Southern Arizona Intercollegiate Journal

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Description
The Southern Arizona Intercollegiate Journal (SAIJ) is a peer-reviewed academic publication of the University of Phoenix, Southern Arizona Campus. SAIJ publishes professional information from a broad array of disciplines relevant to scholar-practitioners. Such disciplines include, but are not limited to, accounting, anthropology, art, biology, business, criminal justice, communications, economics, education, health care, history, information systems technology, law, leadership, literature, management, marketing, mathematics, nursing, philosophy, physics, and the social sciences.

Mission
SAIJ will provide an interdisciplinary forum for the presentation of scholarly information that aligns with Boyer’s model of scholarship: discovery, integration, application, and teaching. ¹

Purpose
As a platform for sharing and celebrating original academic and professional research of faculty and students, SAIJ will stimulate additional innovation in scholarship.

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Welcome Message

Welcome to the 2016 edition of the Southern Arizona Intercollegiate Journal (SAIJ). This publication is truly the result of many individuals’ labor of love, from the leaders who conceptualized it to the academics who envisioned its content. It is a special publication that represents a journey that we all take, every time we teach a class.

This year’s edition of the Journal is extra special as it represents the fifth such publication that has been published during the past five years under the title of “Southern Arizona Intercollegiate…”. Of course, to have this 5th anniversary edition of the SAIJ available during the 40th Anniversary celebration of the University of Phoenix Southern Arizona market is just makes the scholarly achievements all that much more exciting.

2017 is a big year, and we are rightly acknowledging and celebrating four decades of class in Southern Arizona. However, while 2017 is a year of celebration, it is with our primary focus as an institution that we find a center to all of the hoopla and merry-making. At our core, the University of Phoenix is about discovery of knowledge and it is that perspective that we must always keep firmly in our forward view.

Scholarship is at the foundation and the apex of a quality of academic experience. It speaks to learning, discovery, application and integration which are all things that we do in the classroom each and every time we step into one (virtually or brick and mortar). Scholarship surrounds us and binds us together as a community based on learning.

In a year of BIG events (can’t celebrate being 40 without going BIG), I find that the SAIJ represents all that we are and all that we strive to be. We bring excellence and innovation to our professional lives and our identities as educators. Here in SAIJ, though, we have the opportunity to simply enjoy the achievement of scholarship and the discovery of knowledge in its purest sense. As you peruse through these pages, you will learn for learning’s sake - there are no tests to take or papers to write. The knowledge you gain may or may not apply to an immediate need in your life. You are simply discovering knowledge for the sake of discovering knowledge. What an intellectually stimulating concept!

The contents of this journal have a life far beyond publication here. The authors are all encouraged to leverage their experience of preparing materials for SAIJ to achieve additional publication and/or
presentation. Many of the authors from previous editions of SAIJ have successfully published their narratives in formal academic journals or presented the information at local and national conferences. I encourage everyone who has prepared content for this year’s journal, or are enjoying content in this year’s journal, to inspire each other to continue your journey of scholarship. If you wrote something, take it further! If you haven’t written something, the 2017 edition is calling you. Let this truly just be the beginning of your academic adventure.

We have all come together at the University of Phoenix connected by a common joy of learning and discovery. How exciting, then, that you hold a journal in your hands that exists for the exclusive purpose of disseminating knowledge. Let the journal connect you as we move into 2017 and celebrate 40 years of achievement. Enjoy the journey, and enjoy the scholarship!

Mark Vitale
Editor’s Notes

As you look at the by-lines for the articles notice the diversity of disciplines and topics represented. Our Southern Arizona Learning Center’s journey into scholarship in this edition of SAIJ includes Stromee’s revealing and moving essay regarding the application of her counseling skills in response to devastation from flooding in Louisiana.

Three articles shine a light on several facets of faculty involvement in student success. Simon challenges faculty and students to promote learning by staying in the liminal space—the grey-green mush before minds are made up—and critically sort through ideas. V’Marie, Blake, and McCartney invite and encourage faculty to promote the learning of grit. Schleckser makes a compelling case for “the important role of technology in supplementing the impact of professional educators.”

Two articles describe practical methods that instructors can use immediately to promote student engagement in the classroom. In the spirit of the campus Acadlympics Knowledge Conference, George presents us with three medal winning ideas for instructing small classes in the Southern Arizona Learning Center’s new classroom. In her essay, Wilfert describes her experience in developing a learner-centered participation rubric and how she overcame shortcomings in her initial attempt to use her first version of the instrument.

The nation’s relationship with marijuana keeps evolving and Cope applies his legal expertise to assist us in understanding the role of medical marijuana in Arizona, the implications for holders of medical marijuana cards, and the law’s impact on employment practices. Lopez’ article helps the reader sort out how key points from the Americans with Disability Act relate to policies and procedures at the University of Phoenix.

In a follow-up article from Volume 4, Number 1 of SAIJ, Priest, Lawrence, Ferguson, May, and Bynum elaborate on the impact higher education has made (or not made) on individual law enforcement officers and internal conflict within the organizational culture of law enforcement agencies. They offer perspective on how organizational culture meshes with the expectations of society.

Moffett, Sr. and Peltz describe a model for discovery of knowledge regarding the use of time and information associated with the behavior and decisions of leaders. The resulting knowledge would further the understanding of how leaders influence the competitive advantage of their respective companies.

Thanks to the authors and Associate Editors who made SAIJ happen in 2016.

Ron Dankowski
On Thursday, September 1, 2016, I flew to Baton Rouge, Louisiana as an “event based volunteer” with the Red Cross to provide mental health services to those impacted by the floods. It was three weeks into the largest disaster since Sandy wreaked havoc in New England. The demand for mental health services was so great, the American Counseling Association sent out a request for Licensed Professional Counselors to go through an abbreviated Red Cross training and volunteer to help out. While I had seen the images and read the news reports – nothing prepared me for the widespread devastation and the heartache of meeting with families whose only possessions were contained in a couple of Rubbermaid® tubs at the head of their cots in the middle of a gymnasium of other stranded souls. Beginning August 11, 2016, 20-30 inches of rain fell near the convergence of three rivers. These neighborhoods were not in a floodplain, just lower land that quickly became saturated – water rising as high as 49 inches inside the houses of one neighborhood. Cars washed away, appliances crushed, and windows shattered by the force of the water. Sewers overflowed and conjoined with the flood water. Wallboard, interior doors, carpets, furniture, prized possessions, all destroyed. The waters rose so fast many were evacuated by the “Cajun Navy” – neighbors who had boats and ferried people to safety – leaving behind lost animals, glasses, dentures, medical devices, prescription medications, cell phones – taking only the few things they could grab on the way out.

By the time I arrived, the water had subsided in all but one neighborhood. Now the streets were lined with piles of mucked debris from the houses. As one man put it “42 years of my life is in the front yard.” As far as I could see down the narrow streets, piles extended to create a bizarre wall – a continual reminder of the flood, now filled with the stench of decaying food and mold, a magnet for snakes and rodents; mosquitos had begun to breed in all the standing water. It’s still summer in Louisiana – 95 degrees and 80% humidity is the norm. In the afternoons while I was there, the rain would begin to fall and what had appeared as dry grass soon bubbled up water as saturated lawns once again became small ponds.

During the first few days I followed the feeding trucks into the neighborhoods, talking with folks as they gathered to get water, snacks, and a meal. My job was to listen and engage, trying to identify additional needs and texting back to my supervisor with names and addresses for a “hot shot” response. Most of these homes were uninhabitable – the level of damage was so
great, no electricity, no air conditioning, and yet families, friends, and youth groups from churches in other parts of the country were there every day trying to help salvage whatever they could, waiting on a FEMA determination for financial help. Some were lucky enough to have flood insurance, but in most cases it didn’t cover the contents of the house. A woman, visibly red and sweating pointed to her chest “Why am I having these chest pains?” Dehydration is a major concern and can mimic cardiac arrest – “When’s the last time you peed?” a volunteer asked. A friend agreed to take the woman to an ER to get checked out. At another stop a couple told me they had gone through all the bleach they had and their church had also run out. I agreed to call them after I got back to headquarters to let them know what I could arrange.

We drove through middle income neighborhoods and poor alike, through David Duke’s hometown and democratic strongholds, brown, black, or white, rich or poor, it didn’t matter to the river waters that breached their banks and coursed through the bayous into the low lands. The scale of the devastation was mind numbing. The determination and resilience of the inhabitants – many of whom had gone through Katrina was astounding. The blank stares of shock, confusion and exhaustion were expected. Everyone had a story to tell, pictures to show, and many expressed their amazement and gratitude that so many had come from so far away to help.

Each morning I went to the local Red Cross headquarters to get my assignment based on the assessed need. The mission is to provide temporary assistance to communities and already the Louisiana operation was beginning to scale back – working with local jurisdictions to transition into the next phase of the recovery. I saw the big screen TVs in the command center trained on the weather around the country. While I was in Louisiana, two hurricanes threatened Hawaii, Hermine slammed Florida and fires were still raging in California. The Red Cross was already deploying new volunteers to those communities.

By the fourth night I had been given a hotel room that I shared with another volunteer. A hot shower and bed meant a good night’s rest for the 12-hour shifts that are routine for disaster workers. My next assignment was providing mental health services at one of the shelters in a poorer community on the outskirts of Baton Rouge in a rural area that had never flooded. For the most part, the clients at this shelter had lived on the margins – without the financial reserves to survive this level of loss.

The auditorium behind the city government building had been turned into one large dorm. In the shelter there was a narrow entryway with a makeshift staff area for intakes, Red Cross phone for clients to use, cleaning supplies, and snacks. Everywhere there were coolers of cold water. At the other end of the room, two long tables – one with four FEMA reps at computers and one with two folks from Catholic Charities. As displaced residents came in they were assigned to a numbered cot, given a blanket, pillow, towel, and
wash cloth. Inside the auditorium with the cots was a nurse’s station where she worked on replacement dentures, glasses, prescriptions as well as colds and cuts. On the auditorium stage, behind the curtain, were tables of donated clothes loosely arranged by size and sex. Behind another door was a small kitchen where shelter staff dished up meals from the insulated crates that would be delivered from the mobile kitchens set up at regional sites and run by Southern Baptist Disaster Response units from around the country. We ate a lot of chicken and rice. We all used the communal bathrooms. Showers were available during the day in a specialized trailer pulled up outside (the staff shelters had a similar arrangement). In addition to shelter staff, myself and the nurse, there were Red Cross case workers and a FEMA liaison who worked with community nonprofits, landlords, and hotels.

I was given a map of the numbered cot locations and a list of the clients by cot number. My job was to circulate, engage clients, find out where they were in the process of recovery, solve problems, link to resources, and move them towards relocating before the shelter was set to close. Staff was sometimes the lightning rod for clients’ understandable frustration. At first I was “not from around here,” I was “pushing them out” and asking questions they’d already answered. I ate meals with them, sat outside while they smoked, listened to the stories, asked about their life before the storm, what they thought was next and if they wanted, listened to what it was like to lose everything.

