



# 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 Erin Goepfert

National Student Representative 2007-2009  
University of Wisconsin-Whitewater

Greetings! I hope everyone had a great summer and the new school year is off to a great start. Congratulations on getting another semester closer to graduation. Hopefully you will have your own classroom and will be teaching soon.

I know this is a busy time for all chapters. Many of you are in the process of initiating new members. I would like to say welcome to all new members; you will get so much out of Pi Omega Pi. I am sure that your chapter is also busy working on the activity report, national project, local project, community project, and publication.

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### President's Report

Lana Carnes  
Alpha Beta Chapter  
Eastern Kentucky University

Welcome back to another year of service and learning as a member of Pi Omega Pi! This is an exciting year for our chapters as we will meet together in Chicago for the Pi Omega Pi Convention held in conjunction with the 2009 National Business Education Association Annual Convention. I hope your plans are well underway to attend the Convention, April 7-11, in the "Windy City's" Chicago Marriott Downtown located on the world-renowned Magnificent Mile! Within walking distance of the hotel are many of Chicago's top attractions including Navy Pier, American Girl Place, Shedd Aquarium, Millennium Park, museums and theaters. You may want to visit the [www.nbea.org](http://www.nbea.org) website to get complete information regarding conference registration and hotel accommodations.

As part of your planning, please take advantage of this year's incentive program available to those chapters who meet all of the following criteria:

\$100—Advisor and students register for Pi Omega Pi Convention, attend social (Thursday evening), and attend two general sessions (Friday morning and Saturday morning), or

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These projects are due in January. Please help us reach the goal I set, which is to have at least half of the chapters submitting the national, community, local, and publication projects. I know it can be done. If your chapter has questions or needs assistance with any of the projects, please feel free to contact me ([goepferte13@uww.edu](mailto:goepferte13@uww.edu) or 608-931-0996). I have been working on these projects with my local chapter for a while, so I do have experience that I would be willing to share. I would be glad to assist your chapter in any way that I could.

It is very important, as well as, beneficial to attend conferences or other types of professional development. I know many states have a state business education convention. I just got back from the Wisconsin Business Education Association Conference and left with several free textbooks, ideas, and lesson plans. Please mark your calendar for the Pi Omega Pi Conference will be held April 8-11, 2009 in conjunction with the National Business Education Association Conference in Chicago, IL. I think you and your chapter can get a lot from the conferences. Please help us reach the goal that I set for this conference, which is to have at least one person from each chapter attend. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me.

Erin Goepfert  
National Student Representative  
Pi Omega Pi

#### Dates to Remember

December 1 *Here and There* deadline  
January 24 Convention Proposals deadline  
January 31 National Projects deadline  
February 28 NBEA Convention Registration  
Deadline  
National Convention Attendance  
Form deadline

### President's Report Continued from page 1

\$250—Advisor and students register for Pi Omega Pi Convention, attend social (Thursday evening), attend two general sessions (Friday and Saturday morning), give a presentation (Friday afternoon, and attend at least one presentation other than their own chapter's (Friday afternoon).

Your chapters will receive a Call for Proposals in October with the proposals scheduled for submission in January. Students who have made presentations in the past conventions will tell you how rewarding this experience is. We hope every chapter will be involved in the presentation sessions.

This is an election year for the National Council as well as the National Student Representative. Please consider the position of National Student Representative. The duties of the representative are to present the viewpoints of the students at the National Council meeting, work with the Editor of *Here and There*, work with the President-Elect in planning the National Convention, and preside at the National Convention. Serving as the National Student Representative is a great honor for your chapter and a wonderful learning experience for the student winner. I look forward to seeing you in Chicago! It's my kind of town!

#### 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.

December articles and news should be sent to:

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**Chapter Travel Reimbursement for Convention**

Chapters will be eligible for \$100 travel reimbursement to the 41<sup>th</sup> Biennial Convention when:

- Chapter delegates (or delegate if a Chapter sends only one delegate) attend two required meetings. Roll will be taken and delegate(s) must attend:

Pi Omega Pi General Session on Friday  
Pi Omega Pi General Session on Saturday

- Chapter member(s) attend the convention. Chapters with sponsors as the only representative attending the convention are not eligible.
- Chapters have submitted the Attendance Form to the National President-Elect by the February 28 deadline to receive 5 points for national competition.
- Chapters have registered and paid fees through NBEA by the February 28 deadline.

