

unConference

RESEARCH IN MANAGEMENT LEARNING & EDUCATION

2025 Research in Management Learning and Education (RMLE) Unconference

Museum of Liverpool
in collaboration with
Liverpool John Moores University

PROCEEDINGS

Conference Chair:

Professor Amy Kenworthy, Bond University

Conference Executive Committee:

Maribel Blasco, Copenhagen Business School

Peggy Hedges, University of Calgary

George Hrivnak, Bond University

David Jones, Northumbria University

Jennifer Leigh, Nazareth University

Tony Wall, Liverpool Business School

cognition learning
unconference collaboration
engagement sharing
enthusiasm
organic passion
generation
knowledge research

Note: Included QIC document contributions were accepted based on a double-blind peer review process.

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Overview

Research discussions shouldn't have to rise from the ashes of recycled rhetoric and boring presentations prepared months in advance. Interactions about research should be exciting, organic, and engaging. For those who were interested in being generators of innovative, cutting-edge research in management education or those who had questions related to research in management education not addressed through traditional conference or workshop forums, our 2025 Research in Management Learning & Education (RMLE) Unconference was the place to be.

Unlike traditional conference formats that involve fixed agendas, established streams, and planned presentations, our RMLE Unconferences are organic and participant-driven. The fundamental goal of the RMLE Unconference is to bring together interested, passionate, and knowledgeable people to create a forum where they can share, learn, engage, question, contribute, discuss and debate about issues they deem to be important. Each participant is a contributor and all interactions take place in a flexible and highly interactive format (see <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Unconference> for more information).

During the 2025 RMLE Unconference held in partnership with Liverpool John Moores University, our goals were:

- Share ideas about key research areas participants are interested in,
- Find answers and “paths forward” regarding current research questions or concerns,
- Learn from others about their experiences with research project design, development and publication processes,
- Consider issues that are emerging through recent research and publication,
- Meet and network in an intimate and informal setting with other faculty members interested in management education research, and
- Interact with current and former board members and/or editors of the *Journal of Management Education* (JME), *Management Learning* (ML), and the *Academy of Management Learning & Education* (AMLE).

Participant Contributors

We were a group of 57 highly engaging (and engaged) people representing 28 universities, six countries, and three continents. The countries represented by our contributors included Australia, Canada, Denmark, England, Scotland, and the United States of America.

The tertiary institutions and organizations represented included the Bond University, BPP, Copenhagen Business School, Derby Business School, Lancaster University, Liverpool John Moores University, Macquarie University, Nazareth University, Northumbria University, Nottingham Trent University, Santa Clara University, Seneca Consort, St Andrews University, Swansea University, University of Bath, University of Calgary, University of Henley, University of Iowa, University of Liverpool, University of London, University of Notre Dame, University of San Francisco, University of Pennsylvania, University of Technology Sydney, University of Utah, University of Warrick, Utah State University, and Yeshiva University.

Scope and Discussion Groups for Our 11th RMLE Unconference

In terms of scope, the domain for this RMLE Unconference was the same as the previous Unconference events which included management teaching, learning, education, and the contexts within which these occur. As a result, the included submissions focused on a diversity of issues related to the business of management education (whether that be in universities, consulting agencies, or other organizations), which included geopolitical tensions, technological innovation, and issues related to sustainability and responsibility, as well as the processes and outcomes of management education.

The submissions included in these proceedings are called “Questions, Ideas, and Concerns” (QIC) documents. The QICs were written as free-flowing thoughts which encapsulate any questions, ideas, and concerns participants had with respect to research in management education. The content of this year's QICs was varied and rich, resulting in the following initial discussion group clusters. These assigned groups applied to our first discussion session only, after that we encouraged participants to electively and organically shift/morph/adapt the groups based on their experiences and what is shared during the reporting back sessions. As expected, through the course of a few discussion rounds, new idea- and project-specific discussion groups were formed. As always, our group names were reflective of the country and region we gathered in with respect to a few of the diverse innovations that have their home there.

The initial discussion group clusters for this year's event were:

- Group “Wet Dockers” – Considering intersections, tensions, and possibilities of integrating AI into management education teaching and research
- Group “The Hovercraft” – Exploring the foundations for, and creative practical applications of, educational innovation
- Group “Titanic Launch” – Using digital technologies to enhance innovation in higher education
- Group “The Williamson Tunnels” – Developing systems and applications within the (critically needed) domain of faculty development and support
- Group “The Cavern Clubbers” – Focusing on students in terms of how we can “do better” at preparing them for work and meaningful careers
- Group “School for the Blind” – Examining integrated management education and responsible student (group) learning
- Group “Sewer System” – Rethinking academic relevance and pathways for growth
- Group “Orthopaedic Surgery” – Creating a manifesto of care (one RMLE Unconference at a time)
- Group “Grand Olympic Festival” – Teaching to disrupt, unlearn, revitalize, renew, explore, and expand.
- Group “Football Goal Net” – Navigating turbulent times with the goal of creating inclusive (program) leadership
- Group “Public Library” – Exploring the generative and extractive sides of hope: A focus on Ukraine

Event (Un)Structure

As this was an Unconference, there were only two formal presentations - a welcome and a summary – each facilitated by members of the conference chair group listed above (see the “Unconference (Un)schedule” at the end of this document). The minimalist formality of the event's structure is based on its underlying ethos. The bulk of the RMLE Unconference is designed to be 100% driven by the people who are there. Beyond reading the QICs in this document, the only preparation that is asked of participant contributors prior to the Unconference was to bring energy and enthusiasm, a collaborative mindset, and an open-mindedness to going wherever our time together took us. And they did. Unconferences are uncomplicated. They are about knowledge generation via a minimally-structured, highly-engaging, and participant-driven format. The outcomes we saw at this year's event speak for themselves.

Expected Outcomes

The outcomes from any Unconference are various in nature and organic in terms of growth. The 2025 RMLE Unconference was no exception. Now that our time together has come to an end in Liverpool, we look forward to hearing from participant groups as they navigate forward with initiatives and projects with the knowledge, passion, and excitement generated during the event.

A Special Thank You

As with every RMLE Unconference, we would like to thank our ongoing partner organizations, the *Journal of Management Education*, *Management Learning*, and the *Academy of Management Learning and Education*, as well as Bond University and the incredible team members of our RMLE Unconference Executive Committee. This year, we would also like to send a special thank you to the team from Liverpool John Moores University (thank you Tony Wall and team LJMU!) for helping to organise this year's activities. Without our institutional and individual supporters, as well as our engaging and engaged participant contributors, our RMLE Unconferences wouldn't exist.

Attached Documents

1. Unconference (Un)schedule (pp. 97-98)
2. Map of Liverpool Docklands (p. 99)

Group “Wet Dockers”

Considering intersections, tensions, and possibilities of integrating AI into management education teaching and research

**Nur
Drew
Fabio
Shankar
Maddy
Victoria**

Fun Fact: When it opened in 1715, Liverpool’s Old Dock was the world’s first enclosed commercial wet dock. Before it opened there were only limited times when it was safe to load or unload ships in Liverpool, due to the huge tidal range of the river Mersey.

See: <https://www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk/stories/ten-fascinating-facts-about-liverpools-old-dock>

Redefining Success for International Students: Strategies for Inclusive and Adaptive Management Education

Nur Bintimokhtar

BPP Business School, BPP University, UK
Nurbintimokhtar@bpp.com

Danielle Grant

BPP Business School, BPP University, UK
DanielleGrant@bpp.com

Higher education is evolving rapidly, and both students and educators are encountering new, unprecedented challenges (Knight, 2018). For international students, these hurdles are even more pronounced. They must navigate cultural differences (Bai and Wang, 2024), language barriers, financial pressures, and the complexities of visa regulations (Akanwa, 2015). The global disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic (Onyeaka et al., 2021), alongside economic instability and rising living costs, has only intensified these difficulties. Inspired by Fiona Hurd's recent work at RMLE 2024 on supporting learners facing significant challenges, we would like to explore, with other interested attendees, how we might redefine what success looks like in management education to better serve international students in the UK, with an additional focus on how artificial intelligence (AI) can be integrated into educational management to better support these international students. AI has become a new source of competitiveness in higher education (Hannan and Liu, 2023). How can this be effectively leveraged to help international students overcome their challenges and achieve success? According to statistics from May 2024, between 2021 and 2022, there were 679,970 international students studying in the UK. Of these, 120,140 were from the EU and 559,825 were from non-EU countries (HESA, 2024).

The inspiration for our enquiry isn't just theoretical. It is rooted in our everyday experiences. Teaching predominantly international students, who make up around 99% of the cohort across both undergraduate and postgraduate programs, we witness firsthand the diversity of their backgrounds and the challenges they face. We aim to explore how UK business schools, such as BPP University, (and potentially others, globally, who have similar issues), can create more inclusive and adaptive learning environments, including the integration of AI to support international students. We hope to contribute to the ongoing conversation about how to better support and uplift international students in an increasingly complex global landscape.

Our questions for exploration at the Unconference are:

1. How do international students in UK, define academic success, and how does this differ from traditional definitions in management education? (Tinto, 1975; Tinto, 1993)
2. What are the key challenges faced by international students in UK, and how can adaptive management curricula address these challenges effectively?
3. How can business schools in the UK implement inclusive pedagogical strategies that accommodate the diverse cultural and educational backgrounds of international students?
4. How can AI and technology help improve the learning experience and academic success of international students by addressing their unique challenges?

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The Impact of AI Tools on Student Performance, Engagement, and Industry Readiness in Business Management Education

Nur Bintimokhtar

BPP Business School, BPP University, UK
Nurbintimokhtar@bpp.com

Xin Gu

BPP Business School, BPP University, UK
XinGu@bpp.com

Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools are rapidly changing the landscape of higher education. In business management education, these tools provide students with immediate access to information and support for tasks like report writing, case study analysis, and project management. However, as AI becomes more prevalent, it raises important questions about the authenticity of learning. Naor Cohen's insights from RMLE 2024 serve as a thought-provoking foundation that inspires us to explore this further. Cohen compares AI's impact on education to M.C. Escher's Relativity, where the usual rules and boundaries are turned upside down, creating a sense of confusion that challenges our understanding of the integrity of education.

In this research, we want to connect these philosophical concerns with practical evidence, focusing on whether AI tools genuinely help students develop the practical skills and competencies needed in the workplace, or if they merely allow students to mimic learning outcomes. We will look at how AI affects student performance, engagement, and readiness for the industry, while also asking whether these tools encourage true intellectual development or just a surface-level understanding of concepts.

Cohen raises some critical questions about generative AI tools like ChatGPT. He points out that these tools can blur the lines between authentic learning and shallow imitation, which could lead us into a "post-truth" era in education. This idea resonates strongly in business management education, where students need to apply theoretical knowledge to real-world challenges. Cohen warns that AI might create an illusion of understanding, with students relying on technology to generate work that meets basic criteria but lacks the deeper critical thinking and problem-solving skills essential for success in the industry.

While Cohen's thoughts inspire our inquiry, we also recognise that other scholars, like Duong et al. (2024) and Dilekli and Boyraz (2024), argue that AI tools can enhance student engagement and motivation by providing immediate, personalised learning resources. Our study aims to blend these different viewpoints, examining both the philosophical and practical aspects of AI-assisted learning in business management education. In addition to looking at our current students at BPP University, we are also interested in gathering evidence from a range of UK universities to enrich our findings and provide a broader perspective on this issue. We'll explore the following questions:

1. How does using AI tools like ChatGPT, Gemini, Julius.ai challenge or support the authenticity of learning in business management education, especially regarding concerns about performative mimicry?
2. How do AI chatbot tools impact student performance in assessments that require practical, work-based skills?
3. Does reliance on AI affect student engagement in face-to-face and online learning environments?
4. To what extent do students who use AI tools develop the competencies needed by employers in the business management field?

By framing our research within the broader context of Cohen's philosophical ideas, we hope to add to the conversation about AI's role in education. At the same time, we aim to provide practical insights into how these tools impact student performance, engagement, and readiness for the workforce in business management. Ultimately, our goal is to help educators find a balance between harnessing the benefits of AI and maintaining the authenticity and integrity of the learning experience.

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Learning in the Age of AI

Kenneth G. Brown
University of Iowa
kenneth-g-brown@uiowa.edu

Drew Jauron
University of Iowa
andrew-jauron@uiowa.edu

The introduction and quick rise of ChatGPT in 2022 has made Artificial Intelligence, in the form of generative, large language models, appear ubiquitous. Yet, according to a Pew Research Center survey, only 23% of U.S. adults have ever used ChatGPT, suggesting a disparity between individuals knowing of the software and choosing to use it (McClain 2024). Generative Artificial Intelligence (genAI) is defined as a computer system that, upon user prompting, can create text, visual, and/or audio outputs through its training data (Feuerriegel et al., 2023).

