# HERE AND THERE
## National Newsletter
## PI OMEGA PI
**National Business Education Honor Society**
**Member of the Association of College Honor Societies**

| Volume L | December 2007 | Number 4 |
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## A Message from Erin Goepfert

Another exciting semester of Business Education is coming to a close. I hope all of you had a great Thanksgiving. I know finals are coming soon for all of you like they are for me. I wish you the best of luck on your finals.

Many of you are student teaching now or in the spring. For those of you student teaching now, graduation is almost here. I hope you can find a rewarding job in education. For those of you student teaching in the spring, I hope it goes well for you. I know it can be challenging at first, but stick with it and I know it will work out for you.

I am sure that your chapter of Pi Omega Pi has been busy this year. Do not forget to write about all your activities and projects. The activities report and projects (national, community, local, and publication) are due by January 31, 2007.

Mark your calendars for the National Business Education Association Convention on March 19-22 in San Antonio, Texas. This convention is a great way to network with business educators and students from around the United States. I will be attending, so I hope to see some of you there.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns at goepfertee13@uww.edu

Happy Holidays!

## President's Report

Lana Carnes
Alpha Beta Chapter
Eastern Kentucky University

As the fall semester draws to a close, I know many of you are working hard to complete your projects for the National Chapter Award Competition. I will be sending the National Chapter Award Competition Guidelines for 2007 to chapters by December 1. Please remember to submit your reports to the East Carolina State University Pi Omega Pi chapter by January 31, 2008.

**IMPORTANT--**

**New Annual Electronic Filing Requirement for Small Tax-Exempt Organizations**
**e-Postcard (Form 990-N)**

All Pi Omega Pi Chapters must file a 990-N Form for 2007 and after. It has been determined that since each Pi Omega Chapter is a subchapter and is tax exempt, but has receipts less than $25,000 a year, each Chapter needs to submit Form 990-N. **This submission will take place after January 1, 2008, but before April 15, 2008.** This requirement is a result of the Pension Protection Act of 2006 and is for tax periods beginning after December 31, 2006. If a chapter fails to file, it will lose its tax-exempt status after three warnings.

Form 990-N will answer questions about the 990N form. This form will be available as of January 1, 2008. The form will be available in electronic form only and is called an e-postcard.

*Editor's Note—*

As 2007 draws to a close many of you can look forward to student teaching or beginning your professional career.  The Chapter Activity Reports show how prepared students in Pi Omega Pi are for the teaching profession.  Many members will be advisors to a student organization and the experience from Pi Omega Pi has prepared you well.

The articles in the December issue of *Here and There* are related to educational issues and teaching techniques such as differentiated instruction and experiential learning.  Teaching business content is integrated in articles related to financial literacy, business ethics, and Web 2.0 technology.

Enjoy reading and Happy Holidays.

### Here and There

*Here and There* is the official newsletter of Pi Omega Pi, the national honor society in business teacher education. It is published four times each competition year:  February, April, October, and December.  Articles and news should be sent to:

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# Chapter Activities

### Beta Chapter
Northwest Missouri State University

The Northwest Missouri State University Beta Chapter of Pi Omega Pi met Wednesday, November 7, 2007 to induct their two new members, Carrie Littenken and Alexandra Koening. The meeting was held in Owens Library on the campus of Northwest Missouri State University. During the meeting, the two new members were formally inducted and presented with long stem red roses. Four senior members, Melanie Rouse, April Miller, Sarah Jackson, and Kara Gibson, were presented with honor cords for the graduation ceremony. Following the induction ceremony, the group toured the Jean Jennings Bartik museum. Jean, a 1945 Northwest graduate, was one of six women who helped program the world's first electronic computer. On another note, four of our Beta Chapters members are preparing to student teach during the spring trimester. Also, our group will soon begin to prepare for our spring activities.

