

Four Models for Conducting the Introductory Business Course

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ABSTRACT: The introduction to business course provides a critical opportunity to mold students' perceptions about business. In this paper, the authors discuss four different approaches to conducting introductory business courses. These include a survey of the discipline, a philosophical approach, a discipline-specific approach, and an entrepreneurial venture approach. Regardless of format, these approaches focus on the integration of theological constructs and recognize the value of molding students from the start of their academic journey.

KEYWORDS: introductory business course

INTRODUCTION

It is difficult to determine the value of a student's introductory business course. The course is the student's first impression of the field, and it can have a great impact. Such a course is capable of altering the trajectory of students' lives. Stakeholders involved in the implementation of such a course may have different objectives; students are interested in a degree, professors are interested in content, and administrators are interested in retention. The first-year introductory business course is the metaphorical mouth of the river where the confluence takes place and all stakeholder interests are aligned. This paper will review multiple methods of introducing students to the discipline and offer a range of actions and activities to help all constituents meet their goals.

LITERATURE REVIEW

First-year introductory courses have risen in popularity. In 1988, 62% of colleges conducted a first-year seminar. That number rose to 82% by 2000 (Mamrick as cited in Tobolowsky, 2005). It is no surprise that administrators are focused on increasing enrollment (and retention), and the introductory course has become important in achieving that objective. Coakley and Sousa (2013) explained, "University administrators and educators continue to explore and implement new approaches for delivering coursework. Ultimately, they are all attempting to achieve the same goal; increasing the level of student engagement and retention of knowledge while maintaining educational quality" (p. 1).

First-year introductory courses were originally designed to focus on academic skills and an orientation to the campus. Because business schools traditionally begin teaching their content later in the academic course sequence, students often do not take their first business course until their sophomore year and their major content in their junior year. Over time, university administrators began viewing courses such as introduction to business as a cost-effective strategy for increased retention in the institution while deans saw them as vehicles to increase retention within the business major (Lifton et al., 2007).

Lifton et al. (2007) found that discipline-specific introductory business courses “correlated with retention to sophomore year in-major” (p. 118) and, more importantly, to completing the business major. They added:

Pragmatically, this statistically significant difference in retention-in-major to sophomore year suggests that another 16 students would have begun their sophomore year as business majors had curriculum linkages occurred in all sections—enough of a difference in colleges like Ithaca College with low student-faculty ratios to affect instructor staffing patterns and justify more teaching resources to those departments that utilize curriculum linkages to help retain their majors. (p. 119)

Erickson and Stone (2012) found a significant positive correlation between actual retention and students’ satisfaction with the business curriculum. When students felt their university’s business program was better compared with other schools, they were more likely to return to the university after their freshman year (Erickson & Stone, 2012).

Flanders’s (2017) study confirmed the value of an introductory business course because freshmen successfully completing the course within their major the first semester are more likely to return for the second semester as compared to freshmen who did not take the introductory business course. The study also concluded that freshmen students completing the introductory course had a higher GPA; therefore, freshmen students should take the introductory business course during their first semester (Flanders, 2017).

Inputs

At the same time, faculty are using the introductory business course to better align students’ perceptions and abilities with business realities. Parris and McInnis-Bowers (2017) designed their introductory business class to meet society’s expectations that universities prepare business students to be responsible business leaders for positive change and become practitioners of socially conscious business practices. Their introductory business course was started in

2014 and replicated 50 times. Students reported that the course made their business education more relevant, challenged them to perform well by being socially conscious, and connected them to their own aspirations (Parris & McInnis-Bowers, 2017).

While the literature on the introductory business course is small, it is consistent. Specialized introductory business courses provide a myriad of positive effects. Cox et al. (2005) found that the introductory business course had a number of positive impacts on student outcomes. Results included higher GPA, greater academic efficacy, a greater sense of community, and greater retention.

Bisping and Patron (2008) concluded instructors designing an introductory business course need to prepare their material knowing that students’ personality plays a role in performance. The need for specialized curriculum necessitates a unique approach in course design when compared to many other business courses, creating a need for more hands-on experiences for the students.

Coakley and Sousa (2013) converted an introduction to business class from a lecture format to a format that included experiential learning in the form of a business plan project, active learning through hands-on experiences, and cooperative learning through team-based and peer-to-peer interactions. They found that students gained significantly from experiential learning and active learning in addition to lecture-based learning. Cooperative learning results were mixed. Team-based components were well received, but peer-learning was only beneficial when the peers were competent to help them grow (in this case, when upperclassmen assigned to the freshmen had the requisite knowledge to really help them with their business plan projects).

