deviation of pair-wise difference = 4.04145
Test statistic: \( t = 2.6286 \)
\( p \)-value: .0397
Conclusion: Reject the null hypothesis at the .05 level and conclude that the post-test scores and the pretest scores are significantly different.

6. Conclusions
Training these students to use the Go Talk was a challenge. Instructors and therapists must not only be proficient on the use and programming of the Go Talk, but had to be aware of the physical, emotional and cognitive limitations of these students.

At the beginning of the class, some students emotional problems affected their attitude towards performance. Their physical and mental limitations also came into play, and sessions often had to be rescheduled.

Overall, as students improved in their ability to use the Go Talk, and had a better understanding of the benefit of it, became more self directed, and had a greater desire to use it to communicate their wants and needs.

References
Table 1

MADONNA SCHOOL

COMMUNICATION SKILLS

EMOTIONS

NEEDS/WANTS

SOCIALIZATION

Happiness

Anger

Sadness

Food

Bathroom

Recreation

Dance

Socialization

Table 2

Post-test results of students ability to use Go Talk to express needs:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STUDENT</th>
<th>TEST S</th>
<th>EMOTIONS</th>
<th>NEEDS/WANTS</th>
<th>SOCIALIZATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>PPVT</td>
<td>Happiness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>49</td>
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<td>G</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>H</td>
<td>20</td>
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<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
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Classroom Design and Instruction for Principal Preparation Programs:
Reform in School Leadership

Cheryl L. Evans
University of Central Oklahoma
Abstract

This discussion of a pilot project that began in fall 2010, explores the call for improved principal preparation programs across the nation, yet the absence for direction for classroom design and instruction that will improve learning for aspiring leaders. Little research has been completed on new models of principal preparation programs that include the design and physical classroom in conjunction with the type of instruction candidates will be involved in throughout their program hours that are conducted on campus. I will explore with the audience the pilot project for the twenty-first century classroom for aspiring leaders.

Introduction

*Waiting for Superman,* a current and popular film documentary on the state of the nation’s schools joins others in making the incessant call for educational reform. This call for reform is not only for teachers, but also for school administrators. Fryer (2010) believes this documentary underlines the vital importance of high quality administrative leadership even more. Our need for high quality leadership is everywhere. We need strong leaders at all levels, including the classroom. Our policies should reflect this need and empower leaders to work with those who can do the best work with and for kids.

The call for reform is also heard from multiple entities across the nation. The quality of university-based school leader preparation programs has been questioned for years. Some graduates from leadership preparation programs have voiced concerns indicating that the traditional school leadership programs have been ineffective and did not provide the knowledge necessary for preparation for the multiple job requirements of a school leader. Most said their training programs did not touch on the more complex combinations of leadership skills used in cultural, strategic, or external developmental leadership (Portin, Schneider, DeArmond & Gulndlach, 2003).

The Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) also believed a change is required for all university-based school leader preparation programs and identified six recommended research-based strategies: “Single out high performers; recalibrate preparation programs, emphasize real-world training; link principal licensure to performance; move accomplished teachers into school leadership positions, and use state academics to cultivate leadership teams in middle-tier schools” (SREB, 2006). SREB has taken a deep interest and involvement in this call for reform by closely monitoring experiences with schools, universities, and state agencies that should be implemented to produce skilled school district leaders.

School leaders in times past prepared for their roles in schools administration by attending graduate studies programs in educational leadership emphasizing the areas of finance, law, organizational theory, and strategic planning. With the dawning of the age of accountability wrought by reform movements beginning in the 1980s, graduate programs in leadership changed that emphasis to a focus on skills required of an instructional leader (Hallinger, 2003; Jason, 2001). This change of emphasis culminated in the 1990s with the alignment of educational leadership curricula with standards set by the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC). The ISLLC Standards focus on assessment, collaboration professional development, curriculum and ethics. These Standards emphasize the development and implementation of an organization-wide vision, data collection and analysis, and communication/collaboration with the various groups that make up a school community (Council of Chief State School Officers, 1996). A major reason for the adoption of the ISLLC Standards by educational leadership programs was...
that these standards were recognized by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), the accrediting body for colleges of education.

Preparing leaders for schools has always been a challenging task, but never more so than in the emerging global landscape where graduates will be in competition, not only with their peers in the United States, but with their contemporaries throughout the world. Recent reports, however, raise concerns regarding the performance of students in the United States and call into question the efficacy of K-12 education (Hackett & Hortman, 2008). Among these concerns are lagging student performance, particularly in reading and math (Lemke et al., 2004), continuing performance gaps among students from different socio-economic groups (Perie & Moran, 2005), low representation of male students in the sciences, and declining production of graduates with doctoral degrees by universities in the United States (National Science Board, 2006).

Hess & Kelly (2007) believe that school leadership is the key to school improvement. School principals are the front-line managers, the small business executives, the team leaders charged with leading their faculty to new levels of effectiveness. In this new era of educational accountability, where school leaders are expected to demonstrate bottom-line results and use data to drive decisions, the skill and knowledge of principals matter more than ever. The rise of charter-schooling, increasing school choice, and more flexible teacher compensation and hiring have granted thousands of principals new opportunities to exercise discretion and operate with previously unimagined leeway. In this environment, school improvement rests to an unprecedented degree on the quality of school leadership.

With this changing educational leadership environment, multiple scholars have asked whether traditional approaches to preparing and licensing principals are sufficient (Elmore, 2000; Thomas B. Fordham Foundation, 2003; Hess, 2003; Murphy, 2001a; Tucker, 2003). Leaders of the University Council for Education administration have declared that “in order to build programs that support leadership for learning – we must rethink and revise our practice in several areas” (Young & Kochan, 2004, p. 121). Theodore Kowalski (2004), an influential scholar of educational administration, has advocated “substantial reforms in administrator preparation, program accreditation, and state licensing standards” (p. 93).

Farkas et al. (2003, p. 39) confirms that principals themselves are among the first to agree that they need to be more effectively prepared for their jobs. All but 4 percent of practicing principals report that on-the-job experiences or guidance from colleagues has been more helpful in preparing them for their current position than their graduate school studies. In fact, 67 percent of principals reported that “typical leadership programs in graduate schools of education are out of touch with the realities of what it takes to run today’s schools districts: (Farkas et al., 2003, p. 39).

Arthur Levine (2005), president of Teachers College at Columbia University, in a recent four-year study, has raised the stakes of accountability by severely assessing the quality of educational administration programs. Based on a survey of practicing principals and education school deans, chairs, faculty, and alumni, as well as case studies of 25 school leadership programs, Levine (2005) declared that “the majority of [educational administration] programs range from inadequate to appalling, even at some of the country’s leading universities” (p. 23). He discovered that the typical course of studies required of principal candidates was largely disconnected from the realities of school management, though Levine did not seek to analyze the content of these courses. The findings of the Levine analysis and increasing accountability and demands on school leaders have created questions in regard to the program content across the
nation’s university principal preparation programs and have also created a mindset of ineffectiveness for current school leaders.

The current major changes that have been evident in university principal preparation programs have included emphasis on the effectiveness and efficiency of the preparation program, advocacy for application of adult learning methodology, focus on the participants skills and the results produced, and support for curricular choice based on diagnosis of individual needs. Many principal preparation programs are now incorporating the following components:

- Entrance requirements aligned with the demands of the Principalship
- Cohort models
- Clear performance-based standards
- Opportunities for individualization
- Development and assessment of skills
- Emphasis on reflective practice
- Continuous program review with input from current practitioners (Lauder, 2000)

However, with all the attention, calls for reform from multiple entities, accountability for leadership preparation programs, and criticisms of current existing programs, there are two extremely important topics to consider when addressing the changes desired for future and effective principal preparation programs. The topics of discussion and awareness for this paper address the physical classroom design of newly developed principal preparation programs for on-campus classroom hours, and also the type of classroom instruction that should be used when principal candidates are in class and not out in the field conducting field experiences.

**Classroom Design**

With the call for educational reform for principal preparation programs across the nation, an awareness of the need for actual hands-on experience is being created. There is the knowledge that real and reflective experiences are desired, but extremely little is mentioned on what the actual design of the classrooms on our nations’ university campuses should look like for these aspiring school principals. The focus of administrative theory courses include: theoretical and historical foundations, process and change, sociopolitical structures, leadership, and culture. Course content also typically address managing school personnel, school administration, interpersonal relationships, curriculum and technical knowledge of finance and law.

With little or no research completed on classroom design for these required program courses for principal candidates, it continues to be apparent that the classroom design should also be a very important component in the restructuring of leadership programs. Thought should be implemented into making the learning process on campuses a more effective and successful experience that prepares future school leaders for those actual experiences in the schools. Classroom learning experiences should emulate school administrators’ collaborations and leadership opportunities throughout the program, not only during the field experiences or internships hours.

The educational leadership program at the University of Central Oklahoma (UCO), located in a metropolitan area of Oklahoma, has chosen to address this need for change in classroom design in a collaborative and visionary manner. A pilot project that began in the fall of 2010, explored the call for improved principal preparation programs across the nation, yet the absence of direction for classroom design that would improve learning for aspiring leaders. An
educational leadership faculty member from UCO, decided to make application to teach in the newly design twenty-first century classroom. Applications by all interested faculty in teaching their courses in that technology-rich classroom were submitted in spring 2010. Accepted applicants were contacted and plans were made by faculty in how they can better serve their program candidates by implementing all technology equipment in the classrooms. The new classroom design came shortly upon the heels of the newly constructed Center for Transformative Learning classroom building on the UCO campus. A highly innovated type of building consisted of classrooms with all types of technology, classroom tables for groups with an abundance of work space for all students.

The College of Education and Professional Studies (COEPS) at UCO has a Technology Committee in place that began working collaboratively in 2009 with the Director of Technology in creating the classroom for the twenty-first century. Gone were the straight rows of chairs and small tables. A more candidate-friendly room was created with painted walls, carpet, multiple technology resources including laptops, smart board, Red Cat microphones, multiple projectors and screens, a computer kiosk with touch screen for all equipment, DVD, VHS, Internet, a variety of software, large groups tables with comfortable back supportive chairs.

The educational leadership faculty member that was selected to teach in the newly designed classroom not only had to make application, but was also required to explain how the courses taught in that classroom would benefit and how content for the course would be taught with the available hardware, software, large tables and chairs. Syllabi for the courses to be taught in the new classroom were also required and included how the classroom would be utilized for those particular subjects. The educational leadership courses that are currently being taught in the classroom included Curriculum for School Administrations and also the Principalship/Internship course. Aspiring school leaders from UCO have indicated a highly satisfied appreciation of this new classroom that they are a large part of in the future additions and changes to be implemented in the room. One principal candidate commented, “I feel like a grown-up, now!” Principal candidates are given the choice of where to sit at the large group tables due to the collaborative culture of the classroom. All candidates work together in their groups with laptops at their tables to research, solve and conduct case studies, research and create presentations for the class and others, and share their group’s knowledge with other programs within the umbrella of the COEPS as another way to collaborate with other school personnel programs such as counselors and librarians.

The Educational Leadership program at UCO has the excellent opportunity to explore this new classroom design in improving the principal preparation program. The new classroom design goes hand-in-hand with another topic that has been ignored in the call for reform in educational administration preparation programs. The additional topic involves the type of instruction that should be implemented in the leadership preparation programs.

Transformative Learning

An absent topic in developing effective leader preparation programs has been the instructional method that would be the most beneficial to future leaders. The days of total lecture and power points have all but disappeared in high quality programs of study. The leadership content delivery is of great importance and should be addressed immediately.

UCO strives to help candidates learn by providing transformative experiences so that they become productive, creative, ethical and engaged citizens and leaders contributing to the
intellectual, cultural, economic and social advancement of the communities they serve. Transformative learning is a holistic process that places students at the center of their own active and reflective learning experiences. All students at UCO will have transformative learning experiences in these core areas:

- Leadership
- Research
- Creative and scholarly activities
- Service learning
- Civic engagement
- Global and cultural competencies
- Health and wellness

It is with this transformative learning style in conjunction with the new classroom design that has created a new and exciting educational leadership program at UCO. The call for reform should be a call for change and improvement in all area with no aspects of preparation being overlooked and forgotten. By including all areas of principal preparation improvement, all stakeholders will be involved and satisfied with improvement, vision, and effective change.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Future research studies will be completed on the effectiveness of the twenty-first century classroom design and the transformative learning instructional method for the UCO educational leadership program. Focus groups are currently being schedule for interviews of the satisfaction and effectiveness of the classroom design. The candidates’ reflections and responsive input will be of great information for the research area in improved principal preparation programs. Research study results can provide invaluable information in all areas of leadership preparation across the nation. Our beginning research raises the questions about preparation and if we can adequately provide what is needed in the classroom in conjunction with the hand-on field experiences. “Redesigning leadership-preparation programs does not mean simply rearranging old courses – as staff at some universities and leadership academics are inclined to do. True redesign requires a new curriculum framework and new courses aimed at producing principals who can lead schools to excellence” (SREB, 2003, p. 7). The educational leadership program at UCO is prepared to truly redesign the classrooms and instructional methods to meet the challenge of redesign efforts. These efforts in conjunction with the excellent internship and field experiences already provided will provide a helpful template of change for others.

References


Training in Virtual Worlds:
Engaging the Next Generation of Poll Workers

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Training in Virtual Worlds:
Engaging the Next Generation of Poll Workers

This paper presents a collaborative initiative using social media technologies to engage and recruit college students as poll workers for the November 2, 2010 general election in Orange County, Florida. The project provided an innovative approach to poll worker training, along with a unique civic engagement entry point for college students participating in the program.

The November 2, 2010 midterm election featured several high profile races including an open U.S. Senate seat, and open seat contests for all four statewide elected offices (Governor, Attorney General, Chief Financial Officer, and Commissioner of Agriculture and Consumer Services). Voter interest, campaign spending, media attention and voter turnout were all expected to be higher than typical for a midterm election season.

We argue here that recruiting and training college students to serve as poll workers using social media technologies addresses multiple civic problems. Civics education and involvement has diminished dramatically in the last two decades especially among young people. How can young people be motivated to take interest in the electoral process? We suggest that engaging college students as Election Day poll workers is a meaningful way to address declining engagement and participation among young people. We also propose that offering college students state-mandated poll worker training in a virtual online environment is more appealing to them than traditional face-to-face training approaches. Recruiting college students trained to work the polls in an engaging, interactive, high technology learning setting will contribute to an enhanced corps of younger, engaged citizens who are comfortable in an increasingly high-technology election administration environment.

Developing ways to recruit and train college student poll workers helps to address three civic concerns. New election technologies often present challenges to poll workers who may be uncomfortable with such technologies. A second issue rests with a growing need for poll workers in response to recent national and state-level election law changes. Finally, college students represent a demographic that exhibits low, and declining, civic interest, participation and engagement (Dalton, Chapter 1, 2008). Working the polls may serve as an important civic portal for younger citizens.

Bringing college students into this aspect of civic life engages them in nonpartisan, on-the-ground, real world experiences. Working the polls connects theory and practice in real time as poll workers become part of the very process where democracy succeeds or fails. One or several positive election-related experiences may help students see how their involvement makes democracy happen. These experiences can be as mundane as opening the polls on time, ensuring that voting equipment is working properly, processing voters quickly, and distributing correct ballots. Helping first-time voters, be they newly enfranchised young people or recently naturalized citizens, also helps students see up close how federal and state laws impact who is eligible to vote, and the consequences of that eligibility.

By contrast, one or more negative voting-related experiences speak to ways that an open, fair, and legal process may result in persons eligible to vote finding themselves facing one or more barriers. These barriers may include turning away persons because they are in the wrong voting precinct, assisting voters who are confused about candidates and referenda, realizing that not all voters speak the language(s) found on the ballot, dealing with voters who show up too late to vote, or helping persons who are not properly registered to vote.
Together, this combination of experiences gives college student poll workers a unique civic engagement experience that helps them better understand how democracy functions in real time. Recruiting college student poll workers also helps to solve the increasing civic need for more poll workers with advanced technical skills.

The push to recruit college student poll workers is reinforced by current poll worker characteristics. The average poll worker in the U.S. is 74 years old while in Florida it is 78. Young people, age 18-34, use more types of interactive technology such as computers, cell phones, and MP3 players than do older Americans (PEW 2011). One key advantage to recruiting college student poll workers is that they may continue working the polls for the next several decades until they, themselves, reach the current average poll worker age. And, these students’ technical knowledge may enhance their comfort level working with newer election equipment. This means that recruiting college student poll workers addresses both short and long term election-related needs, especially those requiring high technology skills.

The American Political Science Association (APSA) has taken a keen interest in enhancing student political and civic engagement. Dudley and Gitelson (2003) note that former APSA President Elinor Ostrom created the Task Force for Civic Education for the Next Century “to address contemporary ‘deep concerns about the viability of democracy in America…;’” concerns rooted in the perceived ‘decline in civic engagement, political efficacy, and the capacity of citizens to organize themselves” (p. 263; See also Ostrom, 1996). In 2002, the APSA created a standing committee on Civic Education and Engagement.

Several articles focusing on why civic engagement is important for college students, mechanisms for bringing civic engagement into the curriculum, and areas of concern for implementing these goals, have since appeared in prominent journals. These efforts suggest that student civic engagement outside the classroom, yet within the context of academic courses, enhances their learning about government and the political process. One core approach to civic engagement is service learning, a teaching method that uses community involvement to apply theories or skills being taught in courses. Service-learning furthers course learning objectives and addresses community needs. Students engage in service learning when they work the polls within the context of an academic course.

Bringle and Hatcher (1996) note that successful implementation of a service learning program requires that involved constituencies understand the benefits of their participation in order for those programs to succeed. For college students, working the polls provides a means to develop frequent and lasting connections with their communities because of the periodic, ongoing nature of federal, state and local elections, and because they can experience the immediate value and impact of their involvement.

Working the polls also promotes a sense of civic responsibility because students see first hand how abstract democratic principles such as universal suffrage are experienced in real time. Myers-Lipton (1998) found that students who were engaged in any form of service learning were more likely than those who were not involved in such activities to show larger increases in their sense of civic responsibility when compared to students who were involved in community service that was not integrated into their academic course work, or when compared to those students who participated in no community service activities. Myers-Lipton’s findings would suggest that students who work the polls would develop, or further enhance, their sense of civic responsibility because of their direct exposure to democratic processes because service learning, no matter the type or form, achieved a positive impact on students’ sense of civic responsibility.
Through the innovative use of social media technology, the University of Central Florida (UCF) and Valencia Community College (VCC), both in Orlando (Orange County), Florida, recruited and trained students to be poll workers in Orange County, created and offered an online course in civic engagement, used Second Life© as a training platform, and compared capabilities of poll workers virtually trained with those who were trained using traditional methods. The Guidebook for Recruiting College Poll Workers (U.S. Elections Assistance Commission, 2007) was utilized in the program design. While distance learning is being successfully used on college campuses worldwide, virtual training is just beginning to catch on. An on-line course using Second Life, a synchronous Internet based interactive virtual world technology, gave students hands-on experience in completing poll worker training, including a simulated election.

The Need for More Technologically Skilled Poll Workers

The 2002 Help America Vote Act (HAVA) provided funds to states to replace punch card voting systems following the 2000 presidential election debacle in Florida (See Sabato, 2002). HAVA prompted numerous state law changes to facilitate its implementation. In Florida, electronic voting systems must now be available in each voting precinct. These machines use touchscreen technology that allows voters to make unlimited changes before casting ballots. By contrast, per state law, paper ballots utilizing optical scan technology allow just three attempts per voter. Touchscreens do not allow overvotes (selecting more than one choice per office or ballot initiative) while they notify voters of undervotes (no choice selected for a particular race or initiative) so that they can be corrected, if desired.

In addition to the option to utilize touchscreen technology, several Florida counties have implemented a computer-based voter check-in system to replace cumbersome notebooks. These computer-based check-in systems, called “ePoll Books”, ease the check-in process by providing the most up-to-date information regarding address and registration changes, whether any person voted during the early voting period and whether any person requested an absentee ballot. “ePoll Books” also speed the check-in process as voters may scan their driver’s license or sample ballot. These documents contain check-in information that need not then be manually retrieved. Finally, several Florida counties now use the DS200 system that scans paper ballots and has an interactive screen that displays messages to voters and notifies poll workers of ballot errors and machine malfunctions. If the DS200 system is used improperly, the machine will not work. These new election technologies warrant the need for more tech-savvy poll workers.

Despite the civic benefit that college students working the polls represents, their experiences may make meeting mandatory training requirements more difficult than for those not enrolled in college. Current Florida training requirements mandate that potential poll workers complete approximately six hours of face-to face training in two separate sessions several weeks apart. The first session is an orientation to the poll working experience, and includes state-mandated sensitivity training so that poll workers can best assist disabled persons when they vote. The second session is position specific, and focuses on the tasks that the poll worker will perform on Election Day. These face-to-face sessions normally take place at the county Supervisor of Elections office. In Orange County, Florida, the Supervisor of Elections office is downtown; both UCF and VCC are several miles away from that office.

Concerns about training schedules was found to be a key barrier to college students serving as poll workers in an earlier recruitment effort that took place at the same two schools in
advance of the November 7, 2006 general election (Fine and Jewett 2007). Approximately one-third of 300+ college students recruited to work the polls claimed that they could not attend the required training sessions due to schedule conflicts or transportation concerns. Consequently, 30% of those students who signed up to be poll workers dropped out because they could not abide by the training schedule or could not secure transportation to the training site.

**Poll Worker Training in a Virtual World using Second Life**

One way to address these training barriers that takes advantage of college students’ advanced technological skills and comfort level with social media is to create a high-tech poll worker training program that incorporates the advantages of face-to-face training with flexible scheduling options and no transportation concerns. Second Life (SL) was identified as the best alternative delivery mechanism for training college student poll workers.

Second Life is a three dimensional, multi-user virtual environment operated by Linden Lab (www.secondlife.com). The software required to run the SL platform is a free download from the SL main webpage and is compatible with Windows 7, Vista or XP, the three major operating systems. Government agencies and universities have used the SL platform to train employees and run virtual event simulations for several years. SL hosts organizations such as the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and National Aeronautics and Space Administration. It excels in cost-effectively meeting the varying needs of its users. UCF secured space in SL to establish a virtual classroom and allotted space to create and host a virtual polling place.

Training college students in Second Life provides the advantages of face-to-face training with the flexibility of an on-line learning environment. The advantages include learning as a social process, interactivity among the students and between the students and the instructor, and synchronous training sessions. Trainees learn in a virtual classroom enabling their avatars (three-dimensional “people”) to interact with one another and with the instructor in real time using text chat and live voice (in the present case, the instructor required that students mute their own microphones in order to minimize ambient noise). Training sessions can be scheduled to occur at any time provided that the instructor is available.
The Second Life polling place was designed to provide college students with an interactive, virtual training experience, and was created according to specifications provided by the Orange County Supervisor of Elections (OCSE). The UCF Virtual Polling Center© was patterned after a typical Central Florida one-story community center.

Upon entering the building, the avatar encounters the first real OCSE documentation showing a county map with one precinct highlighted in yellow while another board lists the Voters’ Bill of Rights and Responsibilities in both English and Spanish,\(^5\) per federal law.\(^6\)
Inside the front door is a fully immersive interactive voting space that shows virtual versions of all election equipment and supplies including the two laptop computers to be used by the ePoll Book Inspectors. The computers have interactive screens that respond to the same commands in the virtual world as they do in real time.

College Student Poll Worker Recruitment and Training

Students were recruited using two basic approaches. The first approach recruited from among those enrolled in both sections of the upper division undergraduate “Civic Engagement” course offered at UCF in fall 2010. One section was offered on-line while the other was taught face-to-face. A secondary poll worker recruitment effort took place at UCF and at VCC in order to help the Orange County Supervisor of Elections fulfill its poll worker needs, and to encourage college students to get involved in this civic engagement experience. Eighty-nine students were recruited to work the polls as a result of these efforts.

All students enrolled in the on-line section of “Civic Engagement” were required to complete the poll worker training in Second Life whether or not they planned to work at the polls on Election Day. All students enrolled in the face-to-face “Civic Engagement” section, as well as those recruited through the on-campus secondary recruiting effort, completed the face-to-face training. Every student was trained to work the ePoll Book Inspector position.

The Second Life Training took place on multiple occasions. Students could complete the training from any location provided that they had Internet access and sufficient bandwidth to handle the Second Life connectivity requirements. In advance of each session, students received, through e-mail or the online class portal, copies of the relevant OCSE documents. Led by an instructor (as with a face-to-face program) students trained as poll workers in the hands-on virtual environment with their avatars. Second Life enhanced the training process because it included elements such as voters representing an array of circumstances while it also appealed to a college student population through an engaging interactive platform.

The SL training required three components. The first segment was an “Orientation to the Virtual Environment”. This component instructed students on navigating the virtual world, and how to control and manipulate the SL avatar. The second training element was the state-mandated sensitivity training presented as an interactive lecture modeled on the face-to-face
training. This aspect of the training introduced participants to the overall polling place setup and poll worker functions along with strategies for assisting disabled voters. The last component trained students to work as ePoll Book Inspectors. An Election Day simulation, where the students manipulate avatar poll workers to check in voters and manage an array of situations (i.e. name not in database, no or improper identification, record of absentee ballot request with no absentee ballot to surrender, record of early voting, incorrect address) was included at this point in the training. As the avatars moved through the polling place, trainees could view the check-in process from both the voter’s and the poll worker’s point of view; the students took turns role playing voters and poll workers.

The second and third components of the face-to-face and SL training are essentially the same with one key exception. They focus on sensitivity training, an overview of how a voting precinct operates, and position-specific ePoll Book Inspector training. However, the simulated Second Life election experience differentiates the two forms of training because the face-to-face training does not include a simulated experience. This experience enables poll worker trainees to move beyond reading instructions on how to proceed when various scenarios arise to practicing how they would handle such scenarios in real time. The interactivity of the SL experience also encourages ongoing assessment, and assurance that trainees remain on task. For example, the trainer can ask a question to the class, and can then confirm that every student has answered that question (via live text) before proceeding with the training. Avatars also “slump”, appearing as sleeping forms, when the trainee’s hands leave the keyboard for too long a period. The trainer can then message the student privately to redirect the student’s attention, or even direct the student to “wake up” with a vocal command. While these same ongoing assessments are possible in a face-to-face class, the technology that enables the instructor to insure that every student has answered a particular question does provide an advantage over face-to-face training, where the trainer might hear a chorus of responses without knowing that each person in the class has answered a particular question, and answered it correctly.

All of the students who completed the SL poll worker training completed a short questionnaire on the perceived efficacy of the training. The majority of students who completed Second Life training appreciated the training opportunity within the virtual environment and considered themselves prepared for the real-life poll worker experience. Students reported
enjoying the permitted interactivity and the convenience and efficiency of the training (Lundy, 2010). Students also cited the potential for cultural learning experiences in the expansive virtual world, the ease of use, and the opportunities to be creative. Based on their experience with the SL training, students expressed their belief that the virtual training was as efficacious as the face-to-face training.

Comparing the Efficacy of Second Life to Face-to-Face Training

The potential value of Second Life as an alternative poll worker training delivery system was examined by comparing the work performance of those trained in Second Life to those trained face-to-face.

Twelve students who trained as ePoll Book Inspectors in Second Life worked on Election Day. These students were assigned to 12 different precincts; the precinct-based assistant poll clerks evaluated their work performance along with the two other ePoll Book Inspectors who had been trained face-to-face at these 12 precincts. In total, thirty-six poll workers’ performance was evaluated. This comparative approach allowed us to utilize various performance measures between those trained face-to-face and those trained in Second Life. The assistant poll clerks completed a short survey comprised of several closed-ended questions, and a few open-ended questions included for additional comments. These data verified that students trained through Second Life were as well prepared, and performed at the same high level, as individuals trained face-to-face.

(SEE TABLE 1)

These results demonstrate that poll workers trained in either face-to-face or in Second Life were well regarded by their supervisors. Few poll workers exhibited difficulties performing core assigned tasks. Those questions focusing on direct interaction with voters (good listening skills, processing voters) earned the highest overall approval from supervisors; nearly all poll workers earned the highest evaluation on these two questions. These findings, while limited in scope due to the small research population, speak to the potential for virtual training as a meaningful alternative to traditional face-to-face poll worker training methods.

Discussion

Recent debates about civic engagement have focused on how declining participation among young people is interpreted within a democratic context. Notably, Haste and Hogan (2006) argue that declining participation among young people may not necessarily be a result of declining community ties which would be a harbinger of a declining democracy. As Haste and Hogan note: “If we are to understand how to engage young people more effectively in the political process we must understand how such motivations work, and how they relate to the larger questions of democracy’s functioning (Haste and Hogan, 2006, p. 474; See also Lister et al. 2003).” Elinor Ostrom’s call for college students to develop a sense of civic engagement, which would then create a more knowledgeable, participatory electorate, is consistent with Haste and Hogan’s perspective. In addition, we believe that, because the secondary poll worker recruitment effort (students not recruited through the “Civic Engagement” course) took place on college campuses, recruited students will see the poll worker experience as one connected with their college experience even though they were not recruited to work the polls as part of a course-specific service learning requirement.
We demonstrate here that working the polls is a meaningful civic engagement experience that can appeal to college students because of their comfort with interactive technologies. Providing training options in Second Life makes it easier, and more engaging, for college students who might otherwise be unable to participate in training classes or who are unwilling to travel far distances in order to complete face-to-face training.

College campuses are fertile ground for recruiting poll workers. College students grew up teaching themselves how to use new technologies as these technologies emerged. Their comfort with technology renders them amenable to learning how to administer newly developed election administration equipment.

College students also represent the younger generation. Most students enter college for the first time at age 18, while the average poll worker age is much higher. Recruiting on college campuses provides access to younger persons who might work the polls regularly for as many years as they are able once they are recruited while in college. Fostering a commitment to working the polls at a young age may stem the need for poll workers in the near and distant future as, once these students work the polls, they may make a lifelong commitment to continue, thereby enhancing their civic commitment and engagement.

At the same time, this population may experience barriers to working the polls because of their college enrollment. U.S. elections are scheduled on Tuesdays, a day on which college classes are normally scheduled. Even though students may be excused from classes on Election Day in order to work the polls, and may be allowed to make up examinations and quizzes administered on Election Day, they may wish to avoid missing course material or postponing a quiz or exam. Students may be concerned about falling behind in their courses or being given a different test as a makeup from what was given to the rest of the class. Further, college students may be enrolled in as many as six courses that meet on a single day (At UCF and VCC, for example, classes meet between 7:00am and 10:20 pm Monday through Thursday, and at other times on Fridays and weekends. Online course requirements deadlines may occur at any time).

Working the polls requires a minimum 14 hour commitment, sometimes more, in a single day. In Florida, the polls are open from 7am-7pm, and poll workers must arrive at their precincts no later than 6am. Any voter in line at 7pm is eligible to vote, even if the polls must stay open for several hours past that time. Once the polls close, poll workers must remain until all of the ballots and voting equipment has been properly packed and readied for pick-up or drop-off at a designated ballot station, and all of the votes modemed in to the Supervisor of Elections office. In Florida, properly administering an election requires that poll workers be available for most of the day.

**Conclusion**

The results presented here suggest that recruiting college students to serve as poll workers while providing them with the alternative to complete training requirements in Second Life helps to address three civic concerns. Younger people become more engaged in their civic communities, college campuses become community partners with elections officials in addressing an increasing need for poll workers, and a greater number of persons recruited to work the polls bring with them the high technology skills needed for effective election administration. Second Life training offered as an enhancement to existing face-to-face training methods increases poll worker recruitment opportunities, especially among today’s college students.
Bibliography


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Response Options</th>
<th>Second Life Trainees</th>
<th>Face-to-Face Trainees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How much did you observe the ePoll Book Inspector during the day?</td>
<td>Observed very closely</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>0%</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Observed somewhat closely</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Did not observe at all</td>
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<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Observed very little</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No response</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
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<td>Did the ePoll Book Inspector arrive on time?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>79%</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
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<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Don’t know</td>
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<td>13%</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>No response</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did the ePoll Book Inspector demonstrate good listening skills?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Don’t know</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No response</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How much help did the ePoll Book Inspector require throughout the day?</td>
<td>Required no help at all</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Required only a little help</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>38%</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Required some help</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Required a great deal of help</td>
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<td>No response</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>100%</td>
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<td>Did the ePoll Book Inspector take the correct steps processing voters?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<td>96%</td>
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<td></td>
<td>No</td>
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<td>4%</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
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<td>Was the ePoll Book Inspector well prepared?</td>
<td>Very prepared</td>
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<td>92%</td>
</tr>
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<td>Somewhat prepared</td>
<td>8%</td>
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<td>No response</td>
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<td>Total</td>
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<td>N=12</td>
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The authors would like to thank Bill Cowles, Orange County, Florida Supervisor of Elections, Maria Diaz, Elections Coordinator, Orange County, Florida Supervisor of Elections, and Heather Lambert and Erin Welsh for their capable research assistance. The project was funded by the U.S. Elections Assistance Grant, # E4058805I awarded October 2009. The U.S. Elections Assistance Commission bears no responsibility for the content of this paper. All errors belong solely to the authors. The project was undertaken through a partnership developed by UCF’s Public Administration and Political Science departments, the Florida Institute of Government at UCF, and the Lou Frey Institute of Politics and Government in partnership with Valencia Community College and the Orange County Supervisor of Elections.

