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Supporting the Changing Practices of Teaching in Business: University of St. Thomas Local Report

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Supporting the Changing Practices of Teaching in Business

University of St. Thomas Local Report
(in support of Ithaka S & R study)

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University Libraries

Supporting the Changing Practices of Teaching in Business

Executive Summary

During 2018-19 we participated in a national research project sponsored by Ithaka S & R. It is an exploratory study designed to understand the pedagogical practices of business instructors, learn about the degree to which business information fluency concepts are addressed, and determine how the libraries and other support providers on campus might improve services and resource availability to support teaching and learning. We interviewed 13 Opus College of Business faculty members, using a semi-structured interview methodology and questionnaire provided by Ithaka. We identified the following themes:

- **Business Course Content (what faculty teach):** primary teaching methods and content mentioned by the faculty included problem-based learning, case studies, and experiential learning methods; projects and problems incorporating data analysis; and accounting, financial statement, and company/industry/market analysis.
- **Information Literacy Instruction (what librarians teach):** some faculty have librarians come in to class, generally to explain the resources, how to find them, and basic search strategies. Others refer students to visit with librarians for help on research projects outside of class time. Faculty interviewed don't generally think of librarians teaching critical thinking or research skills beyond the mechanics of searching.
- **Student Learning and Assessment:** roughly half of our interviewees mentioned student assessment issues and their ongoing efforts to design effective assessments. Some spoke of the assessment tools available in the Canvas CMS, and most of those felt that the analytics available there do not offer the insight on student engagement that they wish for.
- **Faculty Support Needs:** faculty identified three main sources of support: the library (keeping up on and using materials/content, some research instruction), our faculty development center (developing new course content, learning about pedagogy), and STELAR (St. Thomas E-Learning & Research Center); technology/Canvas support, instructional design)
- **Materials & Content:** about half of the interviewees mention using library subscription content; also, about half use traditional or online textbooks that include supplemental materials like problem sets, quizzes, etc. A similar number also use case studies of various kinds, and roughly half use video content, though most were unaware of the library content in this area.
- **Technology Needs:** faculty mentioned Canvas support and functionality issues, video capabilities and production support, and classroom facilities and technologies as primary areas where they receive support now and, in some cases, where improvements could be made.

Concluding Thoughts & Next Steps:

- *OCB Faculty are generally positive about their interactions with and levels of support from the Libraries and the STELAR Center*
- *Raising awareness of library resources, content, and services*
- *Availability of the library to support business information literacy goals, including the requirements of the new curriculum*

Introduction

Founded in 1885, the University of St. Thomas is a Catholic university based in the Twin Cities of St. Paul and Minneapolis. St. Thomas offers bachelor's degrees in over 85 major fields of study and more than 45 graduate degree programs.

In 2018-2019, The University of St Thomas and 15 other institutions participated in an Ithaka S+R study to investigate the methodology and tools undergraduate business faculty use to teach. Ithaka S+R is "a not-for-profit organization helping the academic community use digital technologies to preserve the scholarly record and to advance research and teaching in sustainable ways." (<https://sr.ithaka.org/our-work/>)

This report will outline how University of St. Thomas undergraduate business faculty use materials and technologies from the library and other places to teach their classes, and the role librarians play in working with faculty to assist with assignments and research.

The Opus College of Business (OCB)

Opus College of Business serves 3,200 graduate and undergraduate students. There are 13 concentrations in the undergrad business program, 5 MBA programs, 30 executive Education programs, and 5 specialized masters programs. (<https://business.stthomas.edu/opus-advantage/facts-figures/>) In 2010, St. Thomas became the first private university in Minnesota to receive accreditation by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business International (AACSB).

Methodology

Prior to the project beginning, we sought and received approval to proceed from the Institutional Review Board (IRB). We also received training from Ithaka in the semi-structured interview method and in doing this form of qualitative research. In September 2018 members of our group met with the OCB Dean's staff to introduce our project and seek their endorsement. In October 2018, we met with Business department chairs and emailed a brief summary to all business faculty. We also wrote an article for the OCB faculty newsletter. Members of the group identified and contacted an initial list of faculty to solicit for interviews from September 2018 – November 2018. We looked for faculty who taught at the undergrad level for the last couple of years, and we sought a balance of departments where we had extensive contact with faculty, and those who we have not worked with as closely. We conducted interviews from November 2018 – February 2019, completing 13 faculty interviews across six departments of OCB.

We scheduled one-hour interviews that took place either in offices or our library conference room or via Zoom video conferencing. We did not offer incentives for participation. We conducted semi-structured interviews using questions developed by Ithaka S+R that focused on current teaching methods, working with materials and content, teaching tools, and aspirations for teaching in the future. The interviews were digitally recorded, we informed each participant of that fact verbally and via written consent forms, and the audio files were then sent to a professional transcription company to prepare written transcripts used in the analysis. Consistent with the semi-structured interview method, the librarians adapted the questions to the flow of the interviews as necessary, and asked follow-up questions where appropriate.

The investigators read every transcript and developed a coding scheme as a group based on common themes from the interviews. Each of the investigators coded 3-4 transcripts by hand, and the data from our coded transcripts was entered into NVIVO qualitative research software, which we used to help draw some insights for our analysis.