Each morning those who still had a job and transportation were up and out, there were two nurses who worked night shifts and came back during the day to get some rest. Several were employees of the city; another was a security guard at a local college. The city had arranged a van to take the many children to the reassigned schools – as their own schools had flooded. Other adults would go back to their apartments to work on the cleanup, to medical appointments, or out to agencies like Department of Motor Vehicles to replace titles and licenses. Among those left at the shelter during the day were special needs clients with functional barriers and mental health issues. Two group homes for those with a serious mental illness were destroyed and we worked hard to find out-patient treatment and replace medications for those shelter clients. Along with the nurse and a city liaison, I mediated a family dispute where the brothers and sisters of a disabled man fought over who had power of attorney to make decisions about his fate. When a woman who was watching another’s child got “fed up with all the backtalk” she took the ten-year-old girl into the bathroom and smacked her hard; we had to make decisions about involving the police. When FEMA denied a claim clients were encouraged to get more documentation and file an appeal.

For those looking for one of the few apartments in the same community, the rents had doubled or they were asked to do the repairs themselves; sign leases that said the landlord was not responsible for any reoccurring problems –
like mold. FEMA has a program to provide hotel rooms for those who are looking for more permanent shelter or are waiting to go back into a rental. The local hotels refused to accept the promise of payment from FEMA because after Katrina it took “too long” to get paid back. And the one hotel that agreed turned out to be a hotbed of drugs and prostitution. I felt my heart break again and again.

In time I could joke with some of the clients, my questions seemed less intrusive and I was thanked for caring. Each small victory was celebrated. We cheered when a homeless woman and her two children were relocated to a transitional housing program in Baton Rouge. The disabled man was placed in a nursing home where his mother lives – with the blessing of the family. One man got the check to replace his car and was headed to live with a brother in Florida. A client diagnosed with bi-polar and schizoaffective disorders and diabetes got accepted into a new group home. Four people had appointments for new dentures, others for new glasses. The day before I left a Black Lives Matter group from Massachusetts rolled up with a commercial outdoor barbeque set up and fixed a great evening meal for everyone.

The legacy of this disaster – the shattered lives, lost possessions and companions, as well as the compassion of so many who responded to help strangers in need will be around for many years to come. When I left Baton Rouge on September 9 there were still hundreds of people in shelters around the area and thousands more staying with friends or family, living in hotels or out of their cars. Whole communities will likely be razed and many other properties will take months to rehab. For some it will take generations to recoup the loss.

While I know there are critics of Red Cross, FEMA and other agencies, I can only speak from my experience. I am in awe of the scale and complexity of the response orchestrated by an essentially all volunteer corps of professional disaster responders who, in consort with churches and partner organizations, moved hundreds of abandoned or lost animals to Humane Society shelters around the country, managed multiple shelters (including those housing the volunteers) for many thousands of individuals and families; provided water and supplies, cooked and delivered meals daily to shelters and affected neighborhoods; distributed bulk supplies of bleach, mops, mosquito abatement, and other essentials to distribution hubs; and sent out hot shot teams of nurses and mental health workers into affected neighbors to provide support and link to services, helping people start to put a new life together.

As I sat to write about this experience (after a good night’s sleep and from the comfort of my home), I got this text from the couple asking for more bleach:
“Hi, Vickie, it’s Antoinette. I FINALLY slowed down long enough to listen to my Voice Mail messages. Thanks SO much for checking on getting us more bleach. We GREATLY appreciate your time, effort and energy to do that. Thanks, again for ALL your prayers and concern. Have a blessed day!

With love and prayers,

Antoinette and Jacob

P.S. Have a safe trip back to your home town! We appreciate you being here!”

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Leaders appear, sometimes, to be unaware about how the interactions of their leadership behavior, the use and efficiency of information and time, and decisions impact the company’s competitive advantage. When executed well, the results can be extremely beneficial; when executed poorly, the loss or stagnation of competitive footing may very likely result. Understanding the executives’ lived experiences, perceptions, and day-to-day operational issues and how their perceptions may influence decision making is, essentially, the essence of the research (Husserl, 2000). This research will be beneficial to contemporary and future leaders challenged with similar problems and issues. Three industry examples are discussed briefly.

**Industry Examples**

Nestlé® financial analysts claimed it “has lost its edge” (p. B6), and pondered if “Nestlé, capitalized at $236 billion, is nimble or agile enough to fight off competitors and swiftly put new products on shelves” (p. B6). Its woes are many: negative comments increasing to 63% from 48% six years ago, reduced sales attributed to a strong Swiss franc, slowdowns in major markets, deflationary forces, and the recall of an Indian noodle product (Blackstone & Chaudhuri, 2016). Arguably, these issues were reflected in Fortune’s “Global 500,” in which Nestlé’s 2014 ranking was 70th and the 2015 ranking was 66th, a 7.8% decrease – a problem (Blackstone & Chaudhuri, 2016; DeCarlo & Rapp, 2016). Recently it was stated, “Nestlé will miss its long-term sales target;” for a fourth straight year (Blackstone, 2016, p. B3).

It appeared Wells Fargo® has failed in strategic management formulation and implementation. The bank was slapped with a $185 million fine for “widespread illegal” sales practices that included opening as many as two million deposit and credit-card accounts without customers’ knowledge, federal and local authorities said (Glazer, 2016a, pp. A1, A6). One manager saw things differently. “In an email peppered with exclamation points and capital letters, she urged her employees to ignore the bosses and get sales up at any cost” (Glazer, 2016b, p. A1). Additionally, “Wells’ CEO John Stumpf will forfeit $41 million for the bank’s burgeoning sales scandal, making one of the biggest rebukes to the head of a major U.S. financial institution” (Glazer, 2016c, p. A1). Time described the Wells’ CEO John Stumpf’s statements as “Cross-selling,” or pushing account holders to open new accounts…which were his pride and joy (Calabresi, 2016, p. 14). Stumpf accepted early
retirement (Krantz, 2016), and Morgenson (2016) indicated Wells must make a clean break.

Yahoo® too has issues. Verizon® is close to paying approximately $5 billion for Yahoo’s Inc.’s core business. This means absorbing a company that helped usher in the Internet age, yet surrendered most of the profits to later entrants like Google and Facebook Inc. Revenues, minus commissions paid to partners for web traffic, fell 19% in the second quarter 2016 – the sixth decline in the past seven periods. Yahoo downsized its workforce 15% to 8,800 employees, and wrote off $42 million for developing content. Then, Yahoo shut down online-video portal Screen, after spending more than $100 million in production costs (Knutson & Cimilluca, 2016).

These are just a few recent examples, and it is likely several other high profile companies may have similar experiences. Possible phenomena contributing to Nestlé, Wells Fargo, and Yahoo’s declining fortunes may be a combination of many factors, which may include information and time use and efficiency issues and/or questionable leadership decisions. Perhaps one of the most important elements to be cognizant of is that of issues relevant to information, time, and leader decisions, which may affect many companies.

Benefits to Leadership and Followership

This is not a case study analysis, rather, it is a closer examination of leadership behaviors, focusing primarily on time and information use and efficiency. The issues and problems discussed may not be unique to only these companies. The findings of this phenomenological study (Husserl, 2000) will have leadership significance by contributing knowledge to organizational behavior and theory, leadership, and followership literature. It will also permit leaders to benefit from a deeper understanding of characteristics, and issues related to leader decision making (Creswell, 2014; Leedy & Ormrod, 2013).

Literature Review

Leadership as a Learned Behavior

Maxwell (2009) has, “Studied successful people for forty years…finding they were alike in one way: their thinking. That one thing separates successful people from unsuccessful ones. The good news is how successful people think, can be learned” (p. ix). Maxwell’s assertion that the behaviors (e.g., thinking patterns, decision-making process, etc.) of successful people, including managers and leaders, can be learned, and originated in the 1940s research emphasis to identify the one best leadership style and behavior (See Likert, 1961; Maxwell, 2009; Stogdill & Coons, 1951).

Ground breaking Ohio State University studies identified two main behavioral components: consideration and initiating structure. In short, consideration referred to the leader trusting, respecting, and caring for the people of the organization; and initiating structure referred to leader behaviors ensuring the work is done, workers understanding the proper work procedures, processes, and so forth (Stogdill & Coons, 1951). Subsequent evaluations found consideration was associated with better morale.
and job satisfaction among subordinates, but lower levels of performance (Bryman, 1996). Later research suggested high levels of consideration and initiating structure were the best leadership style. However, this belief was moderated because of situational contingencies, which eventually ushered in the next period of leadership studies, the Contingency approach (Bryman, 1996, as cited in Clegg, Hardy, & Nord, 1996; Stogdill & Coons, 1951). To reiterate, the emphasis of the behavioral approach was leadership behaviors could be trained and learned.

**Leadership Decision Making**

“The decisions managers make at all levels…can have a dramatic impact on the growth and prosperity of…companies and the well-being of their employees, customers, and other stakeholders” (Jones & George, 2014, p. 197). Sound decisions result from critical thinking, an in-depth continuous process of evaluating information, formulating opinions based on reliable information, and applying learning to effectively solve problems (Ridel, 2015). This would indicate leader decisions do, in fact, affect organizational outcomes on many levels.

During the 1940s significant research also thrived in managerial decision making. Simon’s (1945/1997) descriptive research focused on how managers actually made decisions. His primary finding was a construct labeled bounded rationality, which was defined as managers having a limited capacity to process information, or cognitive limitations that constrain one’s ability to interpret, process, and act on information. This limitation caused decision makers to satisfice in their option selection, meaning the acceptance of a satisfactory rather than a maximum level of performance. Such a decision-making process was implicitly recommended by Peters and Waterman (1982), who stated to have, “a bias for action: a preference for doing something – anything – rather than sending a question through cycles and cycles of analyses and committee reports” (pp. 13-14).

The most preferred decision-making schema has been considered as any rational or prescriptive model (Certo & Certo, 2014; Jones & George, 2014; March, 1994). For rational models to produce the most optimal decisions, total information is essential, whereby more quality (accurate and reliable), timely (done or happening at a good or appropriate time (Hawker, 2006)), complete (all that is needed), and relevant (related to the matter at hand) information is mandatory (Jones & George, 2014). Given inadequate information, managers should be knowledgeable enough to “ask the right questions,” both from a realistic and logical perspective (Brown & Keeley, 2012, p. 3). Therefore, organizations should be successful, in large part, because of optimal managerial decisions.

**The Context of Information Perception**

Jones and George (2014) have argued managers cannot plan, organize, lead, and control effectively unless they have access to information, which is the source of the knowledge and intelligence they need to support decision making. Information is essential for better managerial decisions (Daft, 2013; Jones & George, 2014;
March, 1994; Simon 1945/1997). Improved total information, holds the potential to further enhance managerial decision effectiveness and efficiency.

