



HERE AND THERE

National Newsletter PI OMEGA PI



National Business Education Honor Society
Member of the Association of College Honor Societies

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A Message from Allison Holtzer

National Student Representative
Brookfield East High School

Happy Holidays to you! I'm sure everyone enjoyed the Thanksgiving break, although that will mean finals for a lot of you. Winter break is not far off though; there is light at the end of the tunnel. Congratulations to those who are graduating this semester; good luck with everything you do. Good luck, as well, to those who will be student teaching next semester. Student teaching is a wonderful experience; make the best of it.

The competition year is drawing to a close and I wish each chapter the best of luck. It is close to the scramble time of getting projects in before the deadline. I am eager to hear about all the different chapter projects for the 2006 competition year.

New York is drawing near. I hope many of you are considering the office of National Student Representative. It is a very rewarding experience. Don't forget that this is a special convention with the extra rewards Pi Omega Pi is offering you.

As always, if you have any questions feel free to contact me. I am always glad to offer assistance whenever I can. Have a safe and merry Christmas, and a happy New Year!

President's Report

Thelma King
Gamma Phi Chapter
North Carolina A&T State University

Holiday greetings to everyone!

I know that everyone is busy completing end of semester activities. In a few weeks, we will all be able to take a little R&R. As you enjoy the holidays, continue to give thought to preparing for the Pi Omega Pi conference in New York on, April 4-7, 2007. The conference will begin on Thursday, April 5, with the Pi Omega Pi Social from 5-7 p.m. An advisors' social will follow. On Friday, April 6, the opening general business meeting will be held from 7:30-8:15 a.m. and the student presentations from 3:45-5:45 p.m. The second general business meeting will be held on Saturday, April 7, from 7:30-8:30 a.m. We look forward to all chapters participating in the conference.

Requests for conference proposals for student-led presentations have been sent out. We've had some really great student presentations in the past and eagerly look forward to some very innovative and informative presentations in New York. Please note the January 26, 2007, deadline to submit proposals.

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**National Business Education Association Conference
And Pi Omega Pi Biennial Conference
April 4-7, 2007
New York City, New York**

Business Professionals of America

<http://nbea.org/aboutorgs.html>
 Business Professionals of America is a national student organization for students enrolled in business, office, and technology education programs at the middle school, secondary school, and postsecondary school levels.

DECA

<http://nbea.org/aboutorgs.html>
 DECA, a national association of marketing education students, provides teachers and members with educational and leadership development activities to merge with the education classroom instructional program. DECA chapters attract students who are interested in preparing for entrepreneurial, marketing, or management careers. Working hand-in-hand with the education and business communities, DECA's goal is for its student members to develop a "career success kit" to carry into their business and personal lives after graduation.

Here and There

Here and There is the official newsletter of Pi Omega Pi, the national honor society in business teacher education. It is published four times each competition year: February, April, October, and December. Articles and news should be sent to:

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National Council 2005-2007

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President's Report

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As you plan, don't forget this year's one-time incentive program available for those who choose to participate in the Convention and meet all criteria:

- \$100-Advisor and students register for Pi Omega Pi Convention and attend two general sessions.
- \$250-Advisor and students register for Pi Omega Pi Convention, attend social, two general sessions, at least one other presentation (than the one given by their chapter), and give a presentation based on an accepted proposal.

Guidelines and forms for the 2006 National Chapter Award Competition have been sent out. They were all sent via email attachments. Each chapter advisor was sent the following items:

- Memo about the competition
- Guidelines for 2006
- Evaluation sheets for *community*, *local*, and *national* projects and also for *publications*
- Sheets with suggestions for publication/publication report and project reports

Since this is an election year for the National Council, we hope several of you will run for the position of National Student Representative. It is important to have student representation on the Council.

Again, I know it has been a busy semester. Many of you are finishing your student teaching experience or field experience. I hope you observed many best practices and were able to put theory to practice in the classrooms.

Have a wonderful holiday season!!

Chapter Activities

Beta Chapter

Northwest Missouri State University

The Beta Chapter at Northwest Missouri State University initiated three new members in the fall meeting. The three new members are Nicholas White, Melanie Rouse, and Renee Greever. At the induction, Business Education student teachers and teachers who are members of Pi Omega Pi discussed classroom experiences. They were also very willing to answer any questions and offered suggestions to use during student teaching. One of the speakers talked through voice-over and he shared his experience about teaching at a highly equipped Virginia high school. After the induction, members discussed future plans for national convention being held in New York City.

Mu Chapter

Emporia State University

Mu Chapter has been very busy this semester. At the beginning of the semester members volunteered at a dinner in North Lyon County for the North Lyon County Wrestling Club. The dinner was a fundraiser for the club followed by a concert featuring Michael Martin Murphey.

Currently, Mu Chapter is doing a fundraiser to earn money for the national convention in New York City in April. The Chapter is planning a basketball tournament for girls and boys grades 3 through 6. The plan is to earn enough money for all nine of our members to attend the conference.