Themes

Business Course Content (what faculty teach)

One theme we sought to examine concerned business course content: what pedagogies, techniques, content areas, or teaching methods did faculty members choose to highlight in our interviews? Our results for this theme are obviously heavily influenced by the individual professors we interviewed, their disciplines, the courses they've taught, and what the curriculum calls for in those courses.

Problem-based learning, case studies, and experiential learning methods

Almost all interviewees mentioned using problem-based learning or case studies in their teaching.

"There are some skills that you do not acquire by lecturing. There has to be some application element."

This use of cases or problem-based learning techniques incorporates both case materials written by the professors themselves, incorporating personal experience and disciplinary knowledge (which was quite common across disciplines), as well as published case studies, most frequently Harvard Business Press case studies. These are typically set up in "Harvard Course Packs," where students receive a link to an online platform for the cases, which they pay a fee to access and download.

A related subset of these interviews spoke in more depth about incorporating **experiential learning components** into their courses, often engaging their students to work with actual clients on real-world business problems. Four of this group mentioned this part of their pedagogy in some depth (though anecdotally, this is probably more prevalent at UST—students who desire this experience can have it).

"Mostly just as a methods course, what I have done in terms of methodology, so I have my students work on a semester-long project. They're responsible for finding a client, finding a marketing problem, going out and doing the secondary research, conducting a focus group, fielding a questionnaire, and now they're in their last steps this semester of analyzing their survey and writing up their final report. Really, in terms of experiential learning, I like to make sure that my students can go through all of those steps."

Another professor in this group also mentioned the use of games and simulations as part of their teaching arsenal.

Data Analysis

Projects and problems incorporating data analysis (both primary data collected by students in survey research, and secondary data collected by others) in varying forms was common across disciplines, mentioned in various forms by more than half of our interviewees. Kinds of analytic problems and data types mentioned included:

- Demographics and psychographics of audiences and markets
- Focus group and survey research results
- Competitive and industry analysis
- Macroeconomic data
- Data modeling techniques, skills, and software

"For the undergraduate marketing students, I teach our marketing research course, which is a survey-based course. I teach students effectively how to go out and conduct survey research and what is involved with getting background information you need to design a good questionnaire to get at the answers that you hope will support better decision making."

"The discipline-specific is being able to do the industry analysis work, and the market sizing work, the customer demographics and lifestyle work. For my classes ... yeah, and basic competitive research, which might fall in the industry analysis, might not. Those are sort of the four categories of secondary research data they need to know how to gather and evaluate."

More than one interviewee mentioned the desire of the business community for UST business graduates to have well-developed analytic skills, and very specifically, the desire for them to be very proficient in Microsoft Excel. Interviewees indicated that developing this proficiency is incorporated into various courses in the disciplines, sometimes creating tension in balancing the coverage of these hands-on practical skills with the necessary disciplinary theoretical and technical knowledge that is necessary for mastery of the subjects.

"We keep hearing from the employers, they need Excel skills. They need Excel. They need Excel. I cringe at that because to me, that's like teaching them how to run a 10-key adding machine. . . But I didn't think that was worthy of college credit and I cringe at Excel but that's the way the world has turned so we accommodate that."

Accounting, Financial Statement, or Company Analysis

This is another well-represented grouping of interviewee comments. More than half of our interviewees mentioned aspects of this kind of information being a focus of or component of their courses, also across disciplines. A couple of the interviewees also mentioned a more specialized aspect of this kind of work, that of researching relevant accounting standards.

"I tend to have the students do two things. One, I have them work through a problem to become familiar with the accounting for it. And then I have them do what I call an analytical exercise which may be a footnote out of an actual set of financial statements. It may be an article out of the popular press. It may be something I've run into when I've been consulting or talking with people so it's kind of a, 'What are we talking about? What are the procedures? Here's a problem for you to go do and you know what the resulting information is'."

"So I'll give them a paragraph about an actual financial reporting situation. And I try and get them to think critically about what the accounting issue or question is and what general accounting guidance there might be there to help them address it. And then the cases I assign -- and I tend to assign three or four a semester and they require three to five written pages -- and I have a specific format I have them go through because it's similar to what they'd be expected to write if they were in an accounting firm. They then have to go through a similar process except they're expected to dig into the standards a little bit more."

Information Literacy Instruction (what librarians teach)

While many of the respondents had complimentary things to say about librarians and library resources, many also indicated that they frequently use content not found via library subscriptions, such as case studies and videos (like TED talks) in their courses. For faculty that do use library resources, when asked what specifically they ask librarians to teach, many responses centered around practical skills of identifying appropriate databases and methods of searching them effectively.

"But I'll say just go to the library and talk to a librarian and what I'll joke is I'll say like they'll probably do the homework for you. If you just ask them what I've asked you to do they'll walk you through it."

"A simple demonstration by somebody from the library just to come in to class for 20 minutes to a half an hour some time. And show them how to use the databases we have. I chuckle about this. They all know how to do keyword searches pretty well. But I don't think they're necessarily all that savvy about what's in the different databases and what types of questions they might ask of the different databases."

As important as teaching basic search skills in databases, it is a surface level instruction that doesn't address other aspects of business information literacy skills or evaluating and thinking critically about the information.