### Psi Chapter
University of Wisconsin-Whitewater

UW-Whitewater Psi Chapter of Pi Omega Pi has been keeping a steady pace for the last couple of months, starting, finishing, and continuing various projects.
- This past October, at our formal initiation ceremony, our members had a great opportunity to socialize and get acclimated to the chapter as we enjoyed pizza and football together.
- More recently, we organized a social and focus group event. Members from Whitewater's Marketing Education Association and Phi Beta Lambda were invited to the local country club where we shared a meal, watched the football game, and participated in focus groups relating to Business and Marketing Education. At this gathering, our Psi chapter's

members made nominations to fill various positions for next semester. These nominations will be voted on at our next meeting.
- Also, prior to Thanksgiving, we held a fundraiser and sold Racine Danish Kringles. The funds earned by our members will help our chapter succeed in future projects.
- Currently, we are in the process of crunching numbers and drawing conclusions on the data collected for our gender study. When these things are complete, we're going to compile our findings, write up an abstract, and share our results.
- Looking ahead to February, our group is working on organizing an Etiquette Luncheon. We plan to invite High School and Community students and educate them on proper dinning etiquette especially in a business lunch/dinner setting.

### Alpha Beta Chapter
Eastern Kentucky University

Christmas is not here yet, and the Alpha Beta Chapter is already giving out gifts of joy. Natalie King received the gift of becoming our newest member at the last initiation meeting. With the help of our members, 400 local FBLA students have enjoyed a great time attending a conference held on EKU's campus. Many high schools in our region have been given the chance to learn more about Pi Omega Pi and the broad aspect of the business field.

Alpha Beta members have been making presentations at regional high schools as part of our regional project. Fund raising has also been a top priority. We have written proposals to raise money to travel to San Antonio to attend the NBEA national conference.

We are looking forward to the new semester starting so that we can initiate more members. See you in San Antonio!

**Alpha Chi Chapter**
Eastern Illinois University

Alpha Chi, at Eastern Illinois University, has been busy working on finishing up our local and national projects. For our local project, we are trying to do some recruiting for business education using a display case bulletin board and flyers. For our national project, we are compiling a disc of resources for teachers on career development for their students.

Just before Thanksgiving break, we attend the IBEA Conference in Springfield, IL. Everyone came away with good ideas and resources to use in their future classes.

We elected officers at our last meeting and we would like to congratulate President-Elect, Andrew Reinert. We also recently initiated a new member, Catherine Paulius, who has jumped right in to the swing of things and we're very happy to have her.

Finally, we will be helping out with the "Giving Tree" at Walmart where we will pull ornaments off the tree with things to buy for a certain family written on them. We hope everyone is productive the rest of the year and enjoy your winter breaks!

**Chi Chapter**
Indiana State University

The College of Business at Indiana State University has recently added a state of the art financial trading room to its already impressive campus. On November 15th, the new room was available to finance and investment students as a means to provide real-life experience that will translate into an edge in the job market. The room is complete with multiple stock tickers, three video data walls, and 24 student work stations with duel monitors. The purpose of the trading room is to provide students with an example of the technologies and systems used to trade stocks and manage investments.

The room is utilized by finance and investments students as well as Indiana State's Investment Club. The investment club currently manages a portfolio worth $110,000 that has grown 10% in just six weeks. Having financial data available to students in a format used by professionals allows them to invest wisely as well as acquire valuable experience. The financial trading room is a great way to attract new students to the College of Business as well as provide current students with a tool that will aid in the learning experience. Concepts, terminology, and theory can be taught in the classroom. However, putting preliminary concepts into practice is what will allow students to truly understand what they have learned. It is important for educators to allow their students to take part in some form of simulation. Taking action helps to solidify text and lecture learning into a meaningful learning experience.

Funding for the financial trading room was provided by Randall and Nancy Minas as well as Lilly Endowment Inc. Randall Minas is a senior vice president with Merrill Lynch in Merrillville, Indiana, and provided the following statement in reference to dynamics in the financial world: "They're far more complex, far more global in nature and there are far more variables that affect the financial markets on a minute-to-minute basis." The room is designed to feed students the financial data that they need in order to develop strong investment strategies. The students of Indiana State University are grateful for this opportunity to take their education to the next level and apply their knowledge in a way that makes education fun and interesting.

