

Authentic Research Projects and Community Engagement in the Classroom: Do the Professor's Tenure Status, Discipline, and Classroom Size Make a Difference?

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While schools are increasingly touting the use of experiential education in programs to meet accreditation standards and community expectations, are they walking the talk? Our results indicate that students are more likely to engage with the community and complete required authentic research projects in qualitative business disciplines than in quantitative disciplines. Term faculty further appear to be engaging students with the community and requiring authentic research projects to a greater extent than either tenure-track or tenured faculty. Finally, students in smaller class sizes are benefiting from courses with greater community engagement and authentic research projects.

INTRODUCTION

One source of parental frustration over the past few years is in the skyrocketing costs of college tuition. According to the U.S. College Board, average in-state annual tuition for a 4-year public university in 2013-14 was \$8,893, while the average tuition in private, nonprofit institutions was \$30,094. In the ten-year period just preceding the 2013-2014 academic year, tuition has risen on average 4.2 percent in public 4 year universities and 2.3% in private, nonprofits (U.S. College Board, 2014). Increases vary widely by state. According to one recent report by NPR, over the past five years, costs for a college education in Arizona have risen by 77 percent, followed closely by Georgia (75 percent) and Washington State (70 percent) (Sanchez, 2014).

Despite such increases, the NPR report has found that parents are still paying for it, digging ever more deeply into their pockets with the expectation that they'll reap a strong return on their investment. But will they? Are colleges ensuring that students receive the sort of rigorous, authentic, and meaningful experiences that skyrocketing tuition rates suggest they should be delivering? Are they further ensuring

that students are engaging with the communities in which they're immersed to supplement their conceptual knowledge with applications in the real world?

The present study focuses specifically on business schools and examines whether authentic learning experiences vary as a function of discipline, instructor characteristics, and classroom size. As examples, we examine whether students of disciplines such as entrepreneurship and marketing are more likely to receive an authentic learning experience than their counterparts in finance or accounting. We examine whether the tenure status (term/non-tenure track, tenure track, or tenured) of the instructor impacts the learning experience. Finally, we examine whether classroom size matters.

Ma and Lee (2012) developed an instrument to incorporate an authentic learning strategy into a classroom project, finding that such a strategy is beneficial to several quantitative and qualitative student learning outcomes. Specifically, an authentic learning strategy related positively to learning practical competencies, gaining professional experience, and solving complex problems using different perspectives. The authors further found that students' communication skills, professionalism, team-building, research skills, and learning through interactions improved in an authentic environment. Such benefits are consistent with goals often cited in undergraduate and graduate university curriculum.

We adapted the items from the Ma and Lee (2012) authentic learning strategy instrument to develop a questionnaire, which 231 business professors of various disciplines and universities answered. Our goal was to determine whether the use of authentic learning strategies were a function of professor demographics and university characteristics. This information is useful to administrators of curriculum programs as they determine ways to make experiences in the classroom more authentic. In the next sections, we review the literature and develop and test our hypotheses on these variations. We then offer results, implications, and a conclusion.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Experiential education has long been important to nonprofit groups, such as the National Society of Experiential Education (NSEE) and the Association for Experiential Education (AEE), which have both been operating since the early 1970s. Both organizations have served educators, students, and practitioners through a commitment to excellence in experiential education (NSEE) or adventure programs (AEE). Numerous educational institutions ranging from K-12, community colleges, and 4-year colleges and universities have aligned themselves with these organizations to enhance experiential education on their campuses (For further information about both organizations, see www.NSEE.org or www.AEE.org).

According to the NSEE's publication entitled "Strengthening Experiential Education in your Institution," experiential education has evolved to center stage and is now a prominent place in K-16 education (Hesser, 2013). According to the NSEE, experiential education refers to "high impact learning practices, civic engagement, community-based learning and research, and classroom engagement" (Hesser, 2013, pp. 6). Components of experiential education typically include internships and co-ops, service learning, undergraduate research, and education abroad.