Some findings are obvious. Reviewing their study about absenteeism in an introductory business course, Sauers et al. (2005) found a very strong statistical relationship between absenteeism and academic performance. Specifically, the students who were absent from class on the random days that attendance was taken performed significantly lower on subsequent tests. In addition, the total number of days absent from class was negatively correlated with student performance on the comprehensive final exam. Finally, after GPA, the number of days absent was the second most important factor in predicting student performance on the final exam (p. 26).

Other findings might be surprising. For example, Ruth and Connors (2012) found no statistical difference in academic performance between those who took an introduction to business class online or in the classroom. While academic performance was no worse online, other factors related to retention and satisfaction (such as student engage-

ment and community) were not measured. The introduction to business class is changing for all these reasons. As Cox et al. (2005) concluded:

There is little question that there is a call to reconfigure the first-year experience to bring together the teaching of discipline-based concepts in harmony with developing students' specific business skills in order to prepare them to meet the challenges of today's managers. (p. 41)

The purpose of this paper is to identify various approaches to an introductory business course. If a first impression has greater impact than later impressions, faculty who teach the introduction to business class (or an equivalent gateway to the business major) bear a great responsibility. In the same way that faulty assumptions lead to wrong conclusions, a negative experience can lead students to exit the major, and poor teaching can set the stage for more significant problems in students' careers.

Impact

In addition to the benefits of introductory business courses listed above, another benefit involves preparing students to recognize the social and spiritual impact business has on society. Business management has moved through various waves of prevailing theories. In the West, we moved from a classical approach that emphasized scientific management to administrative management, time and motion studies, and bureaucratic management. The Human Relations Movement appeared to be a departure from previous approaches, but even the Hawthorne studies were focused on increasing efficiency (Gerdes, 2011).

The focus of management has always been on efficiency, which works wonderfully for things, but not so well with people. New modeling and forecasting tools allow organizations to be more efficient than ever, but managers have continued to veer off course ethically despite technological improvements in the science of management. Over time, we realized that bottom-line efficiency is not the only bottom line.

In the 1990s, Elkington attempted to correct this problem with the triple bottom line, an approach that required three separate bottom lines, one for profit, one for people, and one for the planet. While “[t]he idea enjoyed some success in the turn-of-the-century zeitgeist of corporate social responsibility, climate change and fair trade,” (“Triple Bottom Line,” 2009, para. 3), it did little to prevent the dot.com crisis of 2000 or the financial collapse of 2008.

MBA's led the charge into what was perhaps the greatest self-inflicted business disaster in our lifetime. After businessmen inadvertently brought on the 2008 financial crisis

through a mix of analytical acumen and hubris, business schools began to re-evaluate their curriculum and called for additional ethics courses. An NPR report captured the sentiment well:

The financial crisis is energizing an old debate about what the role and mission of business schools should be. Some say it adds urgency to the case that B-schools must do more than just teach managers how to maximize profits. (Brooks, 2009, para. 22)

Harvard University's class of 2009 offered a new solution—the MBA Oath (Kornbluh, 2018). The MBA oath was a voluntary, business-version of the Hippocratic oath which read:

As a manager, my purpose is to serve the greater good by bringing people and resources together to create value that no single individual can build alone. Therefore, I will seek a course that enhances the value my enterprise can create for society over the long term. I recognize my decisions can have far-reaching consequences that affect the well-being of individuals inside and outside my enterprise, today and in the future. As I reconcile the interests of different constituencies, I will face difficult choices.

Therefore, I promise:

- **I will** act with utmost integrity and pursue my work in an ethical manner.
- **I will** safeguard the interests of my shareholders, co-workers, customers, and the society in which we operate.
- **I will** manage my enterprise in good faith, guarding against decisions and behavior that advance my own narrow ambitions but harm the enterprise and the societies it serves.
- **I will** understand and uphold, both in letter and in spirit, the laws and contracts governing my own conduct and that of my enterprise.
- **I will** take responsibility for my actions, and I will represent the performance and risks of my enterprise accurately and honestly.
- **I will** develop both myself and other managers under my supervision so that the profession continues to grow and contribute to the well-being of society.
- **I will** strive to create sustainable economic, social, and environmental prosperity worldwide.
- **I will** be accountable to my peers and they will be accountable to me for living by this oath.

