Association for Business Communication
Southwestern United States
2022 Refereed Proceedings
March 2-5, 2022
New Orleans, LA

Leslie Ramos Salazar, *President*
Lindsay C. Clark, *President-Elect and Program Chair*
Ashley Hall, *Secretary/Treasurer*
Aimee Kendall Roundtree, *Historian*
Kayla Sapkota, *Past President*

Seth Frei, *Proceedings Editor*
McCoy College of Business
Texas State University
601 University Dr.
San Marcos, TX 78640
512-245-4089
sethfrei@txstate.edu

Table of Contents

Editor's Note

Welcome you back *in-person* to the 49th meeting of the Association for Business Communication-Southwestern United States! After an online conference in 2021, we are all excited to join together in-person in New Orleans. Thanks to the planners, program chairs, reviewers, presenters, and others who made this program possible. A special thanks to Lindsay C. Clark as the Program Chair of ABC-SWUS for assembling the great program. We are certain that everyone connected to business communication, whether as an instructor, researcher, or practitioner, will find interesting topics discussed at the conference.

The program this year includes 28 presentations by authors representing institutions across the United States and around the world. Included in the proceedings are two full papers and 18 presentation abstracts. We would like to thank the following people for helping review proposals and papers: Traci Austin, Matari Gunter, Kevin Kryston, Ashton Mouton, Lorelei Ortiz, Aimee Kendall Roundtree, Danica Schieber, Ashly Smith, and Carol Wright.

Completed papers that are submitted for the program are considered for the Distinguished Paper Award. This year's award is presented to N.L. Reinsch, Jr. of Lubbock Christian University for the paper entitled "Giving Values a Voice in the Business Communication Classroom." The paper will be presented at 8:30am on Thursday, March 3. Each year the association awards the FBD Outstanding Educator award in recognition of exemplary teaching. This year, we congratulate Lindsay C. Clark of Sam Houston State University as the recipient of this award.

In these proceedings, you will also find information on previous program chairpersons, award recipients, and recipients of the outstanding research and outstanding teacher awards.

Please make plans to join us next year in Houston, Texas for the 2023 Conference on March 8-11, 2023, at the Hyatt Regency Houston. The call dates for next year's papers and presentation proposals are October 1, 2022.

We hope you enjoy your time at the conference reconnecting with colleagues and friends!

Seth Frei
Editor

Future International, National and Regional Meetings

2022 ABC International Conference
October 3-8, 2022
Tampa, Florida

2023 ABC Europe, Africa, and Middle East Conference
January 12-14, 2023
Naples, Italy

2023 ABC Western Conference
February, 2023
Laie, Hawaii

2023 ABC International Conference
July, 2023
Seoul, South Korea

For more information, visit:
https://www.businesscommunication.org/page/conferences

Program and Paper Reviewers

Traci L. Austin, *Sam Houston State University*
Lindsay C. Clark, *Sam Houston State University*
Matari Gunter, *Texas State University*
Ashley Hall
Kevin Kryston, *Sam Houston State University*
Ashton Mouton, *Sam Houston State University*
Lorelei Ortiz, *St. Edward's University*
Leslie Ramos Salazar, *West Texas A&M University*
Aimee Kendall Roundtree, *Texas State University*
Kayla Sapkota, *Arkansas State University - Beebe*
Danica L. Schieber, *Sam Houston State University*
Ashly Bender Smith, *Sam Houston State University*
Carol S. Wright, *Stephen F. Austin State University*

ABC-SWUS Program Chairpersons 1973 - Present

2022-	Lindsay C. Clark
2021-2022	Leslie Ramos Salazar
2020-2021	Kayla Sapkota
2019-2020	Carol S. Wright
2017-2019	Kelly A. Grant
2016-2017	Laura Lott Valenti
2015-2016	Susan Evans Jennings
2014-2015	Kathryn S. O'Neill
2013-2014	Traci L. Austin
2012-2013	Randall L. Waller
2011-2012	Lucia Sigmar
2010-2011	Margaret Kilcoyne
2009-2010	Faridah Awang
2008-2009	Marcel Robles
2007-2008	Ann Wilson
2006-2007	Carolyn Ashe
2005-2006	Harold A. Hurry
2004-2005	Lana W. Carnes
2003-2004	Marsha L. Bayless
2002-2003	Betty A. Kleen
2001-2002	William Sharbrough
2000-2001	Carol Lehman
1999-2000	William P. Galle, Jr.
1998-1999	Anita Bednar
1997-1998	Timothy W. Clipson
1996-1997	Debbie D. Dufrene
1995-1996	William J. Wardrope
1994-1995	Roger N. Conaway
1993-1994	Donna W. Luse
1992-1993	F. Stanford Wayne
1991-1992	Beverly H. Nelson
1990-1991	Marian Crawford
1989-1990	Marlin C. Young
1988-1989	Sallye Benoit
1987-1988	Tom Means
1986-1987	Lamar N. Reinsch, Jr.
1985-1986	Sara Hart
1984-1985	Betty S. Johnson
1983-1984	Larry R. Smeltzer
1982-1983	Daniel Cochran
1981-1982	Nancy Darsey
1980-1981	John M. Penrose
1979-1980	R. Lynn Johnson
1978-1979	Raymond V. Lesikar
1977-1978	Jack D. Eure
1976-1977	Phil Lewis
1975-1976	Dale Level
1974-1975	Bette Anne Stead
1973-1974	Sam J. Bruno

Call For Papers

Association for Business Communication Southwestern US.
Hilton New Orleans Riverside, New Orleans, Louisiana
March 2 - March 5, 2022

Please submit a proposal or paper related to business communication topics for presentation at the 2022 ABC-SWUS Conference in New Orleans, Louisiana, held in collaboration with the Association for Business Information Systems (ABIS). Research papers or position papers related to business communication topics in the following areas are encouraged:

Communication Technology	Technology and Education
Innovative Instructional Methods	Business Education Issues
International Business Communication	Paradigm Shifts in Communication
Training and Development/Consulting	Interpersonal Communication
Nonverbal Communication	Executive/Managerial Communication
Legal and Ethical Communication Issues	Organizational Communication

- Papers or proposals should include a statement of the problem or purpose, methodology section (if applicable), findings (as available), a summary, implications for education and/or business, and a bibliography.
- If you are submitting a proposal only, it should contain **750 to 1,500** words and must be submitted via the ABC website submission link: https://www.businesscommunication.org/e/sx/eid=41.
- If you are submitting a completed paper, please submit your proposal online as indicated above. After that log in to ABC and **click here** to submit the completed paper as a Microsoft Word document by October 1, 2021.****EXTENDED TO OCTOBER 30**.
    - Personal and institutional identification should be removed from the body of the paper. Identify yourself and your institution only on the cover page. Submissions will be anonymously reviewed.
    - A cover page is required with the title of the paper and identifying information for each author: name, institutional affiliation, address, phone and fax numbers, and e-mail address.
    - For your research to be considered for the **Richard D. Irwin Distinguished Paper Award**, you must **submit here** a completed paper rather than a proposal by the submission deadline, October 1, 2021.****EXTENDED TO OCTOBER 30**
    - Submitted papers should not have been previously presented or published, nor should they be under consideration or accepted for presentation elsewhere.

- Upon receiving notice of acceptance, all authors and co-authors are expected to **pre-register for ABC-SWUS and FBD** at **http://www.fbdonline.org**.

Submission Deadline: **Papers and proposals must be received by October 1, 2021**. ***EXTENDED TO OCTOBER 30**
Proceedings Deadline: Accepted papers must be received by **January 14, 2022**.

For information, contact Lindsay Clark, Program Chair, **lclark@shsu.edu**

FBD Outstanding Educator Awards

Past award winners are:

2022 Lindsay C. Clark, *Sam Houston State University*
2020 Laura Valenti, *Nicholls State University*
2019 Traci L. Austin, *Sam Houston State University*
2018 Judith L. Biss (posthumously), *Stephen F. Austin State University*
2017 Susan E. Jennings, *Stephen F. Austin State University*
2016 Tim Clipson, *Stephen F. Austin State University*
2015 Lucia Sigmar, *Sam Houston State University*
2014 Margaret S. Kilcoyne, *Northwestern State University*
2013 S. Ann Wilson, *Stephen F. Austin State University*
2012 Marcel M. Robles, *Eastern Kentucky University*
2011 Harold A. Hurry, *Sam Houston State University*
2010 Geraldine E. Hynes, *Sam Houston State University*
2009 Roger N. Conaway, *Tecnológico de Monterrey, campus San Luis Potosí*
2008 Bobbye J. Davis, *Southeastern Louisiana University*
2007 Betty A. Kleen, *Nicholls State University*
2006 William Wardrope, *University of Central Oklahoma*
2005 Betty S. Johnson, *Stephen F. Austin State University*
2004 Marsha L. Bayless, *Stephen F. Austin State University*
2003 Lillian H. Chaney, *University of Memphis*
2002 Debbie DuFrene, *Stephen F. Austin State University*
2001 Anita Bednar, *University of Central Oklahoma*

Outstanding Researcher and Teacher Awards

These awards were developed and first awarded in 1992 to recognize the accomplishments of the region's members. Nominated candidates are evaluated by a panel of previous award winners. No awards were given in 1998, 2001, 2003, 2007 or 2013. The association began alternating the awards every other year in 2000 between researcher and teacher. In 2011 the Outstanding Teacher Award was renamed the Marlin C. Young Outstanding Teacher Award in honor and memory of his contributions to the ABC-SWUS organization. The recipients below each received a plaque and award of $100 (the award was changed to $200 in 2008):

2022 Carol S. Wright, Outstanding Researcher Award

2021 Marsha Bayless, Marlin C. Young Outstanding Teacher Award

2020 Ashley Hall, Outstanding Researcher Award

2018 Danica Schieber, Raymond V. Lesikar Outstanding Researcher Award

2017 Judith L. Biss (posthumously), Marlin C. Young Outstanding Teacher Award

2016 Geraldine Hynes, Outstanding Researcher Award

2015 Margaret Kilcoyne, Marlin C. Young Outstanding Teacher Award

2014 Lucia Sigmar, Outstanding Researcher Award

2013 Brenda Hanson, Marlin C. Young Outstanding Teacher Award

2012 Susan Evans Jennings, Outstanding Researcher Award

2011 S. Ann Wilson, Marlin C. Young Outstanding Teacher Award

2010 Margaret Kilcoyne, Outstanding Researcher Award

2009 Harold Hurry, Outstanding Teacher Award

2008 Roger N. Conaway, Outstanding Researcher Award

2008 Geraldine E. Hynes, Outstanding Teacher Award

2006 Janna P. Vice, Outstanding Researcher Award

2005 Bobbye Davis, Outstanding Teacher Award

2004 William Wardrope, Outstanding Researcher Award

2003 Marcel Robles, Outstanding Teacher Award

2002 Lillian H. Chaney, Outstanding Researcher Award

2002 Jeré Littlejohn, Outstanding Teacher Award

2000 William Sharbrough, Outstanding Researcher Award

1999 William Wardrope, Outstanding Teacher Award

1998 Betty Kleen, Outstanding Researcher Award

1998 Robert Olney, Outstanding Teacher Award

1997 Al Williams, Outstanding Teacher Award

1996 Betty S. Johnson, Outstanding Researcher Award

1995 Marsha L. Bayless, Outstanding Researcher Award

1995 Anita Bednar, Outstanding Teacher Award

1994 Nelda Spinks, Outstanding Teacher Award

1993 Timothy W. Clipson, Outstanding Teacher Award

1993 F. Stanford Wayne, Outstanding Researcher Award

1992 Debbie D. DuFrene, Outstanding Researcher Award

1992 Beverly H. Nelson, Outstanding Teacher Award

ABC-SWUS Distinguished Paper Award Recipients[1]

2022 N. L. Reinsch, Jr.
Giving Values a Voice in the Business Communication Classroom

2021 Laura Lott Valenti and Stavros Sindakis
A Qualitative Analysis of Top Performing Franchise Brands' Email Communication Used in the Franchise Sales Process

2020 Ashley Hall, Carol S. Wright, and Amanda Smith
Augmented Reality in Business Communication Classes

2019 Traci L. Austin, Lindsay L. Clark, and Lucia S. Sigmar
Just Get to the Point: Persuasive Strategies for the iGeneration

2018 N. Lamar Reinsch and Vicki Gates
Communication Strategies for Human Resource Managers and Other Counselors: Extensions and Applications of Equity Theory

2017 Jon M. Croghan and Tammy L. Croghan
Improving Performance Evaluations: The Role of Intrapersonal Communication, Message Strategy, and Age

2016 Melissa A. Barrett and Geraldine E. Hynes
The Little Creamery that Could: Weathering a Crisis and Maintaining Brand Loyalty

2015 Mark Leonard, Marsha Bayless, and Timothy Clipson
Media Selection in Managerial Communication: Exploring the Relationship between Media Preference, Personality, and Communication Aptitude

2014 Kathryn S. O'Neill and Gary L. May
Using Business Cases to Foster Critical Thinking

2012 En Mao, Laura Lott Valenti, and Marilyn Macik-Frey
Status Update – "We've Got a Problem" – Leadership Crisis Communication in the Age of Social Media

2011 Betty A. Kleen and Shari Lawrence
Student Cheating: Current Faculty Perceptions

2010 Jose Guadalupe Torres and Roger N. Conaway
Adoption and Use of New Communication Technologies in an International Organization: An Exploratory Study of Text Messaging

[1] Formally called the Irwin/McGraw Hill Distinguished Paper Award

2009 Susan Evans Jennings, S. Ann Wilson, and Judith L. Biss
Is Email Out and Text Messaging In? Communication Trends in Secondary and Post-Secondary Students

2008 Debbie D. DuFrene, Carol M. Lehman, and Judith L. Biss
Receptivity and Response of Students to an Electronic Textbook

2007 William J. Wardrope and Roger N. Conaway
Readability and Cultural Distinctiveness of Executives' Letters Found in the Annual Reports of Latin American Companies

2006 Janna P. Vice and Lana W. Carnes
Professional Opportunities for Business Communication Students That Go Beyond the Course Grade

2005 Lillian H. Chaney, Catherine G. Green, and Janet T. Cherry
Trainers' Perceptions of Distracting or Annoying Behaviors of Corporate Trainers

2004 Patricia Borstorff and Brandy Logan
Argumentativeness and Verbal Aggressiveness: Organizational Life, Gender, and Ethnicity.

2003 Ruth A. Miller and Donna W. Luce
The Most Important Written, Oral, and Interpersonal Communication Skills Needed by Information Systems Staff During the Systems Development Process

2002 Roger N. Conaway and William Wardrope
Communication in Latin America: An Analysis of Guatemalan Business Letters

2001 Annette N. Shelby and N. Lamar Reinsch Jr.
Strategies of Nonprofessional Advocates: A Study of Letters to a Senator

2000 Donna R. Everett and Richard A. Drapeau
A Comparison of Student Achievement in the Business Communication Course When Taught in Two Distance Learning Environments

1999 Susan Plutsky and Barbara Wilson
Study to Validate Prerequisites in Business Communication for Student Success

1998 Jose R. Goris, Bobby C. Vaught, and John D. Pettit Jr.
Inquiry into the Relationship Between the Job Characteristics Model and Communication: An Empirical Study Using Moderated Progression Analysis

1996 Beverly Little, J. R. McLaurin, Robert Taylor, and Dave Snyder
Are Men Really from Mars and Women from Venus? Perhaps We're All from Earth After All

1995 Bolanie A. Olaniran, Grant T. Savage, and Ritch L. Sorenson
Teaching Computer-mediated Communication in the Classroom: Using Experimental and Experiential Methods to Maximize Learning

1994 James R. McLaurin and Robert R. Taylor
Communication and its Predictability of Managerial Performance: A Discriminant Analysis

1993 Mona J. Casady and F. Stanford Wayne
Employment Ads of Major United States Newspapers

1992 Betty S. Johnson and Nancy J. Wilmeth
The Legal Implications of Correspondence Authorship

1991 Rod Blackwell, Jane H. Stanford, and John D. Pettit Jr.
Measuring a Formal Process Model of Communication Taught in a University Business Program: An Empirical Study

Association For Business Communication
Southwestern United States

March 3, 2022 (Thursday)

7:30 a.m. – 8:30 a.m. Camp

ABC–SWUS and ABIS Joint Breakfast

All ABC-SWUS and ABIS presenters and members are invited to enjoy a delicious breakfast. ABC-SWUS or ABIS Association Name Badge Required for Entry.

8:30 a.m. – 10:00 a.m. Joint Session with ABIS Camp

ABC-SWUS and ABIS Joint 2022 Distinguished Paper Session

Co-Session Chairs/Association Vice Presidents and Conference Chairs:
Lindsay Clark, Sam Houston State University
Jason Powell, Northwestern State University

ABC-SWUS Distinguished Paper: *Giving Values a Voice in the Business Communication Classroom*
N. L. Reinsch, Jr., Lubbock Christian University

ABIS Distinguished Paper: *A Review of Research Trend in Information Systems (IS) Discipline*
Shuaibu Hassan Usman, Morgan State University
Ganesh Bhatt, Morgan State University

10:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. Exhibit Hall – St. James

FBD Coffee Break

Attend poster sessions. Please make plans to visit the exhibits for information on the latest books and newest educational technologies. Let our exhibitors know how much we appreciate their presence and continued support!

Great Door Prize Drawings take place at 10:15 a.m. in the Exhibit Area. Must be present to win.

March 3, 2022 (Thursday)

10:30 a.m. – 11:45 a.m. Camp

Communication Technology and Innovation
Session Chair: Ashley Hall

Communication, Collegiality, and Cheating? Students' Use of GroupMe in Business Courses
Lindsay C. Clark, Sam Houston State University
Ashton Mouton, Sam Houston State University
Traci Austin, Sam Houston State University

Using Grammarly: Perceptions of Employees' Use in Professional Settings
Carol S. Wright, Stephen F. Austin State University
Virginia Hemby, Middle Tennessee State University

Creating Well-organized, Visually Appealing Slide Decks: Principles Derived from the Synthesis of Cognitive and Graphic Design Models
Thomas Cavanagh, Dominican University of California
Sophie Hyunah Jung

Teamwork & Project Management: Using Online Collaboration Boards in a Business Communication Course
Rachel Dolechek, Fort Hays State University
Gregory Weisenborn, Fort Hays State University
Ron Rohlf, Fort Hays State University

11:45 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. **Lunch on your own**

ABC–SWUS Executive Board Meeting and Luncheon
By Invitation Only (Location: Port)

1:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. Camp

Issues in Business Education
Session Chair: Kayla Sapkota, Arkansas State University-Beebe

Factors to Consider in Maximizing Benefits and Reducing Costs of Business Course Materials
Marsha L. Bayless, Stephen F. Austin State University
Manuel Guerrero, Stephen F. Austin State University
Jonathan M. Helmke, Stephen F. Austin State University

Students' Perceptions of Feedback on their Business Writing Accuracy in Disciplinary Business Courses
Ashly Bender Smith, Sam Houston State University

Course Assessment Best Practices: Tips for the Busy Professor
Jean Ann Edrington, Arkansas State University-Beebe

Power Skills: Don't Be Soft
Marcel Robles, Eastern Kentucky University

March 3, 2022 (Thursday)

3:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.	Exhibit Hall – St. James

FBD Coffee Break

Attend poster sessions. Please make plans to visit the exhibits for information on the latest books and newest educational technologies. Let our exhibitors know how much we appreciate their presence and continued support!