Experiential education is further important to accreditation. In 2013, The Association for the Advancement of Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) implemented 15 new Standards for Business Accreditation, which directed new schools' attention to impact, innovation, and engagement (AACSB, 2013). The AACSB is a well-recognized and well-respected accreditor based in the United States. Currently, 711 institutions in 47 countries are AACSB-accredited (AACSB, 2014). To achieve and sustain AACSB accreditation, business schools must demonstrate compliance with each of its rigorous 15 standards. The standards focus on impact, innovation, and engagement, along with a more general focus on experiential education. One requirement detailed in the Standards document (AACSB, 2013, pp. 30) states: "Curricula facilitate and encourage active student engagement in learning. In addition to time on task related to readings, course participation, knowledge development, projects, and assignments, students engage in experiential and active learning designed to improve skills and the application of knowledge in practice is expected." Furthermore, in its thirteenth of fifteen standards for accreditation, AACSB

explicitly details its experiential requirements: “For any teaching and learning model employed, the school provides a portfolio of experiential learning requirements for business students, either through formal coursework or extracurricular activities, which allow them to engage with faculty and active business leaders. These experiential learning activities provide exposure to business and management in both local and global contexts.” (AACSB, 2013, pp. 36).

Experiential learning has also been referred to as learning by doing, applied learning, and authentic learning. All have captured the attention of educators seeking to enhance relevance and experience in the classroom. Experiential learning shifts the focus from the teacher to the learner (cf., Lamont & Friedman, 1997; Machemer & Crawford, 2007) as it encourages students to engage in higher-order learning, contextualizing content, and developing a deeper understanding of the material (Anderson, 1997; Shakarian, 1995). Scholars suggest that authentic learning includes such characteristics as: real-world problems, open-ended inquiry, self-directed learning, thinking skills, and a discourse among a community of learners (Rule, 2006; Diamond, Middleton, & Mather, 2011).

Bruner (2002) demonstrated that providing real-life context is one way of enhancing students’ understanding and retention of new concepts. Other scholars have also assessed a variety of authentic and experiential learning experiences in the classroom within a variety of disciplines, finding success in achieving various student learning outcomes (Gulikers, Kester, Kirchner, & Bastiaens, 2008; Hart, Bowden, & Watters, 1999). Several studies have additionally found the achievement of student learning outcomes in using experiential approaches in business disciplines (e.g., Alon & Herath, 2014; Peterson & Albertson, 2006; Nees, Willey, & Mansfield, 2010; McCarthy & McCarthy, 2006; Pariseau & Kezimir, 2007; Mastilak, 2012; Drea, Singh, & Engelland, 1997).

In summary, many in the academic community have embraced experiential and authentic learning for decades and at present, there are a wide variety of classroom engagement activities that fall under the broad umbrella experiential or authentic learning. One primary distinction between experiential or authentic learning from traditional learning is the focus on application over lecture. Accreditors such as the AACSB have embraced experiential education, which may pressure educators currently not using experience in the classroom to figure out ways to do so. Furthermore, assessment-focused academics may embrace experiential learning since evidence suggests that such learning helps to achieve various learning outcomes. Despite positive trends in experiential education, new accreditation standards, and benefits to learning outcomes, are educators of business walking the talk?

Business Disciplines

Business disciplines can be distinguished by quantitative (e.g., Business Economics, Accounting, Finance, and Management Information Systems) and qualitative (e.g., Management, Entrepreneurship, and Marketing) approaches. Both approaches involve problem-solving, yet through different modes. As an example, students of finance may analyze stocks using a variety of quantitative tools, such as quick ratios, return-on-investment, and earnings per share. This process involves experience in that students likely analyze stocks in real-time using technology and a variety of hands-on tools. Students of management may analyze a company’s human resources’ legal compliance with case analyses. Students of marketing may use business-to-business simulations (cf., Anselmi & Frankel, 2004). Disciplines may adopt a variety of experiential approaches to satisfy learning outcomes and objectives.