Florida election law requires that candidates for governor and lieutenant governor run as a team.

The exception to this rule is paper ballots cast as absentee ballots. Absentee ballots with overvotes, undervotes, or other errors (stray marks) cannot be corrected once received by the Supervisor of Elections because they cannot be traced back to any particular voter.

Florida law requires that absentee ballots be surrendered on-site if a voter who had requested an absentee ballot decides to vote in person; the absentee ballot is then destroyed and returned to the Supervisor of Elections office.

A short YouTube video of the virtual polling place may be viewed at http://youtu.be/igTH3B9Bfqc

Orange County, Florida’s Hispanic population is 26%. The federal Voting Rights Act requires that counties with at least 5% residents who speak a language other than English be provided all voting-related information in English and that other language.

Florida law requires that poll workers reside and be registered to vote in the county in which they will be working the polls. UCF is a diverse campus. Online courses attract students who live outside Orange County. Other students had employment, and other school obligations, that precluded them from working the polls on Election Day.

The first part of the SL training is an orientation on how to use Second Life, which is unnecessary for students training face-to-face.
Is the “New Economics” Either New or Economics?

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Abstract
Traditional neoclassical economic theory, with its emphasis on rational decision-making by informed economic units, has been subject to criticism and challenge virtually since its inception. However, in recent years the intensity and the scale of the attacks on traditional economic theory have risen to seemingly unprecedented levels. This paper examines the nature and implications of some of the more prominent of these lines of attack. The relatively recent works of behavioral and experimental economists receive primary consideration in this paper.

Is the “New Economics” Either New or Economics?

Introduction
Given the title of this paper, perhaps a logical starting point is to define and explain some terms—as used here. First, what is meant by the term “new economics?” Since virtually every aspect of what we call economics today has been evolving almost since the time that the term or concept was introduced, obviously there is a significant degree of arbitrariness in deciding just exactly how to use the term. For purposes of this paper, the “new economics” is generally viewed as the behavioral/experimental body of work, with logical extensions, that roughly corresponds to the appearance of the groundbreaking work of Daniel Kahneman and Amos Tversky in the 1970s, culminating in the 2002 awarding of the Nobel Memorial Prize in economics to Kahneman and Vernon Smith. And while some might argue that other areas of economics and related disciplines, such as the “new institutionalism” (as reflected in the work of North and DiMaggio/Powell), and neuroeconomics might be more appropriate candidates for the term “new economics,” the judgment made here is that those areas have to date received nowhere near the amount of attention, nor exerted nearly the amount of influence on the discipline, as the behavioral/experimental “revolution.”

In that vein, it is noted that The Economist (2002), for example, led off its treatment of the Kahneman/Smith Nobel award thus: “Bid farewell to the cold-hearted humans that, since Adam Smith’s day, economists have used as their models…. Now meet the new, sensitive homo economicus: he…is more laid back, relying on intuition and rules of thumb to make decisions, often without perfect knowledge.” (p. 74) Others were equally dismissive of and/or condescending toward traditional neoclassical theory—and its logical extensions. And while traditional neoclassical economic theory, with its emphasis on rational decision making by informed economic units, has been subject to criticism and challenge virtually since its inception, in recent years the intensity and the scale of such attacks have risen to seemingly unprecedented levels. The efficacy and the relevance of the primary tool bag used by economists for more than a century are routinely called into question and often dismissed as erroneous and/or irrelevant. Over the last decade, much research time and ink have gone into efforts to prove that the relevance and applicability of the “old economics” is, at best, rather narrow. As one critic of traditional theory argues, not only are decision makers less than fully rational, they are “predictably irrational.”

Relative to the title question of whether the “new economics” is “economics,” the focus here is not one of the breadth or scope of the discipline. Rather the intended issue is whether the terminology, methodology and concepts employed by a proponent of the “new economics” are consistent with what has been generally recognized and accepted as constituting basic elements or principles of economics. Thus, the test essentially is whether the argument involves what we might consider “sound” economics. For example, terms such as scarcity, rationality, opportunity cost, etc., have fairly well established and widely accepted meanings among economists. If those
terms or concepts are employed in ways inconsistent with such agreement and/or common usage, most economists would argue that that is not “economics.”

Finally, in addressing the question of whether the “new economics” is “new,” the focus in not on some pedantic search into whether the issue, concept or application has ever been raised before—almost all have been, either directly or indirectly and in one form or another. Instead, the question is whether such is merely a re-emergence or a slightly different form of a long standing debate within the discipline. Certainly, there is no intent to argue in this paper that much of what has been done in experimental and behavioral economics in the last twenty years is not new. And while the roots of modern behavioral economics and its efforts to effect a reunification of psychology and economics are often traced back as far as Adam Smith’s *Theory of Moral Sentiments*, as well as to John Maurice Clark (1918) and his “Economics and Modern Psychology” or even to Herbert Simon and his notion of bounded rationality, it seems undeniable that because of the methodologies applied and the breadth of the efforts, modern behavioral economics is indeed modern, and new.

**Economics: Discipline with a tradition of disagreement and debate**

Two general observations relative to the current state of debate in the discipline seem apropos. First, it is not new for economists to disagree—even regarding the relevance, applicability and/or value of specific theories, or even regarding the broad body of economic tools and approaches widely accepted and employed by the bulk of professional economists. In fact, in some ways the assault on neoclassical theory by the behavioralists today seems reminiscent of some of the earlier assaults. For example, the Lester-Machlup-Stigler “Marginalist” exchanges of the 1940s centered on the degree to which “real world” business decision makers employed the tools (and terminologies) that economists employed to explain and predict those decisions. Many of the arguments of the Institutionalists of the late 19th and early 20th century have a familiar sounding ring in the writings of some of the modern critics of neoclassical economics. Consider for example, Collander’s (2006) endorsement of the argument that the economy must be analyzed as a “complex system” (as opposed to a highly complex “simple system”). The implication, he argues, is that “such complex systems are built up in path dependent stages, making individual optimization within such systems history- and institution-specific.” Finally, he asserts, “This means that institutional structure is central to understanding a complex system.” (p. 18) Had these quotes been attributed to a Thorstein Veblin, a John R. Commons, or a Clarence Ayers, would anyone have rejected the authenticity of the alleged source of the quotes on the grounds that the ideas expressed were inconsistent with the views and writings of the named individuals?

As a second point, one could argue that the current challenges and associated debate regarding traditional neoclassical economics are both healthy and desirable. As is the case with medical research, progress often results and new syntheses often emerge as a result of the process. For example, when references are made today to “traditional economic theory” in the context of decision-making, the point of reference is the expected-utility maximization approach developed by von Neumann and Morgenstern (1944) and extended by Savage. (1953) Interestingly, their work takes as its point of departure the work of an eighteenth-century Swiss mathematician, Daniel Bernoulli, relative to what has come to be known as the “St. Petersburg paradox.” The basic question giving rise to this “paradox” was why people were willing to stake merely limited amounts of money on better-than-fair bets, even though their mathematical expectation of the total gain is the greater the more they bet at such odds. Ironically, a question
such as that posed by Bernoulli sounds a great deal like some of the observed behavior that led Kahneman and Tversky to begin to question the efficacy of expected utility theory.

**Roots of economic debate—A point of departure**

While economists have a long, well recognized history of disagreement and debate, it may be noted that a considerable portion of the current debate between classically trained economists and experimental/behavioral economists centers on a question as fundamental as the nature, purpose and characteristics of good theory. For example, many, if not most, classically trained economists accept the notion that the purpose of theory is to explain and to predict. As argued by one “traditional” neoclassical economist, Milton Friedman, (1953) more than half a century ago, “The ultimate goal of a positive science is the development of a ‘theory’ or, ‘hypothesis’ that yields valid and meaningful (i.e., not truistic) predictions about phenomena not yet observed…. theory is to be judged by its predictive power for the class of phenomena which it is intended to ‘explain.’” (p. 7) In this sense, economic theory differs from mere description that carries limited applicability, and also differs significantly from a presentation of experimental results that describes apparent deviations from expected (or theoretically prescribed) behavior. Additionally, most classically trained economists tend to hold to the premise that the mere presentation of evidence that a theory lacks universal applicability or that it sometimes produces less than optimal explanatory or predictive results does not constitute a theory itself. Or, as argued by another “traditional” neoclassical economist, Paul Samuelson, (1951) also more than half a century ago, “In economics it takes a theory to kill a theory; facts can only dent the theorist’s hide.” (p. 323)

**How did we get here?**

Given that there seems to be significant agreement that much of the effort of behavioral and experimental economists is aimed at reunification (versus unification—since there was once at least much less of a divergence of methodology) of economics and psychology, it is interesting to inquire as to why such a divergence developed. One noted behavioralist, Colin Camerer, (1999) cites two major reasons. First, he argues, theorists like Samuelson, Arrow, and Debreu, with physics as inspiration, worked hard at formalizing economics mathematically. At the same time, psychologists were also being inspired by natural scientists, but with this group, they were inspired by the natural scientists’ experimental traditions rather than by their mathematical structure. The consequence, Camerer concludes, was that to an economist, theory became a body of mathematical tools and theorems, but to the psychologist, a theory became a verbal construct or theme that organizes experimental regularity. It was that divergence in methods and ways of expressing knowledge that, in Camerer’s opinion, pushed economics and psychology apart.

The second major factor cited by Camerer for the divergence of economics and psychology is what is sometimes referred to as the “F twist”—so named because of its best known advocate, Milton Friedman. Friedman’s preferred test of a theory, whether it yields good predictions, moves the emphasis away from both the underlying assumptions of the theory and the actual process of the decision making. As Camerer put it, “because theories with patently false assumptions can make surprisingly accurate predictions, economic theories that assume that individual agents are highly rational and willful, judge probabilities accurately, and maximize their own wealth might prove useful, even though psychology shows that those assumptions are systematically false.” (p. 10575) This F Twist, he concludes, allowed economists to ignore psychology.
Revisited: “What is the purpose of theory?”

To the extent that the current debate between traditional economists and behavioral/experimental economists and psychologists has its roots in questions or issues regarding the purpose of theory and/or how one should judge good theory, the answer, of course, is at heart a matter of value judgment. In a paper titled “What Use is Economic Theory?” Hal Varian (1992) takes the position that “one could argue a reasonable case for economic theory on purely aesthetic grounds.” Along that line, he asserts, “Indeed, when pressed, most economic theorists admit that they do economics because it is fun.” (p. 1) More importantly, though, he argues that economics is a policy science, meaning that the contribution of economic theory to the discipline of economics should be measured on how well economic theory contributes to the understanding and conduct of economic policy. However, a review of experimental/behavioral literature suggests that not all behavioralists today share that view. For example, one could easily argue that many of the experiments described by any number of today’s crop of behavioral/experimental economists fail to fit into the realm of a policy science. They are, however, fun. On the other hand, Varian argues that one of the values of theory as a policy science is that it serves as a substitute for data: “In many cases we are forced to use theory because the data that we need are not available.” (p. 3) In many cases, the behavioral/experimental economists are beginning to generate that data. One remaining problem, however, is a difference stemming from a focus on psychology and the individual on the one hand, and policy science and group behavior on the other. As viewed by Glaeser, a University of Chicago trained, Harvard economist, “The great achievement of economics is understanding aggregation….Our discipline has always been about the wealth of nations, not individuals.” Relative to the behavioralists, he argues “Much of the early work has focused on changing the core of economics with work on individuals. It’s hard to read the bulk of research and not think it specializes more on individuals.” (Stewart, 2002, p. 5) However, that does not mean that there are not significant implications of the research findings that extend well beyond the individual.

Do fun experiments make good economics?

Dan Ariely, a Duke University and MIT behavioral economics professor, is one of the more widely recognized members of behavioral/experimental school of economics because he regularly writes to an audience extending well beyond the halls of academia. In those writings he routinely challenges many of the basic precepts of, as well as the applicability of, much of traditional economic theory. Ariely goes so far as to argue that not only are decision-makers frequently irrational, but that they are “predictably irrational”—a phrase which, in fact, forms the title of his 2008 best-selling book. And while even a brief description of the myriad of experiments that he has conducted and reported on over the years would extend this paper well beyond acceptable limits, it is his self-described introduction to the field that may be most revealing of his mind set. Interestingly, Ariely reports that his introduction to the arena of rationality, or irrationality, in decision-making came from his experience resulting from a terrible burn he suffered as a teen in Israel. He describes the process of changing bandages in the hospital, which he describes as hurting “like nothing else I can describe.” As it happened, he reports, the nurses “would routinely grab hold of a bandage and rip it off as fast as possible, creating a relatively short burst of pain.” He then explains that while the nurses, whom he considered to be caring and kind hearted persons, “had theorized that a vigorous tug at the bandages, which caused a spike of pain, was preferable (to the patient) to a slow pulling of the wrappings, which might not lead to such a severe spike of pain but would extend the treatment,
and therefore be more painful overall.” (p. xiv) He explains, however, that as the one who actually experienced the pain of the bandage removal process, he did not share their beliefs—which he notes had never been tested. While casting no doubts toward the relevance or importance of his observations, one might question whether that experience should logically call into question certain basis premises of economic theory.

**But do we know the other person’s utility function?**

Most neo-classically trained economists can well remember the graduate school price theory exercise of demonstrating that an unrestricted transfer or grant would almost always allow the grantee to operate on a higher indifference curve (achieve greater “well-offness”) than would a restricted grant or transfer. Then why would charitable, well meaning citizens so often opt to restrict the allowable uses of the funds, or else make the grant as a payment in kind? Why grant the needy food stamps (given the administrative cost coupled with the fact that they do not allow the grantee to maximize their own utility) when they would prefer cash? Clearly, the answer to that question lies not so much in whether the grantors understand the preferences of the grantees, but rather upon whose utility functions the grantors are more interested in serving. “If you give them cash, they will just spend it on cigarettes and booze.” But what if that is what maximizes their utility? The answer seems clear: it ain’t their utility that counts. To argue that the grantors are irrational—even if they outwardly show signs of kind-heartedness—is to miss the point. And that, I believe, would be the reaction of most classically trained economists to Ariely’s explanation of his entry into experimental/behavioral economist. Perhaps he was focusing on the wrong (less relevant) utility function. Perhaps the kind-hearted nurses were maximizing their own utility, or at least, minimizing their own disutility by limiting the amount of time that they had to “feel” his pain. At the same time, Ariely admits that the slower bandage removal process that he preferred did extend the treatment, meaning that his preferred process consumed more of the nurses’ scarce time, and kept them from other duties. In either of those scenarios, was there any irrationality displayed? Again, the classically trained economist would answer in the negative. The point: It is shaky economics to declare someone else’s observed behavior irrational whenever we cannot see their utility function.

**A straw man tactic?**

While on the “economics” of Ariely, let me slip in an illustrative point of the “is it economics?” query. According to Ariely, “one of the main differences between standard and behavioral economics involves the concept of ‘free lunches.’” Relative to this difference, he asserts that “According to the assumptions of standard economics, all human decisions are rational and informed, motivated by an accurate concept of the worth of all goods and services and the amount of happiness (utility) all decisions are likely to produce.” In contrast, he asserts, “Behavioral economists…believe that people are susceptible to irrelevant influences from their immediate environment (which we call context effects), irrelevant emotions, shortsightedness, and other forms of irrationality…” Knowing that, he offers this optimistic challenge: “If we all make systematic mistakes in our decisions, then why not develop new strategies, tools, and methods to help us make better decisions and improve our overall well-being? That’s exactly the meaning of free lunches from the perspective of behavioral economics—the idea that there are tools, methods, and policies that can help all of us make better decisions and as a consequence achieve what we desire.” Going on, he argues: “This is the basic idea of free lunches—providing benefits for all the parties involved. Note that these free lunches don’t have to be without cost….As long as these mechanisms provide more benefits than costs, we should
consider them to be free lunches—mechanisms that provide net benefits to all parties.” (p. 318-319)

Many, if not most, classically trained (or as he calls them “standard”) economists would argue that Ariely’s “free lunch” argument is not “sound” economics. As used by economists generally [and who is not familiar with the maxim: TANSTAAFL, there ain’t no such thing as a free lunch], the assertion that there are no free lunches has to do with opportunity cost, and not with perfect knowledge, rationality and/or information in decision-making. In short, Ariely has set up a straw man, involving at least an implied false representation of the opposing definition and/or use of a traditional economic term and concept. In fact, few “standard” economists would argue that “free lunches” are not ubiquitous—using Ariely’s non-standard representation of the term wherein it is a free lunch if a transaction provides benefits to all parties involved and/or provides net benefits to all parties. Isn’t that the nature of voluntary exchange?

**A noted behavioralist unloads on Ariely**

In addressing what this paper has characterized as a “straw man” argument, Herbert Gintis (2008), himself a high profile behavioral scientist, is somewhat less charitable, likening behavioral economics to Freudian psychology, which he claims is “just about dead in the self-help arena.” Relative to Ariely type claims, Gintis responds: “The so-called rational actor model was developed in the Twentieth century by John von Neumann, Leonard Savage and many others. The model is often presented as though it applies only when actors possess extremely strong information processing capabilities. In fact, the model depends only on choice consistency. When preferences are consistent, they can be represented by a numerical function, often called a utility function, which the individual maximizes subject to his subjective beliefs.”

In making his case, Gintis offers four caveats: (1) individuals do not consciously maximize something called “utility” or anything else; (2) individual choices, even if they are self-regarding...are not necessarily welfare-enhancing; (3) preferences must have some stability across time to be theoretically useful, but preferences are ineluctably a function of an individual’s current state, and beliefs can change dramatically in response to immediate sensory experience; and finally, (4) beliefs need not be correct nor need they be updated correctly in the face of new evidence, “although Bayesian assumptions concerning updating can be made part of consistency in elegant and compelling ways.”

Assessing Ariely and his work, Gintis opines: “Now Ariely in no way distorts the writings of behavioral economics in this book [Predictably Irrational]. Ariely is a jolly guy who is hard not to like, and he uses his charm to push a popular version of the beliefs expressed in the technical journals and books all the time; the rational actor of economic theory is all wrong, and irrationality is pervasive. ‘People are not logical—they are psychological,’ as the saying goes.” Continuing his assessment of Ariely and other “pop psychology” behavioral economists, Gintis offers: “Despite the extreme value of their experiments, the behavioral economists are mostly a theoretically ignorant and indolent lot, who content themselves with showing that a highly stripped-down version of the rational actor model is wrong, and conclude, sloppily and without warrant, that ‘people are irrational.’ Of course, the greatest behavioral economists have developed better models of human behavior that explain the experimental evidence, but these models are simply sophisticated versions of the rational actor model, not their antithesis.”

**The New Economics as a Policy Science—the Nudge**

Let us move now into a consideration of behavioral/experimental economics as not simply something that is fun, but as (in the words of Varian) a policy science. In this vein the names and work of Richard Thaler and Cass Sunstein quickly come to mind. Consider, for
example, the widely held view that people, left to their own devices, generally undersave for retirement. This is widely regarded as being not only a personal issue for the undersavers, but also a public policy challenge. Research in behavioral economics points to many possible reasons why people do not save enough for retirement. People procrastinate; People have a hard time understanding the real cost of not saving as well as the benefits of saving. Relative to saving for retirement, Ariely offers the promise that “the potential for free lunches from the perspective of behavioral economics lies in new methods, mechanisms, and other interventions that would help people achieve more of what they truly want.” While he offers one such mechanism in a self-control “new and innovative credit card” scheme that he describes, he also points toward Thaler and Shlomo Benartzi’s “save more tomorrow” proposal. The specifics of the Thaler/Benartzi plan, in brief terms, is that where a new employee could be expected to have difficulty in making a decision to sacrifice current consumption in favor of a higher stock of savings in the future, that person would find it psychologically easier to sacrifice consumption in the future, and even easier to give up a percentage of a salary increase that one does not yet have. In short, if the choice is properly framed, a person can be “nudged” into making the correct choice. The idea is that with a little government intervention and nudging, people can be influenced to eat healthier, plan for retirement better, take better care of the environment, etc. As stated by Thaler, (2008) “Humans respond to incentives…but they are also influenced by nudges. By properly deploying both incentives and nudges, we can improve our ability to improve people’s lives, and help solve many of society’s major problems. And we can do so while still insisting on everyone’s freedom to choose.” ² (p. 8)

Thaler’s nudges are supposedly effected through “framing” as opposed to through governmentally imposed edicts—or even governmentally imposed incentives such as changes in tax laws. A central idea of nudge theory, which Thaler characterizes as “libertarian paternalism,” is that default outcomes of a situation can be arranged by the person or organization presenting the choices. The “choice architect” is the person who frames the options. However, while Thaler insists that his libertarian paternalism itself insists on free choice—that it is merely intended at giving people the best shot at making a good decision—it still presupposes that the framer or choice architect has the superior knowledge and knows the “right” or at least socially or organizationally desirable outcome. Some of the troubling implications of that mindset are examined later.

A Nudge Forerunner—ZPG?

An interesting earlier delving into these issues of public policy and private decision making related the field of environmentalism, even what might be characterized as an early “cap and trade” scheme, arose from the discussion of the environment and population growth. Relative to achieving the then-top priority of many environmentalists—zero population growth, ZPG—it was argued that if the United States could achieve an average family size of 2.2 (versus the approximate 3.2 existing at the time), then ZGP could be achieved. Where a dictatorial government might respond to such a challenge by merely dictating a one child per family rule, such an approach would not be consistent with the values of a society that valued individual freedom and private decision making.

In fact, Stephen Enke (Ehrlich, 1970)) suggested that achieving ZPG would not require such a restrictive policy, but could be achieved with a family size distribution that would allow families considerable more leeway in decision making. Pursuant to that point, he calculated that the size distribution of families could be as follows—and still be consistent with ZPG.
Families with Percent
No children 5
One child 10
Two children 50
Three children 30
More than three (averaging five per family) 5

So, while the vast majority of all families (90 percent) would have one, two, or three children, a small number could have very large families, even under an official ZPG policy. But how could such a family size distribution be achieved? In that vein, Kenneth Boulding (1964) put forward his famous “Green Stamp Plan” whereby every boy and girl at adolescence would be given 110 green stamps, 100 of which would entitle them to have one legal child. The idea was that under Boulding’s plan the total number of stamps would permit the population as a whole to have 2.2 children per family—the ZPG rate. Surplus stamps then could be sold in a market organized for that purpose. As Boulding (1970) expressed it, “We then set up a market in these stamps so that the philoprogenitive and the rich can buy them from the phoboprogenitive (those who do not want to have children) and the poor.” (p. 38) An incidental benefit, as he termed it, of his plan would be that “the rich will have loads of children and become poor, and the poor will have few children and become rich.” (p. 39) Somehow the redistributive effects of his plan did not make it palatable to the overwhelming majority of Americans. It is interesting to note that even (and perhaps especially) as early as the early 1960s, the public was no more kindly disposed toward market solutions to social issues than it is today. In fact, Boulding observed in his *Economics as a Science* (1970) that his plan was “received with so many cries of anguish and horror, that it illustrates the extraordinary difficulty of applying rational principles to processes involving human generation.” (p. 39)

**Green stamps versus nudges**

Despite significant differences—Boulding’s green stamp plan obviously would require externally imposed penalties for failure to have a legal child—it is interesting to compare Boulding’s assessment of his plan relative to the goals and methods of Thaler. Boulding: My plan illustrates well the use of the market as a regulator of the great aggregates of society which must be regulated by social means but, at the same time, with a minimum of interference with the behavior of individuals by outside coercion. Thaler: we will be arguing that better governance requires less in the way of government coercion and constraint, and more in the way of freedom to choose. On the other hand, it was also argued at the time of Boulding’s proposal that the policy for achieving ZPG likely would require no more than a fairly mild tax incentive—that income taxes that currently favored married couples over unmarried people and that offered a flat tax exemption for each child a family added could be replaced with a change in the law that would give tax advantages to unmarried people and eliminate the flat exemption, or at least stepwise reduce it, for children beyond two per family. On a policy level, (versus on a Thaler-defined academic level) is a tax incentive merely another form of nudge?

**Nudge anxiety**

But some worry about “who nudges the nudgers?” Edward Glaeser sees a bit of danger inherent in nudge practice. It’s a slippery slope, he warns. And while Glaeser (Stewart) concludes that Thayer and Benartzi’s SMarT retirement plan (now offered to some 200 corporate clients), based on the principles of libertarian paternalism, is “a benign program,” he also advises that “we shouldn’t go farther down the slope.” Thaler’s response to that concern is that “once you know that every design element has the potential to influence choice, then you either close
your eyes and hope for the best, or you take what you know and design programs that are helpful.” However, that scenario is not necessarily the most comforting to everyone. Some argue that there is the danger that a system that imbues certain individuals, or “nudgers,” with the notion that they possess the knowledge as well as the responsibility to influence the “nudgees” to make the “right” choices could eventually lead to the use of a push or a shove. Is it possible that the CEO, the bureaucrat, or that special brand of bureaucrat, the educrat, might be infected with a touch of megalomania? Perhaps that possibility provides fertile ground for designing experiments to test what most academicians feel they already know—that educrats (or educational administrators as most prefer to be called) are strong believers in individual freedom of choice, so long as the decision makers always make the correct, uniform choice.

At the policy science level, the fact that one of the chief proponents of nudge, Cass Sunstein, currently holds the position of head of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs in the Obama Administration does not allay the concerns of those who fear nudge overreach. Given that the Obama Administration is widely considered to be willing, if not eager, to impose solutions when it believes that Americans fail to make socially—or governmentally—desirable choices (such as buying health insurance a la “Obamacare”), there is a certain uneasiness associated with a strong nudge proponent occupying a high position in the Obama regulatory hierarchy. Finally, couple those factors with the Administration’s advocacy of, and strong push for, “cap and trade” as well as its lobbying for government “investments” in targeted areas such as high speed rail, and some would argue that behavioral economics has definitely become a “policy science.” In fact, some would argue that in the same way that some of its critics chide classical economics for being a tool of conservative politicians, behavioral economics is becoming a tool for liberal politicians who wish to expand government regulation and move toward an “industrial policy” a la Japan of the 1970s and 1980s.3

A Few Concluding Thoughts

It seems that all too often, economists and perhaps academicians in general, are intent on proving the other guy wrong. Perhaps it is that approach that is the thing that is wrong. Can two very different viewpoints both be correct? Consider the contrast: Thaler, in discussing John Maurice Clark’s contribution as a forerunner to modern behavioral economics, quotes Clark as having written, “the economist may attempt to ignore psychology, but it is sheer impossibility for him to ignore human nature.” Becker, on the other hand, argues that psychology’s impact on economics is limited. “If there’s a tax on wages, it doesn’t matter what you or I do, but how the whole group reacts.” (Stewart, p. 5) Which view is correct? The answer, of course, depends on the intended use of the theory. Again in the words of Clark, (1918) “If the economist borrows his conception of man from the psychologist, his constructive work may have some chance of remaining purely economic in character. But if he does not, he will not thereby avoid psychology. Rather, he will force himself to make his own, and it will be bad psychology.” (p. 4) But does it yield good predictive results?

Notes

1Neuroeconomics combines research methods from neuroscience, experimental and behavioral economics, and cognitive and social psychology. There are those who would argue that neuroeconomics, with well developed graduate programs at institutions such as NYU, George Mason, Cal Tech, Duke, and Claremont Graduate University, with its Center for Neuroeconomic Studies, deserves equal billing with behavioral/experimental economics in terms of its innovative approaches and contributions to economic theory. Others take the position that neuroeconomics is actually a sub-field of behavioral/experimental economics.
While Thaler differentiates between “incentives” and “nudges,” and, in fact, defines a nudge in such a way as to preclude its resulting in a significant changing of economic incentives, many classically trained economists would make the argument that the mechanism of the “nudge” is, in fact, an economic incentive, and that in accordance with the “rational actor” model, decision-makers react in predictable ways. For example, why do individuals so readily accept default choices in the new software installation process? Are they not merely economizing on a scarce commodity—their time?

For example, conservative commentators such as Glen Beck routinely mention Cass Sunstein as a serious threat to liberty. One particularly disturbing nudge possibility, as far as many conservative commentators are concerned, has to do with organ donations. By reversing the process, or default option, whereby one would be required to “opt out” versus “opt in” regarding organ donations, the government would be able automatically to harvest the organs of all people who die, unless they had specifically requested that it not do so. To many conservatives, this is a frightening, unconscionable government grab of a sacred property right.

References

All Too Human: This Year’s Nobel Prizes Put Man Back at Centre Stage. (2002) The Economist, (Oct. 12), 74
CYBER-ROOTS: USING ELLIS ISLAND RECORDS TO RESEARCH FAMILY HISTORY

ZDENKA GREDEL-MANUELE
NIAGARA UNIVERSITY
From 1855 on Castle Garden in New York was used for processing the influx of immigrants. In 1890 the United States federal government established the Bureau of Immigration and selected Ellis Island as the site for construction of a new federal immigration station for the port of New York. This station which was hastily built of wood, opened on January 1, 1892. A change had occurred from the “old immigration” to the “new immigration”. Immigrants were admitted through the Port of New York primarily from Italy, Russia, Poland, Hungary, and Austria, but there were still those who came from the leading emigration nations of Germany, Ireland, England, Sweden and Norway as during earlier years. In 1897, the wooden buildings on the island were destroyed by a fire. In 1900 the Ellis Island Immigration Center reopened in its present Beaux-Arts style.

In 1924 the National Origins Act dramatically reduced the flow of immigration and the Center was closed in 1954. In 1982, the Statue of Liberty-Ellis Island Foundation, Inc. was established in partnership with the National Park Service. In 1986, the main building on Ellis Island was restored, followed four years later with the establishment of the Ellis Island Immigration Museum. Of great importance for this study is that in 2001 the American Family Immigration History Center launched the Ellis Island Database (EIDB) which made 22 million immigration records from 1892-1924 available.

The original immigrant records which consisted of ship manifests and passenger lists were filmed and preserved by the National Archives in Washington, D.C. They consisted of 3,685 rolls of microfilm. In many cases it was difficult to read the filmed handwritten images because of fading or damage. Twelve thousand volunteers of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints donated over 5.6 million hours extracting the information contained on microfilms and transcribing it to the automated database at Ellis Island (and online).

In a single day in 1907, 11,747 immigrants passed through Ellis Island. It served the United States from 1892 until 1943 as its major immigration station. Twelve million people landed there thus making 40% of the population of the United States descendants of those immigrants. However, it must be noted that immigration to the United States during the period that Ellis Island served as a station was limited to those waves of immigrants who could be termed as “newer”, such as Italians and Eastern European. English, Dutch, Irish, and German immigration records would not be found through the Ellis Island website since these belonged to the earlier immigrant waves not serviced by Ellis Island.

Using Ellis Island Records opens up a plethora of research possibilities. These can be both personal and educational to those who study family history. The Ellis Island Website can be accessed at www.ellisislandrecords.org. There is no charge for using it and it is an easily accessible tool which affords the researcher of family history a new dimension in the process of gathering, organizing and preserving data. It has eliminated the arduous task of visiting the National Archives in Washington, DC and the usage of the sound system and micro-fiche data.

Some of the goals which can be achieved are as follows: the identification of the ancestor who arrived on Ellis Island; the creation of a profile of the ancestor; the gathering of information about the destination of the ancestor; and his/her relationship to the course of European and American history.

It is important to employ an effective historical method in the process. First identify what family is to be researched. One may draw on existing information regarding the family name (name change often occurred) and the origin of the family. The method should include the following: an outline of the project; a list of sources; collection of data; organization of the data; an analysis of sources and finally the writing of the essay.
The first step should be to link to the American Family Immigration History Center website. Familiarize yourself with it and then register. Identify which relative you want to research and then enter the name under Passenger Search.

Reviewing the original Ship Manifest, more details about the voyage and the passenger are revealed. The Manifest provides a list of the ship’s alien passengers for the United States Immigration officer. It lists when the ship departed its port and when it arrived at the Port of New York. The name of the passenger is listed with his/her age stated in years and months and his/her sex. It also provides the person’s status which is indicated with an S (single) or M (married) as well as his/her occupation. It states whether the passenger could read and write.

For the researcher the following information is most valuable: The Manifest lists the passenger’s nationality, the country of permanent residence and the final destination in the United States. It contains the name of a relative, his/her relation to the passenger and the address. Information is provided who paid for the passage and the financial status of the passenger, and whether the passenger was ever before in the United States and if so, when and where.

