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Integrating a humanities and business education course: Issues, problems, and benefits

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Integrating a humanities and business education course: Issues, problems, and benefits

Abstract

Since the mid-nineteenth century, higher education, in particular community colleges, has seen an increased demand to serve the training needs of business and industry. Today, business and industry insist their prospective employees be trained in both job-specific skills (hard) and general skills (soft). These soft skills are defined as management, leadership, teamwork, interpersonal communications, problem-solving, decision-making, and adaptability to change skills (Georges, 1988). However, Stephen Wehrenberg simply described soft skills as being purely mental functions (Wehrenberg, 1986). Hence, traditional occupational education methods of teaching only job-specific skills such as keyboarding, drafting, and auto mechanics are being challenged to include soft skills.

Running Head: INTEGRATING HUMANITIES AND BUSINESS

Integrating a Humanities and Business Education Course:

Issues, Problems, and Benefits

Rhea R. Walker

University of Northern Iowa

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION AND PROBLEM STATEMENT

INTRODUCTION

Since the mid-nineteenth century, higher education, in particular community colleges, has seen an increased demand to serve the training needs of business and industry. Today, business and industry insist their prospective employees be trained in both job-specific skills (hard) and general skills (soft). These soft skills are defined as management, leadership, teamwork, interpersonal communications, problem-solving, decision-making, and adaptability to change skills (Georges, 1988). However, Stephen Wehrenberg simply described soft skills as being purely mental functions (Wehrenberg, 1986). Hence, traditional occupational education methods of teaching only job-specific skills such as keyboarding, drafting, and auto mechanics are being challenged to include soft skills.

Customized training emerged as the best method to meet business and industry's demands. Community colleges provided training and education "customized"

to meet the specific needs of local employers (Jacobs, 1993). The "customization" was to include both hard skills and soft skills. Because "soft" skills were often taught in general education courses such as humanities, customized training led to increased pressure to strengthen general education requirements within existing occupational curricula.

Unfortunately, previous experiences between humanist educators and business educators led to strained relationships. Humanist educators were regarded as the elite and business persons were regarded as anti-intellectual. Humanist educators, according to Jones, concerned themselves with learning for the sake of learning, avoiding any bridge to the working world. Business educators focused on technology and scientific management, ignoring the merits of a humanist education (Jones, 1983). Somehow, in order to meet the failings of the troubled workforce, the two disciplines needed to develop a plan for integration.

The following information will provide an example of integrated curricula involving humanities and business education at the community college level.

An Integrated Course: Changes and Choices

Changes and Choices is an example of integrating humanities and business education. Changes and Choices was developed to strengthen general education requirements within an occupational program. The following information will provide a background on the inception and the development of the course.

Inception

In 1988, the Shared Vision Task Force was developed in cooperation with the National Council for Occupational Education and the Community College Humanities Association. Funding was provided by the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE).

The Task Force met to develop a case to persuade administrators and faculty to improve the quality of occupational programs. The end result was a report consisting of:

1. A systematic examination of potential contributions humanities can make to occupational student learning outcomes.

2. Recommendations, based on the above examination for strengthening humanities within an occupational program.

3. Reactions to these recommendations from faculty, administrators, and business and industry leaders were incorporated into the recommendations.

4. Colleges seeking to implement an integrated course would be provided technical assistance (Shared Vision Task Force, 1988).

The Shared Vision Task Force chose five pilot sites across the country based on interest and a proposal paper submitted by educational institutions. One of those sites chosen was Eastern Iowa Community College (EICCD) located along the Mississippi River. It has three campuses (Clinton Community College, Clinton, Iowa; Muscatine Community College, Muscatine, Iowa; and Scott Community College, Bettendorf, Iowa) and a District Office which is located in Davenport, Iowa.

The following is a discussion of the integrated course at Eastern Iowa Community College District.

Development of Integrated Course

The district chose business education as its occupational area to integrate with humanities. This was a viable choice since business education had just finished a curriculum review. The belief was that other occupational areas would develop a similar course as funds and interest permit.

A timeline was developed by EICCD administration (shown in Appendix A) to keep the project on task. The goal was to have the pilot course implemented in the Spring of 1990. It was hoped to achieve more integration of courses after the implementation of the first course.

The initial concern was bringing humanities and business education faculty together. One solution was to assign a business faculty member and a humanities faculty member from each college within the district to be on the steering committee. Also, the co-chairs of the steering committee represented each discipline. The main idea was to establish an equal ownership for both disciplines. For this venture to be successful, communication was vital.

The steering committee members from each campus surveyed (as shown in Appendix D) the faculty in both disciplines regarding their interest and support for the project. Data were collected and dispersed in tally form for the whole district and for each individual campus. The information was reviewed by faculty and administration. The steering committee also reviewed the findings of the Shared Vision Task Force when the Task Force administered the same survey nationally to faculty and administrators and to business and industry leaders.

The steering committee members wanted to create a team atmosphere in developing the course. This concern was alleviated in two of the three campuses. The third campus, which had the largest student enrollment and highest ratio of part-time faculty to full-time, participated infrequently. For the third campus, humanities and business education disciplines were situated at different locations which led to difficulty with participation. The other two campuses did not have this obstacle to overcome.