Source:
        Taylor, Dave. **ISU News**. *College of Business opens financial trading room*.
        Nov.15, 2007.
http://www.indstate.edu/news/news.php?newsid=10 87

## Mu Chapter
Emporia State University

Mu Chapter welcomes three new initiates who will formally be inducted into our chapter on December 7: Loren Stark, Josh Brabb, and Laura Nichols. Members are currently creating tests for the Flint Hills League Business Contest, working with Kansas District VII FBLA for the contest to be held on campus in early February, and completing required campus community service hours. Additionally, the chapter is eagerly anticipating our youth basketball fund-raising tournament to be held in early January.

## Kappa Chapter
Indiana University of Pennsylvania

Since October 2007, the members of the Indiana University of Pennsylvania chapter of Pi Omega Pi have been involved in multiple activities and events. The first thing we participated in during the beginning of October was our homecoming t-shirt fundraiser. After selling all of the t-shirts we ended up making a profit of approximately $1,075.

Throughout the semester we have also been collecting used cell phones and ink cartridges. There are collections boxes located in each departmental office in the Eberly College of Business to be donated to the Make-A-Wish foundation at the end of the academic year.

The members of Pi Omega Pi are also hosting a web design competition for local high school business students. The submission and judging of the websites will occur sometime in the early spring semester. Students who participate in the competition will be required to create a website for a non-profit organization of their choice and will have to submit the website via CD to be judged.

Whichever school district wins, they will be featured on the Pi Omega Pi website and will be provided with a complementary pizza party.

We also recently attended the Pennsylvania Business Education Association conference on Thursday, November 15 – Friday, November 16 in Grantville, PA. Everyone who attended was able to receive valuable information from different speakers regarding technology and education. In March, 2008, we will be attending the National Business Education Association conference on Wednesday, March 19 – Saturday, March 22.

## Zeta Eta Chapter
Kansas State University

Members of the Zeta Eta Chapter attended the Kansas Business Education Association conference in October. Attendees gained valuable ideas and information to use in the classroom, and it was a good networking opportunity for those students nearing graduation.

In November, the chapter hosted a campus visit for a group of business students from one of the area's high schools. The students toured the College of Business Administration, learned about the Business Education program at Kansas State, visited the K-State Student Union, and toured the rest of campus. The group successfully conducted a fundraiser to raise money for the trip to the national conference by selling fleece jackets for the College of Education. The chapter also welcomed a new member, Sarah Hill, at the most recent initiation ceremony, which took place on November 12. Plans are also underway for the chapter's end-of-the-semester celebration to be held in December.

**Beta Kappa Chapter**
East Carolina University

The Beta Kappa Chapter members at East Carolina University are working hard getting ready for our winter social where new members will be inducted into our chapter of Pi Omega Pi. We plan to induct five new members on December 9, 2007. We are excited about our new membership. These new members will be helping the current members grade the National Projects that all the chapters will be turning in this year. We are all looking forward to grading you projects and attending NBEA in San Antonio, Texas.

**Alpha Delta Chapter**
Bloomsburg University

Fall 2007 was a productive semester for the Bloomsburg University chapter of Pi Omega Pi. The chapter initiated three new members, successfully completed a Gertrude Hawk fundraiser, and increased awareness for the chapter on campus by creating a bulletin-board with chapter announcements in the main corridor of the college of business. Also this semester, a new president and vice president were appointed. Elected president, Mark Yanchek, Jr. plans to initiate new members for the spring semester, utilize the benefits of a fundraiser, and discus the current issues at hand. Along with the help of the newly elected vice president Katy Kodish, Mark also plans to raise interest for the conference offered in San Antonio in the spring. Pi Omega Pi wishes everyone a happy and safe 2008.