In the realm of management education and workplace training, there are numerous ways that genAI can be useful, including assessment, determination and prediction of needs, assisting course development and design, and managing learning processes (e.g., Crompton & Burke, 2023; Pereira et al., 2023). A particularly interesting use is genAI as a resource for learning, specifically as a learner-initiated and learner-controlled activity at work and/or school.

GenAI has the potential to be targeted and personalized, moving accessible online learning tools (websites, e-learning resources) to become like tutors that synthesize information, make recommendations, and offer feedback and guidance. Khanmigo, the AI tutor created by Khan Academy, demonstrates both the potential capability and accessibility of this type of genAI (Khan, 2024).

Against this quickly evolving backdrop, we offer five questions to explore. To begin, we wonder whether learners understand the capacity of even the most commonly available genAI, such as Google Gemini, ChatGPT, Claude AI, and Microsoft CoPilot. Understanding what learners' know and believe about genAI would help illustrate how students and employees will use (or avoid) the technology, and if alternative, perhaps more nuanced, perspectives are starting to appear.

Q1: How do people with different backgrounds perceive the value of genAI and conceptualize its roles in facilitating their learning?

Q2: How do these different perspectives alter the way people use genAI at school and work?

Using genAI is at once incredibly intuitive, because of the natural language processing built into the models, and quite nuanced because specific aspects of the training data and the user-generated prompt may influence output in unpredictable ways. A particularly relevant skill here is user understanding of how to design and improve prompts, now labeled "prompt engineering" (Knoth, Tolzin, Janson, & Leimeister, 2024). Research is needed on how learners naturally learn prompting as well as how that learning curve may be accelerated. Helping learners use prompts effectively will be critical to ensuring that learner-initiated use of genAI is effective and efficient.

Q3: How do people understand and use genAI prompts at school and work?

Q4: What types of guidance offers the greatest benefit to help people improve their use of prompts?

Another question is whether genAI will become an overused shortcut. If genAI is used to produce work without efforts to plan, revise, reflect, and improve, then users will be exploiting the technology rather than learning (Greco, Charlier, & Brown, 2019). Brown and Charlier (2013) and Greco et al. (2019) suggest individual and contextual characteristics that lead employees to be exploitive (rather than exploratory) in their use of learning technologies. With genAI, this possibility is acute because of its capability to produce superficially high-quality output; open access genAI can now write full research papers, prepare presentation slides, answer exam questions, and even produce creative writing and images. This leads us to the question of how instructors and managers can convince people to use genAI thoughtfully.

Q5: What interventions convince people to make more thoughtful, exploratory use of genAI rather than exploit its capabilities without learning?

We look forward to exploring these and other questions about genAI and learning with other attendees.

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Sell Me This Product!: Personalised AI-Teaching Assistant Interactions with Students in Higher Education Modules

Fabio Oliveira
Henley Business School, Reading, United Kingdom
f.deoliveira@henley.ac.uk

Student: *“Hello, can we start a sales role-play so that I can practice my sales pitch in preparation for my individual assignment?”*

AI Teaching Assistant: *“Sure thing. Would you like to know more about the assignment criteria before we start the role-play?”*

Student: *“Yes, that would be useful, thanks.”*

AI Teaching Assistant: *“Your sales role-play consists of four stages, in which you need to demonstrate proficiency and knowledge of sales techniques. First, you need to ask the customer questions that will reveal their needs. Second, you should match your product’s benefits and value proposition to these needs. Third, you must address any possible objections and questions the customer may have. Finally, you need to close the sale by simulating the collection of payment. You will be assessed based on your ability and the depth of your interaction with me, your potential customer, during our session. Are you ready to start the role-play?”*

In a practical application of recent advancements in generative AI, large language models, regenerative augmentation retrieval networks, and document vectorisation, higher education students are offered the opportunity to access a round-the-clock virtual tutor. This innovative approach involves an AI model trained by the module convenor using prompt engineering. A front-end application was developed to enable students to practice and build confidence preceding their actual assignment for a Sales & Business Development module at a British university. This assignment includes a 10-minute recorded online sales call via MS Teams, in which one student assumes the role of the customer, while another acts as the seller.

Despite the rapid progression of technology, academia and universities have a reputation for being hesitant early adopters of new technological tools and teaching methodologies. This cautious stance stems from the inherent pedagogical risks and uncertainties within the British academic system. Consequently, the adoption of cutting-edge technologies often occurs in a fragmented and isolated manner, as illustrated by the initiative described above.

Students today demand more immersive and personalised educational experiences, alongside exposure to the latest technologies that they will be required to use and implement in the professional environment. Simultaneously, universities face financial challenges and faculty members feel overwhelmed by the multitude of job demands.

Key unanswered questions arise when integrating such applications into students’ learning journeys, including:

- What impact do human-AI interactions have on learners and academics?
- What are the real risks for universities in adopting these technologies?
- How can AI-enabled teaching assistants consistently support learning and teaching?

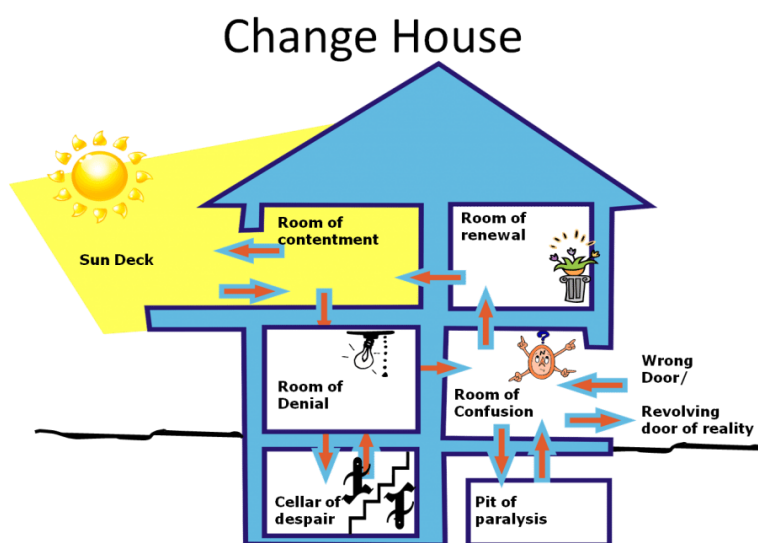
Engaging in discussions around these questions may unveil significant considerations, facilitating constructive engagements with various stakeholders within and beyond the university setting. These conversations are critical for addressing concerns related to data privacy, network protection, risk management, and, most importantly, delivering added value to learners through innovation and personalised, immersive interactions.

Renewal or Paralysis – the impact of Gen AI in academic work.

Shankar Sankaran
University of Technology Sydney, Australia
shankar.sankaran@uts.edu.au

Research Question: *How do we design activities and assignments in the management subjects we teach for students to use Gen AI responsibly while, at the same time, not dissuading them to use it?*

Universities around the world have been in denial about the rapid rise of Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) has taken over learning and research aspects of academic work. Initially they tried to put barriers to AI use but now they are coming around to accepting the fact that they need to find ways to educate students to use GenAI usefully but responsibly (Rowland 2023, UTS 2024). How can universities move to the ‘room of renewal’ instead of landing in a ‘pit of paralysis’ (Janssen, 2011) – see figure below.



At UTS I have been conducting research to explore the use of GenAI in ‘project’ management assignments using the ‘lesson study process’ (Lewis et al. 2019). Due to ethical constraints about equity we decided to use our observations and reflections (Mohammadkarimi 2023) as data as we could not use student assignments. We used collaborative ethnography to reflect upon individual reflections and analyze our data.

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Reflections of a win-win case for the GAI paradox: Embracing GAI through knowledge application whilst recognising the human element in organisational decision making.

Madeline (Maddy) Pickles
Liverpool John Moores University
M.Pickles@ljmu.ac.uk

Although Generative Artificial Intelligence (GAI) is regarded with suspicion and as a threat, it is also perceived as helpful and quick in generating valuable insight on many topics. We should however acknowledge that ChatGPT is not yet regarded as trustworthy (Lu, 2023). According to OpenAI CEO Sam Altman, as reported by the Australian Financial Review: "I verify what it says... This is a generative technology, it is a creative helper, so please don't rely on it for factual accuracy (Smith, 2023)". The paradox exists as besides the lack of trust Professor Sharples stated at the recent UCL Education Conference: "AI can be a positive way to influence and enhance effective teaching and learning" (UCL, 2023).

The paradoxical question for me is how do we include GAI in management education, whilst recognising the benefits of the technology and acknowledging the weaknesses? Hosting a collaborative teaching event between Liverpool John Moores University (UK) and Athena School of Management (India) entitled AI and chatbots a student perspective: Help or hinder' on 17 February 2023, I gained interesting perspectives from students. Some of the words they used to describe GAI included: 'nervous', 'dangerous' and 'too risky', however there were acknowledgments that GAI can be helpful in explaining theoretical concepts that students did not grasp from attending seminars. I was inspired to create a win-win approach using GAI whilst demonstrating why human decision making is essential.

I introduced the use of Open AI via ChatGPT in an Employee Relations module at master's level where students were asked to research specific elements of their coursework that are knowledge based through using GAI searches. Specifically, I asked students to use ChatGPT to gain an understanding of what Employment Relations are and the differences between Unitarist, Pluralist, and Marxist approaches. Following their GAI search, the students were tasked to use the GAI knowledge in a case study that relies on decision-making.

Initial exploration of Chat GPT demonstrated insightful answers as to the differences between the three perspectives. The explanations generated by GAI were not positioned within a critical academic debate, however, I found the account to be reliable in its explanation and adequate to help students make informed and intelligent decisions to apply to the given case study. Students were confidently able to argue which theory of Employment Relations Systems is applicable to the case study and why, based on the knowledge gained by ChatGPT. GAI data were able to provide information that informed and complemented human decision-making. Without the human application, the knowledge alone generated by GAI was limited.

Through this application, I attempted to apply Professor Sharples guidance of using generative AI with care, exploring AI for creativity, and rethinking the use of written assessment whilst also developing AI literacy amongst our students (UCL, 2023).

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AI, case studies and learning preferences

Victoria Willis
University of Bath
Vw250@bath.ac.uk

As an experienced lecturer, but a new management researcher, I find myself pondering a number of questions, ideas and concerns of which my top ones currently relate to the following topics: the use of AI by students and its impact on their sense of achievement; the impact of integrating a single (fabricated) case study throughout an entire unit of study; and investigating students' learning preferences, especially concerning neurodiversity and additional commitments.

AI and sense of achievement

Artificial intelligence (AI) has become an integral part of modern education, offering tools that enhance learning efficiency. However, it also raises significant questions about its impact on students' intrinsic motivation and sense of achievement.

When students rely excessively on AI-generated solutions, they miss out on the deep learning necessary for developing critical thinking. This over-reliance on AI can diminish their sense of accomplishment, as the ease of obtaining solutions might reduce their motivation to thoroughly understand the subject matter.

In addition to the well-versed arguments about academic integrity, it is crucial for educators to find a balance that harnesses AI's capabilities while fostering an environment where students derive genuine satisfaction from their intellectual efforts.

Using a single case study

Integrating a single case study throughout an entire unit of study represents a powerful pedagogical strategy by allowing students to delve into multiple facets of a real-world type scenario over an extended period. With students often failing to do the pre-reading required for single case studies, this could provide a solution to ensuring students come to class ready to discuss, since the case builds up over time and they become familiar with the characters and background story.

The case study I am currently developing for a first year all-year finance course involves following a fictional company through various stages from early investments in a project, to raising finance, to floating on the stock exchange, then later changing capital structure and finally starting to trade internationally.

Students will continuously apply and re-evaluate their knowledge in light of the evolving case context. I am proposing to evaluate the impact on learning of using this single case study approach and would be really interested in views and approaches to this kind of study.

Learning preferences

The diversity of university populations is increasing, with a growing number of students identifying as neurodiverse and having additional commitments such as work, caregiving, and elite sport programmes. Understanding the learning preferences and needs of these diverse student groups is crucial for creating inclusive and effective educational environments.

Research indicates that traditional teaching methods often fail to address the varied learning preferences and needs of diverse student groups, leading to disengagement and reduced academic performance. Understanding how additional commitments influence learning preferences is crucial for designing supportive and space/cost-efficient educational strategies that enhance student success and well-being. I am currently undertaking focus groups to investigate these issues and would love to share these findings.

The RMLE Unconference presents a unique opportunity to explore these critical issues in management education and I would very much enjoy being part of this community.