The steering committee advised the curriculum committees of each campus regarding the upcoming course

and developed a preliminary outline for the program outcomes. With this outline, the co-chairs prepared a draft of the humanities course during the Summer of 1989. This information was presented to the steering committee in the Fall of 1989. Once initial approval was given by the steering committee and administration, the course outline and all accompanying developmental materials were presented to all the business education advisory committees for each campus. All curriculum changes and newly proposed courses in an occupational discipline were required to have approval from an advisory committee. Changes and Choices was a new course for all three campuses.

With the curriculum completed, the committee made suggestions to the administration on how the course should be implemented. The committee wanted each campus to initiate the teaching of Changes and Choices and to have humanities and business faculty members team teach the course. This would involve three offerings with a total of six faculty members. The administration could not find the needed funding for multiple offerings of the course, so one offering of Changes and Choices was telecast over telenet between

two campuses in the Spring of 1990. The co-chairs were the first team to be chosen to teach the course.

Changes and Choices was placed in the occupational business two-year degree and was also placed as a transfer course in the Associate of Arts two-year degree.

According to the participants of the steering committee, there was not an official evaluation by the Shared Vision Task Force of the project. There was, according to the committee, an unofficial evaluation completed by the committee and administration. Changes and Choices was presented at a national conference for the American Association of Community and Junior Colleges in Kansas City.

Within a year, funding was obtained and all three campuses had Changes and Choices being team taught by humanities and business faculty members.

Statement of Problem

The issue explored in this manuscript is to investigate how occupational-based programs may better meet the needs of enrollees by integrating the content of humanities courses into business-oriented courses. To better understand the difficulty in integrating the

two disciplines, differing philosophies and concerns must be understood. Chapter 2 further explains the humanities and business philosophies.

Definition of Terms

The following terms are defined to aid the reader in the uniform interpretation of the manuscript.

General Education. Educational programs concerned with experimentation and problem solving for individual and social action, with the problems of the present and future and with the development of the individual (Miller, 1988). At a community college, the two-year degree earned in general education is Associate of Arts (A.A.). Some use the terms, arts and science or academic, in reference to general education.

Liberal Education. Curriculum based in the methods of logic and concerned with ideas in the abstract, with the conservation of universal truths handed down through the years, and with the development of the intellect (Miller, 1988).

Humanities. Studies which expand the student's awareness of the human condition and appreciation of human needs, values, and achievements. "Humanities assists in developing insights, capacities, and well-

reasoned convictions essential for a fulfilled public and private life as well as success in a career" (p. 6, Shared Vision Task Force, 1988).

Occupational Programs. Programs designed to lead the individual directly to employment in a specific career. At the community college, the two-year degree earned in occupational programs is an Associate of Applied Science (A.A.S.). The terms, technical or vocational are often used when referring to occupational programs.

Business Education. The occupational program in business which includes secretarial, clerical, data entry, and information processing. Business education may be termed Office Technology or Office Education.

Discipline. A field of study characterized by a body of acceptable knowledge and principles with the help of methodical rules (Kockelmans, 1979).

Integration. Integration is the organization of teaching matter to interrelate or unify subjects. It can also be described as the combination and coordination of separate and diverse subjects into a more complete whole.

Interdisciplinary. A solution to a set of problems which can be achieved only by integrating parts of existing disciplines into a new discipline. It does not imply that the original disciplines are totally integrated even though it is not excluded. It is more commonly used in research (Kockelmans, 1979).

Learning Outcomes. Learning outcomes are what educators expect a student to know and be able to do at the end of a specified period of instruction (Shared Vision Task Force, 1988).

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Humanities: Philosophy

Students learn about technology or about properties of matter without necessarily feeling involvement with the subject; no one has ever really learned about themselves in relation to others without such involvement. By teaching humanities, each student is better able to discover the relationships among life, work, and self; to develop an understanding of diversity; to reflect on how values and morals affect our beliefs regarding diversity; and to question the past, the present, and the future (Shared Vision Task Force, 1988).

Humanities provides a vehicle for students to learn about themselves and to see how they "fit" into life beyond the concrete classroom. Humanities draws together skills and concepts and focus on the process of acquisition of knowledge. The process is more important than the product (Holly, 1986). The following discussion demonstrates that business education believes in the product.

Business: Philosophy

Students find the main goal of business education to be immediate employment--they want to achieve economic self-sufficiency. To aid students in meeting this goal, business educators continuously articulate with employers regarding desired employable outcomes. These outcomes are often hard skills. The students are not required to explain or to answer why, but to perform using the best method known.

Business educators believe, as experts in their field, they know what is best for their students. Because of this philosophy, the involvement of "outside" disciplines should be approached cautiously if at all.

Educators often find it difficult to fit in all the desired outcomes within a specified program that is limited to a certain number of credit hours. As a result, business educators believe soft skills need not be taught with so many vital hard skills waiting to get into a tight curriculum (Business Educator, personal communication, April 21, 1993). Also, business skills are objectively evaluated and are based on current and fast-paced information technology (Business Educator,

personal communication, April 21, 1993). Business educators believe humanities is archaic and a vacillating discipline and fear the unknown and abstract pedagogy of humanities (Jones, 1983). These concerns need to be addressed by faculty when integrating curriculum.