In the context of the present study, we ask whether instructors of quantitative courses are more or less likely than instructors of qualitative courses to (1) require an authentic research project and (2) engage the classroom with the community. Because quantitative courses often involve number crunching and the use of secondary data, the ‘human factor’ focusing on interpersonal and communication skills may not be captured well. In contrast, qualitative courses often consider the ‘human factor’ and often require students to work in teams to develop team, leadership, and interpersonal skills. Accordingly, we suggest that instructors of quantitative courses may be less likely to engage the community and require authentic research projects than instructors of qualitative courses. The latter tend to focus on the human factor, considering elements of teams, leadership, and interpersonal skills. Therefore, we propose the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1: Instructors of quantitative courses (Business Economics, Accounting, MIS, and Finance) are less likely to engage their classrooms with the community than their counterparts (Management, Marketing, and Entrepreneurship).

Hypothesis 2: Instructors of quantitative courses (Business Economics, Accounting, MIS, and Finance) are less likely to require authentic research projects than instructors of qualitative courses (Management, Marketing, and Entrepreneurship).

Class Size

Economic realities have forced some universities to offer larger classes (with 100 students or more), and some have argued that such classes enhance diversity and social perspectives (Johnson & Johnson, 1994). Yet the traditional lecture-based approaches generate two weaknesses: student passivity and a difficulty associated with crafting lectures with a depth and breadth of information (Machemer & Crawford, 2007). Class size has long been an issue of contention in the K-12 sector, due to perceptions that smaller classes provide greater individualized attention and the opportunity for active, experiential, and cooperative learning (cf., Moore, 2006). Taken in the university context, small class sizes enable higher order thinking skills, such as creating, evaluating, and analyzing - in addition to affording the possibility of breaking into small groups (Northwest Center for Public Health Practice, 2012). Offering opportunities in which students can engage with other students in small groups enhances belonging and solidarity, aiding engagement (Vinson, Nixon, Walsh, Walker, Mitchell, & Zaitseva, 2010), and small classes present greater opportunities to structure group interactions than large lecture halls or other environments with significant numbers of students. Furthermore, student engagement is a key component of student success (Kuh, Kinzie, Buckley, Bridges, & Hayek, 2006).

Furthermore, smaller class sizes make meeting with community members outside of the classroom more practical. Engaging in projects with community members and businesses may be easier facilitated with small class sizes. Additionally, requiring extensive and authentic research projects in smaller classes seem more likely given the time to grade such projects. Therefore, we propose that instructors teaching in smaller classrooms will be more likely to engage the community and to require authentic research projects.

Hypothesis 3: Classroom size will be negatively related to engagement in the community.

Hypothesis 4: Classroom size will be negatively related to an authentic research project requirement.

Tenure Status

In a hotly debated article entitled 'Are tenure-track professors better teachers?' (Figlio, Schapiro, & Soter, 2013; Berrett, 2013), several researchers found consistent evidence that faculty outside of the tenure system at Northwestern faculty outperformed their counterparts on the tenure track and those who had tenure in introductory undergraduate classrooms. The researchers further found that students who were less qualified academically particularly benefited from instruction by faculty outside of the tenure system. The study involved 8 cohorts of freshmen students, totaling 15,662 students. Limitations to the study included generalizability to faculty outside of Northwestern, which has the ability to pay its faculty higher rates than faculty of some smaller, less endowed institutions (cf., Berrett, 2013).

These results may be attributable to lower research and service requirements of untenured faculty, providing greater opportunity for classroom preparation time. Results may also be attributable to the possibility that the untenured line faculty may have more work experience in the business community - and more recent work experience, and thus can provide more relevance in the classroom.