Chapters will be eligible for \$250 travel reimbursement to the 40<sup>th</sup> Biennial Convention when all of the above criteria are met and the members attend other chapters' presentations and give one of their own.

**Checks will be written and issued to qualified chapters at the Saturday General Session**

**Chapter Participation Award**

The chapter with the most "cumulative" participation (members registered for Pi Omega Pi Convention times miles traveled) will receive the Chapter Participation Award, which is recognized with a plaque for the Chapter.

## Chapter Activities

### Beta Chapter

Northwest Missouri State University

As the school year is getting underway, the Beta Chapter is looking ahead towards a bright future. We have recently volunteered for the MO Chip Safety Awareness Day at the Maryville Community Center located near the Northwest Missouri State University Campus. Here, our members worked with local law enforcers to help ensure the safety of children and teens around the area.

The Beta Chapter has recently announced its officers for the upcoming school year. Lexi Koenig is our new president, Amy Fanning is the vice president, Carrie Litteken is our secretary-treasurer, and Tim Avants is our new reporter. We are currently in the process of recruiting our new members for the fall.

### Kappa Chapter

Indiana University of Pennsylvania

The Kappa Chapter is off to great start this year. Last May our chapter initiated ten new members. So, we kicked off this fall semester with a meet-and-greet for everyone to get acquainted. The chapter had a fundraiser selling 300 T-Shirts for the Homecoming events on campus. All of the profits are planned to go towards our NBEA Conference fees. At the end of October, our chapter has a trip planned to Virginia and Washington D.C. During this visit, we will be visiting the headquarters for the Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) and the National Business Education Association (NBEA). Also, it is tentatively planned for our members to visit a high school in Virginia that has an outstanding and active Business Education Department.

### Mu Chapter

Emporia State University

Mu Chapter initiated two new members in May. Welcome to Kyle Headrick and Raymond Lee. One member, Josh Brabb, is currently student teaching at Burlingame High School. Members are finalizing plans for fund-raising activities for the Chicago conference and completing a variety of projects. Several activities are being planned with a local FBLA chapter, and Mu members are looking forward to working with the high school FBLA members.

### Chi Chapter

Indiana State University

We are very excited to be back to the new school year! As we let go of summer, we are beginning to plan and create our national project. On September 11, we were very thrilled to initiate four new members into our chapter! With eyes wide on what we do throughout the year, the new initiates were very thrilled to jump in and conquer the tasks to help with the project.

Many of our members plan to attend the Indiana Business Education Association's fall conference on November 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup>. This conference will serve to help current and future educators in participating in professional development activities, learn about legislative issues relating to education, gain BPA and DECA information, and receive the curriculum updates.

### Alpha Beta Chapter

Eastern Kentucky University

Greetings! We here at the Beta chapter hope you enjoyed your summer. Since our last meeting, we have welcomed two new members to our chapter. One of which is now our new faculty sponsor, Dr. Faridah Awang. The second new member is Scotty Grubbs who has recently switched his major to Business and Marketing Education. We are doing all we can to make him feel welcome. (Continued on Page 5)

It's a sad time for us right now at the Beta chapter. As you may remember we won nationals earlier this year, but this also means that we are not eligible to compete this year in Chicago. Do not worry though; we are still going to be there to continue learning more about the field of Business and Marketing Education. Currently, we are raising money for the trip out to the windy city and finding new recruits to join this elite field of business teachers.

We hope your semester has been going well for you. Good luck and keep learning.

### **Alpha Pi Chapter**

Mississippi State University

The Alpha Pi Chapter initiated three new members on September 29, 2008. Our members are Karen Blackburn, Jeff Bradley, and Brooke Mayes. We discussed the chapter's attendance and participation at the Pi Omega Pi National Convention that will be held in Chicago in April. We also began planning for the activities required for national competition. Committees were assigned to complete the tasks. Our next meeting is Monday, October 13, 2008. Officers will be elected at that time.