One of the important procedures which the immigrant had to undergo on Ellis Island was a physical examination. The admission to the United States depended on the condition of the status of his/her mental and physical condition of health. The Manifest listing called for information if the passenger was deformed or crippled, the nature of infliction, the length of time and its cause. It also states as categories whether the passenger was ever in prison or an almshouse or supported by charity and where. Whether the passenger was a polygamist and an anarchist also had to be addressed.

This information provided by the Ship’s Manifest was crucial for the study of the passenger. They provided not only data regarding arrival in the United States, but also the country of origin and the destination of the passenger. In order to uncover the accuracy of the data on this passenger, certain family knowledge can be applied. However, two important tools have to be used in order to lead to sound results; the understanding of the historical period of that time and the ability to examine the accuracy of the sources.

Italian immigrants constituted one of the largest ethnic groups who passed through Ellis Island around the turn of the century. Most of them came from the southern parts of Italy and from the island of Sicily. For the purpose of demonstration, the focus will be on the name “Salvatore Manuele”. The Passenger Search indicates that there are six exact matches. The chosen name is the one from Marianopoli. The information which is provided through this record is valuable. It indicates that the ethnicity of the passenger was Italian and that his place of residence was Marianopoli which is located on the island of Sicily. He was married and 24 years of age when he arrived in New York in the year 1902. It also lists the name and picture of the ship, in this case the S.S. Bolivia and the port of departure which was Naples, Campania, Italy. Verification of the correctness of the information is provided by the destination of this passenger and the listing of the relative.

Regarding Jewish immigrants, difficulty of identification regarding origin, residence and nationality can be encountered. Russian Jews were not identified on the Manifests as Jews; rather their race was listed as Hebrew and Russian or Rumanian. Orthodox Jews can be identified from listings of large families.

Immigrants from Eastern Europe constituted an important segment of those entering Ellis Island. Since many of them came from areas which at one time or other had been parts of old Empires or emerging states, their nationalities and places of residence have to be examined on the basis of historic events and geography. The following test cases will be examined in order to
demonstrate flaws and inaccuracies created by political changes. The selected name will be Abramovic residing in Brod na Kupi (Bridge on the river Kupa) in present-day Croatia and Slovenia.

The first Manifest records an Anton Abramovic of Austrian ethnicity residing in Brod in 1901. Because of its multi-ethnic composition of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, Brod was within its domain and therefore the passenger was listed as Austrian.

A second Manifest lists Mathias Abramovic being of Austrian, Slovenian ethnicity. His residence is Brod, Slovenian and Austrian in 1907. At this time Brod still was part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and therefore it is listed as Austrian. However, at the same time the village of Brod is located on the river Kupa. This river serves a boundary between Croatian and Slovenian regions. Therefore he is identified as belonging to the side of Brod which is located on the Slovenian side.

The third Manifest identifies a Franciska Abramovic as Croatian. Her residence is Brod-Kupa, Croatia, in 1909. Even though she is not identified as Austrian, her village still was part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire but her ethnicity indicated that she was from Brod which was located on the Croatian side.

The fourth Manifest lists a Maria Abramovic whose ethnicity is Jugoslavia Croatian residing at Jugoslavia Brod. The year is 1921. After World War I, there no longer existed an Austro-Hungarian Empire. In that Balkan region it had been replaced with the Kingdom of Jugoslavia which was comprised of Serbia, Croatia, and Slovenia. This Manifest listed Brod as being part of the new Jugoslav Kingdom but did not identify the specific ethnicity, Croatian or Slovenian, of the passenger.

The preceding examples illustrate the complexities of the information which are contained in the Manifest. At the same time the researcher has to employ other methods derived from history and geography.

Cyber-roots can be rewarding. The benefit of using the Web is that it provides speedy accessibility and a plethora of research possibilities. But at the same time playing “family detective” can be fun!


2 Pitkin, x, 19, 26.


6 http://www.ellisislandimmigrants.org/ellis_island_history.htm.


8 The information is based on Ellis Island Records’ web-site.

9 All information is based on www.ellisislandrecords.org
How much do college students really cheat on online and in class tests:
Do moral beliefs make a difference?

Bryan Hoyt
Ilie Puiu Vasilescu
The University of Virginia’s College at Wise
How much do college students really cheat on online and in class tests: Do moral beliefs make a difference?

The sheer quantity of cheating among college students has disheartened faculty and college administrators. Robinson, Amburgey, Swank and Faulkner (2004) concluded that four out of five college students cheated in some manner during their college years. In a study conducted by McCabe (1992), he reported that out of 6,000 students surveyed at 31 schools of higher education, 70 percent admitted they cheated on exams. In yet another survey study involving 50,000 undergraduates at 60 institutions, 70 percent of the students admitted engaging in some form of cheating and 25 percent admitted they cheated on tests and exams (Stevens, Young & Calabrese (2007).

Faculty and college administrators are especially concerned with the growing popularity of online teaching and the potential to cheat on tests and exams (Roach, 2001). The consensus seems to be that due to the anonymity of online teaching compared to the traditional classroom situation, cheating will be far more likely (Roach, 2001). However, based on a survey conducted by Grijalva, Nowell, & Kerkvliet (2006), students reported that students were not cheating in online class any more than they did in a traditional classroom setting. Further, Street (2008) argued that the assumption that the lack of the instructor being physically present whiles the student completes an exam online would likely lead to an increase in cheating has yet to be proven.

It naturally follows that faculty and administrators were keenly interested in what might reduce cheating among college students. Stephens, Young, and Calabrese (2007) found on an anonymous survey involving over 1300 students that those who believed that cheating was morally wrong, also reported they would be less likely to cheat. Earlier, Dawkins (2004) reported similar survey findings that made the connection between beliefs about cheating.

Researches do not agree as to whether college honor codes are a deterrent for cheating. Again, based on surveys, researchers have found that honor codes are a good strategy to diminish cheating behavior among college students (Burrus, McGoldrick, Schuhmann, 2007; MaCabe, Butterfield, & Trevino, 2001). However, Vandehey, Dierkhoff, and LaBeff (2007) survey results showed that honor codes did not reduce cheating.

These studies have relied on self-report surveys to ascertain the frequency of academic dishonesty and to understand what might prevent dishonesty among college students. Researchers expressed a strong concern about the limitations self-report dated in general, namely people tend to underreport their own behaviors that society considers undesirable (Dawkins, 2004; Stephens, Young, & Calabrese, 2007; Street, 2008). These concerns about underreporting specifically applied to reports about their own cheating, even when the survey was anonymous.

Baron and Crooks (2005) stated that statistical evidence and empirical data concerning all types of cheating in online class is virtually non-existing. To the best of our knowledge, there is only one experimental study to date that compare cheating in online testing situations with the more traditional classroom tests. In an experimental study, by Hoyt and Vasilescu (in press), the researchers found no difference in the amount of cheating on tests given in the classroom, compared to online tests given outside the classroom.

In a follow-up study to the study by Hoyt and Vasilescu (in press) this study will examine what behaviors predict cheating on tests. Secondly, the study will examine whether self reported anonymous surveys about cheating match empirical data about cheating.
**Methods**

**Participants**
Participants included 76 undergraduate volunteers of whom the majority was non-psychology majors. There were approximately equal numbers of males and females enrolled in a college Introduction to Psychology class at a small, rural, public, liberal arts college. Participants were typically between 18 and 22 years of age.

**Procedure**
Participants completed four chapter tests that each contained 25 multiple choice questions; out of them, 20 covered material found in the lectures and in a chapter of their textbook. The answer to five of the 25 questions, despite of being on the same topic as the chapter, could only be found on a special chapter crib sheet created by one of the experimenters. The crib sheets were given to the participants at the same time they received their test in both the online and classroom testing situations. For each chapter, the test and crib sheet was in all regards identical for the experimental and control group, but the instructions were different. Researchers randomly assigned participants to one of the two groups. Further, the researchers told those in experimental group not to use the crib sheet during the test, but to use it for a review after the test. Researchers told the control group that they might freely use the crib sheet during the test. In the classroom, testing condition, the experimental and control group were not in the room at the same time. After completing the chapter test, both groups completed an anonymous survey that asked nine questions about their own cheating behaviors.

**Results**
The researchers used the binomial test to determine if the proportion of students who indicated they cheated on a test was the same proportion as those who actually cheated. A large majority of students consistently reported in the surveys that they had never cheated in this class; however, our experimental results showed they had cheated. The binomial test clearly indicated there was a dramatic difference in cheating as reported on the anonymous survey and students who actually cheated.

The self-reported cheating data came from the anonymous survey. Therefore, the student responses were untraceable as to whether they were coming from the experimental or control group. On the first test, given in class, there was a significant difference between the proportion of self-reported cheating, 4%, and actual cheating based on the experimental group only, 95% (36/38; binomial test, $p \geq .000$). On the second test, given online, there was a significant difference between the proportion of self-reported cheating, 9%, and actual cheating, 97% (33/34; binomial test, $p \geq .000$). On the third test, given in class, there was a significant difference between the proportion of self-reported cheating, 10%, and actual cheating, 100% (37/37; binomial test, $p \geq .000$). Finally on the fourth test given online, there was a significant difference between the proportion of self-reported cheating, 15%, and actual cheating, 94% (33/35; binomial test, $p \geq .000$; see figure 1).

Using Spearman rank-order correlation coefficient rho, the researchers calculated the correlations between the response to eight of the questions that dealt with previous cheating or attitudes about cheating and the question, "I have cheated on a test in this class," in an attempt to see which of the past behaviors or attitude would predict the cheating behavior in the current class. The seven questions were: "I have cheated on a test during this last year; I have cheated on a test during this last semester; I have cheated on a test in another class; I have cheated on a test in another class; I have someone else cheat on a test; I have had someone helped me cheat..."
on a test; I believe cheating is morally incorrect; I believe cheating is okay if the professor is really hard; and I would be more likely to cheat on an online tests taken outside the classroom compared to an in-class test" (see table 2). Of the eight questions, there were significant correlations across the majority of the chapter tests. However, the question, "I believe cheating is morally incorrect," which was never significantly correlated with "I have cheated on a test in this class;" (see table 1).

Discussion

Prior researchers have relied on survey data to determine the amount of classroom and online cheating on tests (Baron and Crooks, 2005). There have been strong concerns about using self-report anonymous surveys on cheating, because it is believed that people tend to underreport their own behaviors which society considers undesirable (Dawkins, 2004; Stephens, Young, & Calabrese, 2007; Street, 2008). In this study, the researchers compared anonymous self-reports about cheating with actual cheating. The participants typically reported they never cheated. However, the data showed that among the group that had an opportunity to cheat by illegally use the researcher provided crib sheet to answer five of the twenty-five questions that they could not be answer without crib sheet, did so. These participants cheated as frequently in the online tests as in the classroom and the amount of cheating was considerable.

Based on the responses on surveys, it has been assumed that students who believe that cheating is morally wrong are less likely to cheat (Dawkins, 2004; Stevens, Young, & Calabrese, 2007). Many schools of higher education, as did this school, use honor codes in part to educate and remind their students that cheating is morally wrong (Burrus, McGoldrick, Schuhmann, 2007; MaCabe, Butterfield, & Trevino, 2001). At the college on which the present study was conducted, the honor code is displayed the front of every classroom. The response on the questions about prior cheating experiences ("I have cheated on a test during this last year; I have cheated on a test during this last semester; I have cheated on a test in another class; I have cheated on a test in another class; I have helped someone else cheat on a test; I have had someone helped me cheat on a test; I believe cheating is okay if the professor is really hard; and I would be more likely to cheat on an online tests taken outside the classroom compared to an in-class test"), all proved to be predictors. However, the one question never significantly correlated with cheating in this class was the questions dealing with the individuals’ moral beliefs ("I believe cheating is morally incorrect.")

There are some possible limitations with our study. There was a one in five chance that a person could have guessed the correct answer to a question without cheating. However, even if a participant got only one out of the five questions correct on one test, the same person in every case correctly answered two to all five questions correct on the other three tests; the chance of getting correct two questions by giving random answers was only 1/25=0.04. This pattern of correct answers would be highly improbable, if the person were only innocently guessing. It was also possible that some students simply could not find the correct answer to some questions on the crib sheet in the time allotted even when they attempted cheating. This might be due to the fact that the crib sheet contained other information about the general topic of the test and comprised a full page of text. A final possible limitation of our study was that the researchers removed some of the safe-guards against cheating in the online condition to make the testing situation as similar to the classroom tests as possible. The researchers did not scramble the order of the questions, the order of the possible responses, and presented the questions all at once, rather than one at a time.
Academic cheating, especially in testing situations, continues to be a serious problem in higher education. The researches in this study look forward to to see more experimental studies conducted that examine online and classroom cheating, with the hope that better ways can be found to minimize it.

References


Captions

Figure 1: Comparison of cheating reported on anonymous surveys verses of cheating in reality
Table 1: Correlations, cheating in this class with other anonymous questions predicting cheating
Table 2: Anonymous survey
Figures: 1: Comparison of cheating reported on anonymous surveys verses of cheating in reality.
Table 1: Correlations, cheating in this class with other anonymous questions predicting cheating

<table>
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<th>Spearman's rho</th>
<th>A3_I have cheated on a test in this class</th>
<th>First Test in Class</th>
<th>Second Test Online</th>
<th>Third Test in Class</th>
<th>Fourth Test in Class</th>
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**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).
Table 2: Anonymous Survey

Please rate yourself on the following questions: place your responses on the scantron; write Anonymous in the “Name” slot and CH 2 (or whatever the chapter test covers). Do NOT place your name or ID number on the scantron.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mark the letter on your Scantron that corresponds with your answer to each question</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
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</table>

1. I have cheated on a test during this last year
2. I have cheated on a test during this last semester
3. I have cheated on a test in this class
4. I have cheated on a test in another class
5. I have helped someone else cheat on a test
6. I have had someone helped me cheat on a test
7. I believe cheating is morally incorrect
8. I believe cheating is okay if the professor is really hard
9. I would be more likely to cheat on an online tests taken outside the classroom compared to an in-class tests
The Hunger Games:
Discussing Dystopia

Patricia M. Kirtley
Independent Scholar
**Dystopian Derivation**

*These are dangerous times but they are also times of possibility.*

(Bradford 2)

St. Thomas More used the word Utopia in 1516 to refer to an ideal place, an imaginary island of harmonious existence (Zipes ix). “Topia” is the Greek term for place coupled with “eu” meaning good. John Stuart Mill was the first to use the opposing term “dystopia” in his 1868 speech denouncing the British government’s Irish land policy (Trahair 110).

Recent literary publications for young adults include a plethora of dystopian titles. Perhaps this is because modern youngsters have never experienced a world free from war. The predominance of violence on television programs such as *Survivor, Lost, American Gladiator,* or the *Ultimate Fighting Championship* possibly encourages the marketing of such confrontational children’s literature. Some young adults consider their own educational institutions actual dystopias. The challenge of the genre of dystopian fiction is to recognize that it gives young readers the vicarious opportunity to evaluate socioeconomic inequity in an imaginary world and consider potential solutions.

**The Inspiration**

“I appropriated the Greek mythological premise of a conquering power that bent all of its subjects to its will through violence.”

(Suzanne Collins Interview 726)

Suzanne Collins’ 2008 dystopian novel *Hunger Games* was a bestseller on both the adult and young adult fiction lists. Stephen King stated in his *Entertainment Weekly* book review that he could not put it down (King). Collins is well known as the author of a five-book middle-grade fantasy series, *The Underland Chronicles* and as a *Nickelodeon* children’s television writer for the Emmy-nominated *Clarissa Explains It All.*

Collins’ interest in Greek mythology, coupled with her love for a 1960 gladiator movie, provided the impetus for her dystopian trilogy. In the Greek myth of Theseus and the Minotaur, the King of Athens offered a tribute of seven Athenian girls and seven Athenian boys to King Minos of Crete as compensation for another nine years of peace (Herzberg 151). King Minos imprisoned the Athenian children in Daedalus’ maze for the amusement and consumption of the Minotaur, a half-bull/half-man.

In Collins’ novel the Capitol imprisons competitors in an outdoor arena that features technological manipulation and constant surveillance. Just as Katniss volunteers to take her sister’s place in the *Hunger Games,* Theseus, the Athenian king’s son, steps forward and volunteers to take the place of a male tribute.

With the help of Ariadne, Theseus succeeds in killing the Minotaur, yet his return to Crete is tragic. He mistakenly flies a black sail on his ship and his grief-stricken father assumes his son is dead and throws himself into the sea. Katniss’ own triumph in the *Hunger Games* places her in immediate jeopardy and possible retribution since her deception embarrasses the Capitol Gamemakers, “the one thing they can’t stand is being laughed at and they’re the joke of Panem” (Collins *Hunger* 357).

In *Hunger Games,* Collins also pays homage to one of her favorite movies, *Spartacus.* She includes three things that were always present in the pre-Christian gladiator paradigm: “(1) a ruthless government that (2) forces people to fight to the death and (3) uses these fights to the death as a form of entertainment” (Collins Interview 726).
In the *Life of Crassus*, Plutarch chronicles the actions of Spartacus, the rebellious slave leader of a 73 BC uprising against the Roman Republic (Hutchins 442). In one scene in the 1960 Stanley Kubrick film, Crassus finally crushes the slave rebellion and promises not to harm the captives if they will identify their rebel leader. When Spartacus stands to identify himself and spare his troops, each member of his army rises one-by-one in defiant support and shouts, “I am Spartacus!” (*Spartacus*).

A similar sign of insolence occurs in the *Hunger Games* when a Capitol representative exhorts the residents to applaud the unselfish volunteer as their female tribute from District Twelve. Instead the entire populace offers complete silence in dissent, “Which says we do not agree. We do not condone. All of this is wrong” (Collins *Hunger* 24). They also offer a simple salute as each citizen presses his fingers to his lips and holds them out to the young girl. “It is an old and rarely used gesture of our district, occasionally seen at funerals. It means thanks. It means admiration, it means goodbye to someone you love” (Collins *Hunger* 24).

**An Engaging Plot**

“I don’t want them to change me in there. Turn me into some kind of monster that I’m not.”

(Peeta Mellark, Collins *Hunger* 141)

In a *Horn Book* review, Jonathon Hunt comments, “Collins has written a compulsively readable blend of science fiction, survival story, unlikely romance, and social commentary.” (580). *Hunger Games* is set in an imaginary, post-apocalyptic America. All that remains of a past uprising in a country called Panem is an opulent, monopolistic Capitol and twelve colonies of subjugated citizens. The rulers emphasize their hegemony over the subject colonies by holding an annual lottery in each of the colonies, which determines the names of one male and one female contestant between the ages of twelve and eighteen who will participate in a deadly struggle. The competitors must fight to the death. The victor is the last youngster standing.

The Capitol televisions this grisly entertainment throughout all twelve colonies and requires attendance at the screenings. “To make it humiliating as well as torturous, the Capitol requires us to treat the Hunger Games as a festivity, a sporting event pitting every district against the others” (Collins *Hunger* 19). In this way Panem reinforces how little chance the colonies would have to survive a rebellion. The rulers’ message is “Look how we take your children and sacrifice them and there is nothing you can do. If you lift a finger, we will destroy every last one of you” (Collins *Hunger* 19).

Katniss Everdeen is the savvy heroine of *Hunger Games*. When her younger sister draws the lot as the female representative of District Twelve, sixteen-year-old Katniss takes her place in spite of the prospect of certain death. Katniss is a survivalist: an accomplished hunter, a wily trader, and occasionally a desperate thief in order to support her impoverished family. The games are violent, frustrating, and unpredictable. In addition to the obvious horrible expectations of the competition, the Capitol maliciously presents obstacles in the arena to amplify the macabre entertainment.

When Rue, the tribute who befriended her, dies, Katniss realizes that she must do something to signify her hatred of the Capitol. “I want to do something right here, right now, to shame them, to make them accountable, to show them that whatever they do, or force us to do there is a part of every tribute they can’t own. That Rue was more than a piece in their games. And so am I” (Collins *Hunger* 237).
The reader quickly identifies with the characters in *Hunger Games*. As the narrator of the novel, Katniss’ anxiety is painfully evident. In spite of her consuming drive for self-preservation, she remains determined to deprive the Capitol of even a small measure of satisfaction in her discomfort. Her defiance, lack of trust, and anger with manipulation clearly resonates with modern young adults, as does her struggle with unfamiliar feelings for her fellow District Twelve male tribute, Peeta, and her friendship with her handsome hunting partner, Gale.

**An Era of Unrest**

*We are living in very troubled times.*

*More than ever before, we need utopian and dystopian literature.*

(Jack Zipes ix)

Chronologically the last few decades have provided ample opportunities to consider both utopias and dystopias. The focus in dystopian children’s literature changed from nuclear holocaust (1960 – 1980) to pollution and greenhouse gases (1980 – 1990) and post apocalyptic (1990 – 2000). The late 1980’s brought the end of the Cold War and the dissolution of the Soviet Empire. The First Persian Gulf War preceded the Civil War in Bosnia. In 2000 the popular term was “A New World Order” which evolved into “The War Against Terrorism” (Bradford 6).

In the first decade of the 21st century, regressive and often violent dystopian societies replaced the imaginary world of utopian young adult fiction. Though the protagonists in young adult dystopian fiction often suffer both physical and mental agony, the difference between children’s literature and adult fiction is the concluding element of hope and the conviction that such suffering is not in vain. The conflicting ideas of these dystopias provide ample openings for educators to examine and discuss both social and political deficiencies.

Dystopian fiction often is a young person’s first opportunity to analyze social organizations, to experiment with real choices and opinions in an imaginary world (Hintz 2). In *Utopian and Dystopian writing for Children and Young Adults*, Lois Lowry states, “Young people handle dystopia everyday: in their lives, their dysfunctional families, their violence-ridden schools” (ix). They play video games and watch movies where firearms and explosions often settle conflicts.

In discussing didactic young adult dystopian literature, Collins states that she created the sociopolitical overtones of *The Hunger Games* intentionally to characterize current and past world events (Collins Interview 726). As examples of those events she enumerates the use of hunger to control populations, geographical containment, and an elimination of the rights of the individual (Collins Interview 726).

Since September 11th 2001, young children inevitably recognize adults’ unease and fear of the world in which we live. Emma Lazarus’ poem on the base of the Statue of Liberty offers refuge for all; yet, in the 21st century, there is more distrust than welcome for huddled masses yearning to breathe free. Utopian and dystopian texts encourage young readers to explore the philosophy, history, political science, and sociology that influence the uncertainty of their future. Even though this children’s literature takes place in a science fiction or fantasy world, the message is clearly applicable to current events. Political uprisings in the Middle East provide examples of dystopias and present the opportunity to consider solutions. Young people in Egypt and Tunisia recently staged successful public rebellions by using the Internet, Facebook, and Twitter as weapons.

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A Lesson Learned
Younger readers are positioned to recognize the interaction between their own understandings of the world as it is now and the vision of what it might become.

(Bradford 129)

Adolescence is often a time of insecurity and insolence. It can also be a time of discovery with moments of brilliance. Behind a carefully crafted facade of young adult cynicism lurks the challenge of both mental and physical experimentation. Dystopian texts present young protagonists who must analyze their world and make sound choices for the future of both their social and their political environment. The conscious actions of the characters in these novels encourage young readers to examine and overcome some of the problems that adults have created. Hunger Games is only one of many current dystopian novels that are extremely popular with young adults. Rather than dismiss them as impractical science fiction, educators would do well to utilize them to introduce discussions on worldwide political domination and social injustice.

Works Cited


Beyond Politics: An Examination of the Texas School Board’s New Curriculum Guidelines

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Beyond Politics: An Examination of the Texas School Board’s New Curriculum Guidelines

In May, 2010, the Texas State Board of Education performed its required duty to review and adopt new social studies curriculum standards for the next 10 years. These standards, which are proposed by teachers and then either accepted or modified by the State Board, serve as a guide for textbook publishers, who use them to present drafts of their proposed textbooks for adoption. While this may seem like a mundane and pro-forma activity, it takes on an extra measure of importance when we consider that Texas is one of the two largest buyers of textbooks in the United States.

As it is with most things in Texas, one of the most important factors in deciding the curriculum standards is politics. And, politics in Texas is decidedly “red” (conservative). Although there are pockets of Democratic-voting areas, the state is predominately Republican; and, most of the Republicans identify themselves as “conservative,” rather than “moderate.” The Texas State Board of Education, which is elected, reflects this as well. Of the fifteen members, ten are Republicans and 5 are Democrats. Of the ten Republicans, 7 self-identify as “conservative;” however, they are joined by the other 3 Republicans on most votes.

The State Board of Education in May, 2010, adopted new standards for Social Studies that created a national controversy and created partisan division throughout the state. These standards also evoked reactions from political groups in other states. Shortly after passage of the new standards, a bill was introduced in the California legislature that would require the California Board of Education to look out for any of the changes required by Texas and to report them to the legislature and to the California Secretary of Education. (Strauss, 2010) And, in January, 2011, the Tennessee Tea Party issued a list of “demands” for changing textbooks which closely resembled those passed in Texas, specifically in the area of how textbooks portrayed the “minority experience in history.” (Tennessee Tea Party, 2011)

This paper will examine the actions of the Texas State Board of Education by placing them into an historical perspective and examining some of the standards that were adopted, as well as some of the criticism of those standards.

Historical Perspective
The nexus of politics and public education has always been present, but has also always been troublesome. Public schools are governed by, and financed by, public officials and, as such, are subject to the ebbs and flows of the political tides. To try to remove political influences from the public education system would almost require an entire reconfiguration of the way public schools currently appear in our social system.

The problem is not new. Noah Webster, in 1783, published what is widely considered to be the first American textbook, A Grammatical Institute of the English Language. Webster had several purposes in writing this book, including using the English language to unify the various languages and cultures in the newly developing nation. Webster did not view language as a divisive force in Europe, where other unifying forces, including religion, history, and the monarchy, were present. In the new American nation, however, Webster believed strongly that the unprecedented experiment at republicanism, with a heterogeneous, classless, society, needed a common language to be unified. (Commager, 1962)
Webster’s attempt at unification was not universally acclaimed. Those who put regional interests above national interests resisted his efforts at unification. Webster briefly acknowledges these efforts in the 1831 edition of his book:

The American Spelling Book, or first part of a Grammatical Institute of the English Language, when first published, encountered an opposition, which few new publications have sustained with success. It, however, maintained its ground, and its reputation has been gradually extended and established, until it has become the principal elementary book in the United States. In a great part of the northern States, it is the only book of its kind used; it is much used in the middle and southern States; and its annual sales indicate a large and increasing demand. (sic) (Commager, 1962)

Regional politics also provided opposition to Geography Made Easy, the first geography textbook in the United States, published in 1784. The author, Jedidiah Morse, was somewhat of a nationalist (all things American were superior to all things European), but also a strong regionalist. For example, his book describes American lakes as “[t]hose of second or third class in magnitude are of larger circuit than the greatest lakes in the eastern continent.” (Elson, 1964)

When comparing regions within the United States, however, Morse showed a distinctive favoritism to New England:

It may be in truth be said that in no part of the world are the people happier, better furnished with the necessaries and conveniences of life, or more independent than the farmers in New England. As the great body of the people are hardy, independent freeholders, their manners are as they ought to be, congenial to their employment, plain, simple, and unpolished. (Elson, 1964).

Morse had an altogether different view of the South. Claiming that wealthy southerners are “. . .much addicted to gaming, swearing, horse-racing, cock-fighting, and most kinds of dissipation,” Morse continually attacks the South throughout his geography. (Elson, 1964)

Morse’s attacks on the South, along with others by Northern textbook authors, was a major reason behind a move during the Civil War to establish the Educational Association of the Confederate States of America. At state meetings in 1861 and 1862, members of the North Carolina Educational Association vigorously protested what they felt were inaccurate and biased textbooks coming from the North. These protests continued and a major order of business at the Educational Association of the Confederate States of America convention in Columbia, South Carolina, in 1863, was the development of Southern textbooks. (Davis, 1964)

Immediately following World War I, many charges of attempting to subvert Americanism were leveled against history books. The new nationalism brought about by the war was exemplified by fears that American textbook authors were attempting to rewrite history so that the country would virtually become a colony of Great Britain. This was supposedly done by neglecting laudatory descriptions of American national heroes, even to the point of belittling some of them; failing to show a commitment on the part of the American people to their revolution; and, rewriting textbooks in a manner sympathetic to the British at the expense of Americanism.
Harold Rugg, a professor at Columbia University, saw other problems with the curriculum of the time. According to Winters, Rugg thought that the reform of social studies would come with curriculum change, rather than teacher training:

It appeared obvious to him that the curriculum as it existed in the 1920’s simply could not be expected to bear the load. “Not once in a century and a half of national history has the curriculum of the school caught up with the dynamic content of American life.” On the other hand, Rugg felt that the teachers certainly were not prepared for this major task and that the process of preparing them would be more difficult than rebuilding the curriculum. (Winters, 1974)

Believing as he did, Rugg set out to construct a social studies curriculum that would reflect the “dynamic content of American Life.” The result was the series, Man and His Changing Society. Boldly discussing such topics as labor-management problems, the distribution of wealth, and changes taking place in Russia, the series was an immediate success. In fact, the series was one of the few underwritten financially by school districts throughout the country. By 1922, over 2000 orders had been received, even though the materials had yet to be written. (Winters, 1974)

In a 10-year period (1929-1939), over 1.3 million copies of Rugg’s materials had been sold. In 1940, however, Rugg found his books and his loyalty under attack. Tensions abounded in pre-war American; anyone perceived as questioning American practices was not to be trusted. Attacks came from diverse groups, including the National Association of Manufacturers, the Advertising Federation of America, and the American Legion. (Winters, 1974)

Rugg answered these charges in a book, That Men May Understand. In this volume, he states:

I am not a Communist. I have never been a Communist. I have never been a member of or affiliated with the Communist Party, either directly or indirectly, or in any way whatsoever. I am not a Socialist. I have never been a Socialist. I have never been a member of or affiliated with the Socialist Party. Nor have I ever taken part in the work of the party. (Rugg, 1941)

Rugg also explained the conflict from his point of view:

The real animus of the merchants of conflict is that we do not teach in our books their personal brand of the American system of private enterprise. Their personal brand, I say. To them—to judge from their statements—the American system means competition without any regulation or control. (Rugg, 1941)

But, it was too late for explanations. The books were disappearing rapidly from the classrooms in the country. Once a major influence on American schools, Rugg dropped plans to develop materials for adult study and quietly faded away.

While Rugg’s books were prospering, Paul R. Hanna, also at Columbia University, suggested a series of curriculum materials entitled Building America. This series, the format of which resembled the “Weekly Reader,” found widely in American schools, was heavily pictured and dealt with one topic per issue. For example, the first issue, “Housing,” was distributed in early 1935. Accompanied by a teacher’s guide, “Housing” explored many facets of the housing
industry, including where people live; early housing in the country; the effects and causes of poor housing; and, a look at how houses were built and who built them. (Newman, 1961)

Then, in 1946, hostile major criticisms of the series began. Centered primarily in California, this debate not only involved the series, but also a group of individuals on the California State Board of Education. These board members were soon exonerated, however, leaving the full force of the conflict to fall on “Building America.” Fueled primarily by the California Sons of the American Revolution (SAR), the charges included undermining the principles of American government; portraying minorities as clamoring for civil rights; and, using extreme social philosophies to protect the rights of minorities. These attacks soon spread and attracted a larger base of support, including the Merchants and Manufacturers Association, a Senate investigating committee, and the Los Angeles Times. (Newman, 1961)

Because of these attacks, Building America died. As with the Rugg series, pressure groups managed to rid the schools of curriculum materials which did not fit their philosophies. Materials that had been popular for many years were suddenly attacked and destroyed.

In 1961, James Gabler, son of Mel and Norma Gabler, was given an assignment by his teachers to recite the Gettysburg Address. While looking it up in the encyclopedia, the young Gabler found two versions. One version, a photograph of the speech carved into the wall of the Lincoln memorial, included the words “under God,” while the printed version did not. Thus began a long campaign of textbook criticism that spread from Texas to other states. Although the Gabler’s initial criticisms were primarily focused on factual errors (for example, they found one textbook that said President Truman had dropped the atomic bomb on Korea, rather than Japan, and another text that stated that Napoleon had won at Waterloo), their critiques soon included issues of politics and religion. (Holley, 2007)

The Gablers made national headlines in 1973 when they complained about a fifth-grade history textbook devoting several pages to Marilyn Monroe, with only a few sentences devoted to George Washington, leading to Norma Gabler’s famous quote “We’re not quite ready for Marilyn Monroe to be the mother of our country.” (Sommer, 1984) With a watchful eye toward anyone, or anything, that did not agree with their beliefs (on Catholicism, for example, they stated “Roman Catholics do not teach the gospel, and are, therefore, not necessarily Christians,”) the Gabler’s work continued to be a thorn in the side of textbook publishers, both in Texas and in other states. (Martin, 1982)

Texas, 2010

Although not exhaustive, the above discussion provides some background to the curriculum guidelines debate that occurred in Texas in 2010. The preceding attempts at influencing curriculum have several things in common with the debate in Texas. First, they are all based on differing and competing political and educational philosophies. And, like many of the previously discussed debates, the discussions in Texas regarding the social studies standards were, to some degree, based on many of the same arguments, including interpretation of the Constitution, the role of minorities in the presentation of history, and the place of religion in the social studies curriculum.