Yet alternatively, tenure-track faculty members have a strong incentive to want high teaching evaluations: tenure. Without tenure, tenure-track faculty must return to the job market, which may require

uprooting the family and moving elsewhere. Furthermore, tenure-track and tenured faculty may have stronger academic credentials and thus a better understanding of the extant research on particular topics, along with a stronger understanding of conceptual matters. Furthermore, tenure-track and tenured faculty are generally paid higher than their untenured line counterparts - and significantly higher than part-time counterparts (AACSB, 2014).

Theories of distributive justice suggest that perceptions of underpayment may lead some term faculty to lessen their performance relative to their higher paid counterparts doing the same work in the classroom (e.g., Colquitt, 2001). Distributive justice is achieved when outcomes, such as pay and recognition, are consistent with inputs, such as effort and performance.

In the present context, we ask whether term, tenure-track, or tenured faculty members are likely to require authentic research projects and engage with the community. Using distributive justice as our conceptual foundation, we posit that higher paid faculty (i.e., tenured or tenure-track) are more likely to go the extra mile in their classrooms (e.g., require authentic research projects or engage the community) than their counterparts. We propose that tenure-track faculty, who are highly incentivized to earn tenure, may go beyond the amount of effort that their tenured counterparts contribute. Therefore, we propose as follows:

Hypothesis 5: Instructors on the tenure-track are more likely to engage their classrooms with the community than those with tenure and even more so than those in term positions.

Hypothesis 6: Instructors on the tenure-track are more likely to require authentic research projects than those with tenure and even more so than those in term positions.

METHOD

We collected the email addresses of 3,878 faculty members from 256 institutions in the United States. 233 faculty members responded indicating a response rate of 6 percent. 145 were male; 101 were tenured, 57 were on the tenure-track, and 75 were term; 162 were from public institutions, 71 were from private institutions; 34 were from research institutions, 93 were from teaching institutions, and 105 indicated an equal focus on teaching and research; 52 were between 25-44 years of age, 81 were between 41-56 years of age, and 96 indicated that they were over 56. 56 taught courses with fewer than 25 students, 158 taught courses with between 25 and 50 students, 12 taught courses between 51-75 students and 6 taught classes with more than 75 students. Faculty members represented fifty-two separate institutions of higher learning and each of the major business disciplines (Accounting, 33; Business Law, 4; Economics, 12; Entrepreneurship, 30; Finance, 20; International Business, 2; Management, 69; Marketing, 27; and MIS/ITM, 23). 45% of those in the original survey population represented qualitative disciplines, while 60% of respondents indicated teaching responsibilities within qualitative disciplines, suggesting those from qualitative disciplines may be more inclined to respond to surveys of authenticity in the classroom. 75% of those in the original survey population represented public institutions, while 70% of those in the respondent population represented public institutions.

To assess authentic research projects, we slightly modified the instrument developed by Ma and Lee (2012) to modify the target audience from students to instructors. We asked respondents the degree to which they require items 1 - 10 in Table 1. The alpha coefficient for the ten items = .96. To assess community engagement projects, we asked respondents to indicate the degree to which they require items 12, 13, and 14 in Table 1. The alpha coefficient for the three items = .83.

TABLE 1
AUTHENTIC RESEARCH PROJECTS AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

In the course I primarily instruct at my institution, the research projects I require:

Anchors: Never, Rarely, Sometimes, Often, Always, N/A

1. Comprise complex activities to be investigated over a sustained period of time.
2. Provide students the opportunity to collaborate with other students.
3. Have relevant real-world experience.
4. Require students use a variety of resources.
5. Provide students the opportunity to examine the tasks from different perspectives (rather than a single perspective).
6. Allow competing solutions and a diversity of outcomes rather than a single correct response.
7. Require students to think about issues that aren't traditionally considered in the course for the topic.
8. Overall, my required research projects hold a valuable learning experience for students.
9. Require students to use critical thinking skills.