Leaders’ personal perceptions (e.g., attitudes, motives, interests, experience, and expectations) may influence their interpretation of information. Another factor of substance may be how time influences information (Robbins & Judge, 2015). Research seeking a deeper understanding of how different leaders maximize time-information interactions also holds a great potential for increasing manager and leader effectiveness and efficiency.

The Context of Time Allocations

Time is the most valuable and scarcest resource (Kruse, 2015). One source presented an “Allocation of Activities by Time” graphic indicating “successful” managers spent the bulk of their time networking (48%) and communicating (28%); in contrast, “effective” managers spent 44% of their time communicating and 26% of their time on human resource management issues. The latter managers displayed quality of their performance and the satisfaction and commitment of employees (Luthans, Hodgetts, & Rosenkrantz, 1988, as cited in Robbins & Judge, 2015). Wu, Foo, and Turban stated “Recent studies in Australia, Israel, Italy, Japan, and the U.S. confirmed the link between networking and social relationships and organizational success,” (Robbins & Judge, 2015, p. 9), and research permitting leaders to gage time allocation was planned.

Competitive Advantage

For some leaders, understanding competitive advantage may still be somewhat of an enigma. Perspectives of, and definitions for, competitive advantage regarding the stages of industry evolution, business strategy choices, organization agility, language strategy, competitive intelligence, and so forth, are abundant for small sole proprietorships to giant multinationals. A brief search of eight textbooks and two journals found at least 26 perspectives of and/or definitions for the construct of competitive advantage (Angré, 2008; Arons, Driest, & Weed, 2014; Ball, Geringer, Mcnett, & Minor, 2013; Daft, 2013; Dess, Lumpkin, Eisner, & McNamara, 2014; Ebert & Griffin, 2007; Jones & George, 2014; Longenecker, Moore, Petty, & Palich, 2007; Neeley & Kaplan, 2014; Pearce & Robinson, 2013). Competitive advantage is one of several possible outcomes to the proposed model in this study, and it is termed as a random applied outcome (RAO). Other RAOs may include such factors as: motivation, goal attainment, employee satisfaction, and leader effectiveness.

Proposed Model

The proposed model, Figure 1, consists of one independent variable, two mediating variables, and one dependent variable. The independent variable is leader behavior, mediating variables are time and information use and efficiency, and the dependent variable is(are) the resulting leader decision(s). The model depicts these relationships.
Problem Statement and Research Questions

Leaders appear, at times, to be unaware of how the interactions of their leadership behavior, the use and efficiency of information and time, and their resulting decisions impact the company’s competitive advantage. The following research questions will guide this phenomenological (Husserl, 2000) investigation of leaders and followers:

1. How do leaders describe their behaviors towards decision-making with consideration of time (use and efficiency), as it pertains to achieving competitive advantage?
2. How do leaders describe their behaviors towards decision-making with consideration of information (use and efficiency), as it pertains to achieving competitive advantage?
3. How do leaders describe their behaviors towards decision-making with consideration of other objects, events, and/or factors as it pertains to achieving competitive advantage?

Methodology

Rationale

Strauss and Crobin (1990) described qualitative research as “any kind of research that produces findings not arrived at by means of statistical procedures or other means of quantification” (p. 17), which included “nonmathematical analytic procedures that results in findings derived from data gathered by a variety of means” (p. 18). They also indicated “Some of the data may be quantified as with census data but the analysis itself is a qualitative one” (p. 17). Rovi, Baker, and Ponton (2013) identified several research assumptions for qualitative research, two of which provide a valuable grounding for this research study:

- “Qualitative research is descriptive in that the researcher is interested in process, meaning, and understanding gained through words or pictures.” (p. 21)
- “The process of qualitative research is inductive in that the researcher builds abstractions, concepts, hypotheses, and theories from details.” (p. 22)

These two qualitative assumptions provide the necessary framework needed to ensure proper perspective and focus is maintained throughout the study.

Further development of the rationale included the fundamental understanding for the lens through which the research will be conducted. This study utilizes a phenomenological lens whereby the study, and subsequent model, will be constructed through the understanding of shared experiences (Creswell, 2014). Creswell defined phenomenological research as “a strategy of
inquiry in which the researcher identified the essence of human experiences about a phenomenon as described by the participants” (p. 245). This lens will add the requisite substantive perspective as a foundational underpinning.

It is commonly accepted that qualitative research does not necessarily contain the rigor and repeatable processes of quantitative research. To combat this view and increase rigor, validity, and reliability, this research will include several facets of triangulation (Patton, 2002). Patton stated “By triangulating with multiple data sources, observers, methods, and/or theories, researchers can make substantial strides in overcoming the skepticism that greets singular methods, lone analysts, and single perspective interpretations” (p. 556). Patton cited Norman Denzin who stated “By combining multiple observers, theories, methods, and data sources, [researchers] can hope to overcome the intrinsic bias that comes from single-methods, single observer, and single-theory studies” (p. 555). Patton continued, triangulation adds “credibility by strengthening confidence in whatever conclusions are drawn” (p. 556). By incorporating facets of triangulation, this study should overcome the potential pitfalls of traditional non-triangulated qualitative research.

Patton (2002) identified four types/facets of triangulation: sources and data, methods, theory and perspective, and analyst/reviewer. This study will incorporate facets of triangulation in the areas of multiple sources/data and multiple methods, and a dyadic triangulation approach will be evident.

**Process**

Triangulation in multiple sources will be achieved through conducting semi-structured interviews of multiple leaders and followers in the retail industry, with an approximate leader to follower ratio of 1 to 3 (respectively) so as to capture both self and third party reporting facets. The second facet of multiple methods will be achieved through the incorporation of both thematic and quasi-quantitative textual coding whereby each will consist of first and second cycle coding elements for each facet. The intended purpose of incorporating the dyadic triangulation approach is to incorporate additional elements of rigor to decrease and mitigate researcher bias, increase reliability, and increase validity of the overall analyses.

**Final Thoughts**

Leaders appear, at times, to be unaware about how the interactions of their leadership behavior, the use and efficiency of information and time, and decisions impact the company’s competitive advantage. This qualitative phenomenological study, in the Husserl (2000) tradition, seeks a deeper understanding of leaders’ and followers’ perceptions, behaviors, and experiences regarding leader behaviors and organizational information and time use and efficiency, and the resulting influential leader decisions. Research rigor will be bolstered by incorporating facets of triangulation in the areas of multiple sources/data and multiple methods, whereby a dyadic triangulation approach will be evident. Multiple methods will be achieved through the incorporation of thematic and quasi-
quantitative textual coding whereby each will consist of first and second cycle coding elements. This is intended to extend research in the realms of leadership and followership perceptions as they apply to leader decision making.

References


Compliance with the University of Phoenix Americans with Disability Act Requirements

Rosalie M. Lopez
School of Business

This paper will focus on critical Americans with Disability Act (ADA) classroom developments and the University of Phoenix’s philosophies about students that seek and are given ADA accommodations as well as faculty’s responsibilities to follow ADA laws and practices under UOPX policies. “The University of Phoenix recognizes and accepts its obligations under the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the ADA Amendments Act of 2008, which prohibit discrimination on the basis of disability and require the University to provide reasonable accommodations to otherwise qualified disabled students in all university programs and activities” (UOPX, Student Rights & Responsibilities Form, 2016, para. 1). Finally, this paper includes information for the faculty member to assist in working with students permitted accommodations by the UOPX’s Disability Services Office.

Definition of Disability

In the context of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), “disability is a legal term rather than a medical one. Because it has a legal definition, the ADA’s definition of disability is different from how disability is defined under other laws” (ADA National Network, 2016, para. 1). The ADA prohibits discrimination by covered entities (e.g. educational institutions), including private employers, against qualified individuals with a disability. Under the U.S. Code 42 U.S.C §12102(2), disability is defined as:

- a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of the major life activities of such individual;
- a record of such an impairment; or
- being regarded as having such an impairment.

The ADA Amendments Act of 2008 (ADAAA) further makes even more clear the definition of disability. The amended regulations pursuant to the amendments were made effective May 24, 2011. The amendments address “1999 and 2002 Supreme Court decisions that had narrowed the definition, and provide for a broad interpretation of the definition of disability under the ADA” (Rothstein, 2013, p. 7).

The new definition of major life activities specifically includes caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, seeing, hearing, eating, sleeping, walking, standing, lifting, bending, speaking, breathing, learning, reading, concentrating,
thinking, communicating, working, and operating major bodily functions (which are further defined). Many of the conditions found not to be disabilities may prospectively be determined to fall within the definition, so long as the condition substantially limits one or more of those major life activities. The Amendments specifically provide that concentrating, thinking, and communicating are major life activities. This amendment may make it more likely that an individual with a learning disability or with certain mental impairments will fall under the definition. (Rothstein, 2013, p. 7)

Under the law, “The definition of disability does not apply to impairments that are transitory and minor. A transitory impairment is one with an actual or expected duration of six months or less” 42 U.S.C. § 12102(4)(D); (Rothstein, 2013, p. 8). Eligibility decisions, however, are determined by UOPX’s Disability Services on a case-by-case basis and UOPX has allowed disability accommodations for students with an impairment of less than six months or less. When this occurs, the disability services official has determined that the impairment affects one or more major life activities of the student.

**Reasonable Accommodation**

Reasonable accommodations are always determined on a case-by-case basis. Though many situations from student-to-student may appear to be similar, in fact, usually there is some matter that can make a difference in what accommodations are necessary and reasonable. “Reasonable accommodations are modifications or adjustments to the tasks, environment or to the way things are usually done that enable individuals with disabilities to have an equal opportunity to participate in an academic program or a job” (APA, 2016, para. 1, citing U.S. Department of Education, 2007). Reasonable accommodations aid in allowing students with disabilities to have a greater chance of success when using modifications to level the playing field.

Broad categories of accommodations include changes to the application process to ensure an equal opportunity to apply for program enrollment, changes that enable a student with a disability to perform the essential functions of the academic program, and changes that enable a student with a disability to enjoy equal benefits and privileges of the program (e.g., access to training). (APA, 2016, para. 1)

The Americans with Disabilities Act holds postsecondary educational institutions accountable for implementing necessary and reasonable accommodations when a student seeks disability services. This requires making reasonable variations, modifications, or reforms, as well as applying practices, policies, and procedures to make services available. This must be done in such a manner to assist students with disabilities, “unless doing so would “fundamentally alter” the nature of the programs or result in an “undue burden” (APA, 2016, para. 2).