After a careful review of the research literature, it appears that there are few, if any, studies on integrating humanities and business education at the community college level. The following discussion focuses on integrating curricula at the community college level.

Integrating Curricula

According to Williams, education is too fragmented and should be taught in a more unified approach in order to prevent students from evolving into isolated islands. This unified education would entail problem solving skills, cooperation and communication with others, and respect for self and life. The idea is to get away from uncoordinated bits of knowledge which cannot be assimilated and, hence, are without value (Williams, 1986). Williams defines education as unification of one's self with one's environment. He

believes that the elimination of boundaries amongst academic disciplines would enhance the assimilation of knowledge.

While Williams (1986) used the term "unified education," Mayville (1978) called this approach "interdisciplinarity." Interdisciplinarity is the interaction among two or more different disciplines ranging from simple communication of ideas to mutual integration of concepts and methods (Mayville, 1978). Kockelmans (1979) believed interdisciplinarity aims at contributing to the unity of our world view.

Vocational and General Education

The most important reason to integrate vocational and academic classes is related to the creation of a classroom environment in which all students learn to solve problems and share ideas with each other (North Carolina State Department of Public Instruction, 1995 and Iowa State Department of Education, 1992).

There are three models for integrating academic and vocational education: reinforcement, coordination, and thematic. Reinforcement incorporates more academic content into vocational courses by infusing occupational examples and

applications. The coordination model can incorporate team-teaching, horizontal and vertical curriculum alignment, "schools within schools," and/or magnet schools. The thematic approach results in students being assigned to the same group of academic and vocational teachers for the entire year. The teaching team decides the content and sequence of the course, usually focusing on a single theme (page 11, North Carolina State Department of Public Instruction, 1995).

According to the literature, there is a growing concern from business educators regarding the distance between business and humanities. Even the most conservative business faculties are finding that the integration of humanities into the business curriculum is beneficial to students.

Business and Humanities

The swing from the Industrial Revolution to a more service-industry economy has left the archaic scientific management style, which dominates business methodology, trying to cope with a more demanding and humanistically oriented work force. According to Shaw,

humanities is the last hope for business education to develop a broader--more humanistic--view of the corporation (Shaw, 1992). This is a risk for a business discipline that has earnestly tried to achieve legitimacy by attempting to become more of a science (Shaw, 1992).

Shaw believes the development of moral imagination can broaden the sometimes too narrow view of business possibly achieving a much needed balance within the business curriculum. The result being graduates of business education are required to know both scientific knowledge and humanistic understanding. Businesses are working more with people and not products.

An investigation by the American Society for Training and Development and the United States Department of Labor found that employers are requiring different skills than before (Gray, 1991). The single most vital skill is the ability of learning how to learn. Other required skills are communication, computation, diagnosing, problem solving, setting goals, and working in teams (Gray, 1991). Both Shaw and Lynch see these skills to be an integral part of

humanities and encourage their integration into business curriculum (Shaw, 1992 and Gray, 1991).

Because of the changing workforce, Lynch proposes vocational teachers (including business) need to have an extensive preparation in general education, as well as, substantial coursework in the subjects they teach (Lynch, 1991). If teaching preparation programs see the need for general education requirements, possibly the prospective teachers will see the importance of integrating their subject matter with general education. Those who are optimists say vocational education teachers will be prepared in the years ahead to integrate general education and workforce skills (Lynch, 1991).

Baxter depicts another sign of the growing movement towards integration. One of the factors used to judge the Secretary's Award for Outstanding Vocational-Technical Programs by the United States Department of Education is the integration of the vocational curriculum with a quality academic program (Baxter, 1991).

The North Carolina State Department of Public Instruction has gone on record as saying that life and

education are both collages. Educators need to remember that we live in a world overlapping. Disciplines do not stand alone; they interrelate and overlap (North Carolina State Department of Public Instruction, 1995).

Shared Vision Task Force

The Shared Vision Task Force used the survey found in Appendix D to collect information from 70 business and industry leaders at five forums in Boston, Chicago, Detroit, Portland, and Raleigh-Durham. After collecting and analyzing the data, in July 1988 the Task Force developed the following recommendations:

1. That the need to improve the basic communication and computation skills in occupational programs is accepted by educators as well as employers.
2. That skills beyond those of basic communication and computation and beyond the technical skills must be developed further in formal education programs to prepare students better for entry into and success within technical fields.
3. That workers in technical fields are required to perform better than previous expectations. The most

crucial areas are: Adapting to Change, Decision Making, Problem Solving, and Working with Others.

4. That it is possible to develop the above mentioned abilities and to encourage the attitudes required for the application of these skills.

5. That humanities plays a key role in the development of these skills.

6. That the role of humanities is integral to the overall aims of Associate Degree occupational education.

7. That instruction in humanities may require reform in order to accomplish the aims of occupational education.

8. That if employers were to identify clearly and precisely the skills and attitudes they seek in their employees, it would be possible to revise curricula to acknowledge these needs.