A couple of the respondents spoke about teaching research skills to students, which is something that they think that they should work on.

"I've assumed that they've done research projects in the past and saying, 'Okay, you're marketing students. Here's some tools to find some marketing information.' I may need to go through a little more...provide more guidance to them than I have in the past in that regard."

and

"Part of going out and conducting marketing research is just going out and seeing what's already there, making sense of the context so that before you go out and conduct either a focus group or survey you have a better handle on what you should be asking. Now, that said, I think that is one part of my class that I could probably.. I think my students could use more guidance from me as to...Just in terms of doing the research."

In both cases, the respondent doesn't indicate the potential role that a librarian might play in helping teach research skills that go beyond the mechanics of searching.

Teaching critical thinking skills was only specifically mentioned by a few respondents, and none of the faculty interviewed have worked with a librarian on this particular skill set.

"I don't traditionally think of you as providing those kind of things [critical thinking skills] You guys are great if I have a question about anything. How to find the resources and doing things. In terms of the development of those skills in terms of using those resources, maybe that's an underutilized resource."

"I would prefer that somehow it was more explicit for undergrads in their liberal arts education to directly be given the research skills. Now we're pushing more and more downstream on that end of our curriculum. I get it. This is a big debate within the school of business on critical thinking, and who's responsible for it, and where, and when."

We are left with the impression that when faculty respondents do consult with librarians and use library resources, it is only for the basics of identifying and mechanical searching of our databases. Librarians don't tend to be asked by faculty to assist with research or teaching critical thinking skills to students.

Next steps can be for librarians to explore with faculty how we can all work on this together, realizing that business information literacy is not necessarily a skill that all students have, even at the Capstone level. And this especially for faculty who feel they have a knowledge gap in how to teach information literacy skills, or how to incorporate them into the curriculum. We will address this briefly in our concluding thoughts about raising awareness and implementation of the new undergraduate curriculum at St. Thomas.

Student Learning and Assessment

"They always learn something whether they want to or not. The question is, did they learn what I wanted them to learn?"

Assessment of student learning has become a high priority in higher education, and St. Thomas is no exception. While assessing learning important, many faculty continue to struggle with the best way to do so. About half of the faculty interviewed talk about assessment in their interviews. Four of the faculty do assessments throughout the semester to assess learning. Not all the faculty felt that they were successful in assessments.

One faculty member wished to be able to assess whether students thought like a professional (in this case, an accountant), but was not sure how that could be done. Another faculty member saw assessment as an issue university-wide that the library could potentially help with by partnering with Institutional Research to standardize research methods on pedagogy. This is not an area that the library at St. Thomas has traditionally been involved in, except in the case of assessing information literacy learning.

One way of approaching assessment is through analytics in Canvas, our learning management tool. While it does not offer a full assessment of learning, it can give faculty some insight into how students are using Canvas. About half of the faculty talked about analytics in Canvas as something they were interested in pursuing, though most felt that the analytics available there do not offer the insight on student engagement that they'd like, and one faculty member felt that some of the Canvas analytics were akin to "stalking." Faculty want to know more than just which readings or videos a student pulls up on their screen. They need to know how much and how deeply the students are using the materials, and where they are struggling with the content.

Faculty Support Needs

"I know I haven't used STELAR or libraries like I should, but you guys give us stuff we need."

Faculty were asked about the support needs they have in teaching undergraduates. The faculty identified three main sources of support: the library, our faculty development center, and STELAR.

The support needs that most faculty members seek from librarians are those that fall into the traditional realm of librarianship, in that the support centers on library resources. The majority of the interviewees commented that they rely on the librarians to help identify and find materials and help them keep up to date on new resources and trends. As one faculty member noted, it would be helpful to have librarians offer training on "cool stuff you don't know about." Another faculty member brought up the need to connect with local corporate librarians who may have more information useful for local case studies. In that case, the faculty member saw the librarian as having professional contacts that they could leverage.

Faculty looked to their faculty development center for support in developing new course content, and in learning about pedagogical methods. A couple of faculty members brought up grant money from the center for developing content. Others talked about looking for support on new methods of teaching through faculty workshops. Moving to a blended or flipped classroom came up in two interviews as something that faculty needed support with.

As noted in the technology section below, support for technology in the classroom was the biggest support need identified by faculty, and faculty largely saw STELAR as the provider for that support. Canvas support was brought up in more than half of the interviews, clickers or other technological ways to get immediate feedback while teaching was brought up in several interviews. Other technology support needs included technology for group work, videos, and projectors. While most of the support that faculty need is in the use of the technology, two faculty members mentioned monetary support needed for purchasing technology, with one faculty member reporting spending their own money in order to purchase classroom tools.

As more of our teaching and research tools move online, nearly all support becomes technology support at some level, and often support for a tool or course materials become more complex and it can be difficult to identify what type of support is needed when developing or updating a course. An illustration of that came in one of the interviews that mentioned that it is a challenge at the university to know who the expert is for any given technology or problem. This offers an opportunity for librarians to work closely with STELAR and other staff to cross train on technology support as well as understand the types of support given by different groups so

that accurate referrals can be made. Another illustration of this was the recommendation in another interview that STELAR and library staff work together as a team to meet with faculty and offer support on course and assignment design.