Group “The Hovercraft”

**Exploring the foundations for, and creative practical applications of,
educational innovation**

**Naor
Divya
Annemette
Miranda
Tony**

Fun Fact: On 20 July 1962, the world’s first passenger hovercraft travelled from Rhyl to Wirral. The Vickers VA3 (the name of the hovercraft) ended up not being a great success, but the concept of a passenger hovercraft did.

See:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/webarchive/https%3A%2F%2Fwww.bbc.co.uk%2Fblogs%2Fwales%2Fentries%2Fae3388b9-cd80-384a-bd63-04b16e6cad29>

Reading for Leadership: Literature-Based Pedagogy for Empathy and Moral Imagination in Business Education

Naor Cohen
Haskayne School of Business, University of Calgary
ncohen@ucalgary.ca

"This, so far as I can see, is the specific value or good of literature as Logos; it admits us to experiences other than our own . . . in reading great literature I become a thousand men and yet remain myself. Like the night sky in the Greek poem, I see with a myriad eyes, but it is still I who see."

—C.S. Lewis, *An Experiment in Criticism*

In the aftermath of corporate scandals like the ones leading to the 2008 financial crisis, business schools began to prioritize ethical leadership education. Organizations such as the AACSB have urged administrators and faculty to critically assess and enhance their approaches to ethics within the curriculum. Yet, despite these efforts, business education remains grounded in an industrial paradigm that, while essential for enabling modern life, often overlooks the richer aspects of what makes it worth living. Can fiction provide a counterbalance to this focus?

I am interested in exploring how imaginative literature-based pedagogy can help business students develop moral analysis and judgment. Drawing on C.S. Lewis and Martha Nussbaum's theory of moral imagination, this approach uses literature to cultivate empathy—enabling students to see the world through others' perspectives and understand the intricate context of ethical decisions. In business education's results-driven environment, literature offers a humanistic way to engage with diverse viewpoints and experience ethical dilemmas more deeply than traditional practices.

Over the past three years, I have applied this pedagogy in a senior-level ethical leadership course, using Aravind Adiga's *The White Tiger*. The novel follows Balram Halwai's journey from a poor villager in India to a successful entrepreneur, revealing the moral compromises and ethical dilemmas faced in his pursuit of success. My intention was not to replace core management texts but to enrich them. Students analyzed the novel not from a literary critique perspective but rather as a lens to explore ethical challenges in leadership. At the end of the course, students reflected on the impact of engaging with literature as part of their business education, noting that it was unexpectedly transformative.

My QIC invites you to explore how literature can become an integral part of business education, fostering the moral foundations essential for responsible leadership. Though this approach may seem unconventional or even esoteric, my experience shows it to be both practical and enriching (even if less prescriptive). I look forward to discussing the opportunities and challenges of this poetic approach. Some of the questions on my mind are:

- How does imaginative literature uniquely foster empathy and moral imagination among students?
- What assessment strategies can capture the nuanced development of empathy and moral reasoning?
- How can we integrate literature-based pedagogy effectively into our curricula?
- How can we show the ROI of using nontraditional texts, especially when some may view literature as irrelevant or impractical in developing managerial skills?
- Does using literature risk imposing certain moral viewpoints on students?
- Could teaching ethics through literature paradoxically reflect the same utilitarian mindset that prompted the call for ethical education in the first place?

Can the use of aesthetics aid in making sense of ‘Wicked Problems’ in our classrooms?

Martin Quinn (Lancaster, m.quinn@lancaster.ac.uk)

Divya Jyoti (Lancaster, d.jyoti@lancaster.ac.uk)

Marta Gasparin (Copenhagen Business School)

Enrico Maccio (Copenhagen Business School)

The world as we know it is rapidly changing. From geopolitical tensions to climate crises, our comprehension of what ‘is’ and what ‘might be’ is becoming increasingly complex. In a time where attention-spans are fast reducing, as management educators we are confronted with the challenge of translating the ‘intense’, ‘theoretical’, ‘deep’ and ‘philosophical’ analytical and conceptual understandings to students and professionals. How do we offer provocations for organising ‘better’ and indeed managing ‘better’? How do we transform our classroom into thinking laboratories where questioning and debating become the norm?

As a mixed group of early career and experienced management educators, across four higher education institutions and executive and professional development settings, over the past five years, we have been experimenting with the use of contemporary cinema and games as integral components of the modules we design and teach. We have introduced media and film as core elements of the pedagogical approaches and have developed several games which attempt to place students in the role of organizations and individuals within imagined business and societal settings. A few examples of our work include an international trade game, a responsibility matrix game, and playful learning with Lego and films such as the Big Short, Laundromat and The Insider. As we have designed and delivered the experimental pedagogical design, a series of questions, issues and concerns have emerged which we are keen to explore further in the setting provided by the Unconference to share emergent insights and compare our experiences with other colleagues. These include, among others:

- How and why are games successful in enabling students to place themselves into contexts they may not have any real-life experience of? What are some of the ethical burdens that such role-plays generate for students?
- How do interactive games which adopt an agile approach (where rules change mid-way) interrupt power dynamics and challenge students to think on their feet?
- What role does film and media play in translating theory and complex ideas to the students through a differing aesthetic experience?
- How do we further and embed aesthetics-led educational experiences into the curriculum?
- What reassurances do students need to understand the value of alternative educational experiences?
- How do we ensure that such games and reflective exercises are carried out in a safe environment and are inclusive of diverse learning styles?
- How can we develop a learning environment which is able to respond to the eco-anxieties and ethical dilemmas which might be generated as a consequence of provocation for deep and situated ‘thinking’?
- How do we accommodate for the emotional labour required from educators to incorporate aesthetics in their pedagogical designs? Which educational practices and policies might help reduce the burdens?
- What might be the unintended consequences in the classroom of adopting and including such approaches and how do we mitigate against those?

Learning to listen: Leader humility and intergenerational learning for sustainability leadership at business schools

Maribel Blasco, Copenhagen Business School, mbi.msc@cbs.dk

Carole Elliott, St Andrews University, cje7@st-andrews.ac.uk

Annemette Kjærgaard, Copenhagen Business School, amk.msc@cbs.dk

Sarah Robinson, Rennes School of Business, sarah.robinson@rennes-sb.com

Issues and Concerns

Despite decades of initiatives and debates, including PRME, about the need to educate for sustainability leadership at business schools, these insights have still only been translated on a small scale into real change, with sustainability issues still inadequately integrated in business curricula, and their relevance often not being clear to students (Abdelgaffar, 2021; Colombo, 2023; Edwards et al., 2020). Business schools have a particularly vital role here, since they train the sustainability skills and awareness of tomorrow's business leaders (Marathe et al., 2020; Mason et al., 2024).

Yet academia is not yet sufficiently proficient at delivering curricula that can produce graduates with the competences needed to effectively tackle sustainability challenges (Hensley, 2024; Tasdemir and Gazo, 2020); and the pace of change when it comes to sustainability (for instance standards and other regulations that frame business activity) is such that 'keeping up' with the latest developments and requirements is a major challenge for business school pedagogy and curricula.

In line with recent policy initiatives, we propose that *intergenerational learning* holds considerable potential for business schools seeking to address the planetary sustainability challenge (Mannion, 2018: 2). Specifically, we suggest that recognizing students as a crucial sustainability learning resource and a 'voice from the future' is key. This calls for humility on our side as we must acknowledge that we do not have the better solution (Hannah, 2024). Although in many countries students are increasingly being involved in university quality assurance and governance mechanisms (Cardoso et al., 2017), student curricular input, they are often not included as full partners in this process (Isaeva et al., 2020). Moreover, their voices and experiences are still few and far between in sustainability classrooms, despite calls for greater emphasis on teacher-student partnering, learner-driven curricula and co-inquiry, as well as evidence of the benefits of these approaches for all involved (Dmochowski et al., 2016; Herranen et al., 2018). Many students have cutting edge knowledge and experiences garnered outside their studies that can add valuable insights into the classroom, bringing outdated curricula up to speed, contributing much-needed real-life input to the sustainability theories and models taught, and enhancing engagement (Dmochowski et al., 2016).

For this to work, however, business schools' leadership must become more open and less hierarchical in order to embrace the possibilities of intergenerational learning (Mannion, 2018). We therefore propose that university leaders need to adopt an attitude of 'educational humility' (Greenleaf, 1991: 10; Hannah, 2024), which includes 'learning to listen' actively to their students. Just as great teachers take their students' ideas seriously, engage them in shared decision-making and recognize when their teaching is not having the desired results and search for new approaches (Waks, 2018), so too should university leaders if the sustainability agenda is to be inclusive, contemporary and engaging. Humility is, moreover, recognised as essential to issues of intergenerational justice (MacKenzie, n.d.) such as sustainability.

Questions

- How can we conceptualize and implement 'educational humility' for intergenerational learning at business schools?
- What experiences do others have with intergenerational learning at business schools, including student input into sustainability curricula?

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Teaching the masses in Business schools- what do we know from the field of education?

Miranda Lewis
Bayes Business School, City St George's University of London
Miranda.lewis@city.ac.uk

Many higher education institutions are facing significant financial pressures, prompting them to adopt a strategy of increasing student numbers to generate additional revenues. This strategy is more often than not applied in a first instance to business schools, traditionally considered to be the “cash cows” of universities. However, this expansion is often implemented without much reflection on the broader impact of this approach, namely on teaching quality, learning outcomes, and overall institutional sustainability, with approaches that merely seem to add numbers on numbers, without questioning the need for renewed approaches to pedagogical design.

In this context, I would like to open the debate and address the following research question: *what do we know from the pedagogical literature on the impact of large-scale teaching? Can we actually carry out large scale teaching successfully? And what are the hidden prices we pay for this, both in terms of staff, students and institutions?*

In particular, I would like to generate a discussion on the following themes:

1-Impact on educators: among the most worrying outcomes of large-scale teaching is that of educator burnout (i.e. Watts, Robertson, 2011), correlated with large volumes of teaching and the lack of opportunity to build meaningful relationships with the student body.

2- Impact on students: student motivation has been shown to be negatively correlated with large scale teaching (i.e. Kim et al., 2017). While student achievement and learning reveals mixed findings, depending on the type of learning that is being assessed, higher order skills or lower order information retrieval skills (Hornsby, Osman, 2014).

3- Pedagogical practices and choices: while the research here is scant, what seems to emerge is an effort from educators to think creatively and adopt innovations in teaching which blend traditional formats with non-traditional formats (Hornsby et al., 2014; Maringe, Sing, 2014).

Education and teaching is in its origins about social relationships and knowledge exchange (Leenknecht et al., 2023), rather than money exchange, despite recent turns to capitalistic approaches to education. Therefore, looking at innovative thinking in how to scale community relationships on a deep level, rather than merely increments in numbers would be a fruitful avenue to explore. On the broader institutional level, this debate also aims to critique the sustainability of such business models based on increasing student numbers and to contribute to the broader debate on reimagining the business school and questioning its neoliberal philosophical foundations.

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“I am The Walrus” and ethical anthems for the future of management education

Tony Wall
Liverpool John Moores University, UK
t.wall@ljmu.ac.uk

Recent analyses have mapped the diverse ways *The Beatles* have influenced biochemistry, molecular biology, human health and disease – and their education – over the last 40 years (Weiskirchen, 2022). Here, imagery, symbolism, and even conceptual leaps in biotechnological innovation, have been successfully rendered through the lens of top hits. Symbolically, however, this palimpsestic move reflects an educational commitment to making propositional knowledge accessible with a fuller array of senses, but also a disclosure of an educators’ own ontological and axiological perspectives which are temporally located. In this sense, when an educator draws on *The Beatles* (or other anthems), it is a joyful invitation to join a way of integrating knowing into life.

With the exception of jazz and improvisational organisation (Zack, 2000), music’s (and *The Beatles*’) influence on management and organisation studies and its educational signatures have not been as extensive as in pure sciences, perhaps linked to relates struggles of legitimacy (Wilimoft, 1997). However, more recently, the notion of rhythms has become useful in describing academic life and its link to wellbeing (or otherwise) in academic life. Similarly, the notion of provocative theory (Ramsey, 2011) explicitly refers to the rhythmic aspects of how we relate to and interact with theory. In the case of provocative theory, we are not interested in the application of a theory to practice, but rather an invitation to ‘dance’ with theory in ways which spark new ideas. Here, a thought experiment can open up any concept (in fuzzy interpretive terms) as a ‘theory’ (e.g. a set of relationships or meanings), and include words, phrases, feelings, movements, jolts, rhythms, and so on (as explored in art or music therapies). At the same time, these theories are also temporally held, as they can all change when understanding the cultural historic meaning of a song.