Great Door Prize Drawings take place at 3:15 p.m. in the Exhibit Area. Must be present to win.

3:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.	Camp

Impacts of Technology on Communication
Session Chair: Seth Frei, Texas State University

Helping Students Effectively Navigate a Noisy World
Ashley Hall

Impact of Mobile Communication in the Bateyes of the Dominican Republic
John Powers, Quinnpiac University

In Cancel Culture Not All Cancellations are Equal
Rod Carveth, Morgan State University

The Relationship between Computer-Mediated Communication and Active Learning during the COVID-19 Pandemic: Gratitude and Self-Compassion as Potential Mediators
Leslie Ramos Salazar, West Texas A&M University
Audrey Meador, West Texas A&M University

5:30 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.	Exhibit Hall – St. James

FBD Presidential Welcome Reception

You are invited to attend this FBD conference-wide social event. Visit with long-time friends and make new ones as you enjoy light appetizers and a cash bar. Stop by to relax and wind down from the day's conference activities before heading out for the evening. To enter the Exhibit Hall, all persons older than six years of age are required to wear their conference or guest badge. All badges can be obtained from the Registration area during their open hours.

Name Badge Required for Entry

March 4, 2022 (Friday)

7:30 a.m. – 8:30 a.m. Camp

ABC-SWUS and ABIS Joint Breakfast

All ABC-SWUS and ABIS presenters and members are invited to enjoy a delicious breakfast
ABC-SWUS or ABIS Association Name Badge Required for Entry

8:30 a.m. – 10:00 a.m. Camp

Organizational Communication
Session Chair: N. L. Reinsch, Jr., Lubbock Christian University

Essential Communication Skills During Crisis
Marcia Hardy, Northwestern State University of Louisiana
Danny Upshaw, Northwestern State University of Louisiana

Willingness to communicate and solidarity in Russian organizations
Ekaterina Balezina, HSE University
Tatiana Permyakova, HSE University

Leveraging Best Confirmation Practices: How Leaders in Organizations Could Leverage Confirming Behaviors Often Found in Sport Relationships
Susanna Alford, University of the Incarnate Word

How Sorry Are You? A Cross-Cultural, Linguistic Experiment on Perceived Remorse in Corporate Apologies
Effrosyni Georgiadou, Zayed University

10:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. Exhibit Hall – St. James

FBD Coffee Break

Attend poster sessions. Please make plans to visit the exhibits for information on the latest books and newest educational technologies. Let our exhibitors know how much we appreciate their presence and continued support!

Great Door Prize Drawings take place at 10:15 a.m. in the Exhibit Area. Must be present to win.

March 4, 2022 (Friday)

10:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. ABC Business Meeting Camp

ABC-SWUS Business Meeting (all members welcome)

Presiding: Leslie Ramos Salazar, ABC-SWUS President, West Texas A&M University

12:00 p.m. – 1:30 p.m. **Lunch on your own**

Enjoy local cuisine in New Orleans!

1:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.	Choice Session: Joint Session with ABIS	Camp

Innovative and Multidisciplinary Topics I
Session Chair: Ronnie Abukhalaf, Northwestern State University

COVID Business Interruption Claim Decisions that Could Impact Insurance E-Policy Development
Mary Beth Fair, Esq./MA, Northwestern State University
Carmella Parker, Esq./MBA, Northwestern State University

How Interpersonal Communication Skills could Aid to Overcome the Increased Challenges in an Evolving Remote Work Environment
Matthew Flores, University of the Incarnate Word

Panel Discussion: The Increasing Career Readiness for Accounting, Computer Information Systems, and Finance Majors
Vianka Miranda, Northwestern State University
Ronnie Abukhalaf, Northwestern State University
Melissa Aldredge, Northwestern State University

1:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.	Choice Session	Ascot

Innovative Instructional Methods
Session Chair: Leslie Ramos Salazar, West Texas A&M University

Self as a Water Jug: A Nifty Way to Help Learners Think and Communicate about Diversity & Inclusion
Trey Guinn, University of Texas at Austin

Organizational Communication: Product Warning Labels and Technical Writing
John M. McGrath, Trinity University

How to Drive Home to Students the Importance of Audience in a Business Communication Class
Yong-Kang Wei, University of Texas-Rio Grande Valley

A Presentation of the Professional Self on LinkedIn
Danica L. Schieber, Sam Houston State University

March 4, 2022 (Friday)

3:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m. Exhibit Hall – St. James

FBD Coffee Break

Attend poster sessions. Please make plans to visit the exhibits for information on the latest books and newest educational technologies. Let our exhibitors know how much we appreciate their presence and continued support!

Great Door Prize Drawings take place at 3:15 p.m. in the Exhibit Area. Must be present to win.

3:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. Joint Session with ABIS Camp
Innovative and Multidisciplinary Topics II
Session Chair: Carol S. Wright, Stephen F. Austin State University

Student-Focused Online Learning: What Can COVID Teach Us?
Kristen Brewer Wilson, Eastern Kentucky University

Exposing Business Law Students to Virtual Depositions
Russell Sylvester, Esq., Northwestern State University
Carmella Parker, Esq./MBA, Northwestern State University

Roundtable Discussion: Engaging Students with Assignments in Online Classes
Kayla Sapkota, Arkansas State University at Beebe
Carol S. Wright, Stephen F. Austin State University
Lucia Sigmar, Stephen F. Austin State University
Marice Jackson, Stephen F. Austin State University

Please make plans to visit the exhibits to receive information on the latest books and newest education technologies. Please let exhibitors know how much we appreciate their presence and continued support!

Make plans to join us in Houston for our 2023 conference.
♦♦♦

50th Annual Conference
March 8 - 11, 2023
Hyatt Regency Houston
Houston, TX

ABC-SWUS Distinguished Paper: Giving Values a Voice in the Business Communication Classroom

N.L. Reinsch, Jr., Lubbock Christian University

Giving Values a Voice in the Business Communication Classroom:

Why It Should Continue, Why It Matters, and How It Could be Improved

N. Lamar Reinsch, Jr.
Lubbock Christian University (Distinguished Professor of Business)
and
Georgetown University (Professor Emeritus of Management)

9119 Wind Caves Way NW
Albuquerque, NM 87120

Lamar.Reinsch@LCU.edu
ReinschL@georgetown.edu
703-895-5935 (mobile)

Giving Values a Voice in the Business Communication Classroom:

Why It Should Continue, Why It Matters, and How It Could be Improved

One of the more interesting developments in ethics education during the past 15 years has been the introduction and widespread adoption of Mary Gentile's (2010) *Giving Voice to Values* (GVV) business ethics curriculum. Gentile (2012) developed the GVV materials for the purpose of making ethical training more practical (Gentile, 2012). The materials can be used either in a stand-alone business ethics course (Chappell, Webb, & Edwards, 2011) or as part of an integrated approach which includes business ethics in several business courses.

In the intervening years, GVV pedagogy has been adapted to law (e.g., Holmes, 2015), medicine (e.g., Bedzow, 2019; Lynch, Hart, & Costa, 2014), and a variety of business programs (Gentile, 2011) including accounting (Christensen, Cote, & Latham, 2018), economics and finance (Arce, 2011), entrepreneurship (McKone-Sweet, Greenberg, & Wilson, 2011), and management (Swamy & Ramesh, 2011). As of 2017, more than 950 individuals experimenting with the approach had contacted Gentile (Gentile, 2017, p. 475). Surprisingly, GVV does not seem to have attracted attention within the business communication community. For example, a recent electronic search for GVV-related vocabulary (e.g., *giving* and *voice* and *values*) of articles published in the *Business and Professional Communication Quarterly* and in the *International Journal of Business Communication* found not a single example; a similar search of the *Journal of Business and Technical Communication* and of *Management Communication Quarterly* also failed to find any examples.

The neglect of GVV by the business communication community surprises me, because the GVV approach consists of helping students learn to plan and deliver persuasive, business-related messages, a set of abilities that lies at the heart of business communication. Overlooking GVV also constitutes a missed opportunity because business communication professors can both benefit from engagement with the GVV approach and make substantive contributions to the GVV movement.

In this paper, I argue that business communication instructors should consider including (if they do not already—the reason for this qualification will become clear subsequently) one or more GVV cases in their courses and, if circumstances allow, coordinate efforts with other faculty who are using GVV materials. The remainder of the paper consists of five sections. In the next section, the second one, I describe GVV cases, showing that such cases would fit naturally into a business communication course, and note that business communication instructors are well-prepared to use such cases. The third section will briefly review Rest's (1983, 1986) four-component model of ethical behavior; Moore and Gino's (2015) extension of that model; and Reinsch, Pauwel, and Neff's (2021) Ethical Lifestyle Model, which they adapted from the work of Moore and Gino. This review will allow us to place a GVV case—specifically its emphasis on developing a student's communication abilities—into a framework for business ethics education. Then, in the fourth section, I challenge the completeness of the Ethical Lifestyle Model. Drawing on the Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1991, 2020), I argue that viewing a GVV case in the context of a business communication course suggests that behavioral control—both actual and perceived—should be incorporated into the Ethical Lifestyle Model. Consideration of behavioral control as it relates to business ethics further strengthens the claim that GVV cases fit well into business communication courses. A fifth, concluding section summarizes the paper and suggests further steps.

Giving Voice to Values: Materials and Pedagogy

A GVV case includes significant attention to an ethical or moral issue rather than, or in addition to, a technical or strategic issue. The case positions the protagonist as experiencing moral qualms about a current or proposed course of action (usually, but not necessarily, qualms that students are likely to share) and as having reached a decision to challenge, resist, or argue against the course of action. The case describes other characters such as persons who are advocates of the action or who have the positional power to make decisions, usually making clear that the protagonist has an opportunity, or a responsibility, to communicate with the advocates and decision makers. (However, I would argue, GVV cases too often fall short in providing information about the available message targets, thus missing an opportunity to help student to explore issues related to persuasion strategy.)

Typically, a business case—whether in business communication, or management, or ethics—ends by asking students a version of the following question: What should the protagonist do? But, in contrast:

> a GVV case ends with a protagonist who has already decided what he or she believes is the right thing to do and the questions become: "How can they get it done? What should they say? To whom? In what sequence? And what will be the objections or the 'push back' be, and then what will they say? And what data do they need to gather? How would they frame this situation to make it easier to move the relevant parties to a different position? And so on." (Gentile, 2017, p. 475)

In short, while a GVV case resembles a typical business ethics or managerial behavior case, it has a different center of gravity; for that reason, a GVV case has been called a "postdecision making case" (Carolyn Woo as cited by Gentile, 2017, p. 474). Sample GVV cases are available through several sources. Two good places to start are: Gentile, Lawrence, & Melnyk, 2015; and www.darden.virginia.edu/ibis/initiatives/gvv .

Even this brief description should make clear that a GVV case would easily fit into a business communication course. To answer the questions posed in a typical GVV case (Say what? To whom? With what data? Through what medium?) requires the student to ponder issues of audience analysis, to develop a persuasion plan, and to covertly (or overtly) begin to craft messages. A GVV case could, for example, provide the basis for a class discussion, a written assignment (e.g., a persuasive email), an oral presentation, or the role-play of a team meeting or persuasive conversation. Indeed, the fit is so comfortable that some (perhaps many) business communication instructors may realize they are already doing something like a GVV case—but without realizing that their assignments could be described in GVV terms. Based on the teaching cases published by the Association for Business Communication (Clapp-Itnyre, 2000; Morton, 2000; Rogers & Rymer, 1998), it seems safe to assume that business communication cases frequently call on students to plan and develop persuasive messages.

A GVV case does not require the professor to provide instruction concerning ethical principles. Nor does it preclude such instruction. A GVV case typically begins with the protagonist knowing what—at least broadly—he or she regards as morally right and turning attention to questions of articulation and implementation. An instructor could, of course, ask students if they agree or disagree with the position being taken by the protagonist—but experienced GVV instructors (e.g., Gentile, 2017, p. 477) report that students seem to engage more easily with the assignment when they are asked to plan and to write or speak on behalf of the protagonist rather than to articulate a personal ethical position, even when the student's personal ethical posture is identical with that to the protagonist.

Furthermore, taking the GVV approach to a case can facilitate use of a non-communication case by a business communication instructor. In some instances, business communication teachers may avoid using cases that deal with accounting, or marketing, or human resources because they fear they lack the expertise to deal with relevant technical issues. But a GVV approach to a case shifts the focus to topics in which business communication instructors have expertise: audience analysis, message planning, message development, et cetera.

GVV is currently an important and still growing movement in business schools. It asks students to do the sorts of things that business communication instructors are already asking of their students. Like the (probably apocryphal) student who, in a literature class, was surprised to discover that he had been “speaking prose” all his life, some business communication instructors may discover that they’ve “been doing GVV” for most of their careers.

Fitting GVV into Business Ethics: Pedagogy and Models

As documented by Reinsch (1990), business communication instructors have demonstrated an interest in ethics from the beginnings of the field. Some of the concern with ethics has been accurately described by Jameson (*in press*), as growing out of tensions (or at least differences in perspective) between the humanities and the business disciplines. But the substance of business communication—managing words to affect others (Rentz & Debs, 1987)—points to even deeper roots. But, despite a long history of interest and discussion, the field of business communication has not, to the best of my knowledge, achieved (or even sought to achieve) a unified view of how to include ethics in business communication courses.

The field of business ethics, on the other hand, suffers from no lack of well-articulated views and explicitly developed models. Indeed, business ethics scholars and educators have articulated, used, and sometimes sharply disagreed about various approaches to business ethics research and education (e.g., Cameron & O'Leary, 2015; De Los Reyes, Kim, & Weaver, 2017; Felton & Sims, 2005; Floyd, Xu, Atkins, & Caldwell, 2013; Lund Dean & Beggs, 2006; Mahoney, 1990; Medeiros, Watts, Mulhearn, Steele, Mumford, & Connelly, 2017; Mudrack & Mason, 2013; Rasche, Gilbert, & Schedel, 2013; Sigurjonsson, Arnardottir, Vaiman, & Rikhardsson, 2015; Warren & Tweedale, 2002).

To understand the implications and opportunities of including GVV cases in business communication courses we need, therefore, a perspective that allows us to place instruction about language use into a larger framework of business ethics pedagogy. I will argue that the work of Reinsch et al. (2021)—despite limitations noted subsequently—provides a useful perspective. There are several noticeable divides within the business ethics literature, most obviously that between normative and behavioral approaches (De Los Reyes et al., 2017; Treviño & Weaver, 1994) although authors do not always make clear whether the distinction concerns research, teaching, or both. One recurring distinction (present but not, so far, prominent in the literature, but highly relevant to the current paper) is between an approach to business ethics that focuses narrowly on judgment (or analysis) and a business ethics course that also includes non-judgment components of behavior (Clegg, Kornberger, & Rhodes, 2007). This distinction (which relates directly to GVV and to business communication) can be clarified with the four-component model created by James Rest (1983, 1986).

The Rest Model

James Rest, like Lawrence Kohlberg (one of Rest's professors), focused on the process of cognitive development or moral maturation. However, both Kohlberg and Rest were aware that moral behavior is not only a matter of making moral judgments. As Jorgensen has noted, Kohlberg made "a distinction between moral judgement and moral behavior," recognizing that judgment alone did not constitute behavior (2006, p. 187). This insight was even more explicit in the work of Rest (1986) who proposed that ethical behavior requires successful completion of three components in addition to judgment.

According to Rest, the self-consciously ethical person must: (a) be *aware* that a decision has an ethical dimension, that a situation allows for multiple courses of action having varying degrees of moral worth; (b) apply his or her moral principles to reach an ethical *judgment*; (c) form an *intention* to act in accord with the ethical judgment; and (d) perform the intended *action* (Rottig, Koufteros, & Umphress, 2011). Failure to complete any of the components results in a decision process that is non-ethical and, potentially, *unethical*. However, while the components logically fit into the awareness-judgment-intention-action sequence, Rest was explicit in saying that "the components do not follow each other in a set temporal order—as there are complex feed-forward and feed-backward loops, and complex actions" (Rest, Narvaez, Bebeau, & Thoma, 1999, p. 102; see also Rest, 1983, p. 570).

Rest's own scholarship—he is best remembered for his work in developing the Defining Issues Test (Rest, Narvaez, Thoma, & Bebeau, 1999)—focused on the process of judgment. He justified this focus by arguing that judgment was the only component (of the four included in his model) that was "uniquely moral" (1983, p. 570). Unfortunately, therefore, Rest's model has frequently facilitated a narrowly cognitive and overly rationalistic approach (Whitbeck as cited by Cameron & O'Leary, 2015, p. 276). Examples include studies of "models of ethical reasoning, such as theories of rights, justice, utility, and virtue" (Gentile et al., 2015, p. 2; see also Craft, 2013, p. 336).

We should note that Rest—speaking of the four components—wrote that "Moral *education* should be concerned with *all* these processes (p. 569, emphasis added). And, in fact, there have been efforts to move beyond a narrow focus on judgment to encompass human moral behavior more fully. Noteworthy examples include harnessing the "hidden curriculum" of business school culture (Eury & Treviño, 2019; Treviño & McCabe, 1994), encouraging moral courage (e.g., Christensen, Barnes, & Ross, 2007), developing personal virtues (Eriksen, Cooper, & Miccolis, 2019), and, of course, the GVV curriculum (Gentile, 2010).

The Moore-Gino Revisions to the Rest Model

Today scholars recognize that judgment is not always conscious or cognitive (e.g., Greene, 2014; Haidt, 2001, 2012; Kahneman, 2011; Tversky & Kahneman, 1974). That recognition has contributed to the identification of ways in which human decision-making falls short of a logical ideal such as, for example, cognitive biases (e.g., Phillips-Wren, Jefferson, & McKniff, 2019; Saposnik, Redelmeier, Ruff, & Tobler, 2016). Helpfully, Moore and Gino (2015) have organized much of this research as it applies to ethical behavior. They used Rest's four-component model as an organizing framework and persuasively demonstrated that completing the components identified by Rest (1983, 1986)—doing the right thing and doing it on purpose—is no small achievement.

The Ethical Lifestyle Model

Noting that Moore and Gino's work (2015, p. 236) was more concerned with research (than teaching) and with corporate policies (rather than individual decision making), Reinsch and his colleagues developed the Ethical Lifestyle Model (Reinsch et al., 2021). The model focuses on individual decision making and was designed for the purpose of educating undergraduates. The authors labeled the five points at which, according to Moore and Gino, moral behavior may go awry as potential “derailments” and as “challenges” to be met (Reinsch, et al., 2021). They described the decision maker’s predicament as like that of a person in danger of being blown off course (derailing) by a strong wind (see Figure 1). The explicit goal of the model is to convince students that they can help themselves live up to their ethical standards by developing a set of personal abilities, habits, and relationships—that is, a *lifestyle*—that supports their ethical standards.

