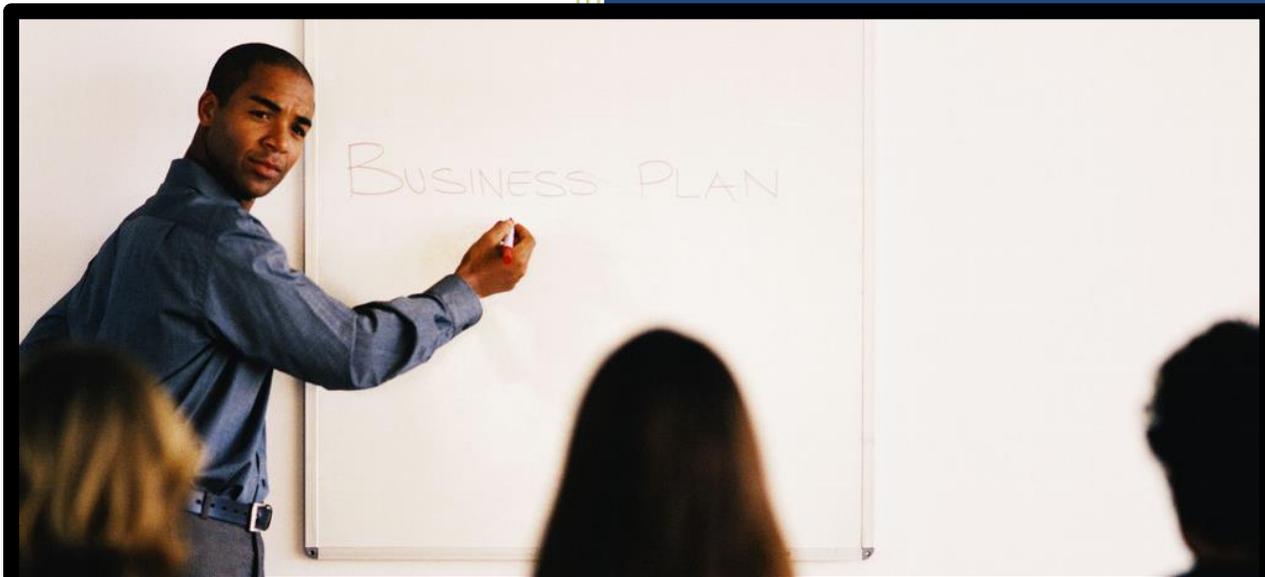


2019 Business Education Research Conference



ARBE-DPE Association for Research in Business Education—
Delta Pi Epsilon

NABTE National Association for Business Teacher Education
Institutional Division of the National Business Education Association

NBEA National Business Education Association
Educating for Success in Business and Life

Chicago, IL
April 16-20, 2019

Table of Contents

Title/Author	Page No.
Planning for Student Teacher Success in the Era of Performance-Based Assessments	2
<i>Tamra S. Davis</i> <i>Illinois State University, Normal, IL</i>	
<i>Kathy J. Mountjoy</i> <i>Illinois State University, Normal, IL</i>	
Online Essay Writing Services: Characteristics and Messaging Strategies	4
<i>Thomas A. Mays</i> <i>Miami University Regional Campuses, Ohio</i>	
Technology Skills of Students Enrolled in a Career and Technical Education Course at a Community College	9
<i>Chadwick A. Springer</i> <i>Auburn University</i>	
<i>Leane Skinner</i> <i>Auburn University</i>	
<i>Elisha Wohleb</i> <i>Auburn University</i>	
<i>Geana Mitchell</i> <i>Bevill State Community College</i>	

PLANNING FOR STUDENT TEACHER SUCCESS IN THE ERA OF PERFORMANCE-BASED ASSESSMENTS

*DR. TAMRA DAVIS
DR. KATHY MOUNTJOY
ILLINOIS STATE UNIVERSITY*

STRUCTURED ABSTRACT

Keywords: pre-service teacher candidates, performance-based assessment, instructional support, lesson plan template, edTPA

Purpose: The purpose of this study was twofold: to determine if using a specific instructional support lead to increased comfort and confidence levels for pre-service teacher candidates during student teaching and to determine if using a specific instructional support increased the success of pre-service teacher candidates on a performance-based assessment.