If we take “*I am The Walrus*” (listen here, the song with the infamous lyric ‘*I am the eggman... they are the eggmen*’) in a business ethics class, what is sparked? Does it raise our consciousness of war and its consequences, power figures and hierarchies? *Prima facie*, these feel pertinent to peace and its related UN Sustainable Development Goal. And, with that temporal shift, do these readings change when we learn that the song was actually referring to a nonsensical dream and that it should not be taken seriously (some say it was written to prevent it being analysed for its hidden meaning, see <https://www.beatlesebooks.com/walrus/>)? As a provocative theory, the most important aspect is its poignancy; how much are we moved to action?

So these musings raise questions to explore:

- What (theoretical) anthems capture where management education has been, where it is going, and where we need it to go in the future?
- What (theoretical) anthems embody the ethical hearts, minds, and hands we need today?
- What commitments and freedoms are imbued within (theoretical) anthems, and to what extent are our interpretations our own projections of our desires?
- Which genres of music are unintentionally excluded and lost as others become classical anthems?
- What would an RMLE Unconference anthem sound like?

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Group “Titanic Launch”

Using digital technologies to enhance innovation in higher education

**Anindita
Martyn
Ken
Sue
Danielle
Ahmad**

Fun Fact: The vessels Titanic, Carpathia, Californian were all Liverpool registered ships from the White Star Line which was founded by Thomas Ismay in Liverpool. The Head Office (containing Bruce Ismay's own office) at Albion House, 30 James St, Liverpool was besieged by the public on the morning of April 15, 1912. J. Bruce Ismay was born and lived in Liverpool. He had two huge mansions, "Sandheys" in Mossley Hill, Liverpool and "Dawpool" at Thurstaston on the Wirral. Both are gone now. Ismay continued to live in Liverpool until after the First World War. Many of the Titanic's crew were from Liverpool.

See:
<https://www.bing.com/videos/riverview/relatedvideo?q=why+is+the+titanic+launch+famous+in+liverpool&mid=5955B036DB5FB2360F695955B036DB5FB2360F69&FORM=VIRE>

Role of the Instructor in Student Learning Processes in the Age of Generative AI

Anindita Banerjee

University of Liverpool Management School, University of Liverpool

anindita.banerjee@liverpool.ac.uk

Context:

In context of the fast-changing higher education environment where generative AI (in addition to traditional methods and tools) is being used in universities for 'learning and teaching' purposes, roles of university faculty need to adopt in this revised context of education. My interests are focused on understanding the evolving or necessary changes required in the nature of faculty role and practices in the age of generative AI in learning and education in management schools. As we transition into more technologically advanced ways of teaching, we need to think through (new) educational practices that would help develop students as engaged learners and also respond to industry's demand of critical thinkers for purposes of employability.

What is at stake?

Two important reasons why students go to universities are (a) to gain knowledge in their subject(s) of interest and (b) to learn how to think critically. In today's world of education Generative AI, e.g. ChatGPT is radically transforming the experiences of teachers and students around methods of teaching and learning and it will continue to do so for the foreseeable future (Mollick and Mollick, 2023). Generative AI is more capable and sophisticated than previous learning technologies in that it has made possible 'assimilation' of information from various sources and provision of that knowledge in a written text or narrative of some standard quality free of cost. However, Generative AI does not make a distinction between assimilating information and disinformation available online. Therefore, given the nature, scope and challenges of Generative AI universities need to be careful about *what and how* students are learning and also about whether students are *engaged* in learning.

Questions:

- In context of student learning and engagement in the age of Generative AI:
 - o What roles/identity would an instructor assume?
 - o What would new educational practices in Management Education in the University look like?

Ideas:

Who should an instructor become?

- A facilitator? Somebody with more pastoral duties? (Barros et al., 2023)
 - o Can (Generative) AI support the multidimensional aspects of student engagement?
 - o More case-based, work-based learning?

Concerns:

- The quality of training and learning, especially around critical thinking that students graduate with prioritizing cost- and time-efficiency as more important values for management schools than good governance.
- The well-being of students and instructors given the relentless nature of AI producing endless information and sometimes that of questionable quality.
- A dystopian future where human instructors end up only supervising Generative AI-generated content or becoming a point of on-demand contact.

Given that industry needs graduates who are competent in critical thinking, creativity and 'teaching and training' and not merely those skilled in handling advanced IT or data analytics (Hazan, 2024), who should the instructor become in the age of Generative AI? What kind of teaching and learning will develop students' abilities to see the big picture at work?

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Podcasts and More – Viable Alternatives to Journal Articles?

Martyn Bradley
University of Liverpool
m.bradley@liverpool.ac.uk

It is not surprising that management undergraduate students tend to seek information for assignments via online platforms such as search engines (Whitmire, 2002). However, what might be surprising is that this might not regularly lead to them acquiring journal articles. For instance, research suggests that the vast majority of journal article readers are PhD students, postgraduates, and postdocs (Mohammadi et al., 2015). Unsurprisingly, undergraduate students might well be more inclined to simply *Google it* (Nicholas & Clark, 2015 and Riyaz, 2017); Historical research suggests that doing so, similarly unsurprisingly, might not provide the type of quality resource, such as journal articles, which more traditional information seeking behaviours tend to find (Brophy & Bawden, 2005). This is a problem as our curricula are regularly designed around knowledge which might only be available in journal articles.

An alternative method for accessing knowledge which is more aligned to an undergraduate's taste might be the podcast with disciplines outside of management studies finding increasing success in using podcasts as learning resources owing to students being more motivated to engage with the same (Rockhill, Pastore & Johnston, 2019 and Johnston, Rockhill & Pastore, 2021). Listening to a podcast as an alternative to reading a journal provides two important and obvious concerns. Firstly, podcasts are not produced with the depth and complexity of a journal article. Secondly, topics can be diverse and niche with it being unlikely that we would be able to locate a podcast which covers the same. A solution is that we, as management educators, could produce in-depth and specific podcasts to discuss each of the journal article sources on our reading lists providing our students with knowledge via a medium more attuned to their taste. Or could we ask generative artificial intelligence to lend us a hand in some way?

Podcasts remain a relatively underused resource within the management education arena possibly because of the above reasons. The RMLE Unconference 2025 is an ideal opportunity for colleagues within the SOTL community to share their experience of promoting reading in novel ways, whether that be through podcasts or not, and to discuss:

1. How can we use podcasts, or other methods, to encourage students to access and engage with our recommended readings/reading lists?
2. Are there particular considerations in relation to how these approaches might impact specific learner types?
3. What are the implications for using new technologies in this way? Are we making it “too easy” to learn and/or access knowledge? Are we, if we produce podcasts and other easily accessible resources which are delivered to students, limiting opportunity for our students to display and develop research skills such as finding sources and analysing and evaluating written texts?
4. If at all, how should we structure our classroom activities and curriculum differently? For instance, if students need to learn how to use certain technologies – should we integrate this within our curriculum or should this be a skills workshop delivered outside of our curriculum. In other words, should we risk, for instance, using sessions and time in which we should be delivering topic-related content to teach about the new we are to employ.
5. What are the potential lenses and perspectives we might explore, as researchers, to understand the potential benefits and limitations of how these technologies might encourage reading and learning of management-related resources.

In addressing questions such as the above it is hoped that we can create a supportive and critical discussion on this important area of practice with colleagues drawing on their own practice and experienced challenges in promoting engagement with texts and other sources.

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Learning in the Age of AI

Kenneth G. Brown

University of Iowa

kenneth-g-brown@uiowa.edu

Drew Jauron

University of Iowa

andrew-jauron@uiowa.edu

The introduction and quick rise of ChatGPT in 2022 has made Artificial Intelligence, in the form of generative, large language models, appear ubiquitous. Yet, according to a Pew Research Center survey, only 23% of U.S. adults have ever used ChatGPT, suggesting a disparity between individuals knowing of the software and choosing to use it (McClain 2024). Generative Artificial Intelligence (genAI) is defined as a computer system that, upon user prompting, can create text, visual, and/or audio outputs through its training data (Feuerriegel et al., 2023).

In the realm of management education and workplace training, there are numerous ways that genAI can be useful, including assessment, determination and prediction of needs, assisting course development and design, and managing learning processes (e.g., Crompton & Burke, 2023; Pereira et al., 2023). A particularly interesting use is genAI as a resource for learning, specifically as a learner-initiated and learner-controlled activity at work and/or school.

GenAI has the potential to be targeted and personalized, moving accessible online learning tools (websites, e-learning resources) to become like tutors that synthesize information, make recommendations, and offer feedback and guidance. Khanmigo, the AI tutor created by Khan Academy, demonstrates both the potential capability and accessibility of this type of genAI (Khan, 2024).

Against this quickly evolving backdrop, we offer five questions to explore. To begin, we wonder whether learners understand the capacity of even the most commonly available genAI, such as Google Gemini, ChatGPT, Claude AI, and Microsoft CoPilot. Understanding what learners' know and believe about genAI would help illustrate how students and employees will use (or avoid) the technology, and if alternative, perhaps more nuanced, perspectives are starting to appear.

Q1: How do people with different backgrounds perceive the value of genAI and conceptualize its roles in facilitating their learning?

Q2: How do these different perspectives alter the way people use genAI at school and work?

Using genAI is at once incredibly intuitive, because of the natural language processing built into the models, and quite nuanced because specific aspects of the training data and the user-generated prompt may influence output in unpredictable ways. A particularly relevant skill here is user understanding of how to design and improve prompts, now labeled "prompt engineering" (Knoth, Tolzin, Janson, & Leimeister, 2024). Research is needed on how learners naturally learn prompting as well as how that learning curve may be accelerated. Helping learners use prompts effectively will be critical to ensuring that learner-initiated use of genAI is effective and efficient.

Q3: How do people understand and use genAI prompts at school and work?

Q4: What types of guidance offers the greatest benefit to help people improve their use of prompts?

Another question is whether genAI will become an overused shortcut. If genAI is used to produce work without efforts to plan, revise, reflect, and improve, then users will be exploiting the technology rather than learning (Greco, Charlier, & Brown, 2019). Brown and Charlier (2013) and Greco et al. (2019) suggest individual and contextual characteristics that lead employees to be exploitive (rather than exploratory) in their use of learning technologies. With genAI, this possibility is acute because of its capability to produce superficially high-quality output; open access genAI can now write full research papers, prepare presentation slides, answer exam questions, and even produce creative writing and images. This leads us to the question of how instructors and managers can convince people to use genAI thoughtfully.

Q5: What interventions convince people to make more thoughtful, exploratory use of genAI rather than exploit its capabilities without learning?

We look forward to exploring these and other questions about genAI and learning with other attendees.

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Lectures via TikTok? What is the future for student engagement?

Sue Cronshaw
Liverpool John Moores University
s.cronshaw@ljmu.ac.uk

In the UK, since 2019 students have had to pay £9,250 per year for the opportunity to study at a University, yet during this time, student engagement levels in HE have been noticeably dropping, demonstrated through lower attendance rates, lack of autonomy, high levels of required referrals and higher drop-out rates. Although there is a current lack of knowledge about the factors that may be associated with engagement in university life (Gulliver et al. 2023) the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic disrupted what students once perceived as a 'normal' way of engaging with learning and teaching, and opened up avenues for engagement beyond traditional classroom experiences. The rise of online/hybrid learning seems to have caused a dilemma for students between their desires for flexible learning and the expectations associated with it (Hulene et al. 2023) and has certainly changed how some choose to engage with their studies.

Is the fault with the universities, who, in a bid to attract these fee paying students, have gone too far with the 'customer is king' philosophy, and the student voice has now become the only voice heard, instilling an apathy around their progress as they feel it is guaranteed? Has the commoditization of HE morphed students into consumers and their degree is just another purchase on the hedonic treadmill of life as a Gen Z? Or are the methods we use now deemed so outdated, the fault lies within archaic learning and teaching styles? Have we stopped engaging students because we stopped understanding how they prefer to communicate within their digitally-driven lifestyles? Is hybrid learning not enough?

As digital natives (Castillo-Parra *et al.*, 2022, p.798), this is a generation who live their lives through their mobile phones, so do we have to adapt our teaching to embrace more digital pedagogies, using software, simulations and platforms that engage this generation in a way that perhaps traditional approaches no longer can. Is delivering content via TikTok or Instagram Reels a way to hold their attention? Are games more beneficial for learning than lectures? As Darwin evidenced, adaptation is key for progress so I am keen to learn from those who are adapting. This QIC is about the implications for future learning and engagement. Should we be reflecting digital lifestyles in teaching? Can digital pedagogies ignite an enthusiasm in students and encourage re-engagement?