Providing accommodations does not compromise the essential elements of a course or
curriculum; nor does it weaken the academic standards or integrity of a course. Accommodations simply provide an alternative way to accomplish the course requirements by eliminating or reducing disability-related barriers. They provide a level playing field, not an unfair advantage. (APA, 2016, para. 2)

In one of the most current studies (see Table 1) available concerning post-secondary students with disabilities (National Center for Educational Statistics, 1999; Do-It Statistics, 2016), most students claiming a disability have specific learning disabilities, followed by ADD or ADHD, and some type of mental, psychological, or psychiatric condition.

Table 1
Post-Secondary Education – Students with Disabilities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disability</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Specific Learning disabilities</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADD or ADHD (Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder)</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental illness/psychological or psychiatric condition</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health impairment/condition</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobility Limitation/orthopedic impairment</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difficulty Hearing</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difficulty Seeing</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cognitive difficulties or intellectual disability</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traumatic brain injury</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autism Spectrum Disorder</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difficulty speaking or language impairment</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other impairments</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(National Center for Educational Statistics, 1999).
This research underscores the fact that most disabilities are not visible. They are sometimes referred to as hidden disabilities (U.S. Dept. of Education, 2016). Faculty cannot expect that a disability only exists if a person functions out of a wheelchair, is noticeably visually-impaired, or is physically disfigured. Dental issues can be given accommodations, depending on the case.

Often faculty want to design their own accommodations, but this is not permitted. UOPX’s Disability Services must determine eligibility for accommodations sought by a student. Further, only UOPX’s Disability Services can counsel students on the types of accommodations UOPX offers. Faculty must not engage in conversations with students about accommodations they have a preference for nor discourage students from seeking accommodations because this has the potential to contravene UOPX’s Disability Services role and responsibilities or federal and state law. Specifically, faculty can unwittingly act against ADA and ADAAA laws. Typical accommodations most institutions provide are as follows:

- Alternate exam formats or additional exam time (88%)
- Tutors to assist with ongoing coursework (77%)
- Readers, classroom note takers, or scribes (69%)
- Registration assistance or priority registration (62%)
- Adaptive equipment or technology (58%)
- Textbooks on tape (55%)
- Sign language interpreters (45%)
- Course substitutions or waivers (42%)

(National Center for Educational Statistics, 1999).

Faculty may not know they also need to provide handouts, PowerPoints®, videos and other materials that are in accessible format. The UOPX Disability Services can assist faculty with making materials accessible and can also teach instructors how to create their documents so they are accessible. For hearing-impaired students, a written transcript or interpreter (or both) will be necessary for any video offered. Lack of accessible materials can affect a disabled student’s success.

**Faculty Mandatory Responsibilities**

The University of Phoenix Disability Services Office is available to assist students with disabilities who self-disclose and request classroom accommodations. However, faculty members are required to immediately refer any student who self-discloses a disability using the link "ADA Referral for a Student" on the faculty eCampus website and enter the student’s IRN number. See Figure 1 under Research & Publications. The ADA referral form is the only place that faculty members can provide as much detailed information as possible regarding the student's self-disclosure. Faculty may not engage in private or public conversations with any student related to any potential disability. If a student attempts to engage faculty in a discussion about
their claimed disability, faculty should professionally, but swiftly bring the conversation to a close and refer the student to UOPX’s Disability Services.

Faculty may not ask any student if he or she has a disability and learning of a disability must come from the student if he or she volunteers the information only. The following is the recommended statement UOPX Disability Services offers in its ADA Compliance Handbook (2016), discussed infra, to assist faculty members with what to say to a student who engages the faculty member in a discussion about a potential disability.

Faculty Member: "Let me refer you to a disability services advisor who can assist you with this issue and more adequately answer your questions. A representative will be contacting you via email within 48 hours. Also, please look at our Disability Services website on http://www.phoenix.edu for further information and to reach out to a disability services advisor." (p. 9) The Disability Services Office will make contact with the student directly. Moreover, in order for the University to provide eligible students with reasonable accommodations, the student must submit an official request for services to the campus disability services advisor. Please note that requesting accommodation directly from a faculty member is not considered appropriate self-disclosure. All students seeking accommodations must contact their campus disability services advisor in order to begin the self-disclosure and accommodation process.

**Mandatory Compliance Handbook for Faculty**

The UOPX provides a compliance handbook available to all faculty members on the Faculty eCampus website as indicated in the graphic screen-shot (see Figure 1) and as pictured in the graphic below. (See Figure 2). The compliance handbook covers the following topics: academic integrity, confidentiality, faculty responsibility for students, accommodations, faculty accommodation forms, faculty responsibilities under the ADA & ADAAA, interpreting services, and student complaints and grievances.

Again, because it bears repeating, determination of accommodations for students is managed only by the UOPX Disability Services.

The ADA Compliance Handbook: Faculty Guide to Student Disability Services (2016, p. 13) makes clear that “no student shall be retaliated against for seeking accommodation under this policy or for participating in any grievance procedures because of alleged noncompliance with the policy.” Hence, it is imperative a faculty member be armed with knowledge of ADA and ADAAA laws and be required to understand the UOPX’s philosophies about students with
disabilities and the respective policies and procedures in accordance with the UOPX Faculty Handbook and UOPX ADA Compliance Handbook. “Students with disabilities report that faculty attitudes are an important part of implementing successful academic accommodations in higher education” (Burgstahler, 2000, p. 181). In essence, faculty are on the front lines in helping a disabled student reach maximum success when accepting the spirit of ADA and ADAAA laws in being compliant with UOPX’s policies and procedures.

Figure 2

Student Process for Seeking Accommodation

As in any other protocol, the UOPX has outlined what is required for a student to establish his or her right to a disability accommodation. This procedure is set out in the UOPX Student Rights & Responsibilities Form, which the student must sign. The UOPX specifically requires the student seeking accommodation:

To arrange for reasonable accommodation(s) for a disability, the student must follow and complete the University of Phoenix self-disclosure process at least six weeks in advance of the course start date. The student must (i) self-disclose any disability; (ii) provide necessary documentation of the disability; and (iii) submit his/her request for accommodations to the disability services advisor (DSA). A student may be eligible for accommodations only after completing the process to request accommodations. Courses completed with the University of Phoenix (UOPX) prior to a request for an accommodation will not be considered for re-evaluation of grades. (UOPX, Student Rights & Responsibilities Form, 2016, para. 2). There are exceptions when a disability arises under exigent circumstances and a student can still be considered for accommodations.

Student Requirements – Medical Documentation

A student seeking disability services via the Disability Services Office must verify what documentation is required. Students are given information and forms from the UOPX Disability Services Office on what medical documentation is required such as:

- Your first option is to provide documentation from the diagnosing professional verifying the current condition of your disability to the Disability Services Advisor. This option generally provides sufficient disability documentation.
- If the only documentation you have does not reflect your disability or
impairment as it currently affects you, the Disability Services Office can help you identify other forms of verification, such as a history of accommodations you received while enrolled at a previous educational institution.

- Your former educational institution can provide verification that you were accommodated for your disability, that the educational institution supports the medical verification, and the dates you attended the educational institution. Please note that you may be required to provide a copy of your medical documentation from the diagnosing professional along with the letter and accommodations information from your previous educational institution.

- If you’re having trouble securing appropriate documentation of your disability, please contact your Disability Services Advisor.

In essence, the student is required to provide sufficient medical documentation that UOPX Disability Services can assess. Based on the documentation provided by the student, UOPX Disability Services will take into consideration information from a diagnosing professional such as medical, psychological, and psychiatric officials in terms of what they consider are the accommodations needed for the student. The accommodations are carefully considered on a case-by-case basis. What might have worked for one disabled student in a prior class may not be applicable to a student appearing to have a similar disability in another class. Faculty will not be given what is contained in the medical documentation provided by the student. The rules of confidentiality under the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) are serious rules to follow and UOPX’s Disability Services cannot release this information to faculty, nor should faculty accept documentation hand-delivered by a student.

**Summary**

UOPX must adhere to the laws affecting students with any potential disability, history of a disability, or presently known actual disability. A student seeking access to all the UOPX disability services has a responsibility to speak up and self-disclose the disability to UOPX Disability Services. The UOPX seriously strives not to impede any of their students’ ability to appreciate the full college experience to the maximum possible.

Faculty must understand and fully appreciate their role in furthering UOPX’s compliance with all applicable laws affecting students with disabilities and understanding their required responsibilities in working with any student that is granted disability accommodations. Because this paper is not exhaustive of all that is necessary for each faculty member to know concerning student disability issues, it is recommended that faculty read the mandatory documents as set out in the
Faculty eCampus website and reach out to UOPX’s Disability Services for additional information as well as to ask questions otherwise not addressed in this paper.

References


Figure 1
ADA Referral for a Student
Faculty eCampus website page noting location of ADA Referral for Student and ADA Guide to Student Disability Services (October 2016).

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Carrying the Torch to a Small Class: One Gold, One Silver, and One Bronze Medal Idea

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From preschools to universities, teacher-student ratio has been controversial for decades (Ilig, 1997). Whatever the age level of the learners, class size impacts instructional techniques, (Skitpton, 2014). This article summarizes a 35-minute workshop given at the University of Phoenix’s July 16, 2016 Acadlympics Knowledge Conference held at Williams Center in Tucson, AZ. This author, Deborah George, presented three instructional techniques to faculty for adult learners in small classes. Using the theme of an Olympic conference, this lead faculty member asked the 19 people attending the morning session to step onto the Acadlympian Podium and consider adapting three medal winning ideas to each faculty member’s specific content areas. For the purpose of this article, small class size is defined as a teacher-student ratio ranging from 1:2 through 1:12.

The newly renovated ground campus at Williams Center, Tucson, AZ, is the backdrop for these ideas. The campus has undergone technology updates to include Via Kramer Collage (Via Kramer Collage retrieved from: http://www.true-collaboration.com/) in many of the conference table style classrooms that accommodate a maximum of 13 people. This maximum room capacity is expressed as a 1:12 teacher/student ratio. In close proximity around the conference table, there is every opportunity for student participation. “The best small-class experiences are hugely interactive -- there's no place to hide” (Macqueen, 2014, p.10). The atmosphere at Williams Center campus is more intimate, yet professional; students sit in ergonomic chairs around the large conference table. The table configuration has the option to divide into a Y shape at both ends if the presenter chooses to stand in the opening. Many companies operate and accomplish goals conferencing around large board room tables, and University of Phoenix students now have this opportunity to experience this posture in the newly renovated rooms.

For faculty, small class size is an adjustment that can be met with enthusiasm because some instructional techniques that work in large classes, also still work in small classes for optimum learning (Ilig, 1997). What follows are descriptions of three ideas used by this presenter in small classes. The ideas are adaptable to most content areas.