## Member Articles

**Getting to Know Differentiated Instruction**     _____

**April Miller**
Beta Chapter

Northwest Missouri State University

      Everyone is created differently and uniquely.  Each person has different abilities, talents, experiences, readiness, and interests.  All people have different learning styles and ways of relating information to their own lives.  That is why differentiated instruction is one of the hottest buzzwords circulating the education world.  Although it is no secret that every student is unique and has different learning abilities, differentiated instruction has been coined as the instructional technique for ensuring that every student is given a specially customized opportunity to learn.

      To differentiate means to distinguish, to tell apart, to make different, and to separate.  Instruction means to teach, train, coach, and educate.  Therefore, differentiated instruction means to educate every student by recognizing differences in interests, abilities, and backgrounds.  The guru of differentiated instruction, Carol Ann Tomlinson, defines differentiated instruction as "tailoring instruction to meet individual needs" (Tomlinson, 2000).  Tomlinson states that there are four diverse components of instruction that can be differentiated: content, process, products, and the learning environment.  Although other authors cite only content, process, and product, Tomlinson points out that the learning environment, the way classroom looks, feels, and works, is just as important (Tomlinson, 2000).

      Differentiated instruction can and should be applied to all age levels and all abilities (Hall, 2007).  A classroom where differentiated instruction is effectively implemented means giving students "multiple options for taking in information and making sense of ideas" (Hall, 2007).  Having multiple ways that students can learn material ensures that no matter what readiness level or learning style the student has, he or she has the opportunity to learn the skills and content presented.  To clarify, "multiple options" essentially describes how students take different routes to arrive at the same destination or end product (Tomlinson, 1999).  This means that through varied content, processes, and products conducted or performed in class, the student can choose the path that most interests them and best fits their individual needs.

      As stated above, differentiated instruction involves modifying what content is taught, the process in which the content is presented, and the products that the students create and complete.  Content is simply defined as what the teacher plans to teach and what the students need to learn.  Differentiation based on process is the activities and instructional methods that engage the student and help them make sense of the content subject.  Finally, product can be defined as how students demonstrate their learning. Products can include different types of assessment these including: teacher assigned and self-selected projects, open-ended tests, interactive assessments, and other ways for students to apply the skills and knowledge they have acquired (Willoughby, 2005).  Therefore, differentiated instruction is the process of educating students by using various content, process, and product techniques, all of which should give learners a variety of ways to learn depending upon their needs, interests, and abilities.

Differentiated instruction is important for one simple reason, and that is student success. Instructors from around the world and since the beginning of organized education have had the goal of helping students succeed by giving them the knowledge and skills they need in life.  As Tomlinson states, "there is ample evidence that students are more successful in school and find it more satisfying if they are taught in ways that are responsive to their readiness levels, interests, and learning profiles" (Tomlinson, 2001).  Differentiated instruction ensures that students' readiness levels are taken into account.  Readiness can be thought of as the "difficulty of skills taught being slightly advance of the child's current level of mastery" (Hall, 2007).

Another factor that makes differentiated instruction successful in ensuring student achievement and thus important, is that it takes into consideration the wide variety of student interests in the classroom.   Even adults are guilty of only paying attention to their interests and skimming over things that bore or appear to be irrelevant to them.  Therefore, it is understandable that students are going to struggle even more with focusing on topics that are out of their interest zone.  To ensure student success, instructors must take into account what students find interesting.  It is obvious that if a student is interested in the subject matter, then he or she is more likely to learn. Teachers can accomplish this by regularly asking students to identify their favorite topics and finding out what students like to do in their free time (Willoughby, 2005).   Then teachers can find ways to tie in student interests into their lesson plan.

Once student interests are understood, a differentiating instructor can easily incorporate interests into their process of instruction and even in the products the students complete. An example of this could include incorporating a wide variety of activities that cover an assortment of materials that hopefully enhance student interest while still getting the content presented.  For instance, an English teacher may choose a section from the sports page to introduce the components of a news article.  An example of incorporating student interest into the product portion would be giving students projects that they themselves can select.   A simple example would be to allow students to prepare a news article from a topic of their choice (sports, business, science, celebrity news, etc.).  When students have a choice in their projects they will be able to reflect their wide variety of learning styles and personal interests (Willoughby, 2005).