### **Alpha Chi Chapter**

East Illinois University

The Pi Omega Pi chapter at Eastern Illinois University was very busy during the Spring 2008 semester. We participated in many activities and completed all of our projects. First of all, we attended the EIBEA annual dinner which was located in Klehm Hall on Eastern's Campus. We also inducted four new members to our chapter in January. In March, we competed against each other in grueling bowling matches while honoring and supporting the March of Dimes. As a group, we participated in a seminar for Big Brothers, Big Sisters. At the end of the semester, we had a cook-out at our advisor's house complete with hot dogs, potato salad and the works! Overall, it was a very successful and busy semester. We look forward to completing more activities this semester.

### **Beta Kappa Chapter**

East Carolina University

The Beta Kappa Chapter at East Carolina University has been busy planning for the upcoming year. An organizational meeting will be held in October in which officers for the 2008-09 academic year will be elected. The chapter is planning an induction ceremony and looking forward to the Biennial Convention in Chicago.

### **Gamma Phi Chapter**

North Carolina A&T University

The Gamma Phi Chapter is off to a good start. Seven new members were initiated in September and new officers were installed. The chapter met to decide on the program of work for the year. Members will be involved in several activities that promote the aims of Pi Omega Pi.

### **Zeta Eta Chapter**

Kansas State University

The Zeta Eta Chapter began the school year by welcoming three new members. The initiation ceremony was part of a Back-to-School meeting, where the chapter set goals for the semester ahead and enjoyed a BBQ dinner. This fall, the chapter is currently working on a fundraising project. Zeta Eta is selling travel drives that sport the K-State Powercat logo. So far, the drives have been a hit! The chapter is also actively developing ideas on how to recruit more members and business education students.



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## Member Articles

### The Stock Market Game

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**Lexi Koenig**  
Beta Chapter

**Northwest Missouri State University**

This past week I have been introduced to the abundance of educational websites that are available to teachers and students for their classrooms. One that sparked my interest instantly, and brought back fond memories of my Introduction to Business class in high school, is The Stock Market Game. This real-world simulation has been around for 30 years, and has only become more popular among the educators.

The Stock Market Game is a virtual reality simulation where students or teams receive a virtual cash account of \$100,000. It is completely up to the students to do research and find what will be the most profitable companies to invest in, based on the current conditions of the market. Everyday, students will analyze their stock portfolio to see if their stocks are increasing in value, or if they need to get rid of them. Students compete with teams across the state and nationally to try and gain the most income from their portfolio.

In my high school experience, I remember The Stock Market Game was one reason I loved coming to school. It was so enticing to see how your stocks had changed, to buy or sell the 'right' stocks, and strive to get your school's name up on the 'Top 10' List. I loved working on a team, as well, because that helped to bring different background knowledge of various companies to the group. This unit helped me to understand what it is really like to buy or sell on a real stock exchange. In addition, it helped me to make profound research-backed decisions and then proceeded to show me the results and consequences of those decisions.

This game is great for many different subject area classrooms. The website notes that it can be used in many different core areas besides business classrooms, such as Math, Social Studies, and Language Arts to integrate a real-world application and give students some experience and background knowledge with the stock market. Some business classrooms where this would be very beneficial are Personal Finance, Economics, Business Math, Introduction to Business, Business Technology, or Marketing.

This on-line game will help students learn to save and invest while meeting various state and national standards of education. The Stock Market Game website, [www.smg2000.org](http://www.smg2000.org), emphasizes that it enhances learner motivation, uses critical thinking, decision making, cooperation and communication, and independent research.

The Stock Market Game website has many supplemental features available to instructors. Many projects, lessons, activities, assessments, and publications are available to use throughout the simulation to aid in additional learning. There is a massive amount of materials that you choose from an easy-to-use drop down menu, picking the grade-level it is for, the subject, and at what level of achievement the students are ready for. The Stock Market Game can be used for students from the ages of 4<sup>th</sup> grade to college level.

I would, with no doubt, recommend The Stock Market Game to any instructor right away. At the very least, check out the website and the testimonies of many teachers nationwide that have used the simulation. The program includes a teacher guide that will take you through the process and allow you to read helpful tips from other teachers that have used it in the past to enhance your ease of using The Stock Market Game in your classroom.