Additionally, this debate broke some new ground. While curriculum has always reflected the philosophical and, to some extent, political beliefs of those who wrote it, official curriculum guidelines have traditionally avoided partisan politics. A major criticism of the new Texas standards is that they require inclusion of Republican Party leaders, while not requiring that
Democratic Party leaders also be included in the curriculum. Additionally, the new guidelines stand accused of explicitly endorsing political conservatism and banning political liberalism.

Had political bias been the only element, though, the matter would have only been debated heatedly in political blogs and on talk radio. For the debate to go beyond the pundit class and into the public, two elements essential to any good controversy, a good headline and a lead story, had to be present. In this case, those elements were supplied by a preliminary decision to “remove Thomas Jefferson” from the curriculum. In truth, such an effort was made, but only in regard to Jefferson’s influence on the Enlightenment. According to McKinley (2010), “Jefferson is not well-liked among conservatives on the board because he coined the term ‘separation between church and state.’” While Jefferson’s role in writing the Declaration of Independence was never in danger of being removed from textbooks, the reports in the media that “Jefferson is being removed” resulted in an immediate backlash from the public. In the end, Jefferson’s name was added back into the discussion of the Enlightenment. (Swaminathan, 2010)

Another good way to insure a controversy in American education is to enter religion into the discussion. This the conservative members of the Board of Education did with a relish. David Bradley, one of the Republican board members, states “I reject the notion by the left of a constitutional separation of church and state. I have $1000 for the charity of your choice if you can find it in the Constitution.” (Schneider, 2010) Of course, it is not difficult to find relevant writings from the Founding Fathers that seem to do just that. Jefferson’s use of the term “separation between church and state” is but one example. Perhaps an even better instance is from James Madison, the main author of the Constitution, who wrote in a letter in 1822:

Every new and successful example, therefore, of a perfect separation between the ecclesiastical and civil matters is of importance; and I have no doubt that every new example will succeed, as every past one has done, in showing that religion and Government will both exist in greater purity the less they are mixed together. (Schneider 2010)

According to Mary Helen Bertanga, one of the Democratic Party members on the board, the Republican members were talking “about the Founding Fathers like they were all Christians.” By a 10-5 straight party vote, the Board rejected a measure by Mavis Knight that would require the Texas social studies curriculum to “examine the reasons the Founding Fathers protected religious freedom in America by barring government from promoting or disfavoring any particular reason over all others.” As Binckes (2010) sees it, “Texas schools already have elective Bible history courses. The changes would put the Bible in Social Studies, to be included in history curriculum.”

A significant point of departure that separates this controversy from the earlier controversies is the rather blatant partisanship exhibited in the new standards. A new standard requires that students be taught that “conservatives were responsible” for Civil Rights legislation. Another section of the standards would require that students learn about leading conservative individuals and groups from the 1980’s and 1990’s. No such requirement regarding leading liberal individuals and groups was included in the standards. (Stutz, 2010) One of the conservative leaders on the board, Dr. Don McLeroy, summed up the board’s reasoning concisely:

The proposed changes have attracted national attention because they challenge the powerful ideology of the left and highlight the great political divide in our country. The left’s principles are diametrically opposed to our founding principles. The left believes in big, not
limited, government; they empower the state, not the individual; they focus on differences, not unity. (Knickerbocker, 2010)

Mavis Knight, a member of the Democratic minority on the board, had another view: “The board has made these standards political and had little academic discussion about what students need to learn. I am ashamed of what we have done to the students and teachers of this state.” (Stutz, 2010).

Some scholars are still scratching their heads over the new requirement that appears to be an attempt to rejuvenate the legacy of Joseph McCarthy, the senator from Wisconsin, who made claims about large numbers of communist sympathizers and spies within the U.S. government. McCarthy was censured in 1954. The new standards require that any mention of McCarthy in social studies textbooks be required to include a statement concerning “how the later release of the Venona papers confirmed suspicions of communist infiltration in the U.S. government.” (Schneider, 2010) However, according to Harvey Klehr, a professor at Emory University, “[v]irtually none of the people that McCarthy claimed or alleged were Soviet agents turn up in Venona...[t]he new information from Russian and American archives does not vindicate McCarthy. He remains a demagogue, whose wild charges actually made the fight against Communist subversion more difficult.” (Schneider, 2010)

Texas is a state with a large Hispanic population, which is growing faster all the time. (The 2010 census shows that the number of Hispanics in Texas grew at almost twice the rate of whites and blacks.) (Census, 2011) According to De Caisse, thousands of Mexicans fought on the side of the Anglos in the Texas Revolution, including several who died inside the walls at the Alamo. In a vote that caused the Democratic members of the Board to stage a walk-out, the Texas State Board of Education specifically rejected a proposed standard that would require mentioning that “Tejanos were among the fallen heros of the Alamo.” (Texas Textbook Massacre, 2010)

This action led Mary Helen Berlanga, a Democratic member of the board, to say “I’ve had it. This is it. I’m leaving for the evening. The board is pretending this is white America, Hispanics don’t exist. I’ve never seen a rewrite like this. This is a step backwards.” (Binckes, 2010) The vote also caused two civil rights organizations, the Texas NAACP and the Texas League of United Latin American Citizens, to request that the U.S. Department of Education conduct a federal review of the standards to determine if Texas was “failing to provide many of its minority students with equal educational opportunity.” (Graczyk, 2010)

According to Paulson (2010), there are also more subtle changes. For example, any references to the trading of slaves will now be referred to as “Atlantic Triangular Trade.” Any references to American imperialism will now be described as “expansionism.” And, all references to capitalism will now be replaced with “free enterprise.” (According to Terri Leo, a conservative board member, “Let’s face it, capitalism does have a negative connotation. You know, “capitalist pig.”) (McKinley, 2010)

What it Means

Obviously, there are strong political implications in the new curriculum standards. One stated intention of the majority on the State Board was to “correct” a perceived liberal bias in the existing standards. Conservative member Don McLeroy states “I think we’ve corrected the imbalance we’ve had in the past and now have our curriculum headed straight down the middle.” (Stutz, 2010) Schneider (2010) responds to this by stating that “history should be studied in its
exactness.” Many arguments have been made that the new social studies standards do not reflect the “exactness” of history, but rather an attempt to teach a political philosophy as fact. An argument could be made that exchanging one political philosophy for another political philosophy is not the best way to correct an imbalance.

While, legally, these changes only apply to Texas, the implications stretch far beyond the state’s borders. As the second largest state in the Union, Texas is one of the largest purchasers of textbooks. And, restrictive laws on purchasing textbooks in Texas also have an impact. For example, state funds can only be used to purchase textbooks on the “state adopted list,” and this list only contains five books per subject area or grade level. Having a textbook put on the state adopted list in Texas guarantees a publisher that they will make a profit on that book. For the most part, the major textbook publishers dominate the state adopted list. Although during the course of the debate, arguments were proffered that the technology currently exists to “individualize” textbooks on a state-by-state basis, the practicality of doing so is questionable. Having authors and editors create two, or more, varying versions of the same book, as well as required changes in printing, etc., could add significantly to the costs of producing multi-state editions. There is little chance that publishers would not compete for the Texas market; however, there is a strong possibility that the Texas editions would be the ones that ended getting marketed in other states, also.

Until now, a teacher would be the final arbiter of what would be taught. As educated individuals, with knowledge of their content area, teachers would be the likely source to protect against political bias in the curriculum. However, in a little noted Federal Appeals Court ruling (Evans-Marshall v. Board of Education of the Tipp City Exempted Village School District) decided in October of 2010, a 6th Circuit panel ruled unanimously to uphold the firing of a teacher who had taught material not included in the curriculum in her school. The court said that a school board may “regulate the content of what is or is not expressed, what is expressed in other words on its behalf.” (Walsh, 2010) Taken to its logical conclusion, a teacher in Texas could be fired for teaching about the slave trade, instead of the “Atlantic Triangular Trade,” as specified in the new Texas curriculum standards. Or, even worse, a teacher could be fired for calling America a democracy, instead of a constitutional republic.

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Moving from Knowledge to Understanding: 
*YouTube in the Classroom*

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Abstract
Educators in applied behavioral sciences struggle with helping their students grasp the meaning of constructs and make the jump from text to understanding. This is most relevant in online educational programs. The judicious use of YouTube in the actual or virtual classroom can help bring a lecture alive. This study looked at student perceptions of YouTube as a learning tool in the college classroom, as based on a pilot survey of 51 undergraduate students in sociology and 47 graduate students in social work. Students overwhelmingly (80%) reported that the use of YouTube in class grabbed their attention, connected and motivated them, made the material relevant, improved subsequent dialogue, and promoted understanding.

Moving from knowledge to understanding: YouTube in the classroom
“…with heroes and villains and mores and bylaws—YouTube is a fascinating place”
(Heffernan, 11/6/2008, NY Times)

Understanding is a student’s capacity to explain, interpret and apply a construct with perspective, empathy and self-knowledge (Wiggins and McTighe, 2005). A textbook can rarely accomplish this on its own, which creates a formidable challenge for educators. The Harvard Graduate School of Education conducted an extensive study on teaching understanding that found “instructions designed around authentic tasks helps students engaged in learning and developing an understanding of content” (Bremer and Morocco, 2003, p. 2). YouTube has the potential to bring authenticity to a lecture by providing brief and emotionally rich ‘real life’ experiences for students to view, in turn enriching classroom dialogue, debate and role-play.

Background
Chad Hurley, Steve Chen and Jawed Karim launched YouTube in 2005 as a social networking site where one could upload, share, view and comment on video clips (Yadav, 2006). By October 2006, Google had acquired it for 1.65 billion dollars in stock (Arrington, 2006). Today YouTube has more than 90 million visitors and is “far and away the most popular destination on the Internet for viewing video, most of which has been posted by users” (New York Times, 2009, B-1).

Jones and Rader (2008) discuss the advantages and pitfalls of using Instructional Technology (IT) in the classroom and conclude that having students view videos and answer questions is insufficient. Instead, Jones and Rader (2008) suggest, “students must interact intensively with educators, mentors and other students to become fully educated” (p. 72). Lebow and Wager (1994) argue that although students may “learn” in the classroom, they often fail to transfer knowledge to application when relevant in the field. This inadequate understanding, “occurs because classroom activities lack the contextual features of real-life problem solving situations” (p. 382). Lebow and Wager discerns between real-life problems and in-school problems. Real-life problems are typically ill formulated, embedded in meaningful context, and have depth, complexity and duration; while in contrast, in-school problems are usually well structured and lack context, depth and complexity. It is important to note that students perceive real-life problems as valid and meaningful. YouTube has the possibility of contributing to some of these elements: real life relevance, ill-defined problems, opportunity to examine tasks from different perspectives, opportunity to reflect; and allowing for competing solutions and diversity of outcomes. YouTube, in concert with field placement, could provide the input for an ‘authentic’ dialogue. An authentic-based discourse in the classroom allows educators to observe and shape students’ perceptions, attitudes and treatment planning of potential clients that are presented contextually.
Nonetheless, exposing students to human experiences via media is not in itself learning. How the YouTube is used in the classroom is critical. Wiggins and McTighe (2005) suggest that when designing a classroom presentation to promote understanding an educator should think backwards. Firstly, identify what understanding the instructor would like the student to take home, “desired results” (p. 18). Secondly, determine what facts would support the understanding, “acceptable evidence” (p. 18). Thirdly, plan a teaching strategy to accomplish the desired results, “learning experiences” (p. 18).

For example, if the goal is to educate social work students on the needs of the homelessness in New Orleans post Katrina, playing the YouTube video, New Orleans Interview with a Homeless Man under I-10, http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zLsl8FnGlnY&feature=related will encourage a dialogue that expands how professionals identify the needs of the homeless to include how the homeless perceive their own needs. The strength of the video is that it exposes the students to an actual homeless person in the context of post-Katrina. However if the educator has not identified a ‘desired result’, then the video could waste valuable class time. Another example is The American Widows Project Extended Trailer, http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VVqeGNAa8nk that illuminates peer support interventions. This video may not make much of an impression on students when played outside of a lesson plan, yet it is memorable as the impetus towards a conversation about the power and creativity of peer-support treatment strategies.

The strength of YouTube as a teaching tool for understanding has been suggested in a number of exploratory studies. The use of YouTube has been shown to: engage students (Burke and Snyder, 2008), add relevance (Oishi, 2009), stimulate right brain activity (Markham, 2008), increase the persuasiveness of the lecture (Simons, 1998), connect the student emotionally to the material (Schutz and Lanehart, 2002), as well as germinate dialogue and debate (Markham, 2008). How well YouTube actually contributes to learning understanding will require explanatory research design studies; however as in all research endeavors, the initial venture should be exploratory in design (Rubin and Babbie, 2009).

This survey study explores undergraduate sociology and graduate social work students’ experience of watching YouTube videos in social science college classes.

**Method**

**Design and Procedure**

In a pilot survey study, 99 college students (52 undergraduate sociology majors and 47 graduate social work majors) responded to a brief online survey about their experiences and attitudes toward the use of YouTube videos as a learning tool in the classroom. The survey and procedures were approved by the institution’s Committee for the Protection of Human Subjects. An Excel program was used to generate a random number for each name in a list of ~1700 undergraduate students majoring in sociology, sorted by that number, it selected 400 cases with the lowest randomly generated numbers. These 400 students and all 135 currently enrolled graduate social work students were invited to participate via an email that included the link to the web-based survey. About two months after the first invitation was sent via email, a reminder email was sent to recruit more participants. Of the invited students, 35% of the social work graduates (n=47) and 13% of the sociology undergraduates (n=51) completed it. A database collected the responses electronically. Names and email addresses were disconnected from the responses.
Participants

A total of 99 on-line surveys were collected. One survey was excluded from the initial data cleaning due to its missing 50% or more of the data. The data cleaning yielded a sample size of 98 for analysis. The 98 participants were all from a large urban commuter university; 47 were graduate students from the Department of Social Work and 51 were undergraduate students from the Department of Sociology in the 2008/2009 academic year.

Measurement

The brief survey, developed by researchers and based on existing YouTube studies, asked respondents about their familiarity and viewing history – both on and off campus – of online videos. The study explored how frequently they experienced YouTube as incorporated into a class lecture, how they perceived both the advantages and the disadvantages of YouTube in class, their age, and school status. Furthermore, students were provided an opportunity to write additional comments on their classroom experience of YouTube.

Results

A summary of characteristics for demographic variables is presented. In terms of student status, 49.1% (n=51) of the sample were undergraduate students in sociology and 45.2% (n=47) graduate students in social work. Since graduate students were compared to undergraduate students, age distribution was examined. 3% (n=3) of the total respondents were in their teens, 73.5% (n=72) were in their 20s, 13.3% (n=13) in their 30s, and 10.2% (n=10) in their 40s or 50s. Overall, more undergraduate students were in their 20s (82.4%, n=42) than were the graduate students (63.8%, n=30) and more graduate students were in their 30s or 40s (34%, n=16) than were the undergraduate students (13.7%, n=7) (t=2.57, p=.01).

Descriptive analysis indicated that the majority of the sample (87.8%, n=86) were familiar with YouTube. Most (82.7%, n=81) of the sample had watched a YouTube video outside of school three or more times in the last few months, and 64.2% (n=63) had watched a YouTube video in class at least three or more times over the same period.

Findings also supported positive student experiences of YouTube. Over 70% of the sample agreed that YouTube makes the material more interesting (81.6%, n=80); makes the material more relevant (86.7%, n=85); helps achieve understanding (83.7%, n=82) and allows for deeper understanding (88.8%, n=87). Students also felt that the use of YouTube helped put the ‘umph’ in a lecture (75.6%, n=74); helped students connect emotionally to the experience(s) of another (82.6%, n=81); and stimulated better dialogue/debate (83.7%, n=82). Overall, 91.8% (n=90) of the students agreed “somewhat to very much” that a well selected and well planned showing of a YouTube video in class promotes student learning.

One of the interesting findings is that undergraduate and graduate students reported significantly different experiences of YouTube on six items, and this summary is represented in Table 1. For example, 80.9% (n=38) of graduate students had seen a YouTube video played in class three times or more as compared to 49.0% (n=25) of undergraduate students (t=-4.64, p<.01). However, undergraduate students reported that they would be more likely to re-watch a YouTube video at another time (82.4%, n=42) than graduate students (59.5%, n=28) (t=-2.49, p=.02). When asked whether professors should use YouTube in class, 76.5% (n=36) of graduate students agreed or strongly agreed as compared to 45.1% (n=23) of undergraduate students. Furthermore, graduate students showed significantly more positive perception of YouTube. More graduate students viewed YouTube as a valuable learning tool (78.7% graduate students vs. 58.8% undergraduate students, t=-2.23, p=.03), and more graduate students perceived that YouTube made the material more interesting (89.3% graduate students vs. 74.5% undergraduate
students, t= -2.55 p=.01) and more genuine (74.5% graduate students vs. 50.9% undergraduate students, t= -2.34, p=.02).

**Discussion**

YouTube can engage students in a variety of ways. Client-generated material posted on a YouTube allows students to hear an authentic voice, observe a phenomenon, or ‘feel’ an experience without leaving the classroom. When selecting videos directly from YouTube’s search engine the following is recommend: (1) follow the Wiggins and McTighe (2005) suggestion to first decide on the take home message and then select a relevant strategy – such as a YouTube video – that best stimulates a dialogue or role-play; (2) find videos that are created by the target population or client system – family members – to get an authentic voice and to contextualize the issues; (3) present the YouTube material at the beginning of class to allow sufficient time to guide a rich discussion; and, (4) when appropriate, have fun with it.

The video is not the lesson—it is the trigger for a guided conversation. In other words, YouTube can start the dialogue by engaging the learner, and then add authenticity and complexity to the conversation. In addition YouTube can augment the dialogue with, broadening the perspective offered in textbooks or limited field placements; contextualizing clients and problems; or sharing the human experience, viscerally. YouTube has the potential to bring the classroom alive!

**Ethics and Pitfalls**

Like all new and powerful tools, YouTube needs to be used with caution. Similar to any information on the internet, there is little screening for accuracy, authenticity or appropriateness (Markham, 2008). Although, YouTube videos typically have not been vetted, it does provide an opportunity to discuss with students how to evaluate the value and veracity of internet material. Additionally, some of the YouTube material is copyrighted. Bosanquet (2008) warns “creations posted by the legal copyright holder (for example home videos) are amenable to use if the owner gives permission . . . But considerable care needs to be taken with copied material posted by someone other than its creator.” To help navigate these muddy waters, Hirtle (2009), Cornell University Library, posted a table of copyright terms, major legal rulings in an historical context on [http://www.copyright.cornell.edu/resources/publicdomain.cfm](http://www.copyright.cornell.edu/resources/publicdomain.cfm). Additionally, Hoon (2009) posted a Frequently Asked Questions, FAQ, regarding the use of copyrighted material in the classroom on [http://www.knowyourcopyrights.org/resourcesfac/faq/traditional.shtml](http://www.knowyourcopyrights.org/resourcesfac/faq/traditional.shtml).

**Summary**

Students perceive YouTube as a valuable learning tool. Overall, graduate students expressed more positive attitudes toward YouTube than undergraduates did. One graduate student wrote, “Sometimes it is hard for others to make a connection unless they can put a face on it. [YouTube] can make it more real and thus more relevant especially when presenting on a disorder.” Another graduate student contributed “the use of YouTube is an essential learning tool for students to grasp concepts and to stimulate dialogue.” Graduate students who are preparing to work with clients are uniquely appreciative of ‘real’ examples that they may encounter in field placements or expect to encounter in practice. In contrast, undergraduate students may not be as anxious about the application of knowledge. One undergraduate put it succinctly, “students tend to tune out when not visually stimulated or when they are simply lectured at”.

The results of this pilot study should be interpreted with caution. The study has a low response rate – 12% of the undergraduates and 35% of the graduates – and thus may not represent other students’ perceptions. Moreover, the survey was not standardized: the validity
and reliability were not tested. Since, YouTube is rapidly changing both technology and delivery of technology on college campuses, it is important that social scientists begin to assess how students perceive its usefulness. Future studies will need to address YouTube’s impact on learning, and applying intended learning outside the classroom. This study is to start the conversation between academics as they embark on an exploration of this “fascinating place”.

References
Table 1  
Characteristics of Demographic Variables (N=98) 

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demographic Variables</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>School Year</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undergraduate</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>49.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>45.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20s (born in 1980s)</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>73.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30s (born in 1970s)</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>13.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40s or 50s (born in 1960s or 1950s)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2  
Comparison of YouTube experience between undergraduate and graduate 

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Undergraduate</th>
<th>Graduate</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How often have you seen a YouTube played in class?</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-2 times</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>50.9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>19.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-4 times</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>35.3</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>34.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 times or more</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>13.7</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>46.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Would you be likely to re-watch it at another time?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>very much or somewhat</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>82.4</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>59.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>neutral or not at all</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>17.6</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>38.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professors should use YouTube in class.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>strongly agree or agree</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>45.1</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>76.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>strongly disagree or disagree</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YouTube is a valuable learning tool.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>strongly agree or agree</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>58.8</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>78.7</td>
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<td>strongly disagree or disagree</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YouTube makes the material more interesting.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>strongly agree or agree</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>74.5</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>89.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>strongly disagree or disagree</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YouTube makes the material seem more genuine (real).</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>strongly agree or agree</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>51.0</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>74.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>strongly disagree or disagree</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9.8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4.3</td>
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Learning by Doing: A Constructivist Approach to Assessment and Collaborative Action Research through the Lens of Professional Learning Communities

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ABSTRACT
The purpose of this study was to analyze how university MAT credential candidates approached assessment and collaborative research practices by participating in professional learning community activities. Candidates were enrolled in one of four different sections of EDU 603 Classroom Assessment and Research Practices over the course of one year. 44 candidates participated in the study and were enrolled in one or more disciplines within the MAT program. The study was largely descriptive in nature and looked at any descriptive and interpretive concepts emerging from the data. From different sources of data, five themes emerged: time, isolation, divergent views, collaboration, and culture. Even though candidate learning outcomes were achieved more effectively and efficiently, it cannot be concluded without further study that candidates were adequately prepared for collaborative action research or the professional learning communities model outside of the parameters of this particular study.

INTRODUCTION
An incredible amount of change is taking place in schools all over the United States. Schools are increasingly being managed like businesses. Without effective strategic planning principals will be involved in crisis management (Van der Linde, 2001). As schools engage in strategic planning, professional learning communities should be heavily depended on to help districts move from infancy to maturity in their quality of instructional and overall educational success. By introducing pre-service candidates in a university MAT credential program to professional learning communities, this may increase the success of professional learning communities and their impact on assessment and research practices.

The purpose of this study was to analyze how university MAT credential candidates approached assessment and research practices by participating in professional learning community activities. This study addressed the need to better prepare MAT credential candidates in the areas of assessment, action research, and professional learning communities. By utilizing local school districts involved action research and professional learning communities, candidates were able to achieve the highest excellence possible in educational achievement.

Professional learning communities (PLC) have over the last few years been almost a household name among educators of all levels. In fact, the term has been used so ubiquitously used that it is in danger of losing all meaning (DuFour, 2004). Each word of the phrase “professional learning community” has been chosen purposefully. Dufour (2004) stated that “a professional” is someone with expertise in a specialized field. He also said that “learning” suggests ongoing action and perpetual curiosity. In a professional learning community, educators create an environment that fosters mutual cooperation, emotional support, and personal growth as they work together to achieve what they cannot accomplish alone (Thomas, Gregg, & Niska, 2004).

Most professional learning communities followed the same protocol. Within each community the teacher as well as leaders were encouraged to pursue personal and professional development, integrating it as part of their regular job responsibilities. For example, the Sunnyside Unified School District implemented PLC time into the school week by creating a weekly early release day for students and utilizing that extra hour for mandated sessions for teachers to be in their specified professional learning community. Within professional learning communities, leaders incorporated professional development by asking teachers to discuss and share differing classroom applications.

DuFour, DuFour, and Eaker (2006) wrote about the difference between a PLC’s
collaborative culture and a team. The main difference is the interdependence that exists within a PLC. A PLC meeting was more than teachers getting together to share data—it was a group of individuals who met to achieve common goals for their grade level and for the school. Instead of sharing data, they responded to data, which required a sense of mutual accountability and changing classroom practices. Furthermore, building and maintaining a collaborative culture was one of the most difficult aspects of a PLC (DuFour, DuFour, & Eaker, 2006). There were events that one cannot always anticipate, such as illnesses, sudden family transfers, personnel issues and divorces that became toxic to the collaborative process. The collaboration often resulted in teachers jumping in to champion the school’s mission.

From those interactions, teachers enhanced their professional knowledge in a more informal approach to professional development. True professional learning communities follow different protocols to evoke dialogue between team members. In some professional development settings, teachers are asked to read books or educational articles as a catalyst to encourage reflection, inquiry, and sharing. Individual and team judgment is valued more than rules, policies, forms, and procedures. Most importantly, everyone is encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning and development and this is considered to be a norm of the school’s culture (Thompson, 2004).

These concepts of professional leaning communities may sound simple to implement, this is not always the case. Implementing professional learning communities is challenging. For starters, they require a deep cultural change within the school (Honawar, 2008). Furthermore, what would it take to persuade educators that successfully implementing professional learning community practices is the most promising path for sustained and substantive improvement of our schools and districts? Many experts and professional organizations in education endorse and advocate the development of PLCs.

There are cascades of strategies, theories, district initiatives, and many other ideas to improve student learning. Teacher collaboration is hailed as one of the most effective ways to improve student learning (Honawar, 2008). This can be debatable like most issues. According to Thomas, Gregg, and Niska (2004), many K-12 school are working to become professional learning communities in the hope that student learning will improve when adults commit themselves to talking collaboratively about teaching and learning and then take action that will improve student learning and achievement. Other leaders in the field, such as Schmoker (2004), believe “the most promising strategy for sustained, substantive school improvement is building the capacity of school personnel to function as a professional learning community” (pg. 424).

METHODS

Participants

Participants in the study were candidates in a university MAT credential program. At the time of the study, there were 44 candidates enrolled in 4 different sections of EDU 603 Classroom Assessment and Research Practices that spanned from Spring 2010 to Spring 2011. This was a required course in the MAT program. It was also concurrently taken with clinical practice 1 or 2, or while the candidate was in the university internship program. The participants included 28 European American candidates (21 females and seven males), 14 Latino/a candidates (10 females and four males) and two Indian-American male. All 44 participants held a four-year degree and were enrolled in the university’s MAT program. Of the 44 participants, 39 were not employed full time in a school district. The remaining five was part of the university internship program.
EDU 603 Classroom Assessment and Research Practices

Every candidate in the MAT program took EDU 603 Classroom Assessment and Research Practices, as this course was unique to Point Loma. The course description was as follows: This course analyzed assessment types, practices and instruments used to evaluate student academic achievement both formative and summative. Students applied the knowledge and skills to design differentiated instruction and assessments based on student profiles. Relationships between theory and practice provided the basis for reflection to encourage application of proven pedagogical strategies in the classroom. This course included intentional practice with regards to classroom management, active and equitable participation for English Learners and students with special needs, and lesson planning with effective instructional strategies based on on-going assessment to differentiate instruction for all learners. Furthermore, candidates used an acceptable educational research model to develop an action research study for evaluating one specific aspect of their practicum classroom experience, demonstrating the competence in electronic research tools, presented findings using appropriate, computer-based technology.

Data Collection

The purpose of this study was to analyze how university MAT credential candidates approached assessment and research practices by participating in professional learning community activities, as defined by DuFour, DuFour, and Eaker (2006). Qualitative methods were chosen because they allowed participants the freedom to choose their own words. In addition, qualitative methods allowed responses to open up new emergent topics not initially considered and can reveal complexities in the research data, as well as new approaches to teaching this concept in EDU 603.

For the study, two surveys were used. All 44 participants completed a background survey that addressed prior knowledge of assessment, action research, and PLCs. The purpose of the background survey was to collect descriptive data about the participant’s gender, race, credential program, as well as prior knowledge. Each participant a second survey that addressed what they learned in EDU 603 as it related to assessment, action research, and PLCs. It included 15 open-ended questions on the abovementioned topics and included opportunities for participants to write about both positive and negative experiences they had with action research and PLCs in EDU 603. These surveys were chosen as a source of data because they allowed the researcher to learn about things that cannot be directly observed, they allowed participants to reveal their perspectives, and they allowed for expanded answers.

Field-based (classroom) observations were undertaken to gain insights into the context behind the surveys and participant data. The researcher was the professor-of-record for EDU 603, which helped with observations. Being the professor-of-record allowed the researcher to use the observations to describe the collaborative culture and the extent of collaborative efforts of each team during the respective term. Teams (during each term) were selected based on his or her clinical practice placement and credential for which they are acquiring (e.g., single subject, multiple subject or special education). Participants attended class met one night per week for eight weeks during each term.

Analysis

This study was largely descriptive in nature. The researcher looked at any descriptive and interpretive concepts emerging from the data. The goal of data analysis in this study was to determine if the candidates... Beyond that, the researcher looked at the culture of
collaboration among the participants in the study as it related to the PLC activities in class. Data analysis took place simultaneously with data collection.

Answers from surveys and notes from observations were coded based *a priori* themes and also on themes that emerged during analysis. Specifically, the researcher looked to the data and its relation to the research question that served as the basis of this study. Time, isolation, divergent views, collaboration, and culture were identified as *a priori* themes. Candidates’ responses were organized into these five themes. Within each theme, similar responses were grouped together and enumerated for the purpose of summarizing the results. Similar responses that did not fit within the five *a priori* themes were assigned deductive codes. This allowed additional themes to emerge from the data. Conclusions were focused on the research question, based on similarities that occurred. When unrelated responses occurred, these results were also examined to determine what, if any, conclusions could be drawn.

**FINDINGS**

*Time*

As a researcher and the professor-of-record, I knew there were going to be several limitations involved with the study. One of the biggest limitations was time and the participants confirmed it. DuFour and Eaker (1998) confirmed that time needed to be purposefully built in to the day for collaboration. All participants in the study indicated that the PLC activities in EDU 603 met their expectations of collaboration (on a small scale), and a majority indicated that their PLC team did not have enough time to effectively collaborate as a team. However, the time together was focused, structured, and effective given the length of the class. It is interesting to note that two candidates said that if this assignment was not required for the class (but rather an optional assignment) that they would not have chosen to do it. One was quoted as saying, “I do not see the value in this and it seemed like a waste of my time.”

*Isolation*

DuFour and Eaker (1998) indicated that PLCs required teachers to develop a shared mission, vision, and goals and to commit to guiding principles that articulate beliefs of the team (or school). In this study, the PLC activities alleviated isolation by providing an opportunity in class for PLC teams to meet on a regular basis, promoting collaboration, and helping participants build relationships. In addition, the majority of participants reported that they felt PLCs provided a more supportive environment for teachers and was helpful and better prepared for the real thing when they acquire a teaching position.

*Divergent views*

DuFour and Eaker (1998) indicated that PLCs established norms by which they would operate, goals that they wish to accomplish, ways to assess the effectiveness of their PLC, and a process by which to resolve conflicts that occur. In addition, participants were willing to engage in discussions when conflict arose and must be able to come to a shared consensus.

*Collaboration*

Data revealed that the PLC activities implemented in class developed a process to effectively resolve conflict through collaboration. In addition, the majority of the participants reported their PLCs had come to a consensus to identify essential learning outcomes, standards to assess learning, SMART goals and norms, and to develop common, formative assessments.

*Culture*

In class, the overarching hypothesis was that if time, the isolated nature of the EDU 603, and divergent points of view were addressed, then culture would improve. Through student surveys and observations, data indicated that collaboration among PLC teams did not function in
the most ideal ways. Given the nature of the class and timeframe in which the class was held, it would be expected that the PLC team collaboration be hindered.

Other themes emerged from the data through the process of coding. The new themes were established when common terms were mentioned by more than a third of the respective class. They were then identified as emergent themes. These included benefits, hindrances, and value. The data represented by these three themes did not fit well with the research question but did, however, reflect the opinions of participants in this study. It provided useful information as to how to improve the course.

DISCUSSION

During class sessions, one issue that kept resurfacing (through interviews and observations) was that time must be kept sacred. Individuals in each of the PLC teams valued the collaborative time in class. Many agreed time needed to be kept sacred because it was the time when everyone on the PLC had committed to come together to work toward the shared goals of the team (within EDU 603). The nature of time needed to be communicated to all members of the team as well as the professor of the course. It allowed everyone to know what was to occur during collaboration time including reviewing of the team norms (each class session). Teams were required to adhere to the objectives of the meeting, outlined by the professor. Team members made valuable use of the time allotted and a weekly artifact and reflective writing prompt was due at the end of each PLC collaborative class session.