As well as planning a basketball tournament, Mu Chapter is teaming up with SIFE (Students in Free Enterprise) and PBL (Phi Beta Lambda) to put on a "Business Day" for area high school students interested in a career in business. There will be four

different workshops on subjects such as Business Ethics, Entrepreneurship, Personal Credit and Living in a Global Economy. During lunch, there was a presentation showing appropriate and inappropriate business attire. The day will end with some preparation for FBLA competitions and a Life Smarts Competition.

In addition, Mu Chapter validated the 2007 State FBLA Business Procedures test after being asked to do so by the Kansas FBLA Advisor.

Psi Chapter

University of Wisconsin-Whitewater

On October 2, 2006, Psi Chapter held an initiation banquet at Dr. Marcia James' house. The purpose of the event was to welcome and initiate three new members. The three new members are Demetri Andrews, Amanda Dowds, and Suncerrae Perry. Each member brought a dish to share and enjoyed a meal together. After dinner, an initiation ceremony was held. The final activity was a pumpkin carving contest. It was a success!

On November 16, 2006, Psi Chapter participated in a bowling social at the Hawk Bowling Alley in Whitewater, WI. Phi Beta Lambda and the Marketing Education Association joined us. Everyone had a great time.

Alpha Beta Chapter

Eastern Kentucky University

The semester is winding down, but it's not slowing down! The Alpha Beta Chapter would like to welcome four new members: Hayes Browning, Lucas DeBord, James Murphy and Donna Rogers.

Along with the excitement of new members, the Chapter is putting the finishing touches on projects and working diligently on funding so that all members can attend the NBEA conference in April. The Chapter also has three members that will have an exciting new year as they will be student teaching.

Alpha Pi Chapter

Mississippi State University

The Alpha Pi Chapter at Mississippi State University has had a very busy semester. Members have been working hard on completing all projects for the national competition. One member was initiated in October. Four members attended the Southern Business Education Association Conference in October. This year the conference was in Atlanta, GA. Members had a great time learning new things and networking with great business professionals. Alpha Pi's president represented the Chapter at our Mississippi Business Education Association Conference at the Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College-Jefferson Davis Campus in September. Alpha Pi's president was the Student Representative on the Mississippi Business Education Association Executive Board. The two members who are student interning this semester have had a wonderful experience and are ready to have their own classrooms. Members are looking forward to the Christmas break, a fresh semester, and the National Conference in New York!

Alpha Chi Chapter

Eastern Illinois University

The Alpha Chi Chapter at Eastern Illinois University has had a good fall semester. At this time, five members or more are ready to join in January. In October, in cooperation with the EIU chapter of Phi Beta Lambda, members presented at the Regional Office of Education Fall Institute Day. Teachers from many school districts from around the area came to Charleston High School for an in-service day. The teachers attended many sessions that provided them with professional development. Our presentation was aimed at elementary and middle school teachers who are teaching keyboarding with little or no training. We demonstrated proper technique and provided them with a packet of other helpful information, including an outline for a keyboarding class. The session was a great success! Last month, two members attended the Illinois Business Education Association (IBEA) Conference in Springfield,

Illinois. While there, the students attended many informative sessions on technology and curriculum, and made valuable contacts for jobs in the future. In December, the Chapter will elect new officers for Spring 2007 and have a fall social. Happy Holidays to everyone!

Beta Kappa Chapter
East Carolina University

Beta Kappans at East Carolina University are busy finalizing the National Project. One current project is digitizing our organization's archives. The archives include pictures, documents, and newsletters beginning from Beta Kappa's charter date in 1944. The Chapter's founder's day was a huge success. Members plan to induct four new members at the winter induction ceremony on December 10. Members are very excited about attending the Pi Omega Pi biennial conference in April and networking with other Pi Omega Pi chapters.

Gamma Phi Chapter
North Carolina A&T State University

The Gamma Phi Chapter has been busy this semester.

Members assisted with and participated in the PRAXIS II Preparation Workshop, and participated in the university National Education week activities.

The Chapter helped provide school supplies to a local high school that burned down, and provided nonperishable food items for Thanksgiving box. Gamma Phi assisted at university Career Day activities by talking with students interested in Business Education as a major.

Zeta Eta Chapter
Kansas State University

Three members attended the KBEA Conference in October. Those attending learned more about different computer programs, received some great information, and collaborated with future colleagues. Anita Aubert, Chapter vice president, received one of two KBEA scholarships awarded at the conference.

Zeta Eta Chapter decided to sell hooded sweatshirts and long-sleeve t-shirts to raise money for the NBEA trip in the spring. These were sold in October along with coasters and decals. The fundraiser was a success. Members sold many sweatshirts to College of Education staff and students along with other Kansas State University faculty and students.

Members are selling Subway cards to help raise money for the trip to New York City.

At the December meeting and holiday party, members will elect new officers.