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## Personal Response Systems

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Sarah O'Sullivan  
Kappa Chapter

### Indiana University of Pennsylvania

Today's teachers are looking for ways to help them create classrooms that are engaging and provide opportunities to take advantage of emerging technologies. One of the many new trends that have made their way to the classroom is Personal Response Systems. When most hear that title they think they have no idea what it is. However, many are surprised to find that they do, in fact, know what Personal Response Systems really are. Some know these devices as "clickers", it is a term that is becoming more and more common across universities. These devices are "small battery-operated gadgets that allow users to respond enmasse to a question posed" (Lightstone, 2007). This technology has become an incredible asset to the classroom because it allows all students to participate in the class lecture. Active learning is now emphasized rather than the passive learning that has been driving students away from our brick and mortar classrooms. The number of people using this new technology is growing rapidly. Most universities have begun to implement the devices into many lecture halls. The Classrooms For The Future Grant has brought them into many public schools, as well. The price of the devices costs students between \$20.00-\$40.00, depending on the brand that the instructor has chosen to use. The main unit that the instructors need costs around \$300. Many text book companies are offering the Personal Response Systems as part of their text book packages. Once the Personal Response Systems have been purchased, the schools need to be sure they have the updated software necessary to run on the program on the computers. One of the downfalls of the new devices is the continuous software updates that the companies are coming out with that keep them up to date with technology. There are about six different companies that are offering similar Personal Response Systems on the market today.

"Remote Responders (clickers) have been showing up in classrooms since 1998" (Lightstone, 2007). When the devices were first released they used infrared technology. Today most PRS devices use radio frequency. These "low cost radio frequency (RF) systems were just introduced in early 2005" (Barber, Njus, 2007). Not only are the clickers useful for classroom instruction but they are also being used in the corporate world, game shows and home health care. The devices can help enhance a meeting by giving everyone the opportunity to anonymously voice their opinion and make group decisions. Television shows, like Who Wants To Be A Millionaire, allow for interactive audience participation using the clickers. The home health industry has been using the Personal Response Systems for elderly living alone in homes. These devices are worn around their neck. They simply press the button if help is needed and someone will assist them. Having this new technology gives them the opportunity to still be within the comfort of their own home.

Teachers are finding that clickers are great for taking attendance, getting responses from the entire group and they also work great for small quizzes. Using the clickers gives teachers "an instant read on how well their students are absorbing the material and, when necessary, they can go back to review the information" (Kalinowski, 2005). Before clickers teachers would have to wait to see test results to know how well the students were grasping the information. This is also a great opportunity to keep the class engaged. Students get to have fun while learning. It can be useful for attendance because it saves the teacher's time that was once wasted on roll call. Now students just need to click in their devices that they are present for class. Research has show that using the clickers in universities helped to increase attendance and grades. The students are now coming to class more prepared because they know that their answers really do count. Not only do the students feel that the devices are making the class more engaging, but they also enjoy how quickly they can get their results back from questions and quizzes. Typically it would take teachers a few days to grade these things, but now with the click of a button they can know how well they performed.

The traditional alternative to Personal Response Systems would be the old school style of calling on students. Some teachers use a similar concept to that of the clickers, whereas, they have their students hold up colored paper based on what they think the answer is. This method works however; there is no privacy and also gives students the opportunity to cheat by looking at how their peers have responded. The results that teachers receive are similar but by using the clickers students are able to track their answers, as well as, learn new technology.

Implementing Personal Response Systems into the classroom is something that many teachers should consider. Students today are looking for technology to be implemented into their school life as much as it is in their personal life. Why not take part in this new form of active learning? Not only is it a fun tool, it is also a great time saver for teachers!

#### References:

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2. Lightstone, K (2007). Personal response systems. *International Journal of Learning*. 13, 17-24.
3. Kalinowski, Tess Clicking with students. (2005, September 28). *Toronto Star*.

#### Integrating CTSOs into the Business Education Classroom

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Ryan Norton  
Mu Chapter

Emporia State University

It is no secret that as we begin our careers in business education, we are going to be teaching to standards; standards that our students must meet in order to be considered “competent.” But, did you know that there are professional standards that we as business teacher must also meet? It isn’t hard to remember that our students have standards, but sometimes educators forget that as professionals, they also have standards that must be met.

The National Business Education Association has published the *Business Teacher Education Curriculum & Program Standards*, and it is very important for beginning as well as advanced business educators to take a look at these periodically and validate that these standards are being met by the business teacher. There are actually ten different standards that we as business educators should attempt to meet ranging from professionalism to career development to assessment to subject competencies.