This oath I make freely, and upon my honor. (“MBA Oath,” n.d.)

Alternative

The triple bottom line did not prevent the 2008 crisis and it is doubtful that the MBA oath will be any more successful. Both approaches are add-ons to the existing structure of business education. In contrast, Christian business faculty bring an element to the table that redeems fallen human actions, infusing meaning and purpose in value creation. Faith in the Creator is grounding; it provides vision and a reason beyond the parchment barriers of the triple bottom line and the MBA Oath. Since people are made in the image of God (Genesis 1:27), if such thinking is embedded in the DNA of the business curriculum from the start, it would be reasonable to assume that this approach has a greater chance of success.

This is considerably different than an approach that adds an ethics class to an existing curriculum, adds additional bottom lines, or adds an oath to a utilitarian philosophy of efficiency in organizations. The implications are staggering. Let us offer an example.

Servant leadership is quite popular, but the formula offered by Greenleaf (1970) was groundless. He wrote, “The servant-leader is servant first.... It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first” (p. 7). In Greenleaf’s paradigm, it would be nice to have leaders who desired to serve instead of leaders who only desired to lead, and he described characteristics of those who serve, but there is no reason that they *must* serve. It is just an option. In contrast, Christ *requires* service for Christian leaders:

Jesus called them together and said, ‘You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be your slave—just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.’ (Matthew 20:25-28)

A faith-based approach sends a consistent message about the value of people and our role as stewards of that which has been entrusted to us. In contrast to the triple bottom line, Rodin (2010) wrote:

As God’s people, we are called to reflect the image of our Creator God through whole, redeemed relationships at four levels—with God, with our self, with our neighbor and with creation—bringing glory to God and practicing in each the ongoing work of the faithful steward. (p. 33)

This kind of thinking, rooted in an individual’s identity in Christ, has greater staying power. When large sums of money are to be made by questionable means, the Oath will be a slim defense against deeply ingrained “survival of

the fittest” justifications. But a fully developed Christian worldview has greater tensile strength to stand against this type of ethical breach.

WHY THE INTRODUCTION TO BUSINESS COURSE?

Christian professors are inculcating a Christian worldview in colleges across the nation, but they do not generally see business students until upper-level classes. We have the opportunity in the introductory business course to set students on a path toward becoming the type of business leaders who seek to redeem rather than acquire. The introductory business course is an opportunity for professors to introduce the vision and values of human flourishing through business early in the student’s experience.

Experiential learning is at the heart of the new approaches to the introductory business courses. Kolb’s (1984) Experiential Learning Theory Model suggests that learners move through a four-stage cycle that consists of direct experience, reflection, development of conclusions, and action. Through this process, learners create new knowledge (Kolb, 1984). Each of the approaches below follow this method in some way.

An introductory business course contains many benefits. Here we provide four primary approaches, all different, as the contrast will provide different perspectives. Common to all is an intentional focus on values, vision, and biblical integration. None of these institutions see *ethics* as an add-on. Rather, we all seek to deeply embed a relationship with God that extends to concern about fellow men from the earliest possible point in the process. We believe that the value of the introduction to business course is not just useful for retention and greater academic competence, but it is a place where students begin to refine their discipline-specific Christian worldview.

FOUR APPROACHES

Exposure to Each Discipline: Geneva College

The introduction to business course at Geneva College, formally known as Fundamentals of Business, is a three-credit hour course that meets for 55 minutes, three times a week. It is a survey course of the main fields of business. The goal is to familiarize students with each discipline which should help them identify their interests and career path.

Catalog Description

Business Foundations is a survey course designed to provide students with exposure to general business concepts

and theories. Students will be introduced to the many disciplines of business including economics, human and operations management, accounting, finance, marketing, and ethics.

Summary of Aims

This approach is praxis-oriented and is designed to help introduce students to the college and their vocational calling. On the first day of class, professors go to great lengths to help the students understand the nature of the class by introducing the class metaphor—“drinking from a firehose.” It is explained that this class is designed as a survey course and will be “a mile wide and an inch deep.” The Department of Business, Accounting and Sport Management uses this class as an introduction to the discipline and as a retention tool. The class is also popular with out-of-discipline majors to get an overview of business. Additionally, the survey-style pedagogy helps students to verify their selection of business as a major and to fine-tune their choice for those who want to specialize in a specific business discipline. The topic of vocational calling is discussed as students are introduced to business through a Christian worldview.