Member Articles

TEACH-nology Tools You Must Have

Crystal Hart
Beta Chapter

Northwest Missouri State University

On November 17 and 18, I attended the Missouri Business Educators Association (MBEA) Fall Conference where I was able to attend many helpful sessions about business education. The most enjoyable one was given by Tonya Skinner from Oran High School where she presented "TEACH-nology Tools You Must Have." In this session she shared many free websites that could be used as great tools in the classroom. These are great websites that everyone could find valuable.

The first program is called Wink and it is located at <http://www.debugmode.com/wink>. This website is a program that helps create tutorials on how to use different types of software or any topics that are difficult for the students. This program allows you to make screen shots of every specific step you want to cover. This provides students with step-by-step information on how to complete a specific task. You can also use audio by recording your voice so the student can hear and see the example being completed. To see an example of how the wink program looks when completed visit <http://www.stat.lsu.edu/exst2000/demos/demos.html>.

Another program was FastStone Capture found at <http://www.faststone.org/FSCaptureDetail.htm>. This program allows you to make screen captures of a full screen, freehand region, scrolled screen, window/object or a rectangular area. It also has a screen color picker that can provide you with the RGB and Hex code of the color you picked. Another great option it provides is a built-in screen magnifier so you can zoom in on any screen. It also provides a built-in editor that helps add text boxes and lines to your screen captures. This is an excellent program that could be a very helpful resource in the classroom.

These two programs could be very beneficial tools for the classroom and the best part is that they are free! Free stuff is always great especially when it is something valuable that can be used in the classroom. For more great resources from Tonya Skinner visit her website at <http://lessonplans.btskinner.com>. The MBEA Fall Conference was very enjoyable where attendees learned lots of new ways to make the classroom more creative. Anyone who has a chance to attend one of these conferences should definitely take the opportunity!

Resources for Personal Finance, Economics, and Money Management

Stacie Palmisano
Mu Chapter

Emporia State University

Have you ever been in a bind and needed some quick resources for a personal finance class or economic class? If so, look no further than the Internet. It is amazing how much “stuff” there is for teachers to use. There are games, ready-to-teach lesson plans, projects, and assessments. By using the Internet, one can save both time and energy when trying to come up with content that will keep students interested.

The first web site is my personal favorite: “Family Economics & Financial Education” at <http://www.familyfinance.montana.edu>. This site is from Montana State University and the Credit Counseling and Debt Management Company. This web site started in 2001 and later moved its headquarters to the University of Arizona in Tucson in 2006. The mission of this web site is “to provide educators with no-cost curriculum materials and the skills and confidence to effectively teach family economics and finance to their students.” Some of the resources teachers can find are completed PowerPoint slides, assessments, games, projects, and worksheets. All you have to do is find the topic you are interested in, and it will give you a full detailed lesson plan. Some of the worksheets are prepared for use with an overhead and some are information sheets to hand out to the students. Besides all the printable resources available to you, it also gives you government sites and other outside resources to look further into your topic for other free resources.

Another great web site that is useful for finance and money management is called “Practical Money Skills for Life.” This web site is <http://www.practicalmoneyskills.com>. This site is designed to assist teachers, parents and students in developing better money management skills. This web site was created by VISA partnering with leading consumer advocates, educators, and financial institutions. This web site is very different from the previous one because it has lessons for home and work—not just in the school setting. There are lesson plans and free resources for educators and parents such as a CD that teaches parents and students about prepaid cards. This is a wonderful site to suggest to parents and friends who have children in the early stages of learning about money.

Only a couple of sites were discussed, but there are a lot of free sites for educators. These web sites have many ideas and resources that may interest students. It has ideas for how to introduce topics in a more engaging

way. There is nothing wrong with using pre-created resources if they meet your objectives, and if they can get the students motivated and interested in learning. Go ahead and check them out; you just may learn something new yourself.

Microsoft Office® 2007 Suite

Brandon Haston
Chi Chapter

Indiana State University

Microsoft Office® has always been popular for anyone using computer applications. The program has continued to become more effective and offer more features with each new publication. This year is no different. An early preview of the Microsoft Office® 2007 suite proves that Microsoft listens to its users and strives to improve its product with every publication. This year the major changes have to do with the navigation and functionality of the programs. Three new objects have replaced menus and toolbar buttons. The first of these objects is an office button. The office button is located in the top left corner and gives access to such features as Open, Save, Print, and allows you to change the options in the program. The second object featured is a ribbon. The ribbon organizes menus and buttons into tabs and similar buttons and features are grouped together for ease of use. On average, users only used about ten percent of the options available on older versions of Microsoft Office. These features are no longer buried in the menus and buttons and should open up several features that many users were unaware of. The last new object is the quick access toolbar. The quick access toolbar allows users to select the most commonly used features with one click such as Save, Undo, and Print. The feature is only available when a document is open because of the features it allows.