Research Design: A phenomenological approach was used to examine the stakeholders' perceptions concerning the use of a lesson plan as an instructional support during student teaching. Phenomenological qualitative research allows researchers to examine the perceptions, perspectives, understandings, and feelings of those people who have experienced or lived a shared phenomenon or situation of interest.

Data Collection Procedures and Analysis: This study was conducted at a large mid-western university that focuses on teacher education. All candidates were in their high school student teaching placement. The student teaching cohort consisted of three students—one male and two females. The male was student teaching in a small, rural school. One female was student teaching in a large urban school; the other female was student teaching in a large suburban school. The two females were traditional-age college students; the male student had already earned a bachelor's degree in a non-teaching field but was close to traditional college age. One-on-one structured interviews were conducted with student teachers, cooperating teachers, and the university supervisor to determine if the perceptions of the student teachers matched the perceptions of the other stakeholders concerning their levels of comfort and confidence in the business education classroom when presenting lessons. edTPA score results will be analyzed to determine the impact of using the lesson plan template compared to edTPA scores from previous classes of student teachers who did not use the same instructional support.

Findings: One student teacher indicated that the use of the lesson plan template made completing the performance-based assessment "as easy as it could be". Another student teacher believed that the reflection questions on the lesson plan template provided invaluable support for answering the prompts on the performance-based assessment. The university supervisor felt that the student teachers could

discuss their lesson plans, instructional supports, instructional strategies, and assessments with detail and justify why they had planned the lesson in a particular way. Cooperating teachers were pleased with the “rapid” improvements in the performance of the student teachers. Principals who offered feedback were positive and believed that the student teachers performed “better” than some veteran teachers. At the time of the presentation, the scores on the performance-based assessment had not been received so the researchers were unable to determine the effect of the lesson plan template.

Conclusions/Recommendations: Based on responses from the stakeholders, the lesson plan template lead to increased comfort and confidence levels for pre-service teacher candidates during student teaching. Because the number of participants was minimal, the study needs to be repeated on subsequent pre-service teacher candidates during their student teaching placements.

ONLINE ESSAY WRITING SERVICES: CHARACTERISTICS AND MESSAGING STRATEGIES

THOMAS A. MAYS, MIAMI UNIVERSITY REGIONALS

STRUCTURED ABSTRACT

Keywords:

Academic Integrity; Contract Cheating; Plagiarism; Essay Writing Services

Background:

Essay writing services are not a new phenomenon. Stavisky (1973) describes advertisements targeting students appearing as early as the 1940s. However, as the Internet and social media have matured, essay writing services have taken advantage of these platforms, openly advertising to students and streamlining communication and purchasing processes using technology.

The widespread use of such services may be impacting the integrity of higher education, and the concerns do not stop at commencement. Students who cheat in college tend to engage in unethical behavior in the workforce (Graves & Austin, 2011; Harding et al., 2004; Nonis & Swift, 2001), and this is not different for business students (Lawson, 2004). "Once an individual forms the attitude that cheating is acceptable behavior, he or she is likely to use this behavior, not only in the educational arena but also in other areas" (Nonis & Swift, 2001, p. 75).

Given the potential negative impact on degree credibility and the future ethical behavior of graduates, it is critical that faculty focus on educating students about academic integrity and essay writing services. One step in this process is to understand the characteristics and messaging tactics these services employ.

Purpose:

The purpose of this study was to explore the online and social media tools and messages used by essay writing services. Of specific focus are aspects of the business model, the communication/media channels employed, and messaging justifying student use of these services. Focusing on these areas may help inform educators about not only the strategies these services apply to attract and secure student customers but also the business processes and technological advances that continue to shape the industry. This information may inform educators with developing policies and strategies to guide and educate students on the ethical issues surrounding using essay writing services. Lastly, it is vital to understand how these services may change as artificial intelligence technology improves and writing bots become more commonplace.