The bronze medal idea involved listing key figures from course content. For example, in a sociology course, Auguste Comte, the Father of Sociology may be on the list. For a business course, perhaps Charles Babbage, mathematician and engineer of the automatic calculator may be listed; for history, Mahatma Gandhi; for art,
Wassily Kandinsky. Students enter Google Images and then scroll downward to the posters below the images. Students may need to click “see more” at the bottom of the screen to get to the posters in Google Images. Students choose the poster with the most information about the person that includes a portrait. Students then “step into class” VIA KRAMER Collage and compare the information found (Via Kramer Collage and Via Connect Pro (Retrieved from: http://www.true-collaboration.com/). Usually a discussion follows and curiosity sparks further research to online articles. The posters are numerous and no student duplications are permitted for the activity.

Next, writing practice is infused into University of Phoenix course workshops. The silver medal idea suggested a website called Everyday Edits (Everyday Edits, n.d.). At this site, there are printable paragraphs, each containing ten errors that are content arranged according to calendar months. The factual information connects historical people and events that are related in some way to the month; for example, America’s Independence in July, or Ghandi’s birthday in October. Students correct writing convention errors by editing the paragraphs. A key is provided at the Everyday Edits’ site and the paragraph is easily reviewed in class with grammar and punctuation rules explained by the instructor. Students begin to hone the precision of writing. Also, this tool is useful for awarding classroom participation points. Students are more apt to arrive on time and stay for the full class, depending upon what time during the workshop students are given the Everyday Edits’ exercises to complete.

The gold medal idea challenged faculty at the Acadlympics session to “step out of the box” and experience meditation as a possibility to use in their small classes. Faculty were encouraged to assess their own comfort level meditating and consider using a short guided CD meditation as a tool to de-stress students for optimum learning in small classes. A 12-minute guided breathing meditation entitled, “Meditations for Daily Life,” (Meditations for Daily Life, n.d.) was used for attendees willing to participate. All 19 faculty participants chose to meditate. An alternative research topic can always be given to students who do not wish to experience breathing meditation.

Simple ways to position one’s body for meditation were demonstrated; for example, some chair seated positions and several floor positions were shown. Motivation for audience participation was achieved by asking: (1) Did you know that Yoga Nidra, a form of meditation, improves PTSD hyperarousal symptoms? (2) Did you know that overall sleep quality as well as daytime functioning improves with meditation, according to a study done with veterans? (3) Did you know that meditation helps lessen depression and lower blood pressure? (Staples, 2013).

After the 12-minute guided breathing, faculty debriefed their thoughts about the meditation experience with a partner. They discussed the feasibility of doing guided meditation in class. Faculty shared their own ideas for teaching in smaller classes and all seemed willing to carry the
Acadlympian classroom activities to students, no matter the class size!

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Liminal Space

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Knowledge can be simply a static accumulation of facts. For example, a person can know that they are an alcoholic, they can acknowledge that they are destroying their family, they can voice an awareness, and they can even understand and articulate their illness and the damage it causes to the liver. Likewise, a student can have knowledge of a textbook. They can understand, articulate its chapters, describe the authors, and define terms. They can even write papers about the key concepts articulated in the text. This is knowledge. However, knowledge may not necessarily produce the crucial step of integration and learning necessary to change ideas. I propose that an inquiry into complex thought and personal liminal spaces may prove more useful than pure knowledge acquisition. Inquiry involves understanding PLUS reflection, inquisition, and connection. Inquiry may bring the learner closer to action. Just because someone understands the logistics of alcoholism or a text, does not automatically make the knowledge meaningful or applicable. The learning process is complex; the way university faculty members teach should be equally complex. Faculty should be actively moving students into a place of integration vs. regurgitation. This paper will discuss the concepts of complex and simple thought, the benefits of allowing students to feel the unknown, and allowing faculty members to personally stay in a difficult moment longer than they are comfortable. Using the lens of complexity and reform thinking, from Edgar Morin, the term liminal space will be defined. The reader is asked to explore complex thought as a tool to increase integration of concepts from knowledge to change of behavior.

Edgar Morin (2001) defines complex thinking as a concept created from the roots of information theory, cybernetics, and systems theory. Morin states that complex thought is multidimensional, complementary, concurrent, and antagonistic. A complex structure is one that holds differing, pluralistic truths. The opposite of complex thought is simple thought; thought which separates, reduces, isolates, abstracts, fragments, and disconnects from its context. Simple thought is dangerous in that it is often rigid and stereotypical. While simple thought may be logical it is often distorted and an overly reductionist way of viewing the world. By this definition, when an idea is simplistic it fails to address the many aspects and features of the whole. Simplistic thought isolates elements and neglects the greater context or system in which it is embedded. Knowledge alone may fall into the simplistic category.

Alfonso Montuori (2005) combines these preceding terms and describes a human sequence of events that occur when faced with an
unstructured situation, “…Ambiguous situation→ Uneasiness or anxiety reflected as intolerance of ambiguity→ Need to structure→ Structuring→ An established frame of reference” (p. 23). Montuori (2005) asserts that when chaos or ambiguities arrive, people have a desire to establish order. Acting out of fear and anxiety people will attempt to reduce the complex problem down to its smallest denominators in order to understand and simplify the ambiguity. Students want the right answer. They have a tendency to condense the problem, ask for guidance, or blame others for the unknown solution. This reductionist thinking style leads people into the arms of unscrupulous leaders or blaming an unsuspecting scapegoat. When there is a big problem with many pieces, people want to move out of their uneasiness by ordering chaos and by applying simplistic solutions to parts of complex problems. Pluralism, “requires a form of dialogue and exchange that does more than immediately totalize and dichotomize, but rather is open to the dialogue of ambiguity and openness to other perspectives” (Montuori, 2005, p. 35).

As a rule, people hate waiting, hate not moving, this midway point is called liminal space. Everyone hates being in limbo, that dreaded place right before a decision is made. People would rather make a bad choice than stay in the indeterminate state before the problem is solved. However, the experience of being uncertain offers many possibilities and choices. If individuals jump too quickly out of the middle, they may make a bad decision. They may run or react from something that feels uncomfortable. Imagine the caterpillar reduced to green slime, not yet grown into a butterfly. In liminal space he is incubating, waiting to transform. If the caterpillar rushed this process and moved into the butterfly too fast, he may not develop properly. His wings, eyes, or neck may not be ready. Human beings often rush through the liminal space.

Pluralism is the antidote to this human tendency to reduce. How often do faculty embrace multiple answers and ambiguity of pluralism in their classrooms and personal lives? If pluralism is indeed the anecdote to overly simplistic data gathering, faculty should teach and embrace diverse thought. University faculty members all teach different subjects; therefore, a broad discussion will follow about how to be more pluralistic in order to bring this perspective to the students.

It is normal that people run quickly toward solutions. This is a biological design to make sense of the world and to move forward. It is the work of the human mind to edit a problem and make meaning. To understand a situation; the brain observes, translates, cross checks (to search for similarities), and then focuses on one aspect to label and define. This observation-editing process happens in a second.

One unfortunate side effect of fast meaning making, is that the brain skips the opportunity for growth and reduces complexity. In an effort to feel better-faster, humans are programed to focus on the pain and throw away anything that may be construed as unnecessary. The brain will quickly concentrate on the problem and edit out pieces that
get in the way of this goal. The cost of this editing is complexity. The giant, messy hairball of the world is traded for a focused piece of a larger puzzle. This is economy of the mind. The brain does not want to sift through and sort tons of data. It is more efficient to focus on the task at hand and then decide what to do next. Once the person has labeled the problem, he or she is free to move on and fix it. But what if in haste there is a failure to see the true problem?

Stress further compounds this meaning making process. A mind in stress wants easy yes or no answers. A stressed mind becomes myopic and narrow. Creativity is eliminated and most people under duress want quick, clear decisions. Often stressed minds will say, “I am tired of making choices, tell me what to do.” When in pain, people naturally want a fast solution to get out of pain. They review what has happened, omitting the majority of the context, and decide they want out of the situational discomfort, and then react. This reaction process does not create the best solutions. In fact, the individual reacting is simply avoiding pain. What interesting outcomes could happen if they embraced all of the nuance, the past, the details, and the facets before labeling and defining? Most people would resist sitting in the unknown, sorting through the big picture. They do not want to sit in the mid-point. The brain would rather risk a wrong or a bad decision that was made quickly than simmer in the green slime. Unfortunately, this rush to avoid neglects the middle place of growth, the liminal space.

The term liminal space is borrowed from psychology, sociology, and anthropology. The common definition of liminal is threshold, coming from the original Latin definition. Think of entering a doorway. Many scholars have used the term liminal to define rites of passage or ritual. They describe it as the mid-point between two positions. It is a deconstruction area, the person enters into the space, stripped of knowledge. Traditional liminality literature defines a three-part process: There is a beginning or entrance. There is the middle liminality or unknown. This liminality can feel uncomfortable or exciting. The final stage is integration where structure and form emerge and transformation happens. If people rush through the middle, they may not experience transformation. In fact, they may be running from pain only to find that they are more stuck than before. Imagine liminal space as a naked snake. The snake has shed his old skin. He is soft, sensitive, and vulnerable. He does not yet have his new skin. He is in the middle. He may want a new skin, but in the naked space he learns much about his safety and environment. He feels every rock, all temperature changes, and each subtle movement. Snakes are cranky during this skin shedding time. This process is crucial to help the snake understand his environment. When his new skin arrives he is tuned in to his world.

Why should people care about the naked snake in liminality? The middle is where the magic happens. If a person is too quick to jump in and make decisions, he or she misses the opportunity to experience better decision making. The middle
offers unlimited potential. It offers many solutions instead of just running from pain. Imagine that in this space right before making a decision, all outcomes are possible. By sitting for a few seconds in the grey-green mush and sorting through ideas, a new focus could arise. Faculty should try an experiment, challenge their students to be a naked snake, instead of jumping to overly simplistic solutions. Sit in the process of the unknown. Experience whether or not the faculty and the students can tolerate the liminal space.

The integration process of learning moves beyond the seeking and acquiring of knowledge. Don’t rush through the unknown. Sit, explore a pluralistic answer; the liminal space may be the best education faculty can provide. Imagine if faculty and students didn’t move out of their discomfort so quickly. Explore the value in pluralistic, complex answers. Faculty do not have to water down the unease. What if the gift of education is asking good questions so that the student can come up with innovative or creative solutions? Maybe this allows for multiple truths, multiple ideas? Pluralism is not the easy path. Although it is quicker to answer a student question, faculty may then miss out on the other opportunities to expand the student. In a world full of knowledge, why not ask for more?

References

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The 21st century classroom hosts a seemingly infinite smorgasbord of technical choices for student consumption. It appears that contemporary college students appreciate the abundance and availability of technical offerings. For example, according to key findings from a recent survey prepared on behalf of McGraw Hill Education (2016), 84% of the approximately 3,000 students surveyed indicated a perceived correlation between using technology and improvements in their education. With teachers aspiring to create meaningful, authentic, and relevant learning experiences and learners receptive to better learning through technology, the climate seems right for disruption of the status quo by capitalizing on technology.