The final major factor that makes differentiated instruction important is that it caters to different learning styles.  When instruction accommodates a student's learning style, it allows them to "develop [a framework] of meaning [which] allows them to retain and transfer what they study" (Bafile, 2006).   When content material is presented in a way that appeals to an individual's learning style, they have an easier time making sense of the topic, which leads to student success.  Although there have been many different learning styles and models identified and researched over the years, there are three major learning styles recognized in the education world: auditory, visual, and kinesthetic learners.  Students may have one dominant learning style or they may have a mixture of several learning styles.  Differentiated instruction helps generate student success because it provides diverse instructional strategies that cater to each of the learning styles.  Therefore, students can choose which instructional method helps them make sense of what they are being taught.

Differentiated instruction is important because it is flexible in that it provides multiple options through content, process, and product for the student to make sense of the subject material. Additionally, it is important because it is student-focused and meets individual needs and interests. Simply put, differentiated instruction is important because it helps lead to the success of all students, not just the students who have above-average abilities and are interested in the subject matter.

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**LEARNING OUTSIDE OF THE CLASSROOM** ──────────

**Amy Beetstra**
Psi Chapter

University of Wisconsin Whitewater

## Statement of Article Theme

Sacramento City Unified is raising the bar in terms of vocational studies at the secondary level. Internships and other "real-life" experiences are reinforcing the course content taught at this school.

## Summary of Article

"That sense of purpose is what educators have been trying to instill in high school students" (Rosenhall par. 14). Rosenhall is referring to the reaction Sacramento City Unified has been receiving from students involved in the internship program at their school. In an effort to reduce the number of students who drop out, this high school is implementing new strategies to engage students in the curriculum. They've done this by hiring "five people from the business world to create internships and other learning opportunities for students" (Rosenhall par. 6). The article also states that there is a wide array of professionals coming from "the fields of arts, media and entertainment; business and information technology; engineering and industrial technology; health; and human and public services." These mentors turn out to be very valuable resources to the teachers and students. They also bridge the gap between the professional and educational worlds. Sacramento City Unified's innovation in education has recently gotten them recognized by the Ford Motor Company Fund.

## Personal Reaction

I'm very excited for this particular educational direction. High school is a very important time in students' lives when they have to decide what they want to do after graduation. I also think a lot of students get restless during this time because they are anxious to get out into the real world, some because they are bored with school. This program has the capability of appealing to a variety of students and their interests, while giving those students various experiences in different job settings. This can be beneficial in helping students who are undecided about post-high school plans make a decision, and it could also help students who know what they want to do confirm their decision. Additionally, this opportunity helps them relate their "course work with the working world" (Rosenhall par. 1). The internships offered are a great way for students to get "instant" gratification for the classes they take in school. The article left me to wonder how an internship fits in with the regular curriculum. Do the students take time out of the school day? If so, how do they find time to complete their other graduation requirements? Although their system isn't specified, I'm sure it works well.

Currently, there are only four of these models set up in the country.  It will be interesting to see if programs like these become a national norm in the future.

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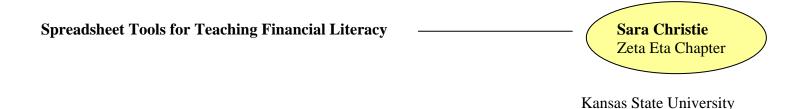The Sacramento Bee. 5 Nov. 2007. <http://www.sacbee.com/101/v-print/story/450651.html>

**Practical Experience Adds Value to Teaching**                    _____

**Hollyann Colson**
Alpha Beta Chapter

Eastern Kentucky University

Most teachers would agree that "practicing what you teach" in a real-world environment is an asset to students and teachers alike.  As a business education student, finding employment opportunities that allow you to practice both your computer and teaching skills simultaneously may not be easy. Such opportunities are available, but research and tenacity are needed to search them out.