In the course I primarily instruct:

10. I require students to complete group research projects.
11. I require students to complete a service learning/community engagement project.
12. I require students to engage with the outside community.
13. I have incorporated a requirement that students travel to an off-campus location.

We used ANOVA and Pearson correlations to test our six hypotheses to determine whether mean differences between groups within various categories were significant (ANOVA) or our continuous variable relationships were significant (Pearson correlations).

RESULTS

We initially ran several tests to determine assumptions in our equations were not violated when running ANOVA equations. One important assumption is normal distribution of the dependent variables: community engagement and authentic research projects. For the community engagement variable, the skewness was .474, SE .16 and kurtosis was -.59, SE .32. For the authentic research projects variable, skewness was -1.84, SE .16 and kurtosis was 2.34, SE .31. These fell well under the 3 (skewness) and 10 (kurtosis) cut-off values suggested by Kline (1998).

We next checked equality of variance across quantitative vs. qualitative disciplines and tenure status. Levene's test indicated significance for both community engagement and authentic research projects across both disciplines in the quantitative and qualitative categories and tenure status, indicating unequal variances. We therefore ran a Welch ANOVA (cf., Luh & Guo, 1999), which is a more robust test, which can be applied when variances are unequal.

We additionally checked for problems associated with the use of self-reports, as this methodology potentially produces biases such as social desirability, acquiescence, leniency, and issues associated with fluctuations in mood (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee & Podsakoff, 2003). Although the prevalence of these biases is debatable (Spector, 1987), a discussion and check follows. We used Harman's single factor test to check for common source problems loading all of the study variables into an exploratory factor analysis and examining the unrotated factor solution. When common method variance is a problem, either a single factor emerges or a single factor accounts for a majority of variance. Principle axis factor analysis with an unrotated solution of all continuous items produced 5 factors, with initial eigenvalues ranging between 40.84% and 5.5%, suggesting that common source bias is not be a significant problem.

TABLE 2
WELCH ANOVA BY DISCIPLINE OF COMMUNITY
ENGAGEMENT AND AUTHENTIC PROJECTS

		Community Engagement	Authentic Projects
Other (please specify)	Mean	2.18	3.75
	N	11	11
	S.D.	1.39	1.42
Accounting	Mean	1.74	3.4
	N	33	33
	S.D.	1.16	1.51
Business Law	Mean	1.5	4.35
	N	4	4
	S.D.	1	0.13
Economics	Mean	1.48	2.58
	N	11	12
	S.D.	0.75	1.9
Entrepreneurship	Mean	3.3	4.19
	N	29	30
	S.D.	1	1.26
Finance	Mean	1.6	3.42
	N	20	20
	S.D.	0.72	1.54
International Business	Mean	2	4.25
	N	2	2
	S.D.	1.41	0.49
Management	Mean	2.29	3.84
	N	69	69
	S.D.	1.16	1.27
Marketing	Mean	2.98	4.43
	N	27	27
	S.D.	0.96	0.36
MIS/ITM	Mean	2.17	3.74
	N	23	23
	S.D.	0.94	1.2
Total	Mean	2.29	3.79
	N	229	231
	S.D.	1.18	1.34
Welch ANOVA For qualitative vs. quantitative	Statistic	32.69	12.89
	df	204.46,1	149.9,1
	Sig.	.000	.000

In hypothesis 1, we posited that instructors of quantitative courses of business would be less likely to engage students in their classrooms with the community. Results provide support for this hypothesis. Specifically, Means for Accounting (1.74, SD 1.16), Economics (1.48, SD .75), Finance (1.6, SD .72), and MIS/ITM (2.17, SD .94) were lower than means for Entrepreneurship (3.3, SD 1), Management (2.29, SD 1.16), and Marketing (2.98, SD .96)

In hypothesis 2, we posited that instructors of quantitative courses would be less likely to require authentic research projects than instructors of qualitative courses. Results supported our hypotheses. Means suggest that instructors of economics are the least likely to require authentic research projects, while instructors of marketing, business law, and entrepreneurship are the most likely to require authentic research projects.