Some advantages of using technology for learning may include improved efficiencies in time used for administrative tasks associated with learning activities, but more importantly, increased competencies and academic performance. Although the 2016 National Education Technology Plan, (NETP), also known as the flagship educational technology policy document for the United States, focuses on equitable access to technology, its key message is the importance for transformational learning experiences enabled by technology (OET, 2016). According to NETP (2016), while technology has the ability to accelerate, amplify, and expand the impact of effective teaching practices, appropriate design and purposeful application are imperative. Therefore, this essay encompasses a call to action for education professionals to examine their individual practices with consideration to changes based on learning objectives, digital taxonomy choices, and situational appropriateness.

**Background**

Clayton M. Christensen (1997) originated and popularized the expression *disruptive innovation* in his best-selling book, “The Innovator’s Dilemma When New Technologies Cause Great Firms to Fail.” The book was written about failure by good companies to respond to market and technical change. Although the connotation of what constitutes disruptive innovation has evolved since then, an understanding of the historical perspective of Christensen’s initial viewpoints is important to contemporary interpretations and application to the modern classroom.

According to Christensen (1997), disruptive innovation is a process by which a product or service displaces established competitors in the marketplace. Christensen (1997) initially categorized technology as either sustaining or disruptive. From this perspective, sustaining
technology refers to improved performance of existing products of established value, while disruptive technology refers to a difference in value proposition (Christensen, 1997). One common example of a disruptive technology that conforms to this interpretation is the smart phone, a product that replaced the traditional fixed line phone. A smart phone, in addition to replicating the audio calling functionality of a traditional telephone, provides a plethora of functions and features that were not previously known or valued by original customers of fixed line phones. Other historical examples include automobiles that individualized transportation and personal computers that replaced mainframes.

Initially Christensen (1997) criticized large organizations for failing to capitalize on disruptive technologies because of a perceived lack of reinforcement of immediate company goals. By contrast, Tellis (2006) criticized early efforts to generalize ways in which organizations should view disruptive technologies, opining that technologies do not always evolve in predictable linear patterns or expected performance curves. Further, a narrow focus on existing customer expectations while ignoring new technologies that appear initially inferior to established technologies may constitute significant organizational risks (Christensen, 1997; Tellis, 2006).

The historical business view of disruptive technology is relevant to higher education in several ways. First, activities enhanced with technology have the potential to improve education when not generalized in predictable linear patterns. Thus, activities that support different methods, styles, and preferences may appeal to a broader audience. Second, technology-enhanced learning activities may attract a different customer base such as learners who enjoy and expect technology in their daily lives, including the classroom. Third, by using effective technology-enhanced activities, teachers have better tools with which to accelerate, amplify, and expand the impact of their professional teaching practices.

**Theoretical Basis**

Many teachers are familiar with Bloom’s Taxonomy, a framework initiated in 1956 for the purpose of providing a common language for learning goals and as a basis of alignment of learning objectives, activities, and assessments within a specific course or curriculum (Krathwohl, 2002). As the taxonomy evolved, numerous revisions included dimensions for both knowledge and cognitive processes (Anderson and Krathwohl, 2001) as well as activities associated with Web 2.0 technologies (Churches, 2007). The term Web 2.0, attributed to Tim O’Reilly (2005), refers to interactive web-based tools, representing a deviation from static online material such as web pages and e-books. Common Web 2.0 capabilities include media sharing, media manipulation, messaging, games, blogs, and wikis (Conole & Alevizou, 2010). Web 2.0 technologies constitute the basis for Bloom’s Digital Taxonomy, a framework used for alignment among learning objectives, learning activities, and activities associated with technologies (Churches, 2007).
Connecting Theory to Practice

In actual practice, utilizing Bloom’s Digital Taxonomy may facilitate creating a learning environment that incorporates common elements as necessary for equitable requirements and assessment, yet accommodates customization at the level of the individual student. Additionally, by creating learning activities enhanced with Web 2.0 capabilities to support learning objectives, learners become the drivers, creators, and designers of a dynamic, engaged, and relevant classroom experience. Finally, increased engagement and ownership may contribute to the transformation of learners from passive consumers to active producers of knowledge.

As part of Southern Arizona’s Acadlympics Knowledge Conference 2016, faculty members participating in the breakout session “Be Disruptive – Go for the Gold!” demonstrated the principles of disrupting the status quo with technology in their classrooms. First, participants discussed common technologies. Common themes included smart phones with audio, video, social media, and chat functions, multimedia hosted via the Internet on sites such as YouTube and Vimeo, and spreadsheet and presentation applications. Next, participants shared learning objectives from their classes, opining on how existing learning activities may be improved with technology. Finally, faculty members pitched their ideas for disrupting the status quo with proposed changes in their own practice by aligning learning objectives and activities associated with Bloom’s Digital Taxonomy.

Conclusion

Arnett (2014), on behalf of the Christensen Institute for Disruptive Innovation, posits that disruption matters to individuals seeking to improve education, noting the important role of technology in supplementing the impact of professional educators. Meaningful, authentic, and relevant learning experiences are not static. Instead, teaching in the digital age requires a varied and versatile menu of approaches, tools, and techniques. As an alternative to using technology for replicating existing practice, consider disrupting the status quo. Infuse your classes with technology that accelerates, amplifies, and expands the value of the education you provide.

References


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A Synopsis of Arizona’s Medical Marijuana Law

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The latest statistics from the Arizona Department of Health show that over 77,000 Arizonans have medical marijuana cards (Arizona Department of Health, 2016). Cardholders range in age from under 18 to over 80 years old. The majority of cardholders work in business today. Chances are that an employer has employees that have cards. What rights does an employer have when a cardholder tests positive for marijuana in the workplace?

Arizona law is very clear on this point. Except in very specific circumstances, an employer may not terminate or discriminate against an employee because that person has a card. In fact, without evidence of impairment, employers may not terminate an employee for testing positive for marijuana except in limited situations.

Medical marijuana cards are issued if an individual has an illness or condition listed in the law: cancer, AIDS, HIV, glaucoma, Hepatitis C, ALS, Crohn’s Disease or a chronic or debilitating medical condition. Chronic pain is the number one reason listed by cardholders (Arizona Department of Health, 2016).

Further, an employer may not ask job applicants if they have a card because it is as though they were asking them if they have a serious medical condition, which is clearly illegal to ask under the Americans with Disabilities Act.

The law does give an employer certain protections if they act in good faith. First, if the employer would lose a federal monetary benefit (i.e. federal contract, federal grant money, etc.) the employee’s medical marijuana protections do not apply.

Second, an employee may not smoke, ingest, or possess marijuana in the workplace or that of a client or customer. And finally, a cardholder may not be impaired while working.

The big problem for employers is determining whether or not the employee is impaired. It is common knowledge that .08 blood-alcohol level is the standard for legal intoxication. There is no similar standard for marijuana.

The law helps employers with identifying subjective factors. So if the employer can in good faith observe and document one or more of the following factors, it can conclude the person is impaired:

- Speech
- Walking
- Standing
- Physical dexterity
- Agility
- Coordination
- Demeanor
- Irrational or unusual behavior

Further, the employer may take into account: appearance; clothing; odor; negligently operating
machinery or equipment; involvement in a serious accident resulting in serious damage or injury; any symptoms or actions by an employee that causes reasonable suspicion of the use of drugs or alcohol (ARS §23-493).

Another extremely successful strategy is to designate certain jobs as safety sensitive. Safety sensitive positions include those employees whose jobs entail the handling of food or medicine; operating motor vehicles, equipment or machinery; repairing or monitoring machinery or equipment; performing service in the premises of a residential or commercial customer. Therefore, if an employer wants to eliminate the card protection, they must revise the job descriptions as safety sensitive. Generally clerical staff persons are not in safety sensitive jobs. It is important that employers do not over designate positions as safety sensitive when they are not. It is advised to follow the four requirements described above.

The law protects employers that act in good faith pursuant to a legal drug test, even if they fail to test for a specific drug; and have a good-faith belief the employee used or possessed drugs on work premises; and have a good-faith belief the employee was impaired during work or on the premises.

Many attorneys would advise that the employer should have at least two managers confirm the fact that the employee is impaired and have each clearly document what they saw, heard, smelled, etc. It is important to clearly document these factors.

Over the next few years it is expect there will be much more litigation in this area. Therefore, it is important to follow the law and have a medical marijuana policy in the employee handbook or procedures, and to document everything.

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Introduction

Some students assumed that physically occupying a chair in the classroom for four hours would guarantee them full participation points. Most faculty members did not share this assumption. This identified a gap in understanding that needed to be closed by providing the students very clear guidelines on how they would be measured for their participation. Recognizing this gap, many recent faculty gatherings discussed this issue and shared possible ways to eliminate it. After having many false starts, I may have finally found something that will work, quickly adding that it will continue to be a work in progress.

Background

The first event where I recall exploring this subject dated back to July 2013 where Cheryl Kelly and LeCarie Whitfield shared two versions of a participation rubric. Each was a 4x4 matrix whose rows were criteria on which a student would be rated; the columns were the points that would be earned based on each student’s performance on a criterion. Starting from the work they had already completed, my first participation rubric was born based on the four criteria (conduct, insights and questions, application, and preparation and attendance) from LeCarie’s rubric. The workshop and models provided faculty the necessary time to focus on how to close the gap in understanding.

Initial Attempts

I was so very excited to try version 1.0 of my rubric in the classroom. Prior to the start of the class, I posted the rubric in the new classroom and informed the students to review the document so they would know the criteria against which their participation points would be determined. My experiences have confirmed that some students do not review any posts in the classroom, no matter what they are. Therefore, unbeknownst to me, the gap was still present.

In the classroom, I decided to take notes on each student’s participation since I was quite familiar with the criteria. That was an unworkable solution, as I could not jot down notes while the class was in progress; I missed too much. The only thing I was able to do successfully was note when a student arrived or departed. That was the end of version 1.0 as I reverted to trusting my memory to recall what each student had contributed to the class.

The Spark

In July 2016, the School of Business Content Area Meeting (CAM) included a poster session
by Steven P. Laden and Sandra L. Abbey entitled “Developing Critical Thinking Skills by Encouraging Student Participation in Classroom Discussions and Activities.” They discussed the link between active participation and development of critical thinking skills (Abbey & Laden, 2016). Supporting research conducted in several Hong Kong universities in 2015 states, “Advocates of assigning class participation marks believe that class participation enhances learning, trains students’ critical thinking and communication skills” (2015, p.19).

This inspired me to revitalize my efforts into creation and successful application of the participation rubric in my classes. The need to close the gap in understanding had not diminished so I made a commitment to complete version 2.0, first analyzing what needed to change in order for the rubric to be successful. The goal of the participation rubric was to determine the level and quality of student engagement in the classroom.