How the Class Is Conducted

The text provides all necessary course material. Students are provided with a lecture, supported by PowerPoint decks to expose them to the basic terminology and general concepts of each business discipline. Experiential activities as well as videos are used to reinforce major concepts and theories. Students are regularly broken into small groups to discuss homework and for exam-prep competition.

Each discipline is given approximately two weeks of class time (four or six class sessions at 55 minutes each). Supplemental information and course material is added as needed to ensure students are given the foundational knowledge and familiarity with material they will need as they progress to higher-level courses. Each member of the business department faculty has been asked to review the section of the course that deals with their specific discipline (accounting, marketing, etc.) and has provided feedback on what information needs to be added to the textbook materials to enhance course effectiveness.

Culminating Experience

There are multiple culminating experiences for each discipline. At the end of each section (two weeks), the lead faculty member of that sub-discipline is invited to speak to the class. This is the business department’s—and each faculty member’s—opportunity to advocate for business as a major and their specific discipline’s merit as a major/concentration. Having each faculty member speak to the class also exposes the students to all business department faculty members, which helps to build both relationships and comfort levels. At the end of each section of material

the class engages in exam review. The exam prep used is a gameshow-style competition that has become affectionately known as Fuss-Feud. The class is broken into two families and competes by answering questions designed to replicate those they will experience on the actual exam. The winning team earns bonus points, which usually makes for an exciting and lively time. As a culminating integration experience, students are asked to write an essay dealing with the integration of faith and business. Since most students are underclassmen, usually first- and second-semester freshmen, they are provided with a specific resource to direct their thinking. Cafferky’s (2013) pamphlet *Scriptural Foundations for Management* is used and is a tremendous resource. He provides students with a spiritual perspective that is needed to prepare a person of faith for a career in the world of business. Students are asked to reflect on this resource and respond to the discussion questions he poses at the end.

The Discipline-Specific Method: Dallas Baptist University

Entrepreneurship majors at Dallas Baptist University (DBU) enroll in two, one-hour courses their freshman year, ENTR 1101 in the fall semester and ENTR 1102 in the spring. The courses are called Future Entrepreneurial Leaders (FuEL) 101 and 102 and each meet for one hour a week.

Catalog Description

Future Entrepreneurial Leaders 101 and 102 are designed to prepare entrepreneurship students for their role as entrepreneurs and to build a culture of excellence, dedication, and faith within the undergraduate entrepreneurship program. FuEL is comprised of in-class, on-campus, and off-campus activities that immerse students in the entrepreneurial ecosystem from the start of their college experience.

Summary of Aims

The goals of the FuEL classes include:

- Introducing students to basic concepts in entrepreneurship and exposing them to experiences of entrepreneurs.
- Helping students early in their university experience identify if entrepreneurship is the right pathway for them, and, if not, what other majors at DBU might be a better fit.
- Teaching students the role of business in society and how God uses business in his work of restoring creation to help them find their place in that work.
- Laying a preliminary understanding of the functions and benefits of free market economics.
- Building a culture of camaraderie, commitment, and excellence among entrepreneurship students.

How the Class Is Conducted

The course combines preparatory readings and videos that prompt questions in the classroom on topics such as

the nature and role of entrepreneurship in society, traits and behaviors of entrepreneurs, the role of one's faith in entrepreneurship, and the role of business in God's restorative work in creation.

In the first semester, students take the *StrengthsFinder 2.0* assessment (Rath, 2007) to begin learning how God has uniquely shaped them for the work they are called to do. In the second semester, students begin working on their professional network by creating a résumé, a LinkedIn profile, and connections with entrepreneurs, investors or bankers, and lawyers or accountants who work with startup businesses.

In addition to in-class work, students are required to take part in activities that immerse them in the entrepreneurial ecosystem in Dallas. From these experiences, students not only learn more about business but also begin to build a network of relationships on which they can call in the future as they seek mentors, internships, or job opportunities.

Each semester, students travel to the Estes State Prison to take part in a Prison Entrepreneurship Program event (www.pep.org), an organization that equips incarcerated men and women with life skills and business knowledge as they prepare for release.

Students also have the opportunity to take part in a One Million Cups of Coffee event (www.1millioncups.com), sponsored by the Kauffman Foundation, where they hear entrepreneurs pitch their business ideas. In the spring semester, students benefit from the Lion's Den Dallas-Fort Worth event (www.thelionsdendfw.com), hosted at DBU each year, in which faith-based founders pitch their businesses to an audience, including faith-based investors, with the hope of raising capital.

