

KEY PEDAGOGICAL STRATEGIES FOR MILLENNIAL GENERATION STUDENTS IN UNIVERSITY BUSINESS COURSES

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to discover key pedagogical strategies for millennial generation students in university business courses. The design was qualitative, using semi-structured interview questions. Purposive sampling and content analysis was to identify themes. Findings include: classroom pedagogical strategies:(a) using real-world examples; (b) creating participatory activities such as applied learning, projects, group work; and (c) providing clear structure. Online pedagogical strategies incorporated (a) using blended course strategies; (b) applying online strategies such as MySpace, Moodle, YouTube, Blackboard, etc.; and (c) providing feedback. Additional findings emerged: spend more time teaching critical thinking; assess student engagement; and value what millennial generation students offer.

Keywords: pedagogical strategies, online strategies; millennial generation students.

INTRODUCTION

According to research, the millennial generation has its own nuances that require a new strategy of teaching. Researchers have recently turned their attention to the unique needs of the millennial generation in higher education classroom and online courses. The literature demonstrates that university students in the millennial generation are bored and uninspired in many of today’s business university classrooms [5]. This study responds to this call to action, addressing key pedagogical strategies for millennial generation students in university business courses.

Table 1--Summation of Review of Literature

Topic	Summary	Main contributors
United States college and university history	College and university timelines from the 17th century to the 21st century, with business curriculum becoming evident in the middle of the 19th century. First colleges and universities to develop Christian clergy and to develop gentlemen. First colleges: Harvard, William & Mary, then Yale.	[4] Brickman & Lehrer (1962); [11] Crawford (1915); Hofstadter (1961a);[20] Hofstadter & Hardy (1952)
Business curriculum in United States universities	Significant college reform in 1842 by Francis Wayland, pres. of Brown Univ. who believed there was a gap in traditional colleges and universities. After 1950, numerous business college chains teaching our country’s leaders. In 1981 Wharton School of Commerce and Finance at the Univ. of Pennsylvania started offering business classes followed by others.	[12] Daniel (1998);[20] Hofstadter & Hardy (1952); [34] Moreland (1977); [44] Snyder et al. (2007)

The professoriate	Prior to the 1990s, teaching was the focus of colleges. United States growth after WWII spurred the need of agriculturist and engineers, causing a change in professoriate focus. Research was now the recognized scholarship for promotion and tenure. Boyer (1990) published the Carnegie Foundation report that emphasizes a return to teaching. Multiple reports continue the emphasis on teaching as a focus for the professoriate.	[3] Boyer (1990);[15] Glassick et al. (1997); [16] Graubard (2001); [26] Katz (1988); [39] Peik (1950); [43] Richlin (1993)
Pedagogy vs. andragogy	Dewey’s <i>1897 Pedagogic Creed</i> has an education philosophy “process for living and not a preparation for future living” [as cited in 14, p. 22]. Pedagogical strategies have been used for hundreds of years and higher education is recognizing and in some instances changing to a more andragogical strategy with a core set of six adult learning principles. The Andragogical model uses a “facilitator” in place of a “teacher”. Andragogical methods demonstrated the importance of self-directedness.	[2] Bowers (1977); [7] Cheren (1978); [8] Chickering (1993); [13] Dewey & Dewey (1915); [14] Dworkin (1959); [17] Gruber & Vonèche (1977); [18] Hilgard & Bower (1966); [26] Katz (1988); [27][28] Knowles (1973, 1984); [32] Mezirow (1991); [33] Milhollan (1972); [40] Penland (1977); [41] Peters & Gordon (1974); [47] Suanmali (1981); [48][49] Tough (1979, 1981)
Millennial generation	The millennial generation was born between 1982 and 2005 [46] and is the most ethnically diverse generation to date. This generation has seven traits: special, sheltered, confident, team oriented, achieving, pressured, and conventional.	[6] Butterfield & Fox (2007); [10] Coomes & DeBard (2004); [22][23] Howe & Strauss (2000, 2007); [29] Lancaster & Stillman (2002); [31] McGlynn (2006); [38] Oblinger (2003); [42] Proserpio & Gioia (2007); [46] Strauss (2005)
Millennial generation in colleges and universities	Millennial expectations in college and universities are high with the expectation of involvement on campus with the same good grades they received in high school. Professors have changed from the familiar teacher role to the role of the facilitator, not as a conveyer of knowledge. The college ratio of men to women has changed drastically, with 57% of bachelor degrees conferred to women in 2004-2005 [44]. Financial aid has changed from need to merit and from grants to loans. Research states that 65% of students are employed while attending college. More students are working off-campus, causing less study time. Millennial generation students want experience, teamwork, structure, and use of technology.	[1] Atkinson (2004); [10] Coomes & DeBard (2004); [21] Howe (2005); [22][23] Howe & Strauss (2000, 2007); [25] Jennings (2007); [36] New Strategists (2001); [50] Wilson (2007)
Online college and university teaching	Changing from “sage on the stage” [30, p. 212] to “guide on the side” [30, p. 214]. E-learning is still in its infancy as a body of knowledge. Online enrollment is increasing yearly, with 89% of public universities offering online courses in 2000-2001 [44]. Reward system for faculty does not take into consideration the added time for online class preparation.	[9] Chin & Williams (2006); [24] Irvine (2004); [30] Markel (1999); [35] Mossavar-Rahmani & Larson-Daugherty (2007); [37] Nichols (2003); [42] Proserpio & Gioia (2007)