**Supporting Research**

University of Phoenix had shared with the faculty the importance of a student-centered learning environment where it has been shown that turning the focus on the student finds the students taking a more active role in owning their education. “Students are in the center of the teaching and learning process. They become more motivated in their learning if students own their learning, and they are engaged in it” (Li, 2015, p. 20). This research also showed that if the students have a clear understanding of what is expected of them they will willingly invest the time to track specific examples of their own contributions to the class. They will also validate that contributions made by other students was indeed valuable (Li, 2015, p. 19).

**Version 2.0 and the Pilot**

My ‘aha moment’ had occurred. The new version’s content changed only slightly, adding an area to calculate total participation points. The major difference was in its use, as the students would complete and submit the self-evaluation of their performance at the end of each class. In alignment with a student-centered learning environment, they would own their participation rubric.

My pilot was in a COM/295 class with 12 students. Minor modifications were made as the class progressed. A notable change was the addition of a comment box in which the students added examples of their participation in support of the score they gave. One caveat was that total participation points could not be earned without supporting examples. Version 2.0 was live.

**Reactions to the Rubric**

The students were engaged in the use of the rubric. They identified areas that were unclear and worked with me as changes were made. As the weeks progressed, they provided excellent examples of where they were demonstrating the grading criteria. Some made note of areas where they felt they needed to improve. Many times the improvement was visible in the next week and used in the comments section as an example.
The reactions I saw aligned with the conclusions from the Li research that found self-evaluation increased students’ motivation to participate in the discussions. Their learning increased “through higher attendance rates, frequent exposure to the course materials and participation in feedback and feedforward interactions such as class discussions” (Li. 2015, p. 25).

Another reaction was unexpected and that was mine. I was so proud of how the students embraced the use of the rubric. If they were in class, everyone completed the rubric and turned it in; no teeth were pulled. The next morning, when grading participation, I was excited to read their thoughts on what they had learned, how they had demonstrated that in class, and where they wanted to develop even further. This allowed me to reflect on not only the students but also on my facilitation and where it could be improved. As a point of information, I would not automatically give them the points they gave themselves.

I found another use for the rubric. When I substituted for a class recently I used the rubric, asking the students to submit the self-evaluation. This gave me additional feedback that along with my own I was able to provide the faculty for whom I substituted.

Thoughts for improvements

One rough area that I have now fixed relates to attendance. As a math major, I felt that if a student arrived to class at 8 PM that the most participation points he or she could receive would be 50% of the total. That was a hard concept for some students to grasp. Therefore, Version 2.1 contains an additional criterion called Time in Class that is multiplied to the sum of the ratings for the four criteria. The formula is shown below.

\[(\text{Conduct} + \text{Insights} + \text{Application} + \text{Preparation}) \times \text{Time in class}.\]

A process improvement that will be made in an upcoming class is to provide feedback to their feedback especially when the points that are entered into gradebook differ from the student’s self-evaluation.

Conclusion

The results of my pilot aligned with both the information shared in Abbey and Laden’s poster session and the results from the Li study. I saw increased genuine participation among all students. This has encouraged and reenergized me. My participation-grading rubric will be used in all my classes, as the results have proven beneficial to both the students and me. I am sure there will be a new version but right now, I have a process that I have embraced. My regret is that it took me so long to implement.

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Criminal justice has long recognized the need to improve the officer and organization through education. The 1967 President’s Commission suggested a four-year degree for all criminal justice officers to “reduce prejudice, bias, and excessive force”. However, until recently, no specific courses were identified to address these issues. While higher education has benefited most officers, it has had limited impact on the organization. This article discusses four main areas: the efforts to provide education, the lack of courses to address cultural conflict (this was the original purpose of the 1967 President’s Commission), issues in the workplace, and the influence that the “Philosophy of Punishment” has on officers and criminal justice organizations.

Education has been seen as essential in the efforts to improve the individual and society. While most would argue that the goals/approaches would be different, some believed the improvement of the individual would also result in the improvement of society. Education was viewed as a means of challenging old ideas, beliefs, and values which therefore allows new ideas, beliefs and values into the culture of an organization. Individuals need to be encouraged to learn new concepts, techniques, procedures and gain empowerment (Northouse, 2001).

Education was also seen as the means to improve the officer and the criminal justice organization. While studies did show improvement of the officer, education had limited impact on the organization. The educated new officer was introduced to the old adages, “This is the way we have always done it”, “This is the traditional method of doing things” and the “Officer is the punishment” philosophy (Delaney, et al. 2015). However, as society has changed, the emphasis to improve the criminal justice organization has risen. The organization must learn to change in order to succeed (Butler, 2001; Perroncello, 2002; Fullan, 2004).

The Need for Education

The formal education of law enforcement officers began with the London Metropolitan Police Act of 1829. Sir Robert Peel introduced efforts to “reform and create the modern police force.” (Florida State Board of Community Colleges, 1996, p. 12). In 1908, August Vollmer,
the police chief in Berkeley, California, established the first police academy in the United States. Vollmer contacted the University of California at Berkeley to develop the first courses for a minor in criminology. He recruited new police officers from the Berkeley police education program. The first associate degree in criminology was offered by San Jose State in 1930. The need for more advanced education and college preparation for police officers has been recognized by several national commissions and research studies during the last 96 years. (Florida State Board of Community Colleges, 1996).

**Law Enforcement Assistance Act (1965)**

In 1965, the Law Enforcement Assistance Act (LEAA) provided grants to develop and improve education in criminal justice, and decrease state crime. This resulted in the creation of evaluation and planning commissions, community relations programs for police departments, courses in police science in colleges and universities, comprehensive education in corrections within prison and probation, and the establishment of state police education standards and training in riot prevention and control. The 1965 Act provided specific education programs at colleges and universities for the improvement of officers and supervisors. Programs were also established for the development of advanced education in rural areas, the establishment of regional corrections centers in the South and management education for supervisors (Dept. of Justice, 1968).

**1967 President’s Commission**

While efforts were being made to improve the criminal justice system, society saw little change in criminal justice organizations. The civil rights disturbances in the 1950s and 60s resulted in the creation of the 1967 President’s Commission on Law Enforcement and the Advancement of Justice. The Commission determined that all officers should possess a four-year degree because

Well educated persons are less prejudiced toward minority groups than the poorly educated. A degree should have a significant positive long term effect on community relations. Police personnel with two to four years of college should have a better appreciation of people with: different racial, economic and cultural backgrounds, should have the innate ability to acquire such understanding, less bias, prejudice and excessive force (Winslow, 1968).

The commission believed that a degree would result in better officers. However, higher education was seen as an individual effort and not an organizational mandate. Unfortunately, the Commission did not suggest any specific courses.

**Minnesota Study**

Minnesota is the only state which requires a four-year degree as a condition of employment. According to the Minnesota Police Officers Standards and Training (POST) (1978), the police chiefs and sheriffs exhibited no preference in
college degree area possessed by the officer. Administrators were more concerned about skills the officers acquired during college:

- critical-thinking skills,
- oral and written communications,
- adequate research prior to taking action,
- ability to handle stress,
- successful group presentations,
- adequate introduction to world, ethnic and gender issues.

The accomplishment of a degree was seen as an effort by the individual, having little influence on the organization. There was no standard or priority for the “adequate introduction to world, ethnic and gender issues” except in the general sense (Minnesota Department of Public Safety, 1978).

**Individual Responsibility**

The development of basic and advanced education has taken several directions since the 1960s. While a few departments have focused on a basic academy and in-service education, most departments left the responsibility for higher education to individual officers. Community colleges and universities developed curricula in law enforcement administration and other criminal justice areas (Stevens, 1983). Johnson (1986) noted officers in Kansas primarily attended in-service and college education for four reasons; personal development, promotion, to learning how to resolve specific situations, and to increase involvement in community service. Many officers were attending college even before the enactment of mandatory education requirements for recertification. Miller (1994) noticed that the need for specific education, the amount of education, and the quality of education were influenced by three items; the location of the department (rural versus urban), size of the department (large versus small), and the number of officers who needed additional education. Educational levels of administrators were also a factor in the emphasis on education.

Totzke (2002) noted the educational level of the police chief or sheriff determined the emphasis on education for officers. The majority of the police chiefs or sheriffs believed that it was easier to work with a college-educated officer, and that for criminal justice professionals to be perceived on the same level as lawyers and doctors, educational requirements must be raised. College-educated officers had fewer complaints about excessive use of force, disciplinary actions and other infractions (Wymer, 1996). They were seen as having increased flexibility in dealing with difficult situations, better interaction with diverse cultures, better verbal and written communication skills, and greater flexibility in accepting and implementing change (Wymer, 1996; Varricchio, 1999; Totzke, 2002).

Education is still seen as a means of improving the officer and criminal justice organization (Seiter, 2013). Studies support that a college degree reduces the level of bias and prejudice in both law enforcement and corrections (Telep, 2011). However, not all officers have attended college and
Limited Impact

According to Moore (1997) the intent of the 1967 President’s Commission was to change the system. Not to necessarily control crime, but rather to create justice. He felt the intent of having academia help create this change never really materialized, but research did increase. Academia did increase the skills of the officer, but it did not provide the information and stimulus needed to change the system. Moore (1997) stated there are three major concepts of professionalism in criminal justice:

1. Technically competent people
2. People committed to the right values,
3. People who feel authorized to imagine and act

This view has resulted in better leadership and professionalism in criminal justice. Buerger (2004), held that community college and university criminal justice curricula were in conflict with the criminal justice system. After the 1967 President’s Commission suggested a four-year degree, colleges/universities combined several existing courses together with a few courses on criminal justice. He felt criminal justice curriculum was designed as a social science, not necessarily to resolve issues in the streets. He stated there was a need to create an educational program which raised awareness and enhanced critical thinking to better deal with situations on the streets (Buerger, 2004).

Cultural Conflict and Education

Culture is the collective beliefs and values of those working within the organization. Some organizations can be characterized as dysfunctional primarily due to problems with their internal culture. Conflicts among other staff members can cause stress, as well as lack of productivity and lack of focus on the organizational mission. While it is important to provide advanced education to achieve the primary goals of the organization (e.g. criminals, inmates, students), it is also important to address the issues that create barriers and conflict.

Bynum (2007) conducted a study involving 187 police officers, deputies, corrections officers and criminal justice professors in Southern Arizona. The study looked at the effectiveness of criminal justice curriculum to address problems in the workplace and society. Respondents were asked several questions regarding the effectiveness of criminal justice education to improve workplace relations and resolve issues. There is an old saying in corrections “It is not the inmates that drive us crazy, it is the staff. We can do things with inmates, we cannot do anything with staff” (unknown).

The summary was that the need for education was determined by the individual in each career stage or life (Bynum, 2007). Some realized education was needed for promotions, personal development, transfer to a specialized unit, or to reach the next stage in their career. Some decided that they had reached a stage in life where additional education was no longer needed.