One of the standards deals specifically with the manner in which we utilize/conduct our student organizations (FBLA-PBL, DECA, BPA, etc.) According to the standard, business teachers **are required to incorporate carefully planned activities designed to achieve specific educational goals of the business curriculum**. In addition, we are to facilitate student participation in the activities and competitive events of district, state, regional, and national organizations.

It isn’t hard to have students participate in the individual tests that are a part of the competitive events. But, how many of us are incorporating the student organizations in the classroom business curriculum? Many business teachers still see the business Career and Technical Student Organizations (CTSOs) as “extra-curricular clubs” where activities should be completed after school. That is not the intent or purpose of CTSOs. These organizations are designed to teach leadership skills and career skills to all students,

regardless of whether they have paid dues. Therefore, activities must be included in the curriculum and all students should participate. Of course, if the activity can be utilized in a CTSO competitive event by a member later in the year, that is great and that should be done. Business educators need to create assessments and projects for classes that lend themselves to 1) the competition area of the CTSOs; 2) to individual awards (such as the FBLA Future, Business, etc. awards); and 3) to the development of leadership and career skills

Here are two suggestions for Future Business Leaders (FBLA) team competitive events that could be incorporated into your classes. With good teacher planning, these projects can be assigned to all students in a class following FBLA rubrics for reports, etc. and then the results can be utilized at the competition stage for FBLA with little last-minute planning.

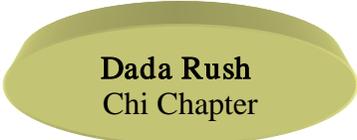
***Business Presentation:*** Utilizing the topic that is provided by the national office in early August each year, plan a time in a business class, such as business technology or a presentations/video production class, where you integrate the “Business Presentation” competition into your class in November or December (integrates language arts, career skills, and leadership skills). This year’s topic is on safe internet usage for youth. There are many business classes where this integrated project could be completed in November or December, well before the deadline for district or state FBLA. Divide the students into groups and assign a presentation over internet safety providing the grading rubric (the competition one) that you will be utilizing when you grade this summative project. Have them present their presentation in class (much as they would in the competition area). Students who are in the CTSO might desire to make needed changes to their presentation and take it to competition. There might also be some students who are not CTSO members who have created an outstanding project that you might want to encourage to join so they can compete with their finished project (it is much easier to talk students into “doing it” when “it is already done.”)

***E-Business:*** In a beginning or advanced webpage design class, you can provide student with the opportunity, through a simple project in the class, the “E-Business” competition. In this event the students are asked to design a website for a flower and plant sale that benefits your FBLA chapter. You could work with the group to make the websites and give different groups different pages but following basic formatting guidelines through all groups. Again, there is a rubric already created and you can have them give a presentation of their web site. Everyone in the class participates and everyone receives a grade.

For teachers to effectively integrate the student organization into the curriculum, they must plan early and be willing to change their plans every year. Teachers must plan ahead and utilize a creative process in order to incorporate these activities into the classroom. Business teachers must follow the lead that vocational agriculture instructors have had for decades—Future Farmers of America (FFA) is an integral part of the vocational agriculture program. So, to, are our CTSOs parts of our business curriculum.



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**Technology in Education**

**Dada Rush**  
Chi Chapter

**Indiana State University**

The world is moving at a fast pace and advancing rapidly technologically. Schools need to be preparing their students for the world by introducing more technology in the classroom. Many schools, especially rural schools, are not receiving the funding they need to stay current with technology. Also, the technology available in many rural schools is far behind today's technology. The National Education Association's stance is that the technology in schools "should be on the same level" (Technology and Education, 2007) as what is currently being used outside the schools. Many classrooms in rural areas do not have a computer in the classroom, or have only one. Computer labs are commonly used. They can be effective in providing technological utilization, but careful planning and scheduling is required (Critical Issue, 2001).

As Business Education majors, the importance of technology is especially clear. Whether a student is going on to college or directly into the workforce, they will need to be able to work with some form of technology. They may use it in preparing a report or a presentation for a college assignment, or for taking a customer's order at a retail store.