Based on the work of Moore and Gino (2015), Reinsch et al. argue that ethical behavior may go awry in five ways as follows: (1) because of failure to recognize or *notice* an ethical issue; (2) because of *defining* the situation as one that does not include ethical principles in the judgment process; (3) because, whatever one’s ethical judgment, one might choose to *favor* oneself and so behave unethically; (4) because, at the moment of action, one might not *persist* and carry through with good intentions; or (5) because, having committed (or planned to commit) an ethical error, a person’s mental *review* might consist of rationalization rather than correction.

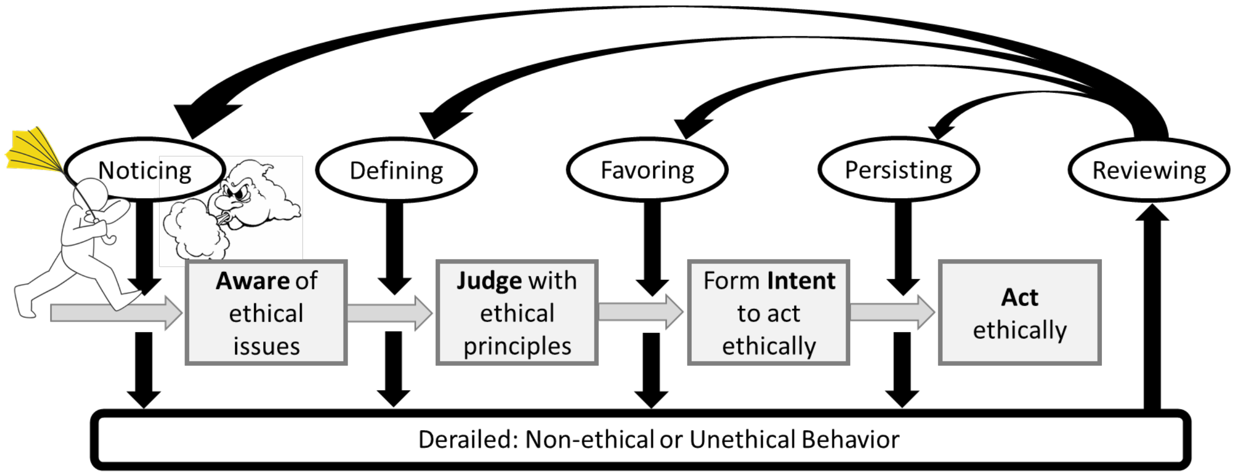

Figure 1. Ethical Lifestyle Model from Reinsch et al. (2021). Reproduced by permission.

One of the values of the work of Moore and Gino (2015) and (derivatively) of Reinsch et al. (2021) is helping instructors and students to develop a clearer understanding of how and why human behavior may go awry and, consequently, to think productively about how to better resist derailment. Where, then, does a GVV case fit into the Ethical Lifestyle Model?

Students working with a GVV case, it would seem (I discuss this issue in more detail in the next section of the paper), are engaging the last of Rest's four components (Gentile, 2017, p. 474), how to *act* ethically (see Figure 1). In a typical GVV case, the protagonist (and the reader) is *aware* of the presence of a moral issue, has reached a *judgement* concerning something that should (or should not) be done, has formed an *intention* to take appropriate action, and is now engaged with issues of execution or implementation.

This helps to explain the power of the GVV approach both in the classroom and in the workplace (Chappell & Bowes-Sperry, 2015; Plump, 2019): A more typical—judgment only—approach to ethics would re-examine the protagonist's ethical assessments. A reader might be asked to consider whether the outcome of the protagonist's judgment is consistent with Kant's categorical imperative, or the Golden Rule, or with the greatest good for the greatest number. While such discussions may be valuable for students (if any) who have trouble distinguishing right from wrong, they do nothing to address the other three components identified by Rest. In contrast, the GVV approach directly addresses matters of implementation (e.g., persuasion planning) and execution (e.g., message drafting). For this reason, students (and faculty) who use GVV cases feel they are exploring a new dimension of ethics, a dimension that helps students to move in the direction of *doing* what is morally right rather than "merely analysing the ethics of a situation" (Edwards & Kirkham, 2014, p. 483). Completing one or more GVV exercises in a class will not, of course, make the behavior habitual (Ajzen, 1991, p. 203). Nor will a GVV exercise necessarily help a person to carry out ethical acts if those acts do not involve communication with others. But any habit must start somewhere; and many ethical issues can be addressed, at least partially, through communication with others.

And who better than a business communication instructor to help a student become more adept at giving voice to values? While I have casually spoken of audience analysis, communication planning, and message drafting, business communication scholars have the knowledge and skills to explore and expand those (and related) concepts. The business communication literature includes, for example, Annette Shelby's theory of management communication which can identify and integrate a great many of the considerations relevant to successful persuasion in each situation (1988, 1991, 1998). Today, of course, we can supplement Shelby's model with research showing that people who locate themselves at various points along the political spectrum tend to rely on differing moral foundations including, for example, "authority/respect" (used by conservatives more than liberals) and "fairness/reciprocity" (used by liberals more than conservatives) (Graham, Haidt, & Nosek, 2009). Business communication instructors can easily (and creatively) integrate such concepts into a GVV assignment: "If Joe Protagonist wanted to make an authority-based argument in favor of acknowledging (rather than hiding) the accounting error, what might that argument sound like? If Joe wanted to make a fairness-based argument (or a harm/care, ingroup/loyalty, or purity/sanctity argument), what might that sound like?"

Admittedly, the explicit introduction of efforts to improve a student's persuasiveness may appear to run counter to certain assumptions in the GVV approach. But in my view, challenging certain GVV assumptions to clarify them seems likely to strengthen the GVV curriculum. Fundamental assumptions of GVV include, for example, the notions that an "individual expression of values empowers others to do so" as well, and that "if enough people express their core values in an organisation better decision-making will result" (Edwards & Kirkham, 2014, p. 482). Both assumptions strike me as generally true. On the other hand, presentations of GVV sometimes seem naïve in the sense of assuming that people will (or should) be satisfied to verbalize their personal values and to anticipate that mere voicing will produce an ethical outcome. It seems to me more realistic to assume that individuals—especially those who have strong convictions—will try to express their values in such a way as to be persuasive, that is, they will engage in rhetoric. So, the issue is not whether people will engage in rhetoric but whether people will be skillful both in making their views attractive to others and in treating others with respect (rather than as targets for attempted manipulation). People are going to behave as rhetors. Will they be effective and wise rhetors? Or otherwise? And these are the sorts of questions that are more likely to occur to business communication scholars and teachers than to scholars and teachers in other business specialties.

Omissions in the Ethical Lifestyle Model

In the preceding section I have attempted to clarify why GVV cases can be powerful and why they can fit naturally into a business communication course. I have also noted, albeit briefly, that business communication instructors are well prepared to enrich GVV materials by bringing theories of rhetoric and persuasion to bear in teaching GVV cases (and, I would think, in writing their own GVV cases).

In this section of the paper, however, I will argue that placing a GVV case into the context of the Ethical Lifestyle Model reveals certain limitations of the Ethical Lifestyle Model. I will describe the deficiency as I see it and suggest repairs.

As noted, a GVV case clearly falls into the second-half, or the right-side of the Ethical Lifestyle Model, that is, processes that logically follow identification of a moral action and, consequently, focus on implementation and execution. And that is the portion of the model that has been most often omitted or overlooked—for example, Rest noted "very little research" concerning intent (1983, p. 570), and Gentile et al. noted the neglect of intent and action (2015, p. 2). Neglect of implementation by ethics scholars does not, however, mean that everyone has neglected the topic. Indeed, the studies of attitude and behavior by (the late) Martin Fishbein and especially Fishbein's student Icek Ajzen, and Ajzen's students and colleagues, offer valuable insights into the formation of intent and the translation of intent into action. Rest was aware of Fishbein's early work but did not, at that point in time (and probably correctly), regard it as useful for his own (1983, p. 564).

However, when one considers the outcome of the work by Fishbein and Ajzen—the Theory of Planned Behavior as it eventually took shape (e.g., Ajzen, 1991, 2020)—the potential value of their work is apparent. The Theory of Planned Behavior and the research that it has stimulated clearly shows the relevance of two variables. One variable, *perceived behavioral control*, can affect the formation of intentions; and both perceived behavioral control and *actual behavioral control* can affect the implementation of intentions. Factors believed relevant to behavioral control include “required skills and abilities; availability or lack of time, money, and other resources; cooperation by other people; and so forth” (Ajzen, 2020, p. 315)—perceptions of such factors constitute *perceived* behavioral control, and the actual, objective state of such factors (whether perceived accurately or not) constitute *actual* behavioral control.

Research related to the Theory of Planned Behavior shows that whatever forces may favor the formation of a particular intention—such as, for example, the intention to perform a particular ethical act—a person becomes less likely to form such an intention to the degree that he or she lacks confidence that the contemplated behavior is something of which the person is capable (i.e., lacks perceived behavioral control). Why would one form the intention to do something which he or she believes to be impossible?

Furthermore, research related to the Theory of Planned Behavior also shows that perceived behavioral control moderates the efforts to implement an intention. The effect might be explained as follows: Perceiving an action as difficult to perform tends to encourage a person to give up (rather than persisting) in carrying out an intention. (Furthermore, whatever one’s perceived behavioral control, the carrying out of one’s intentions is strictly limited by one’s actual behavioral control—if one cannot perform a certain act then a mis-guided intention to perform the act will not magically transform the impossible into the possible.)

The Theory of Planned Behavior has been used at least once to study unethical behaviors (Beck & Ajzen, 1991). Ajzen also acknowledged—but did not explore—the possibility that personal, moral norms could be incorporated into the model (1991, pp. 199-200). So, the current linkage of Rest's work (1983, 1986)—which provides the foundation for the Ethical Lifestyle Model—with the Theory of Planned Behavior has been made before but not fully explored.

The relevance of the research stimulated by the Theory of Planned Behavior to the Ethical Lifestyle Model and to the use of a GVV case in a business communication course, should be obvious. The lack of attention to behavioral control—most especially perceived behavioral control—appears to be an important omission in the Ethical Lifestyle Model.

In a business communication course, the instructor should, I think, keep in mind both students' actual behavioral control and their perceived behavioral control. Successful completion of a GVV case (or cases) can help a student to develop persuasive abilities, that is, to increase actual behavioral control in communicative situations. Of course, not every ethical matter can be addressed with verbal behavior—some ethical matters consist of nonverbal behavior (e.g., theft, physical harassment). But many ethical matters can be addressed in whole or in part with words, and a business communication instructor can, by helping students to develop their communicative abilities, help students to "give voice to values" and thereby to contribute to a more ethical workplace for themselves and others.

Business communication instructors will also want to remain sensitive to each student's perceived behavioral control. The available evidence consistently points to a conclusion that a person who perceives him- or herself as able to give voice to values, to develop and deliver messages that can potentially move others to do what is right, is more likely to form good intentions to speak up and to carry through with them. Empirical findings (Christensen et al., 2018)—from an "action oriented" theoretical framework which is fully compatible with the current analysis—support these claims. Conversely, a student who completes a business communication course with the self-perception that he or she lacks the abilities to articulate personal values and to bring those values clearly into the awareness of others, would be more likely to go along with unethical workplace behaviors.

The current analysis leads to one piece of pedagogical advice: When using a GVV case in a business communication classroom, I recommend trying to design the assignment in such a way that students experience a genuine success to build a heightened sense of behavioral control. Instructors quite naturally use a variety of assignments and seek to achieve a variety of objectives in their classes, including both student learning and fair and accurate grading in accord with appropriate standards as specified by the institution and its administrators. Typically, this means that not every student can receive an excellent grade on every assignment. However, given the potential power of GVV cases to affect how students eventually speak up (or do not) about ethical matters in the workplace, I recommend trying to design GVV assignments in such a way as to help each student to achieve (at least eventually) an excellent level of performance. The pedagogical goal should be, using an expression that can be traced through Fran Weeks back to Quintilian, to “arrange victories for one’s students” (Jamison, 1984; Locker, 1984).

Conclusions

This paper has described the GVV curriculum, with a focus on GVV cases. Since GVV cases are intended to improve business ethics pedagogy, the paper has, of necessity, reviewed certain aspects of that field. This review, in addition to advancing the current project, has at least partially clarified the place of business communication in the field of business ethics pedagogy: Business communication skills (both perceived and actual) play a key role in the implementation of very many examples of ethical behavior, essentially all those that require the use of words for their implementation. Thus, just as ethics has a place in business communication (Rentz & Debs, 1987), so does business communication have a place in ethics.

This paper advances several claims, some more explicitly than others. Those claims may be summarized as follows:

1. The GVV curriculum offers an opportunity for business communication instructors to contribute to an important business school objective. While methods and levels of effort vary, in general, business school faculty members would like for their graduates to be both successful in business and ethically responsible or even admirable—they certainly do not wish to see their graduates publicly identified as unethical or criminal. The GVV approach is one way in which business communication instructors can help to achieve that objective.
2. The GVV approach creates an opportunity for business communication faculty members to work together with other business school faculty. The GVV approach lends itself to an integrated, multi-course effort into which business communication faculty should participate. Such cooperation could take the form of multiple courses working in parallel toward the same objective (i.e., developing student abilities to "give voice to values"). It could also take a more integrative approach (when circumstances allow) such as assigning students a case in a discipline specific course (such as Finance) or in a business ethics course, and then following up with a GVV version of the same case in business communication.
3. The GVV approach is one for which business communication are well prepared (and, indeed, some business communication faculty have been "speaking prose" all along). This preparation, both in formal education and in classroom experience, will allow

business communication faculty to make valuable contributions to faculty discussions of how to teach and evaluate GVV cases.

4. And, considering the preceding conclusions, I reiterate that I think GVV cases should be included in business communication courses.

One obvious next step would appear to be the review of currently-available GVV cases—and the development of additional GVV cases—to assemble a set of cases for use in the business communication classroom. As already noted, business communication instructors are well prepared to improve existing cases and to write new ones (Shapiro, 2011). Another concomitant step would be the use of GVV cases by business communication instructors at multiple universities.

I believe—and this paper is, of necessity, something of a personal statement—that the GVV curriculum provides an opportunity for our field, but only if we seize it.

References

Ajzen, I. (1991). The theory of planned behavior. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, *50*, 179-211. DOI: 10.1002/hbe2.95

Ajzen, I. (2020). The theory of planned behavior: Frequently asked questions. *Human Behavior and Emerging Technology*, *2*, 314-324. DOI: 10.1002/hbe2.95

Arce, D. G. (2011). Giving voice to values in economics and finance. *Journal of Business Ethics Education*, *8*, 343-347.

Beck, Lisa, & Ajzen, I. (1991). Predicting dishonest actions using the theory of planned behavior. *Journal of Research in Personality*, *25*, 285-301.

Bedzow, I. (2019). *Giving voice to values as a professional physician: An introduction to medical ethics*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Cameron, R. A., & O'Leary, C. (2015). Improving ethical attitudes or simply teaching ethical codes? The reality of accounting ethics education. *Accounting Education: An International Journal*, *24*, 275-290.

Chappell, S., Webb, D., & Edwards, M. (2011). A required GVV ethics course: Conscripting ethical conversations. *Journal of Business Ethics Education*, *8*, 308-319.

Chappell, S. F., & Bowes-Sperry, L. (2015). Improving organizational responses to sexual harassment using the Giving Voice to Values approach. *Organization Management Journal*, *12*, 236-248.

Christensen, A., Cote, J., & Latham, C. K. (2018). Developing ethical confidence: The impact of action-oriented ethics instruction in an accounting curriculum. *Journal of Business Ethics*, *153*, 1157-1175.

Christensen, D., Barnes, J., & Ross, D. (2007). Developing resolve to have moral courage: A field comparison of teaching methods. *Journal of Business Ethics Education*, *4*, 79-96.

Clegg, S., Kornberger, M., & Rhodes, C. (2007). Business ethics as practice. *British Journal of Management*, *18*(2), 107-122.

Craft, J. L. (2013). Living in the grey: Lessons on ethics from prison. *Journal of Business Ethics*, *115*, 327-339.

De Los Reyes, G. Jr., Kim, T. W., & Weaver, G. R. (2017). Teaching ethics in business schools: A conversation on disciplinary differences, academic provincialism, and the case for integrated pedagogy. *Academy of Management Learning and Education, 16*, 314-336.

Edwards, M. G., & Kirkham, N. (2014). Situating 'Giving voice to values': A metatheoretical evaluation of a new approach to business ethics. *Journal of Business Ethics*, *121*, 477-495.

Eriksen, M., Cooper, K., & Miccolis, A. (2019). On becoming virtuous. *Journal of Management Education*, *43*, 630-650.

Eury, J. L., & Treviño, L. K. (2019). Building a culture of honor and integrity in a business school. *Journal of Management Education*, *43*, 484-508.

Felton, E. L., & Sims, R. R. (2005). Teaching business ethics: Targeted outputs. *Journal of Business Ethics*, *60*, 377-391.

Floyd, L. A., Xu, F., Atkins, R., & Caldwell, C. (2013). Ethical outcomes and business ethics: Toward improving ethics education. *Journal of Business Ethics, 117*, 753-776.

Gentile, M C. (2010). *Giving voice to values: How to speak your mind when you know what's right*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Gentile, M. (2011). A faculty forum on *Giving Voice to Values*: Faculty perspectives on the uses of this pedagogy and curriculum for values-driven leadership. *Journal of Business Ethics Education*, *8*, 305-307.

Gentile, M. (2012). Values-driven leadership development: Where we have been and where we could go. *Organization Management Journal*, *9*, 188-196.

Gentile, M. C. (2017). Giving voice to values: A pedagogy for behavioral ethics. *Journal of Management Education*, *41*, 469-479.

Gentile, M. C., Lawrence, A. T., & Melnyk, J. (2015). What is a Giving Voice to Values case? *Case Research Journal*, *35*(2), 1-10.

Graham, J., Haidt, J., & Nosek, B. A. (2009). Liberals and conservatives rely on different sets of moral foundations. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *96*, 1029-1046.

Greene, J. D. (2014). Beyond point-and-shoot morality: Why cognitive (neuro)science matters for ethics. *Ethics*, *124*, 695-726.

Haidt, J. (2001). The emotional dog and its rational tail: A social intuitionist approach to moral judgment. *Psychological Review*, *108*, 814-834.

Haidt, J. (2012). *The righteous mind: Why good people are divided by politics and religion*. New York, NY: Pantheon Books.

Holmes, V. (2015). 'Giving voice to values': Enhancing students' capacity to cope with ethical challenges in legal practice. *Legal Ethics*, *18*(2), 115-137.

Jameson, D. A. (1984). The ideal teacher: Arranging victories for students. *ABCA Bulletin* [*Business and Professional Communication Quarterly*], *47*(4), 10-12.