Research Design:

This study uses an exploratory qualitative design to examine the presence and messaging strategies of online essay writing services. A document analysis approach was adapted for analyzing websites, and descriptive statistics were tabulated.

The research questions are as follows:

- What online channels do essay writing services use to reach their audiences?
- How can the business model be described?
- What messaging strategies do essay writing services use?

Data Collection Procedures and Analysis:

A Google search was performed using the phrase “write my college paper.” The top 30 website results included nine paid advertised sites and 21 organic search sites. Several results were excluded, including two sets of duplicate sites, two results from an unrelated freelance platform, one article on contract cheating, and one site that appeared to be a legitimate tutoring resource. The final sample included 24 sites (n=24).

The data collection period lasted from April 2, 2019, to April 7, 2019. The first set of collected data included essay turnaround times, prices, and social media metrics. These were analyzed using descriptive statistics. The second set of data included the website text for each site in the sample. Kim and Jasna (2010) describe a document analysis approach for websites adapted from the work of Kimberly Neuendorf. This content analysis approach involves nine stages beginning with a research question stage and ending with an analysis stage. Key stages include identifying variables, sampling, creating a coding scheme, and coding (Kim & Jasna, 2010). The following categories and subcategories formed the coding scheme to guide data collection and analysis:

- Communication Channels (web; social; mobile)
- Business Model (writer employment; pricing)
- Messaging (justification; legitimacy)

Findings:

Online Channels

All the websites were professional in appearance with 79% of the sites offering “live chat” services and 42% incorporating blogs. Other channels included mobile apps (21%) and social media sites (71%). Eight (33%) of the services had more than 1,000 followers on at least one social media site. The following show each social media site with the percent of the sample using that channel:

- Facebook: 67%
- Twitter: 54%
- Instagram: 33%

- LinkedIn: 13%
- YouTube: 8%
- Pinterest: 8%
- Behance: 4%

Business Model

Writers

Most sites (83%) referenced their writers as “on staff” or did not make a distinction. Two sites referred to freelance writers, and one site noted a “marketplace of writers.” The site that used a subscription model touted an artificial intelligence essay writing bot.

Pricing

Pricing models included per-page pricing, annual subscription, freelance bidding, and freelance negotiation. Pricing calculators were available on 14 sites. The per page rates for a 10 day turnaround ranged from \$10 to \$20 ($M=16.29$, $SD=2.47$, $n=14$). The per page rates for the shortest turnaround (ranging from 3 hours to 24 hours) was \$22 to \$68 ($M=38.13$, $SD=10.10$, $n=14$). The balance of the sites either required an inquiry via email, a form, or another method to receive pricing information. The subscription model involved a set annual price for unlimited essays.

Other services

Most sites (67%) promoted additional services, including multiple choice questions, discussion forums, and other assignment types.

Messaging Strategies

Justification

Justification messages were nearly universal in connotation, pointing almost exclusively towards addressing stress and the pressures of school. Messaging included words and phrases like “relax,” “easy,” “convenient,” “free from headaches,” and “rid you of stress.” Other messages focused the problem on teachers or the assignments, with one service stating “...teachers assign too much homework.” The central theme that emerged was that these services help students handle stress caused by their instructors and institutions.

Not all sites were as brazen, noting that purchased materials were to be used as references and not “academic credit.” Two sites suggested that students consult their institution’s policies on plagiarism and academic integrity.

Perception of Site Legitimacy

Many sites presented their services as legitimate help using phrases like “Academic Services.” Several sites also included messaging commonly found on e-commerce sites including testimonials, 24/7 support, and real-time order tracking. Sites often touted official titles including “Client Success Manager” and “Customer Support Representative.” One site showcased their A+ rating from the Better Business Bureau, which was confirmed by the researcher.

References to essays being free from plagiarism were widespread (88%) as was customer confidentiality (75%). Additionally, 38% of the sites displayed security related badges including “McAfee Secure,” “DCMA Protected,” and “Norton Secured.”