Buerger (2004) noted most advanced education in criminal justice focused on basic issues. Advanced material should be added to the
information being presented in the basic academy. The training should address specific situations covering the functions of the job, cultural issues, personal development and working with others. Curricula presented by colleges and universities were general in nature and did not adequately prepare the individual for work situations (such as cultural conflict and dealing with other staff members).

**Basic Academy as a Filter**

A study done in Queensland, Australia (Wimhurst & Ransley, 2007) illustrated the differences between two models using college education in criminal justice. Both models were designed to use education to resolve major issues in the criminal justice system. The first model required all police recruits to attend two semesters at a local college prior to attending the police academy. If a police recruit had positive beliefs on specific issues, those beliefs would often erode during the academy. Those beliefs would then further erode during the field training sessions. The academy and field training sessions were often taught by current officers of the organization. The instructors introduced the recruits to the existing culture, therefore limiting the impact of the college education. The college degree, by itself, did not guarantee better officer performance or a change in the organization (Worden, 1990). While a college education was shown to benefit the officer, organizational benefits were not as easily identifiable (Wimhurst & Ransley, 2007).

**Philosophy of Punishment**

How a society decides to punish may vary depending on its culture. Many views of punishment can exist in a criminal justice culture:

- “Eye for an Eye” (equal retribution for a wrong.)
- “Just Desserts” (punishment occurs in the future and may include the offender being assaulted or killed while in jail/prison.)
- “Lock the door and throw away the key” (a conservative view that sees the need to be “tough on crime.”)
- “Rehab for everyone” (a liberal view that wants to reform the system to better address the needs of the offender and society.)
- “The offender is also a victim” (radical point of view that considers the offender as a product of a bad environment.)
- “The officer is the punishment” (the U.S. Supreme court has ruled the “separation from society” is the punishment, not the officer or the system.)

These beliefs exist in the criminal justice system and are often in conflict with each other. Although most officers try to provide a “firm but fair” approach, this may conflict with the “lock the door and throw away the key” and “the officer is the punishment” philosophies of other officers, administration, and elected officials. These
philosophies of punishment have an impact of the behavior of the officers. This creates conflict within the culture of an organization and society.

**Cultural Conflict Curriculum**

Many in criminal justice and higher education have recognized the need to better educate officers and improve the criminal justice organization. There is debate on which topics should be presented to the officers (firearms training, first aid, driving skills, report writing). The 1967 President’s Commission opined that a four-year degree would result in “lower bias, prejudice, and excess use of force”. The Minnesota Study (1978) remarked that the skills the officer obtained in college were the most important.

Corley, Nalla, & Hoffman (2005) conducted a study on the issues upon which corrections officers felt higher education should focus. They noted “while corrections staff thought race and ethnic relations should be a focus of a graduate corrections curriculum” (p.390) a review for race and ethnic relations found fewer than three-fourths of introductory textbooks contained information on the subject. Most criminal justice textbooks provided one chapter on the topic (Corley, Nalla, & Hoffman, 2005). A review of the curricula of criminal justice programs in 30 colleges/universities showed at least one class on cultural diversity, ethics, or decision making on each academic level (associate, bachelor, masters, doctoral). Eighteen programs showed classes in all three of these areas (cultural diversity, ethics, or decision making) or similar courses. Eastern Kentucky University has a Social Justice degree.

When the criminal justice professors (Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences members) were asked if one class on cultural diversity was sufficient to change the beliefs and behaviors in criminal justice, all responded – it was not.

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Let’s Get Gritty: Measures of Student Success

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Grit is perseverance and passion for long-term goals (Duckworth & Quinn, 2009). Students who have a gritty mindset (Tri, 2013) are achievement-oriented, action-oriented, intrinsically motivated, accountable, and risk takers. By harnessing the connections that are essential to student learning, grit and a growth mindset are fostered. Faculty can show students that they can succeed with passion, perseverance, and the stamina of grit when they make connections. Creating connections with their faculty is integral for students to apply course goals and lessons learned. Students’ collaborative connections among their classmates are equally important along with connections with class materials. In the process of it all, faculty can help students recognize their skills and abilities.

Gritty students persevere in challenging experiences and delay gratification (Tri, 2013). “The grittiest people tend to have developed their passions from personal interests, but also from one particular kind of broader purpose—the intention to contribute to the well-being of others. It is never too early or too late to begin cultivating a purpose” (Duckworth, 2016, para. 14). The goal is for students to approach their educational experience as a marathon, allowing students to maintain motivation and exhibit resilience in the face of setbacks (Duckworth, Peterson, Matthews, & Kelly 2007). Duckworth opines “Three recommendations for developing a purpose: (1) Reflect on how what you’re already doing can make a positive contribution to society; (2) Think about how, in small but meaningful ways, you can enhance your connection to your core values; (3) Find inspiration in a purposeful role model” (Duckworth, 2016, para. 15-17).

Bits of Grit

A deaf student was homeless for six months during his studies at the University of Phoenix. He would go to the library, do his work, and then look for food and handouts to get through the day. Someone got to know him and offered him a room for no charge. Finally, he got some part-time work and put money toward rent. He is finishing his undergraduate degree and hoping to go on to graduate studies.

Another student with previous limited academic success wanted to make a difference with her life. She pursued an associate’s degree and finally completed the last class. She would ask questions of her instructor and seek assistance when she did not understand the readings or the assignment. This student had tenacity and kept climbing over each roadblock that came along.
She went on, earned her bachelor’s degree, and is volunteering now, working for those with disabilities.

**Questions about grit**

Students who have grit do not give up, although times get tight and all signs lead to stopping. Why do they not quit? What is it that encourages them to go on? How do they get grit? Why do some have it, and others do not? More importantly, how can people be inspired to get more grit – or can they? This paper will attempt to answer these questions and more.

Carol Dweck (2006), the author of *Mindset: The New Psychology of Success*, claims that “how one thinks” dictates the choices one makes. Faculty members can inspire students by providing insight into their abilities and advice for their future, inspiring them to pursue their passion in life, embracing their own talents and skills. By getting to know students and their capabilities, instructors can be the catalyst that encourages students to believe in themselves and cultivate grit. Dweck believes that the student’s mindset determines success and whether a person has a growth or a fixed mindset.

Students often face challenges that the university can change to directly improve the experience for students, helping them be more successful. These challenges may be external factors that are out of the control of school administrators, but an awareness of these issues helps to make decisions about services to provide to students (Tucker, 2016). These challenges include, but are not limited to, family obligations, lack of support, financial pressures, and apathy. Family issues may affect student success, not because the students lack drive, but obstacles such as childcare may prevent students from attending class regularly. Finding childcare to attend classes or do assignments may be a struggle for students without guidance or outside help. Students may not have a support system at home. Some students may face opposition about attending school because of the financial and time commitments that take away from family obligations (Tucker, 2016). Attending school is on its own a financial burden for many students. Students may be returning to school to increase opportunities for financial success and attending classes can take away from the opportunity for financial gain from additional hours at work. Students also can be stunted from academic growth due to boredom and apathy (Tucker, 2016). School administrators and faculty can look at issues with student engagement as an opportunity to get students involved.

**Challenges for Online Students**

Online students in higher education may face unique challenges that differ from traditional students. Students in online programs report that they feel a lack of support and are unprepared for the demands of online learning. New students, in particular, report to struggling academically. They often feel ill prepared for the online environment and the rigor of academics. Students believe that upon entering an online program, they are faced with too much, too fast.
They struggle with learning the new technology and systems as well as the rigor of the academic expectations. Students also report that they feel like a number and lack the personal attention that they need for online learning, which can seem more isolated and lonely than an on-ground program. Schools and universities need to consider the challenges that students, particularly new students, face developing grit strategies.

**Growth Mindset**

When talking about grit, one must also speak of a growth mindset. A student with a growth mindset believes that intelligence is not fixed, but that it is developed (Dweck, 2006). Another fundamental difference of a person with grit is the desire to learn, rather than merely to look smart. They are excited about challenges and see failure in a positive way. They thrive despite obstacles. They know the path to a growth mindset is a journey and that effort is required. A growth mindset can be created by learning from criticism, becoming inspired by other’s success, and seeking input and new strategies. A growth mindset recognizes that continuous effort is required for development (Jaeger, Freeman, Whalen, & Payne, 2010). To do that, students must change the messages they send to themselves. Instead of thinking, “It would easy to quit, I am not good at this, I am failing,” a faculty member could encourage flipped messaging. An example of flipped messaging would be to reflect on the obstacles in the student’s way. The faculty member could explore whether the student really wants to stop or ask if the student is missing something that would help him/her smooth out an obstacle.

**The Faculty Role in Grit**

Faculty members hold a vital role in identifying strategies to foster grit in the classroom. Faculty should strive to help students thrive and develop grit skills to persevere and achieve long-term goals with passion and optimism (Jaeger, Freeman, Whalen, & Payne, 2010). Grit involves individuals conquering challenges including boredom and disappointment with continual effort and interest despite failure and adversity (Voss, 2011). Developing grit skills may help students to overcome adversity and increase their potential for success.

Keeping the characteristics of a marathon in mind when teaching can contribute to a foundation for fostering this important skill set. Some marathon characteristics include managing failure, conscious achievement, endurance, resilience, and excellence. Faculty can help students manage their fear of failure, a vital part of the process, as there are valuable lessons learned (Perlis, 2013). Failure is a small though necessary step in the goal achievement process (Bradberry, 2016). To that end, cultivating courage leads to “learning how to fail and to embrace it as an inevitable part of life” (Perlis, 2013, para. 8). Conscious achievement includes committing to going for gold versus showing up for practice, demonstrating the achievement-oriented approach versus the dependable approach (Perlis, 2013). Faculty can teach
students specific skills. Embracing challenges and overcoming obstacles assist students in growing grit (Bradberry, 2016). Endurance requires following through with long-term goals and practice, which must have meaningful purpose, passion, and value (Perlis, 2013). Resilience empowers one to persevere despite obstacles by combining optimism, creativity, and confidence (Perlis, 2013). Excellence involves striving for that with a matching attitude and prioritizing progress rather than perfection (Perlis, 2013).

Faculty members are also instrumental in establishing expectations that encourage grit qualities. According to Tinto (2012), “High expectations are a condition for student success” (p. 4). In the classroom, this includes the syllabus, assignment instructions, grading rubrics, lectures, and much more. Students are adept at learning the expectations from faculty in the classroom and adjusting accordingly (Tinto, 2012). Faculty must hold high expectations throughout the classroom experience and support students with the resources to meet their needs (Tinto, 2012), and in that way, show them how they can develop their grit and become more successful.

References

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Editing process: October 27, 2016 to November 21, 2016
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Questions?

Authors may contact any member of the Scholarship Committee with questions. Members are:

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