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Redefining Success for International Students: Strategies for Inclusive and Adaptive Management Education

Nur Bintimokhtar
BPP Business School, BPP University, UK
Nurbintimokhtar@bpp.com

Danielle Grant
BPP Business School, BPP University, UK
DanielleGrant@bpp.com

Higher education is evolving rapidly, and both students and educators are encountering new, unprecedented challenges (Knight, 2018). For international students, these hurdles are even more pronounced. They must navigate cultural differences (Bai and Wang, 2024), language barriers, financial pressures, and the complexities of visa regulations (Akanwa, 2015). The global disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic (Onyeaka et al., 2021), alongside economic instability and rising living costs, has only intensified these difficulties. Inspired by Fiona Hurd's recent work at RMLE 2024 on supporting learners facing significant challenges, we would like to explore, with other interested attendees, how we might redefine what success looks like in management education to better serve international students in the UK, with an additional focus on how artificial intelligence (AI) can be integrated into educational management to better support these international students. AI has become a new source of competitiveness in higher education (Hannan and Liu, 2023). How can this be effectively leveraged to help international students overcome their challenges and achieve success? According to statistics from May 2024, between 2021 and 2022, there were 679,970 international students studying in the UK. Of these, 120,140 were from the EU and 559,825 were from non-EU countries (HESA, 2024).

The inspiration for our enquiry isn't just theoretical. It is rooted in our everyday experiences. Teaching predominantly international students, who make up around 99% of the cohort across both undergraduate and postgraduate programs, we witness firsthand the diversity of their backgrounds and the challenges they face. We aim to explore how UK business schools, such as BPP University, (and potentially others, globally, who have similar issues), can create more inclusive and adaptive learning environments, including the integration of AI to support international students. We hope to contribute to the ongoing conversation about how to better support and uplift international students in an increasingly complex global landscape.

Our questions for exploration at the Unconference are:

1. How do international students in UK, define academic success, and how does this differ from traditional definitions in management education? (Tinto, 1975; Tinto, 1993)
2. What are the key challenges faced by international students in UK, and how can adaptive management curricula address these challenges effectively?
3. How can business schools in the UK implement inclusive pedagogical strategies that accommodate the diverse cultural and educational backgrounds of international students?
4. How can AI and technology help improve the learning experience and academic success of international students by addressing their unique challenges?

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Socio-digital Disadvantage, Widening Participation and Management Education

Uzair Shah
Lancaster University Management School
s.shah2@lancaster.ac.uk

Ahmad Timsal
Derby Business School
A.Timsal@derby.ac.uk

Hameed Chughtai
Lancaster University Management School
h.chughtai@lancaster.ac.uk

QIC:

What is the relationship of socio-digital disadvantage, widening participation and management education? How do we support students from disadvantaged backgrounds as they transition within business schools?

Summary:

Business education is often seen as a means for social mobility and economic prosperity (Kumar et al., 2024). There is an increasing emphasis on widening participation within business schools (Fernando and Kenny, 2021). However, scholars have warned that social and digital inequalities negatively impact the educational opportunities and experiences of individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds (Fotaki and Prasad, 2015; Timsal et al., 2024). There tends to be a ‘deficit approach’ adopted within widening participation practices that assumes limited motivation and skills of students from disadvantaged backgrounds as the main reason for lack of progression to and within universities (O’Sullivan et al., 2019).

Scholars have questioned the claim that business education offers equal opportunities and a level-playing field to all students for social mobility and economic prosperity (Dar et al., 2021; Zulfiqar and Prasad, 2021). Studies have highlighted narratives and practices within management education that perpetuate and normalize social and digital inequalities within business schools (Clark and Hordósy, 2019; Eisenman et al., 2024; Timsal et al., 2024). Critics have also questioned the assumption prevalent in business schools that success is solely the result of an individual’s hard work and dedication to self-improvement and task completion (Eisenman et al., 2024). This belief is particularly appealing to students from disadvantaged background, despite evidence suggesting elusive nature of the promise of social mobility. Further, scholars have identified that the hidden curriculum within business schools disproportionately disadvantages students from less privileged backgrounds, thereby perpetuating existing inequalities. (Eisenman et al., 2024; O’Sullivan et al., 2019).

In this work, we report findings from our study exploring use of digital technologies of students from less privileged backgrounds, enrolled in a full time MBA programme in two business schools in Pakistan. Our research revealed that the students found digital technologies to be alienating and isolating. This experience significantly impacted their academic engagement and social interactions, and further entrenching their socio-digital disadvantage in business schools within a Global South setting.

Our findings shed light on the complex relationship between socio-digital disadvantage, widening participation and management education in a Global South context (Chughtai, 2023). We question the deficit approach of widening participation, and the view of digital technologies as neutral, functional, mundane objects used for enhancing students’ experiences of management education. We highlight that the assumptions regarding prior exposure to, and skills in using digital technologies within management education, contributes to the socio-digital disadvantage of students from less privileged backgrounds. In so doing the MBA programmes/business schools (in-)advertently reproduce social and digital inequalities (Fotaki and Prasad, 2015; Zulfiqar and Prasad, 2021).

Insights into the students’ experiences of socio-digital disadvantage can contribute to widening participation practices within business schools. This is important as students from disadvantaged backgrounds are less likely to study at higher education institutions (HEIs) in comparison to those from elite backgrounds (O’Sullivan et al., 2019). Studies have also highlighted students are likely to continue studies in their educational institutions depending on the extent to which they feel a sense of belonging with that institution (Clark and Hordósy, 2019). More research into critically

reflexive and transformative dialogues and reflections amongst students and academics on probing the influence of, and addressing socio-digital inequalities, will offer useful contributions to management education literature.

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Group “The Williamson Tunnels”

**Developing systems and applications within the (critically needed) domain of
faculty development and support**

**John
Jeanie
Gianluigi
Catherine
Kelly
Hector**

Fun Fact: The Williamson Tunnels are a series of extensive subterranean excavations in the Edge Hill area of Liverpool, England. They are thought to have been created under the direction of tobacco merchant, landowner and philanthropist Joseph Williamson between 1810 and 1840. Although popularly described as "tunnels", the majority comprise brick or stone vaulting over excavations in the underlying sandstone. The purpose of the works remains unclear and remains a subject of heavy speculation; suggestions include commercial quarrying, a philanthropic desire to provide employment, and Williamson's own eccentric interests.

See:
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Williamson_Tunnels#:~:text=The%20Williamson%20Tunnels%20are%20a%20series%20of%20extensive.and%20philanthropist%20Joseph%20Williamson%20between%201810%20and%201840.

Holistic Approaches to a Liberal Management Education

John Ferguson

Huntsman School of Business, Utah State University

John.Ferguson@usu.edu

Shannon Peterson

Utah State University

Shannon.Peterson@usu.edu

Interdisciplinary approaches to education have been of interest and touted for decades. In academic circles this usually manifests in faculty co-teaching a course or sprinkling bits of material from another discipline. In the business world it often involves training sessions that push people out of their comfort zones, whether that be a survival training weekend to sharpen management skills or an improv class to help sales teams be more creative. The problem with most interdisciplinary efforts is that they usually either engage only those disciplinary interests that are closely aligned (e.g., including economics or finance as part of a management course) or they make surface level connections for the purpose of proof texting (e.g., reading a literary source to validate a management concept). These efforts avoid the uncomfortable introspection that deeper connections require. This failure robs both disciplines of their authenticity and minimizes the cognitive dissonance that spawns real learning. True interdisciplinary educational methods would first require the disciplines in question to evaluate the core assumptions and principles of each and open them to critique from an external system. This exposure to outside evaluation is only possible when the entities involved are actually willing to allow external evaluators to damage or even eradicate core ideas so that new ideas and foundations can be built.

This approach is crucial, especially in academic environments, due to the lived realities graduates will face when entering their social and work worlds. Given the wicked problems university graduates (especially Gen Z) must now, and will be, facing, holistic approaches to all disciplines is crucial for societal well-being. Management education is beneficially situated to engage in this work as management has always had interdisciplinary elements at its core.

Questions:

1. Instead of continuing to narrow, how can academics broaden the educational environment to reflect the holistic realities where education will ultimately be manifested?
2. How can interdisciplinary approaches break out of the confines of traditional connections to business adjacent or co-opted fields to more inclusive outlooks?
3. How do faculty prepare themselves and connect with others to make truly interdisciplinary work possible?

Ideas:

1. Interdisciplinary approaches need to be allowed into the curriculum development and deployment of management education at all levels. While this can be dangerous to fundamental disciplinary ideas, it allows for growth that better responds to the lived realities of modern students (especially Gen Z).
2. Academia's drive to publish or otherwise provide outputs fails to recognize the need for developmental opportunities for faculty. Developmental freedom for faculty to expand their own knowledge and comfort base through non-output related collaborations with colleagues outside their field are crucial for advancing this area.

Concerns:

1. While many people may agree with the idea of interdisciplinary education, funding models and university structures often work against this type of cross department or even cross college collaboration.
2. Another worrying concept in innovating in these areas is the fear faculty will experience in risking their currently safe position to try something new, especially in light of the realities in point 1.

Is Faculty Development A Mess?

Jeanie M. Forray
jeanieforray@gmail.com

Faculty development refers to higher education institutions' intentional and systematic efforts to enhance faculty members' knowledge, skills, and abilities to effectively fulfill their roles as educators, scholars, and mentors (Camblin & Steger, 2000). Increasingly, business and management faculty are expected to engage with emerging business trends, integrate industry practices into the curriculum, adopt and successfully deliver innovative pedagogy, and contribute to business programs and broader institutional initiatives along with their scholarship/research contributions and student mentoring/advising.

Institutions that invest in faculty development often do so in order to align themselves with accreditation standards by demonstrating their commitment to continuous improvement and adherence to best practices in business education (AACSB International, 2020). However, as Camblin & Steger note, "The assumption has long been that a scholar (i.e., faculty member) would and could easily self-educate to keep abreast of new developments and to maintain high skill levels" (2000:2). Aligned with that assumption, many institutions provide some combination of sabbatical leaves, orientation of new faculty, workshop presentations, funding for academic conferences, mentoring and the like as the basis of faculty development.

However, there is little evidence that these programs are either effective or sufficient when not designed with theories, assumptions, and values that underpin a community of practice or evaluated for their efficacy (see Amundsen et al., 2005; p. 12). In general, critiques of faculty development programs include the need for more rigorous evaluations, broader focus, diverse training methods, and fostering new partnerships and collaborations (Guraya & Chen, 2019). Additionally, the literature emphasizes the importance of faculty development programs adapting to the evolving roles of faculty members and considering the impact of such programs on the organizations/institutions in which individuals work (Steinert et al., 2006). Insufficient budgets and leadership dedicated to professional development also have been highlighted as barriers to effective faculty development (Minter, 2009). These critiques call for a more integrated, process-oriented, stakeholder-involved approach to business faculty development programs, including enhanced leadership engagement and resource allocation.

How can management educators become better advocates for the importance of high-quality faculty development in an era of shrinking resources and increased competition? Perhaps, as Minter (2009) suggests, answers lie in corporate professional development by highlighting the need to think of faculty development as a process rather than an isolated activity. Alternatively, as Chak (2022) proposes, by acknowledging the importance of securing the proactive involvement of multiple stakeholders to support and assess faculty development programs and the need for these programs to be aligned with the institution's vision, mission, and strategic plan (Chak, 2022).

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Mainstreaming Decolonisation

Gianluigi Giorgioni
University of Liverpool Management School
G.Giorgioni@liverpool.ac.uk

Questions

Despite noticeable initiatives [Bayes (2021), Economics Observatory (nd), Boussebaa (2023)], the issue is the “apparent” lack of progress in the process of decolonising the curriculum in Management or Business (M&B) schools.

And the questions are: (1) Why? and (2) What can be done?

Students themselves, including those from the “Global South” who are investing significant amount of money in their education, may be anxious to pursue their professional careers and may not wish to engage in activities they perceive as being under-appreciated by potential employers.

Members of staff in non-managerial roles, who might hold significantly more different opinions on socio-political matters than is portrayed in the media (i.e. some may have strong reservations against de-colonisation see Stokes (2023)), are trapped in ever-increasing workloads to achieve all the expectations put on them by institutions. Moreover, they need to comply with the epistemological virtues and paradigmatic orthodoxy of their discipline and journals (FT50??).

Members of staff in managerial roles, at different levels in the hierarchy, may quite literally see de-colonisation as an obstacle to the strategic mission (see Boussebaa (2020) and Grey (2018)).

Controversially the way forward is to “mainstream decolonisation”.

Ideas

“Mainstreaming decolonisation” means moving beyond the binary separation of mainstream/critical studies. And very controversially (I accept) moving beyond the notion that decolonialism is anti-capitalist even though the roots and subsequent triumph of capitalism (over the artisanal, or family-based or putting out mode of production) are clearly linked to colonialism. It also needs acknowledging the post-colonial, neocolonial, anti-colonial and de-colonial approaches by emphasising the commonalities rather than the differences (doing the same in the narrower sphere of development economics with the Structuralist approach, the Dependencia school and the de-linking approach) that emanate from the very same historical events.