We next grouped all quantitative courses into a new quantitative variable and followed the same procedure for qualitative courses. We excluded the ‘other’ variable, since it contained a mix of quantitative and qualitative courses, while we grouped business law and international business disciplines within the qualitative discipline group. As noted above, we ran a Welch test of the ANOVA to determine whether significant differences exist between the quantitative and qualitative populations. Results confirmed statistical significance for community engagement (Welch statistic 32.69, df 204.46,1, sig. = .000) and authentic research projects (Welch statistic 12.89, df 149.9,1, sig. =.000).

TABLE 3
MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS BY CLASS SIZE

What is the typical class size of the course in which you primarily teach?		Community Engagement	Authentic Projects
Fewer than 25 students	Mean	2.73	4.28
	N	55	56
	S.D.	1.05	0.77
25-50 students	Mean	2.15	3.68
	N	157	158
	S.D.	1.18	1.39
51-75 students	Mean	1.69	2.98
	N	12	12
	S.D.	0.83	1.79
More than 75 students	Mean	2.39	3.35
	N	6	6
	S.D.	1.67	1.82
Total	Mean	2.27	3.78
	N	230	232
	S.D.	1.18	1.33

In hypotheses 3 and 4, we posited that class sizes would negatively relate to engagement with the community and the requirement of authentic class projects. Mean differences indicate support when distinguishing classrooms with under 25 students, between 25-50 students, and 51-75 students, where the

vast majority (all but 6) of the respondents resided. Yet the 6 who indicated that their typical class exceeded 75 students indicated a relatively higher use of community engagement and authentic projects than expected, just below that of a small class. Pearson correlations indicated that class size was negatively related to community engagement ($r = -.19, p < .01, n = 230$) and the requirement of authentic research projects ($r = -.23, p = .001, n = 232$).

TABLE 4
WELCH ANOVA BY TENURE STATUS

What is your tenure status?		Community Engagement	Authentic Projects
Non-tenure track, term position	Mean	2.55	4.08
	N	74	75
	S.D.	1.07	1.13
Tenure track	Mean	2.28	3.46
	N	57	57
	S.D.	1.35	1.64
Tenured	Mean	2.05	3.69
	N	100	101
	S.D.	1.09	1.34
Total	Mean	2.26	3.76
	N	231	233
	S.D.	1.17	1.37
Welch ANOVA	Statistic	4.52	3.73
	df	128.9,2	129.73,2
	Sig.	.013	.027

In hypotheses 5, we proposed that instructors on the tenure track would be more likely to engage the classroom with the community than their tenured or term counterparts. Surprisingly, results supported the opposite conclusion with significant mean differences (Welch statistic 4.52, df 128.9,2, Sig. = .013). Means for non-tenure and term faculty were higher (2.55, SD 1.07) than those for tenure-track (2.28, SD 1.35) and tenured faculty (2.05, SD 1.09).

In hypothesis 6, we proposed that tenure-track instructors would be more likely to require authentic research projects than their tenured or term counterparts. Once again, results provided the opposite conclusion with significant mean differences (Welch statistic 3.73, df 129.73,2, Sig. = .027). Specifically, term instructors are more likely (4.08, SD 1.13) to require authentic research projects than their tenure track (3.46, SD 1.64) or tenured (3.69, SD 1.34) counterparts. Scheffe tests indicated statistically significant differences between the term instructors and the tenured instructors - and no significant differences between term and tenure-track.