While all the sites advertised plagiarism free work, one site went so far as to promote its use of the plagiarism detection tool Turnitin to ensure plagiarism free papers. One site’s message was straightforward, noting how the service helped students “evade” assignments. Four sites noted their services were “legal.”

Conclusions/Recommendations:

The openness of essay writing services and seemingly mainstream approaches to websites and social media are concerning on multiple levels. First, it raises questions on the integrity and legitimacy of higher education. Second, and as supported by the literature, students engaging in unethical behavior in college are apt to continue that behavior professionally. This is especially concerning in business disciplines that often battle ethical concerns.

The sites included in this study reflected well-developed websites with many furthering their reach through social media and mobile apps. The messaging defended the practices with varied approaches but were nearly universal in addressing the stress students may often feel.

Addressing this problem in the classroom is not easy, and if the dishonest behavior becomes normalized based in part on the messaging and approaches of essay writing services, the task will become even more difficult. However, some strategies can be used.

One strategy is to start with teaching about academic integrity in the classroom, including not only what academic integrity entails, but specifics about institutional policies and penalties. Holding frank discussions with students is essential. Another strategy is to carefully design more extensive papers so that they are due in stages including topic, outline, rough draft, and final draft.

Students using essay writing services are very difficult to identify. It is hoped that with better education in the classroom as well as an improved understanding of the messaging and tactics of these services, educators can focus students on acting ethically both in school and in their chosen profession.

Looking to the future, the increasing sophistication of artificial intelligence bots may make it even more comfortable and more cost-effective for students. This is an important area for future research.

References

- Graves, S. (2008). Student Cheating Habits: A Predictor Of Workplace Deviance. *Journal of Diversity Management*, 3(1), 15-22.
- Harding, T., Finelli, C., and Carpenter, D. (2006). Cheating in College and its Influence on Ethical Behavior in Professional Engineering Practice. Proceedings of the 2006 ASEE Annual Conference and Exposition, Chicago, IL. American Society for Engineering Education. Retrieved from <https://deepblue.lib.umich.edu/handle/2027.42/55273>
- Lawson, R. (2004). Is Classroom Cheating Related to Business Students' Propensity to Cheat in the "Real World"? *Journal of Business Ethics*, 49(2), 189-199.
- Nonis, S., & Swift, C. O. (2001). An Examination of the Relationship Between Academic Dishonesty and Workplace Dishonesty: A Multicampus Investigation. *Journal of Education for Business*, 77(2), 69.
- Stavisky, L. (1973). Term Paper "Mills," Academic Plagiarism, and State Regulation, *Political Science Quarterly*, 88:3, 445-461.

Technology Skills of Students Enrolled in a Career and Technical Education Course at a Community College

Chadwick A. Springer, Auburn University

Leane Skinner, Auburn University

Elisha Wohleb, Auburn University

Geana Mitchell, Beville State Community College

STRUCTURED ABSTRACT

Keywords:

Career and technical education, technology skills, community college, basic computer tasks

Background:

With the spotlight, from the federal government and multiple state departments and organizations, on CTE and the economic predictions that the job market will continue to be strong in the CTE fields, it is imperative that students are equipped with the skills demanded by employers. There are many rigorous CTE programs that provide students with the skills needed to obtain employment in high-demand fields. However, there is an ongoing challenge to maintain alignment between curriculum standards and the rapid advancement in employer expectations concerning employees' skills. Students enrolled in a CTE program at a community college should enter the workforce with not only the skills needed to gain employment, but with the traits employers want their employees to possess. Thus, this study will investigate the technology skills of students enrolled in a CTE program at a community college in a Southeastern state.

Purpose:

This study was designed to investigate: (a) the technology skills concerning software, hardware, and technology tools; and (b) the perceived competency level to complete basic computer tasks of students enrolled in one or more CTE courses at a community college in a Southeastern state. The purpose of this study was to provide information that may be utilized to improve CTE programs at the community college level so that students will graduate with the skills needed to excel in a chosen field.