Jameson, D. A. (*In press*). Selling my soul: Moving from the humanities to business communication. In Janis Forman (Ed.), *The business communication profession: Essays on the journeys of leading teacher-scholars* (pp. x-x). Oxford, England: Routledge.

Jorgensen, G. (2006). Kohlberg and Gilligan: Duet or duel? *Journal of Moral Education, 35*(2), 179-196.

Kahneman, D. (2011). *Thinking, fast and slow*. New York, NY: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.

Locker, K. O. (1984). Arranging victories for one's students: A legacy from Fran Weeks and Quintilian. *ABCA Bulletin* [*Business and Professional Communication Quarterly*], *47*(4), 8-9.

Lund Dean, K., & Beggs, J. M. (2006). University professors and teaching ethics: Conceptualizations and expectations. *Journal of Management Education*, *30*, 15-44.

Lynch, S., Hart, B., & Costea, C. M. (2014). Giving voice to values: An undergraduate nursing curriculum project. *Collegian*, *21*, 367-373.

Mahoney, J. (1990). *Teaching business ethics in the UK, Europe and the USA: A comparative study*. London, England: Athlone.

McKone-Sweet, K. E., Greenberg, D. & Wilson, H. J. (2011). A Giving Voice to Values approach to educating entrepreneurial leaders. *Journal of Business Ethics Education, 8*, 337-342.

Medeiros, K. E., Watts, L. L., Mulhearn, T. J., Steele, L. M., Mumford, M. D., & Connelly, S. (2017). What is working, what is not, and what we need to know: A meta-analytic review of business ethics instruction. *Journal of Academic Ethics*, *15*: 245-275.

Moore, C., & Gino, F. (2015). Approach, ability, aftermath: A psychological process framework of unethical behavior at work. *Academy of Management Annals*, *9*, 235-289.

Mudrack, P. E., & Mason, E. S. (2013). Ethical judgments: What do we know, where do we go? *Journal of Business Ethics, 115*, 575-597.

Phillips-Wren, G., Jefferson, T., & McKniff, S. (2019). Cognitive bias and decision aid use under stressful conditions. *Journal of Decision Systems*, *28*, 162-184.

Plump, C. (2019). How giving voice to values can transform a toxic workplace culture. *People + Strategy*, *42*(3), 40-45.

Rasche, A., Gilbert, D. U., & Schedel, I. (2013). Cross-disciplinary ethics education in MBA programs: Rhetoric or reality. *Academy of Management Learning and Education, 12*, 71-85.

Reinsch, N. L. Jr. (1990). Ethics research in business communication: The state of the art. *Journal of Business Communication*, *27*, 251-272.

Reinsch, N. L. Jr., Pauwels, V., & Neff, C. D. (2021, June 10). *The Ethical Lifestyle Model: A progress report*. Paper presented at the meeting of the Christian Scholars' Conference, Nashville, TN.

Rentz, K. C., & Debs, M. B. (1987). Language and corporate values: Teaching ethics in business writing courses. *Journal of Business Communication*, *24*(3), 37-48.

Rest, J. R. (1983). Morality. In P. H. Mussen (Series Ed.) & J. H. Flavell & E. M. Markman (Vol. Eds.), *Handbook of child psychology: Vol. 3. Cognitive development* (4th ed., pp. 556-629). New York, NY: John Wiley & Sons.

Rest, J. R. (1986). *Moral development: Advances in research and theory*. New York, NY: Praeger.

Rest, J. [R.], Narvaez, D., Bebeau, M. J., & Thoma, S. J. (1999). *Postconventional moral thinking: A neo-Kohlbergian approach*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Rest, J. R., Narvaez, D., Thoma, S. J., & Bebeau, M J. (1999). DIT2: Devising and testing a revised instrument of moral judgment. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, *91*(4), 644-659.

Rogers, P. S., & Rymer, J. (Eds.). (1998). Business and management communication cases [Special issue]. *Business Communication Quarterly, 60*(1).

Rottig, D., Koufteros, X., & Umphress, E. (2011). Formal infrastructure and ethical decision making: An empirical investigation and implications for supply management. *Decision Sciences*, *42*, 163-204.

Saposnik, G., Redelmeier, D., Ruff, C. C., & Tobler, P. N. (2016). Cognitive biases associated with medical decisions: A systematic review. *BMC Medical Informatics and Decision Making*, *16*, 138. DOI 10.1186/s129121-016-0377-1

Shapiro, M. (2011). Charting your own route: Developing your own Giving Voice to Values cases. *Journal of Business Ethics Education*, *8*, 376-382.

Shelby, A. N. (1988). A macro theory of managerial communication. *Journal of Business Communication*, *25* (2), 13-27.

Shelby, A. N. (1991). Applying the strategic choice model to motivational appeals: A theoretical approach. *Journal of Business Communication*, *28*(3), 187-212.

Shelby, A. N. (1998). Communication quality revisited: Exploring the link with persuasive effects. *Journal of Business Communication*, *35*, 387-404.

Sigurjonsson, T. O., Arnardottir, A. A., Vaiman, V. & Rikhardsson, P. (2015). Managers' views on ethics education in business schools: An empirical study. *Journal of Business Ethics*, *130*, 1-13.

Swamy, R., & Ramesh, C. M. (2011). The relevance of GVV approach to management education in India. *Journal of Business Ethics*, *153*, 348-357.

Tversky, A., & Kahneman, D. (1974). Judgment under uncertainty: Heuristics and biases. *Science*, *185*, 1124-1131.

Treviño, L. K., & McCabe, D. (1994). Meta-learning about business ethics: Building honorable business school communities. *Journal of Business Ethics*, *13*, 405-416.

Treviño, L. K., & Weaver, G. R. (1994). Business ETHICS/BUSINESS ethics: One field or two? *Business Ethics Quarterly*, *4*, 113-128.

Warren, R., & Tweedale, G. (2002). Business ethics and business history: Neglected dimensions in management education. *British Journal of Management*, *13*, 209-219.

John M. McGrath, Trinity University

Perceptions and Responses to Warning Labels:

Implications for Technical Writing

John M. McGrath, Ph.D.

Department of Human Communication

Trinity University

San Antonio, TX 78212

Send all correspondence to John M. McGrath, Ph.D., Department of Human Communication Trinity University, One Trinity Place, San Antonio, Texas 78212. jmcgrath@trinity.edu 210-999-8514

Abstract

Tanning bed use has been linked to increases in skin cancer among young women. Although a causal relationship between ultraviolet radiation emitted by tanning beds and melanoma is well established, it is unclear if tanning bed users are aware of the risk and how they would respond to a warning message. Two hundred and ten women aged 16-29 who had used a tanning bed at least once in the last year were asked about their perceptions of risk and their responses to a prototype warning label that followed technical writing guidelines. Participants were already aware that tanning beds could cause cancer, but after viewing the warning label most people said they would stop or reduce their tanning bed use. Reactions to the prototype warning label were encouraging and future research should pursue the possibility that current guidelines for tanning bed warning labels may need to be revised.

Introduction

Skin cancer is the most prevalent cancer in the world and its incidence has been rapidly increasing in the United States.[1] Diagnoses of new cases of melanoma, the deadliest form, are increasing disproportionally among young women because of their use of indoor tanning beds. One study observing 63 women diagnosed with melanoma before age 30 found that 61 of them (97%) had used tanning beds.[2] Although the link between tanning bed use and skin cancer including melanoma has been well-established,[3,4,5] it is unclear whether tanning bed users are aware of the risk and how they would respond to skin cancer warnings. For example, some studies have shown that tanning bed users are unaware of the risks or have misconceptions, such as believing that indoor tanning bed use is safer than outdoor tanning.[6,7] Other research found that tanning beds were more likely to be used by young women, the majority of whom were aware of the associate risks.[8,9,10] Given the increases of melanoma cases among the most frequent users of tanning beds, it is important to find out more about their perceptions of risks and to identify possible messaging strategies that may influence them to reduce or stop their use of tanning beds. In this pilot study, tanning bed users were asked about their perceptions of risk and about their responses to a tanning bed warning label that followed specific technical writing guidelines.

A primary goal here was to pilot test a prototype warning label. This warning label was designed according to the technical writing guidelines of the American National Standard Institute's (ANSI) warning label standard, ANSI Z535.4. ANSI-styled warnings are based on the latest peer-reviewed research on warning labels and have shown often to be more effective than other formats or labels that do not follow ANSI guidelines.[11] Conversely, according to previous research, the content and design of current tanning bed warning labels have not been informed by health communication best practices, are not based on research,[12] and may be hard to see or missing.[13]

ANSI guidelines recommend utilizing a signal word (i.e. Danger, Warning, Caution) coupled with a safety alert symbol (exclamation mark within a triangle), a specific identification of the risk, how to avoid the risk and the consequence of not avoiding the risk. The guidelines also recommend a tiered, outlined format, the use of clear, explicit language, and the use of bold and contrasting colors.[14]

Method

An on-line software platform and crowdsourced data base, Qualtrics Panels, was used to screen for women aged 16-29 who had used a tanning bed at least once in the last year in the United States. Crowdsourcing involves soliciting on-line participation from large and diverse groups of people, who register on a website to complete surveys for which they are paid a small fee. To screen participants, they were asked to give their opinions regarding a variety of consumer products, including exercise equipment, computers, and tanning beds, among other items. If they responded "yes" to having used a tanning bed within the last 12 months, they were prompted to respond to a question about cancer risk and then on the following screen to a depiction of a tanning bed warning label. The rationale for this screening approach was to mitigate potential selection and response bias in crowdsourced surveys that can be related to participants knowing the characteristic of interest in the survey or the purpose of the study.[15,16,17] Recent studies have demonstrated the validity of crowdsourcing and online panel data collection platforms, including Qualtrics.[18,19] A total of 210 participants, who met the age and tanning bed use criteria, completed the survey. Figure 1 below is the ANSI-styled tanning bed warning label used in this study.

Figure 1 - Warning Label Shown to Tanning Bed Users

Data was also gathered regarding reactions to specific parts of the warning label, wherein participants were asked to click once on the area of the warning label that caught their attention the most. This study was approved through a university human subjects committee.

Results

Results showed that most tanning bed users were aware that tanning beds could cause cancer (see Figure 2). In fact, 83% of the respondents thought that tanning beds could either "Definitely" or "Probably" cause skin cancer. However, when shown an explicit warning label, the vast majority of participants said they would "definitely stop," "probably stop," or would use tanning beds "less often" (See Figure 3). Participants also indicated which part of the label captured their attention the most. The most frequent response was to the statement, “TANNING BEDS CAN CAUSE CANCER," which was given by 35% of participants, followed by the statement, "Ultraviolet radiation from tanning beds significantly increases the risk of melanoma cancer and other forms of skin cancer" (20% of participants), and then to the signal word, "WARNING" (17% of participants).

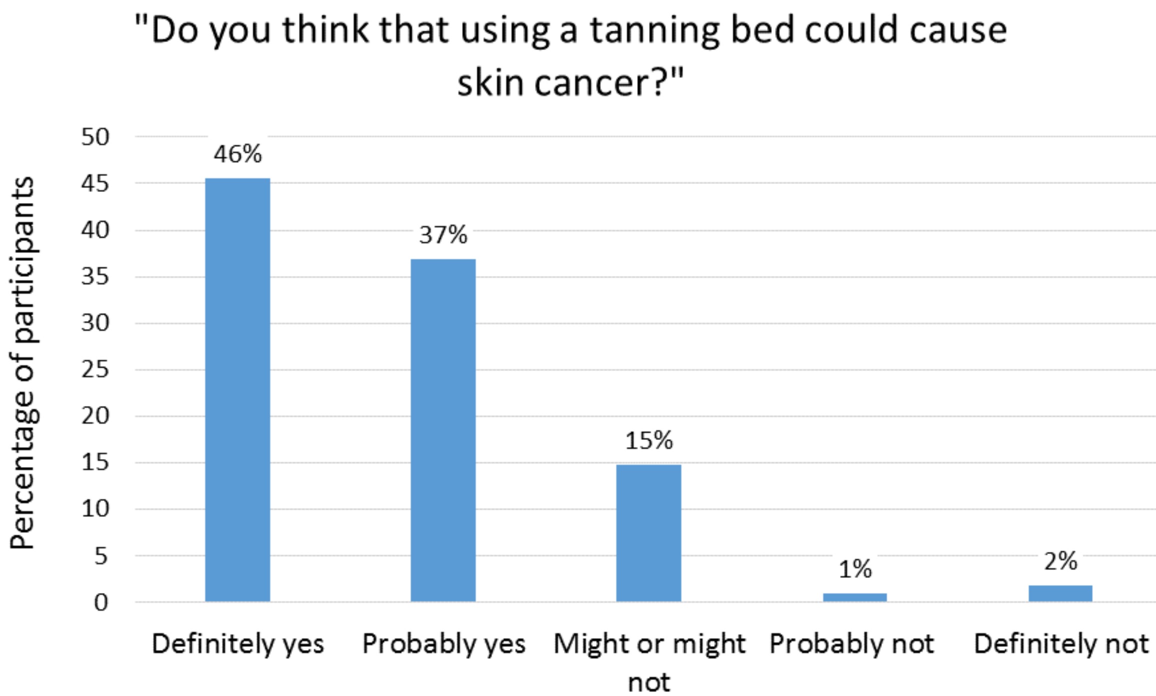

Figure 2 - Tanning Bed Users Perspectives on Skin Cancer

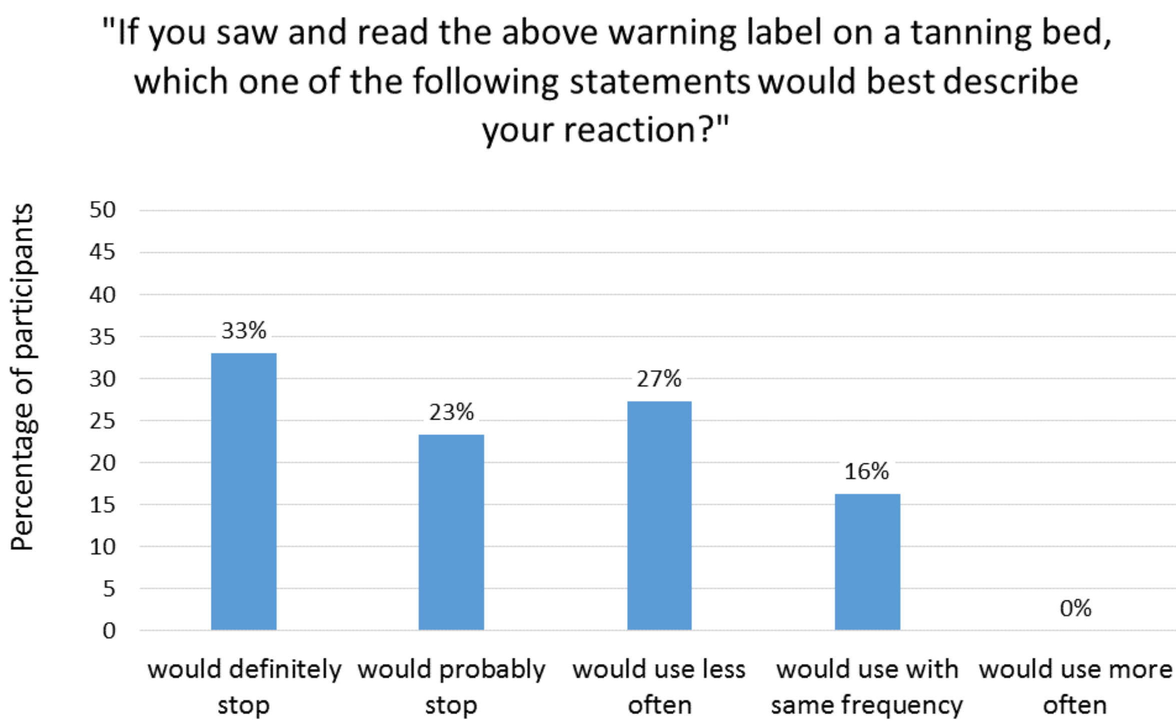

Figure 3 – Tanning Bed Users Reaction to Warning Label

Conclusion

Indoor tanning beds have been linked to an increased risk of melanoma among young women, and have been classified by the World Health Organization as carcinogenic to humans.[20] In the present study, most tanning bed users were aware that tanning beds could cause cancer, but after viewing an explicit warning label they indicated they would stop or cut down on their tanning bed use. Although intentions do not always align perfectly with future behavior, results suggest that the prototype label at least has the potential to influence users in a way that would reduce their risk of skin cancer. Moreover, it may be possible to improve current tanning bed warning labels that have been described in the literature as being poorly designed and not properly displayed.[12,13] Tentative conclusions are warranted because different labels were not compared in this study but several design characteristics and technical writing guidelines can be noted.

Signal words and bold, contrasting colors serve as an alerting mechanism that calls attention to a label and the seriousness of the message.[21,22] Explicit language influences peoples' perception of risk[23] and it could be that a specific reference to melanoma had such an effect. Similarly, the inclusion of so called "consequence statements" or outcomes of the hazard tend to capture attention to improve the effectiveness of a warning[24,25] and in this case the prominently placed consequence statement, "TANNING BEDS CAN CAUSE CANCER," was the part of the label that captured the participants' attention the most. The concise, bulleted statements used in the prototype warning label also follow technical writing guidelines for effectively communicating safety information.

The tanning bed industry has a history of providing false and misleading information to downplay the risk of cancer. In one study, investigators representing themselves as fair-skinned teenage girls contacted 300 tanning salons nationwide in the U.S., including at least 3 in each state. Nearly all salons denied the known risks of indoor tanning, saying, for example, that the link between indoor tanning and skin cancer is a "big myth." Four out of five salons falsely claimed that indoor tanning is beneficial to a young person's health.[26] Perhaps consequently, tanning beds remain popular and socially acceptable. For example, nearly half of the gyms in the United States offer indoor tanning,[27] and of the top 125 US Colleges and Universities, 48% had indoor tanning facilities either on campus or in off campus housing.[28]

The results of this study suggest that further research is warranted and that if a public health goal is to reduce the risk of cancer through labeling, it may be time to at least consider using more explicit tanning bed warnings that follow specific, technical writing guidelines. In addition, demonstrating the application of the ANSI 535.4 research-based guidelines as best practice in technical communication could be a helpful supplement to the pedagogy of business communication courses.

References

1. Cancer Fact and Figures 2019. American Cancer Society. https: www.cancer.org/research/cancer facts-statistics/all-cancer-facts-figures/cancer-facts-figures-2019.html. Accessed May 5, 2019.

2. Lazovich D, Vogel RI, Weinstock MA, Nelson HH, Ahmed RL, Berwick M. Association between indoor tanning and melanoma in younger men and women. *JAMA Dermatol.* 2016;152(3):268-275. Doi:10.1001/jamadermatol.2015.2938.

3. Cust AE, Armstrong BK, Goumas C, et al. Sunbed use during adolescence and early adulthood is associated with increased risk of early-onset melanoma. *Int. J. Cancer*. 2011. 128(10): 2425-2435.