For a very cursory overview the reader may access the following papers and the references therein: Alcadipani and Faria (2014); Dörrenbächer and Gammelgaard (2019), Moosavi (2020), Smith and Lester (2023), Zagelmeyer (2024).

One practical suggestion is to bring the rich literature on the role of the colonies and slavery on the first industrial revolution that has been developed outside M&Bs (and since the seminal paper by Cooke (2003)), into M&B curricula and the publications used in the reading lists.

Concerns

Mainstreaming means leveraging on an inter-disciplinarity approach (instead of uni-disciplinary) with a view to re-opening “old topics” (instead of pursuing elusive “new research gaps”), and using a different paradigm, namely de-colonisation, (instead of new methodologies).

The first concern regards the inevitable epistemological differences that will arise from different approaches and from different disciplines. In this respect, efforts should also be made to accommodate diversity.

The second concern is that the suggested topic/perspective may be construed as unambitious, “euro-centric” and only aimed at “improving” M&B curricula. While accepting the reasonableness of the “charges”, it should be noted that “old Europe” should be affected by decolonisation, that different lived experiences have a role to play, if only for allyship, and once the “unreasonableness” of the current mainstream mono-disciplinary curricula is “exposed”(for instance that MNEs are uniquely placed to solve “Grand Challenges”), students cannot possibly argue that their education is not worth pursuing.

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Rethinking Relevance: Cultivating Academic Growth Beyond Higher Education Rankings

Catherine Heggerud

Haskayne School of Business, University of Calgary, Canada
Catherine.heggerud@haskayne.ucalgary.ca

Justin Knibbe

Haskayne School of Business, University of Calgary, Canada
justin.knibbe@ucalgary.ca

Leighton Wilks

Haskayne School of Business, University of Calgary, Canada
leighton.wilks@haskayne.ucalgary.ca

“Global rankings demonstrate how globalization has transformed higher education into a marketable commodity.” (Hazelkorn, 2014)

University rankings have become deeply embedded within the higher education sector since the introduction of *US News and World Report*. Following this, professional programs, including law and MBA programs, were also ranked, and in 2008, the *Financial Times* introduced its own rankings for business schools. These rankings offer students a single metric to base complex decisions about where to apply and attend, often simplifying a nuanced choice.

In pursuit of these rankings, some business schools have shifted away from their core mission, at times with serious consequences, as seen in the Fox School of Business case, where Dean Moshe Porat manipulated data to inflate rankings (U.S. Attorney’s Office, 2021). Research suggests that rankings fuel global competition in higher education and can lead to problematic practices, such as undervaluing teaching quality or incentivizing research with little practical relevance (Grolleau & Meunier, 2023).

At recent conferences, scholars have reimagined a future for higher education that goes beyond performative metrics. Jones (RMLE 2023), for example, advocates for a “heterotopic” academic space—one that centers on academic well-being and addresses the power imbalances exacerbated by ranking systems. Similarly, Jandrić (RMLE 2018) critiques rankings as mechanisms that commodify students, treating education as a market-driven transaction rather than a journey toward personal and social growth.

In light of these discussions, how can we—whether as universities, faculties, or individual educators—prioritize academic well-being over competitive metrics while still maintaining global relevance and fostering environments that support student learning, genuine academic growth, and integrity?"

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OMG I have to release the grades! The impact of grading on professor mental health

Justin Knibbe
Haskayne School of Business, University of Calgary, Canada
justin.knibbe@ucalgary.ca

Catherine Heggerud
Haskayne School of Business, University of Calgary, Canada
Catherine.heggerud@haskayne.ucalgary.ca

Leighton Wilks
Haskayne School of Business, University of Calgary, Canada
leighton.wilks@haskayne.ucalgary.ca

You have spent hours grading papers, providing feedback, entering letters into a spreadsheet, and the grades are all ready to be released. And now your stomach is in knots. Your finger hovers over the “release grades” button while you prepare to unleash hell. How long will it be until you receive the first email? The email from a student complaining about a grade, demanding that they see you, or upset because this is the “worst grade that they have ever received!?” Do you avoid your inbox or obsessively watch it to prove to yourself that nothing bad is going to happen? And....there is the first email. OMG.

If you have ever felt overwhelmed or stressed over grading and the releasing of grades, you are not alone. Professors are often tasked with grading large volumes of assignments, exams, and projects, which can be time-consuming and mentally taxing. With class sizes increasing (in the past two years our class sizes have increased from 60 to 80-100 students), it becomes even more taxing to finish grading. The need to provide timely feedback adds another layer of pressure, as students increasingly expect prompt responses.

And performing the grading is only half the battle – you still have to face the students! According to Rickey et al. (2023), grade obsession is one of the top challenges in education, and Kouyoumdjian (2012) states that one of the most stressful aspects of teaching is “managing student responses to their grades (para. 1). Professors spend a lot of time explaining and defending grades that were given, while also trying to provide constructive feedback and ensure that students are learning. This problem is exacerbated by the fact that tenure and promotion often rely on student satisfaction as a major input. Professors must juggle fairness and feedback while also trying to ensure that the students are happy with them – a difficult task. Due to the high stress facing many students, they often externalize blame instead of accepting responsibility (Kouyoumdjian 2012). Some faculty feel that they are being harassed by students and even fear student retaliation when they stand firm on the grades that they distributed (O’Grady, 2023).

As professors, we understand this fear. We have faced students who cannot speak because they are crying about their low grade, students shaking with anger, and others begging for extra credit assignments. And we understand where they are coming from: grades have major ramifications for their lives. Higher grades lead to more scholarships, better access to post-secondary opportunities, and even higher paying jobs (Rickey et al., 2023). Grades can lower students’ self-esteem, increase anxiety, and even change how students learn (Rickey et al., 2023).

The question we want to explore is: is there a better way? Is there a way to evaluate students while decreasing the stress on professors (as well as students)? Can we evaluate the work that students have done while focusing on learning and growth instead of arguing, negotiating, begging, and hounding?

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Cultivating Responsible Leaders: Integrating DEI into Business Education for Lasting Impact

Jessica McManus Warnell
Mendoza College of Business, University of Notre Dame
jmcmanus@nd.edu

Kristen Collett-Schmitt
Mendoza College of Business, University of Notre Dame
kcollett@nd.edu

Amanda McKendree
Mendoza College of Business, University of Notre Dame
amckendr@nd.edu

Kelly Rubey
Mendoza College of Business, University of Notre Dame
kelly.rubey@nd.edu

Our faculty team from the departments of management & organization, finance, and the Office of the Deans of our business college, would like to more effectively collaborate across our institution to enhance opportunities for all of our students to feel welcome, to engage with their courses and each other in meaningful ways, and to be equipped to contribute to inclusive, ethical organizations after graduation. Societal shifts have led to increasing attention to diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) initiatives in business schools. As the training ground for future leaders, our schools are critical stakeholders in the move toward more inclusive and equitable workplaces. We offer our experiences of pursuing a more integrated strategy to DEI pedagogy by focusing on case study teaching and experiential learning, and we continue to seek ideas and opportunities for more effective and holistic incorporation of these topics into business education.

Considerations of diversity, equity, and inclusion in practice situate within an interrelated set of issues that demand new approaches. Businesses consider social and environmental impact in the face of a complex and changing regulatory environment; stakeholder awareness and greater demands for accountability; and “grand challenges” such as climate change, inequity, and social unrest. In addition, the politicization of DEI topics increases at alarming rates. Business responsibilities for creating diverse, equitable, and inclusive environments has only increased in this context. Education of future business leaders is critical in the move toward more inclusive and equitable workplaces, yet meaningful DEI content remains inconsistent within and across universities and colleges. New textbooks, case collections, and teaching activities are introduced almost daily as institutions seek useful material. As educators grapple with incorporating these themes, collaboration is key as best practices and innovative activities are tried out and assessed. Case study teaching and experiential learning allow for training on key terms and concepts, variability that allows for alignment with specific goals, and a focus on equipping students with practical tools to effect change, which meets these recommendations. While case teaching and experiential learning are not new, we consider how more effectively and intentionally integrating these pedagogies can help all of our students flourish.

Our examples illustrate a variety of experiences that include undergraduate-level courses in inclusive leadership, an online certificate program for practitioners, a professional development program for a variety of learners, experiential service learning projects for graduate students, and a co-curricular DEI case competition. To signal institutional commitment to DEI, we emphasize the importance of coordination and promotion with a member of the senior academic administration team who works closely alongside the dean and other leaders. We demonstrate that case study teaching and experiential learning can bridge the gap between academic and student affairs by connecting classroom learning to career development, alumni, corporate and nonprofit engagement, and hands-on programming outside of the classroom. These initiatives not only help students progress towards degree completion, but also increase their sense of belonging in the business field. This, in turn, could lead to students taking positions post-graduation with organizations that foster more equitable workplaces and communities. We welcome the opportunity to discuss successes, and ongoing barriers to success, in integrating DEI pedagogy in our business schools.

Exploring Professional Identities of Education-Focused Academics in Research-Oriented Universities

Hector Viveros Tapia
Macquarie University
hector.viveros@mq.edu.au

The professional identity of academics in education-focused roles often goes underexplored in management learning and education. While traditional academic careers in balanced workloads (research, teaching, and service roles) emphasise "publish or perish", education-focused academics dedicate themselves mainly to the scholarship of teaching and learning, mentoring and student support. However, these roles are often characterized by heavy teaching and service workloads, leaving limited time (or funds) for research or participation in conferences, which can hinder career progression and job opportunities in similar institutions.

These challenges reflect broader tensions in research-centric cultures of higher education, where recognition, career progression, and self-concept are often tied to research outputs. This proposal invites participants to engage in critical discussions and collaborative brainstorming on how education-focused academics construct their professional identities, navigate institutional expectations, and advocate for a more equitable and impactful future in management education.

Questions (Q)

1. How do education-focused academics develop and define their professional identities in environments where research achievements are often prioritised?
2. What strategies do education-focused academics use to gain institutional recognition and advance their careers within research-oriented universities?
3. How do education-focused academics navigate conflicts or tensions between their teaching-centred roles and the institutional culture of "publish or perish"?
4. How do education-focused academics navigate perceptions of being treated as "second-class citizens" compared to peers in balanced workload roles, and what impact does this have on their professional identity?

Ideas (I)

1. Investigate the ways in which academics in education-focused roles perceive and shape their professional identities within research-intensive academic environments.
2. Examine the challenges and conflicts that arise for education-focused academics in systems that prioritise research outputs over teaching excellence, and how these dynamics affect their sense of professional self.
3. Analyse the impact of institutional initiatives, such as teaching fellowships, peer-review programs, and recognition awards, in fostering a sense of value, belonging, and legitimacy for education-focused academics.
4. Investigate the coping mechanisms and strategies education-focused academics employ to address and challenge perceptions of being "second-class citizens" within academia, including fostering communities of practice, advocating for policy changes, or leveraging mentorship networks.

Concerns (C)

1. Despite their critical role in student success and institutional teaching excellence, education-focused academics are often underrepresented in studies of academic identity, leaving a significant gap in understanding their experiences and contributions.
2. The emphasis on research outputs for institutional rankings and funding can overshadow the value of education-focused roles, perpetuating a culture that marginalises those who prioritise scholarship of teaching and learning, or others related areas.
3. Without adequate recognition and support, education-focused academics may face burnout, reduced job satisfaction, and limited career progression, ultimately affecting the quality of education and student outcomes in higher education.
4. Perceptions of being treated as "second-class citizens" may lead to strained relationships and reduced collaboration between education-focused academics and their peers in balanced workload roles, potentially affecting departmental cohesion and overall morale.

Group “The Cavern Clubbers”

**Focusing on students in terms of how we can “do better” at preparing them
for work and meaningful careers**

**Lisa
Dane
Laura
Peggy
Uzair
Harris**

Fun Fact: Nestled in the lively Mathew Street in Liverpool, the Cavern Club opened its doors on January 16, 1957. Originally a jazz and skiffle venue, it quickly transformed into a hotspot for rock and roll, paving the way for the emergence of the Merseybeat sound. No recounting of the Cavern Club's history is complete without mentioning The Beatles. The Fab Four graced the Cavern's stage nearly 300 times between 1961 and 1963, igniting the spark that would later become a global wildfire known as Beatlemania.

See: <https://liverpoolcitysights.com/blog/cavern-club-history>

The value of a business school education; how do new undergraduates use management research in practice?