Research Design:

This study utilized a cross-sectional research design based on major groups as the study only focused on determining current technology skills of students enrolled in one or more CTE courses at a community college. In an effort to provide insight into technology skills of the aforementioned population, three major groups were created: workforce development, general studies, and health-related.

Data Collection Procedures and Analysis:

Data was collected using a researcher-designed survey instrument that was validated by an expert panel of university professors. Statistical treatment of the data included the use of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) 22.0. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze, organize, summarize, and describe the collected data. A higher-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) test was utilized to determine the difference in perceived competency of students enrolled in one or more CTE courses at a community college to use hardware technology, software technology, and technology tools based on degree program. An ANOVA was also used to determine the difference in perceived need for further development of hardware, technology, and technology tools skills based on degree program. Descriptive statistics were used to determine percentages and frequency counts.

Findings:

The majority of respondents were female (71.3%), the most common reported age category was 20-29 years of age (42.9%), and the largest percent of respondents were Caucasian (52.9%). The highest reported degree program was other (29.5%) which were identified to be the General Studies degree programs. One hundred and ninety one responses were received. Results showed no statistically significant differences for students' competency to utilize hardware technology based on their degree programs group [$F(2, 96) = 2.384, p = .098$]. However, results did show statistically significant differences for students' competency to utilize software technology based on their degree programs group [$F(2, 95) = 3.554, p = .032$]. Follow-up tests were conducted to evaluate pairwise differences. There was a significant difference in competency to utilize software technology between students enrolled in General Studies degree programs and students enrolled in Health-Related degree program ($p = .028$). The mean score for students within the General Studies degree programs group was 20.85 compared to the mean score of 25.86 for students within the Health-Related degree programs group, with standard deviations of 5.71 and 8.13 respectively. Results showed statistically significant differences for students' competency to utilize technology tools based on their degree programs [$F(2, 96) = 5.435, p = .006$]. Follow-up tests were conducted to evaluate pairwise differences. There was a significant difference in competency to utilize technology tools between students enrolled in General Studies degree programs and students enrolled in Health-Related degree programs ($p = .004$). The mean score for students within the General Studies degree programs group was 26.52 compared to the mean score of 34.65 for students within the Health-Related degree programs group, with standard deviations of 1.58 and 1.90 respectively. Results showed no statistically significant differences for students' need for further development of skills concerning software technology based on their degree programs group [$F(2, 95) = 1.529, p = .222$]. No statistically significant differences for students' need for further development of skills concerning hardware technology based on their degree programs group [$F(2, 94) = 2.663, p = .075$] was found. Results also showed no statistically significant differences for students' need for further development of skills concerning technology tools based on their degree programs group [$F(2, 94) = 1.194, p = .308$]. The basic computer skills that respondents identified the most as being able to complete without assistance were: Save a Microsoft Word document as a different file type (94.0%), Utilize spell check to edit documents (91.9%), Create headers and footers in Microsoft Word (91.9%), Create a folder on the desktop (89.2%), Copy/paste using

shortcuts (88.4%), Create a table in Microsoft Word (87.3%), Empty the Recycle Bin (87.1%), and Open a link in a new window in a web browser (87.0%).

Conclusions/Recommendations:

The following conclusions were made based on the findings of the research: (1) the perceived competency level to utilize software and technology tools is impacted by degree program, while the perceived competency level to utilize hardware is not impacted by degree program; (2) students do not perceive a need for further development of their technology skills concerning: software, hardware, or technology tools; and (3) students' perceived ability to complete computer tasks without assistance varied. Based on these conclusions, the following recommendations were made: (1) a follow-up study utilizing performance tasks should be conducted; (2) consideration should be given to requiring a technology examination upon enrollment to determine students' skill level related to technology. This assessment would allow for appropriate placement in computer/technology courses; (3) introduction of a beginner-level computer course for students with limited computer skills; (4) embed industry-credentials in computer courses to validate skill development; and (5) utilize and integrate technology campus-wide and in all courses to ensure continued development of computer skills.