Materials & Content

The St. Thomas business faculty draw from a rich variety of sources to use in their instruction, some of which is library subscription or library-created content, and some of which is not. Below we highlight the major kinds of content our interviewees mentioned using in their classes. While we didn't specifically ask, we noticed a few differences on how our business disciplines view resources for their teaching and will mention those in passing below.

"We [the faculty member and the librarian] always coordinate before the beginning of every semester so that you have one of my class sections actually work with my students to say, 'Here's what the library has available.' The tools, how to access them, what information is there, and that has been extremely useful."

While comments like that are heartening, we are also struck by our perception that there is a lot more library content and services that faculty could be tapping into to support their courses, including:

- Library instruction supported by research guide websites that highlight relevant subscription and free web content relevant to course research projects and assignments, as well as convey business information literacy concepts
- Content including academic and professional articles, large ebook collections that can provide access to course texts in some cases and to more limited chapter readings in others, and online streaming videos, among others
- Datasets of various kinds for analysis

Some things that faculty perceive could hamper library use include student reluctance (*"I think that trip to the library discourages them from seeking the information"*), student lack of time, and perceptions of pay walls (*"I was told I can't [link to library resources] because you have to pay."*)

Articles: the majority of faculty we interviewed use articles in their courses. This includes journal articles, practitioner articles, and articles from popular sources or current events items. Most often, the academic and practitioner articles are accessible to faculty on campus via the library-paid subscriptions, whether they are aware of that or not. Often, faculty will link them in the course management system. Faculty use articles because they are current, relevant, and relate to current topics.

"To be honest with you, articles are much more up to date, and more relevant. And I don't use academic articles, I use industry written articles. So it's essentially how to do it by a practitioner, not by an academician."

Textbooks: More than half of our interviewees use textbooks and supplemental materials from textbook publishers, including textbook chapters, datasets, and other support material including videos, quizzes, and problems. Textbook publishers are willing to work with faculty to develop custom chapter packages. One faculty member said that textbooks are chosen on a departmental basis, since for almost everything they teach, there are multiple people teaching it. Only one mentioned using an open source textbook. One concern was the challenge of changing textbooks; faculty get invested in that material, or that platform. One faculty member expressed concern in the high cost of textbooks, and that they don't change much from one edition to another.

"The textbooks and the textbook support materials along with what the [professional association] provides, tend to be pretty good. There's close ties between the ... profession and academia so they're very supportive of us."

Reasons for not using a textbook vary. One marketing faculty member finds that practitioner-written articles are more current and relevant.

"I don't use a textbook. Some of the faculty who are teaching in this course, they use textbooks. I found it, to be honest with you, articles are much more up to date, and more relevant. And I don't use academic articles, I use industry written articles. So it's essentially how to do it by a practitioner, not by an academician."

Another said that there isn't a good textbook for their subject, given the variety of topics it includes. Others tend to create course packs or prefer to use resources they've collected themselves to emphasize what they think is key, rather than using publisher resources.

"I'm all about my own stuff and my own emphasis, so I don't really use some of those publisher resources."

An entrepreneurship faculty member discussed why they must think beyond a textbook.

"My courses and most of our courses in entrepreneurship ... don't rely on a textbook. Because we're a major, which then has a high degree of division and specification of topics, a single textbook for each topic doesn't really exist in a way that you can use either effectively or economically... So we're constantly piecing together disparate pieces of information to accumulate a course, a substantive course."

Videos: More than half of the interviewees also mentioned using videos, including resources from textbook publishers, TED Talks, YouTube videos, and movies. Some of the faculty were not aware, or newly aware, of library DVD and online streaming video resources. A few said specifically that they have videos for students to watch on their own, while some mentioned sometimes watching them in class.

"I do use TED Talks, and sometimes I'll put them out for them to watch on their own, and sometimes I use them in class."

Case Studies: Cases or case studies are also commonly used materials, used by about half of the faculty we interviewed.

"I've certainly written cases or mini cases, or sometimes when you do kind of problem-based learning, right, when you're selecting examples and working through those examples."

While some write their own cases, others use published case studies. One faculty member expressed concern about the costs for students in using these, *"but it's so easy and they pay (Harvard) directly."*

Other Resources: about half of the interviewees mentioned using other resources, including library research guides, library subscription research databases, Lynda.com (now part on LinkedIn) for video content, role play exercises or games, experiential exercises, private company mailing lists, simulations, trade business books, materials from professional associations, legal or government documents, company financial data, discipline-specific workbooks, blogs and blog posts, and datasets.

An accounting faculty member noted the importance of textbooks as well as the AICPA (American Institute of Certified Public Accountants) and the big four accounting firms in supporting their teaching.

"... Because of the professional bodies that sit out there, a lot of what I think other disciplines tend to use a library for, we use the public accounting firms for. So that's not really a criticism of the library. It's more the structure of the environment as to why we don't."

A few of our thirteen subjects mentioned using course packs for their classes. One faculty member noted that they appreciated the flexibility of course packs, and that they are good value for the money.

Technology Needs

Obviously, a big focus of this study and the questions it asked is technology: hardware & software, tech staff support, and facilities. With a few exceptions, it seems that Opus College of Business faculty believe they are generally well supported in the area of teaching technology, at least for the size and resources available at St. Thomas.