The first program covered in the new Microsoft Office® 2007 suite is Microsoft Office® Word 2007. Its new features include ribbons with the following features: home, insert, page layout, references, mailings, review, view, and a contextual tab for when pictures are selected. This is new to the program, which only gives options for pictures when pictures are selected. Microsoft Office® Excel 2007 includes many of the same features as Microsoft Office® Word 2007. The ribbon features in Microsoft Office® Excel 2007 include home, insert, page layout, formulas, data, review, view, and a contextual tab for when tables or cells are selected. Microsoft Office® PowerPoint 2007 has become much easier to use and create slides. The functionality of having ribbon features for easy use and access allows users to easily create slides and presentations with minimal effort. The ribbon features in Microsoft Office® PowerPoint 2007 include home, insert, design, animations, slide show, review, and view. Microsoft Office® Access 2007 also includes many new features, but is still drastically different from the other programs. Strides have been made to make the program interact with the others, but still needs some work. Overall, the new Microsoft Office® 2007 suite will allow users to complete work more efficiently using more features and making the programs much more powerful than ever before.

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Teaching the Millennial Student

Erin Goepfert
Psi Chapter

University of Wisconsin-Whitewater

Times are changing. Today's students are different than they have been in the past. Teachers have to adjust to the millennial students. How are the students different? How do teachers change their teaching to meet the

students' needs? Since I am considered a millennial, do I fit the description? There are techniques that can be used to help the millennials in the classroom.

The students of today are different from those of the past. According to The Millennial effect: Implications for academic development, millennials are characterized as “sociable, optimistic, talented, well-educated, collaborative, open-minded, influential and achievement oriented.” They enjoy structure, teamwork, experiential activities, community learning, community service, and technology. These students have high expectations.

Millennials want several things from their teacher and there are techniques that teachers can use to meet the students' needs. Students want teachers to be familiar with technology and use it in the classroom. They want the teacher to be the leader because they are looking for a role model. They want a challenge, so teachers should give them challenging work and projects. These students want to work with friends, so teachers should allow them to work with friends. This is just like being a friend with a coworker. Millennials want to have fun! Teachers should “allow and encourage humor in the learning.” Just like a teacher, students want to be respected. Students want their teacher to be flexible because they have a lot of things that they do such as work, social events, and study. Their learning preferences include technology, entertainment/excitement, teamwork, structure, and experimental activities.

I am a millennial and fit the characteristics. I like when teachers use technology to teach a class. I also like to use technology on my own. I prefer to work with friends on a project. I also look to my teachers for a role model. I chose business education because I looked up to a business teacher. When fun/humor is used in the classroom, it makes me want to learn more. I want to be respected and to respect others.

Students today are different than students of the past. Teachers and students can work together to meet each others' needs. I do fit the description of a millennial. Teachers can use techniques to help millennials.

Reference:

“The Millennial Effect: Implications for Academic Development” by Diana Jonas-Dwyer (The University of Western Australia, Perth, Australia) and Romana Pospisil (Edith Cowan University, Perth, Australia (copyright 2004) <http://www.herdsa.org.au/conference2004/Contributions/RPapers/P050-jt.pdf>.

Integrating Math Skills in High School Business Classes

Nick Sutherland
Alpha Beta Chapter

Eastern Kentucky University

The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) became law in 2002 and was designed to ensure student learning by raising overall achievement indices, by closing the achievement gap, and by measuring performance through statewide testing (U. S. Department of Education, 2005). The second phase of the NCLB requirements extended into high school requiring all teachers of core academic subjects to meet highly qualified requirements and increasing high school assessments to an annual basis (Bush, 2005). Unquestionably, NCLB calls for “improving the quality of secondary education, ensuring that every student graduates from high school, and ensuring that every student graduates prepared to enter college or the workforce with the skills to succeed” (Glenn, 2005, p. 12). These goals are in perfect harmony with those of business and technical education. However, in some schools, the push to assess core content has resulted in a push to pressure students to enroll in more traditional academic courses at the expense of career and technical education. Business educators must show how their classes positively impact the NCLB in order to be players in school reform.

In the current NCLB environment, business educators must work collaboratively with core content teachers and promote the reality that basic entry-level skills are the same in all industries (Warner, 2005). In the four areas of core content--English, Math, Social Studies, and Science--business classes provide opportunities for students to apply and build upon learning in the core content classes (Carnevale & Desrochers (2003). Math

classes can benefit from business classes teaching and reinforcing personal finance skills and knowledge. In fact, legislators in several states are mandating that financial literacy be taught in secondary schools, and business classes are accepting the challenge (Glenn, 2005).

Collaborative strategies benefit business classes and core content classes as well. These strategies also benefit students. In statewide initiatives in Florida and Kentucky, collaborative projects between business, career, and technical education and core content curriculum achieved the following results: higher test scores on statewide high-stakes tests, higher student retention rates, increased communication among teachers, fewer discipline problems in the classrooms, and more engaged students due to real-world activities (Bedard, 2005; Wayne, Conder, & Davis, 2005). Business teachers must be willing to collaborate with other disciplines to create learning experiences, align curriculum, design assessment measures, and use assessment data to improve instruction (Policies Commission for Business and Economic Education, 2005).