4. LeClair MZ, Cockburn MG. Tanning bed use and melanoma: establishing risk and improving prevention interventions. *Prev. Med. Rep.* 2016(3):139-144

5. Boniol M, Autier P, Boyle P, Gandini S. Cutaneous melanoma attributable to sunbed use: systematic review and meta-analysis. *BMJ* 2012;345: e475.

6. Diehl K, Bock C, Breitbart EW, Greinert R, Schneider S. Building awareness of the health risks of sunbed use: identification of target groups for prevention. *Photodermatol. Photoimmunol. Photomed.* 2013; 29(6): 291-299.

7. Nergard-Martin J, Caldwell C, Barr M, Dellavalle RP, Soloman JA. Perceptions of tanning risk among melanoma patients with a history of indoor tanning. *Cutis* 2018; 101(1):47-55.

8. Farley C, Alimi Y, Espinosa LR, Perez S, Knechtle W, Hestley A, Carlson GW, Russell MC. Tanning beds: A call to action for further educational and legislative efforts. *J. Surg. Oncol.* 2015; 112 (2): 183-187.

9. Knight JM, Kirincich AN, Farmer ER, Hood AF. Awareness of the risks of tanning lamps does not influence behavior among college students. *Arch. Dermatol*. 2002; 138: 1311-1315.

10. Gajda M, Kaminska-Winciorek G, Wydmanski J, Tukiendorf A, Kowalska M. Behaviors of active sunbed users and their knowledge on the potential health risks; results of a cross-sectional study in Poland. J. *Cosmet. Dermatol.* 2018; 17(3): 538-544.

11. Klasher MJ, Obenauer WG, Weiss CF. Evaluating ANSI Z535-formatted warning labels as an Integrative System. *Proceed. Human Factors Ergon. Soc.* 2016; 60(1): 1642-1646.

12. Sypes EE, McWhirter, JE. Content analysis of health warning labels for indoor tanning in the United States. *Amer. J. Health Educ.* 2019(50): 80-87.

13. Brouse CH, Basch CE, Neugut AI. Warning signs observed in tanning salons in New York City: implication for skin cancer prevention. *Prev. Chronic. Dis.* 2011; 8(4): A88.

14. American National Standards Institute (ANSI). Product Safety Signs and Labels (Standard No. ANSI 535.4-2011). New York, NY.

15. Sheehan KB. Crowdsourcing research: Data collection with Amazon's mechanical turk. *Commun. Monogr.* 2018; 85(1): 140-156.

16. Jan-Benedict EM, Steenkamp MG, De Jong HB. Socially desirable response tendencies in survey research. *J. Mark. Res.* 2010; 47(2): 199-214.

17. Krosnick JA. Survey research. *Annu. Rev. Psychol.* 1999; 50: 537-567.

18. Walter SL, Seibert SE, Goering D, O'Boyle, EH. A tale of two sample sources: do results from on-line panel data and conventional data converge? *J. Bus. and Psych.* 2019(34):425-452.

19. Holt TP, Loraas TM. Using Qualtrics Panels to Source External Auditors: a replication study. *J. Info. Systems* 2019(33): 29-41.

20. El Ghissassi F, Baan R, Straif K, et al. WHO International Agency for Research on Cancer Monograph Working Group. A review of human carcinogens---part D: radiation. Lancet Oncol. 2009;10(8):751-752.

21. Hellier E, Edworthy J. Signal words. In: Wogalter S, ed. *Handbook of Warnings.* Mahwah: New Jersey; Lawrence Erlbaum Associates; 2006: 407-417.

22. Braun CC, Mine PB, Silver NC. The influence of color on warning perception. Int J *Industrial Ergonomics*. 1995 15(3): 179-187.

23. Laughery KR, Smith DP. Explicit information in warnings. In: Wogalter S, ed. *Handbook of Warnings*. Mahwah: New Jersey; Lawrence Erlbaum Associates; 2006: 407-417.

24. Magnan RE, Koblitz AR, Zielke DJ, McCaul KD. The effects of warning smokers on perceived risk, worry, and motivation to quit. *Annals of Behav Med.* 2009 37(1): 46-57.

25. Braun CC, Holt RS, Silver NC. Adding consequence information to product instructions: changes in hazard perceptions. In Proceeding of the Human Factors and Ergonomics Society 39th Annual Meeting. Santa Monica, CA: *Human Factors and Ergonomic Society.* 1995; 346-350.

26. U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Energy and Commerce. False and misleading health information provided to teens by the indoor tanning industry. https://www.dnanurse.org/sites/default/files/downloads/2012/Tanning Investigation Report2.1.12pdf. published February 1, 2012. Last accessed August 13 2019.

27. Pagoto S, Nahar V, Frisard C, et al. A comparison of tanning habits among gym tanners and other tanners. *JAMA Dermatol* 2018; 154: 1090-1091.

28. Pagoto S, Lemon S, Oleski J, eta al. Availability of tanning beds on US college campuses. *JAMA Dermatol.* 2015: 151(1): 59-63.

Communication, Collegiality, and Cheating? Students' Use of GroupMe in Business Courses

Lindsay C. Clark, Sam Houston State University
Ashton Mouton, Sam Houston State University
Traci Austin, Sam Houston State University

Abstract
The use of the app GroupMe is a common communication tool for students to share information, ask questions, and coordinate interactions for specific courses. Although there are benefits of using the app, it is also sometimes used for code of conduct violations. Our survey (n=500) addressed seven topics associated with GroupMe use. The qualitative responses are currently being reviewed, and the results will be presented at the conference.

Description
Undergraduate students often communicate with each other about course-related topics using technological tools, including email, learning management systems, and mobile instant messaging (MIM) apps. At the presenters' university, the use of the app GroupMe is a common communication tool for students to share information, ask questions, and coordinate interactions for specific courses.

While the academic literature on GroupMe is sparse, some researchers have identified benefits of using the app. Gronseth & Hebert (2018) argue for the usefulness of GroupMe in facilitating communication in both face-to-face and online courses. Similarly, Ly's (2020) analysis of GroupMe posts and follow-up interviews from her composition students demonstrated rhetorical decision-making, arguing that "computer-mediated communication is a valuable space...that is rich with rhetorical activities, critical thinking, and identity/voice negotiations" (p. 149).

However, in recent years, students have also used GroupMe as a tool for cheating and other code of conduct violations. Ohio State University cited "unauthorized collaboration" between students on a GroupMe chat in a business course (Roll, 2017). Similarly, after two University of Texas students sent information about an upcoming exam over the app, the university threatened failing grades or expulsion of all 70 students on the chat (Rendall, 2019; see also Cohen, 2019). In the first year of online and hybrid courses in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, many universities have reported a surge in code of conduct violations via GroupMe, prompting several to include explicit statements about MIM apps into their academic integrity policies (Jones, 2020).

In our business college, faculty have discussed the benefits and drawbacks of these student-initiated backchannels; on one hand, we recognize the potential of GroupMe for coordinating virtual collaboration and managing team projects, as well as disseminating course-related announcements and reminders. Conversely, many faculty discussed issues of academic dishonesty (e.g., sharing exam information and homework answers), dissemination of incorrect information regarding expectations or due dates, and even slander about instructors.

For this project, we sought to better understand students' perceptions of the GroupMe app, specifically, why and how GroupMe is so valuable to students that they increasingly initiate or join these student-only communication channels. To gather data for this project, the authors surveyed students in our college (a college of business at a regional university in the Southwestern U.S). The students were enrolled either in a junior-level business communication course or a masters-level managerial communication course. The survey was administered during the Spring, Summer, and Fall terms of 2020.

The anonymous survey consists of open-ended and multiple-choice questions that sought input on the students' experience with GroupMe. The topics addressed in the survey included:
1. The frequency and pervasiveness of class-focused, student-created GroupMes
2. The students' purpose in joining and using GroupMe
3. Instances in which students have felt uncomfortable in or left a GroupMe
4. The perceived impact of GroupMe on their success in the course
5. The impact of the pandemic-related university shutdown on the frequency and pervasiveness of student-led GroupMes
6. Students' attitudes toward instructor presence on a class-centered GroupMe
7. Opportunities for open-ended and non-directed input.

Findings

In total, the authors received approximately 500 responses to the survey. The qualitative responses are currently being reviewed, and the results of this review will be presented at the conference. The goal of the review of qualitative responses to the survey is two-fold: first, to capture students' experience with and attitudes toward GroupMe; second, to use the student input as a foundation for exploring ways in which instructors can adapt to and perhaps even channel the presence of GroupMe chats associated with their individual courses.

It is common for instructors to have a negative attitude toward GroupMe--at best ambivalent, and at worst adversarial. However, preliminary results from the survey show that GroupMe often plays a crucial, practical role in student success in and satisfaction with a course--and, indeed, the platform seems to be offering a place for support, communication, and collegiality that students feel is not available elsewhere. Additionally, the results suggest that students would be open to an instructor-initiated GroupMe for specific courses, suggesting a preference toward this communication channel over email. By better understanding the reasons why students turn to GroupMe, instructors can, perhaps, find ways to capitalize on the positive aspects of GroupMe, counteract its negative tendencies, and provide other ways of achieving the collegiality, safety, and practical, real-time communication students seem to be seeking in GroupMe.

References

Cohen, L. (2019, November 26). Is it cheating to use GroupMe for college classes? Daily Dot. https://www.dailydot.com/irl/groupme-cheating-college/

Gronseth, S. & Hebert, W. (2019). GroupMe: Investigating use of mobile instant messaging in higher education courses, TechTrends, 63, 15-22.

Jones, J. (2020, November 17). Georgia State students warn about cheating through GroupMe. The Georgia State Signal. https://georgiastatesignal.com

Rendall, A. (2019, October 23). UT GroupMe cheating scandal causes students to resent app. The Daily Cougar. http://thedailycougar.com/2019/10/23/ut-groupme-cheating-scandal/

Roll, N. (2017, November 14). Cheating without intent? Inside HigherEd. https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2017/11/14/could-groupme-lead-cheating-guilt-association

Quang C. Ly, Q. C. (Spring/Summer 2020). The Case for GroupMe: Rhetorical Thinking Thrives Among Students Using App, Journal of Literacy and Technology, 21, 110-158.

Using Grammarly: Perceptions of Employees' Use in Professional Settings

Carol S. Wright, Stephen F. Austin State University
Virginia Hemby, Middle Tennessee State University

Abstract
With new technology products being introduced frequently, it is difficult to determine which are useful and will offer the best benefit. Early adopters like to try products as soon they hit the market, but others like to wait to see the true value. One product, Grammarly, introduced in 2009, has both free and paid subscriptions and claims 30 million users.

Description

With new technology products being introduced frequently, it is difficult to determine which are useful and will offer the best benefit. Early adopters like to try products as soon they hit the market, but others like to wait to see the true value. One product, Grammarly, introduced in 2009, has both free and paid subscriptions and claims 30 million users (Grammarly Inc., 2021).

In a study by O'Neill and Russell (2019), participants identified six areas of concern with the use of Grammarly to improve writing. One issue was the accuracy of the feedback from Grammarly. One of the comments from a participant stated "not all grammar errors were valid or correct." They also noted that Grammarly missed errors and that it made suggestions that were at times difficult to understand. One participant pointed to an issue that the literature has identified as a potential hindrance to language development when using a tool such as Grammarly: "They just fix the grammar but I don't understand why they did it that way. It's just for the assignment not for overall English development." These findings suggest that the use of Grammarly has limitations.

The purposes of this pilot study are:
1. Determine how prevalent the use of Grammarly is for business professionals
2. Understand the perceptions of the value of Grammarly in professional writing

Using responses from alumni of a 4-year university, responses will be collected and analyzed using Qualtrics. This session will present the initial findings of the survey.

References

Grammarly, Inc. (2021). About. https://www.grammarly.com/about

O'Neill, R., & Russell, A. (2019). Stop! Grammar time: University students' perceptions of the automated feedback program Grammarly. Australasian Journal of Educational Technology, 35(1), 42-56. https://doi.org/10.14742.ajet.3795.

Teamwork & Project Management: Using Online Collaboration Boards in a Business Communication Course

Rachel Dolechek, Fort Hays State University
Gregory Weisenborn, Fort Hays State University
Ron Rohlf, Fort Hays State University

Abstract
Teamwork or collaboration is a top career-ready competency recognized by the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE), yet team-based coursework is difficult to implement. This presentation will detail an exercise implemented in a business communication course prior to and during COVID-19. Session attendees will be introduced to the exercise, results of the pre/post-test, and advice for implementing online collaboration boards in future business communication group projects.

Description
Teamwork or collaboration is a top career-ready competency recognized in the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) recent Job Outlook study (NACE, 2019). Institutions of higher education acknowledge the importance of developing teamwork as an employability skill, but team-based coursework is oftentimes difficult to implement effectively (Kliegl & Weaver, 2014). After recognizing the importance of improving students' collaboration skills, faculty members in three business discipline created an exercise to guide students in the development of their groups. Using free online collaboration boards and applying a project management methodology, students learned a new approach to working in teams. Using an agile framework, such as scrum, places a focus on developing both collaboration skills and soft skills (Rush & Connolly, 2020). Scrum sprints and online collaboration boards provide a good framework for sharing, updating, and monitoring task completion in a group project.

During this presentation, attendees will learn about an experimental exercise implemented in a business communication course prior to and during COVID-19. This exercise was designed to expose students to informal project management tools by using a pre-test, lecture, project, and post-test format. Students completed a pre-test prior to a class lecture on project management methodology and Kanban collaboration boards. After completion of the analytical report project, a post-test assessed acquired knowledge from using the online collaboration board and changes to team participation and engagement due to using this tool. Session attendees will be introduced to the exercise, results of the pre/post-test, and advice for implementing online collaboration boards in future business communication group projects.

The classroom exercise is adaptable to multiple disciplines. This session will discuss completion of the exercise in two additional disciplines. With the COVID-19 pandemic, the need for remote collaboration is critical, both across disciplines in higher education and in the workplace.

Attendees will engage in this presentation by discussing implementation of the exercise in their own course, as well as how this framework could be used in the workplace. Session attendees will provide invaluable feedback for improvement of the exercise to increase workplace readiness of students.

References

NACE. (2019). Job Outlook 2020. https://www.naceweb.org/

Kliegl, J. A., & Weaver, K. D. (2014). Teaching teamwork through coteaching in the business classroom. Business and Professional Communication Quarterly, 77(2), 204–216.

Ritter, B. A., Small, E. E., Mortimer, J. W., & Doll, J. L. (2017). Designing management curriculum for workplace readiness: Developing students' soft skills. Journal of Management Education, 42(1), 80-103.

Rush, D. E., & Connolly, A. J. (2020). An agile framework for teaching with scrum in the IT project management classroom. Journal of Information Systems Education, 31(3), 196-207.

Factors to Consider in Maximizing Benefits and Reducing Costs of Business Course Materials

Marsha L. Bayless, Stephen F. Austin State University
Manuel Guerrero, Stephen F. Austin State University
Jonathan M. Helmke, Stephen F. Austin State University

Abstract
The purpose of this study is to define the factors that must be considered when adopting textbooks in business communication and business ethics and society courses to provide quality materials at affordable prices for students. Three areas of course materials will be examined: traditional textbooks, open resource books and materials, and customizable textbooks.

Description
The cost of college textbooks has become a key issue in the price of higher education as tuition increases, housing and food increases, and user fees have also escalated. Some students seek to save money by opting to not buy the college textbooks that have been chosen by the faculty who teach the courses they are taking. Other students decide to wait to buy a text to see if they can "get by" without a book or if they "really need" the text. This reluctance to invest in course text material can cause the student to fall behind, be less successful than they had hoped in a course, or even to fail the course.

The high cost of textbooks is not a new issue. A study of seven California universities in 2003 as well as a study in Connecticut in 2004 attributed rising textbook costs to publishers' providing frequent publication of new editions and a practice of bundling items together. The State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV) reported in 2006 that an effective used book market was important in maintaining affordability of textbooks (Christie, Pollitz, & Middleton, 2009). While the issues may have changed over the years, the cost of textbooks has continued to be an issue in the Covid-era.

A CBS News report in 2018 indicated that the average cost of textbooks had increased four times faster than the rate of inflation over the last 10 years (Castillo, 2020). Some states have taken steps to provide alternatives. In Texas a statewide Open Educational Resources or OER grant has been instituted to provide some videos, books, scholarly articles, and primary resource materials to faculty and students at no cost (Castillo, 2020).

A 2019 survey of 400 students from Rutgers University were asked how much money they spent on textbooks in a typical semester ranging from \$100 to over \$1000. The largest percentage at 32% indicated they spent between \$200 and \$300. When asked if they were unable to purchase a book because of the cost, 58% of the respondents said that they had run into a situation with the cost of the book keeping them from purchasing the text (Todorinova & Wilkinson, 2019).

College faculty may have limited ability to affect many of the costs of higher education. However, the selection of textbooks and materials for the course is an area where they may be able to make a substantial savings impact for students. Instructors should consider the cost of college textbooks, the formats that are available, and the quality of the books and materials that faculty can provide. Increasingly, colleges and faculty are offering open source materials or other low-cost options for students. Historically, many of the open source materials are dated or not updated to reflect current business practices. It may also not be easy to find the particular subject matter area or content. In addition, the material may not utilize current technologies in presentation that are attractive to students such as embedded videos, color graphics, and interactive elements.

In 2007 FlatWorld Knowledge was organized to fight the high cost of college textbooks by publishing low-cost quality materials that were often in digital formats. The company soon realized that they needed to look at other educational projects with better profit margins. One of the earlier concepts was to give free textbooks but to have supplemental materials that required additional cost. This model, however, did not work well in practice. By 2018 FlatWorld which had received a lot of positive publicity had revised the model to focus on a book for a base price of about $30. A student could get the book in different formats such as print or digital at an additional cost. Over 4,000 professors at hundreds of colleges have adopted Flat World textbooks throughout the U.S. and Canada (Reid, 2018).

Textbook materials can be broadly placed in at least three categories: traditional textbooks, open resource books and materials, and customizable textbooks. Books can also come in formats of hard copy and e-text.

Purpose

The purpose of this study is to explore textbook options for business communication and business ethics and business society courses including traditional textbooks, open resource books and materials, and customizable textbooks. Analytic information will also be reviewed from a customizable e-text.

Findings

An analysis of analytic information related to an e-text will be summarized and discussed in this presentation. In addition, the availability and cost of various business communication and business ethics and society textbooks will be discussed.

References

Castillo, R. (2020, August). In the news: An alternative to expensive college texbooks. San Antonio Express-News. https://www.alamo.edu/pac/news-events/news/2020/august/in-the-news-commentary--a-revolutionary-alternative-to-expensive-college-textbooks/

Christie, A., Pollitz, J. H., & Middleton, C. (2009). Student strategies for coping with textbook costs and the role of library course reserves. Portal: Libraries and the academy, 9(4), 491-510.

Reid, C. (2018). FlatWorld refocuses on low-cost quality textbooks. Publishers Weekly. www.publishersweekly.com.