Another recommendation pertained to the types of team members who did not want to fully participate or who were absent on a consistent basis. This was a recurring concern for some team members. Team members commented that members who did not fully participate or were absent needed some sort of accountability. Some recommended a self- and peer-evaluation at the end of the study. This was not a good suggestion but it also modeled a form of assessment as discussed in EDU 603. Furthermore, members felt too much was “wasted” bringing absent team members up-to-speed (as a result of the absence).

Ultimately, the need for further discussion and collaboration is required. Topics in each meeting needed to be purposeful, meaningful, and productive. Team members suggested that more time be built into the class for that collaborative discussion; however, given the short timeframe of the class, it was unlikely. Therefore, team members took it upon themselves to meet outside of the given class time. This increased the amount of planned meeting time and made available a deeper discussion about planning, instructional strategies, and assessment.

Finally, in the end, the team members wished they had shared planning time within the school day at each other’s school as to make an immediate impact on student learning. A culture began to form and increased the amount of opportunities each team member had to make contributions to the team for greater good of the students. Ultimately, team members made the best of what was given and if the class went beyond the 8 weeks, the culture of each team and the class as a whole would have strengthened.

Conclusions

Based on the data collected in this study there have been improvements to the collaborative culture of EDU 603. In the past, candidates did not conduct any type of study, let alone a collaborative action research study. Furthermore, the PLC concept was not introduced in EDU 603 prior to the Spring 2010 semester. Based on observations and candidate interview data, the collaborative culture of the class increased as a result of the implementation of the PLC concept and the collaborative action research study. Collaboration between team members was more consistent as this time was built into each class session. Teams had norms in place to
structure “meeting times,” had goals and assignments from the instructor to accomplish during those “meetings,” shared data from the previous week’s collection, and discussed similarities and differences as a result.

Over the course of the four terms of data collection, the course has achieved its learning outcomes more effectively and efficiently as a result of the implementation of these processes. However, one cannot conclude that candidates were truly prepared in the field as a direct result of this class. One can only assume candidates were more prepared, but unless further studies were conducted outside of the class the true effectiveness of this process cannot be determined. It was found, however, to make a difference in the context of this study, and revealed the potential for continued improvement and preparation of candidates in the MAT credential program as it related to action research and PLCs. Overall, school districts felt that PLNU candidates were more prepared as a result of this information presented, which was encouraging and could lead to further study once these candidates become employed.

REFERENCES

The Success of an Applied Technology Grant in Mechatronics

Martin Milkman
Murray State University
This paper discusses a grant to Gateway Community and Technical College from the National Science Foundation. This type of grant is specifically designed to assist technical education in Science, Math, and Engineering education. This particular grant was to develop, teach, and sustain a program for Mechatronics Technicians.

Gateway Community and Technical College is located in Northern Kentucky and draws students from both the Northern Kentucky and Southern Ohio area. In this area many industries use machine tools and a number of these companies use mechatronics. Therefore one of the highlights of this grant was industry involvement.

The grant was governed by a Project Implantation and Evaluation (PIE) Team. The grant was coordinated by Dr. Anthony Clarke. I served as the evaluator for the grant. A list of all project participants including those who serve on the PIE Team is included in the Table at the back of the article.

Obstacles

Once the grant was awarded to Gateway Community and Technical College there were many obstacles. The first problem was that many members of the technical faculty were not supportive of the grant. They felt that the grant would reduce enrollment in their programs and therefore they would be forced to teach classes they were not familiar with. Over time at least for some of the faculty these fears were reduced or eliminated.

The second major obstacle was that it was difficult to find an instructor for the mechatronics classes. Eventually Antonio Tramber was hired but this took longer than expected. However it was worth the weight. Mr. Tramber seems to be a very good teacher. While his students think that he is hard, they think that he is an excellent teacher.

The last major obstacle is due to the governance system of the Kentucky Community and Technical College System. Any new proposal first has to get the approval of the school itself. In this case, Gateway Community and Technical College must give its approval. Then it must be also approved by the Kentucky Community and Technical College System.

Curriculum and Students

One of the major tasks of the project was the development of a six credit hour course in Mechatronics. The curriculum itself included both theory (4 Hours) and hands on experiences with the Siemens Mechatronics trainer (2 Hours).

There are broadly speaking three types of students enrolled in the program. The first type of student is in an apprenticeship program. These students work during the day and then come to school at night. There are other students who are just enrolled in the school. Some of these students may have jobs, but they are not presently enrolled as apprenticeship programs. However some of these students are interviewing for apprenticeship positions as they become available. The third set of students is high seniors who are interested in technology. Some of these students are regular high schools students and others attend an Area Technology Center. All of the schools and the companies that have apprenticeship programs are also listed in the table at the end of this paper.

The high school students presented a particular challenge because they could not complete the course in one term. Therefore a new option was put into place where a two term course was developed. The course was divided into two courses Mechatronics A and Mechatronics B. Each course would have 60 contact hours and would be worth 3 credit hours. High school students took these classes on a dual credit basis. This means that the students received both high school credit and credit at Gateway Community and Technical College.
The technical side of community and technical colleges in Kentucky in addition to awarding Associates degrees also awards certificates. All students who complete the Mechatronics curriculum receive a certificate. These certificates seem by themselves to be valuable in helping to get a job or be promoted. So some students just enroll in a certificate program.

Other students get an associate degree. Many of the associate degree programs are transferable to colleges that offer 4 year degree programs. The Mechatronics program is a requirement in the Associate of Applied Science in Manufacturing Engineering Technology, and an elective in three other degree programs.

**Enrollment**

All of the following is lifted directly from the draft of the final report written by Dr. Anthony Clark. “Since its implementation as a pilot course and certificate in fall 2009, 46 students will have earned the certificate by May 2011. Fourteen early college students completed the “A” course in spring 2010 and ten of those students completed the certificate in summer 2010. Another 17 Early College students completed the “A” course in fall 2010 and 14 of those students will complete the “B” course and earn their certificate in May 2011. In addition, 13 college students completed the “A” course in fall 2010 and 11 of those student completed the “B” course in the spring 2010 semester and earned their certificate. In the following 2010-11 academic year, seven regular college students completed the “A” course in fall 2010 and five of those students will complete the “B” course in spring 2011 and earn their certificate. In addition, six incumbent workers from a local employer completed the certificate in November 2009.

As noted above, the Mechatronics students are spread across three key student populations. The first student population served by the certificate was incumbent workers. The certificate was delivered to Hahn Automation, a local industry partner in Hebron, Kentucky. Six assembly technicians completed the course. Feedback was positive about the instructor and the course. Some participants noted that although they knew how to do much of the hands-on applications, they had no idea about the theory behind the work. They found this new knowledge to be particularly useful.

Second, 14 students from J.D. Patton Area Technology Center (ATC) enrolled in Fundamentals of Mechatronics “A” in January 2010. Gateway’s service area contains four area technology centers (ATCs) which are local secondary schools that focus on technical career education. The J.D. Patton ATC students enrolled at the college and provided their own transportation to the Gateway Campus in Florence, Kentucky for two afternoons each week. The course was received very well. No one missed class, except for a few excused absences. All of the students met the learning objectives and passed the class. Given the level of interest among the students to continue into with the “B” course and receive the certificate, the “B” course was offered to ten students. Student came for four afternoons a week during late May and June and all ten students earned their Fundamentals of Mechatronics certificate.

For the 2010-11 academic year, the Mechatronics Early College program was expanded to include three other secondary schools – C.E. McCormick Area Technology Center, Grant County Schools and Walton-Verona Independent School District. At the beginning of the academic year, 21 students enrolled in two Mechatronics “A” courses: 14 students from J.D. Patton ATC, three students from C.E. McCormick ATC, one student from Grant County and three students from Walton-Verona. During the fall semester one student was dropped from the class for an unexcused absence. Another four students chose not to pursue the “B” course due to
other extracurricular activities or being accepted to a four-year college. In addition, another two students were withheld from the “B” class by their school principal due to unacceptable class conduct. The remaining 14 students are all expected to complete the “B” course in spring 2011 and earn their certificate.

Finally the mechatronics course is being offered to current students, primarily in the Manufacturing Engineering Technology degree program. Twenty students have taken the “A” course. Eleven have already earned their certificate and another five are expected to complete the “B” course and earn their certificate in spring 2011. Future enrollment is expected to be steady as the course is a required course for the manufacturing engineering technology degree and an elective course in the electrical technology, industrial maintenance and machine tool technology programs.”

**Sustainability**

Now that the grant period is ending, one key is that Gateway Community and Technical College sustain the grant. They will hire Antonio Trambber to be a full-time employee of Gateway Community and Technical College. Under the NSF grant half of his salary was paid from the grant. The college has also applied for a follow-up grant from NSF. The new grant would extend the high school program to some of the rural area in the college’s service area.

**Participants**

1. C. E. McCormick Are Technology Center (Alexandria, KY)
   a. Partnered with Gateway CTC and the NSF ATE project to coordinate an early college initiative for high schools students to enroll in Fundamentals of Mechatronics certificate and earn college credit while in high school
2. Eagle Manufacturing (Florence, Kentucky)
   a. Has a representative serve on the Project Implementation and Evaluation Team
   b. Has incorporated mechatronics into their apprenticeship program
3. Grant County Schools (Dry Ridge, Kentucky)
   a. Partnered with Gateway CTC and the NSF ATE project to coordinate an early college initiative for high schools students to enroll in Fundamentals of Mechatronics certificate and earn college credit while in high school
4. Hahn Automation (Hebron, Kentucky)
   a. Sent six technicians to complete the Fundamentals of Mechatronics certificate
5. J.D. Patton Area Technology Center (Edgewood, Kentucky)
   a. Partnered with Gateway CTC and the NSF ATE project to coordinate an early college initiative for high schools students to enroll in Fundamentals of Mechatronics certificate and earn college credit while in high school
6. Johnson Controls (Florence, Kentucky)
   a. Has a representative serve on the Project Implementation and Evaluation Team
   b. Participated in Advanced Manufacturing Careers Pathway Expo
7. MAG (Hebron, Kentucky)
   a. Has a representative serve on the Project Implementation and Evaluation Team
   b. Has incorporated mechatronics into their apprenticeship program
   c. Participated in Advanced Manufacturing Careers Pathway Expo
8. Mazak Corporation (Florence, Kentucky)
   a. Has a representative serve on the Project Implementation and Evaluation Team
   b. Participated in Advanced Manufacturing Careers Pathway Expo
9. Schwan’s Global Supply Chain (Florence, Kentucky)
   a. Has a representative serve on the Project Implementation and Evaluation Team
   b. Participated in Advanced Manufacturing Careers Pathway Expo
10. Toyota Motor Manufacturing, N.A. (Erlanger, Kentucky)
    a. Has a representative serve on the Project Implementation and Evaluation Team
11. Walton-Verona Independent School District (Walton, Kentucky)
    a. Partnered with Gateway CTC and the NSF ATE project to coordinate an early college initiative for high schools students to enroll in Fundamentals of Mechatronics certificate and earn college credit while in high school
A Field Study of Nine Induction Procedures and their Impact on Positive and Negative Cognitions

Edward J. Murray
Carol A. Puthoff- Murray
Joseph Detnerski
Kent State University at Ashtabula
Positive and negative thoughts have played an important role in healthy and unhealthy behaviors (Beck, 1967 and Ellis 1973). Beck and Ellis have demonstrated that thoughts influenced emotions and behaviors. The purpose of therapy was to change negative thoughts to positive thoughts that transformed cognitions, emotions, physiology and behaviors (Beck 1967, 1976, 1979 and 1985 and Ellis 1973, 1975 and 1977.)

Based on the research of Polivy (1981), that induced and role played emotional states, which produced significant results, Murray, Murray and Murray (2008) argued in a theoretical article that inductions and role playing of depression, anxiety, aggression and assertiveness were possible. Murray, et. al. (2008) expanded the argument by using the research of Schacter, (1964), Sapolsky, (1994) and Seligman (1990). Incites from these various authors suggested that emotional role playing and emotional inductions engaged the totality of the person. Emotional inductions and emotional role playing impacted cognitions, because the process began at a cognitive level. However, the cognitive engagement produced changes in the Limbic System that carried over into physiological responses. Murray, Murray and Murray (2008) stated, “The role playing behaviors flowed out from the thoughts, physical arousal and the emotional correlates.”

In discussing Rational-Emotive Therapy, Ellis (1973) pointed out that beliefs and cognitions had an emotionalized output which produced experiences of anxiousness, worthlessness and depression. He elaborated that the therapist started intervention with the recognition of the emotions but quickly attacked the irrational beliefs and cognitions. Through a change in cognitions from illogical thoughts to healthy positive cognitions, the individual was able to create a new positive emotional climate and generate productive thoughts. Ellis (1977) demonstrated that the emotional and physiological state of anger resulted in multiple negative thoughts. These negative cognitions were directed toward other people and were combined with verbal blaming and a physical condition of hostility.

Sapolsky (1994), contributed significant physiological research that indicated that high levels of aggression and prolonged aggression correlated with serious heart disease. These clinical and research findings strongly suggested that negative cognitions were related to stress and physiological decline.

In analyzing the condition of depression, Beck (1997) described the outcomes from negative and self-defeating thinking. These thoughts generated negative automatic feelings and subsequently unhealthy behaviors. In further descriptions, Beck (1997), showed clinically, that dysfunctional negative thoughts impacted the emotions and resulted in feelings of sadness, loneliness and anxiousness. The goal of therapy was to change the negative cognitions and produce an environment of positive thoughts, emotions and behaviors.

Seligman (1990), clearly pointed out the negative consequences that resulted from adversity which produced automatic negative thoughts. These negative thoughts stimulated negative feelings and resulted in the production of negative behaviors outcomes. Seligman (1975 & 1990) strongly argued that the emotions, cognitions, physiological responses and behaviors were interconnected. Unhealthy patterns in one domain produced negative consequences in the other systems and healthy responses generated a climate for positive growth, development and cognitions. In his emphasis on Optimism, he expected the individual to change his negative thoughts to more positive visions of life. Seligman (1990) demanded that the individual attack and challenge the negative automatic thoughts and negative belief systems.

Building upon the clinical therapeutic and theoretical insights, Murray, Murray and Murray (2009) performed two laboratory studies that explored the impact of induced role playing
e.g., depression, anxiety, anger and assertiveness. The study examined the influence of these
manipulations on negative or positive thoughts and anxiety. In the first experiment, the role
played inductions were crossed with the manipulative condition of classical music from Mozart
and the dependent variable was positive and negative thinking. In the second experiment, the
four manipulations were contrasted with a manipulation of silence (sitting alone) and an aversive
frustrating role playing condition. The second study used the Welch Anxiety Scale as the
dependent variable.

The first experiment showed significant levels of negative thinking in the depressed and
aggressive conditions. However, males in the in the assertive condition and males and females
in the Classical Music condition expressed significant levels of positive thoughts. The second
experiment produced findings that indicated role playing an aversive frustrating experience
significantly reduced anxiety, while sitting alone in silence and induced anxiety significantly
increased anxiety.

Murray, Murray and Murray (2009) found with the same design that role playing an
aversive frustrating experience and aggression resulted in significantly decreased depression on
the Subjective Depression Scale from the MMPI. On the other hand, sitting alone silently and
induced anxiety significantly increased depression. Rotter’s Locus of Control Scale was the
other dependent variable. An aversive role playing condition and induced assertiveness produced a pattern of an internal
Locus of control, while induced anxiety and induced depression reflected greater external locus
of control (Murray, Murray & Murray, 2009).

These various experimental studies generated many consistent findings. The conditions
of sitting alone in silence and induced anxiety increased anxiety and depression. Induced anxiety
and induced depression showed a pattern of increased External Locus of Control. Finally,
induced depression and induced aggression produced a significant number of negative thoughts.

In contrast to these unhealthy outcomes, role playing an aversive frustrating experience
reduced anxiety and depression. Induced aggression also significantly lowered the response of
depression. The role playing of an aversive frustrating experience and induced assertiveness
created an atmosphere that significantly increased the likelihood of an Internal Locus of Control. A
significant level of positive thoughts, were generated by males in the induced assertive
condition and males and females in the classical music condition. All these results supported

Based upon the previous laboratory experimental research, Puthoff-Murray, Murray and
Detnersky, (2010), designed a field experiment to test out the findings from prior research. In
this new design, they realized that role playing an aversive frustrating situation was not possible,
because this condition applied to an academic environment in which students lost money and
academic credits. The new study kept the conditions of induced depression, anxiety, aggression,
and assertiveness and sitting alone in silence. The Mozart classical music condition was also
included in the manipulations. Sachs (2008) showed the importance of music for healthy
behaviors and life enjoyment. With this clinical data supporting the importance of music, the
new field experiment examined the impact of other musical forms on automatic thoughts. The
expanded musical conditions were Wagner classical music, Rap and Heavy Metal.

The findings for 30 something subjects found that subjects in the induced anxiety
condition, sitting alone in silence and the induced anger condition produced significant numbers
of negative automatic thoughts, (Puthoff-Murray, Murray and Detnersky, 2010). The significant
amount of negative thinking also applied to females in the Rap and Heavy Metal Conditions. In
contrast, Wagner, Mozart and induced assertiveness produced a significant level of positive automatic thoughts. The findings pertaining to positive automatic thoughts also applied to males in the heavy metal condition (Puthoff-Murray, Murray and Detnerski 2010). This last finding showed a cohort effect.

This field experiment added supporting evidence to the previous experimental findings in that classical music Wagner and Mozart and induced assertiveness increased positive automatic thoughts. The results also showed that induced anxiety, induced aggression and sitting alone in silence increased the probability of negative thoughts. The findings pertaining to induced anxiety and sitting alone in silence helped to confirm the unhealthy impact of these conditions that was found in previous experimental research. Another supporting ripple was the finding that induced aggression had negative outcomes.

The present field study will examine 18 to 30 year olds to determine if a younger age group responds with similar patterns. Will these manipulations show supportive data with a younger group?

**METHOD**

Five researchers collected data on subjects between the ages of 18 and 30 years of age. Each researcher was to manipulate 18 females and 18 males. The subjects were 88 females and 83 males from the County of Ashtabula. Each manipulated condition had 17 to 22 subjects. Prior to the manipulations, the conditions were randomly assigned for this field study. The subjects in the study had an average age of 22.38 years and the various manipulated groups ranged in age from 20 years to 24 years.

The five researchers, who were from an undergraduate research design course, collected data on 171 subjects. The randomly assigned manipulations were all prerecorded. A female voice performed the seven minute inductions and the silence manipulation was blank for seven minutes. Each musical manipulation was recorded for seven minutes. Some researchers failed to collect data for some subjects in each of the following conditions: female assertiveness, female silence, female Mozart, male depression, male anxiety, male Heavy Metal and male anger.

A 9 x 2 factorial design was used. The manipulations consisted of the four induced attitudes and the condition of silence (sitting alone for seven minutes). The music conditions were Mozart, Wagner, Heavy Metal and Rap. All inductions were performed within a seven minute time period.

**Music Selection for Conditions CD**

Track 2: Classical  
Artist: Wagner  
Album: Overtures & Highlights  
Song: Die Meistersinger von Nurnberg – Overture

Track 4: Classical  
Artist: Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart  
Album: The Jupiter Symphony Violin Concerto  
Song: Adagio – Violin Concerto No. 3 G-Major
The manipulated and induced attitudes were anxiety, depression, assertiveness and anger. Anxiety was induced through seven statements from Beck’s (1976) checklist, which through factor analysis was the best predictor of anxiety. Depression was induced through seven statements from Beck’s checklist, which through factor analysis was the best predictors of depression. Anger was induced through seven statements from Ellis’s (1977) *Anger: How to Live With It*. Assertiveness was induced through seven statements from Lang and Jukerbowksi (1976) *Responsible Assertive Behaviors*.

The induction procedure was read three times for seven minutes by a female coach, while the subject concentrated on the seven attitude statements. Then the coach said, “as part of our study, you are asked to seriously role play your cognition experiences. You are asked to role-play not a character but an emotion reflected in some cognitive attitudes. The emotions expressed by these attitudes are the following conditions.” At this time the appropriate cognitions are read to the subject. These emotions are listed below under depression, anxiety, anger, and assertiveness. The female coach was prerecorded to create a consistent manipulation.

The coach continued to read, “to help put you in touch with that emotion, we will do an exercise. Sit back, close your eyes and relax. Remember a time when you were feeling (appropriate cognitions will again be read to the subject.) “Picture a time in your mind when that emotion was the strongest. Remember your surroundings. Were you inside or outside? (If outside, see * below.) Remember the specifics of your surroundings. If you were inside, remember the room; the furniture; the walls. Did the walls have wallpaper or paint? Can you remember the pattern or color? Were you standing or sitting? Picture the people that were with you. Focus on one of your senses. Do you remember any specific smells, sounds, sights, or something associated with touch at the time you were (appropriate cognitions will be repeated)?”

*“If you were outside, picture your surroundings. Were you with any people? Remember who was with you. Remember specific things. Standing or sitting. Focus on one of your senses that you associate with the event.”*

The following statements are the cognitions for the individual emotions.

**INDUCTION PROCEDURES**

The seven-minute induction procedure was read three times by the female coach.

**Depression**
I’m worthless.
I’m not worthy of other people’s attention or affection.
I’ll never be as good as other people are.
I’m a social failure.
I don’t deserve to be loved.
People don’t respect me anymore.
I will never overcome my problems. (Beck 1987)

**Anxiety**
What if I get sick and become an invalid?
I’m going to be injured.
What if no one reached me in time to help?
I might be trapped.
I am not a healthy person.
I’m going to have an accident.
There’s something very wrong with me. (Beck, 1987)

**Anger**
How awful for anyone to have treated me so unfairly.
I can’t stand anyone treating me in such an irresponsible and unjust manner.
You should not, must not behave that way toward me.
Nothing ever works out the way I want it to.
Life is always unfair to me – as it shouldn’t be.
Other people must treat everyone, but especially me, in a fair and considerate manner.
Things must go the way I would like them to go because I need what I want.
Life is awful, horrible and terrible when I don’t get what I want. (Ellis, 1977)

**Assertiveness**
Calm, just continue to relax, as long as I keep cool, I’m in control.
Just roll with the punches.
Don’t get bent out of shape.
You don’t need to prove yourself.
There is no point in getting mad.
Don’t make more out of this than you have to.
I’m not going to let him get to me.

The dependent variable was the measurement of positive/neutral and negative thoughts. After the subjects experienced one of the nine manipulations, they were asked to write down five automatic thoughts. Many subjects did not write down five automatic responses. It was hypothesized that the manipulations had the potential to produce differential responses.

**FINDINGS**
This analysis examined the nine conditions crossed with sex of subject to determine main effects and potential interaction effects. The Chi Square for negative thoughts was 87, df 8, p .01. These data were significant beyond the probability level. These data showed main effects for anxiety, depression and anger in that these conditions have multiple and significant negative thoughts and no sexual differences. For females, the Silence Condition (sitting alone) and the Heavy Metal condition produced a significant number of negative thoughts. The musical conditions of Wagner and Mozart displayed few negative thought and no sexual differences. For
males in the Assertive and Heavy Metal conditions, they expressed very few negative thoughts. Negative thoughts were few for females in the Rap condition.

The positive and neutral thoughts had a Chi Square of 89, df 8 and were significant beyond the, v 01 level. When positive and neutral thoughts were examined, the findings indicated a main effect for classical music in that the Wagner and Mozart conditions produced high levels of positive thoughts with no sexual difference. In contrast, males in the Assertive condition and females in the Rap condition generated a high degree of positive thinking. The conditions of Anxiety, Depression and Anger showed very few positive and neutral thoughts and these data indicated no sexual differences. In the Silence Condition (sitting alone), females expressed few positive or neutral thoughts. The data, that reported the thoughts patterns, are found in Table 1 along with sample size and average age of subjects.

CONCLUSIONS

The research results add support for the models of Ellis (1973, 1975 and 1997), Seligman (1975 and 1990) and Beck (1975, 1979 and 1985.) The present data show that induced anxiety, depression and anger generate multiple negative thoughts for males and females. These findings also support the Murray et al., (2008, 2009 and 2010) research and theoretical hypotheses. The previous Murray et al., research are also supported in that the state of silence (sitting alone) has a negative outcome for females.

The research findings indicate that classical music produces high levels of positive and neutral thoughts for males and females. These data support Sachs’ (2008) observations that classical music generates healthy responses. These data also provide evidence that different types of music have significantly difference impacts on people, Sachs (2008). The present findings adds support to the research of Puthoff-Murray, Murray and Detnerski (2010) that heavy metal music has a different outcome in males and females. Again, the assertive condition for males produces significant positive and neutral thoughts and these data support previous Murray et al (2009 and 2010) research.

An unique finding discovers that female have significant positive thoughts in response to the Rap condition. Obviously, this result represented a specific cohort effect.

This present field study shows that the data in this field study is very similar to the results found by Puthoff-Murray, Murray and Detnerski (2010). In other words, the responses for the subjects between the ages of 35 to 50 are similar to the responses made by 18 to 30 year olds. The present data shows that these two cohort groups make similar responses to controlled stimuli. The two field studies have substantially the same results.

REFERENCES


### TABLE 1

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A CONTINUUM FOR MULTICULTURAL SENSITIVITY

SUMEETA PATNAIK
MARSHALL UNIVERSITY

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MOREHEAD STATE UNIVERSITY
A CONTINUUM FOR MULTICULTURAL SENSITIVITY

A Shift in Emphasis:

The exploration of multicultural sensitivity began in the counseling field where Sue, Arrendondo and McDavis (1992 as quoted in Estrada 2005) defined sensitivity as a “crucial area for the provision of multiculturally competent counseling services” (p. 14). Gorski (2000 as quoted in Moore, Madison-Colmore and Collins 2005) notes that the goal of multicultural sensitivity is a three-part path that begins with the transformation of self, then a transformation of schools and schooling and finally, a transformation of society (p. 66).

Multiculturalism has had to shift its emphasis from addressing cultural deficits in educator’s thinking to addressing levels of multicultural sensitivity in educators’ thinking which impacts how they address cultural diversity issues in their classrooms and interact with students and minority faculty members. Arizaga, Bauman, Waldo and Castellanos (2005) argues that educators should adopt a more multiculturally sensitive approach as it will allow educators “to overcome prejudice at the cognitive level, experience diversity at the affective level and increase their ability to demonstrate multicultural competence at the behavioral level” (p. 199).

The Impact of Faculty:

Clarke (2009) notes that “faculty have a huge impact on college student development” and further asserts that “this impact is greatest felt on college students of diverse groups.” Bennett (1999) notes that college students must go through intercultural stages of development in order to gain multicultural sensitivity to other students, faculty and co-workers. Clarke (2009) argues that students from minority racial and ethnic backgrounds, gender, and sexual orientation often do not develop a strong identity in college because these students do not receive support from their professors or college. As such, the literature states that for faculty to help students of diverse groups to form a strong identity while in college, then the faculty and college must recognize the role of privilege and oppression in education, clarify the concepts of multiculturalism, organize multicultural change, and commit to diversity.

Understanding how educators view multiculturalism is essential to understanding how much multicultural sensitivity and responsivity these educators possess toward the cultural diversity of their students. Bennett (1993) argued that individuals need to understand that “sameness does not equal fairness.” Welburn further argues that college curriculum often “contradict the multicultural characteristic of society, its history, and present condition in the United States” (p. 158). Soloman notes that multiculturalism is often a divisive issue on college campuses with traditional thinkers arguing that multiculturalism brings “ethnic and cultural divisiveness that destroys social cohesion on campus” while multiculturalists “perceive western cultural traditions as fundamentally Eurocentric with other cultural norms occupying a marginal position” (p. 67).

Blindness to One’s Own Assumptions:

Despite the commitment to social justice programs from colleges, Hooks (1994) explains that most faculty are afraid of making multiculturalism and social justice a focal point of their programs as “it is difficult for many educators in the United States to conceptualize how the classroom will look when they are confronted with the demographics which indicate that “whiteness” may cease to be the norm ethnicity in the classroom settings on all levels” (p. 41). Furthermore, hooks asserts that most faculty teach in classrooms that are predominantly white,
therefore, students are better able to succeed in a Eurocentric setting. Yet, Howard (2006) notes that teacher training sets new teachers, particularly white teachers, up for failure because teachers are not taught to recognize their own perceived beliefs and prejudices. In fact, Howard argues that “too often we place white teachers in multicultural settings and expect them to behave in ways that are inconsistent with their own life experiences, socialization patterns, world views and levels of racial identity development” (pp. 6).

Furthermore, Sue et. al (1998 as quoted in Rogers-Sin 2008) states that multicultural training must provide specific competencies across three dimensions: “a.) one’s own assumptions, values and biases, b.) understanding world view of culturally different people, and c.) developing appropriate intervention strategies and techniques” (pp. 314). Nevertheless, Krishnamurth (2003) notes that in order to be successful, college faculty had to support professional development in multiculturalism in order for such training to be successful and implemented college-wide. Furthermore, Krishnamurth argues that “more professional development programs are needed for department chairs and non-instructional staff who function in support roles and impact students’ campus life and support services they receive” (p. 273).

Assessing and understanding the multicultural sensitivity of faculty at a rural higher education institution has not been seen in the current literature on multiculturalism, multicultural sensitivity, multicultural responsiveness and attitudes toward diverse groups. At this time, there are no multicultural trainings specifically for higher education faculty as most colleges and universities expect that faculty will have some multicultural training through their doctorates or terminal degrees. Furthermore, higher education faculty, by virtue of their education, is expected to seek out this training on their own or engage in multicultural activities offered by their educational institution. Yet, with the group of more diverse population groups attending college, particularly rural colleges, and universities, it is important for these institutions to have initiatives, and programs that can assist faculty in becoming more multiculturally sensitive to their minority students.

The Significance of Measuring Multicultural Sensitivity and Responsivity:

Also assessing multicultural sensitivity in a rural higher education institution setting through a survey of the institution’s faculty would allow the institution to measure levels of multicultural sensitivity and responsiveness and assist that institution in planning multicultural initiatives that could include professional development training in multiculturalism for the administration, faculty, staff, and surrounding community and professional development opportunities for faculty. In addition, the survey could assist faculty in becoming more self-aware of their prejudicial attitudes toward students of diverse groups. Finally, the survey could assist rural educational institutions in developing outreach programs for minority students, recruitment programs for minority student (outside of sports), professional development programs for faculty and retention initiatives for minority students to continue toward finishing their degree.
CONTINUUM OF MULTICULTURAL SENSITIVITY
SURVEY

Multiculturalism
Rank order each answer on a scale of 1 to 4 with 1 being the least likely answer and 4 being the most likely answer.

1. You are having a conversation with one of your colleagues regarding the importance of diversity in a democratic society.
   _____ a. You argue that a democratic society should embrace differences in gender, racial, ethnic, cultural and sexual orientation with each group experiencing equal treatment
   _____ b. You argue that a democratic society should include acceptance of all races, ethnicities, gender, sexual orientation, and culture, but not equal treatment for all.
   _____ c. You argue that a democratic society should allow equal treatment for some ethnicities, sexual orientation, and culture, and equal treatment.
   _____ d. You believe that a democratic society should include persons based on race, ethnicity, gender, culture and sexual orientation.

2. During a student by an Arab student, the student presenter makes some controversial comments that upset other students.
   _____ a. You use this opportunity as a teachable moment and invite campus leaders in multiculturalism and international studies to facilitate communication between the students to increase their understanding of diversity.
   _____ b. You use this opportunity as a teachable moment to help students learn critical thinking methods that will help them learn how to respond to controversial decisions.
   _____ c. You use this opportunity to speak to students about different viewpoints; however, you reprimand the student for causing a problem in class.
   _____ d. You report the student to the university and ask him or her to withdraw from your class.

3. You have a class of 20 students. While majority of the students are white, you have two students who are African-American. Whenever issues of race come up, you ask the two African-American students to “voice” their opinions on African-American issues.
   _____ a. You believe that each student has a unique voice and should not be used as the “voice” for their race, culture, ethnicity, gender or sexual orientation.
   _____ b. You believe that your classroom should reflect the voices of all students as long as those students share the viewpoints of the majority.
   _____ c. You believe that your classroom should reflect the voices of students who are of a certain race, ethnicity, gender, culture, and sexual orientation.
   _____ d. You believe that your classroom should only reflect the voices of students who are of the majority race, ethnicity, gender, culture, and sexual orientation.

4. You work at a rural educational institution that has little opportunity for students and faculty to interact with diverse groups. Your school’s new vice president of multiculturalism is holding a campus-wide forum to connect different cultures on campus.
   _____ a. You don’t believe the forum is unnecessary since most cultures on campus don’t interact and could possibly cause racial tension.
b. You believe that the forum could help students gain cultural understanding, but are concerned that the forum might raise issues of race.

c. You believe that the forum will provide students and faculty with opportunities to interact positively with different cultures.

d. You believe that the forum will allow students and faculty to learn more about other cultures.