9. That when the above has been accomplished, it will be established that there are unique and significant contributions which the study of humanities can make to career preparation at the Associate Degree level (Shared Vision Task Force, 1988).

Dilemmas

Certain dilemmas need to be addressed in order for curricula to be integrated. First, the purpose of the curriculum needs to be made explicit. Second, timing of the project needs to be planned and periodically evaluated. Third, a process has to be instituted to deal with the reluctance of occupational education faculty to develop and teach a curriculum that draws upon a liberal arts and science curriculum or the reverse. Fourth, the project needs to be administered by a neutral party. Fifth, the students need to be included in the process either as an active participant or as an advisor (Scott, 1979).

CHAPTER 3

DESIGN OF STUDY

Subjects

The subjects for this study came from the Eastern Iowa Community College District which had a pilot program for the integration of humanities into occupational programs. The district is the third largest community college in Iowa with approximately 8,000 students taking credit courses. EICCD was established in 1965. It offers 36 vocational-technical training programs and 28 liberal arts and science concentration areas.

Administrators from the district gave permission for the study, and the author received background information on the project.

Humanities and business education faculty members from all three campuses and the District Office were utilized to obtain data. Faculty members were surveyed during the development of Changes and Choices in April 1989. In addition to this existing data, the author for this study interviewed faculty members from both

disciplines. The interview questions are shown in Appendix B.

Students from the Spring of 1993 section of Changes and Choices were surveyed. The author administered the survey (shown in Appendix E) in the sixteenth week of the semester (of an eighteen-week semester). The survey was administered after the students were exposed to the material in Changes and Choices. Demographic information form (shown in Appendix F) was used to collect student demographics.

Informed consent (shown in Appendix C) was given to the faculty members who were interviewed. Prior to the interview, the informed consent was explained by the author as to its purpose and how the information would be used for this study.

Sources of Data

Interview

The interview questions were developed by the author using the literature review and through the results of the prior survey given to faculty by the steering committee in April 1989. The interview questions were asked of all faculty members who consented to be interviewed. The author conducted the

interview in a semi-structured manner in order to pursue, when necessary, comments more in detail.

Survey

The author surveyed humanities and business educators and the students of Changes and Choices regarding their views of this course.

The model for the survey was taken from the Shared Vision Task Force report that provided the funds to create the course. It was validated by surveying several hundred business people and educators across the country. Permission was given to administer Part B of this model survey. The contributions found in Part B are best interpreted through the context of asking how humanities contributes toward students' learning outcomes. The following list the ten contributions (Shared Vision Task Force, 1988):

1. The ability to understand and empathize with others through the development of an understanding of human needs and problems.
2. An understanding, beyond proficiency in the basic language skills, of the unavoidable ambiguities, vagaries, and value-laden nature of all human language.

3. An appreciation of the values of diverse cultures.
4. An appreciation of what human beings hold in common which encourages their sense of civic purpose and responsible citizenship.
5. An appreciation of what is significant about human life--past, present and projections for the future.
6. The ability to recognize the limits and goals in applying analytical skills to the resolution of human problems and dilemmas.
7. An appreciation of the variety of human purposes and values to be realized in solving problems.
8. The ability to approach and make decisions concerning problems that may not have a singular resolution.
9. The ability to make judgments reflective of human values: ethical, aesthetic, and pragmatic.
10. An appreciation of the importance of responding appropriately to change as an essential and necessary human activity (p. 57).

ProceduresInterview

The faculty members were interviewed on April 21, 1993. Out of the six faculty members interviewed--three were business educators and three were humanities educators. The author had the faculty sign the informed consent and also, explained the interview process that included a tape recording of the interview and notetaking done by the author.

Survey

Faculty. Humanities and business education faculty members were surveyed in April 1989. Out of the twenty educators completing the survey--ten were business educators and ten were humanities educators. The data obtained from the survey are shown in Table 1 and were used as background information for the study.

Students. The author surveyed the students on the contributions Changes and Choices made. The students in the class were not randomly chosen by the author since a class of 18 students already was in existence in the Spring semester. Demographic information of the students was obtained through the use of the instrument shown in Appendix F.

The ten contributions were rated on a Likert Scale. The individual checks one of four possible responses to each contribution: Never, Occasionally, Usually, and Always. Each response was also labeled with a numerical value: zero (0) represented a "Never" response, one (1) represented "Occasionally" response, two (2) represented "Usually" response, and a three (3) represented "Always" response. The frequency of each response was tallied and presented in table format.

Data Analysis

The results of the interviews and the surveys are presented in this study in narrative form. The data are illustrated in table format by frequency of responses.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results and Discussion

At the time of this study, a formal evaluation of Changes and Choices had not occurred since its first offering. The author interviewed the team of educators who currently teach Changes and Choices on one of the campuses to find out how they evaluated the course. Also, other faculty members in the two disciplines were interviewed. The following is a summary of individual interviews with these faculty members.

