Blending Theory and Practice in the Classroom

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In the next 15 minutes

☐ Some definitions
☐ Why should theory and practice be blended in our classes?
☐ What are methods of blending?
☐ What are some potential problems of blending?
Definitions: Theory

- “A statement or set of statements designed to explain a phenomenon or class of phenomena.”

- “The logical expression of relationships among abstract concepts, generally developed to explain a set of related behaviors or events.”

Sources: wordnet.princeton.edu/perl/webwn; srmdc.net/glossary.htm
Sources: http://www.college-cram.com/study/pecosjack/files/-1/115/Price+Demand+-+War+Game+Inc.JPG; http://www.uri.edu/artsci/newecn/Classes/Art/INT1/Mic/Gif/elasticity0.gif
Practice

- “A customary way of operation or behavior.”
- “What someone actually does; a way of doing something that someone actually uses.”
- “The periods on Friday and Saturday mornings at a Grand Prix meeting when the drivers are out on the tracks working on the set-up of their cars.”

Sources: wordnet.princeton.edu/perl/webwn; www.satisfice.com/blog/archives/42; f1site.com/glossary.html
It has been said...

“Theory is when you know what should happen, but you can’t get it to work... Practice is when things more or less work, but nobody knows why.”

Source: www.freelists.org/archives/avenews/01-2006/msg00009.html
Theory-Practice: Recent findings

- Increasing emphasis toward theory and away from practice-application.
- True for BBA as well as MBA programs/courses.

Why blend theory and practice?

Students build their base of knowledge
Why blend theory and practice?

Helps me build MY base of knowledge and makes me more of an expert.
Why blend theory and practice?

It’s what employers want.
Helps students in the job market.
A Few Methods that Have Worked for Me In Class

In addition to other excellent methods such as internships, etc.
Methods

- Personal work experience
Methods

- What I’ve learned from networking
  - Free and paid consulting
  - Former students
  - My speaking engagements
Methods

- Cases
- Exercises
- Assignments
- Projects
- Simulations
- Wiki creation
Methods: Guest Speakers
Methods: Field Trips
...But there are potential problems

Projects or speakers that students object to.
“It is my desire to be sensitive to the values of individual students. If you are asked to engage in an assignment or classroom exercise that goes against your values and beliefs, please let me know within twenty-four hours for assignments and right away for any in-class exercise. I will then consider arranging some alternative assignment or exercise, if possible.”

Source: http://www.d.umn.edu/~scastleb/policies.pdf
Other potential problems

Too many or too few speakers / companies to choose from.
Other potential problems

Companies or speakers that bail out at the last minute
Other potential problems

- Time is precious
  - Student’s
  - Company’s
  - Your’s
Other potential problems

Students just don’t want another group project!
Remember why we’re blending

- Students build base of knowledge
- Builds my base of knowledge
- It’s what employers want

Want to discuss this?

http://blog.lib.umn.edu/scastleb/httpbloglibumneduscastlebblog/

Dr. Stephen B. Castleberry Sr's Blog

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SMA Conference: Blending Theory and Practice

I'd love to know what you think about all of this. Feel free to drop a question or make a comment. We learn by sharing!
Steve

Posted by scastleb at 08:42 PM | Comments (0) | TrackBack (0)
...75 days until Spring semester...