5. As a teacher, you feel that your classroom is free of class and privilege issues. Yet during a classroom discussion, some of your minority students assert that as a person of privilege you have not experienced hardship.

a. You use this opportunity to facilitate a discussion of issues of privilege in and out of the classroom.

b. You apologize to the students and resolve to do a better job of recognizing your class values.

c. You acknowledge that there are class issues but do not discuss it further.

d. You do not acknowledge the student’s remarks.

Multicultural Responsivity
Rank order each answer on a scale of 1 to 4 with 1 being the least likely answer and 4 being the most likely answer.

1. Your department is requiring all faculty to self-evaluate their understanding of multiculturalism and its implications in the classroom.

a. You believe that such self-evaluation is important because it provides insight into faculty’s understanding of multiculturalism and cultural diversity and provide an opportunity for educators to transform their thinking.

b. You believe that such self-evaluation will assist you in learning more about your understanding of multiculturalism.

c. You complete the evaluation, but feel it does not provide insight into your understanding of multiculturalism.

d. You do not complete the evaluation because you feel that multiculturalism has no place in your classroom.

2. Your educational institution is located in a small, rural setting and in the past, the institution did not have a large minority population. Recently, your institution has begun to actively recruit minority students. Several colleagues have expressed to you that they dislike working with minority students.

a. You ask your colleagues to discuss why they dislike working with minority students and discuss ways to bridge those class and cultural differences.

b. You ask your colleagues to discuss why they dislike minority students and refer them to the Office of Multicultural Affairs.

c. You agree that minority students can be difficult to work with but argue that they are entitled to equal treatment in the classroom.

d. You agree with your colleagues that working with minority students make you uncomfortable.
3. At the end of the semester, you invite one of your classes to join you for dinner. Among the students to attend are students from a different race or ethnic group.
   _____a. You use this opportunity to get to know the student outside of the classroom.
   _____b. You use this opportunity to ask questions about the student’s culture.
   _____c. You only speak briefly to the student as you don’t have much in common.
   _____d. You don’t interact with the student at all.

4. You are walking on campus and witness a gay student getting bullied.
   _____a. You respond by intervening and calling campus police.
   _____b. You respond by calling campus police.
   _____c. You respond by watching the scene but do not take action.
   _____d. You respond by walking away and do not take action.

5. In the 21st century, college students are required to learn skills, such as, intercultural communication and multiculturalism, in order to succeed in a global workplace.
   _____a. You tailor your curriculum to include variety of cultural perspectives and empathy toward different cultures.
   _____b. You include activities in your curriculum on intercultural communication and multiculturalism.
   _____c. You include a lesson as it is required by your department, but feel that students should maintain an allegiance to their own culture.
   _____d. You do not include any lessons or activities on intercultural communication or multiculturalism as you feel that students should primarily learn more about their own culture.

Multicultural Sensitivity
Rank order each answer on a scale of 1 to 4 with 1 being the least likely answer and 4 being the most likely answer.

1. In one of your courses, you are having a class discussion. Several students disagree with you and some of those students are African-American, and Hispanic.
   _____a. You believe that the classroom is a place to discuss different viewpoints and you encourage your students to express their viewpoints.
   _____b. You believe that the classroom is a place to discuss different viewpoints and you accept that your students have different opinions from yourself.
   _____c. You believe that the classroom is a place for discussion, yet you prefer students who share your viewpoints.
   _____d. You believe that the classroom is a place where only the viewpoints of the majority are shared.

2. Your educational institution is revising the curriculum in its programs and majors to make multicultural sensitivity a goal in all programs and majors.
   _____a. You feel that your educational institution must make it a goal to include multicultural sensitivity in all its programs and majors.
   _____b. You feel that your educational institution must include multicultural sensitivity in all its programs and majors.
c. You feel that your educational institution should only allow multiculturalism in some of its programs.
d. You feel that your educational institution should not allow multicultural sensitivity in all programs and majors as it promotes anti-western ideas.

3. One of your students is a non-native English speaker with intermediate writing skills in a course who is having difficulty completing a writing assignment for your class which requires above-average writing skills.
   a. You consult the Office of International Affairs and ask them if they can provide a tutor for the students
   b. You request for the student to go to the campus writing center or your office for extra tutoring.
   c. You ask the student to withdraw from your class as their writing skills are not up to college level.
   d. You tell the student that he or she is not ready for college work and should drop out.

4. The Office of Multicultural Affairs at your educational institution is hosting a conference on multiculturalism and all faculty are invited to attend. Your division or department chair encourages you to attend the conference.
   a. You attend the conference which you feel reflect the norms and values of the educational institution and learn multicultural activities that you can use in your department.
   b. You attend the conference and learn new theories and ideas about multiculturalism that you will integrate into your curriculum.
   c. You attend the conference, but feel that you have not learned anything new.
   d. You do not attend the conference as you feel that multiculturalism has no place in your department.

5. Your department chair has to hire a new faculty member and the department chair has made a request of the search committee to recommend a qualified minority candidate.
   a. You respond enthusiastically. Your department needs more diversity.
   b. You respond enthusiastically. Your department needs more diversity, but the candidate needs to have the right qualifications.
   c. You respond unsympathetically. A candidate’s race or gender should not be part of the search process.
   d. You refuse to consider a minority candidate.

**Attitudes toward Diverse Groups**
Rank each answer from 1 to 4 with 1 being the least likely answer and 4 being the most likely answer.
1. In your introductory class, several minority students are struggling to complete assignments and pass exams.
   a. You encourage the students to stay with the course and seek tutoring.
   b. You encourage the students to stay with the course.
   c. You encourage the students to drop the course.
   d. You encourage the students to withdraw from the program.
2. In one of your classes, several of your female students have complained that the work is too difficult and that your class is unfairly biased against women.
   a. You take their complaints seriously and work with the students and the Women’s Studies office to make your course free of gender bias.
   b. You accept their complaints and work with the students to help them with their difficulties with the course.
   c. You listen to their complaints, but offer no assistance and do not make any changes to the course.
   d. You inform the students that your course does not have any gender bias and that if they cannot complete the work, then they should withdraw.

3. In one of your classes, you have a student who is openly gay and often finds opportunities to discuss gay issues, even when they do not relate to the topic or issue at hand.
   a. You welcome gay students to your class, but remind the student not to use your classroom as a platform for gay issues.
   b. You accept gay students in your class, but do not want them to discuss any gay issues in your class.
   c. You tolerate gay students in your class, but only want them to attend class without bringing attention to themselves or gay issues.
   d. You do not accept gay students in your class, and request that the student keep any opinions to themselves.

4. You have student athletes in your classes and you require active class participation.
   a. Your classroom actively engages student athletes to actively participate in your classes.
   b. You encourage student athletes to participate in class when they have something to contribute.
   c. You allow student athletes to participate in class when they have something to contribute.
   d. You do not encourage student athletes to participate in class as you feel that they have nothing to contribute.

5. You have a class with minority students, some of whom are English as Second Language (ESL) students.
   a. You are excited to have students from another country in your class and look forward to working with college students from different countries and cultures.
   b. You look forward to working with college-level ESL students.
   c. You do not like working with ESL college students but feel that all students deserve a change for a quality education.
   d. You do not like working with ESL college students because you feel that the language and cultural barrier are too difficult to overcome.

**In-depth responses-Multiculturalism**
Answer each question in-depth with one to two sentences.

1. What direction do you feel that your educational institution should take to create a more inclusive campus?
2. What type of multicultural training and professional development opportunities would you like to see offered by your educational institution?

3. What do you feel are the most appropriate ways for faculty to build relationships with minority students?

4. What type of guidelines do you think that the university should provide to faculty when they have to deal with issues of race, ethnicity, gender, culture and sexual orientation that occur in the classroom?

5. What do you feel are the most appropriate ways for faculty to build relationships with minority faculty?

THE CONTINUUM DEFINED

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Multiculturalism</th>
<th>Exclusion</th>
<th>Tolerance</th>
<th>Acceptance</th>
<th>Inclusion</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Belief that a democratic society should exclude persons based on race, ethnicity, culture, gender and sexual orientation</td>
<td>Belief that a democratic society should only allow certain racial, ethnic, cultural, sexual orientation and gender groups to receive equal treatment</td>
<td>Belief that a democratic society should regards race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, culture and gender as receiving equal treatment</td>
<td>Belief that a democratic society should embrace diversity that includes gender, ethnic, racial, cultural, and sexual orientation and allow these groups to receive equal treatment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Belief that students from diverse backgrounds do not contribute to your understanding of diversity</td>
<td>Belief that students from certain diverse groups contribute to your understanding of diversity</td>
<td>Belief that students from diverse groups should be given the opportunity to contribute to your understanding of diversity</td>
<td>Belief that all students from diverse backgrounds have increased your understanding of diversity</td>
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<tr>
<td>Belief that minority students do not experience hardship and use it as an excuse for their lack of success</td>
<td>Belief that minority students experience hardship and use it as an excuse for their lack of success</td>
<td>Belief that minority students hardships should be recognized in class</td>
<td>Belief that issues of class and privilege should be discussed, particularly for minority students</td>
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<tr>
<td>Belief that students who are gay, lesbian, transgendered should not be allowed to</td>
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### Multicultural Sensitivity

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<th>Exclusion</th>
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<th>Acceptance</th>
<th>Inclusion</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Belief that only students who are from the majority group and share your values should be valued</td>
<td>Belief that only students from certain groups who share your values should be valued</td>
<td>Belief that certain students of diverse backgrounds who have different values should be valued</td>
<td>Belief that all students, including students of different race, gender, ethnicity and sexual orientation should be valued</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belief that the educational institution should not include multicultural sensitivity in its programs and majors</td>
<td>Belief that the educational institution should only revise its programs and majors that already include courses with multicultural or international components</td>
<td>Belief that the educational institution should revise its programs and majors to include a multicultural or international components</td>
<td>Belief that the educational institution should revise its programs and majors to encourage multicultural sensitivity in all courses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belief that working with non-native students is difficult because there are cultural differences that prevent them from being academically successful</td>
<td>Belief that working with non-native students is difficult because they do not possess the academic skills to be successful</td>
<td>Belief that working with non-native students can provide cross-cultural understanding between the teacher and student</td>
<td>Belief that working with non-native students can provide you with new teaching methods, link you to new campus resources and help you gain greater cross-cultural understanding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belief that multicultural activities and training have no place in your classroom or at your institution</td>
<td>Belief that multicultural training and activities should only occupy a small place in your classroom and at your institution</td>
<td>Belief that multicultural training and activities are a new part of teaching and should be included in your classroom</td>
<td>Belief that multicultural training and activities reflect the norms and values of the educational institution</td>
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</table>
Belief that minority faculty bring anti-Western viewpoints to the educational institution

Belief that minority faculty bring unique viewpoints that can be valuable to the educational institution

Belief that minority faculty bring unique viewpoints that can be valuable to the educational institution but those viewpoints should coincide with the mission of the college

Belief that minority faculty bring new viewpoints and ideas to the educational institution and these viewpoints help facilitate the mission of the college

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Multicultural Responsivity</th>
<th>Exclusion</th>
<th>Tolerance</th>
<th>Acceptance</th>
<th>Inclusion</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Belief that self-evaluation of multicultural understanding is a waste of resources</td>
<td>Belief that self-evaluation of multicultural understanding does not provide insight as most people fall on one extreme or another</td>
<td>Belief that self-evaluation of multicultural understanding provides insight into multicultural understanding</td>
<td>Belief that self-evaluation of multicultural understanding allows faculty to revise their curriculum to be more multicultural</td>
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<tr>
<td>Belief that educational institutions should not admit students of diverse races, ethnicities, culture, gender and sexual orientation as they are not capable of college-level work</td>
<td>Belief that educational institutions should include only some students of diverse races, ethnicities, culture, gender and sexual orientation who are capable of college-level work</td>
<td>Belief that educational institution should admit all students of diverse race, ethnicities, culture, gender and sexual orientation</td>
<td>Belief that educational institutions should reflect diverse gender, ethnicity, race, culture, and sexual orientation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belief that promoting tolerance only creates problems in the classroom</td>
<td>Belief that it is not your responsibility to educate student to understand races, ethnicities, cultures and beliefs different from one’s own</td>
<td>Belief that it is your responsibility to promote tolerance both insider and outside of the classroom</td>
<td>Belief that it is your personal duty to promote diversity through classroom activities, leadership training and on-campus activities</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belief that certain minority groups, gays or African-Americans, bring criticism or derision upon themselves</td>
<td>Belief that certain minority groups, gays or African-Americans, should be given the opportunity to come to school free from bullying</td>
<td>Belief that certain minority groups, gays or African-Americans, should be protected by the educational institution so they can attend school free from bullying</td>
<td>Belief that all students regardless of age, race, ethnicity, gender or sexual orientation should be protected by their educational institution and be allowed to attend school free from bullying</td>
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| Attitudes toward Diverse Groups |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Exclusion** | **Tolerance** | **Acceptance** | **Inclusion** |
| Belief that students from minority groups do not possess the skills to complete coursework for your class | Belief that only students from minority groups possess the skills to complete coursework for your class | Belief that only majority groups possess the skills to complete coursework for your class | Belief that all students possess the skills to complete coursework for your class |
| Belief that female students do not possess the skills to complete coursework for your class | Belief that only some female students from specific minority groups possess the skills to complete coursework for your class | Belief that female students from minority groups possess the skills to complete coursework for your class | Belief that all female students possess the skills to complete coursework for your class and contribute to your class |
| Belief that gay/lesbian/transgender students do not belong in your class as their presence is distracting | Belief that gay/lesbian students do belong in your classroom | Belief that gay/lesbian/transgender students add diversity to your classroom | Belief that gay/lesbian/transgender students bring diversity to your classroom by challenging other students assumptions about gay/lesbian/transgender |
| Belief that minority student athletes do not contribute anything to your classroom and should not be allowed to take courses in the major | Belief that minority student athletes should be allowed to take courses in the major | Belief that minority student athletes should be allowed to contribute to the classroom | Belief that all minority student athletes should be allowed to act as mentors in the classroom |
| Belief that English as a Second Language students are too difficult to work with as the language and cultural barriers are too | Belief that English as a Second Language students are hard working students, but the language and | Belief that English as a Second Language students are hard-working students and that any language and cultural barriers can be | Belief that English as a Second Language students add diversity to your classroom and provide you with the opportunity to try new |
hard to overcome cultural barriers create problems in the classroom overcome with faculty involvement pedagogical practices

BIBLIOGRAPHY


Another Frightful Tale of Horror for Dr. Lowly Professor in Acadumbia

Lem Londos Railsback
Railsback and Associates
A little over two years ago, I resigned from a university, after 50 years of teaching! As I think back about those last 4 years of service, I am still amazed at events and an apparent lack of academic freedom, honest and open procedures for conducting campus business and fiscal responsibilities, and high academic standards that we used to have. During my last 2 years of service, I had suspected 2 students of cheating on an online graduate reading class. A forensic review, performed in our presence by three members of the distance education team, of the electronic record of the class had revealed that one of the students had needed almost 2 hours to complete the mid-term, had missed 1 question, and had scored one of the two highest scores in the class. The second student, beginning her test only 8 minutes after the first student had finished her test, had finished the test in 23 minutes, had missed 1 question, and had made the same grade as that of the first student. Investigating further, we found that both had made the same score, that both had missed exactly the same question, and that both had used the same computer on the same Sunday afternoon! Rather naturally, I grew suspicious. Neither student had shown up for the electronic forensic review, although both had been invited. Since the graduate dean had scheduled his meeting with one of the students for the next week, I had passed to him the printed sheet with all of the data of proof. Amazingly, the graduate dean destroyed the paper with the damning evidence, different administrative versions of the two students’ actions emerged, and the administration effectively mobbed and then ignored me. By November, I had realized that the graduate dean, the college dean, and the chairperson of my college were not going to pursue a regular procedure for students suspected of academic cheating. (After all, each of the two belonged to two of the most powerful and rich families in both of our “twin cities.”) In fact, those “leaders” were going to allow the two students to graduate with master’s degrees.

I had been requested to lead the “university population” into the fall graduation ceremony as I carried the huge “mace,” a big wooden stick with fake giant jewels glued onto it (for which we paid the system over $9,000.00 rent each time we used it.). When I asked a close friend why I had received the request, she told me that the duty was usually carried out by the Faculty Senate President: carrying that mace to lead the administrators, professors, and staff into the graduation ceremony constituted a great honor. Because he had known me for so many years as a competent and honorable faculty member, the new Faculty Senate president had offered to give up his to-be-bestowed honor and pass it to me. I was touched by the new Faculty Senate president’s respectful kindness, and I sent to him my heartfelt “Thanks!” However, I thought that my actual participation in that hooding ceremony and, later, in that graduation ceremony would constitute a dishonor to all of the other students—i.e., the honorable students, the students who had never cheated—whom I had taught over the past fifty years! On the day that I had discovered the names on the graduation list of the two students whom I had suspected of cheating but who were never subjected to the regular hearing, investigation, and sanctions-if-applicable that dozens of other students had been subjected to every year, I walked over to the human resources office and resigned. I did not participate in the hooding ceremony, I did not participate in the graduation ceremony, and I did not carry that awfully heavy and ugly mace while leading the administration, faculties, and staff into the great hall for the graduation ceremony. Since I was treated by my dentist, by my eye doctor, by my ear doctor, and by my regular medical doctor on the four remaining semester days in January, I never returned to the campus. About 1 year from that retirement date, I donated over a quarter of a million dollars’ worth of unused sick leave to the sick leave pool of the university. Throughout my academic career, I had always acted as an ethical “squeaky wheel.” Whenever I observed something that I
thought was unethical, immoral, and/or just plain mean, I said aloud my observations and objections. And if further action were needed, I offered that. After all, I had been reared on the movie roles played by John Wayne, Gary Cooper, James Stewart, and other similar "independents." To merely "look the other way" at corruption, crime, and smallness of spirit was an anathema to a "real man," according to the code by which I had been reared and by which I lived! Apparently the wide-spread resentment and jealously of my "being my own man" had reached down even to the staff and work-study levels—e.g., to this day, I have never received a simple "Thanks!" or even an acknowledgment of my gift of unused sick leave. Further, the fact that I had earned from a distant major university an online degree in designing and delivering distance learning was never entered by the "specialist" in charge of the CATALOGUE. After all, with that last degree, the black-and-white print of the CATALOGUE would have revealed that I held more degrees that the dean of my college! That CATALOGUE has gone through two editions—i.e., is, four years—without my last degree being displayed/included. At our university, such are the wages of the character who maintains his own character fashioned after such a character as John Wayne and/or James Stewart.

Even though I retired, after 50 years of teaching, I stayed in town. Various persons asked me, "Why are you staying here? Why do you stay among all of this violence and corruption and dishonesty? After all, the old powers that ran this place for the last eighty years have now got control of the university. Why in the world do you stay?" I have answered with a straight face, "I like living here. Within ten blocks of my home, I can walk to thirteen eating places, two service stations, one dollar store, a giant supermarket with food and dog food and paper goods and a pharmacy. In short, I have it made, whether my car works or not! And one bus stop is one block away while the other is three blocks away in the opposite direction. Even the funeral home is only fourteen blocks away, although I don’t think that I would be walking on that day. I added a further clarification whenever individuals asked me about my visiting Mexico every Sunday. I explained, "I learned as a kid that if one sleeps with dogs, one can get fleas. So, I never mess with dogs. Whenever I go across, I never bother with anything that doesn’t directly involve me. I have been visiting my Cuban girlfriend, and I have been absolutely faithful to her for over five and one-half years. I go over to spend the day with her, and I come back to my home. My home is a mansion 107 years old and was built when builders really knew how to build a house. I have spent a fortune in repairing, remodeling, expanding, and furnishing it, but it is absolutely beautiful. I say, "Why in the world would I ever want to go somewhere else and leave all this?" With my explanation, the questioning stops.

Even though I had retired, I had still maintained contact with over a dozen of my former colleagues at the university and maintained friendships with wonderful persons from town whom I have known over the thirty-nine years that I have lived here. In any case, the former colleagues and my community friends have kept me up to date about the happenings at the university.

As I have led a productive, busy, and intellectually-stimulating life in retirement, I have occasionally recalled my last five years at the university with astonishment at the administrative action/inaction and what I consider to be a loss of institutional integrity. Among sad memories delineated below was a sunny May noon about 4 years ago when Dr. Quited, my best-friend at that time, and I were walking to the last Faculty Senate meeting of the academic year. She reminded me, "Please remember today at our Faculty Senate meeting the subject that we spoke about at lunch yesterday."

"Are your referring to my nominating you for V-P of our Faculty Senate?"
“Yes, don’t you dare forget! And remember that Professor Ambit wants to have a second term as our president.”

“And you said that everyone—including Dr. Viking Hellbent, who is up for Vice-President already knows that I will nominate Dr. Ambit for President and you for Vice-President and that they both have agreed to allowing you to step in front of Dr. Viking Hellbent.”

“Yes. Now, don’t be late and don’t forget.”

After the May Faculty Senate meeting, another exchange between my best-friend and me exploded. “Low, what happened to you? Why did you hesitate? Why didn’t you nominate me?”

“Because, as I told you on our way out of the meeting, I was watching Dr. B Viking Hellbent when I stood up to nominate Dr. Ambit for a second term. I could tell from her facial expression that my nomination for him for a second term was a complete surprise to her. She nearly broke up when she heard me make the nomination. She almost cried. After all, she was on the printed ballot to serve as the next president of our group. And when I saw her face and her opened mouth, I knew that she had not suspected anything.”

“What do you mean? She knew, and she had agreed to my serving with Dr. Ambit.”

“I can read a person’s face and determine whether or not, that person is surprised. SHE WAS SURPRISED!”

“No, you don’t understand. Even after Dr. Ambit had accepted Dr. Coconspir’s nomination of Dr. Hellbent, he moved directly in front of you and looked directly down at you and even gave you extra time to make my nomination. Don’t you remember any of that? He even asked if you had anything to say, and you stayed mum.”

“I understand completely. I realized from Viking Hellbent’s expression that she was surprised, even shocked, that the whole protocol was being changed. She realized that what she had taken for granted might not come to pass. AND I DO READ FACES QUITE WELL!”

“Well, I am sorely disappointed in you.”

“And I am sorely disappointed in you. You had lied to me about the ‘deal’ that you and Ambit had cooked up. I am an honest man! Don’t ever involve me in anything like that again!”

Three months later after the May F. S. meeting, President Ambit had discovered that Dr. Viking Hellbent’s term had expired on the week of his election: Dr. Viking Hellbent’s election to the Vice-Presidency was going to be declared as null and void, because of the termination of her term, her friend. But Dr. Coconspir gave up her own seat—which had one more year before it would expire—on the condition that her close friend would be allowed to fill the seat. Dr. Ambit agreed and “seated” Dr. Viking Hellbent as Vice-President at the next meeting—i.e., at the first F. S. in the fall semester. As her first act, Dr. Viking Hellbent admitted to the gathered members of the Faculty Senate in August, “I don’t know about you, but I think we need an annual evaluation of our university president. I am passing around a form that my friend from my old university sent to me in an e-mail. I will just pass this around and let you study it as the kind of form that we could use.” After discussion, the F.S. determined that Dr. Viking Hellbent should chair a new F.S. Committee to select an evaluation form and to develop appropriate procedures for implementing the annual evaluation. After settling 3 minor issues, the F.S. adjourned.

Dr. Lowly Professor to Dr. Ambit, November 1: In September F.S. meeting, we considered holding an annual faculty evaluation of our university president. Of course, I am for that procedure. Since the president claims that he wants “transparency, accountability, and continuing feedback,” an annual evaluation of the performances by him and his hand-chosen minor administrators should prove very useful. It might even improve their respective procedures. However, I want add this caution. Nearly 4 decades ago, we--the first faculty of this
institution--underwent during our second year of operation a student evaluation of the faculty. Nobody died, nobody had a heart attack, and nobody got fired because of their student evaluations. In point of fact, those of us who served on the committee to design and install the student evaluation pursued our effort with three central understandings that were shared with the entire faculty, discussed, and finally installed as a protocol on our campus. First, in those days, “feedback,” “relevancy,” and “customer satisfaction” were in vogue across our whole society. So, we encouraged the feedback from all of our students and followed that stylish notion. After all, we were giving our students opportunity to provide valuable insights about our teaching effects. Second, in the case that a professor’s evaluations fell into the bottom quartile for two consecutive semesters, that pattern would signal to the administration that a professor probably needed some peer/administrative guidance, retraining, and mentoring to raise his/her evaluations within a reasonable number of semesters. Third, the evaluations gave the students a chance to “blow off steam,” toward the end of the semester. So, with those specific purposes in mind, we continued refining the evaluation instruments and procedures. At no point in those olden days did we ever think that the evaluation should/would be used to fire a professor. In the first place, we reasoned, students’ evaluations are the students’ opinions about a given professor at a given time on a given class and shaped by the effects of a particular day’s events on the individual student—e.g., happiness, pain of a stomach ache, hangover, breakup of a romance, and a host of other determinants. The students’ evaluations, then, constituted only a glimpse of what was happening in those students’ lives and perceptions of particular classes/professors. In other words, the students were certainly not experts at observing and critically evaluating; after all, they were the ones who were paying to hear us talk and think critically aloud. The students’ critical thinking faculties had generally not fully developed. Taken with a hefty grain of salt, then, the students’ evaluations could offer a hint that some professor needed some time off, some further training in the selected academic field, or a raise in salary. Students’ evaluations were never supposed to constitute the sole or major determinant of tenure for a professor. And we thought, too, that only giant genetic miscalculations/misconfigurations would ever think so.

Frankly, I found the evaluations helpful for my own introspective review of my teaching. I discovered that I “favored” teaching to the “middle” of the classroom. Upon that discovery, I began moving around the entire classroom as I taught; in some cases, I would even stop in front of a right side or a left side group of students as I continued lecturing. In some cases, I would ask the group a question; then, I would move very quickly to another group on the opposite side and ask them for the answer to my question. In short, I used the results of the student evaluation to improve my own teaching. Sadly to say, however, not all professors shared my enthusiasm for improvement. Consequently, we would be showered periodically with sharp criticisms of the “whole evaluative mess.” In time, we settled into the judgments-each-semester by our students.

In time, our first president proposed that the faculty had a right to perform an annual evaluation of the administration. We were impressed and enthusiastic! However, the first instrument used for that purpose was a questionnaire completed by each faculty member. One of the questions was “Do you think that 24 hours is enough lead time for administration to take care of emergencies?” One of the professors, in a fit of flippancy, wrote, “Yes, except when a commode is running over.” That particular questionnaire never showed up again during the next four decades nor even a whiff of the notion of faculty evaluation of administration.

While I like the idea of our faculty’s evaluating our administration, I urge caution in designing, installing, and refining such a new protocol. By the way, I didn’t hear anyone mention faculty evaluation of administration in either October or November. What gives?
Dr. Ambit to Dr. Lowly Professor, December 2: Thanks, Low. I agree with you that we need to use our very best judgments as we proceed with this. I have noticed the same thing, but I have no answer for you. Let’s just wait until the December meeting and ask Dr. Viking Hellbent.

Dr. Lowly Professor, December 9: Dr. Ambit, I understand that evaluation devices have already been passed out to the faculties, that the faculties have completed them, and that the instruments have been collected from the faculty members and are being processed, even as we speak.

Dr. Ambit to Dr. Lowly Professor, November 25: You are correct, Low. All of that has happened, and I don’t have a clue as to how it did. At next F.S., we need to ask Dr. Hellbent about all of it.

At the F.S. January meeting, Dr. Hellbent was absent. At the F.S. February meeting, Dr. Hellbent was absent. At the F.S. March meeting, Dr. Lowly Professor moved that after two absences from regularly scheduled meetings, a Faculty Senate member would be removed unless a legitimate excuse could be verified—e.g., a serious illness. Motion carried unanimously.

At the F.S. March meeting, Dr. Hellbent finally appeared and passed out to each F.S. member a copy of the administrative evaluation summary and a copy of the “Comments” provided by the respective professors of the different colleges. She also announced that additional copies of the numerical evaluations and “Comments” had already been provided to the system’s chancellor and to the board of regents. So many F.S. members were impressed with her “mighty task” that they offered “Sincere Thanks!” to Hellbent and her helpers. Then, these same F.S. members voted to appoint Hellbent as the “Administrative Evaluations Officer.” Dr. Ambit was obviously flabbergasted and so angry that he was speechless. He adjourned the meeting.

Dr. Ambit to Dr. Lowly Professor, March 14: Can you imagine the gall of that Hellbent? I am not even sure that the actions by her and her workers were even legal, particularly in terms of the form that Hellbent and her followers had used. Was it a copyrighted form? It most certainly was not kind or, even, considerate. In point of fact, in my opinion, it was absolutely unprofessional!

Dr. Lowly Professor to Dr. Ambit, March 15: I agree. We need to address that at the next F.S. She should be placed on the proverbial “hot seat” for such audacious and unauthorized actions.

At the F.S. April meeting, Dr. Hellbent was absent. By this time, the chancellor had demanded an explanation from the president for such an inferior evaluation. The president and his minor executives had huddled for nearly a week to finally decide on a wide-span explanation. Essentially, the written response reviewed many problems suffered by the city—low revenues and, therefore, low budgets for building infrastructure; massive illiteracy (one of the highest levels in the U.S.); lack of regular tax collections; decades-old feuds; unforgiving sleights from previous “leaders”; neighborhood violence; cultural clashes; extreme socio-economic; lacks of cooperation of school districts with university; et al, ad infinitum. As the president phrased it, he was caught in the middle of the continuing problems of a corrupt and divisive city and the many internal problems of the university. He had to act as if he liked everybody and agreed with them, but he had to make sure that he never got into any close alliance with anyone on anything. He made such a fervent case that the chancellor decided to not take the first evaluation too seriously. But the chancellor did warn that subsequent evaluations would be taken most seriously.

Earlier in the semester, several professors had commented on the obvious change in the president’s behavior; he was hardly ever seen on campus. When he was, he would walk very quickly from his car to his office in the mornings and from his office to his car in the late afternoons. And he stayed in his office nearly all day every day. He even quit eating in the campus cafeteria, as he had been doing nearly every week over the last several years.

As the May F.S. meeting was beginning, Dr. Hellbent showed up, but minutes later was called out by a work-study student to handle “a student problem.” Dr. Ambit thanked all of the
members present for their cooperation during the past two years. Then, Dr. Lowly Professor nominated a quiet, literate, teacher of humanities named Janes (like the famous authority on ships of the world) for F.S. president. Janes was elected president unanimously for the coming academic year. Dr. Hellbent’s colleagues in her college chose her to represent them, once again, on the F.S. for the next academic year. At the August meeting, Dr. Hellbent did not show up.

At the September meeting, Dr. Hellbent showed up, but was not questioned nor even pressed for any explanation. After all, over half of the F.S. members apparently sympathized with her actions during the previous academic year. As Dr. Janes, the new president, had articulated, “There is no virtue in kicking an old horse! No pun intended here.” or something like that. Then, we moved to new business.

At the October and November meetings, business on the F.S. flowed as usual. Several of the members reminded Dr. Hellbent of her imminent duty. She quickly assured them that she had not forgot. Surely enough, in late November during the student evaluations, Dr. Hellbent’s crew had repeated their operation and in three days had distributed and collected the completed evaluation forms from the professors of the different colleges.

Upon the beginning of the next spring semester, neither the numbers part nor the “Comments” was presented to the F.S., to the administrators, to the faculties of the different colleges, to the chancellor, or to the board of regents. At the February, March, April, and May F.S. meetings, both the numbers and the “Comments” continued to be missing. At each meeting, Dr. Hellbent assured the F.S. that the evaluation results were still “in process” and she was granted more time at each meeting. At the August F.S. meeting, Dr. Hellbent assured the F.S. on her “personal honor” that the “whole thing” was still “in process. She repeated the same “whole thing…in process” at the September and, again, at the October meeting. At the November meeting, Dr. Hellbent presented the numerical version but indicated that the “Comments” section would take longer because it was so huge. By the December meeting, certain members of the F.S. pressed Dr. Hellbent about the missing “Comments” until she finally admitted that she had gone through all of those commentaries and edited them. Members of the F.S. were aghast. When pressed even harder in January, Dr. Hellbent provided her edited version—a rather short piece—of the “Comments” and finally admitted that, after her fast editing of the “Comments,” she had thrown away the original “Comments,” en toto. A loud furor broke out in the F.S.: even several of her supporters were upset. I never found out whether Dr. Hellbent and her crew ever did the faculties’ evaluation of the administration for that semester.