Todorinova, L. & Wilkinson, Z. T. (2019). Closing the loop: Students, academic libraries, and textbook affordability. The Journal of Academic Librarianship, 45(3), 268-277.

Students' Perceptions of Feedback on their Business Writing Accuracy in Disciplinary Business Courses

Ashly Bender Smith, Sam Houston State University

Abstract
A support program at a regional business college incentivizes business faculty to assign writing assignments by providing a support grader who marks grammar errors in students' submissions. Preliminary assessment data suggests that the program effectively reduces errors, but it is unclear how students use and perceive the program. This presentation reports on students' perceptions and use of the support grader's feedback so that such programs may better develop students' business writing skills.

Description
Faculty across the business disciplines often acknowledge the importance of effective business communication for all majors. However, they may be resistant to incorporating assignments that strengthen communication skills in their courses for a variety of reasons. One commonly heard reason is that faculty do not feel they have the time to provide effective feedback on written assignments.

Various support resources and feedback strategies have been recommended to reduce the feedback time burden, including course-embedded tutors (Carpenter et al., 2014), use of audio comments (Grouling, 2018), and using Pareto principles to guide revision assignments (O'Neill, 2018), and more. In one regional southern university's business college, administrators developed a program called the Writing Initiative to address faculty's concern about feedback time by providing grading support to business faculty who include written assignments in their courses. The grader for the Writing Initiative provides a handout listing common and bothersome grammar errors in business writing, and then the grader marks these errors and others on the students' submitted written assignments. Participating faculty are asked to provide the handout of common errors to students and to allocate at least 10% of the assignment grade to the grammatical effectiveness of the assignment. Beyond these two requests, there are no further requirements about how faculty use the Writing Initiative. Overall, the Writing Initiative provides faculty a minimally intrusive intervention in exchange for providing students more opportunities to practice their business writing skills. Faculty design the assignment and grade the course-related content while the grader simply marks and tallies the grammar errors without taking up any class time or providing any feedback on the assignment.

Approximately 12-15 faculty use the Writing Initiative each semester, and those who use the program regularly tend to have positive impressions of its value and effectiveness. One prior assessment study tracked students' error type and frequency across four assignments that received Writing Initiative feedback in an upper-level Management course. The results showed that students reduced their error frequency from the first to the last assignment on five commonly occurring error types: sentence fragments, run-on sentences, capitalization errors, misspelled words, and comma errors (Clark et al., 2020). While these results are promising, the error tracking data alone did not provide insight into whether and how the students used the Writing Initiative resources and feedback that they received.

This study aims to gain insight into students' perceptions of the Writing Initiative and how they use the resources and feedback provided through the program. This information will help strengthen the Writing Initiative and programs like it so that such programs support both faculty and students in the effort to improve students' business writing.

In this effort, students in Fall 2021 course sections using the Writing Initiative will be recruited to complete an anonymous Qualtrics survey about their perceptions and use of the Writing Initiative resources and feedback. The survey opens with basic demographic questions and then includes a set of multiple-answer questions about the student's use of the Writing Initiative resources and feedback. Finally, survey-takers will respond to a set of Likert-scale prompts about their perceptions of the Writing Initiative programs, resources, and feedback. Approximately 200 students will be recruited to complete the survey in December 2021.

This presentation will provide a brief overview of the Writing Initiative and then present the results of the student use and perception survey. Overall, the Writing Initiative is a unique way to encourage business faculty to assign writing assignments while also offering students feedback on the effectiveness of their business communication. Earlier assessment data suggested that using the Writing Initiative for multiple assignments in a single course can reduce students' error frequency over time, but that data did not clearly indicate whether students' use of the Writing Initiative resources and feedback was connected to the error reduction over time. The findings from this student survey will provide better insight into the usefulness of the program from the students' perspective. Further, those who manage the Writing Initiative and similar programs at other schools can leverage the insights from this student to strengthen the implementation of such business communication support programs.

References

Carpenter, R., Whiddon, S., & Dvorak, K. (2014). Guest editor introduction: Revisiting and revising course-embedded tutoring facilitated by writing centers. Praxis: A Writing Center Journal, 12, 3-7. http://www.praxisuwc.com/from-the-guest-editors

Clark, L., Luo, Z., & Smith, A. B. (2020). Effects of course-embedded grammar graders: Evidence from a business college writing initiative program. Research & Practice in Assessment, 15(2), 1-17. https://www.rpajournal.com/dev/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Effects-of-Course-Embedded-Grammar-Graders-.pdf

Grouling, J. (2018). The genre of teacher comments from hard copy to iPad. Journal of Response to Writing, 4(1), 70-99. https://journalrw.org/index.php/jrw/article/view/103

O'Neill, K. S. (2018). Applying the Pareto Principle to the analysis of students' errors in grammar, mechanics, and style. Research in Higher Education Journal, 34, 1-12. https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1178476

Course Assessment Best Practices: Tips for the Busy Professor

Jean Ann Edrington, Arkansas State University-Beebe

Course assessment is founded upon answering the question: What learning is needed to provide competency in a particular subject or skill? What types of assessment can indicate whether that competency has been reached or to what degree it has been reached?

This concept often goes back to the original justification for including a course in a particular degree of study and strives to get to the heart of why the knowledge embedded in the course is considered valuable, helpful, or necessary. The planning for course assessment begins with some philosophical questions that need to be wrestled through to provide guidelines and shared outcomes that can hopefully be uniformly applied by various instructors/professors or a program/department.

Formerly scholastics and curricular commissions focused on course hours or classroom time and chapters covered or unit progression. However, in our current learning environment these measures have become more impractical due to online formats, hybrid teaching, flipped classrooms, and remote asynchronous student engagement. The question becomes, how do we measure what learning is taking place? How do we measure learning progression or individual competency? How can we recognize mastery?

Preparation for Assessment

The process begins with preparation to be ready to assess a course or program. Ideally there is a shared vision emanating from the university, department, program that will guide the process and help define outcomes and objectives. It is also tremendously helpful if there is an impetus for change or an awareness of gaps in outcomes or a perception that improvement is needed.

Objectives/Student Learning Outcomes

Those outcomes and objectives need to be clearly articulated and identified. The outcomes and objectives also need to be specific, measurable, student-oriented, and related to the university's mission. These should be included in the course syllabus (hopefully there is a syllabus template so that these objectives and learning outcomes are uniformly communicated to students.)

Methods

Determine what measure beast suits assessing the success of the learning outcomes and demonstrates that students are learning and/or absorbing the course material. These measures might be direct or indirect. Be clear about what type of measure or score would indicate that students are meeting the stated objectives.

A search for articles and assessment methods from other institutions can be immensely helpful. I discovered for instance that there was an academic paper on an assessment measured for a Business Communication course and that the researchers included the questions and topics that they assessed students on. I was able to cite the paper in my course assessment and back up my assessment plan with an academic journal article and research.

I plan to include examples of previous course assessments and different kinds of assessments and parameters. I also plan to include guidelines and examples of where to determine realistic parameters based on previous student performance, course expectations, or institutional criteria.

Results and Use of Results
Results and the data should be clearly described and related to the objectives and stated criteria for success. The plan should discuss how the assessment results will be used and what actions will be taken.

If the results indicate that the goals are not met, then the action steps to correct or improve need to be listed and described. It is worth noting that a result that indicated room for improvement or other actions is not a "failure" but that the assessment and measurement are doing what they are designed to do in terms of assessing how successfully students are absorbing the course material or meeting objectives.

- How well have students achieved the learning outcomes set for the course?
- What could be enhanced to improve student success overall?
- Have students improved over a term -- from beginning to end -- on their performance about key learning outcomes in the course?
- Are there any interesting trends within the data or any subgroup results worth noting or highlighting? (e.g., part-time versus full time students, traditional vs nontraditional, on campus vs commuter students, Male vs. Female, etc.)

Also, it is helpful to note how the results will be distributed (including whether faculty, administrators, students and/or other stakeholders will have access and in what ways the information would be available).

Course Outline:

- Preparation for Assessment
    - A shared vision of the course or program, including outcomes and objectives
    - An impetus for change, such as a perceived discrepancy between the existing state and desired future
    - Identification of those concepts that are important to teach for a particular course or program
- Objectives/Student Learning Outcomes
    - The objectives/student learning outcomes should be specific, measurable, student-oriented, and related to the university's mission.
    - These should be included in the course syllabus (ideally there is a syllabus template so that these objectives and learning outcomes are uniformly communicated to students.)
- Methods
    - Determine what measure beast suits assessing the success of the learning outcomes and demonstrates that students are learning and/or absorbing the course material.
    - These measures might be direct or indirect

    - Be clear about what type of measure or score would indicate that students are meeting the stated objectives.
- Results/ Use of the Results
    - Results and the data should be clearly described and related to the objectives and stated criteria for success.
    - The plan should discuss how the assessment results will be used and what actions will be taken
    - If the results indicate that the goals are not met, then the action steps to correct or improve need to be listed and described. It is worth noting that a result that indicated room for improvement or other actions is not a "failure" but that the assessment and measurement are doing what they are designed to do in terms of assessing how successfully students are absorbing the course material or meeting objectives.
        - How well have students achieved the learning outcomes set for the course?
        - What could be enhanced to improve student success overall?
        - Have students improved over a term -- from beginning to end -- on their performance about key learning outcomes in the course?
        - Are there any interesting trends within the data or any subgroup results worth noting or highlighting
    - Also, it is helpful to note how the results will be distributed (including whether faculty, administrators, students and/or other stakeholders will have access and in what ways the information would be available).

Power Skills: Don't Be Soft

Marcel Robles, Eastern Kentucky University

Abstract
The view on soft skills and hard skills has been changing over the past several years. Hard skills used to be the center of attention for employers. Employers wanted to know if candidates had the qualifications for the job before hiring them; but in today's world, that is not the only quality employers are looking for. Soft skills are the power skills that contribute most to the success of an employee and an organization. Some soft skills are more important than other; and if employees learn the specific power skills employers are looking for, they will have productive fulfilling careers.

Helping Students Effectively Navigate a Noisy World

Ashley Hall

Abstract
Students today are living in a technologically noisy world. We as educators have a role to play in helping them develop essential skills to aid in workplace readiness. This presentation will focus on the technological realities our students are facing and how to build opportunities into your classes to foster genuine face-to-face connections with other students and professionals.

Statement of the Problem / Purpose
Our world is noisy. Endless phone dings alert us to updates and app notifications. Emails are received all hours of the day and night. In the last 18 months, Zoom meetings have become commonplace. In a world filled with technology, there seems to be no end to the noise. However, while technology makes it easy to connect with someone, studies are routinely finding that people are lonely, isolated, and craving authenticity. Tech saturation does not equal feeling connected. So what are we, as educators, supposed to do? How can we help students navigate the endless lure of technology and exchange shallow technology interactions for genuine face-to-face connections?

Summary
Walk into a classroom before the scheduled start time and instead of hearing small talk, you will likely find students with their heads down, engrossed in scrolling on their phone.
The purpose of this presentation is to encourage participants to consider the noisy world in which students are living and to work to foster genuine connections inside and outside the classroom.

Implications for Education
This topic is timely and relevant. Its significance is far-reaching because according to GCF Global (n.d.), numerous countries have "declared a loneliness epidemic." One study even reported that 47% of Americans say they lack meaningful personal connections in their life. This number is astounding, and the problem has only been exacerbated by the isolation brought about by the COVID pandemic. Interestingly, it has been noted that "Many experts believe that having constant access to technology, specifically smartphones, can prevent us from making personal connections. For many people, it's become a habit to reach for a smartphone any time they have a free moment, and this behavior could be making our loneliness worse" (GCFGlobal, n.d.).

Given students' propensity to reach for their phone, we as educators have a role to play. We can encourage genuine face-to-face connections by providing students opportunities to engage with each other in class, as well as professionals in their desired fields. Students should be taught how to build and foster a professional network and how to actively listen when they are engaged in conversation. These items may seem commonplace, but they are routinely lacking in college students and recent graduates. The audience will be engaged through compelling stories, relatable content, real-life applications, and time for questions.

Expected Learning Outcomes
After attending the session, participants will be able to:
1. Understand the tech saturation experienced among students today

2. Develop strategies to teach students how to build a professional network
3. Articulate how to encourage students to engage in active listening
4. Construct ideas for fostering real-life connections among students
5. Express the benefits of genuine connections versus relying solely on technology to give the illusion of feeling connected

References

GCFGlobal (n.d.) Is technology making us lonely? Retrieved from https://edu.gcfglobal.org/en/thenow/is-technology-making-us-lonely/1/

Impact of Mobile Communication in the Bateyes of the Dominican Republic

John Powers, Quinnpiac University

Abstract
The bateyes of the Dominican Republic are extremely poor and lack the most basic of modern conveniences including electricity, running water, and more. Despite this, digital communication has found its way to the people of the bateyes and is having a powerful impact on interpersonal communication and the social identity of residents. How is this phenomenon similar to our own interpersonal communication in a digitally saturated culture?

Purpose of Study
This research is intended to develop further understanding related to the powerful impact new digital communication has on us as individuals, families, and communities. Research was conducted in an isolated and impoverished population in the sugarcane villages of the Dominican Republic, home to often-illegal migrant Haitian workers and their families. This project adds to the scholarship that already is in place related to the impact of cell phones, Internet, social media, and other new media on the daily lives of individuals and groups. By examining interpersonal communication through new technologies among the people in the bateyes, insights are gained related to social identity, interpersonal relationships, and other behaviors. While gaining an understanding of this impact on the people of the bateyes, we can also reflect on the effect digital communication is having on interpersonal communication involving personal relationships, business, education, and more.

Unlike most traditional diffusion studies, this research did not tracking adoption over time using a quantitative methodology. Instead, this study uniquely examines the diffusion phenomenon by reflexively using ethnographic methods including observation, conversation, and interviews. This is a much-needed approach in Diffusion of Innovations and Social Identity studies, and adds a more detailed and contextual understanding to these processes.

In addition, this research is the first to examine the diffusion and adoption of digital communication in the bateyes of the Dominican Republic. While doing that, the study also adds to the current body of research related to the impact of communication technologies, and particularly how these digital technologies and their applications are impacting the interpersonal relationships and social identities of people.

Social identity theory, introduced initially by Taijfel and Turner (1979), is a theoretical perspective that should help explain why those in the bateyes have begun to embrace the use of cell phones and related communication technologies. The theory basically asserts that people tend to identify with certain groups and emphasize solidarity within these groups in which they are members while rejecting groups where they do not belong. This sense of belonging involving social media and digital media has been the focus of a number of studies in recent years as the digital divide has been examined in the United States and developed world (O'Keeffe & Clarke-Pearson, 2011). In the bateyes, as the digital divide begins to be torn down, a whole new world potentially is opened up to its residents. Despite this, the potential for real division remains in the batey between those who have access to this new technology and those who do not. The adoption of new communication technology also allows groups of people in the bateyes to have access to and potentially join social networks outside of their isolated village. This would include family and friends in the Dominican Republic (nearby and also in parts of the country that would be considered a great distance to travel), Haiti (virtually all of the residents of the bateyes have immediate family and connections still living in Haiti), and the United States.

Methodology

This research study used a qualitative methodology, employing ethnographic techniques including extensive observation, interviews, and conversations.

Conclusions

The diffusion and adoption of digital communication technology and applications in the bateyes of the Dominican Republic have taken place with a ferocity and passion that is palpable. Having spent many weeks in Batey 50 over the last 15 years, I have seen other transformations take place as a church was built, new homes were erected to replace tiny shacks, a small school was constructed to educate the children of this village, and a sustainable food garden was developed to help eradicate the continuous hunger that plagues most in the bateyes. All of these transformations were met with thankfulness, gratitude, and excitement. Yet, the spreading of cell phones, smartphones, social media, and Internet has produced a joy among the people that is much more demonstrative. Residents have shared a deep desire to be part of this new media world, and the digital divide that is so evident in the bateyes is self-described as "sad" and "painful" for those who are left out.

This research found that in both Batey 50 and Batey La Papita, individual lives and the communities as a whole have been altered. No longer were residents isolated completely from the outside world – they were now part of worldwide social networks and relationships with distant family and friends that in the past would have been impossible were now alive and thriving.

One example of this phenomenon is shared by Dr. Edgar Benitez, a Haitian-Dominican physician who moved to the United States with his American wife five years ago to continue his medical studies. Up to this point, he has lived in La Romana his entire life and has worked with the Maranatha Mission and El Buen Samaritano Hospital for decades in the bateyes to bring assistance to the people in need. Some of his own family still live in those sugarcane villages surround the city of La Romana.

Dr. Benitez has also observed the diffusion and adoption of digital communication in the bateyes of the Dominican Republic, and while he expresses some astonishment at how quickly this has occurred in these undeveloped regions of his country, he also recognizes some relational fallout from this phenomenon.

"Before people in the bateyes had mobile phones, Internet and technology to distract them from each other, there was a very powerful connection between people in those villages," he commented. "They spent huge amounts of time talking, visiting, and were much more concerned with each other than what I have observed here in the United States. I have noticed since moving here that in the US, everyone is very concerned with their social media first and their personal interactions second. And that is something that concerns me in the bateyes as more and more people get connected through digital technology.”

References

Barker, V. (2009). Older adolescents' motivations for social network site use: The influence of gender, group identity, and collective self-esteem. Cyberpsychology & behavior, 12(2), 209-213.

Baym, N. K. (2015). Personal connections in the digital age. John Wiley & Sons.

Cohen, Scott Allen. “Personal identity (de)formation among lifestyle travelers: a double-edged sword.” Leisure Studies 13 (2010): 289-301. Routledge: Taylor & Francis Group.

Crowley, D., & Heyer, P. (2015). Communication in history: Technology, culture, society. Routledge.

Do Millennials Ever Put Down Their Mobiles? (2015, March 16). Retrieved February 03, 2017, from https://www.emarketer.com/Article/Do-Millennials-Ever-Put-Down-Their-Mobiles/1012210

Epp, A. M., & Price, L. L. (2008). Family identity: A framework of identity interplay in consumption practices. Journal of Consumer Research, 35(1), 50-70.

Fang, Irving E. (1997) A History of Mass Communication: Six Information Revolutions, Focal Press ISBN 0240802543

Gasser, Heather S. “Being Multiracial in a Wired Society: Using the Internet to Define Identity on Campus.” Wiley Periodicals, Inc. 123.7. (2008): 63-71.

Gergen, Kenneth J. The Saturated Self: Dilemmas of Identity in Contemporary Life. New York: Basic Books, 1991.

Gross, Elisheva F. "Adolescent Internet Use: What We Expect, What Teens Report." Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology 25.6 (2004): 633-649.

Haney, B. (Producer), & Grunebaum, E. (Director). (2007). The Price of Sugar [Motion picture]. United States: Uncommon Productions.

Hongladarom, Soraj. "Personal Identity and the Self in the Online and Offline World." Minds and Machines: Journal for Artificial Intelligence, Philosophy and Cognitive Science 21.4 (2011): 533-48.