Lisa Anderson
University of Liverpool Management School
l.anderson@liverpool.ac.uk

At the time of the Unconference, two colleagues and I will be interviewing undergraduate students who have just completed their Year in Industry (the 3rd year of a 4 year programme) as part of a research study. The students have been asked to keep a learning log throughout their time in practice and to reflect on how they have used the theories and concepts they learned in their first two years of study. We are interested in how managers use research and other sources of knowledge in their practice and how an engagement with management research affects their propensity to act in a reflexive, responsible and ethical way. We would also like to know if management research can be mobilised in practice by our graduates. We also hope to understand what types of management knowledge and research new managers use (we characterise our Year in Industry students as new managers because most of them complete the equivalent of the first year of a Graduate programme), how new managers frame and respond to problems in the workplace and how they articulate and perform responsible management.

We hope that the outcomes of the study will add to current debates about the impact of management research, which we think is under-theorised in respect of how impact is achieved through education. Scholarly impact is a particular concern for the management academy, reflected in successive presidential addresses at the annual meeting of the Academy of Management and a steady stream of literature (e.g. Aguinis et al., 2014; Sharma and Bansal, 2020). Evidence of how new managers engage with responsible management in their day-to-day practice is also of interest to the global management development and education community, where sustainability and responsibility have become key issues (PRME, n.d) Previous research into this form of impact has focused on postgraduate and executive education (e.g., Spencer et al, 2022; Lepistö and Hytti, 2021; Paton et al., 2014) with very few exceptions that investigate the practice of new (or nearly) graduating students.

We are interested in hearing about others' perspectives and experience of preparing undergraduates for work. The dominant narrative in the UK is about using graduates' earnings as a proxy for the value of a university education. We would like to influence this to include a recognition of the way in which engaging with management theory can develop thoughtful and responsible managers who continue to use their training as social scientists after graduation.

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What is the Purpose of International Field Trips in Management Education?

Dane Anderton
University of Liverpool
dane.anderton@liverpool.ac.uk

The design and implementation of international field trips within management education remain an underexplored area (Sachau et al, 2010; Mu and Hatch, 2020). While experiential learning and cultural immersion are commonly discussed, few peer-reviewed journals provide frameworks or guidelines tailored for field trips embedded in business and management curricula. In management education, field trips are increasingly valued for their contributions to professional growth and cultural exposure. However, standardized approaches to designing and assessing these experiences are lacking. Existing cases tend to be context-specific, often focusing on destinations such as China or the United States. These studies are generally focusing more on location and logistics than on providing adaptable frameworks for broader educational settings. Rarely do they address the deeper purposes, motivations, or pedagogical goals of incorporating international field trips, potentially resulting in field trips that are often seen as standalone events rather than as integral parts of a holistic learning journey.

Many postgraduate programmes market international field trips as distinctive components intended to attract prospective students. These trips are promoted as unique and valuable learning opportunities, setting programmes apart from others in a competitive educational market. However, without clear frameworks for design and meaningful outcome assessment, these trips risk becoming costly endeavours with uncertain educational benefits (Koernig, 2007). The substantial financial and logistical investments required from institutions raise questions about the sustainability and educational value of these trips. Additionally, students who bear personal costs to participate may find that the perceived return on investment falls short of expectations, potentially leading to dissatisfaction and a diminished overall experience.

The current evaluation of field trips in academic literature and institutional practice is primarily limited to student satisfaction surveys, which inadequately measure the complex impacts of these experiences on students' professional development, cultural competence, and interpersonal skills. Simple satisfaction metrics fail to capture the multi-dimensional benefits these trips may offer, such as personal growth, career advancement, or shifts in worldview. A shift towards qualitative approaches—such as reflective assessments, focus groups, and longitudinal impact studies—could provide a deeper understanding of the value these experiences bring to students and institutions alike. Such insights would allow educators to design field trips that better align with student development needs and institutional goals, creating experiences that are not only educationally sound but also personally transformative (Jackson et al, 2023).

This inquiry calls for a more comprehensive and structured approach to the design, implementation, and assessment of international field trips, especially within post-experience management programmes. Involving students in the co-design process offers a promising way forward, as it fosters a sense of ownership and ensures that the experiences are meaningful and relevant to student needs. Co-designing with students can better align students' expectations with educational outcomes, enhancing the impact and overall value of the experience. Furthermore, by employing qualitative evaluation methods, educators can better understand the transformative potential of field trips beyond mere satisfaction.

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Living to Learn, or Dying to Study? Exploring how universities can better support students with life-limiting illnesses

Laura Dixon
Liverpool John Moores University
L.J.Dixon@LJMU.ac.uk

SHORT DESCRIPTION

This QIC invites collaboration with a current LJMU project that seeks to construct a charter outlining the best ways to support students with life-limiting (also known as ‘terminal’) illnesses who wish to continue their studies.

ABSTRACT

Despite the growing emphasis on inclusivity in higher education, students dealing with life-limiting conditions often constitute a hidden demographic, yet one that faces specific barriers that hinder not only their educational progress, but can negatively impact their overall wellbeing (Hamilton et al, 2021). The “Living to Learn” project at Liverpool John Moores University (LJMU) aims to address this gap by establishing a charter that outlines comprehensive support for these students. The initiative advocates for practices such as personalised learning plans, flexible assessment options, and coordinated communication between academic staff and healthcare providers. Implementing these supports requires a deep understanding of the barriers faced by students with life-limiting illnesses, including fluctuating health conditions, unpredictable schedules due to treatment, and the need for a flexible academic approach.

A key aspect of “Living to Learn” is prioritising the principles of equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) in higher education by embedding flexibility and compassion into academic systems. Research shows that students with chronic or terminal illnesses often struggle with feelings of isolation and inadequate support within academic settings, leading to higher dropout rates and adverse impacts on mental health (Toller and Farrimond, 2021). Therefore, initiatives like “Living to Learn” aim not only to retain these students but to empower them to pursue their educational goals in an environment that respects their individual needs. At the institutional level, this requires proactive communication with healthcare providers and regular staff training on inclusive practices, which have been shown to positively impact student retention and satisfaction (Thomas et al, 2002).

However, implementing these supports sustainably raises several critical questions. How can universities manage the potential strain on academic and administrative resources needed to support students with life-limiting conditions? What are effective strategies for training staff to deliver inclusive practices that genuinely meet these students' needs? How might institutions balance academic rigour with the necessary flexibility, without compromising educational standards? And without a standardised framework, how can universities ensure consistency and equity in the support offered to students across different departments or campuses? Engaging with these questions at the 2025 RMLE Un-Conference, will help to further develop and inform the “Living to Learn” charter, as we seek to develop a collaborative framework that other institutions can adapt, establishing a model of shared responsibility for supporting students with life-limiting conditions in higher education.

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Developing and evolving our teaching practices to prepare our students for today's workplace

Peggy Hedges

Haskayne School of Business, University of Calgary, Canada

hedges@haskayne.ucalgary.ca

Norm Althouse

Haskayne School of Business, University of Calgary, Canada

norm.althouse@haskayne.ucalgary.ca

Our students are evolving, technology is evolving, the workplace is evolving; educators need to adapt teaching practices to address today's reality.

Most undergraduate students are Generation Z or “Zoomers” (those born between mid-to-date 1990s to early 2010s). This generation has been characterized as having an extreme online presence, using social media four hours per day or more (Forbes). This is up from the two hours per day in 2017 (Mander). This group often relies on the world of social media, and increasing generative artificial intelligence (gAI), for information (or misinformation). Since the pandemic, there has been an explosion of research regarding the impact of social media concerning the importance of social interaction in both self-determination and sensemaking theories. A recent paper by Poppe and Kjekshus (2023, p. 23277) used the “pandemic as a prism to understand how and why social relations and interaction are important in the educational system.” They, along with others, note that the use/misuse of technologies impacts students learning, including cognitive overload and a reduced capability to engage in deeper communications that are essential in helping them to achieve higher level competences.

Surveys have shown that managers and business leader find this generation “difficult in the workplace” citing that they often lack initiative, effort, motivation, productivity, professionalism, and have poor communication skills. (Forbes, Intelligent). In August 2024, 966 business leaders completed a survey which revealed their perception is this specific generation lacks a work ethic (54%), do not respond well to feedback (54%), and are unprepared for the workplace (53%) (Intelligent).

As educators “How can we develop and evolve our teaching strategies to help these students be better prepared for the “real world?” How can we use our classrooms to facilitate the environment and desire to create a social identity that will serve them in “real-life scenarios” where the individual has built relationships that are genuine (not some faceless remote stranger telling you that you will be OK). How can we create a learning space that embraces a strong work ethic, develops professionalism, encourages face-to-face engagement to develop vital skills such as communication, critical problem solving and decision making, social and business etiquette, accountability, etc., and at the same time, respond to this generations’ needs?

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Could ‘one percent for reflection’ develop reflective ‘muscle memory’ in management students?

Brent Snider

Haskayne School of Business, University of Calgary, Canada

brent.snider@haskayne.ucalgary.ca

Peggy Hedges

Haskayne School of Business, University of Calgary, Canada

hedges@ucalgary.ca

For management education to genuinely help address grand challenges facing the world such as the UN’s Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), *grand adoption* of a pedagogical approach that frequently and repeatedly embeds responsible thinking practice into the ‘muscle memory’ of all business students is required. Grand adoption, in turn, would require minimal change that all management faculty can easily implement into any of their business courses. Could “one percent for reflection” be the small pedagogical change that enables business schools to graduate students with engrained ‘muscle memory’ of responsible decision making?

The concept of “one percent for art” programs (often a government ordinance), where one percent of an infrastructure project’s cost is allocated to fund and install public art to enhance public spaces is long established in many countries including the United States, France, Germany, Finland, the Netherlands, Japan, Australia, and Canada. The theory is that allocating just one percent of resources specifically for increasing societal benefits (public good), beyond the originally planned functioning of the deliverable, should not be too much to ask.

Reflective and reflexive abilities have been identified as an essential skill for responsible managers (Cunliffe, 2016; Eriksen, 2009). Having students explore their assumptions and biases behind their personal actions, according to Cunliffe (2016), helps students become managers who will be “critical thinkers and moral practitioners” (p.408). If management students only have reflective / reflexive experiences in a handful of courses during their program, regularly being a reflective practitioner is not engrained in their ‘muscle memory’. ‘Muscle memory’ describes how top athletes reproduce an action during competition, without conscious thought, due to the prior frequent practice of repeating that action.

What if management schools, especially those that are among the almost 800 business schools that have committed to the United Nations’ Principles for Responsible Management Education (PRME), asked all of their faculty to allocate just 1% of their class time during a semester for student reflection? Could the small ask of “one percent for reflection” lead to increased societal benefits from management students that graduate with responsible reflection engrained into their muscle memory? What are the incentives and barriers at the faculty, student, and institutional level?

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Socio-digital Disadvantage, Widening Participation and Management Education

Uzair Shah

Lancaster University Management School
s.shah2@lancaster.ac.uk

Ahmad Timsal

Derby Business School
A.Timsal@derby.ac.uk

Hameed Chughtai

Lancaster University Management School
h.chughtai@lancaster.ac.uk

QIC:

What is the relationship of socio-digital disadvantage, widening participation and management education? How do we support students from disadvantaged backgrounds as they transition within business schools?

Summary:

Business education is often seen as a means for social mobility and economic prosperity (Kumar et al., 2024). There is an increasing emphasis on widening participation within business schools (Fernando and Kenny, 2021). However, scholars have warned that social and digital inequalities negatively impact the educational opportunities and experiences of individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds (Fotaki and Prasad, 2015; Timsal et al., 2024). There tends to be a 'deficit approach' adopted within widening participation practices that assumes limited motivation and skills of students from disadvantaged backgrounds as the main reason for lack of progression to and within universities (O'Sullivan et al., 2019).

Scholars have questioned the claim that business education offers equal opportunities and a level-playing field to all students for social mobility and economic prosperity (Dar et al., 2021; Zulfiqar and Prasad, 2021). Studies have highlighted narratives and practices within management education that perpetuate and normalize social and digital inequalities within business schools (Clark and Hordósy, 2019; Eisenman et al., 2024; Timsal et al., 2024). Critics have also questioned the assumption prevalent in business schools that success is solely the result of an individual's hard work and dedication to self-improvement and task completion (Eisenman et al., 2024). This belief is particularly appealing to students from disadvantaged background, despite evidence suggesting elusive nature of the promise of social mobility. Further, scholars have identified that the hidden curriculum within business schools disproportionately disadvantages students from less privileged backgrounds, thereby perpetuating existing inequalities. (Eisenman et al., 2024; O'Sullivan et al., 2019).

In this work, we report findings from our study exploring use of digital technologies of students from less privileged backgrounds, enrolled in a full time MBA programme in two business schools in Pakistan. Our research revealed that the students found digital technologies to be alienating and isolating. This experience significantly impacted their academic engagement and social interactions, and further entrenching their socio-digital disadvantage in business schools within a Global South setting.