Even though I had retired from the university, I continued to complete any unfinished business that I felt that I was obligated to do for the university and its F.S. One of those chores was finishing the “History of the Institution” for the Faculty Handbook. The F.S. committee charged with completing the “History…” had been directed by Dr. Hellbent and had worked for a year on the project. At the beginning of the second year, I had been asked to serve on that committee. I had agreed. At the very first meeting, I made an observation, and Dr. Hellbent took me to task. She dared me that “if I didn’t like the “History…” that she and her committee had worked so hard on, then I should be her guest and re-do the “History…” myself. I took her dare and decided that I would do it although pressing events would prevent me from doing so before I retired. Finally, within a few months after my retirement. I did all that work at my home on my own computer and paid with my own funds for all of the copies for the F.S. members. (But, that effort was a story unto itself and time and space constraints prevent my telling the story of my “History…” here. That story will have to wait until another day, another issue, another block of uninterrupted time in which I can thoroughly tell that story.) Meanwhile, although members of
F.S. were upset, no talk of any kind of sanction of Dr. Hellbent was ever uttered. In time, the matter appeared to be just another event that continues to remain unsettled, closed, secret, etc.

By the next fall, Dr. Hellbent was elevated to oversee the new “Honors Program” wherein the interested and brighter students from certain local high schools could take certain college courses and receive full credit while serving in the dual-enrollment program. According to the original grant, as I understood it, the Honors Program offered certain college-level classes taught by professors to the selected high-schoolers: the courses would be taught to the high-schoolers-only population. The Program was re-vamped so that the high-schoolers were simply dumped into already-crowded regular undergraduate classes. Then the professor of each class, if I understood correctly, was required to design and assign a special project for each high-schooler to complete, along with the high-schooler’s completing the regular academic assignments that the regular undergraduate students were completing. As more than one of my correspondents explained, the new re-vamping produced expanded workloads for the professors and disappointing grades for the students. Through more time, the revamping—supported by constant administrative urgings and acts—produced a serious lowering of expectations, a lot of frustration for both the professors and undergraduates and high-schoolers, and, ultimately, a bit of lowering of standards with its concomitant result of grade inflation. Of course, throughout the effort, positivity was the watchword of each day of each class. Dr. Hellbent and her “cooperating professors” were publicly applauded for their “history-making efforts to re-form and re-define secondary education.” The administration continued to proclaim that Dr. Hellbent was so successful in her project and that she was so understanding of secondary education that she was “heavensent” to the university at a moment with the university was joining across the nation with powerful grant-giving entities to “redefine secondary education.”

And then, the daughter of Provost Hugegut applied for a scholarship and entry into the traditional “Honors Program” at the university. As she was being processed and interviewed, the admitting committee discovered that she had neither the level of cognitive skills typically possessed by an Honors Program student nor the socio-economic need that the grant which funded the Honors Program had specified. She did have the credentialing required—i.e., her grade average was in the top 5% of her graduating class. However, as in so many, many cases before her in so many different programs at the university, the fact that one’s grades fell within the “top 5%” of the graduating class had proved, time and again, that that “5%” of local schools’ distributions was not at all reliable. In point of fact, I was told, some of those “5%-ers” had scored “8” or “9” on the SAT. So, in a nutshell, as they say. Dr. Hellbent’s duties were expanded by Provost Hugegut: she not only would administer the “high-schoolers in college” “Honors Program, but she would also begin administering the traditional, older, and highly respected “Honors Program” that had been established to serve “high I.Q./high achievers with low income.

Upon learning of such goings-on via a telephone call from my long-time friend Dr. Solores, particularly the apparent interference with the successful traditional Honors Program, I began to query.

Dr. Lowly Professor to Dr. Manly Honor: Hello, Dr. Honor. This is a voice from your distant past. This is Dr. Lowly Professor who used to use an office across the hall from your all’s main office and meeting room. How in the world have you been?

Dr. Manly Honor to Dr. Lowly Professor: I am fine, thank you. I had heard that you had retired.

Dr. Lowly Professor to Dr. Manly Honor: I am retired, happy, busy, and I am staying in Laredo.

Dr. Manly Honor to Dr. Lowly Professor: Well, I am glad to hear all that. We need more honest folk and intellectuals like yourself to stay in our town. So many professors retire and move to
some other “less hot” places. We are glad that you have chosen to be among us. My family has been here for over three hundred years! So, when I say that we are glad that you are here, I am saying so with the authority of our legacy that has allowed us to compete and live here all through all of those centuries! Mi casa es su casa! Now what can I do for you today?

**Dr. Lowly Professor to Dr. Manly Honor:** And to you, mi casa es su casa! I wanted to express my appreciation for your establishing our Honors Program and for working so hard to obtain funding. Thank you for providing genuine assistance for young Americans who, without your assistance, would probably have never been able to attend the university and generally improve their possibilities for the future. So, in short, I just decided to check in with you to see how you are doing. See you in town someday, probably at the grocery.

I decided to check in with my long-time friend, confidante, and advisor Dr. Solores.

**Dr. Lowly Professor to Dr. Solores:** Let’s meet at the cafeteria today and talk.

**Dr. Solores to Dr. Lowly Professor:** O.K. I remember what you told me years ago about the administration’s little short guy who monitored all of the e-mails sent at the university. I’ll be there at 11:30. We can get our food and go out on the veranda like we used to do.

Dependable as ever, Dr. Solores showed up on time on the veranda with her food and drink and sat down at the table on which I had my food and drink. “Isn’t this a gorgeous day?”

“Yes, it is. Thanks for coming. I just communicated with Dr. Manly Honor this morning and found that he apparently does not know anything about the provost’s moving his program under Dr. Hellbent’s “umbrella,” like you told me was happening.

“Well, what I told you is exactly what is happening. I got that from the provost’s secretary at lunch yesterday. Oh, I know what they are doing. They probably are not going to tell Dr. Manly Honor about the change to his program until the end of the semester. But that is the truth. The provost’s secretary complained about her have to do so much computer work just to record and verify the programmatic change. She even had to call some of the original donors for their approval. Most of them wouldn’t give it. Just remember, over the last three decades, I have always told you the truth about anything that was going on on our campus. I was never lying to you then, and I am not lying to you now.

“Well, I believe you. I just think that it is just a great bit unethical for them to be doing what they are doing. After all, when there was no program like that in town—anywhere, Dr. Manly Honor wrote down his basic belief that there really are some gifted students in our city who will never be able to attend the university only because they just cannot afford our high tuition and fees and the outrageous prices for the textbooks. He surveyed the local schools to identify the obviously gifted and talented students whose parents could not afford to send them to school. Then, he secured from several of our wealthier citizens the initial funding for his project. He did all this in spite of his holding down a full teaching load at our university, in spite of taking care of his sick wife and their seven young sons and daughters, and in spite of a second job of tutoring on Saturdays over at the laboratory school. To meet all of his regular responsibilities and then to establish his special project, Dr. Manly Honor proved that he was an idealist of the brightest category. He remains a staunch friend for high I.Q./high-achievers in need. And although he continues to serve as a most valuable member of one of our faculties, he is one of the ones most obviously unappreciated--perhaps, even resented--by the administration. And the provost does not seem to understand that the little provost’s daughter was turned down by the Honor Program by a standing committee. In other words, Dr. Manly Honor probably did not even know that the provost’s daughter had applied for his program; Manly leaves that kind of decision to his standing committee because he designed and constructed a program that works
like it is supposed to. That is in stark contrast with our other programs that we start, funded, get evaluated by outsiders, and begin re-vamping to start following the published guidelines.”

“I agree with you. Dr. Manly is highly respected downtown. After all, he had achieved something that most of them would never have even dreamed of. And he has operated a very successful program for over two decades. One of the deputy attorney generals of our state is a graduate of Dr. Honor’s program. So are four of the local attorneys and one of the local doctors. His high I.Q./high achievers have used the opportunity provided by Dr. Honor to better themselves, their families’ situations, and their communities. He deserves a big pat on the back, and not replacement. By the way, who do you think they would choose to take his place?”

“In the first place, they cannot replace him. He is irreplaceable! But they can take away his job and give it to someone else.”

“I agree.” But who do you think will replace, or, rather take his job?”

“Oh, it will be some spineless creature who will jump to the provost’s tune and, of course, to Hellbent’s directions. “I think that this is serious enough for me to intervene. Do you mind if I use the information if I promise to keep your name out of the situation?”

“Oh, of course! I would think of you less if you let Dr. Honor get railroaded without some much of a warning. Yes! I want you to tell him so he can, at least, defend himself.”

I telephoned Dr. Manly Honor, “Hello! The purpose of this phone call is to see if you want some coffee downstairs.” He agreed with, “Hey, Low. O.K. See you in five.”

Smiling and already seated at the table with two cups of steaming coffee, Dr. Honor waved his invitation with “You Old Son of A Gun! How are you, really? I knew when you e-mailed me this morning that something was up.”

“How did you know?”

“Because as busy as you always were and as busy as I always am, neither of us takes the time to make social visits. So, whenever you visit, even by e-mail, I know that something is up.”

“Then, let me come to the point. Do you know of any move to give your job to another?”

“Look, Low, they threaten to do that every time I argue with one of the administrators. And when they do, I say, ‘Take it!’ and then they back down. In a way, I think that they do have an idea of how much work is involved. So, over time, they have learned to leave me along.”

“Well, I understand what you’re saying, but this time it appears to be serious.”

“But, why?”

“Did your all’s admitting committee turn down the provost’s daughter for a scholarship?”

“Myra—She’s the head of that committee—mentioned to me that there might be a repercussion for the committee’s findings on that little girl, but I didn’t worry over something that hadn’t happened yet. Well, as I read your face, it apparently is about to happen? But do you know what that little girl scored on her SAT? Besides, how in the world can the daughter of a provost quality for a “poverty need” scholarship? Do you know how much money he makes here at the university? No way in hell could we have legally admitted her into our program!”

“Well, steps are underway to move your program over and under Hellbent’s umbrella.”

“I would quit before I would let that happen. That Hellbent is one of the most incompetent professors we have ever hired. She doesn’t even meet all of her classes. And the feminism crap that she dishes out instead of good old chemistry is worthless to serious students. You see, both my wife and I are feminists ourselves, and we belong to several of the feminist organizations and contribute, sometimes, to certain efforts. But when a kid pays high tuition and fees and outrageous prices for textbooks, the one big thing that they don’t want wasted is their time in the classroom. Besides, one of our bright students who is a feminist herself and is openly
gay claims that Hellbent does not really understand feminism. But that is all beside the point. When do you think that this change will be made.

“Soon. Probably at the end of the semester and before the summer semester begins.”

“Well, they can have it. But come with me to the office and listen as I make some calls.”

Back at his office, Dr. Honor asked his secretary to place a call to one of the program’s major supporters downtown. When the donor came on line, Dr. Honor offered, “Say, Good Friend, I want to congratulate you on raising that big contribution that we had planned to announce in the newspaper next week. But I need a favor from you. Let’s hold back on that announcement. Then, you and the others and I can sit down and strategize some more. Yes, something new has come up, but I am not at liberty to discuss it with you at this moment. Let’s just hold up on making the announcement. We may even want to change our mind about the recipient. Yes, I am definitely serious. O.K., see you at the Lion’s next week.”

As he laid down the telephone, he looked over at his monitor. “Well, I’ll be damned! You were right! The provost is telling me by this official e-mail that my program is being merged into Hellbent’s so-called ‘Honors Program’ to achieve greater efficiency and increased fiscal responsibility.’ You Old Son of a Gun! You always knew what was about to happen, even, sometimes, days before it happened! Well, thanks for telling me. By the way, the one-way conversation that you just heard was about a $3,000,000,00 contribution that we had raised over the past year. Frankly, that Professor Hellbent will never see a single dollar of that donation. In fact, we may send it to another great project over in the capital city. We’ve been monitoring their results for years, and their results sometimes were better than ours. And they really help a lot more kids! Besides, my wife and I have talked often about our moving to that beautiful city.”
Understanding Why Constitutionally Speaking the Executive Branch is the Second Most Powerful Branch of the National Government

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Introduction

This explains why constitutionally speaking the Executive Branch is the second most powerful branch of the National Government. This paper takes a closer look at the main focuses of Article I, Article II, and Article III of the United States Constitution. This paper offers brief descriptions of what I think are the most important constitutional powers of the Executive Branch. This paper lists how the Framers of the United States Constitution made sure that the Executive Branch could not exercise its powers without a system of checks and balances. This paper concludes with an analysis supporting my explanation why constitutionally speaking (on paper) the Executive Branch is the second most powerful branch of the National Government.

Main Focuses of Articles I, II, and III of the United States Constitution

The constitution is a nation’s basic law. It creates political institutions, assigns or divides powers in government, and often provides certain guarantees to citizens. The United States Constitution is the document that was written in 1787 and ratified in 1788 that sets forth the institutional structure of United States government and the tasks that these institutions perform. The main focuses of Articles I, II, and III of the United States Constitution are as follows.

Article I: Legislative Branch

Article I of the United States Constitution created the Legislative Branch that is composed of the House of Representatives and the Senate. The power to make the laws was given to the Legislative Branch by the United States Constitution. I think that the Legislative Branch is the most powerful branch because it makes the laws. The Framers thought that the Legislative Branch would be the most powerful branch because it is closest to the concerns of the people. The Framers thought that the people would bring their problems to the Congress, and then the Congress would debate and resolve their problems (Mitchell, 1995).

In Federalist Paper Number 51 (1788) titled, The Structure of the Government Must Furnish the Proper Checks and Balances Between the Different Departments, James Madison stresses the need for the system of checks and balances within the Legislative Branch. James Madison asserts that in a Constitutional Republic the Legislative Branch is the strongest so it must be divided into different branches with little connection with each other as possible and with different modes of election. Before the 17th Amendment to the United States Constitution, the members of the House of Representatives were chosen directly by the people, and the members of the Senate were chosen by the state legislatures (Mitchell, 1995).

James Madison examines the structure of the House of Representatives in Federalist Paper Number 52 (1788) titled The House of Representatives and Federalist Paper Number 53 (1788) titled The Same Subject Continued: The House of Representatives. He feels that the two-year terms will provide members of the House of Representatives with enough experience, without remaining office too long, to understand national affairs and how things work in the different states and to gain some knowledge of foreign affairs. James Madison details the importance of having stability in the government for both Americans and for foreign countries and seeks to justify the organization of the United States Senate in Federalist Paper Number 62 (1788) titled The Senate and Federalist Paper Number 63 (1788) titled The Senate Continued.

Article II: Executive Branch
Article II of the United States Constitution created the Executive Branch that is composed of the President, the Vice-President, and the Bureaucracy. The power to execute the laws was given to the Executive Branch by the United States Constitution. The President is charged with enforcing the laws passed by Congress and overseeing how the bureaucracy spends the funds appropriated by Congress. I think the Executive Branch is the second most powerful branch of the national government because it must faithfully carry out the laws passed by the Congress and spend the funds appropriated by the Congress. The tension among the Framers of the United States Constitution about the nature of a Chief Executive led to the Executive Branch being the second most powerful branch. Some of the Framers wanted a strong Executive because they feared that only a strong leader could hold the new nation together, and that if the Executive had limited powers the new nation might unravel. Some of the Framers feared a strong Executive because they thought that such an Executive could become very much like King George of England (Mitchell, 1995).

In Federalist Paper Number 67 (1788) titled, The Executive Department, Alexander Hamilton discusses the powers and limitations of the Executive Branch by comparing the constitutionally limited executive powers of the president and the more extensive powers of a monarch as a ruler. Alexander Hamilton chastises opponents of the United States Constitution who believe the President is granted excessive power by being allowed to fill vacancies in the Senate. Alexander Hamilton points out that this power is limited in scope as the President's appointments expire at the end of the Senate’s next session, and permanent appointments are left to the state legislatures.

Article III: Judicial Branch

Article III of the United States Constitution created the Judicial Branch composed of the Federal Courts and the Supreme Court. The power to interpret the laws was given to the Judicial Branch by the United States Constitution. I think that the Judicial Branch has the least amount of authority in the federal government, and therefore the weakest of the three branches of the national government because it can only negate laws that seem to violate the intent of the Constitution and because does not have the power to enforce its own decisions. The United States Supreme Court has the power of judicial review or the power to determine whether acts of Congress and, by implication, the executive are in accord with the United States Constitution. The power of judicial review was established and first used by the United States Supreme Court in the Marbury v. Madison (1803) case. The United States Constitution gives the Federal Judiciary some important powers, such as the power to try federal cases and interpret the laws of the nation in the cases that they hear (Mitchell, 1995).

In Federalist Paper Number 78 (1788) titled, The Judiciary Department, Alexander Hamilton describes the Judicial Branch as the least powerful branch, discusses the importance of an independent judicial branch, and the meaning of judicial review. Alexander Hamilton also explains how federal judges should retain life terms as long as those judges exhibit good behavior. Alexander Hamilton believed that because the judiciary did not have the power to enforce its judgments, there was little concern that the judiciary would be able to overpower the other political branches because constitutionally speaking the judiciary depends on the other political branches to uphold its judgments.
Important Constitutional Powers of the Executive Branch

According to the Article II of the United States Constitution, the role of the Executive Branch (President) is to faithfully execute the laws (enforce or carry out the laws). Section 1 of Article II establishes the offices of the President and the Vice-President, and sets their terms to be four years. Presidents and Vice-Presidents are elected by the Electoral College, whereby each state has one vote for each member of Congress. Presidents and Vice-Presidents must be at least 35 years of age, must be natural-born citizens of the United States, and must be residents of the United States for at least fourteen years prior to election. Section 2 of Article II makes the President the Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces and of the militia (National Guard) of all the states. The President can have a Cabinet, can pardon criminals, can make treaties with other nations, and can pick many of the judges and other members of the government (all with the approval of the Senate). Section 3 of Article II establishes the duties of the President to give a state of the union address, to make suggestions to Congress, to act as head of state by receiving ambassadors and other heads of state, and to be sure the laws of the United States are carried out. Section 4 of Article II briefly discusses the removal of the President, called impeachment. I think that the following powers are some of the most important constitutional powers of the Executive Branch (President).

**National Security Powers**
- Serve as commander in chief of the armed forces.
- Make treaties with other nations, subject to the agreement of two-thirds of the Senate.
- Nominate ambassadors, with the agreement of a majority of the Senate.
- Receive ambassadors of other nations, thereby conferring diplomatic recognition on other governments.

**Legislative Powers**
- Present information on the state of the union to Congress.
- Recommend legislation to Congress Convene both houses of Congress on extraordinary occasions.
- Adjourn Congress if the House and Senate cannot agree on adjournment.
- Veto legislation (Congress may overrule with two-thirds vote of each house).

**Administrative Powers**
- “Take care that the laws be faithfully executed.”
- Nominate officials as provided for by Congress and with the agreement of a majority of the Senate.
- Request written opinions of administrative officials.
- Fill administrative vacancies during congressional recesses.
- Whenever there is a vacancy in the office of the Vice President, the President shall nominate a Vice President who shall take office upon confirmation by a majority vote of both Houses of Congress (25th Amendment).

**Judicial Powers**
- Grant reprieves and pardons for federal offenses (except impeachment).
- Nominate federal judges, who are confirmed by a majority of the Senate.
Constitutional Checks and Balances on the Constitutional Powers of the Executive Branch

The United States Constitution does not allow the Executive Branch to exercise its powers without a system of checks and balances, in which the powers of one branch can be challenged by one or both of the other two branches. In *Federalist Paper Number 51* (1788) titled, *The Structure of the Government Must Furnish the Proper Checks and Balances Between the Different Departments*, James Madison addresses means by which checks and balances can be created in government and also advocates a separation of powers within the national government. James Madison informs the readers of the safeguards created by the United States Constitution to maintain the separate branches of government, and to protect the rights of the people. I think that the following powers are some of the most important constitutional checks and balances on the constitutional powers of the Executive Branch (President).

*The Legislative Branch*

The Legislative Branch (Congress) checks on the Executive Branch (President) because it has the following powers (Tarr, 2008).

♦ The Congress has the sole power to enact taxes and allocate funds.
♦ The Congress has the sole power to declare war.
♦ The Congress has the power to override a Presidential veto by a two-thirds vote in both Houses of Congress.
♦ The House of Representatives has the power of impeachment, which is the power to accuse an office holder (President) of wrongdoing or charge a public official with misconduct in office.
♦ The Senate has the power to try impeachments and if an impeached office holder is convicted by the Senate, the conviction can not be pardon, and the punishment can include removal from office and may disqualify the convicted from ever holding a government office again.
♦ The Senate has the power to approve appointments of federal judges nominated by the president, and this means that the Senate helps determine who sits on the federal bench.
♦ The Senate has the power to approve appointments of department heads nominated by the president, and this means that the Senate helps determine who heads the departments of the federal bureaucracy.
♦ The Senate has the power to approve appointments of ambassadors nominated by the president, and this means that the Senate helps determine who serves as our nation’s diplomatic representatives in foreign nations.
♦ The Senate has the power to approve treaties negotiated by the president, and this means that the Senate helps determine our diplomatic relationships with other nations.
♦ The House of Representatives has the power to select the President from among the top three electoral vote getters if no one Presidential candidate receives a majority of the electoral votes (12th Amendment).
♦ The Senate has the power to select the Vice President from among the top two electoral vote getters if no one Vice-Presidential candidate receives a majority of the electoral votes (12th Amendment).
♦ The Congress has the power to approve the replacement of the Vice President because whenever there is a vacancy in the office of the Vice President, the President shall nominate a Vice President who shall take office upon confirmation by a majority vote of both Houses of Congress (25th Amendment).
The Judicial Branch

The Judicial Branch (Federal Courts) checks on the Executive Branch (President) because it has the power of judicial review. Judicial review is the power of the courts to determine whether congressional statutes as well as presidential actions are in accord with the United States Constitution. Judicial review is not an explicit power given to the courts by the United States Constitution, but it is an implied power. The power to strike down laws has been deemed an implied power derived from Articles III and VI of the United States Constitution. Article III states that judicial power shall extend to all cases in law and equity arising under the Constitution, the laws of the United States, and treaties made under their authority. Article VI declares that the United States Constitution is the supreme law of the land and the judges of every state shall be bound thereby (Jost, 2006).

Judicial review was first used in the case of *Marbury v. Madison* (1803) when the United States Supreme Court asserted its right to determine the constitutionality of a federal law as well as the meaning of the United States Constitution. No state or federal law may violate the United States Constitution and when the United States Supreme Court hears cases it can decide the constitutionality of federal law or state law under the United States Constitution. In the case of *Marbury v. Madison* (1803), the Supreme Court struck down the portion of the Judiciary Act of 1789 that had altered the United States Supreme Court's original jurisdiction from what the United States Constitution described (Jost, 2006).

Conclusion

Constitutionally speaking (at least on paper), I think the Executive Branch is the second most powerful branch of the National Government because the Congress is by far the most powerful of all the branches of the government. Congress is the representative of the people, and it has the power to set taxes, can raise armies, can declare war, can suspend habeas corpus, can impeach the President or judges, and can set laws touching the lives of every person in the nation. This is a lot of power, and the framers made sure that the power could not be wielded without balance. The Congress itself has to agree between its two houses on every law; the President checks the power of the Congress with the veto; the judiciary checks the power with judicial review. Even with these checks, the Congress is the most powerful branch on paper.

On paper, the President does not have a lot of power. He or she is the commander in chief of the armed forces and has almost exclusive power over foreign policy (though the Senate has to ratify any treaty and the Congress always has the power of the purse to influence foreign policy). The President also nominates judges and justices and maintains the cabinet, but these powers do not, in and of themselves, seem very powerful. In practice, however, the President can be very powerful, especially when the Congress and the President work together, such as when the presidency and the Congress are held by a single political party. In this case, it is common for the President to set policy that the Congress merely rubber-stamps. In such a case, the President can be said to be very powerful. If the President is very popular with the people, the Congress might not be willing to challenge the President's policies. The Constitution clearly makes the Congress the most powerful of the three branches of government. Depending on the circumstances, however, the President might have more influence on Congress than one would think based on the separation of powers outlined in the Constitution.
References


Obama Healthcare Scorecard:
The *Affordable Care Act* in Real Life

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On March 23, 2010, President Barack Obama signed into law the Affordable Care Act, and in September of 2010 the first of the law’s stages, including the new Patient’s Bill of Rights, went into effect. This paper, through comparative analysis, will examine Candidate Obama’s 2008 campaign promises for healthcare reform, President Obama’s 2010 objectives for the healthcare reform bill, the actual law as passed in 2010, and the current reality of the law’s implementation. This paper will answer the following questions: What is the history of our healthcare system leading us to healthcare reform? Where we are with this law as new stages continue to arrive? And, how is it actually affecting the American people? In particular, how do Americans perceive the landmark law as it relates to needed healthcare insurance reforms, costs, and the quality of healthcare for all Americans, now and in the future? The answers are important because public ignorance of what is really in the law has serious political implications and potential impacts upon American society’s healthcare providers and consumers.

To better understand the healthcare crisis of the United States and why it is that presidential candidates and presidents have proposed healthcare reform, it is necessary to examine the historical development leading the nation toward healthcare reform. In the United States, we never really had an organized healthcare system; it was a non-system. Americans value rugged individualism, and thus it has been every man and woman and child for himself or herself, even in respect to healthcare coverage (Rivers, 2008; Quadagno, 2004). World War II accidentally gave us our process for insuring workers. In the 1940’s, with so many men and women serving in the armed services, the country suffered a labor shortage. Yet it was illegal under wartime law for employers to offer higher wages as a hiring inducement, so companies tried offering health benefits instead. And the federal tax code was amended to give employers financial incentives to keep on supplying their employees with health insurance. After the war, Veterans had both the GI bill and health benefits. But, as time progressed, the non-system began unraveling as there were progressively fewer veterans, and subsequent veterans had inferior health insurance. Post war, the technological boom produced new, highly expensive medical equipment and treatments; labor unions led strikes for increased health benefits; and healthcare costs consequently began soaring upward (Quadagno, 2004; Rivers, 2008).

At this time in the United States, healthcare insurance for the individual is generally purchased either by the employer or the individual, with the exception of those persons on Medicare, Medicaid, military or Federal Government insurance. This contrasts with virtually all other industrialized democracies of the world, where healthcare is granted to the individual by the government or through a government-mandated program. In other industrialized countries, there is national solidarity arising out of World War II that reflects the belief that everyone is on the same team and deserving of medical care (Rivers, 2008). This difference of systems between the United States and the countries with universal healthcare insurance has significant impact upon whether an individual can receive treatment for injuries or illness, and the quality of that treatment (Rivers, 2008).

Historically, the United States came close to adopting a universal healthcare insurance coverage system on two occasions. Once was in 1945, when President Harry S. Truman proposed it and 75% of the public supported it. Then there was 1993, when President Bill Clinton endorsed the HMO-based version crafted by Hilary Clinton (Quadagno, 2004; Rivers, 2008). Both times, traditional insurance companies and the American Medical Association responded with huge fear campaigns charging that Americans would get socialized medicine,
lose the right to choose their own doctors, and have long waiting lines. In other industrialized
countries, where insurance industries were less mature, universal national healthcare became the
norm.

In the United States during Obama’s 2008 Presidential campaign, approximately 47
million Americans at one time or another had no health insurance, and at least 16 million more
were officially designated as underinsured (Rivers, 2008; Weinstock, 2007). According to the
Rivers’ Health Insurance Anxiety Index, the uninsured are 15% of the population, and the
underinsured are another 12% of the population, meaning that 27% of the population has health
insurance anxiety (Rivers, 2008).

The preceding data of the Rivers’ Health Insurance Anxiety Index directs us to the
existing crisis. The uninsured or underinsured persons frequently obtain their healthcare in
hospital emergency departments when they are having a serious illness or injury. They receive
no coordination of care, no preventive illness measures, and cannot afford to pay the expenses.
The hospitals absorb the cost and attempt to pass it onto paying patients. According to the
National Coalition on Healthcare (2008), one person in American declares bankruptcy every 30
seconds due to expenses from illness or injury.

Thus, the stage was set for healthcare reform during the 2008 Presidential campaign.

Methodology

The methodology being utilized for this paper is that of a comparative analysis between
what candidate Obama stated in his healthcare goals in 2008-2010 and the outcome. The
procedure utilized is the retrieving of data from journals, papers, and media, and conducting a
comparative analysis.

Results and Discussion

Barack Obama, the Candidate and the President

As the candidates for President in 2008 proposed various plans to potentially address the
country’s healthcare crisis, candidate Obama was heard and seen in the media talking about his
plans. His campaign produced a television ad on healthcare reform delineating two supposedly
undesirable extremes that he promised to avoid. The ad stated that on the one hand we have
government run healthcare with high taxes, while on the other hand we have out-of-control
insurance companies without rules denying healthcare coverage. In the ad, Obama says that he
finds the two extremes wrong, and proposes a middle ground. Candidate Obama is for: 1)
 Keeping employer-provided coverage; 2) Keeping your own doctor; 3) Taking on the insurance
companies to bring costs down; 4) Preventing insurance companies from denying coverage
because of pre-existing conditions; and 5) Promoting preventative care. The ad closes by saying
that this is common sense for the change we need, and that it is paid for by BarackObama.com
(Obama, 2008).

President Obama was elected in 2008 proposing a dual track system for acquiring
healthcare insurance from the federal government. The first track would be similar to the existing
Federal Employees Health Benefit Plan, but available to the general public. For the second track,
Obama planned to create the National Health Insurance Exchange, requiring private insurance
plans to match the content of the federal plan and assure eligibility for every American
regardless of pre-existing conditions. He said he would require that parents insure their children.
Other than that, Obama would not require the uninsured to purchase insurance. He proposed to provide subsidies to enable everyone who wants insurance to buy it. He said he would leave intact the for-profit insurance system. Despite his earlier assertions that he was for universal coverage, the word “universal” never appeared anywhere in his campaign materials. Because of the numerous variables and uncertainties inherent in the proposal, there was no way to determine accurately the cost of implementing and running Obama’s program.

**President Obama’s Eight Objectives: Met or Not?**

There are eight objectives or principles of President Obama’s which he said should be met by the new healthcare law. These objectives were determined by the President approximately six weeks before the bill’s passage.

The first objective of President Obama is to contain the escalating rate of healthcare spending from the current rate of 2% to 1% above GDP (Dentzer, 2010). (GDP is basically all the spending that goes on in a nation. Definition of GDP: “The total market value of all final goods and services produced in a country in a given year, equal to total consumer, investment and government spending, plus the value of exports, minus the value of imports” [InvestorWords, 2008; Rivers, 2008]). The GDP comparisons spent on healthcare, according to the Organizations for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) (OECD, 2008), Japan spends 8% of its GDP on healthcare; the United Kingdom, 8.3%; Canada, 8.5%; Germany, 10.7%; France, 10.9%; and the United States, 15.3%. That means that Americans are spending roughly 90% more on healthcare than the Japanese and about 40% more than the French.

Canadians are spending just $3,165 per capita annually for healthcare, whereas Americans spend more than twice as much, topping $7,000 annually; and, to add insult to injury, the Canadians are getting superior health results by virtually every measurable standard (Medical Minute, 2007, April 12; Rivers, 2008).

At the current rate -- 4% per year since 1980 (Kaiser Family Foundation report, 2011, as cited in Bush, 2011) -- if America does not get control over its runaway healthcare spending, in 75 years from now all the nation’s economy will be going to healthcare and nothing would be available for such essentials as education or defense. Families’ main concern is that overall, insurance premiums have more than doubled since 1999, a 131% increase. The tools to curb spending down to 1% beyond the GDP (Dentzer, 2010) are in legislation. The tools include, reducing dollars spent on lawsuits and unnecessary tests; reducing administrative costs of insurance so that 80% goes to medical care; and instituting pilot projects such as accountable care organizations, medical homes, and bundled payment (Dentzer, 2010). Also, the Congressional Budget Office states that legislation is in place to reduce the growth of Medicare spending (per beneficiary, adjusting for overall inflation) from about 4% per year for the last 20 years to about 2% per year for the next 20 years.

The second objective of President Obama is that of expanding Medicaid. Medicaid is to be increased to cover the poor with medical expenses at 1.3X the federal poverty level. Since 1964 only half of the poor have been covered (Dentzer, 2010).

The third objective is to aim for universality of coverage. The estimate of those not covered with healthcare insurance is now at 50 million with the recession adding 3-6 million uninsured (Dentzer, 2010).

The fourth objective of the President is to provide portability of coverage between jobs. There would be no pre-existing condition rules to coverage. One would be able to go on the website and shop for the insurance needed. Standardized market places and national plans would
be available. There would be subsidies available to families with incomes up to $90,000. This objective would enable one to have choice of physician and health plans (Dentzer, 2010).

The fifth objective is to promote disease prevention. Conditions and diseases such as obesity, sedentary lifestyles, and smoking drive healthcare costs in this country. 86% of Americans will be overweight or obese by 2030 at the current rate of weight gain (Obesity. 2008, July). The intent of this objective is to provide disease prevention measures.

The sixth objective of the President is to provide meaningful use of electronic health records by 2014 (Dentzer, 2010). The sharing of patient records between healthcare providers in a confidential atmosphere would reduce care fragmentation and resultant expenses. Payments made to Medicare and Medicaid providers would become transparent and thus potentially reduce expenses caused by fraud.