Canvas Support and Functionality

St. Thomas uses the Canvas learning management system as the primary online platform to provide course content to students. All of our interviewees mentioned Canvas (at least in passing) as the forum used for providing content to students online. Most were complimentary of the support provided by STELAR, Information Technology Services (ITS) generally, and the Canvas support telephone line in helping them set up and troubleshoot issues in their Canvas course sites.

“STELAR has, I think, done a really good job in being there for faculty to help them, if the faculty member is using Canvas, to make the most of it.”

“I'm a heavy user so I'm on the production side they've (STELAR) been great. The instructional designers and that whole crew. Never had any issues with getting the support I need.”

One faculty member did report a negative experience with Canvas support. They had approached STELAR about how to share quiz questions among different course sections taught by different professors. STELAR staff spent some time researching it and the answer given was that it couldn't be done. (I believe this was in the early stages of our Canvas implementation; conceivably this issue has been addressed subsequently).

A couple of faculty members expressed some frustration about **Canvas's internal analytics**, in terms of the granularity of information that they could or couldn't see about individual student's interactions with components of the Canvas course site. One compared it unfavorably to what had been previously available in Blackboard.

A couple also expressed concerns about the **Canvas gradebook**, one concerning ease of use and another lamenting the lack of support for qualitative feedback.

[Usability comment] *“So Canvas Gradebook is wonderful, but not intuitive. It does too much. . . So figuring out how to do things can be a little bit challenging. So, for example, unless ... and I've learned this now, unless I tell Canvas otherwise, it would record attendance, for example, the way it records any other assignment, artificially inflating a student's grade. So it was basically saying you got a point every day that you were there, and that's not how I grade attendance. So they'd go, ‘Oh, I thought I had a B+.’ ‘No, you had a B-, and it was because Canvas was over-inflating grades through attendance recording.’ So that was a problem. I've got that fixed, so now I know how to fix that.*

Weighting of grades, I don't even know how to do yet in Canvas. So students could look at their grade total, and that's going to be slightly misleading because whatever weighting scheme I told them I'm using isn't yet embedded in Canvas, because I don't know how to do it.”

[Qualitative Feedback comment] *“I mean every learning management system has issues, and maybe it's because I teach a very non quantitative subject area that I find the grading tools geared for very quantitative stuff like*

everything's points. And I don't want points, I get qualitative feedback and they give me qualitative stuff, I give them qualitative stuff. And the learning management system always wants to reduce it to points, and then I can't even just like eliminate the points and give qualitative feedback I have to like nominally give it points. But my students fixate on the points, which is part of why I don't want to use them, but that's LMS specific so I don't know that it's really ... so some of the tools that are out there I think it's just picky. Canvas has a way for me to give verbal feedback like quick click and leave a verbal comment to my students, which would be easier for me than typing."

One professor also expressed a concern about student's ability to opt out of **Canvas communications**: *"So, okay, so with Blackboard, I could check a box that said, 'automatically send this to a student's email.' With Canvas, if I'm understanding this correctly, the students get to set up how they want to receive my announcements, which sounds great, but if they don't know how to set it up, I don't really know that they're getting my announcements.*

It would nice if I could say I don't care how you set it up, I want you to get an email every time I do this. It sounds kind of mean, but they're making choices and they might not even know what's available. 'Cause I've had students like, 'Oh, I didn't get your announcement.' I mean, how'd you not get my announcement?"

Video Capabilities & Production Support

Most interviewees mentioned using videos in their courses in some way, either library-provided or external video content, or self-authored and produced videos. Nine of those mentioned using library-provided or external sources for videos as an integral part of their course content.

Nearly half of our faculty members mentioned creating their own video content, either lectures or other kinds of explanatory material for use in their classes.

"Now having said that, for my blended classes, for my high flex classes, I'm also a heavy user of video lectures and Panopto. I've been using STELAR's [recording studio] to create as best I can quality video lectures. I've actually migrated over to the OEC STELAR production facility. It's really nice. I use Canvas extensively. The Panopto library I've created. Zoom, I use extensively in my blended and online classes as well, both for in class stuff as well as my online office hours, homework reviews where I'll just create some presentations."

"Because it's technology-based course, I tend to lean on heavily on the STELAR group. Because they're there and can help support me with the technological problems or help develop things, those are the resources that are helpful to me. Yes, any technology support for technology-based courses is always essential but we do have good support here. I don't need to go in and request it typically."

One professor expressed frustration about the level of support for video production, feeling that they didn't have the production, post-production, and video editing support that they needed to produce quality videos. This was particularly the case when they wanted to merge different media in video, like a Lightboard lecture with a PowerPoint, with perhaps a web screenshot, etc., and they didn't have the technical knowledge of how to pull all those components together.

Classroom Facilities and Technologies

Another thread of the technology discussions revolved around the physical facilities and technologies, including smart classrooms, smart boards (including lightboards and whiteboards). Many professors have seen and been impressed by the STELAR facilities (within the OSF Library and Terrence Murphy Hall) and the few bookable classrooms that have such capabilities, but feel that expansion of these facilities more widely across campus is needed.