Summary of Interviews

Humanities faculty members. The benefit of the course is that a communication line across the district is open, and students realize or connect how humanities plays a part in their lives. Specific skills learned include thinking, decision-making, problem-solving, working with others, and conflict resolution.

By team teaching the course, faculty members believe they can achieve a better understanding of other disciplines. "There is a purpose and need for business education, but it can be enriched with

humanities" (M. Bonte, personal communication, April 21, 1993).

The two most difficult elements of acquiring support for the program were: a) getting administrators to approve of team teaching, and b) finding a place within the Business Associate of Applied Science degree for Changes and Choices.

According to Bonte, the crucial points after the implementation of Changes and Choices were: a) keeping faculty members from both disciplines informed, b) making sure students have the necessary prerequisites, and c) informing counselors and advisors of the prerequisites (M. Bonte, personal communications, April 21, 1993). Also, one item overlooked was getting administration, faculty, students, and business and industry more involved in the evaluation process (Humanities Educator, personal communications, April 21, 1993).

It is important to get support from faculty and administration, but the needs of the students must not be forgotten. The best evaluation done for the course is the evaluation completed by the students. "In addition, most of the students taking the course are

taking it because they were referred by other students" (M. Bonte, personal communication, April 21, 1993). Hence, humanities faculty members believe Changes and Choices has been a positive learning experience for the students.

Business faculty members. The main benefit to the course is that occupational programs need more than yes/no information. In the workforce, workers work through a lot of changes, and they need the skills to deal with these changes. Job skills (hard) listed on a resume would aid the student in obtaining a job; but in order to keep the job, soft skills such as being able to adapt to change are needed.

Furthermore, team teaching is the best method to present this course. Students can better relate and assimilate the ideas presented in the course by having more than one instructor. "It is great to bounce ideas off a peer prior, during, or after a class" (B. Kisling, personal communication, April 21, 1993).

The drawback of the course now is the lack of enrollment from the business side. It is difficult to talk about specific issues without an audience that is going into the area. The course needs to market to

business education majors better or open it up to other occupational areas.

Because of the lack of participation from the business students, there still exists discipline ownership--outside discipline cannot replace the expertise of the main discipline. Over time, the discipline boundaries, humanities versus business, may disappear. But, when asked which would be Ms. Kisling's choice, Changes and Choices or another business area; the answer would be "another business area" (B. Kisling, personal communication, April 21, 1993).

Regardless of preparation or development of the course, it comes down to whether or not the student will enroll in the course.

The following information are the results of the survey given to the faculty and students.

Survey

Faculty. Twenty educators from both disciplines were surveyed prior to the implementation of Changes and Choices. The steering committee focused on Part B of the survey. The data obtained was used to bring the

departments closer together--enable both departments to claim ownership.

Table 1 shows the response of twenty educators.

Table 1
Percentages of Faculty Rating the Ten Contributions of Humanities

Contributions	Percentages of Responses*			
	0	1	2	3
	Never	Occasionally	Usually	Always
# 1		12%	35%	53%
The ability to understand and empathize with others through the development of an understanding of human needs.				
# 2		12%	71%	18%
An understanding, beyond proficiency in the basic language skills, of the unavoidable ambiguities, vagaries, and value-laden nature of all human language.				
# 3		35%	41%	24%
An appreciation of the values of diverse cultures.				
# 4		35%	53%	12%
An appreciation of what human beings hold in common which encourages their sense of civic purpose and responsible citizenship.				
# 5		53%	29%	18%
An appreciation of what is significant about human life--past, present and projections for the future.				

Table 1 continued

Percentages of Faculty Rating the Ten Contributions of Humanities

Contributions	Percentages of Responses*			
	0 Never	1 Occasionally	2 Usually	3 Always
# 6 The ability to recognize the limits and goals in applying analytical skills to the resolution of human problems and dilemmas.	06%	18%	53%	24%
# 7 An appreciation of the variety of human purposes and values to be realized in solving problems.		18%	47%	35%
# 8 The ability to approach and make decisions concerning problems that may not have a singular resolution.		29%	35%	35%
# 9 The ability to make judgments reflective of human values: ethical, aesthetic, and pragmatic.		24%	47%	29%
#10 An appreciation of the importance of responding appropriately to change as an essential and necessary human activity.		12%	29%	59%

*Due to rounding errors the total of the percentages for each contribution ranges from .99 to 1.05.

On Items #1 and #10, more than 50 percent of the responders selected "Always." On Items #2, #4, and #6, the majority chose "Usually" as an option. Finally, 53 percent of the respondents chose "Occasionally" on Item #5.

The faculty members appear to be more conservative in their responses. The possible explanation could be that they were more regarded prior to the implementation of Changes and Choices. On Item #5, the faculty members were even more hesitant to commit an opinion. On Item #2, over 70 percent chose "Usually." This item is cumbersome and confusing. By choosing "Usually," the faculty may be indicating a safer response.

Students. Eighteen students were surveyed in Spring of 1993 Changes and Choices class. Table 2 demonstrates the students' demographic information.