An example of a work-related job that could provide future business teachers with real-world experience involves a company that trains customers on the use of Microsoft and Adobe applications through on-site training conducted at the customers' facility.  As part of this job, the trainer must ensure that employees leave the session with their questions answered and the appropriate skills to use the software firmly in mind when they return to their offices.   To accomplish this, the trainer uses the techniques and methods to train the customer that will likely be used in student teaching and later in the business and/or marketing classroom. Through this work experience, more in-depth knowledge about the computer applications is gained and classroom instruction will be strengthened through more content knowledge.   This knowledge improves software skills as well as sharpens instruction methods and delivery skills.

When students have the opportunity to pursue jobs related to classroom instruction, their future classrooms will benefit from these experiences that will provide real-world experiences for future classroom examples.

**Spreadsheet Tools for Teaching Financial Literacy** ———————————— **Sara Christie**
Zeta Eta Chapter

Kansas State University

Financial literacy in high school financial courses is getting a lot of attention these days, due to the rising number of bankruptcies and because of the rising amount of credit card debt. Students will gain knowledge about wise financial planning while taking business classes in high school. It is vital that business educators actively motivate their students about gaining fundamental knowledge about finances.

By educators using spreadsheets to display financial information, this can help draw the students in and get them interested in money management. You can make spreadsheets a part of the learning process when dealing with loan amortization. By being educated about how lending institutions calculate loans, borrowers can have a huge advantage over uneducated borrowers. An activity like loan amortization is ideal for a personal finance class. Excel provides an easy-to-use template to perform loan amortizations. Amortization schedules are usually applied to home mortgages, car loans, and other types of loans. Conventional mortgages are preferred by buyers because they will have a fixed interest rate for the lifetime of the loan, instead of a fluctuating interest rate due to the country's economic situation. .

When your students are completing this activity they can easily compare payments at different interest rates. It's also important to be aware of changing mortgage rates; a home owner may wish to refinance their loan if the interest rate drops by 2%. The most important part of the loan schedule is the amount that is going to pay on the principal amount and on the interest; as more time passes the borrower will start paying off more on the principal and less towards interest. By making unscheduled payments a borrower can reduce the amount of interest owed on the loan and the number of total payments. Upon completion of this activity, business students should recognize the ease of performing financial calculations with the help of a spreadsheet. With the majority of people who file for bankruptcy being around the age of 38 it is important for young people to learn good personal financial literacy. It is key for business educators to demonstrate and model the best tools for financial literacy.

One of the main points of the article is that it is very important for today's youth to be educated in financial literacy. They do a great job of supporting this point by letting the reader know that since 1985 bankruptcies have been on the rise and that the country's amount of credit card debt is spiraling out of control. This is a very well written article; the authors make sure that they explain the importance of today's high school students learning more about finances and they include a clear plan on how you can implement this into your lesson plans. This article is very how-to, and gives you a clear and concise plan on how to include this in your classroom. I think that the authors give you a good plan on implementation; the project idea that they include is truly a project that students could relate to and could use in their futures. I feel that the authors arrive at the conclusion that through the use of spreadsheets students can truly get a feel for financial concepts. By using their project example or something similar you can truly get students interested in managing their money.

It can be difficult for teachers today to find projects for their students to do that actually get them interested in the topic. As a high school student, I always preferred to do projects that I knew I would actually use again someday. I really liked their project idea and it was something I never did in high school. It's something that I'll definitely keep in mind for using once I become a teacher. It is very important to have financial knowledge. If students graduating from high school don't have a good financial background, it is very

easy for them to lose control of their finances once they enter college or go out into the real world.  The author's implementation plan will work very well for teachers. This amortization activity can be beneficial for a variety of things that the students will be purchasing in their futures.