Understanding the pertinence of such matters is particularly important to new teachers. Education is an ever-changing field that requires the educator to change with the times. We, as business teachers, have a unique opportunity to pave the way in collaborative classroom environments. New teachers must take the lessons from the past and apply them to the future. Collaboration is essential to meeting the future goals of our educational system.

Business is essentially the application of knowledge from other classes. Emphasizing the importance of math, science, reading, and writing will prove to be beneficial to students as members of the workforce. New Business teachers must understand that showing students these applications will spark their interest, lead to higher assessment achievement, and be useful in a real world setting.

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on the keyboard. When building skill, teachers must remember that building speed and building accuracy cannot occur at the same time. The first step to assisting students in building skill is to practice good techniques. Business teachers must instill in their students that practicing proper techniques at the computer keyboard is critical to skill development. Not only must teachers explain to students the value of using proper techniques, but the teacher must also model proper keyboarding techniques while keying at the computer.

Here are a few suggested keyboarding techniques to consider when keying at the computer: Keep fingers curved, upright, and in keyboarding position over the home keys. Keep wrists low and relaxed with the base of the hands just off the keyboard frame. Both thumbs should be curved toward the palms of the hands with the right thumb resting lightly on the space bar. Forearms should be parallel to the slant of the keyboard. Make quick, snappy strokes with immediate key release. Maintain uniform, continuous, fluid key stroking action. Tap each key with proper controlling finger. Remember that certain fingers have to touch certain keys.

The second step to helping students build speed in keyboarding is to determine which types of writings are appropriate for building speed in keyboarding. Goal timed writings are great for building speed. The students take a 30-second or 1-minute timed writing to determine their base rate or gwam (gross words a minute). After determining the base rate, the teacher asks the students to add 3 or 4 more words to the base rate. Next the students are instructed to type as fast as they can without going beyond their threshold to meet or exceed their new base rate. If the students reach the new goal rate, they are to add 3 or 4 more words to their gwam.

Another effective speed writing to use is the guided writing. Guided writings are easy to identify in a keyboarding textbook. They are the writings that have the dots and numbers positioned above the words. The purpose of the guided writing is to guide students in reaching certain goals when keying for speed. For example, if a student goal is to key 32 words per minute, the student divides the goal by 4 (32/4). At 15 seconds, the student must have keyed 8 words, at 30 seconds, 16 words; at 45 seconds, 24 words; and at 1 minute, 32 words. The interval goals guide the student on how fast he/she must key to reach the goal of 32 words per minute.

Another important element that a keyboarding teacher must be aware of is the triple-controlled timed writings. In keyboarding textbooks and accompanying software, the writings are triple-controlled. These controls are average word length, syllable intensity, and percentage of high frequency words.

When developing skill, the teacher needs a reliable means of measuring skill development. With a controlled timing at a determined difficulty level, the teacher can administer various timings at the same difficulty level and determine the students' skill. The different timings controlled at the same difficulty level would result in a reliable score that informs both the teacher and the student of the degree of skill development. If a student keys one timing at the easy level, another at the low average, and still another at average, the student will have a wide range of gross words per minute keyed and would be discouraged on his/her progress. Building keyboarding skill requires consistent observation and reminders of correct keying techniques and effective means of skill assessment. As a business teacher, you will want to be aware of the various methods of skill development.

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Technology is a tool currently used in education, business, industry and many other facets of our daily lives. The integration of technology in schools has been slow in the past; however, numerous schools are being reformed as technology enriches their learning environments. Teachers are the key to integrating technology in

the classroom, yet many are apprehensive about technology integration. The lack of time, training, skills and resources impede teachers' ability to implement technology into their curriculum. Technology benefits both teachers and students, thus technology is a necessary tool teachers need to integrate into education so they can prepare their students for the technologically based global workplace.

Benefits of Technology Integration

According to Bauer and Kenton (2005) "computer technology is an effective means for widening educational opportunities, but most teachers neither use technology as an instructional delivery system nor integrate technology into their curriculum" (p. 519). Technology integration in schools helps teachers access information from around the globe instantly. It also allows teachers to collaborate with others in their field anywhere in the world. Collaboration and access to information allow teachers to find and create methods to use technology to enrich the learning environment for their students. Teachers who use technology have found that learning becomes more interactive and fun; these changes increase their students' performance (Devi, 2006). Technology helps teachers achieve the ultimate goal, to create lifelong learners. Technology is able to give students the necessary skills "in a real world context" (Boyle, 2005, p.30). Teachers gain so many resources from technology which allow them to help students learn the skills which enable them to think and learn (CDW-Government, 2006). Technology integration is not separate from curriculum and content; both should be used together to increase student performance.