Table 2

Demographic Information: Students in Changes and Choices

Age -

17 to 27 years old:	14
28 to 38 years old:	6
39 to 49 years old:	0
50 to 60 years old:	0
61 and above:	0

Gender -

Male:	6
Female:	14

Credit Hours -

Humanities Credit (A.A. Degree):	14
Office Technology (A.A.S. Degree):	5
Other (Please Specify):	1
(Both)	

Demographics. The demographics of the students were predominantly humanities rather than from business education--originally the course was developed only for students from business education. The first Changes and Choices course taught in 1990 consisted of all business education students. According to the demographics, in less than three years the student population of Changes and Choices had changed drastically. This information demonstrates a problem of low enrollment found in business education.

The table also shows more females enrolled in this course than males. Even though this is a typical ratio of females to males in a business education course, most of the students are taking Changes and Choices for Associate of Arts degree credit.

Table 3 shows the response of the eighteen students.

Table 3

Percentages of Students Rating the Ten Contributions of Humanities

Contributions	Percentages of Responses*			
	0 Never	1 Occasionally	2 Usually	3 Always
# 1 The ability to understand and empathize with others through the development of an understanding of human needs.		6%	44%	50%
# 2 An understanding, beyond proficiency in the basic language skills, of the unavoidable ambiguities, vagaries, and value-laden nature of all human language.		6%	63%	31%
# 3 An appreciation of the values of diverse cultures.		19%	44%	37%
# 4 An appreciation of what human beings hold in common which encourages their sense of civic purpose and responsible citizenship.		13%	31%	56%
# 5 An appreciation of what is significant about human life--past, present and projections for the future.		30%	37%	37%
# 6 The ability to recognize the limits and goals in applying analytical skills to the resolution of human problems and dilemmas.		30%	44%	31%

Table 3 continued

Percentages of Students Rating the Ten Contributions of Humanities

Contributions	Percentages of Responses*			
	0	1	2	3
	Never	Occasionally	Usually	Always
# 7			44%	56%
An appreciation of the variety of human purposes and values to be realized in solving problems.				
# 8		6%	44%	50%
The ability to approach and make decisions concerning problems that may not have a singular resolution.				
# 9			50%	50%
The ability to make judgments reflective of human values: ethical, aesthetic, and pragmatic.				
#10			37%	63%
An appreciation of the importance of responding appropriately to change as an essential and necessary human activity.				

*Due to rounding errors the total of the percentages for each contribution ranges from .99 to 1.05.

On Items #4, #7, and #10, more than 50 percent of the responders selected "Always." On Item #2, the majority chose "Usually" as an option.

Because of the large percent of "Always" and "Usually" responses, the students appear to understand how humanities contributes toward their learning. Two possible explanations for the "Always" and "Usually" responses are: a) students were influenced by the previous exposure to the material (surveyed in the sixteenth week of an eighteen-week semester) and/or b) there were a greater number of humanities students in the class who would have been exposed to similar material in preceding courses.

CHAPTER 5

RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

Recommendations

The following are recommendations based on this study:

1. Timing is crucial. Course and curriculum ownership issues could hinder progress towards integration. People need time to adjust to new ideas and guidance to obtain a valued goal.
2. Faculty members from both disciplines need to be informed on a consistent basis about an integrated course from the point of development through the point of evaluation. Communication is crucial in these situations.
3. Because Changes and Choices is an integrated course, it should be team taught. Students will benefit by learning from educators in each discipline. Team teaching an integrated course will provide cohesion between the disciplines.
4. Counselors and advisors be informed regarding the minimum requirements for the course.

5. Administration, faculty, students, and business and industry need to be involved in the evaluation process.

Conclusions

This study presented material on the need for developing curricula that include both hard and soft skills. Changes and Choices, an integrated humanities and business education course, was presented to show the possibilities of interdisciplinarity education.

The faculty interviewed agreed the course was a positive learning experience for the students. Interviews and surveys illustrated how an integrated humanities and business course could benefit students and faculty from either discipline.

Major obstacles encountered in maintaining the course are: a) territorial issues between disciplines, b) budget and personnel constraints of team teaching, c) changing demographics of students from occupational to arts and science, and d) lack of formal evaluation process.

Obstacles are surmountable with commitment and support from administration, faculty, students, and business and industry. Based on the author's

observations, the key to success was open and consistent communication.

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Appendix A

**SHARED VISION MODEL SITE TIMELINE
COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT**

<u>TASK</u>	<u>DEADLINE</u>	<u>PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY</u>
1. Select the Humanities and Occupational Technology (OT) Co-Chairs and the faculty representatives from each of the three campuses	4/1/89	Instructional Council
2. Distribute Task Force questionnaire to OT faculty, full- and part-time	4/15/89	OT Committee Members from each campus
3. Review of questionnaire results by full- and part-time Humanities faculty on each campus	4/25/89	Humanities Committee Members from each campus
4. Develop outcomes for program and humanities course	4/25/89	Steering Committee
5. Advise curriculum committees on each campus of new course coming in September	5/1/89	Steering Committee
6. Send Interim report on desired outcomes onto Task Force	5/1/89	Administrator
7. Prepare draft of program outcomes and the new humanities course	8/1/89	Co-Chairs of Steering Committee
8. Provide information and questionnaires to Advisory Committees on each campus	9/1/89	Steering Committee Members on each campus
9. Review draft of prepared course and program outcomes on TIE	9/1/89	Steering Committee