Several professors mentioned using and liking the smart boards that are available in some of the classrooms.

"I love the smart board. Especially in my blended classes, when I got to any of my video lectures in my classes that I teach traditional even, any chance I get I use [classroom]. I love the smart board because especially with the Panopto, it allows them both live for me specifically in finance, live annotation. I do a lot of PowerPoints but a lot of them are just framework PowerPoints because I've got to build an equation evaluation model, something like that. That's not conducive in PowerPoint, but it's good if I can put a frame up there and then I can use the live annotation of the smart board. I use that a lot and that's exceptionally constructive when I can use that smart board in conjunction with my video lectures because then Panopto, it allows my students to have different choices about how they view it. They get views in Panopto of here is [professor] at the board live as in class creating it, or what they can do is then take a full of only the smart board of my PowerPoints and annotations with the audio overlay. Of course there's replay. The smart board in conjunction with Panopto I found to be really effective in my high flex blended and even my traditional face to face classes."

Several professors also extolled the virtues of the smart classrooms that are available. They are in various configurations in different campus buildings, but a desired configuration includes both a room-wide projection/video screen viewing capability, plus several additional wall-mounted screens distributed around the room where small groups of students can cluster around the monitors and collaborate on projects and exercises of various kinds. The fact that there are a limited number of these available on campus is seen as a problem. One professor suggested that the room they're assigned can make a large pedagogical difference in their course delivery, as some kinds of breakout exercises and activities are specifically designed for a smart classroom, "cluster" environment, and wouldn't work well in a more traditional classroom layout without monitors for the individual groups to use.

Concluding Thoughts & Next Steps

We have very much enjoyed the opportunity to engage more deeply with a subset of our business faculty on these important questions of pedagogy and support, and look forward to following up on the issues raised in our research in the months and years to come. In addition to our observations made in the descriptions of the themes above, we offer the following conclusions and next steps.

OCB Faculty are generally positive about their interactions with and levels of support from the Libraries and the STELAR Center

Most of the interviews had positive comments about the library, including a strong collection of good resources and good support from library staff. A little less than half of the faculty mentioned bringing a librarian to their class to provide instruction.

Faculty identified time constraints and lack of familiarity with library systems and content as reasons for not working more with librarians. One theme from the interviews is that faculty are not always familiar with our systems, resources, or services. Two faculty addressed communication methods in their interviews, one recommended that we offer workshops on new resources and the other noting that one-on-one relationships offer the best way to keep faculty up-to-date on our offerings.

Faculty are similarly typically positive about their interactions with and support from the STELAR Center, most often highlighting STELAR's work in instructional design, video production support, Canvas implementation, and general support for exploring and implementing new teaching and learning technologies.

More work is needed to raise awareness of library resources, content, and services

As mentioned above, it is clear from the interviews and anecdotally from our librarians' observations that faculty are too often unaware of the contributions the Libraries can make to the success of their teaching and professional research, and to their student's learning. To that end, we'd like to explore this notion in more depth with OCB faculty and administration to see if we can better work together to make it happen. Possibilities might include:

- Build extended time with their liaison librarian into faculty onboarding processes
- Include presentations on library research databases, open educational resources, or other content into OCB faculty professional development offerings ("lunch & learn" sessions, teaching and research forums, departmental meetings, or other opportunities)
- Librarians contact their department chairs to have a conversation about how to build awareness of resources in the specific context of that discipline
- Continue the Library's support of the OCB Emerging Technologies initiative by continuously updating our resources in this area
- Support the College's analysis of its list of journals preferred for publishing purposes (aka "PRJ list") and seek to maximize library holdings of the highest ranked journals (currently hold over 90% of A and A-ranked journals)
- Offer/publicize consultations with faculty on how to use the "current awareness" alerts within the library's journal collections
- Include a library presence in the on-campus Residency program that occurs at the beginning of new cohorts in the Online MBA program (as already done during the full-time MBA Launch)
- Add "Library Resource of the Week" content to the OCB student (already implemented) and faculty newsletters

- Offer to train students in the OCB “research pool” on library resources, research techniques, etc. and make them aware of our research consultation services

The Libraries should work with OCB faculty to support business information literacy goals, including the requirements of the new curriculum

Similarly, we’ve found that faculty are often unaware of, don’t see the need for, or simply don’t have time in their curricula to make use of librarian’s information literacy instruction services. Expanding our shared understanding of how the library can contribute to making OCB graduates competent users of information (demonstration of which can convey an advantage to them in the job market and subsequently to add value to the employer’s operations) would require further conversations between the librarians and the faculty.

One opportunity to do this is in the implementation of the new undergraduate curriculum. Appendix F of the approved undergraduate curriculum proposal introduces the requirement to include Information and Research Literacy:

“An important skill for all St. Thomas students is knowing how to access, evaluate, and use information appropriately. This includes the ability to determine the extent of information needed, to find information, to logically interpret and evaluate that information while being aware of one’s own inferences and biases, and to use information for specific purposes that align with legal and ethical imperatives. In an information-rich world, information/research literacy is essential, but our students don’t enter with the level of sophistication required to be both liberally educated citizens who can effectively navigate the landscape of the digital age and professionals who can competently apply discipline-specific skills in their work lives.”