Not only is technology essential for preparing a student for their college and professional careers, but it is also a great support system for a teacher. Computers can be used to prepare presentations to highlight key points and show illustrations. Technology promotes engaged learning by allowing students hands-on experience (Critical Issue, 2001). It is also another way to enhance critical thinking skills from problem-solving exercises. Professional development time in the schools is necessary to keep general education teachers up to date with the latest technology advances. Teachers need time to develop new skills and new ways to implement the new technology in their classroom instruction (Critical Issue, 2001).

There have been some major steps toward noting technology's importance in the schools. E-Rate was one of the first major steps. It has been greatly instrumental in expanding technology available to school systems. Congress approved e-Rate, which just recently celebrated its 10th anniversary this year, in 1997 as part of the Telecommunications Act of 1996 (E-Rate, 2007). It "provides deep discounts on telecommunications, Internet access and internal networking to America's public and private schools and public libraries" (E-Rate, 2007).

The importance of technology is clear. Everyone will need to develop technological skills to keep up with the advance to a more technical world. The push for more funding is vital to ensure that students are well equipped to be successful in their life (Technology and Education, 2007).

**References:**

1. Critical Issue: Promoting Technology in Schools, 2001. Retrieved from <http://www.ncrel.org/sdrs/areas/issues/methods/technlgy/te200.htm>
2. E-Rate 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Underscores Progress in Closing Technology Gap. Retrieved from <http://www.nea.org/newsreleases/2007/nr070228b.html>
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## The Importance of Teaching Soft Skills

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**Jordan Marcum**  
Alpha Beta Chapter

**Eastern Kentucky University**

Many of us understand the value of first impressions and how we conduct ourselves with other people. Being in the business world and taking courses in college, we learn about soft skills and understand what that means. On the other hand, if you think back before entering into college, as a high school student, did you really even know the meaning of soft skills? Not to say that most college students still do not know what soft skills are, but I think as future business educators we need to take some responsibility to enforce this issue.

As we enter the workforce, there is a need to have excellent soft skills as we deal with consumers, suppliers, and co-workers. Having these skills will not only land you a career that you have always dreamed of, but take you places you cannot go with a lack of a better word, a “sorry” attitude. In teaching basic soft skills, the focus needs to be primarily on the interpersonal skills, leadership, business etiquette, and behavioral traits such as attitude, motivation and time management.

Kentucky schools now have different paths where high school students can travel down when picking what they want to do after high school. Two of these paths that I want to focus on are the college and business paths. As future business education teachers, being able to teach to both groups of students the essentials of developing soft skills will provide invaluable assets for life. As students travel down the business path they will need to learn the basics of these skills so when they enter the business world after high school, they need to have a positive attitude, develop motivation and a sense of people’s skills. These skills will carry beyond a lower level career. For college-bound students, they need to learn these skills as a foundation and continue to develop them in college. These skills become essential in looking for jobs in and after college. Soft skills are valuable lessons for anyone, but as business education teachers, we need to make sure that students are not left unprepared for the real world situations where soft skills are critically sought after.

A few basic things that can be done in the classroom to improve soft skills would be to have students prepare a business research paper or a presentation on the proper etiquette in the workplace and learn to use appropriate non-verbal gestures as well as verbal cues and skills during mock interviews. Also, to improve on attitude, you can have your classroom be conducted in a manner such as a business office and learn to have positive attitudes in class where positive behaviors are rewarded. The way the class is conducted will tremendously help with behavioral traits in how we treat each other and how we shape our attitudes towards other classmates, future employees, and employers. In teaching effective time management, you can have students keep a daily schedule of the events, practices, homework, test, work, and other things that are going on in their life. They may use free web-based real-time sharing and collaboration technology, like Zoho Docs, to meet deadlines on certain team projects assigned in class.

Teaching soft skills will be a new venture for most business education teachers. There are many creative ideas that can be explored to improve teaching soft skills but reaching out to attempting to teach is just the start.



**Black Board Learning System**

**Jim Rosinia**  
Alpha Chi Chapter

**Eastern Illinois University**

Being a new teacher can be very time demanding and stressful. Using Blackboard Learning System can make your class much more organized and operational. Blackboard Learning System is a family of software applications designed to enhance both teaching and learning. It is an incredibly easy to use application. More and more schools are using a Blackboard Learning Systems in their classrooms. If your school does not utilize Blackboard, you should try to get it as soon as possible. If your school already has Blackboard Learning System, you should definitely take advantage it.