The seventh objective of the President is to focus on quality and patient safety (Dentzer, 2010). The Institute of Medicine (IOM) Report in 1999 indicated that 44,000-100,000 avoidable deaths occurred in hospitals in 1997. Many initiatives can be implemented to reduce this error rate, including electronic medication records.

The eighth and last objective of the President is to achieve long-term sustainability. The plan must pay for itself by reducing the level of cost growth, improving productivity and dedication additional sources of revenue. The Congressional Budget Office estimates that the cost of healthcare reform would be $1-1.6 trillion (2001-2010) (Dentzer, 2010).

The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA) of 2010, as discussed subsequently by the authors, meets the stated eight objectives or principles asserted by the President (Dentzer, 2010). The question remains how the ACA will actually be implemented.

The Reality of Implementation

The Patient’s Bill of Rights component of the ACA went into effect on September 23, 2010. According to Greg Nelson, White House Office of Public Engagement (Nelson, 2010), the Patient’s Bill of Rights in the ACA would end insurance abuses and put us in control of our health. The abuses he referred to include the insurance companies upping our rates, denying coverage, or just dropping patients outright. Nelson identified that the Patient’s Bill of Rights would mean: 1) No more discrimination against children with pre-existing conditions; 2) No more lifetime coverage limits on insurance and no caps on insurance; 3) Young adults, age 26 years and under, could now stay on their parent’s plan if their job doesn’t provide healthcare benefits; 4) Free preventive care, so that if you buy or join a new plan, the insurance company must provide mammograms, colonoscopies, immunizations, pre-natal and baby care without charging you any fees; 5) Freedom to choose your own doctor in your own network, provided you buy or join a new plan; 6) No more restrictions on emergency care: Provided you buy or join a new plan, insurance companies will not be permitted to charge you more for out-of-network emergency services. According to the White House, it is intended that the ACA will provide basic direction to cut costs, begin to get our fiscal budget in order, and give us peace of mind.

On January 1, 2011, a number of the law’s changes in the way we receive our healthcare took effect. ABC-TV journalist Brian Moore neatly summarized them as the following: 1) Insurance companies cannot cap off how much care we receive; 2) Insurance companies cannot discriminate against children with pre-existing conditions; 3) The employer must spend 80-85% of the insurance premium on services related to the medical care; 4) Part D of the insurance for the Medicare client, the so called “donut hole”, is reduced -- the seniors will receive a 50% discount on brand names and smaller amounts on generic drugs; 5) Senior preventative care
benefits are free, such as mammograms, colonoscopies, and immunizations; 6) Seniors can talk with their doctors about end-of-life care (This is the item that the Tea Party had erroneously referred to as “death squads” for the elderly); 7) Those with Flexible Account Plans will have restrictions on over-the-counter drugs; 8) Tax credits are offered to small businesses to make employee coverage more affordable. These Tax credits can total up to 35% of employer premium contributions. Also, there are tax credits to small non-profits up to 25%. In 2014, there will be tax credits up to 50% of employer premium contributions and up to 35% for small non-profits; 9) In 2014, there will be the mandate that everyone buy health insurance, with subsidies for those in poverty; 10) In 2014, there will be Insurance Exchanges. Customers will be able to shop for insurance or exchange their employer’s insurance. It is expected that the uninsured will be using the Exchange and that it will work like the Government Insurance Exchange available to the Federal Government employees.

One Year Anniversary of the ACA

The ACA turned one year on March 23, 2011. There was no major fanfare although the Obama administration quietly celebrated the event. There have been legal challenges with more than 24 states having signed lawsuits attempting to overturn the law and there have been victories in Florida and Virginia. The law has been ruled constitutional by three federal judges whereas two judges have ruled against it (Barry, 2011). Some states led by Republicans are refusing to implement the law. It will likely be the Supreme Court that will have the final say. Government officials have implemented some of the ACA provisions and are laying the groundwork for the parts of the law yet to arrive in 2014.

According to Hellerman (2011), the most significant changes in the law are that 3.4 million people age 26 and under became eligible to sign up under their parents’ insurance policies, according to the group Families USA, which supports the law, and that many seniors will pay hundreds of dollars less for prescription drugs this year due to changes in the “donut hole.”

Additionally, there are more modest changes, including the interim plan to help people with chronic illnesses (Hellerman, 2011). The Federal government has plans in 23 states to help them obtain coverage, and there are other states with their own plans. Under the federal reform, assistance can be given to an American citizen or legal resident with health problems who has had no insurance for the past six months or more. As of February 2, 2011, the Department of Health and Human Services finds that only 12,347 persons have signed up nationwide. The reason given is that the coverage is very expensive. Also of modest impact is the subsidies provision which helps small businesses provide coverage for their workers. A recent survey by the resources consulting firm, Towers Watson, found businesses are planning to cut back in 2012, and that from 2007-2010, the number of employers confident about their ability to provide healthcare fell from 73% to 38% (Hellerman, 2011).

There are concerns about the total healthcare spending cost, and figures are not yet available. Critic Douglas Holz-Eakin, formerly McCain’s 2008 top campaign adviser, says that the law has not curbed the expenses. Insurance terms have gotten worse because healthcare costs continue to rise and the recession worsened the risk pools (Hellerman, 2011). For a comparison of costs among a variety of countries, we can consider how much a modern, average, hospital room costs. The cost in dollars per day for a stay in a hospital room in a full-service hospital in a sample of industrialized countries: England, $164; France, $168; Germany, $172; Japan, $181; Canada, $183; Switzerland, $192; and the United States, $1,183 per day (Rivers, 2008; WHO,
2008). Americans obviously can ill afford to continue paying nearly ten times what people pay in universal healthcare countries for the same quality of hospital room. It will be of great interest to see to what extent the Obama reforms mitigate this financial nightmare.

**Conclusion**

Although the one-year healthcare scorecard is incomplete at this time because many of the significant provisions become law in 2014, its 4th anniversary, the new law provides a beginning with some fundamental rights implemented, such as no pre-existing conditions for children. Those items due to become law in 2014 include the following requirements: Private insurers must cover ill people; individuals have to carry coverage; subsidies are provided to help buy the coverage; and the Exchanges become available (although no one can anticipate accurately how many Americans may choose to use them to acquire or exchange their insurance). Overall, the Obama Administration considers all eight of his original objectives to be met assuming the law is not repealed before 2014.

The Congressional vote to repeal the ACA by the new GOP-controlled House of Representatives in January 2011 is seen as being largely symbolic since the Senate was expected not to pass the repeal. Many GOP House members made speeches boasting that their vote for repeal represented the will of the vast majority of the American public (ABC Evening News, 2011, January). The next day, satirist Stephen Colbert made his humorous reply on The Colbert Report (Colbert, 2011, January 24), presenting a CBS News Poll (January 15-19, 2011) reported in the New York Times in which 40% of Americans indicated a desire to see the healthcare law repealed (CBS News/New York Times Poll, 2011, January 20). And 40% constitutes a majority, crowed Colbert, echoing the Republican line.

In fact, more Americans would prefer to keep the healthcare legislation than repeal it by a margin of +8%. And support for repeal is dropping: in November, 2010, 45% wanted to repeal the law, whereas in January, 2011, only 40% said to repeal. In 2010, 44% said to keep the ACA, whereas in 2011, 48% said to keep the law (CBS News/New York Times Poll, 2011, January 20). It is not surprising that the differences in preference fall along political party lines. Most Republicans would like to see the healthcare law abolished, while the majority of Democrats prefer to keep the law. (See Table 1 and Table 2.) The level of ignorance about the law is substantial, as evidenced by the fact that 22% of Americans think that the law has actually already been repealed as cited in the February poll by the nonpartisan Kaiser Foundation (Barry, 2011, April).

Considering that this country is so divided in its opinion on whether the government should provide healthcare to its citizens, the relatively modest Obama reforms may be the most that a new law could reasonably offer at this time. Of course, the government already provides healthcare to seniors with Medicare, to the military, to government employees, to the extremely poor with Medicaid, to the citizens of Massachusetts, Oregon, and Hawaii. Yet some say there should be no government healthcare for the working poor, neither for the underinsured, nor for those going bankrupt because illness or injury. “On balance, most of us conclude that this is the best set of health reforms possible in a country that is very deeply divided in its belief in government…We struggle with this as a people” (Dentzer, 2010, May 28).
Implications

It is impossible to predict the future, but as Americans experience and learn more about the components of the ACA and what it means to them, they become less fearful and more satisfied with the ACA. The authors, a nursing administrator and an educator over a number of decades, find that for the United States to equal the healthcare standards of the rest of the industrialized democracies of the world it would be necessary to adopt vast reforms involving comprehensive basic health insurance for every American from birth to death, impartial auditing to prevent fraud and abuse of services, liability protection for providers of care, freedom for private and public medical institutions to compete fairly for the patient’s business, instantaneous and sufficient reimbursement for patients and providers alike, including hospitals and other community agencies, safe and adequate nurse staffing that promotes a climate of safety and professionalism, and a formula of reward for excellence in service and continuous improvement in quality, value, and cost control. All of these seemingly utopian measures already exist elsewhere, and, by implication, can exist in America.

Back in 1908, America’s most popular author, Jack London, was widely denounced as an evil Socialist for advocating that the United States establish across the nation such things as public utilities (the gas company, the electric company), public hospitals, public highways, and even free public schooling beyond the eighth grade for everyone (Rivers, 2008). Today, slightly over 100 years later, even our most conservative patriots support every item on that agenda, and we all feel as if public utilities and the rest have always been part of America. A century from now, in the year 2111, will Americans look back and see universal healthcare coverage as one of those old, traditional, red-white-and-blue American institutions that must have always been with us?

The authors’ future research includes continuing with the monitoring of the ACA as it is rolled out for implementation. Will the law be fully implemented including the requirements for 2014 or will the Supreme Court take actions to the contrary? Will there be fine tuning of the law, and how will the public accept it? Additionally, the authors will survey graduate and undergraduate students as to their satisfaction with the ACA.

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Table 1

**Health Care Law: Should Congress Try To...?**

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<td>Keep it</td>
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Table 2

**Health Care Law: Should Congress Try To...?**

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<th>Republicans</th>
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<td>16%</td>
<td>38%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Keep it</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>77%</td>
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Phonological Errors Observed in Adult Monolingual English-Speaking American Learners of Amharic as a Second Language in Ethiopia

Samuel M. Wube
University of Wollega
Abstract:
Amharic is the official language of Ethiopia. Foreigners, who come to Ethiopia as missionaries, development agents, researchers, etc, learn Amharic and other Ethiopian languages of their interest in order to communicate with Ethiopians. The purpose of this particular presentation is to examine the phonological situation of adult monolingual American English speaking learners of Amharic as a second language in Ethiopia. The information is based on a thorough research study conducted by the author at a school in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, where Americans and other foreigners learn Amharic and other Ethiopian languages. Samples were selected via purposive sampling technique from four level of competence. The researcher employed Cross-sectional Research Design, and the elicitation techniques were both Structural Natural Conversation and Unstructured Natural Conversation. The errors were analyzed quantitatively based on Creative Construction and Contrastive Analysis theories. The study revealed that the errors are both developmental and interference in nature. The finding has significant contribution for pedagogical purposes such as textbook preparation and curriculum development and the expansion of the role of Amharic for Ethiopian socioeconomic development.

1. Statement of the Problem
Although Amharic is taught as a second language to numerous foreigners in many language training schools in Addis Ababa, adequate research has not been carried out to investigate Amharic as a second language as related to the phonological errors of the learners. The present study, specifically investigates the phonological situations that are observed in adult monolingual English-speaking American learners of Amharic as a second language in order to identify errors and related issues that require a particular attention in the future improvement of the teaching/learning process of Amharic.

2. Objective of the Study
The objectives of study were: 1) To identify, categorize and describe the learners’ phonological errors; 2) To suggest remedies for the phonological errors; 2) To provide information on the learners’ phonological competence to teachers, textbook writers, and others; and 3 To suggest remedies in reducing phonological errors

3. Literature Review
Numerous foreigners from different ethno-linguistic groups come to Ethiopia as researchers, missionaries and tourists etc. Many of these people are eager to learn Amharic in order to communicate, work, and share experiences with the local people. To satisfy these needs, some individuals and NGOs have established language training schools in Addis Ababa. In many of these schools, the curriculum and the materials are not designed based on second language research findings. In fact, most of the schools treat Amharic as a foreign language. As stated by scholars such as Littlewoods (1984) and Ellis (1994), second and foreign language teaching differs in: teaching methodology, material preparation, curriculum design and teachers training. Scholars such as Wilkins (1972) and Yule (1996) argue that a second language is a language which is learned in addition to first language in the area where the second language is used as a wider means of communication of the local people outside the classroom.
Some applied linguists such as Fries (1945) and Lado (1957) tend to assume that first language is a major factor in second language acquisition and performance. They write that they can predict those linguistic structures that will or will not cause difficulty in learning second language by systematically comparing the structures and cultures of the learners’ first language and second
language. However, this hypothesis was discredited except at the level of pronunciation (Borden, Gerber and Milsark, 1983). On the other hand, Dulay and Burt (1973) show that errors are the result of processing strategies a learner uses to recognize and produce a new language rather than first language interference. From their findings they formulated the Creative Construction Theory. In any context, research on the role of first language is important for a better understanding of the nature of second language learning. Due to the remarkable difference between Amharic and English in linguistic features, evidence of first language might be easily noticeable. Hence, this study was designed to examine both interference and developmental phonological errors.

Making errors is natural in the processes of learning first, second and foreign languages. However, behaviorists do not accept errors as an indicator of learning progress; rather they see errors as unacceptable act of learners. They argue that errors must be avoided. However, the mentalists believe that errors are implications of language learning processes in the learners’ mind, and they treat errors as normal phenomena of learning and also good indicators of the learners’ language learning progress (Brown, 1994; Ellis, 1994). In this particular study, both Creative Construction and Contrastive Analysis theories are taken as working framework to analyze the phonological errors which are observed in the target group.

4. Research Methodology

The target school had many years of experience in teaching Ethiopian languages in an integrated package for foreigners through grammar method. Furthermore, after assessing the problems of its curriculum, it has adapted a new approach of teaching second language: Growing Participator Approach. This approach has six phases. Each phase gives emphasis for the socio-cultural nature of the language learning. The researcher selected forty-five adult monolingual American English-speaking learners of Amharic as second language via purposive sampling technique. The period of their formal exposure for Amharic ranges from a month to ten months. Cross-sectional research design was employed in this study because it assists to investigate the development of second language learners’ language at a given point (Dulay and Burt, 1982).

The researcher collected the data primarily using Unstructured Natural Communication (UNC). In this technique, he communicated with the subjects naturally without intention to elicit specific structures. Structured Natural Communication (SNC) was also applied as supplementary tool to collect the data. Dulay and Burt explain that, “In cross-sectional studies, the structured communication task is typically used because it is fairly short and can be administered to a large sample within a reasonable time period.” (1982: 249). The researcher also used digital audio recorder while eliciting the data from UNC through: picture description, interaction with the students, free conversation, storytelling, and classroom speech. Then the phonological errors were analyzed and described in two categories: interference and developmental errors.

4.1. Interference Errors

Speech sounds have their own place of articulations and manner of articulations. Some sounds are also found only in a particular language but not in another. For instance, the most common features of the Amharic sound system are the weak indeterminate stress; the frequent gemination of consonants; the frequency of central vowels; and the use of an automatic helping vowel (Bender 1976: 75). Most of these features are not commonly found in English sound system. On the contrary, stress is prominent in English unlike in Amharic. Hence, these kinds of differences
between Amharic and English can be potential causes for interference errors. Some of the most common phonological interference errors of the learners are discussed below.

Amharic has five ejective sounds: /p'/, /t'/, /k'/, /č'/ and /s'/ (Baye, 1994; Getahun, 1997). The learners could not pronounce these sounds as seen from the following data. For instance, they pronounce the words: /p'ap'p'as/ ‘bishop’, /hɪns'a/ ‘building’, /mat'ta/ ‘He came.’, /ruč'č'a/ ‘running’, /k'әlәm/ ‘ink’, /wanč'a/ ‘cup’ as /papas/, /hinsa/, /mәta/, /ruča/, /kәlәm/ and /wanča/ respectively. This illustrates that they could not pronounce the ejective sounds of Amharic: /p', /t', /k', /s' and /č'. The pattern of their substitution is as follows: /p'/ by /p/, /t'/ by /t/, /k'/ by /k/, /s' by /s/ and /č' by /č/. Ejectives and their non-ejective counterparts have some similarities in their manner of articulation and some differences in place of articulation. All ejective sounds are voiceless; however, /p', /t' and /k'/ are stops and /s' and /č' are affricates. In fact, in their place of articulation, the following differences are observed: /t' and /s' are alveolar ones, but /p', /k' and /č' are bilabial, velar and palatal respectively. Getahun (1997) explains that /p/, /t/, /k/, /s/ and /č/ are the non-ejective counterparts of them. Contrarily, English does not have ejective sounds. This seems to cause the substitutions of the ejective sounds with their nearest non-ejective counterparts because the non-ejective sounds exist both in Amharic and in English, and have many common features with the ejective ones. For instance, /p'/ and /p/ share more features than /b/. However, /p'/ is [+ejective] but /p/ is not. When we compare /b/ with /p', it differs from /p/ in two features: [+voiced] and [-ejective]. The difference between /p'/ and /b/ is greater than the difference between /p' and /p/. Thus, the learners substitute /p/ for /p'/ rather than using /b/. In the same way /d/ is the [+voiced] counterpart of /t/ and /t', but /t'/ is not only [-voiced] but also [+ejective]. The only difference between /t' and /t/ is, the former [+ejective], but the later is not.

Furthermore /s/ differs from /t' in two features: [-stop] and [-ejective]. /t/ has three features in common with /t'/: [-voiced], [+alveolar] and [+stop], so that the learners preferred /t/ instead of /d/ and /s/ to substitute /t'/. In the case of /k'/, it shares two common features with /g/: [+velar] and [+stop], however, /k' and /k/ have three features in common: [-voiced], [+velar] and [+stop]. Place of articulation is common across these three sounds. /g/ is different from the rest in phonation; and /k'/ is distinct from /k/ and /g/ in [+ejective]. From this analysis, one can conclude that due to the highest similarity between /k/ and /k', the learners used /k/ in place of /k'/ while speaking Amharic. In another category /s/, /s'/ and /z/ are alveolar fricative sounds. Moreover, /s/ and /s'/ are similar in phonation because both of them are [-voiced]; however, /s/ is [-ejective]. The sound /z/ differs from /s'/ in two features: [+voiced] and [-ejective]. When one compares the degree of similarity among these three sounds, /s/ is the nearest to /s'/. That is why, the learners pronounce /s/ in place of /s'/ while speaking Amharic. Lastly, /č'/, /č/, /ʃ/ and /š/ are palatal. However, the first three [+affricate] and the forth one is [-affricate]. Except /ʃ/, all of them are [-voiced] sounds. Another difference among /č'/, /č/, /ʃ/ and /š/ is that /č/, /ʃ/ and /š/ are [-ejective] whereas /č'/ is [+ejective]. Thus, /č'/ has three features in common with /č'/: [-voiced], [+palatal] and [+affricate]. That is why the learners tended to use /č'/ in place of /č'/. Generally, the learners substitute the ejective sounds by the [-voiced] counterparts of them (/p/, /t/, /k/, /s/ and /č') rather than the [+voiced] ones (/b/, /d/, /g/, /z/ and /ʃ/) since the formers have most common features with their ejective counterpart parts than the later ones.

Gemination is another interference error. Sounds in a given language may vary in length of time they take for production. If the non-geminated sound takes time ‘i’ then the geminated one may take ‘i+t’ time. This means one requires more time to produce the earlier one. Gemination is one of the distinctive features of Amharic (Bender, 1976). In Amharic, the presence or absence of
geminated sound in a given word may cause meaning disparity; however, the learners regularly uttered both the geminate and the non-geminate counterpart of it in the same way as observed in the following pair of words: /bәla/ ‘Say!’; bәlla/ ‘He ate.’ as /bәla/, /alә/ ‘He stated.’; /allә/ ‘He/It exists.’ as /alә/.

4.2. Developmental Errors
Paltalization is one of the phonological processes in Amharic. If a second person singular feminine imperative form of the verb which ends with alveolar sound in a verb final position is followed by the front vowel /i/ or /e/, the alveolar sound is changed into palatal sound, and this process is called complete palatalization (Baye 1994). Baye (1994) further explains that the difference between alveolar and palatal sounds is [+high]. This means that the palatal sounds are [+high] but the alveolar ones are [-high]. Therefore, if one say the alveolar sounds are changed into palatal sounds, one means that they are changed from [-high] into [+high]. This change also comes due to the presence of the alveolar preceding the [+high] sound. The learners do not follow this rule as observed from the following data. They uttered /gotti/ instead of [gottɨčɪ] ‘pull!’; /wisәdi/ instead of [wissәǰi] ‘take!’ and /siti/ instead of [sič’č’i] ‘give!’. However, if native Amharic speakers want to construct second person feminine singular imperative form and if the last sound of the verb is alveolar, the alveolar sound is completely changed into palatal due to the influence of the [+high] vowel /i/. The pattern of this change is: /t/ to /č/, /d/ to /ǰ/, /t’/ to /č’, /s/ to /š/, /z/ to /ž/, /s’/ to /č’/, /n/ to /ň/, /l/ to /j/ and /r/ to ř. The learners do not apply this pattern and they simply utter the alveolar sounds and the [+high] vowel separately. This seems to be one of the developmental errors.

Sometimes different words may have relatively similar sound arrangements. This similarity makes it difficult to differentiate and to use those words properly. As a result, semantic problems arise in the communication of the interlocutors. The following pairs are observed being very difficult for the learners: /šurruba/ ‘Ethiopian hair style’; /šorba/ ‘sup’, /arba/ ‘forty’; /arb/ ‘Friday’, /ɨsr/ ‘bound’; /assr/ ‘ten’. The pairs have high similarities in pronunciation and the learners find it difficult to differentiate. As a result, they make errors by using them interchangeably. This simply seems to be a developmental error.

5. Conclusion and Recommendation:
The study revealed that: (i) most of the phonological errors were caused by mother tongue interference; (ii) others are the result of omission. The latter one seems the result of developmental errors which reflects the learners’ attempts to construct hypothesis about Amharic sound system. Some ambiguous errors also observed in the learners’ language. They made interference errors in the form of substituting ejective sounds with their voiceless non-ejective counterparts in the following pattern: /p’/ by /p/, /t’/ by /t/, /k’/ by /k/, /s’/ by /s/ and /č’/ by /č/. Furthermore, one of the most common developmental errors is omission of the palatalization process in the construction of a second person feminine imperative form of a verb which ends with an alveolar sound followed by the front vowel. The phonological errors such as: substituting the ejective sounds by the non-ejective counterparts and problem of germination are focalized by the learners. These errors were observed in almost all of the informants, however, several of the developmental errors were observed in phase three and four learners. The first important step to teach Amharic for the target group is defining the status of the language, either as a second or as foreign language. The researcher believes that Amharic should be taught as a second language for foreigners who learn it in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. As far as
tackling the problem of substitution of the ejective sounds by the non-ejective counterparts is concerned, one of the feasible solutions can be teaching and drilling them in minimal pairs in different positions of the word. For instance, /dɨnk/ ‘surprising’ vs. /dɨnk/ ‘dwarf’; /bәkәlә/ ‘it grew.’ vs. /bәkәkәlә/ ‘it spoiled.’ To minimize the interference errors, using audio materials which contain the expressions and utterances of native speakers of Amharic that include the targeted sounds in a systematic way can be very helpful. To teach geminated sounds, it is advisable to have a list of the minimal pairs which contain geminated and non-geminated sounds. It may also be important to record them so that the students can hear and practice them.

Developmental errors are normal in second language learning. In this case, teachers should not consider them as failure of the learners. Instead, they should treat these errors as indicators of the learners’ language learning process. Second language teachers should be knowledgeable on the difference between the Amharic learners’ linguistic competence and their performance errors. Teacher’s assessment of their students should be based on the classification of errors as interference and developmental. Teachers can also employ contrastive error analysis techniques while teaching Amharic as it is apparent that the learners’ mother tongue (English) interferes with their use of Amharic. Above all, it is imperative that schools teaching Amharic as a second language should make continuous effort in preparing appropriate and practical curriculum, textbooks, audiovisual and related materials that may enhance the teaching/learning process of Amharic as a second language.

References:


Transforming Teacher Education:  
The National Educational Technology Plan  

Constance Wyzard  
Boise State University
Introduction

The overall goal of the National Educational Technology Plan (NETP, 2010) is a transformation of American Education with the authors of the plan espousing “revolutionary transformation rather than evolutionary tinkering.” The plan places technology at the core of this revolution with technology-based learning and assessment systems as pivotal in improving student learning and generating data to improve the educational system at all levels. The question for teacher educators then is, “How do we transform teacher education so teachers are at the forefront of the revolution?” This paper discusses the 2010 National Educational Technology Plan and the implications for teacher educators.

Technology Planning at the National Level

Beginning with the Clinton-Gore administration, planning for technology in education has been a focus for the Office of Technology with a national plan published approximately every four to six years. The first plan *Getting America’s Students Ready for the 21st Century: Meeting the Technology Literacy Challenge* (U.S. Department of Education, 1996), called for “technological literacy” advocating basic computer skills, access to hardware and software, and connecting classrooms to the “information superhighway”. The goal was to prepare teachers and students for the 21st century with some discussion about the current "digital revolution" and the learning opportunities available through technology.

The 2000 NETP, *e-Learning--Putting a World-Class Education at the Fingertips of All Children* (U.S. Department of Education, 2000) reinforced the 1996 goals that promoted teacher training, technology skill development, and internet access. In the new plan, research and evaluation were recognized as pivotal to improving technology for teaching and learning: additionally, there was an emphasis on the role of networked applications and digital content in transforming teaching and learning. The 2000 NETP worked off the premise that technology was now available in the schools and that the next step would be to fully utilize the capabilities afforded by e-learning.

One of the major influences in the development of the third NETP, *Toward A New Golden Age In American Education: How the Internet, the Law and Today’s Students Are Revolutionizing Expectations* (U.S. Department of Education, 2004), was the No Child Left Behind law requiring states and school districts to improve the performance of all students by 2014 based on rigorous testing. Given the capability of technology to transform teaching and learning and the funding of technology over the years, the public expected marked improvements in student achievement. The reality was that technology was not being used consistently and that, “...in most schools, it is business as usual. Computers are enclosed in computer rooms rather than being a central part of the learning experience.” Even the U.S. Secretary of Education, Rod Paige, voiced his frustration, “Education is the only business still debating the usefulness of technology. Schools remain unchanged for the most part, despite numerous reforms and increased investments in computers and networks.”

The 2010 NETP, *Transforming American education: Learning Powered by Technology* (U.S. Department of Education) calls for “revolutionary transformation rather than evolutionary tinkering” leveraging technology “to provide engaging and powerful learning experiences, content, and resources and assessments that measure student achievement in more complete, authentic, and meaningful ways.” According to the U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan, the purpose of the NETP is to “dramatically improve teaching and learning, personalize
instruction and ensure that the educational environments we offer to all students keep pace with the 21st century.” The plan encourages educators to adopt a 21st century model of learning powered by technology focusing on five essential areas: learning, assessment, teaching, infrastructure, and productivity.

Learning
As was the case in the 2004 NETP, the 2010 plan is tailored to address the needs of today’s students who have grown up with technology and for whom technology is central to their environment:

Many students’ lives today are filled with technology that gives them mobile access to information and resources 24/7, enables them to create multimedia content and share it with the world, and allows them to participate in online social networks where people from all over the world share ideas, collaborate, and learn new things. (p. 4)

Given the rich technological experiences of today’s students, learning can be more engaging and, more importantly, learning resources are available “on demand.” The authors of the plan explain that the “challenge for our education system is to leverage the learning sciences and modern technology to create engaging, relevant, and personalized learning experiences for all learners that mirror students’ daily lives and the reality of their futures.”

The plan recommends that students are empowered to take control of their own learning and that at the core of this learning are the competencies necessary for success in the 21st century: critical thinking, complex problem solving, collaboration, and multimedia communication. Moreover, students need to use real-world tools used by professionals. To become “more productive members of a globally competitive workforce,” students require learning opportunities that feature the use of such tools as wikis and blogs to facilitate communication and collaboration. To develop 21st century expertise, students must be able to tackle real-world problems using digital content for research, design tools, and inquiry and visualization tools. To ensure student learning and attainment of competencies, a comprehensive assessment process is an essential component.

Assessment
A driving theme of the 2010 NETP is the need for student learning and the attainment of 21st century competencies utilizing technology-based assessments to facilitate and streamline that process. In the discussion about the role of assessment and learning, the authors report:

Technology-based assessments that combine cognitive research and theory about how students think with multimedia, interactivity, and connectivity make it possible to directly assess these types of skills. And we can do so within the context of relevant societal issues and problems that people care about in everyday life. (p. 5)

The plan outlines an assessment process that systematically collects student learning data to improve learning outcomes and productivity. Also recommended is the need for training and tool support for educators so they can manage the assessment process, analyze data, and take appropriate action. Recognizing the integral role of the teacher in student mastery of 21st century competencies, the 2010 NETP recommends a shift from a traditional teaching model to a model of connected teaching.
Teaching

The model of 21st century learning advocated in the plan requires a shift in the role of teachers requiring that they be part of a teaching team “fully connected to learning data and tools for using the data; to content, resources, and systems that empower them to create, manage, and assess engaging and relevant learning experiences; and directly to their students in support of learning both inside and outside school (p. 6).” No longer isolated, sole practitioners, teachers must be connected to students, fellow educators, professional experts, parents and community members through online learning communities.

Professional development should be replaced by “professional learning that is collaborative, coherent, and continuous and that blends more effective in-person courses and workshops with the expanded opportunities, immediacy, and convenience enabled by online environments full of resources and opportunities for collaboration (p. 6).” For this teaching model to be effective, classrooms must be fully connected to provide 24/7 access to data and analytic tools as well as to resources that help teachers to act on the information the data provide. With the emphasis on the online environment, the plan recommends that more teachers become expert at providing online instruction. Moreover, the plan authors acknowledge that the connected teaching model cannot be achieved without a comprehensive infrastructure.

Infrastructure

Although the 2010 NETP identifies the need for a comprehensive infrastructure to support 21st century learning, the authors acknowledge the building an infrastructure that “provides every student, educator, and level of our education system with the resources they need when and where they are needed” is a “far-reaching project that will demand concerted and coordinated effort.” They provide a clear statement of the components that make up infrastructure:

The underlying principle is that infrastructure includes people, processes, learning resources, policies, and sustainable models for continuous improvement in addition to broadband connectivity, servers, software, management systems, and administration tools.

On an operational level, the infrastructure involves accessing data from multiple sources integrating everything from computer hardware and interoperable software to information resources and middleware services and tools. On an instructional/learning level, infrastructure is necessary to ensure that learning is always on, available to students, educators, and administrators regardless of their location or the time of day. By supporting access to information as well access to people and participation in online learning communities, an infrastructure for learning “unleashes new ways of capturing and sharing knowledge based on multimedia that integrate text, still and moving images, audio, and applications that run on a variety of devices.” The “always on” access “enables seamless integration of in- and out-of-school learning.” With the capabilities empowered through technology, the authors of the 2010 NETP encourage educators to rethink the basic assumptions about education and schooling.

Productivity

The final essential component listed in the 2010 NETP is perhaps the most crucial to the overall goal of the plan to “transform American Education.” As in prior national education technology plans, the authors encouraged educators to look to practices in the private sector that improve efficiency and manage costs. The current tight economic climate was also cited as a
motivation for educators to consider ways for technology to be improve productivity. Educators are encouraged to examine traditional assumptions that students be organized in age-determined groups in classes of approximately the same size and to question the assumption that time-based or “seat-time” is a measure of educational attainment. Given the competencies required for success in the 21st century, the need to separate academic disciplines was also listed as an assumption educators need to review.

As far as funding for technology, the plan calls for the establishment of the National Center for Research in Advanced Information and Digital Technologies (also called the Digital Promise) to be housed in the Department of Education. The goal of this organization is to user contributions from the public and private sectors to support the research and development. The center would address “grand challenge problems in education research and development” involving a community of scientists and researchers to work toward their solution.

Implications for Teacher Educators

Given the goal of the NETP is to “transform American education,” it would seem that the goal of teacher educators is to transform our teacher training to reflect the 21st century model of learning and the shift to connected teaching. Although the majority of preservice are in an age group that grew up with technology, they are not prepared to use technology for teaching and learning. Although they have many technology skills, they have limited experience in the modeling of technology by their K-12 teachers. They are apt to teach in the manner in which they were taught unless teacher educators provide support for their growth as connected teachers. Coupled with this is the need to train these soon-to-be teachers in teaching online and to become adept at using multiple online instructional strategies. As the teachers of the 21st century, they will need those skills to be qualified for future online teaching jobs as well as to meet the needs of their students with access to 24/7 learning.

References