Methodology

The design of this study was qualitative, using semi-structured interview questions to discover key pedagogical strategies for millennial generation students in university business courses. The interview

questions were reviewed by a panel of experts who determined validity. Purposive sampling was utilized with snowballing techniques to identify participants who met the criteria. Content analysis was used to analyze the data with a second rater to establish reliability. Themes were identified and categorized and the results were presented in textual and graphic formats.

Findings

The study resulted in a number of findings specific to key pedagogical strategies for millennial generation students in classroom and online university business courses. The classroom pedagogical strategies included the following: (a) using real-world examples; (b) creating participatory activities such as applied learning, projects, group work; and (c) providing clear structure. Online pedagogical strategies incorporated the following: (a) using blended course strategies as a best practice; (b) applying online strategies such as MySpace, Moodle, YouTube, Blackboard, etc.; and (c) providing feedback. Additional findings emerged from the data related to the following teacher-student interfaces: spend more time teaching critical thinking; assess student engagement; and value what millennial generation students offer.

Conclusions

This study reported multiple key pedagogical strategies for teaching millennial generation students in university business courses. Findings from this study will add to the literature in the field of university pedagogies, the millennial generation, and faculty development. The results of the study are intended to benefit business faculty, universities, and administrators. The recent volume of literature indicates this is an important topic impacting students, faculty, and universities.

Implications for Faculty Teaching Online. A) A combination of face-to-face and online blended courses work best. Face-to-face meetings can be designed with specific outcomes. The online portion provides the flexibility for the student to accomplish class assignments while working around family and job commitments, B) use multiple online strategies such as: MySpace, YouTube, Blackboard, video, clickers, Moodle, posting, online tests, and Skype; and C) Feedback provides motivation for millennial generation university students.. Immediate or quick feedback, such as clickers, reduces stress and enables students to complete assignments more successfully.

Implications for Faculty and Universities. Millennial generation and generations to follow will be continuously more technologically savvy Universities will need to make updated technology available. and offer continuous training for faculty to use the new technology. Course management systems will require continuous and costly upgrades.

Recommendations

The following are recommendations for future research:

- Conduct similar studies to discover key pedagogical strategies for millennial generation students in university business courses in a different geographic location.
- The sample size of this study was very limited; use a larger sample size.
- Compare and contrast the pedagogical strategies that are useful for the millennial generation and Generation X in different regions or states.

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