While we found no indication of a discipline - tenure status interaction, we isolated tenure-status within the management discipline (with the largest number of respondents per discipline) to determine whether results were the same for hypotheses 5 and 6. While results indicated no significant group differences, means mirrored those of the entire study sample for community engagement: term (2.55, SD .92, n=23), tenure-track (2.29, SD 1.40, n =21), and tenured (2.06, SD 1.15, n=23). Means for authentic

research projects for term (4.29, SD .49, n=23), tenure-track (3.54, SD 1.54, n=21), and tenured (3.67, SD 1.50, n=23) suggest that term faculty are once again providing more experiential opportunities for students than their tenured or tenure-track counterparts. Scheffe tests indicated statistically significant tests between term and tenure-track instructors and no significant differences between term and tenured instructors.

IMPLICATIONS

Previous research has found that students benefit from engagement and activities both outside of the classroom (cf., Stuart, Lido, Morgan, Soloman, & May, 2011) and inside (e.g., Brunner, 2002,). As noted at the outset, students benefit from engagement with the community and the requirement of authentic research projects, yet our results suggest that the likelihood that students will receive this experiential education varies by several factors in business schools. These include discipline, tenure-status of the instructor, and class size. While we expected that students in smaller classes would receive more individualized attention and would thus be exposed to the community and the requirement of authentic research projects than their counterparts in large lecture halls, we did not expect that students taking courses with term faculty may be provided a more rich educative experience than their counterparts taking courses with tenured or tenure-track faculty members. We further suspected that discipline would make a difference. Results indicated that students are less likely to engage with the community in quantitative disciplines (e.g., Economics, MIS/ITM, Finance, Accounting) than qualitative disciplines (Management, Marketing, Entrepreneurship). Economics ranked the lowest in the requirement of authentic research projects, yet a relatively small number of respondents in that discipline (n=12) may have impacted generalizability assumptions.

These results may be useful to administrators considering the student satisfaction, retention, and placement. While resource constraints often lend themselves to large class sizes, students in such classes aren't benefiting from a rich, educative experience. Perhaps resources should be devoted to hiring additional term faculty, who our modest study suggests are providing an authentic learning experience for their students. Term faculty members are likely less expensive than their tenure-track or tenured instructors, so the investment could be worthwhile on several fronts.

Administrators may further want to consider alternatives for engaging the community within the quantitative disciplines. The accounting students, for example, could benefit from service learning projects that engage with the community, such as the VITA (Voluntary Income Tax Assistance) program. Finance may benefit from a student-traded fund in which students trade investment vehicles in real time, with real money. Economics students may benefit from conducting economic impact analyses of the cities, counties, and communities in which they reside. MIS/ITM students may benefit from data analytic projects for local or regional businesses - or from the implementation of real-world enterprise resource systems, such as SAP. These are a few alternatives in a pool of many more, which could be used to enhance engagement with the community.

One reason why our results indicate that management, business law, marketing, and entrepreneurship instructors are more likely than their counterparts to engage the community may be that case analyses, marketing analyses, and new venture or business start-up projects and applications are inherent in the development of many courses within the discipline - instead of only a few. Administrators may not only want to consider experiential alternatives for each discipline overall, but they may want to consider alternatives for each class within the disciplines. They could further consider stimulating an interest in authentic learning through the establishment of teaching communities, blending faculty from divergent disciplines. Previous research has found that faculty learning communities can improve teaching in varying sorts of environments (See Heinrich, 2014, for a discussion).

LIMITATIONS

Despite the representativeness of our sample across multiple institutions of with varying degrees of an attention to teaching, research and teaching, or research, our sample size is relatively small. Future studies would benefit by gathering data from a larger sample for greater generalizability. Our study further is limited in that respondents self-reported their answers. Though anonymity was preserved, response bias in individual patterns and tendencies is always a possibility. Future studies would benefit from external sources of confirmation of the data, such as from syllabi checks.

Though limitations exist, the present study stimulates conversation about a relevant and current topic in academia: experiential education. The present study further offers universities a glimpse in ways experiential education may vary across disciplines, class sizes, and the characteristics of the instructors delivering coursework.

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