Students whose learning environments are enriched with technology perform 30 percent higher on skills tests (Levy, 2006). Students who use technology daily create better quality work and take more pride in their work, thus increasing their self esteem and faith in their abilities. Technology is not only a resource for acquiring information but also an attention-capturing tool; schools that use technology report fewer absences and dropout rates due to students' attitudes pertaining to learning with technology (Levy, 2006; Taylor, Castro, & Walls, 2007). Students who learned with technology as opposed to those who did not, showed greater gains in knowledge acquisition. A technology-integrated classroom provides students with an opportunity to be engaged with learning, thus increasing students' knowledge. An integrated classroom allows technology to become a supplement for instruction whereby a student's interest in the content can be sparked (Jhurree, 2005). According to Simkins (2005) "technology can inspire teachers and students alike to move beyond conventional content and deepen the process of learning in various disciplines" (p. 22). As countries become established in the 21st century, they will compete over competent and technology savvy youth; technology will begin to play an increasingly important role in the employment of individuals (Jhurree, 2005). Youth whose education was sparked and enriched by teachers who integrated technology beyond the curriculum level will become the most marketable employees.

Reasons Teachers do not Integrate Technology into the Classroom

There are numerous reasons teachers abstain or are apprehensive about integrating technology into their classroom. The most widely attested reason is lack of training in technology integration. The second reason is time; teachers lack time to plan for the integration of technology in their classrooms. Teachers also state that lack of funding and resources hinder their use and integration of technology. Other reasons are lack of technical support, lack of reliable networks, and hardware/technical difficulties (Freedman, 2006; Bauer & Kenton, 2005). Teachers are intimidated by technology and its use in the classroom; this fear impacts the ability for teachers to comfortably acquire technology skills and use technology in the classroom (Kleyn-Kennedy, 2006).

Vocational Education and Technology Integration

Technology is thrust upon vocational educators because their curriculum's objectives and goals are aligned closely with the incorporation and use of technology. Most vocational educators may not have the same opinions as other content area teachers in regards to the lack of time, resources, and training. Vocational educators are trained in the use and integration of technology and thus need technology to meet objectives for their students. So many teachers lack the resources and training needed to integrate technology; often vocational educators are looked toward to fill this void. They become technology trainers for other faculty and even school server administrators, school webmasters and are consulted as information technology specialists.

It is overwhelmingly clear that technology integration is beneficial to students' education; thus it will continue to be the essential responsibility of a vocational educator to train students in the use of technology and for the changing workforce.

Conclusion

According to Devi (2006) teaching methods have not changed over the years; however the world surrounding education has changed rapidly. Society encourages students to utilize technology in their everyday lives; therefore our classrooms need to move away from blackboards, chalk, pencils and paper. Education is being reformed not by technology but "the way in which it is used by teachers and students" (Jhurree, 2005, p. 478). Teachers should use their resources to integrate technology to their best ability. With the support and advocacy of administrators, teachers should receive the training and resources necessary to integrate technology effectively. Technology integration is not about making educators' lives more difficult or time consuming; it is to create learning environments that will enrich students' learning experiences to prepare them to enter the global workforce as technologically savvy contributors to the world economy.

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Instructional Strategies for Diverse Classrooms

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Recognizing diversity is one of the most important challenges teachers face in an educational setting. Diversity in the classroom can consist of, but is not limited to, differences in race, culture, ethnicity, religion, academic background, social class, gender, and language. Classroom diversity is reflective upon the diversity of the United States, which is moving from a "melting pot" society to a "salad bowl." The difference is a result of citizens accepting one's differences instead of trying to melt them into a single culture. This attitude on life should be implemented in the classroom setting. Educators must become more aware of differences and embrace them by creating a culturally relevant curriculum. By doing so, teachers will be able to recognize the diversity among students and understand how to help students learn.

The diversity in the school system that I performed my field experience in consists of 68,722 students. The ethnic breakdown of the school system is: American Indian, 0.6%; Asian, 4.4%; African American, 40.7%;

Hispanic, 6%; Caucasian, 44.6%; and Multi-racial 3.7%. Student diversity in the classroom directly correlates to these percentages.

With the rapid increase in diversity in the Business Education classroom, educators need to understand the needs of their students and know how to help them grow in the learning process. Based on field experience observations, students with language barriers, such as English as a Second Language (ESL) students, have a difficult time understanding and receiving instruction. New Business Education teachers in the 21st century need to be more aware of the cultural diversity in classrooms and know how to effectively educate all pupils so they can become productive in the future.

The following is a list of culturally relevant strategies/ideas that will help to enhance ESL student performance:

1. Use culturally relevant pedagogies by connecting their world to the world of the classroom – In order to embed the culture of the student into every lesson, educators should model certain instructional strategies and emphasize diversity in their lesson plans.

Example: When teaching about promotional strategies in Marketing, ask probing questions about how things are promoted in their respective communities and/or home countries. How are the home country strategies different from promotional strategies in the U.S. or other countries? How are they similar?

2. Create and construct links between what they know and what they are about to learn – This helps students see commonalities as well as differences among various cultures. Students are able to build multicultural awareness and value newly acquired information.

Example: When teaching the spreadsheet unit of Computer Applications I, teachers can write basic computational math problems on the board and ask students to solve the problems showing the similarities between cultures. Then the teacher can show the differences in MS Excel by introducing the asterisk (*) instead of the commonly used multiplication (x) symbol.