Blackboard works by issuing every student and teacher of a particular school a user name and password to a home page. Both the students and teachers will have a home page with all of the classes they have for that semester listed on it. The user has the ability to click on each class name and be brought to an individual classroom site. Here there are many useful classroom tools.

A teacher has the ability to put their class syllabus, PowerPoint notes, assignments, web links, rubrics and much more on their classroom page for easy student use. They teacher can have students submit their assignment online or even take online quizzes through the Blackboard Learning system.

Blackboard offers students many organizational tools and reminders. Teachers can set up a calendar with daily schedules and due dates for assignments. As assignments get close to the due date, a reminder will pop-up on the students' login screen to remind them. Teachers can also leave announcements for the class.

Blackboard Learning System can make communication between students and teachers much more clear. Students can see their grades on all of their assignments and, as well as, their progress through the semester with just the click of a button. Blackboard also offers many different communication tools. It has a mail area to send and receive mail from the teacher of a particular class and all of the students in that class. It also has live class discussions and chats. These tools are especially useful for group activities.

This is only some of the many different capabilities Blackboard offers to teachers and students who utilize it. Hopefully you will have the opportunity to work with the Blackboard Learning System and its many interactive tools. To learn more on the Blackboard Learning System check out:

[http://www.blackboard.com/products/academic\\_suite/learning\\_system/index](http://www.blackboard.com/products/academic_suite/learning_system/index)

**The Reality of Using Voice and Speech Recognition in the Year 2008**

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Using voice and speech recognition software is definitely a reality in the year 2008. This software can already be used for a variety of office computer applications, cellular phone applications, and vehicle navigational operations, not to mention text input at an approximate rate of 150 words per minute for word processed and other office documents. The software has many possibilities in society, and, while readily available in MS

Office and Vista software, it is still largely unknown by most business software users. Since businesses rely on computers already, full integration of voice and speech recognition can make routine office tasks quicker and easier for document processing. Gaining experience with speech recognition will provide job seekers with a competitive edge when entering the job market; so it is important to begin teaching students about this technology now. As business educators, we should embrace this technology and make efforts to ensure that it is utilized in our classrooms.

Although the software has many benefits, there may be limitations as well. One is that in order to use the software, users have to be trained and must take the time to complete the training steps and practice. Practice is necessary to make the software accurate and to provide user proficiency in navigating the software. Time dedicated to this practice and training could take away from productive work time. If a business or teacher could deal with the time required to get the software working, they could use the software to their advantage, and in the long run find that speech recognition can be very productive.

Other limitations include difficulty with voices recognized and the user's desire to make use of the software. With inadequate training, the software will not work properly and could be frustrating to some potential users. Not all students will be excited and willing to use speech recognition; it is almost a guarantee that at least one student may get frustrated with the software and refuse to use it. Also, while it is possible for an entire class to be using speech recognition simultaneously, that can complicate the instructional part more than if just one single user were learning to use the software in isolation. It is also likely that speech recognition skills will be developed quite easily and naturally for some students and will prove to be more difficult for others. This means that, as with any other lesson or objective in your curriculum, you must adapt and overcome obstacles. This may mean allowing some students to help or teach others since teaching speech recognition to a group of 20 students can be awkward. Although the software is an exciting tool, businesses, educators, and personal users need to be aware that some pitfalls may come along with using it, such as a gross amount of errors and perhaps additional editing opportunities, especially in the early stages of using the software.

A major benefit of using speech recognition software is that students with disabilities may be able to do so using the speech recognition software. Many IEP's require that students give oral reports because they have difficulty writing or expressing their thoughts on paper. Speech recognition technology may be an alternative for these students and give them the opportunity to use computers like the other students. Homework assignments could even be done using speech recognition software if the student has the equipment and software at home. On a daily basis, the world is becoming more computerized, and speech recognition can help include individuals who may have otherwise been left out of the computer movement, due to a disability.

Students always enjoy learning about and using new software programs and technology. Teachers can use speech recognition to enhance their lesson plans and hopefully engage their students. Take the general objective of using a word processor to format a document, and kick it up a notch with speech recognition. Students get the opportunity to learn a new skill while mastering a skill they have already learned. They can practice dictating instructions to format the document as well as inputting the text through voice input. This is also a perfect opportunity to show how students with limited motor-skills can operate a computer. With speech recognition, you can start programs, browse the Internet, and use MS Office applications like Excel and Word simply by speaking commands.