Culminating Experience

Students in the FuEL classes write reflection papers on the topics discussed in class as well as lessons learned from hearing guest speakers and taking part in various programs, such as PEP, One Million Cups, and The Lion's Den DFW.

Students also work on two group projects: presenting lessons learned from an episode of *How I Built This or Faith Driven Entrepreneur* podcasts and preparing and pitching a business idea. Since groups and teams play an important role in business and are utilized in most of the upper-level business courses, these assignments help students learn early how to work in groups and deal with challenging group dynamics.

In addition, in the fall semester, students write about their strengths identified through *StrengthsFinder 2.0* and how those strengths might be helpful in their future business endeavors. In the spring they learn how to tell stories and write their own story as a nascent entrepreneur.

In both semesters, students write about their understanding of the role of faith in their future work. In this way,

faculty can track the growth of the student's holistic understanding of faith integration from one semester to the next.

The Philosophical Approach: Charleston Southern University

The introductory business course at Charleston Southern University (CSU) is a three-credit hour course that meets for 50 minutes, three times per week. At CSU, the introductory business course was not designed to help students choose a major. It was designed to create interest in the beauty of business.

Catalog Description

BUSI 105: The World of Business

(3 hours) A foundations course that emphasizes decision making in an ever-changing world economy. The focus is on building a foundation for key success factors and life skills, including professionalism, communications, global and cultural awareness, team-based decision making, critical thinking, technological competence, and business language. Some emphasis is placed on career guidance, including an appreciation for the functional areas of business.

Summary of Aims

Recognizing that college students tend to be idealistic (Russell, 1980), the goal of the philosophical approach is to introduce students to business and help them consider what influential business leaders have achieved so that they might aspire to lofty and noble goals. It is not focused on the course structure of their major. It is a time for them to consider their calling.

How the Class Is Conducted

The course begins by focusing on the process of building a solid foundation in biblically based character traits (Philippians 4:8, Colossians 3:12). In the first few weeks of the course, students read, write, and reflect upon the need to embrace biblically based character traits such as integrity (Proverbs 11:3, Proverbs 12:22, Proverbs 28:6), humility, (Micah 6:8, Proverbs 11:12, Proverbs 12:15, Ephesians 4:2) and justice (Psalm 37:27-29, Psalm 106:3, Proverbs 21:3, Proverbs 21:15, Proverbs 29:7).

The development of biblically based character traits serves as the foundation for building all other concepts in business. Psalm 1:1-3 tells us that this is the path to success: Blessed is the one who does not walk in step with the wicked or stand in the way that sinners take or sit in the company of mockers, but whose delight is in the law of the Lord, and who meditates on his law day and night. That person is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither—whatever they do prospers.

Students are encouraged to see entering the marketplace as a legitimate “calling”—as significant as a calling to the ministry. Luther (1520) affirmed this perspective when he wrote:

Therefore I advise no one to enter any religious order or priesthood...unless he is forearmed with this knowledge and understands that the works of monks and priests, however holy and arduous they may be, do not differ one whit in the sight of God from the works of the rustic laborer in the field or the woman going about her household tasks, but that all works are measured before God by faith alone. (p. 45)

Students need to know that work is worship (Colossians 3:23-24). This concept of business as a holy calling is often revelatory to students. It is a core component of a biblical worldview of business.

This worldview begins with an understanding that God made all people in his image (Gen 1:27). Furthermore, every child of God has been blessed with unique gifts and talents (I Corinthians 12), so the course helps students seek to discover their strengths and their particular calling with Rath’s (2007) *Strengthsfinder 2.0*. Calvin (1555) reminded his readers:

We know that people were created for the express purpose of being employed in labor of various kinds, and that no sacrifice is more pleasing to God than when every person applies diligently to his or her own calling, and endeavors to live in such a manner as to contribute to the general advantage. (Para. 2)

The course also challenges students to understand that a business exists for a greater purpose than just profit. Professors want them to recognize and value the contributions of businesses that make a positive contribution to society by creating value. They want them to understand that profit is the reward received when a business accomplishes its purpose. They also want them to envision possibilities that they may have never imagined before.

This is achieved by introducing students to the work of influential business leaders. For example, instead of introducing them to finance as a college discipline, students read *Banker to the Poor*, Muhammad Yunus’s (2007) memoir. Yunus is the founder of the Grameen bank, the man who won the Nobel Peace Prize for creating a viable system of microcredit in Bangladesh. In this way, students begin to aspire to great things.