3. Use flexible grouping in cooperative-learning environments – Teachers should balance high, middle, and low ability students in each learning environment. The incorporation of racial and ethnic balance should also be present in these groups. Note: These groups are flexible and the composition changes as students progress towards new needs.

Example: When working in cooperative learning environments dealing with making a business flyer on a computer, include students in the group that are familiar with technology/not familiar with technology, introverts/extroverts, leaders/non-leaders, etc. This will allow the students to learn from heterogeneous grouping and other students' strengths and weaknesses.

4. Administer learning style tests – Learning style tests help teachers design learning activities that blend with a variety of student educational needs. By understanding students learning styles, teachers can accommodate student needs based on their preference of visual, auditory, tactile, and kinesthetic styles of learning.

Example: <http://www.engr.ncsu.edu/learningstyles/ilsweb.html> this website offers a learning style questionnaire. Teachers are to take the questionnaire first then administer the questionnaire to their students. Total the preferred learning styles of your students then develop lesson plans to accommodate your student learning style needs.

5. Use visual aids and Bandura's "Social Learning Theory" to help students learn - Most of what humans learn comes through the observation of others. According to Bandura, observational learning is a three-step process: attention, retention and production.

Example: If diverse learners are situated in the front of the classroom and the teacher exhibits a direct learning style of teaching, the teacher has their attention. Teachers have to effectively communicate the information to the students so that they are able to retain the information taught. Furthermore, students are required to produce evidence of their retention of knowledge learned through an assessment.

These suggestions and ideas will be effective in the classroom by creating a multicultural classroom that actively involves all students in the learning process. Specific teaching models and strategies are available to

accomplish multicultural learning goals. Test scores can potentially be improved and students will develop an appreciation for all cultures. As new educators, it is important to become aware of your own cultural bias and address stereotypes and myths you may hold in order to continue to effectively educate your classroom of diverse learners.

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Using Mapping to Improve Reading and Writing Skills

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With the recent requirements of NCLB and high-stakes testing, teachers and schools are working to improve reading and writing skills. As future Business Education teachers, we will need to also strive to improve reading and writing skills.

The article, “Content Area Cognitive Mapping for Reading and Writing Proficiency” by Mark Lee Peresich, et al, describes what the leaders at Moss Point High School in Mississippi did to improve writing skills. During the school year of 1985-1986, the students in the 11th grade were assessed according to the state’s mandatory “Basic Skills Assessment Program in Reading, Written Communication, and Theme Writing”. This assessment entailed reading comprehension, general written communication and essay writing. Of the 388 students, 47% (182) of the students passed the written essay section, 85% passed the written communication, and 77% passed the reading comprehension. Since writing was clearly the lowest assessment score, the leaders of the district focused on it for improvement the following year. By the spring of 1987, a decision was made by the leadership of the district, the district, and the language arts curriculum committees to implement cognitive mapping or semantic mapping strategies in hopes that the overall scores would improve.

The cognitive or semantic mapping provides the students with ways to make a connection between previously learned information and the new information (constructivist theory). It is done prior to reading the text and shows the students visually how the information is presented in the text. In order to implement this strategy the teachers first had to learn how to teach mapping.

A staff development plan was implemented in the summer months of 1987. This plan entailed three parts. First, the teachers had to change their form of teaching from “direct teaching” to the “constructivist view” and then learn to use the strategy to help the students understand the text. Second, the strategy had to be used in all areas of content throughout the district. Third, computer labs were created near the library and were used to help implement and to help reinforce the strategy. Librarians were utilized for overseeing and scheduling the classes, teaching the classes, and assisting the students with library resources. Computer software programs were used to provide models for narrative and sequential mapping, which is found in most reading.

Once the students completed a section of the computer software, the teacher used it in the classroom. Prior to teaching each unit, the teacher would have to decide how to use mapping to present the information to the students. Creativity had to be used to organize the information in various ways such as classification, sequential, theme, and comparison/contrast mapping. In teaching the students, the teachers would have the students read the information then they would display a blank map that was created by the teacher. The students would fill in the map through class discussion. This could be done in one of two ways. Either they could fill in all the main topics and add a little at a time to each topic or they could follow the chapter format and fill in one topic at a time. To elaborate on the process, the teachers would have the students come up with their own mapping in groups or give the students a blank map and a list of all the information for the map in random order and have the students arrange the information on the map. Following this activity, the teacher would then move into a writing activity by having the students write an essay based on the information in their map. In looking at these

written essays, the teachers reported that the students' writing had improved. "Students analyzed the reading much more carefully." The students "used their completed maps as guides". The students also told the teachers when asked why they connected certain things that they had "made judgments about the text reading". This proves the students were using their higher order thinking skills. According to Bloom's Cognitive Taxonomy (1956) the higher domains are analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. The students analyzed the information from the text and arranged it according to a relationship to the other information. They were synthesizing by adding information previously learned with new information. Then they evaluated their maps and made decisions about the information. By the end of the first year, the assessment scores for the 11th graders for the written communication, reading comprehension and written essay had improved to 93%, 95%, and 99.5% respectively. Following the second year, the scores for the 11th graders had improved still with 97.5%, 99.2%, and 100% respectively.