LaBonty, Dennis J. and Anza Ketterman. "Teaching Financial Concepts Using Spreadsheet Tools", *Business Education Forum*, Vol. 60, Issue 3.  February 2006.

**Ben Franklin & Business Ethics**  ———————————————  **Holly Minkler**
Mu Chapter

Emporia State University

        "Ethics"—a business buzz word during the 1990 and 2000 decades.  Does a business ethic exist?  Is it something new that has to be taught?  Why does each person in the world have a different set of ethics?  And, one of the most important questions:  How can I teach business ethics in my business classroom?

        The first three questions posed above are hard to answer—some would say that ethics in today's business world exist only when the level of corporate and individual greed is at a "lower than normal" level.  Some experts say that business ethics are hard to teach (similar to "teaching an old dog new tricks") because ethics and value systems are the result of one's upbringing.  And, of course, each of us has a different set of ethics based on our home life, our interactions at school, and, perhaps, due to genetic differences.

        The fourth question:  How can I teach business ethics in my business classroom? is a question that can be simply answered.  Through the use of Ben Franklin's Integrity Project curriculum materials (www.bfip.org).

        The Ben Franklin Integrity Project is an organization based out of Lawrence, Kansas.  It provides a business ethics curriculum for around $300-$350.  The curriculum includes a video, posters, worksheets, and teacher's resources.  The curriculum integrates social science, mathematics, and language arts to help the students understand the importance of ethical behavior on the job.  Its primary focus is to help students understand the objectives of the Anti-theft/Pro-ethical Workplace Program but the case studies allow students to understand the disastrous results of employees and employers conducting business in un-ethical manners.

        This curriculum is designed to be used as a stand-alone unit of instruction or integrated throughout entrepreneurship, management, introduction to business, or marketing classes.  It could even be utilized in a personal finance/consumer education course because it does deal with employee ethics.
        To find out more about this excellent, integrated curriculum resources, go to www.bfip.org.

**Web 2.0** ———————————————————

**Kellin De Master**
Kappa Chapter

Indiana University of Pennsylvania

The sky is the limit today. If you can dream it, technology seems to be able to do it. Technology has made such incredible advancements over the years and is continually changing. As business educators, we must be aware of the recent technologies in order to educate our students to the best of our ability.

I recently attended the Eastern Business Education Association's Annual Convention. Kristin Hokanson, a presenter at the conference, presented about the breakthrough of Web 2.0 technologies and how it can make a difference in the classroom. Web 2.0 technologies, such as Blogs, Wiki Spaces, Collaboration Tools such as Google Docs, Podcasts, and many more, help facilitate collaboration and sharing information between groups of people. Web 2.0 uses the Internet as a publishing tool rather than a reading platform. It is collaborative, dynamic, uses multimedia, open, and shared.

What a perfect tool for business education? It incorporates the essential elements of quality education, uses advanced technology, and simply fun for students to participate. Students across the nation already use blogs, wikis, and instant messaging in their personal lives every day. Why not incorporate these resources into the classroom? Blogs and wiki spaces can allow students to express their ideas, and communicate with other students and the teacher. These tools are great way for students to interact with other students while enhancing their reading and writing skills as they post entries, comment and respond to their classmates. It's programs like this that encourage creativity, and most importantly, it is something our students can relate to and have fun with. Whether it this tool is used in a business/computer class, history, English or math, these tools can be incorporated into the learning process.

As the push for preparing students with 21st Century Skills, a term coined by the North Central Regional Educational Laboratory, Web 2.0 is a perfect example of fostering of all these skills – digital age literacy, inventive thinking, effective communication, and high productivity. As business educators, we can enhance these skills by using captivating, engaging, and collaborative projects that incorporate Web 2.0 technology.

Resources:

The Connected Classroom retrieved November 28 http://theconnectedclassroom.wikispaces.com/

21st Century Skills retrieved November 28 http://www.ncrel.org/engauge/skills/skills.htm

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As of April 2007
Please notify the National Editor of corrections and additions.

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