Kaplan, A. M., & Haenlein, M. (2010). Users of the world, unite! The challenges and opportunities of Social Media. Business horizons, 53(1), 59-68.

Kozinets, R. V. (1998). On netnography: Initial reflections on consumer research investigations of cyberculture. NA-Advances in Consumer Research Volume 25.

Lambert, J. (2013). Digital storytelling: Capturing lives, creating community. Routledge.

Mahajan, V., Muller, E., & Bass, F. M. (1995). Diffusion of new products: Empirical generalizations and managerial uses. Marketing Science, 14(3_supplement), G79-G88.

McMillan, S. J., & Morrison, M. (2006). Coming of age with the internet: A qualitative exploration of how the internet has become an integral part of young people's lives. New media & society, 8(1), 73-95.

O'Keeffe, G. S., & Clarke-Pearson, K. (2011). The impact of social media on children, adolescents, and families. Pediatrics, 127(4), 800-804.

Rauniar, R., Rawski, G., Yang, J., & Johnson, B. (2014). Technology acceptance model (TAM) and social media usage: an empirical study on Facebook. Journal of Enterprise Information Management, 27(1), 6-30.

Rogers, E. M. (2003). Diffusion of innovations. New York: Free Press.

Singh, Charu Lata. "New Media and Cultural Identity." China Media Research 6.1 (2010) 86.

Stald, G. (2008). Mobile identity: Youth, identity, and mobile communication media. Youth, identity, and digital media, 143.

Tucker, M. L., Powell, K. S., & Meyer, G. D. (1995). Qualitative research in business communication: A review and analysis. Journal of Business Communication, 32(4), 383-399.

Turkle, S. (2015). Reclaiming conversation: The power of talk in a digital age. Penguin.

Tajfel, H., & Turner, J. C. (1979). An integrative theory of intergroup conflict. The social psychology of intergroup relations, 33(47), 74.

Turner, J. C., Brown, R. J., & Tajfel, H. (1979). Social comparison and group interest in group favouritism. European Journal 0f Social Psychology, 9(2), 187-204.

The Relationship between Computer-Mediated Communication and Active Learning during the COVID-19 Pandemic: Gratitude and Self-Compassion as Potential Mediators

Leslie Ramos Salazar, West Texas A&M University
Audrey Meador, West Texas A&M University

Abstract
Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, face-to-face courses transitioned into an online environment. This cross-sectional study investigated positive social psychology constructs including self-compassion and gratitude in relation to students' computer-mediated communication and active learning during the COVID-19 pandemic. Findings revealed differences by gender and generation status. This study also found evidence of partial mediation of self-compassion. Implications are offered for business education.

Description
During the COVID-19 pandemic, students in higher education experienced many hardships as a result of the sudden shifts to online learning. Face-to-face courses transitioned to a variety of online modalities through videoconferencing technologies such as Zoom, Microsoft Teams, and WebEx, to name a few. With this in mind, computer-mediated communication skills became essential. Computer-mediated communication can be defined as sending and receiving messages via e-mail, instant messaging, chat rooms, discussion boards, videoconferencing, etc. Because the COVID-19 pandemic may have exacerbated the challenges faced by the students (including first generation students), examining positive psychological constructs such as gratitude and self-compassion in relation to computer-mediated communication and active learning may be beneficial. Gratitude has been shown to help young adults display positive feelings toward learning (Froiland, 2018). Also, studies have shown that self-compassion is associated with reduced self-presentation, but it that it also increases student communication and learning behavior (Long & Neff, 2018; Wagner, Schindler, & Reinhard, 2017). A gap in the current literature is that it is not clear what positive characteristics (gratitude and self-compassion) mediate the relationships between computer-mediated communication and active learning among undergraduate students in the online learning environment. As such, this study has three purposes. First, to examine the gender differences in active learning, self-compassion, and gratitude. Second, to examine the generation differences in self-compassion and gratitude. Third to examine two mediation models looking at gratitude and self-compassion on the relationship between computer-mediated communication and active learning during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Method
After Institutional Review Board approval, a Qualtrics survey was distributed to undergraduates at a regional, four-year, and public university. Faculty were also asked to recruit study participants through distribution of the questionnaire to their students. A total of 429 students completed the questionnaire including 27.7% male, 71.1% female, and 1.2% other. The mean age was 24.75 (SD = 8.37). The ethnic composition was .5% American Indian or Alaskan Native, 2.3% Asian, 4% Black or African American, .2% Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, 66% Caucasian/White, 20.8% Hispanic, and 6.1% Other. The classification included 11%

freshman, 15% sophomore, 36.7% junior, and 37.4% senior. A total of 38.9% indicated being a first generation student. And, 92.3% indicated taking online course during the pandemic. A total of 52% indicated missing any grading assignments. Of the students, 27.3% indicated being infected with COVID-19, and 11.2% were unsure. A total of 49.3% indicated intending to get the COVID-19 vaccine. A total of 20.6% indicated having a medical condition that would increase their risk of severe illness from the COVID-19 virus.

Findings
SPSS 22.0 was used to perform descriptives, independent t-tests, and correlations. Hayes' Process was used to run the mediation models of this study. Independent t-test results provided evidence that there were gender differences in self-compassion and gratitude. There were also generation differences in active learning and self-compassion. Correlations showed that computer-mediated communication related to active learning during the COVID-19 pandemic. The first model found partial mediation evidence with gratitude mediating the relationship between computer-mediated communication and active learning during the COVID-19 pandemic. Lastly, the second model found partial mediation evidence with self-compassion mediating the relationship between computer-mediation communication and active learning during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Implication for Education and Business
The first implication demonstrated gender differences among college students during the COVID-19 pandemic. First, females reported having more gratitude than did males. Females also indicated being more prone to active learning during the pandemic than did males. With this association, it could be suggested that male students might struggle with practicing gratitude and with active learning. As a result, educators may need to consider strategies to promote gratitude and active learning in the classroom environment. The second implication demonstrated that first generation students indicated being more competent in computer-mediated communication and active learning, and self-compassion than did those who identified as being a second generation student or higher. Because there was partial support of the mediation (gratitude and self-compassion) on the relationship between computer-mediated communication and active learning, it is worthwhile for educators to investigate strategies, such as journaling, to help students develop gratitude and self-compassion in the online classroom or when presented with challenges in education. Activities such as showing meditation videos on gratitude and self-compassion can develop these characteristics to assist students in the active learning process.

Bibliography
Froiland, J. M. (2018). Promoting Gratitude and Positive Feelings About Learning Among Young Adults. Journal of Adult Development, 25(4), 251–258. https://doi-org.databases.wtamu.edu/10.1007/s10804-018-9294-0

Long, P., & Neff, K. D. (2018). Self-compassion is associated with reduced self-presentation concerns and increased student communication behavior. Learning & Individual Differences, 67, 223–231. https://doi-org.databases.wtamu.edu/10.1016/j.lindif.2018.09.003

Wagner, L. K., Schindler, S., & Reinhard, M.-A. (2017). The positive facet of self-compassion predicts self-reported use of and attitudes toward desirable difficulties in learning. Frontiers in Psychology, 8. https://doi-org.databases.wtamu.edu/10.3389/fpsyg.2017.01353

Essential Communication Skills During Crisis

Marcia Hardy, Northwestern State University of Louisiana
Danny Upshaw, Northwestern State University of Louisiana

Short Description

"Essential Business Communication Skills During Crisis" explores the recent evidence across industries identifying critical crises communication situations. The authors recommend strategies for successfully navigate during a crisis and propose communication skills to stabilize the message while prompting positive action during environmental, social, and economic shifts.

Description

In today's Covid pandemic landscape and economically insecure business environment, with climate change impacting communities experiencing extended hurricane seasons, and out-of-control wildfire damage, leaders are faced with the ever-present dilemma to resolve high impact issues in a moderately tempered way. A leader's ability to demonstrate the highest level of communication skills during these disasters is required. Our purpose is to present key communication responses which drive successful awareness and action, problem-solving, and the leader's ability to harness solutions while effectively communicating the necessary steps to survive a business disaster. Recent research and evidence will be presented regarding essential communication skills during the crisis will be gathered from sources impacted by natural and economic disasters. A summary of these essential communication skills will also be provided.

As we begin to experience a greater degree of global and "sphere of influence" disaster zones, our ability to successfully navigate this landscape will be impacted by our mastery of essential communication skills. The initial response to crises, non-verbal and verbal communications, will be explored and techniques for diagnosing and managing sources of conflict will be presented.

Edwards, Bybee, and Frost (2016) recognized that misunderstanding a message while being communicated can lead to those messages being misinterpreted which could ultimately result in conflict. Their research explored the relationship between communication channels and perspective-changing. The results of their research indicated "face-to-face misunderstandings are more serious than those that occur in computer-mediated communication. " The researchers' three forms of perspective-taking (dispositional, situational, and partner's situational) will be presented with the authors of this paper suggesting communication strategies to address each one.

Pamela Ferrante suggested a number of key concepts which should be practiced during these crises such as the evaluation of various scenarios and the development of a written risk/communication plan. George David (2011) suggests internal communications play a key role in the management of a situational crisis. A lack of "accurate, adequate, timely and fluent information during a crisis dramatically affects the trust people have in their own organization, thus endangering the commitment they should show in cooperating to crisis resolutions. "

The healthcare industry has been under siege with the emergence of the Covid-19 pandemic. Hospital delivery systems are strained while experiencing nursing staff shortages and facility shortages. Scarce yet vital equipment resource restrictions have resulted in healthcare provider frustrations and compromised patient care access. The necessary staging rooms, masks and personal protection equipment (PPE) needed to successfully deliver care to pandemic patients, routine surgery patients, and emergency care patients, may not be available which could negatively impact the receipt of vital care being sought. In a recent publication, authors Eldridge, Hampton and Marfell (2020) recognized the critical role effective communication plays in the crisis scenario. Barbara Reynolds is quoted as saying, “ The right message at the right time from the right person can save lives.” Alexi Cohen (2020) reported that a leadership and preparedness expert pointed out that a “consistent, transparent, and unified messaging from the state, local and federal leaders is needed to push through the coronavirus crisis and get the public to follow vital instructions.”

Due to the increasing nature of these crises in our environment and in the workplace, the implications for education and business are certain and profound. By introducing Lewin’s three-stage change model, the authors will propose several essential communication skills to be implemented during this time of crisis to help stabilize the message. The steps will include communication strategies to “unfreeze” the disaster to effectively realize the need for directional communication change, to introduce the communication “change” to the situational disaster to successfully navigate the crisis, and lastly, to “refreeze” and establish a concrete communication strategy and performance metric for creating an environment of stability in an otherwise chaotic scene. Communication techniques for addressing the crisis moment and prompting positive action will be recommended.

Bibliography

Abraham T. Lessons from the pandemic: the need for new tools for risk and outbreak communication. Emerg Health Threats J. 2011;4(1):1–4.

Cohan A. Consistent, transparent messaging from leaders needed in coronavirus crisis, expert says. Boston Herald. 2020. www.bostonherald.com/2020/04/08/consistent-transparent-messaging-from-leaders-needed-in-coronavirus-crisis-expert-says.

David, G. (April 2011) “Internal Communication-Essential Component of Crisis Communication”, Journal of Media Research 10: 72-81.

Edwards R, Bybee BT, Frost JK, Harvey AJ, Navarro M. That's not what I meant: how misunderstanding is related to channel and perspective-taking. Journal of Language and Social Psychology 2017;36(2):188–210.

Eldridge, C., Hampton,D. and Marfell, J. (August 2020), “Communication During Crisis”, Nursing Management (Springhouse), V. 51, Issue 8, Pp 50-53. doi: 10.1097/01.NUMA.0000688976.29383.dc.

Ferrante, P., (June 1, 2010) “Risk & Crisis Communication: Essential Skills for Today’s SH&E Professional” Professional Safety Journal 55 (06): 38-45; Paper Number: ASSE-10-06-38.

Raza, M. (Nov. 15, 2019), “Lewin’s Three-Stage Model for Change Explained”, The Business of IT Blog, bmc Exchange: 1-15.

Willingness to Communicate and Solidarity in Russian Organizations

Ekaterina Balezina, HSE University
Tatiana Permyakova, HSE University

Abstract
The paper deals with organizational communication in Russia. It analyzes the features of communicative behavior of Russian employees and their perception of interaction with managers and colleagues. Data collection method involves formalized questionnaires with employees across various occupations and organizations in the Russian Federation (N=220, 37% male, 63% female). Expected results are supposed to assess the level of Solidarity and Willingness to Communicate among Russian employees.

Statement of the Problem/Purpose
It has become an imperative for modern employees to possess strong communication skills to carry out job responsibilities. The failure to communicate effectively within an organization is detrimental to the success of that organization (Pierce, Gardner, Dunham & Cummings,1993) since poor communication or the lack of it may create corporate stress, which is likely to lead to lower productivity (Fulmer, 2010). On the contrary, specific organizational outcomes might be fostered because of willingness to communicate effects (Richmond & Roach, 1992).

From the intercultural perspective, willingness to communicate measure (WTC) is found to produce mixed results, also in terms of validity (Sallinen Kuparinen, McCroskey & Richmond, 1991). Therefore, a new scale of WTC has been proposed by Croucher and Kelly (under review). Additionally, Russian population is under-investigated in terms of communicative behavior. Only a small fraction of international students of Russian background was questioned about WTC (Kassing, 1997). The main purpose of this study is to fill the gap by applying a newly proposed measure of WTC to a sample of employees in Russian organizations.

To begin with, Burgoon (1976) considered the negative side of WTC, i.e. unwillingness to communicate. McCroskey and Baer (1985) adapted this category on the positive side and renamed it to willingness to communicate. MacIntyre (1994) argued that these two concepts can be seen as opposite sides of one trait. Hence, willingness to communicate can be defined as the likelihood for a person to decide to initiate communication (McCroskey & Baer, 1985; McCroskey, 1992), or a person's intention to communicate. It has been suggested that willingness to communicate functions as a personality trait, demonstrating stable individual differences over time and in different situations (MacIntyre, 1994). Nevertheless, WTC is also determined by situational variables (McCrosky & Richmond, 1990), precisely "WTC is a disposition, similar to a trait that can be influenced by situational factors" (Roach, 1999).

This study employs another specific form of rapport in the workplace via communication: interpersonal solidarity. Interpersonal solidarity is a sense of closeness between people that develops as a result of shared feelings and similarities. Interpersonal solidarity is an affective (emotional) area interpersonal relationship. Solidarity is viewed from different angles and has different definitions. For example, including intimacy in relationships (Baus & Allen, 1996), psychological intimacy (Wheeless, 1976), and rapport, understanding (Gremler & Gwinner, 2000). The model of solidarity in workplace between the supervisor and the subordinate was proposed by MacDonald et al. (2014). It considers the influence of solidarity between a manager and a subordinate on job satisfaction, motivation and burnout of subordinates. Perceived solidarity in organizational peer relationships (Myers & Johnson, 2009) examined the correlation with self-disclosure and trust. Following this overview, the construct of solidarity in this study includes solidarity between colleagues and supervisor-subordinate solidarity.

The purpose

The main goal of the study is to test the Willingness to communicate scale and Solidarity scale on a Russian sample of the working population. Surveys were prepared first in English and then translated into Russian. Native speakers of Russian translated it, followed by bilingual speakers conducting back-translation.

Method and data collection

Willingness to communicate scale (Croucher & Kelly, under review) contains 15 items, each item was rated from 1 "totally disagree" to 7 "totally agree". The scale has shown high reliability: Cronbach's alpha = .95.

Solidarity scale consists of nine, seven-interval Likert-type statements (Wheeless, 1976). These are developed on the basis of their content validity for measuring the criterial attributes of the construct (Wheeless, 1976). Reliability for the solidarity measure was .89.

In the sample of 220 people, 37% are men (n=81) and 63% are women (n=139). All of the participants are the employees of Russian organizations. The age of the respondents is from 18 to 66 (mean = 35.8) years, and the average length of service (tenure) for the sample is 8.6 years. Analytical procedures involves descriptive statistics, correlation and factor analyses.

Expected results

We expect that the study will provide an assessment of Solidarity and Willingness to Communicate among Russian employees and the difference between these indicators for the employee-employee and manager-subordinate groups.

Implications for Theory and/or Business

It is expected that the data obtained will allow to assess the level of Solidarity and Willingness to communication among employees of Russian companies. In addition, the construction of a model that determines factors that influence the increase of this level will help to provide evidence for communication theories. From an applied point of view, the expected results may offer the directions of managing and improving communication between supervisors and subordinates at workplace. The study will also help to conduct a comparative cross-country analysis of a new WTC measure.

References

Baus, R. D., & Allen, J. R. (1996). Solidarity and sexual communication as selective filters: A report on intimate relationship development. Communication Research Reports, 13, 1-7. doi:10.1080/08824099609362064

Burgoon, J.K. (1976). The unwillingness-to-communicate scale: Development and validation. Communication Monographs, 43, 60-69.

Fulmer, B. N. (2010). An investigation of willingness to communicate, communication apprehension, and self-esteem in the workplace. "Master's Thesis, University of Tennessee, 2010. https://trace.tennessee.edu/utk_gradthes/710
Gremler, D. D., & Gwinner, K. P. (2000). Customer-employee rapport in service relationships. Journal of Service Research, 3, 82-102. doi:10.1177/109467050031006
Kassing, J. W. (1997). Development of the intercultural willingness to communicate scale. Communication Research Reports, 14(4), 399-407.
MacDonald, P., Kelly, S., & Christen, S. (2014). A path model of workplace solidarity, satisfaction, burnout, and motivation. International Journal of Business Communication, 52, 1-19. doi:10.1177/2329488414525467
MacIntyre, P. D. (1994). Variables underlying willingness to communicate: A causal analysis. Communication Research Reports, 11, 135-142.
McCroskey, J. C. (1992). Reliability and validity of the willingness to communicate scale. Communication Quarterly, 40, 25-26.
McCroskey, J. C., & Baer, J. E. (1985). Willingness to communicate: The construct and its measurement. Paper presented at the annual convention of the Speech Communication Association, Denver, CO.
McCroskey, J. C., & Richmond, V. P. (1990). Willingness to communicate: Differing cultural perspectives. Southern Communication Journal, 56, 72-77.
Myers, S. A., Johnson, A. D. (2004). Perceived solidarity, self-disclosure, and trust in organizational peer relationships. Communication Research Reports, 21, 75–83. doi:10.1080/08824090409359969
Pierce, J. L., Gardner, D. G., Dunham, R. B., & Cummings, L. L. (1993). Moderation by organization-based self-esteem of role condition-employee response relationships. Academy of Management Journal, 36(2), 271-288
Richmond, V. P., & Roach, K. D. (1992). Willingness to communicate and employee success in US organizations. Journal of Applied Communication Research, 20(1), 95-115.
Roach, K, D. (1999). The influence of teaching assistant willingness to communicate and communication anxiety in the classroom. Communication Quarterly, 47, 2. http://global.factiva.com.ezproxy.waikato.ac.nz:2048/zhcn/eSrch/ss_hl.asp.
Sallinen Kuparinen, A., McCroskey, J. C., & Richmond, V. P. (1991). Willingness to communicate, communication apprehension, introversion, and self-reported communication competence: Finnish and American comparisons. Communication Research Reports, 8(1), 55-64.
Scott A. Myers & Aaron D. Johnson (2004) Perceived solidarity, self-disclosure, and trust in organizational peer relationships, Communication Research Reports, 21:1, 75-83, DOI: 10.1080/08824090409359969
Wheeless, L.R. (1976), Self-disclosure and interpersonal solidarity: measurement, validation, and relationships. Human Communication Research, 3: 47-61. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2958.1976.tb00503.x

Leveraging Best Confirmation Practices: How Leaders in Organizations Could Leverage Confirming Behaviors Often Found in Sport Relationships

Susanna Alford, University of the Incarnate Word
Trey Guinn, University of the Incarnate Word
Matthew Flores, University of the Incarnate Word

Description
Becker (2009) explains how meaningful athlete-coach communication has been advocated for recognition by sport scholars. Although coach confirmation behaviors are grouped in this category, scholars have yet to acknowledge how coach confirmation could be leveraged by organization leaders. The purpose of this qualitative research study is to explore the coach confirmation practices and explain how these behaviors may affect athlete-coach relationships within the sport industry. The need is to study the problem of effective and ineffective coach confirming behaviors through the lens of organizational communication amongst athlete-coach relationships. The qualitative study implements a convenience sampling design and projected to be led across those organizations hosting group exercise opportunities.