Clearly the improvement of the students was, in part, due to the teachers as well as the students themselves, but there were several other people who had a part in it. The writers of the article include a teacher in the school district, assistant superintendent of the district and director of the reading clinic at St. John's University in New York. Other people involved were the rest of the teachers in the district, school board members, the support staff, the Mississippi State Department of Education, the district leaders, the district itself, language arts curriculum committee, and all the schools in the district and their faculty and staff.

"Mapping" refers to essentially graphic organizers. Graphic organizers are being used more and more today to help students make connections between what they already know and what they are learning or to help them create new knowledge. They help the students organize the information to make it more meaningful and allow them to use the higher order thinking skills. As teachers we need to keep in mind this high school's example of improvement in reading and writing skills and use graphic organizers/mapping in our curriculum to help our students "get connected".

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Articles Inadvertently Omitted from October Issue

Extensible Markup Language

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Chi Chapter

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Technology is becoming a big component of the world today. Educators need to stay up with the newest technology in order to educate the children. With the world revolving around computers so much, web design is becoming a popular topic to teach in classrooms. Web designers are beginning to use XML to create the websites.

XML (Extensible Markup Language) defines the content and set-up of a document. It is designed to exchange and share data and to store information in different files and databases. This allows the data to be reused and retrieved at anytime. The purpose of XML is to describe the layout of the information and to display the information in a more precise, flexible, and adjustable way. It is also a way to keep the data organized and consistent throughout a web site or database that you are working with. In order to use XML, you must understand the basics. XML is important when it comes to web designing but it can be complex, tricky, and monotonous. The main importance of XML is to allow the exchanging of data between different types of computers, different software, and different businesses without having to deal with different formats.

XML does not indicate how information should be stored and kept but it does describe how the information should be structured through document type definitions (DTDs) or XML Schemas. The XML Schemas are

used to exchange the information and to store the information. XML does not have predefined tags. You can create your own tags when creating documents.

Rules for XML are straightforward but are strict. Here are some rules and things to remember when working with XML:

- All elements must have closing tags
- Tags are case sensitive
- Tags must be nested into the document with the right tags
- Tags must start and end with the same tag name
- Quotations mark must be used when assigning attribute values
- All documents must have root elements

XML is important and very beneficial if you know what it is and how to use it. The following scenario will show how important XML is:

You are teaching a class with about 50 students. The students are different ages and have different cultures. You tell them to get in groups of ten to write a report on something that was covered over the course of the year. In the groups, the students disagree on what topic the report should be on. The students also disagree on how to organize the report. The students are having a hard time agreeing on a topic and how to organize the report because the students speak a different language. In order for the students to make progress, the students must pick a language for communication. After that the students will produce a high-quality report.

This is the focus of XML and what makes it so important.

The future of XML is going to continue to grow and become just as useful as HTML (hyper-text mark-up language) is in web design. XML will be the most common tool to use when it comes to managing data. This language has developed quickly and will continue to grow and be used among many software users especially with web design.

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Membership Makes a Difference

University of Wisconsin-Whitewater

What an experience! I attended the Fall 2006 Wisconsin Business Education Association Conference. The theme of this year's conference was "No Bluffing, You Can't Top Business Education." By attending this conference, I met new people, learned about the teaching profession, and got ideas for when I start teaching.

Friday was the official start of the conference. First we had the opening session, but the guest speaker did not show up. Then I went to two breakout sessions. At the first session I learned about personal branding. The lady that led the session has a business that helps you find your strengths, and she shows you how to make yourself more marketable. The other session that I attended gave tips and tricks for Microsoft Office. After lunch we began roundtable discussions. In the discussions I gained an idea for a lesson and learned numerous helpful websites, what blogging was, and what two different states thought about employment. In the evening, I went on a relaxing ferry ride with my colleagues. It gave us time to share what we had learned so far.

Saturday was the last day of the conference. The opening speaker taught us how to make learning fun and new for our students. Then I went to two breakout sessions. I learned about three teachers' first year of teaching Business and Marketing Education. They shared things that they learned in their first year of teaching that they had not learned about in school. The second session was about building rigor, relevance, and relationships in your program. They spoke about the Dr. Bill Daggett model. Both of the speakers were from a Daggett model school in Menomonee Falls, WI. After the sessions, we had an awards luncheon. At the luncheon, two of my colleagues received scholarships.

Why should I join the Business and Marketing Association in my state or attend one of their conferences? As you can see from my experience, you learn a lot. I have lesson plans, teaching suggestions, and helpful websites, which will help me in my future career. In addition to that, I was able to network with Business and Marketing teachers throughout the state. Taking part in this kind of event will make the difference between being a good teacher and a great teacher.

Reference:

Wisconsin Business Education Association website. (www.wbeaonline.org)

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