This section of the new curriculum calls for a 3-phase plan for ensuring that our students acquire these skills:

- Phase 1 First-Year Experience Co-curricular Module
- Phase 2: Application in Core-area Courses
- Phase 3: Discipline-specific information/research literacy

Business is a discipline at St. Thomas that already includes much in the way of information literacy instruction to its students: marketing plans and market analysis, company and industry competitive research, financial statement and investment analysis, and analytics/data modeling projects all require students to learn and demonstrate some of these skills. Whether librarians are included in the instruction programs of these classes or not, we are often contacted for help by students struggling with these concepts and projects.

We believe that the business librarians can work effectively with OCB faculty in their ongoing incorporation of business information literacy concepts into the sequence of courses within each department, identify more opportunities to partner in delivering instruction on them, and to help prepare the plans called for in the curriculum proposal that each department will need to submit. Specifically, we believe we could:

- help identify and document content in the existing courses that would satisfy the curriculum requirement to convey business information literacy concepts
- identify additional opportunities to use librarian services to supplement instruction in those concepts

We would welcome a similar opportunity to collaborate on this work at the graduate level.

Next steps

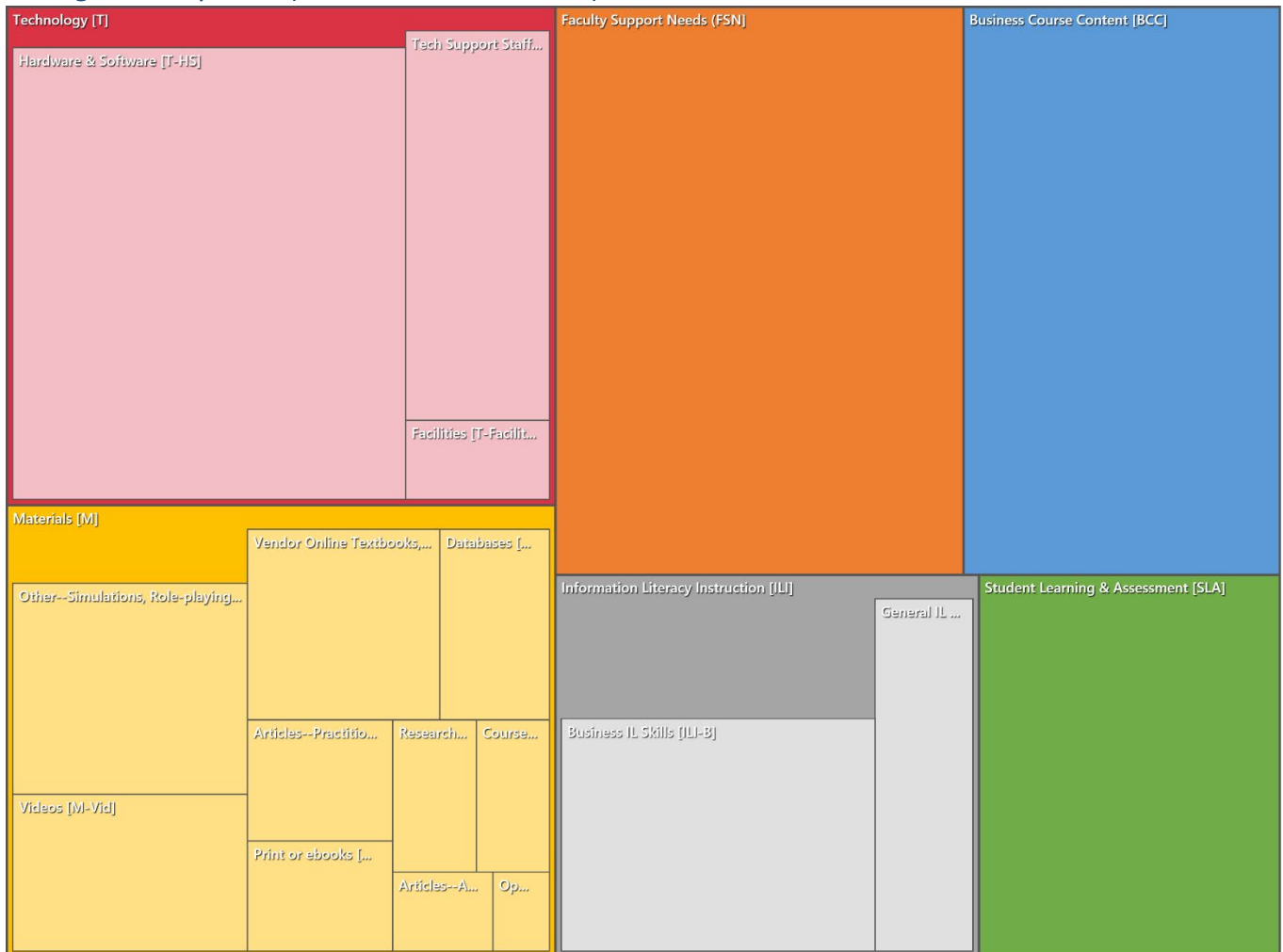
We believe that learning from this research, discussing it with stakeholders, and using it to make improvements to our services will be a multi-year process. Initially, we plan to:

- Meet with OCB Administration and department chairs to brief them on the report
- Distribute the report to all OCB faculty via email, author an article for the faculty monthly newsletter, offer to present at departmental meetings, the annual OCB Research forum, and any other appropriate venues.
- Work with the faculty to agree on individual and joint steps to move forward.