Appendix A

SHARED VISION MODEL SITE TIMELINE
COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT

Page 2

<u>TASK</u>	<u>DEADLINE</u>	<u>PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY</u>
10. Request curriculum committee approval; Send report to Shared Vision Task Force	9/15/89	Steering Committee; Co-Chairs
11. Incorporate new course in appropriate documents	9/15/89	Steering Committee
12. Put the course in the Spring Schedule	10/1/89	Appropriate Campus Coordinator
13. Publicize the project in the newspaper and on each campus	10/31/89	Administrator
14. Have new course materials ready	11/1/89	Co-Chairs
15. Seek Transferability	1/1/90	Steering Committee
16. Integrate humanities component into OT technical courses and offer humanities course	1/10/90	Each campus
17. Evaluate course and program integration	5/10/90	Shared Vision Task Force and internal measures
18. Present the new integrated curriculum, course process, and content at AACJC in Kansas City	10/90; 3/91	Community College District; Steering Committee

Appendix B

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Why integrate humanities and business education?
2. How did this course come about?
3. What were the initial benefits of the course? problems?
4. What is the purpose of humanities? office technology?
5. What are the objectives of the course?
6. How does this course differ from the mainstream curriculum?
7. What types of skills would the students learn from this course that would not be learned elsewhere?
8. What are soft skills? How do they differ from hard skills?
9. How was the curriculum chosen for this course?

Appendix B

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Page 2

10. How does this course meet the needs of the students?
11. How do you see humanities? office technology? Has this course changed your view of the other discipline?
12. What are the interconnections of the two disciplines? What are the commonalities of the two?
13. How do the two disciplines differ?
14. What kind of support have you received from faculty? students? administration?

 Before:

 During:

 After:
15. Was the course evaluated after its implementation? If not, how would you evaluate it?
16. What kind of problems have you encountered after the implementation of the course?
17. What are the benefits of the course now after implementation?

Appendix B

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Page 3

18. What would you change in the course? Why?

19. What recommendations would you give someone contemplating integrating humanities and a business education course?

20. Would you support a program in another school? Do you believe that more schools should adopt more integrated courses?

COMMENTS:

Appendix C

INTERVIEWS INFORMED CONSENT

The purpose of the study is to describe the issues, problems, and benefits associated with the integration of a humanities and business education course.

Your participation is voluntary and you may discontinue participation at any time. The author has asked to interview you on the integration of humanities and business education. A tape recorder will be used by the author to aid in notetaking. After the study has concluded, the notes be destroyed and the tape recordings erased by the author. Only the author will have access to the interview transcripts and tapes. The subject matter discussed in the interview will be used only in the study. The resulting paper will not list nor refer to your name.

Risks involved are minimal for you as the participant since the interview transcripts and tapes are seen and heard only by the author. The benefits for your participation would be your aiding in describing the unique and significant contributions integrating a humanities and business education course.

The author is a graduate student in Educational Psychology at the University of Northern Iowa in Cedar Falls, Iowa. The author's advisor is Dr. Len Froyen. His phone number is 273-2844.

If you have any questions about the research and about the rights of research subjects, please contact the office of the Human Subjects Coordinator, University of Northern Iowa, 273-2748.

I am fully aware of the nature and extent of my participation in this project as stated above and the possible risks arising from it. I hereby agree to participate in this project. I acknowledge that I have received a copy of this consent statement.

(Signature of subject or responsible agent)

Date

(Printed name of subject)

(Signature of investigator)

Appendix D

Thank you for participating in the forum on the specific contributions that the study of the Humanities may make to an Associate Degree graduate's performance in the workplace. Your input, as a potential employer of these graduates, will be of great value to the Task Force.

To further assist in developing recommendations regarding the curricula of two-year Associate Degree occupational programs, please circle the most appropriate response to the following questions:

However, if you are not sure of the applicability to your employees, make no response to that question.

0-Never
1-Occasionally
2-Usually
3-Always

	<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>
A. Would you expect job applicants with an Associate Degree to demonstrate:				
1 - An ability to work with others?	0	1	2	3
2 - Problem-solving ability?	0	1	2	3
3 - Decision-making skill?	0	1	2	3
4 - Adaptability to change?	0	1	2	3
B. Do you believe the following potential contributions of the Humanities are important for your employees?				
1 - The ability to understand and empathize with others through the development of an understanding of human needs and problems.	0	1	2	3
2 - An understanding, beyond proficiency in the basic language skills, of the unavoidable ambiguities, vagaries and value-laden nature of all human language.	0	1	2	3
3 - An appreciation of the values of diverse cultures.	0	1	2	3
4 - An appreciation of what human beings hold in common which encourages their sense of civic purpose and responsible citizenship.	0	1	2	3
5 - An appreciation of what is significant about human life - past, present and projections for the future.	0	1	2	3
6 - The ability to recognize the limits and goals in applying analytical skills to the resolution of human problems and dilemmas.	0	1	2	3
7 - An appreciation of the variety of human purposes and values to be realized in solving problems.	0	1	2	3
8 - The ability to approach and make decisions concerning problems that may not have a singular resolution.	0	1	2	3
9 - The ability to make judgements reflective of human values: ethical, aesthetic, and pragmatic.	0	1	2	3
10 - An appreciation of the importance of responding appropriately to change as an essential and necessary human activity.	0	1	2	3