How Sorry Are You? A Cross-Cultural, Linguistic Experiment on Perceived Remorse in Corporate Apologies

Effrosyni Georgiadou, Zayed University

Abstract
This interdisciplinary study explores the effects of different linguistic realizations of apologies on consumers' purchase intentions within the context of a corporate crisis. More specifically, it investigates the causal relationship between perceived remorse, response satisfaction and purchase intention as a result of different apology messages. It further examines these effects through the boundary condition of culture and more specifically, the socio-cultural dimension of individualism.

Purpose
This interdisciplinary study explores the effects of different linguistic realizations of apologies on consumers' purchase intentions within the context of a corporate crisis. More specifically, it investigates the causal relationship between perceived remorse, response satisfaction and purchase intention as a result of different apology messages. It further examines these effects through the boundary condition of culture and more specifically, the socio-cultural dimension of individualism (Hofstede, 1980).

Theoretical background
Apologies occur in a context of a violation and aim at restoring the relations between the speaker and the offended party. Apologies failing to convey the negative emotion of the transgressor can be less effective in repairing the relationship as they are perceived as less remorseful by the offended party. Similarly, at a corporate level, according to attribution theory and Situational Crisis Communication Theory (SCCT; Coombs, 2008), apologies typically occur in the context of a crisis where organizations are perceived by stakeholders as fully or partly responsible for the crisis. An apology is categorized as a rebuild strategy as its main purpose is to repair the relationship with stakeholders and restore their faith in the corporation.

Several cross-cultural studies, especially within the field of negotiations and disputes and mostly between the US and Japan (Ide, 1998; Maddux et al., 2011; Oki, 1993; Sugimoto, 1997), have investigated the meaning and function of apologies and have offered support to the cultural underpinnings of the apology act. Hofstede's theory of socio-cultural dimensions (1980), and more specifically the dimension of Individualism (Hofstede, 1980) has been widely used to explore these differences. In individualist societies, there are loose ties between members of the group, individuals look after their own interests and personal agency, independence and freedom are valued. On the other hand, societies scoring low in individualism exhibit stronger in-group ties, prioritize communal interests and value harmony and inter-connectedness. Using Hofstede's individualism construct, the previous studies (Ide, 1998; Maddux et al., 2011; Oki, 1993; Sugimoto, 1997) have shown that apologies are conceptualized differently and, thus, serve a distinct purpose in the two cultures.

Based on the linguistic theory of Speech Acts and the framework of the Cross-Cultural Study of Speech Act Realization Patterns (CCSSARP; Blum-Kulka & Olshtain, 1984), apologies can be realized linguistically in various ways expressing varying degrees of remorse (Scher & Darley,

1997).
According to CCSSARP, apologies can take one of two basic forms or a combination of both. They can be executed with an Illocutionary Force Indicating Device (IFID, e.g. apologize) or with one of the following strategies:

1. an expression of the speaker's responsibility for the offence
2. an offer of repair
3. a promise of forbearance.

Apologies with a combination of strategies (e.g. IFID + offer repair) are considered intensified. In this paper, we hypothesize that apologies intensified apologies (IFID + other strategy) will be perceived as more remorseful and more satisfactory leading to higher levels of purchase intent in the individualist group.

Methodology
The study adopted a between-subjects experimental design (6 [apology types] x 2 [culture]) to measure the effects of different linguistic formulas of apologies on perceived remorse, response satisfaction and purchase intent; the apology messages were offered to the public by a fictitious corporation (an airline) on a social media platform (Twitter) in two different populations.

Sample
The total sample was n=511, mostly female (72%) with a mean age of 32.3 years. Participants for the UK/individualist sample (n=359) were recruited through the crowdsourcing platform, Prolific Academic (www.prolific.ac). Participants in the UAE (n=152) were recruited through convenience sampling from a university student population.

Procedure
Participants were exposed to an article introducing an airline incident (i.e., all baby/kids' meals on board were past their expiration date). The article, created based on existing news articles on brand crises, was presented as emanating from a news website. Subjects were randomly assigned to one of six apologies published on Twitter. Apologies were formulated based on CCSSARP (Blum-Kulka & Olshtain, 1984). After reading the article and the response, respondents rated their satisfaction with the apology, perceived remorse and purchase intent. Perception of remorse and response satisfaction were measured with the scales used by Philpot and Hornsey (2008) in their study on the effectiveness of intergroup apologies; all items were scored via a 7-point Likert scale (from 1=strongly disagree to 7=strongly agree). Reliability analysis showed high internal consistency for both scales (Cronbach's a=.88 and .81, respectively). The behavioral variable of purchase intent was measured via a single-item (How likely would you buy a Skyblue ticket?) on the same 7-item Likert scale. All data were analysed with SPPS 25. The three variables were significantly and positively correlated.

Findings
Our hypotheses were tested through a moderated, serial mediation model which tested the effect of apology messages on perceived remorse (M1), response satisfaction (M2) on purchase intention (Y) with culture (W) as the moderator. Based on what we know about the cultural underpinnings of apologies and remorse, the dichotomous variable of culture (individualist vs.

collectivist) was included in the model as a moderator (W) of the relationship between the independent and dependent variables (see Figure 1 for conceptual diagram).

Conditional process analysis (Hayes, 2018) revealed that intensified apologies containing an offer of repair (‘We’re sorry. We’ll make it up to you’) and an adverbial intensifier (‘We’re so terribly sorry’) were perceived as significantly more remorseful by the individualist group and led to higher response satisfaction and, subsequently, purchase intentions. There was no direct or indirect effect of apology message on perceived response, response satisfaction or purchase intention in the collectivist group.

Self as a Water Jug: A Nifty Way to Help Learners Think and Communicate about Diversity & Inclusion

Trey Guinn, University of Texas at Austin

Abstract
Picture yourself as a water jug. Life experiences and messages fill your jug like water. Your individuality and uniqueness flavors what's in there, like a Kool-Aid pouch. Along the way, a lot of messages pour out of your jug.

Description
This will be an interactive session intended to provide participants with a novel approach for helping communicators understand and teach about diversity and inclusion.

Picture yourself as a water jug. Life experiences and messages fill your jug like water. Your individuality and uniqueness flavors what's in there, like a Kool-Aid pouch. Along the way, a lot of messages pour out of your jug.

In working with students and clients over the years, this has been my most helpful way to explain why people communicate so differently. Part of our uniqueness is attributable to the distinct flavor of our Kool-Aid, but then there is also a lot to be said for all those messages and experiences (water) that fill our jug. An important reason for pausing on this is because individuals looking to increase their effectiveness as communicators want to jump immediately into evaluating and modifying what comes out of the jug without exploring why that is coming out and where it is coming from. What comes out of your jug can be modified, but part of that requires getting real about what's in your jug and why it's there. This to say, there is a very strong relationship between how people communicate with us, how we see ourselves, and how we then communicate with others.

Let me explain a bit further. In most cases, when I have a client who wants help on a big interview for a job or on-camera, the easiest part tends to be crafting strong content. More challenging tends to be coaching the client to deliver it well. And early on as a coach, I mistakenly thought my job was done at coaching on content and basic delivery. Boy, was I wrong! I soon realized there is much more to consider. What if my client tends to shut down any time they are across the table from an old white guy? What if my client is triggered every time someone mentions their accent? Imagine the number of outside factors that go beyond developing content and rehearsing delivery with a familiar face. For these reasons, being an exceptional communicator isn't merely learning when to pause; it's knowing what gives you pause. You can't just examine what comes out of your water jug; you must also examine what fills it.

Our water jug is filled by everyday interactions and experiences. But then there are memorable messages that, like it or not, seem to stick with us. For instance, growing up you may have interacted with your primary caregiver nearly every day and perhaps multiple times a day. Certain things your primary caregiver said may echo with you forever, yet not all your interactions are particularly memorable. I don't recall most meals I had with my mom as a child, but a handful of things she said to me during certain mealtime conversations left a strong impression on me. On the other hand, I can think of people I dined with only once, yet they said something that stuck with me for years.

The point being, regardless of the person or the nature of their relationship to you, a memorable message is one that you remember for long periods of time and may potentially influence the course of your life in some meaningful way. I'll never forget when, as a freshman in high school, the principal interrupted my classroom and asked to speak with me in the hall. I was shocked, even a bit nervous, as I walked with him to the corner of the hallway. He proceeded to tell me, "I have a special project… I'm asking you to do this because I trust you and I know you will do the right thing." That was more than a quarter century ago. I never forgot that moment nor the words he spoke over me that day. There have been handfuls of experiences like that in my life, some positive and uplifting, but others not so much. Clients have shared a few of their memorable messages with me over the years:

Let's face it, you just aren't a math person.
You want to be that when you grow up—but isn't that more of a girl(boy) job?
Let's face it, you only got this job because you are a _________.
No matter what life throws you, your family will always be here for you.
You will never drive a car like this if you choose to major in X.
You got this job because you are cute. It's not your fault. If you got it, baby, flaunt it.
Wow, you've got a big nose…but I'm sure you will grow into it.

The messages we receive will influence the messages we send to self (intrapersonally) and others. In many cases this becomes like an amplifying loop. To illustrate the point, imagine I tell my son that he is a good person and that it makes me proud when he shows kindness to others. I also tell him how much I love his sweet personality and silly sense of humor. He's only two and it's possible he doesn't fully understand what I am saying to him half the time. My hope is that the messages I say to him are taken to heart and he comes to believe them. Ideally, he will grow to internalize and reproduce those words intrapersonally and when communicating with others. Conversely, imagine the words he might begin to internalize and reproduce about himself if he repeatedly heard me tell him that he was a little brat with a horrible personality who would amount to nothing in this world.

How to Drive Home to Students the Importance of Audience in a Business Communication Class

Yong-Kang Wei, University of Texas-Rio Grande Valley

Abstract
Questions will be raised and issues discussed as to how to teach the concept of audience more effectively in a business communication course, beyond textbook lessons, but the focus of this presentation is on a simple method or a small exercise, which appears to have brought in "big results" in terms of students' audience awareness.

Description
How to Drive Home to Students the Importance of Audience in a Business Communication Class: An Exercise

Audience is perhaps the most important concept in business communication. Often we hear experts say, “Audience, audience, and audience,” as if audience is all that matters in effective communications. However, how to teach it to your students in a way suitable to them may not be an easy task, as most of them are still holding fast to an attitude about communication that can be best described as “writer-centered. I have experienced this challenge in person in my years of teaching in business communication, despite the fact that every textbook adopted talks in length about audience awareness, such as “keeping your audience in mind,” “understanding your needs,” etc. But the truth of the matter is, abstract talking or teaching can never drive home to students how an audience can affect the outcome of a business communication.

In recent years, I developed a new method of teaching the concept of audience, that is, by asking students to do a description experiment. A small exercise but with a big result, as can be seen in the students’ evaluation comments about the course. At the end of the semester, most of the students feel that audience is the most important thing they have learned about business communication, and they often cite the description experiment as a “wake-up” call to them. And this is what I propose to present at the ABC-SWUS conference, as I would like to share with my colleagues how a small assignment can result in a sea change in students’ attitude about something they often take for granted. The following is the assignment:

Writing Exercise: Description Experiment

Writing descriptions is considered an important part of professional writing. But you will soon find out how to accurately describe an object or procedure can be very challenging due to language issues (e.g., language ambiguity, which was discussed earlier when we talked about the style of professional writing), audience's knowledge and background, contextual constraints, and many other variables. Because of this, writers would have to go through something commonly referred to as "document testing" to ensure that descriptions they have written are truly accurate. Often the testing has to be done repeatedly with different users and in different situations.

To get an idea about description writing, I would like you to do a description experiment, as detailed in the following:

1. Pick up a pecan in the shell (in normal shape); observe it for a few minutes; and then describe (any) 5 features of it (size, shape, color, texture, etc.) in your own words (Note: do not write about anything beyond your observation);
2. Do a testing with at least two people by showing your descriptions to them (but without telling them in advance what you tried to describe). If your audience can easily recognize it as a pecan simply based on your written descriptions, that means you succeeded; otherwise, you need to modify your descriptions based on their feedback; and
3. Submit a memo (250 words min.) with the following in mind: a) your original and modified (if applicable) written descriptions of a pecan; b) the subjects of your testing (i.e., persons who participated in the test); c) the process: i.e., how you did the testing and/or what you observed from the testing process; d) feedback from your testing subjects; and e) your after thought about the experiment (for example: lessons learned, challenges faced, etc.).

Attention: Please make sure to practice social distancing when conducting the testing, which can be done virtually or through a phone call as an alternative.

On the surface, this exercise is about how to write descriptions, but the lesson to be learned is really about the gap that exists between the writer and audience and about how to match the writer's perceptions with those of a target audience. In the proposed presentation, I will share more details about the students' reflections on the exercise and their achievement of "audience awareness" as a whole, as demonstrated through their end-of-the-semester thoughts. In addition, some questions will be raised and issues will be discussed as to how to teach the concept of audience more effectively, beyond the textbook lessons.

How Interpersonal Communication Skills could Aid to Overcome the Increased Challenges in an Evolving Remote Work Environment

Matthew Flores, University of the Incarnate Word
Trey Guinn, University of the Incarnate Word
Susanna Alford, University of the Incarnate Word

Abstract
To understand and improve upon the relationship between employees and supervisors. We hypothesize that by cultivating interpersonal relationships in the workplace, productivity will increase as well.

Description
The goal of this proposal is to find the significance of the relationships between employee engagement and business productivity. We believe that it may discover methods related to nurturing and facilitation that may promote and facilitate the workers' emotional well-being. One suggestion is to cultivate employee engagement through offering training related to interpersonal enhancing interpersonal communication skills. Our research analyzes the corporate relationships between employees and middle management. In an attempt to find a correlation between interpersonal relationships and the productivity of the employees, the methods for evaluating this could be a mixed-methods approach through interviews and an analysis of productivity metrics. We hope to find a direct correlation between employees that find one another enjoyable to be around and the level of productivity in an attempt to provide evidence that genuine interest and connection will cultivate healthier relationships in the workplace. Rather than the belief of a formality or personal undertook to maintain a level of professionalism, a healthy relationship built on interest and mutual respect will produce a more productive environment.

Roundtable Discussion: Engaging Students with Assignments in Online Classes

Kayla Sapkota, Arkansas State University at Beebe
Carol S. Wright, Stephen F. Austin State University
Lucia Sigmar, Stephen F. Austin State University
Marice Jackson, Stephen F. Austin State University

Abstract
Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, higher education changed its routines in many ways – from budget cuts, to housing restructuring, to revised admissions processes, to increased remote learning. As faculty members, we remember quick shifts, new technologies, and course restructuring. Presenters will share lessons learned in engaging students in online classes. Assignments that incorporate visual communication, online discussions, targeted learning styles, and video creation tools will be discussed.

Description
With the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on higher education in the spring of 2020, colleges and universities have been forced to change their routines in many ways – from budget cuts, to housing restructuring, to revised admissions and testing processes, to increased remote learning. As faculty members, we all likely have memories of quick shifts, new technologies to learn, and restructuring of our courses. In this roundtable discussion, presenters will share lessons learned in how to engage students in their online classes. Assignments that incorporate visual communication, effective online discussions, targeted learning styles, and video creation tools will be the topics of discussion. Audience interaction and feedback is encouraged.

Visual Communication
Preparing students for the modern workplace necessarily involves teaching business communication and visual communication principles. While the effectiveness of these combined principles is usually measured in Powerpoint or Prezi slide design, business communication and visual design principles can also be easily taught or reinforced as a part of the b-comm curriculum. This segment includes assignment specifications, learning materials, and examples that you can incorporate in your own classes.

Effective Online Discussions
Online classes can be tough when it comes to encouraging students to engage with one another. Discussion assignments are a common tool used to attempt to accomplish this. Whether an institution uses Blackboard, Canvas, D2l, Moodle, or another learning management system, each software typically includes a tool for faculty to assign this mandatory student-to-student interaction. When discussing topics in a remote setting (i.e. not face-to-face), students may feel adrift and disconnected from the topics. We will discuss ways in which we have used online discussion assignments successfully.

Learning Styles
Instructors are faced with the challenge of creating online classroom activities that will engage adult learners. Adult learners (persons over 18 years of age) bring to the classroom their unique

professional and personal experiences that have shaped their business perspectives. The instructor's responsibility is to create stimulating online learning assignments that allow adult learners to share their unique experiences in their answers as they learn new models and theories. Online learning assignments should utilize three learning styles: affective learning, behavioral learning, and cognitive learning (Leith, 2002). We will provide examples of those three learning styles that will keep undergraduate and graduate students engaged.

Zoom Assignments

Zoom was a commonly used video-conferencing tool prior to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, but with the rapid transition from in-person to remote and/or online classes, Zoom's popularity as an educational tool skyrocketed. This required quick learning by educators as they moved classes to Zoom and online formats little to no warning or time for preparation. Nearly two years out from this switch, faculty members have learned many tricks of the trade, with some classes remaining via Zoom or online even now and some classes being offered via Zoom on a regular basis. We will discuss tips and tricks for creating assignments using Zoom technology to keep students engaged in their classes.

Video Creation

While video creation tools, such as Screencast-o-matic, Panopto, YuJa, and Bongo, may have existed prior to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, they (like Zoom) increased in popularity last year. The ages-old issue of maintaining student engagement in an online class can be alleviated with video creation assignments. Requiring students to use new technology (this is "digital native" generation after all) to discuss or expand upon the class content, combined with the opportunity to be innovative and creative can be a win-win scenario. Additionally, a break from grading writing assignments may be quite welcomed by communications faculty members. We will discuss experiences using this type of tool for reflections and other assignments types.