We offer our sincere appreciation to the Opus College of Business administration and our faculty interviewees for their time and earnest cooperation on this project.

Appendices

Coding Hierarchy Chart (based on # of references)



Coding Summary Table

Code	# of interviews coded	# of References
Business Course Content	13	103
Faculty Support Needs	13	133
Information Literacy Instruction	5	24
Business IL Skills	11	47
General IL Skills	7	22
Materials	3	8
Articles--Academic	5	5
Articles--Practitioner	7	11
Course Packs—Reading Lists	4	7
Databases	5	13
Open Source Textbooks	1	3
Other—Simulations, Role-plays, Case Studies, Datasets	7	31
Print or E-books	6	10
Research Guides	5	8
Vendor Online Textbooks & Supplemental materials	3	23
Videos	9	23
Student Learning & Assessment	12	66
Technology	3	4
Facilities	3	7
Hardware & Software	13	111
Tech Support Staff	10	35

(from NVIVO qualitative research software)

Word Frequency Cloud



Implementation Guide

Supporting the Changing Practices of Teaching in Business: Interview Questions



Semi-Structured Interview Guide

Background and Methods

1. Tell me about your experiences as a teacher [E.g. How long you've been teaching, what you typically teach, what you currently teach]
 - Does your teaching incorporate any particular teaching methods or approaches? [E.g. experiential learning, case method, design thinking, problem-based learning, flipped classroom]?
 - Have you received any support/relied on others towards developing your teaching approach?
 - Are there any other supports or resources that you think would be helpful for you?
2. Do you currently teach general research skills in any of your courses? [E.g. finding sources, evaluating sources, data literacy, financial literacy, critical thinking]
 - How do you incorporate this into your courses? Have you experienced any challenges in doing so?
 - Does anyone support you in doing so and if so how? [E.g. instruction classes offered through the library]
 - Are there any other forms of support that would be helpful in doing this?
Follow-up question: Do you currently teach discipline-specific or topic-specific research skills in any of your courses? [e.g. locating and using SEC filings; company financial data, or accounting standards; locating and interpreting demographic or psychographic data; doing a "Five Forces" analysis for an industry, etc.] Would you consider partnering with a librarian to teach such skills while demonstrating library tools that support those information needs?

Working with Materials and Content

3. What materials do you typically create in the process of developing a course? [E.g. syllabi, assignments, Canvas course site, online modules, lectures, tests]
 - How do you make these materials available to students?
 - Do you make these materials more widely available? [E.g. public course website or personal website, sharing via listserv]
 - How have you experienced any challenges in creating and/or making these materials available?
 - Do you ever consult with others as part of creating and/or making these materials available?
 - Are there any supports that could help you in creating and/or making these materials available?
4. Beyond the materials you create in the process of developing a course, what other kinds of content do students typically work with in your courses? [E.g. readings from textbooks, journals, or other sources; practice datasets, videos, etc.]
 - How involved are you in how this content is selected and/or created?
 - How do you make these materials available to students?
 - Do you make these materials more widely available? [E.g. public course website or personal website, sharing via listserv]
 - Have you experienced any challenges in selecting, creating and/or making these materials available?
 - Do you ever consult with librarians or others as part of selecting, creating and/or making these materials available?
 - Are there any supports that could help you in selecting, creating and/or making these materials available?

Working with Tools

5. Have you considered using and/or are you currently working with data and/or analytics tools to understand and improve your teaching? [E.g. dashboard or an app through a course management system, early alert notification system on student performance via email]
 - If no, why? (e.g. unaware of such offerings, current offerings are not useful, opposed to such offerings)
 - If a tool could be designed that leverages data (e.g. about students) in a way that would be helpful towards your teaching, what data would feed into this and how would this tool ideally work?
 - Do you have any concerns in relation to how this data is collected and/or leveraged (e.g. privacy)?
 - If yes, what data and/or tools have you used and how? To what extent was this useful?
 - Do you have any concerns in relation to how this data is collected and/or leveraged (e.g. privacy)?
 - What are some of the greatest challenges you've encountered in the process of using these tools?
 - Do you rely on anyone to support you in using these tools?
 - Are there any other forms of support that would help you as you work with these tools?
6. Do you rely on any other tools to support your teaching (E.g. clickers, smart boards)? If so,
 - What are some of the greatest challenges you've encountered in the process of using these tools?
 - Do you rely on anyone to learn about and/or support you in using these tools?
 - Are there any other forms of support that would help you as you work with these tools?

Wrapping Up

7. If there were a magic wand that could help you with some aspect of your teaching [beyond giving you more money, time, or smarter students], what would you ask it to do for you?
8. Are there any ways that the library or others on campus have helped you with your teaching that have not yet come up in this interview?
9. Are there any issues relating to your experiences teaching that you think that librarians and/or others on campus who support you and your students should be aware of that have not yet come up in our discussion? [e.g. the role of the library in supporting teaching, what makes teaching in your specific discipline, or Business more widely, that warrants unique support?