The possibilities are endless and the future of speech and voice recognition is promising. In our everyday lives, voice recognition can help us accomplish tasks faster, which is important since time is increasingly becoming a rare commodity. Fast food restaurants could use the software to take orders and communicate the orders while employees prepare the food. Homes will become more technologically advanced as "smart homes," and TV's, microwaves, lights, ovens, dishwashers, washing machines and dryers could all be programmed with software

to operate with voice commands, just as navigational devices and cell phones now do. In most any instance where a computer is used for data input, speech recognition can be used. It is time to embrace speech and voice recognition as you can be sure that they will be very prominent in our future.

### Strategies for Teaching Business Ethics across the Curriculum

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Legal and ethical issues play a huge role in business. It is important for students to study and explore the impact that ethical decision making can have on a business and on their customers. Case studies are a good way for students to get a feel for ethical decisions that arise in the real business world. In the December 2005 issue of *Business Education Forum*, hints and examples are provided for teaching business ethics. A business case from recent events is described and there are suggestions for several ways to implement such events into the business curriculum. A situation is given in which many ethical decisions need to be made over a period of time. The students need to observe the actions of one individual, determine the significance of those actions, analyze a corporate code of ethics, and determine the importance of good personal decision-making.

The article presents a very high-profile ethical scandal: the Martha Stewart case. It first gives the background of Martha Stewart and her company, Martha Stewart Living Omnimedia, Inc. (MSO). It also discusses the MSO code of business conduct and ethics. We then find out how the scandal unfolds and the financial outcomes that resulted from the scandal. Teaching strategies are given for discussion along with questions to be asked for this case study. The teaching plan breaks up the class into five segments: 1) before class, 2) the first 15 minutes of class, 3) the next 15 minutes of class, 4) the third 15 minutes of class, and 5) the final five minutes of class, which is used to conduct a wrap-up discussion with the class. There are seven categories of questions that can be asked of the students: general discussion questions, ethics questions, legal questions, communication questions, management questions, and marketing questions. This should be everything a teacher would need to get started in teaching business ethics in the classroom.

The 2008 NBEA Yearbook discusses the effects of business scandals on young people in chapter 14 on Business Law using the Martha Stewart case and the Enron scandal. The observation was made that “young people seem to be among those most affected by these ethical challenges,” and that “they are more likely to engage in unethical behavior than their predecessors.” A report by the Josephson Institute revealed “60% of the students surveyed cheated on at least one examination with the previous 12 months.” (2008 NBEA Yearbook)

The recent headlines add to the concerns about unethical behaviors with the FBI investigating “possible corporate fraud in relation to the worst housing crisis since the Great Depression” involving Fannie Mae, Freddie Mac, AIG and Lehman Brothers. These four institutions are under investigation for “concerns that Fannie Mae, Freddie Mac, AIG or Lehman Brothers may have sought to encourage agencies to inflate their ratings by offering higher fees or the promise of more work.” (Times Online September 25, 2008))

When implementing the topic of business ethics in the classroom, there are a couple of things for teachers to keep in mind. First, the teacher must be aware of the level of material he or she uses. The content should be challenging and should require higher order thinking skills. However, we should not expect high school students to solve ethical dilemmas many middle-aged adults struggle within the workplace. The key to including this content is to get the students thinking and to make them aware of the importance of being a

knowledgeable, ethical decision maker. To go along with the level of content, teachers must also consider how much time they dedicate to teaching about business ethics in their classrooms. As it is often a supplemental activity, teachers often struggle to find time for it. It is important to make sure that when we do decide to include a lesson on ethics, we give it the time and attention it deserves. Finally, incorporating business ethics into your teaching curriculum can open doors to using different teaching methods. For example, the students could learn about a specific issue in business ethics by role-playing the situation. This would give students a kinesthetic activity in which they could apply their knowledge. Other teachers have probably come up with many innovative ways to teach about business ethics, and we have all found great resources to use in our teaching from time to time. This is where collaboration between teachers could make a huge difference. If we share our ideas, we will all have a larger pool of activities to pull from.

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