Appendix D

- C. Do you believe the following competencies will contribute to the ability to work with others?
- | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 - An understanding of what values motivate people. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 2 - An understanding that human and institutional motivations may differ. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 3 - An appreciation of the perspectives of others. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 4 - An understanding of the basic feelings we all share with others. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 5 - An ability to look through the eyes of others. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 6 - An understanding of how words carry with them value judgements. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 7 - An understanding of the elements of vagueness and ambiguity in language. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 8 - An understanding that people share more in common than they have differences. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 9 - An understanding of the ways people have found for learning how to live and achieve together in order to prosper. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 10 - An understanding of the values and problems arising from a society comprised of diverse cultures. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 11 - An understanding of human needs and problems. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
- D. Do you believe the following competencies will contribute to problem-solving ability?
- | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 - An understanding of past approaches to problem-solving. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 2 - An understanding of the limits to analytical skills in the resolution of human problems and dilemmas. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 3 - An understanding that there are a variety of analytical methods. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 4 - An understanding that there are some human experiences that cannot be fully analyzed or qualified. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 5 - An ability to evaluate alternative solutions in terms of the objectives to achieved. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 6 - An ability to understand the factors contributing to the problem. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 7 - An understanding that not everyone in a given situation may share a common purpose or hold the same values in the same order. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 8 - An appreciation of the perspectives of others. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 9 - An understanding of the basic feelings we all share with others. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 10 - An understanding of human needs and problems. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 11 - An ability to look through the eyes of others. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 12 - An ability to consider factors beyond the basic service or product. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |

Appendix D

- E. Do you believe the following competencies will contribute to decision-making skill?
- | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|
| 1 - An understanding that some problems may have more than one answer. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 2 - An ability to consider factors beyond the basic purpose of a service or product. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 3 - An understanding of the aesthetic effects of a product or service. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 4 - An understanding of the concerns and values of people. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 5 - An ability to apply ethical principles. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 6 - An understanding of what values motivate people. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 7 - An understanding that human and institutional motivations may differ. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
- F. Do you believe the following competencies will contribute to adaptability to change?
- | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|
| 1 - An understanding of human needs and problems. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 2 - An understanding of the importance of preparing for change. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 3 - An ability to analyze the situation to understand factors contributing to the change-oriented situation. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
- G. Please provide the following information for the purpose of response analysis:
- 1 - Type of business or organization:
- Manufacturing _____
- Service _____
- Government _____
- Health _____
- Other _____
- 2 - City and state in which located:
-
- 3 - Number of employees:
- Less than 50 _____
- 50 to 100 _____
- 100 to 500 _____
- 500 to 1,000 _____
- over 1,000 _____

SHARED VISION TASK FORCE
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Appendix E

April 20, 1993

STUDENTS OF CHANGES AND CHOICES

Directions: Please circle the most appropriate response to the following questions; however, if you are not sure how to respond to the question, make no response to that question.

	0 - NEVER 1 - OCCASIONALLY 2 - USUALLY 3 - ALWAYS			
DO YOU BELIEVE THE FOLLOWING POTENTIAL CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE HUMANITIES ARE IMPORTANT TO YOU AS A GRADUATE OF A PROGRAM?	0	1	2	3
1. The ability to understand and empathize with others through the development of an understanding of human needs and problems.	0	1	2	3
2. An understanding, beyond proficiency in the basic language skills, of the unavoidable ambiguities, vagaries and value-laden nature of all human language.	0	1	2	3
3. An appreciation of the values of diverse cultures.	0	1	2	3
4. An appreciation of what human beings hold in common which encourages their sense of civic purpose and responsible citizenship.	0	1	2	3
5. An appreciation of what is significant about human life - past, present and projections for the future.	0	1	2	3
6. The ability to recognize the limits and goals in applying analytical skills to the resolution of human problems and dilemmas.	0	1	2	3
7. An appreciation of the variety of human purposes and values to be realized in solving problems.	0	1	2	3
8. The ability to approach and make decisions concerning problems that may not have a singular resolution.	0	1	2	3
9. The ability to make judgments reflective of human values: ethical, aesthetic, and pragmatic.	0	1	2	3
10. An appreciation of the importance of responding appropriately to change as an essential and necessary human activity.	0	1	2	3

Appendix F

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

DIRECTIONS: Please answer the following information by placing a check by the appropriate response.

AGE -

17 to 27 years old _____

28 to 38 years old _____

39 to 49 years old _____

50 to 60 years old _____

61 and above _____

GENDER -

Male _____

Female _____

CREDIT HOURS -

Humanities Credit (A.A. Degree) _____

Office Technology (A.A.S. Degree) _____

Other (Please Specify) _____