In the same way, professors do not teach what it is like to be an economics major. Instead, students read Koch’s (2007) *Science of Success*. Charles Koch of Koch Industries is the 11th richest person in the world and Chairman of Koch industries, the second largest privately held company in the

United States (“Billionaires: The Richest,” 2019). The book is filled with the economic principles upon which he has built his business.

Culminating Experience

While students wrestle with their own character and read about the struggles of well-known business leaders, they work in teams to create a business plan that will be judged by a number of faculty in a business plan competition at the end of the semester. The business plan provides students with synthetic experience to prepare them for the real world of business (Parris & McInnis-Bowers, 2017).

Through each of these experiences, professors hope that all their students gain clarity and purpose. The goal of the philosophical approach is not to answer the question: “What is your major?” Instead, faculty want them to wrestle with the larger question: “What is your calling?”

The Entrepreneurial Venture: Oklahoma Baptist University

The introductory business course at Oklahoma Baptist University (OBU) is a three-credit hour course that meets for 50 minutes, three times per week.

Catalog Description

An introductory business course designed to acquaint students with the ethical foundations of business and to explore careers in business. Topics include but are not limited to accounting, economics, entrepreneurship, international business, management, marketing, social entrepreneurship, technology, and résumé writing. Required for all BBA and computer science students. Open to all students who want to gain a basic understanding of the world of business. This is the cornerstone course for BBA and computer science students.

Summary of Aims

Through an actual entrepreneurial venture, students will have an opportunity to learn a variety of professional skills, such as time management, teamwork, and public speaking. They also develop a level of professionalism, which helps to prepare them to enter a career in business. Ethical business behavior is key during this process. Students also learn the basics of a variety of business disciplines, which are presented by both the course instructor and College of Business instructors.

How the Class Is Conducted

Ferrell et al.’s (2019) book, *M: Business*, provides the basic structure for the course material. The course material is introduced in a variety of ways to accommodate different learning styles: PowerPoint, discussion, small-group work, teamwork, and individual business briefings. Participation

in a team business exercise that includes a presentation to a group of mock investors is a major part of the course. The design of the course also includes components of a business internship, such as students writing their biographical sketches, creating a résumé, and writing an essay entitled, "This I Believe."

Culminating Experience

Twenty-five percent of the course grade is based on student participation in the business exercise with the purpose of creating a small business venture in which students propose a product to sell. Students are divided into teams of five to seven students each. Using Lynn's (2008) outline in *Venture Out: An Entrepreneurial Introduction to Business*, each team of students writes a business plan for a proposed project presentation. A mock group of investors is invited to hear each team's proposals during the fifth week of the semester. At the end of the presentations, the investors award up to \$500 in credit to each team to purchase their products to sell. Money is set aside in a specific account at OBU for this class project. Students use the OBU purchase order system to pay for their product orders; they sell their products, write a final report, and close their businesses down the 14th week of the semester. A requirement of the project is that 50% of the profits go into the College of Business Scholarship fund. The other 50% of the profits go to a charity chosen by each individual team.

This project began in 2006 and has successfully continued for 13.5 years—27 semesters. To date, students have raised \$56,929, and more than 35 different charities have received donations. Beginning five years ago, nine \$500 scholarships have been awarded to OBU business students each year. At the beginning of the project, enough money was raised from external donors to fund up to \$200 per team. Fifty percent of the profits were donated to charities and the other fifty percent was kept as retained earnings to increase the fund pool. The available funds grew to the present \$500 per team.

CONCLUSION

The evidence is clear. Students benefit from a clear introduction to the business discipline. In this paper, we have outlined four approaches to the introduction to business course. The first method is to introduce them to each discipline in the curriculum. The second method introduces students to a discipline-specific field. The third method is to focus them on the beauty of business. The fourth method engages them in an actual small-scale business venture. Each of these approaches have merit. We believe that as methods

of business education are ever changing, our colleagues may benefit from new approaches that will help their students follow their callings. As we conclude, we restate that these four methods are not the only ways. Nor do we claim that they are the best ways. We recognize that other institutions follow different approaches and encourage the cross-fertilization of ideas to better equip students. This was the impetus behind the development of this paper as faculty from the Christian Business Faculty Association (CBFA) sought to learn from each other and share what we know with each other. We hope it sparks conversation and that faculty cross-pollinate effective practices as we prepare our students to handle the business challenges of the 21st Century.

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