Our findings shed light on the complex relationship between socio-digital disadvantage, widening participation and management education in a Global South context (Chughtai, 2023). We question the deficit approach of widening participation, and the view of digital technologies as neutral, functional, mundane objects used for enhancing students' experiences of management education. We highlight that the assumptions regarding prior exposure to, and skills in using digital technologies within management education, contributes to the socio-digital disadvantage of students from less privileged backgrounds. In so doing the MBA programmes/business schools (in-)advertently reproduce social and digital inequalities (Fotaki and Prasad, 2015; Zulfiqar and Prasad, 2021).

Insights into the students' experiences of socio-digital disadvantage can contribute to widening participation practices within business schools. This is important as students from disadvantaged backgrounds are less likely to study at higher education institutions (HEIs) in comparison to those from elite backgrounds (O'Sullivan et al., 2019). Studies have also highlighted students are likely to continue studies in their educational institutions depending on the extent to which they feel a sense of belonging with that institution (Clark and Hordósy, 2019). More research into critically

reflexive and transformative dialogues and reflections amongst students and academics on probing the influence of, and addressing socio-digital inequalities, will offer useful contributions to management education literature.

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Business Education in Turbulent Times

Anne M. Greenhalgh
The Wharton School, University of Pennsylvania
greenhaa@wharton.upenn.edu

Moses Pava
Yeshiva University
mpava@yu.edu

Harris Sondak
David Eccles School of Business, University of Utah
harris.sondak@eccles.utah.edu

The scope of current societal challenges – in the aftermath of the pandemic, in anticipation of increasing civil unrest, in the deluge of disinformation, in the face of climate change – compel us to reconsider the purpose and trajectory of business education. What do fields typically embedded within business schools have to contribute to these issues? Our experience with the Aspen Institute’s initiatives on business education lead us to think that going beyond the usual fields to explore how disciplines in the liberal arts -- philosophy, literature, and history, for example -- can contribute to the educational reform of business schools and programs. We invite scholars to bring their insights from a wide range of fields – from business to the liberal arts – to respond to the question of how business schools and programs might meet the challenges that confront all of us in turbulent times, now and in the future.

Questions:

- What challenges do we face in business education given these turbulent times?
- What should change about business school curricula?
- How can business schools be sufficiently nimble to address those challenges successfully?

Ideas:

- Business schools and their faculty members will not be able to continue doing the same things they have done for decades because AI will force changes.
- Demands for change will come from students and other stakeholders.
- Wise judgment will take center stage as the essential learning outcome from business education.
- Liberal arts are likely to be a valuable source of recommendations for content and method.

Concerns:

- What kind of pushback will we get as we replace technical expertise with broad-minded judgment as the goal of business education?
- How can we leverage the forces encouraging change?
- Where are examples of best practice?
- We believe it is timely to revisit this topic, which was featured in a *Journal of Management Education* special issue in 2018, and a broader approach informed by scholars’ experience in the last six years would offer new insights.

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Group “School for the Blind”

Examining integrated management education and responsible student (group) learning

**Liz
Justin
Mali
Paul
Long
Carole**

Fun Fact: The Royal School for the Blind in Liverpool, England, is the oldest specialist school of its kind in the UK, having been founded in 1791. Only the Institut National des Jeunes Aveugles in Paris is older, but the Royal School for the Blind is the oldest school in the world in continuous operation, and the first in the world founded by a blind person, Edward Rushton, who was also an anti-slavery campaigner. It was also the first school in the world to offer education and training to blind adults as well as children.

See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Royal_School_for_the_Blind,_Liverpool

Learning to listen: Leader humility and intergenerational learning for sustainability leadership at business schools

Maribel Blasco, Copenhagen Business School, mbl.msc@cbs.dk

Carole Elliott, St Andrews University, cje7@st-andrews.ac.uk

Annemette Kjærgaard, Copenhagen Business School, amk.msc@cbs.dk

Sarah Robinson, Rennes School of Business, sarah.robinson@rennes-sb.com

Issues and Concerns

Despite decades of initiatives and debates, including PRME, about the need to educate for sustainability leadership at business schools, these insights have still only been translated on a small scale into real change, with sustainability issues still inadequately integrated in business curricula, and their relevance often not being clear to students (Abdelgaffar, 2021; Colombo, 2023; Edwards et al., 2020). Business schools have a particularly vital role here, since they train the sustainability skills and awareness of tomorrow's business leaders (Marathe et al., 2020; Mason et al., 2024).

Yet academia is not yet sufficiently proficient at delivering curricula that can produce graduates with the competences needed to effectively tackle sustainability challenges (Hensley, 2024; Tasdemir and Gazo, 2020); and the pace of change when it comes to sustainability (for instance standards and other regulations that frame business activity) is such that 'keeping up' with the latest developments and requirements is a major challenge for business school pedagogy and curricula.

In line with recent policy initiatives, we propose that *intergenerational learning* holds considerable potential for business schools seeking to address the planetary sustainability challenge (Mannion, 2018: 2). Specifically, we suggest that recognizing students as a crucial sustainability learning resource and a 'voice from the future' is key. This calls for humility on our side as we must acknowledge that we do not have the better solution (Hannah, 2024). Although in many countries students are increasingly being involved in university quality assurance and governance mechanisms (Cardoso et al., 2017), student curricular input, they are often not included as full partners in this process (Isaeva et al., 2020). Moreover, their voices and experiences are still few and far between in sustainability classrooms, despite calls for greater emphasis on teacher-student partnering, learner-driven curricula and co-inquiry, as well as evidence of the benefits of these approaches for all involved (Dmochowski et al., 2016; Herranen et al., 2018). Many students have cutting edge knowledge and experiences garnered outside their studies that can add valuable insights into the classroom, bringing outdated curricula up to speed, contributing much-needed real-life input to the sustainability theories and models taught, and enhancing engagement (Dmochowski et al., 2016).

For this to work, however, business schools' leadership must become more open and less hierarchical in order to embrace the possibilities of intergenerational learning (Mannion, 2018). We therefore propose that university leaders need to adopt an attitude of 'educational humility' (Greenleaf, 1991: 10; Hannah, 2024), which includes 'learning to listen' actively to their students. Just as great teachers take their students' ideas seriously, engage them in shared decision-making and recognize when their teaching is not having the desired results and search for new approaches (Waks, 2018), so too should university leaders if the sustainability agenda is to be inclusive, contemporary and engaging. Humility is, moreover, recognised as essential to issues of intergenerational justice (MacKenzie, n.d.) such as sustainability.

Questions

- How can we conceptualize and implement 'educational humility' for intergenerational learning at business schools?
- What experiences do others have with intergenerational learning at business schools, including student input into sustainability curricula?

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Group learning as a signature pedagogy – how learning from the past can inform our future teaching and learning

Liz Houldsworth

Henley Business School

liz.houldsworth@henley.ac.uk

Ana Graca and Andrea Tresidder

Henley Business School

Our questions, interests and concerns:

Our interest in how students learn with and through others has been inspired by the article '*Pedagogy is not a Dirty Word*' (Mason et al. 2024). In response to the crises of financial instability, the pandemic and climate change, the paper calls for a 'paradigm shift' towards responsible management learning and education (RMLE), to transform management practices to value people and the planet. They advocate both humanistic and transformational pedagogies to achieve this with the former enabling learners to explore the complexities inherent within management context (Vince 2010) and transformational pedagogies fostering values and feelings of responsibility, personal growth and critical thinking (Brunstein, Walvoord, and Cunliff 2021).

Although they acknowledge the work of previous critical management learning and education scholars at the programme, course and group-work levels, Mason et al (2024) highlight the 'missing middle' (see their figure below). They call for greater theoretical conceptualization across a portfolio of programmes, along with work to understand signature pedagogies which are unique to a particular business school (Shulman, 2005), driven by their unique assets (expertise, research, place, community and strategic partners).

This resonated with us, as three teaching-focused academics working for a business school that will be 80 years old in 2024 and has a heritage built upon the 'Syndicate method'. The word syndicate is less commonly used today than it was in the 1980s and 1990s. It refers to purposively created groups of post-experience students, who are combined together in order to work in an action learning mode to solve problems or tackle challenges. Learning in groups in this way has been identified (Collier 1980) as providing a range of learning benefits including increased student involvement and improved performance in what have been identified as higher-order intellectual skills (Bloom et al. 1964), such as the interpretation and extrapolation of data; the application of learned principles in fresh situations and the synthesis of diverse materials to form a coherent picture. Collier (1980) highlights that these attributes all suggest that working with others invokes a deeper-level processing of the material studied (Marton and Säljö 1976).

Our question focuses on how (and if) our business school syndicate learning heritage is reflected in current manifestations of group learning – have we learnt from the past? To do so we are starting with a very broad definition of groups, as any learning intervention involving at least one other learner.

We are **interested** in seeking to address the 'missing middle' through the articulation of a theory-informed signature pedagogy for our business school (at least across post-experience programmes).

Our concern is to do this in a way that focuses on learning and goes beyond the marketing messages that might be associated with an 80th anniversary celebration.

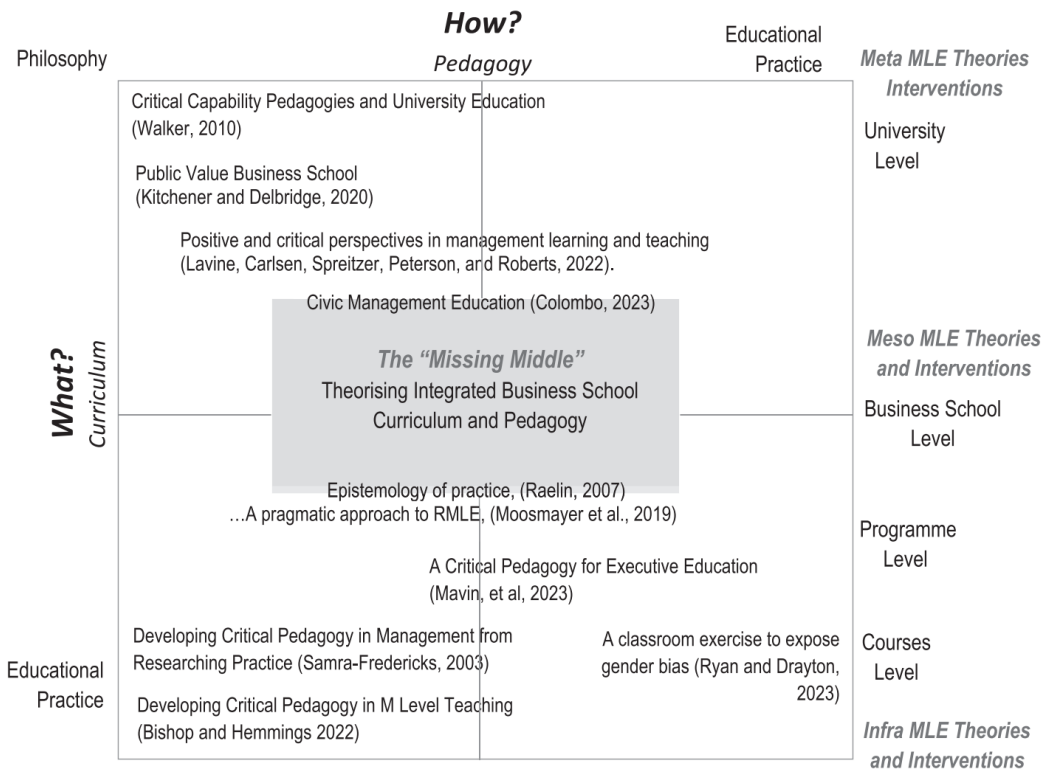


Figure 1. A framework for exploring an MLE research agenda

Figure from Mason et al (2024)

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Rethinking Relevance: Cultivating Academic Growth Beyond Higher Education Rankings

Catherine Heggerud
Haskayne School of Business, University of Calgary, Canada
Catherine.heggerud@haskayne.ucalgary.ca

Justin Knibbe
Haskayne School of Business, University of Calgary, Canada
justin.knibbe@ucalgary.ca

Leighton Wilks
Haskayne School of Business, University of Calgary, Canada
leighton.wilks@haskayne.ucalgary.ca

“Global rankings demonstrate how globalization has transformed higher education into a marketable commodity.” (Hazelkorn, 2014)

University rankings have become deeply embedded within the higher education sector since the introduction of *US News and World Report*. Following this, professional programs, including law and MBA programs, were also ranked, and in 2008, the *Financial Times* introduced its own rankings for business schools. These rankings offer students a single metric to base complex decisions about where to apply and attend, often simplifying a nuanced choice.

In pursuit of these rankings, some business schools have shifted away from their core mission, at times with serious consequences, as seen in the Fox School of Business case, where Dean Moshe Porat manipulated data to inflate rankings (U.S. Attorney’s Office, 2021). Research suggests that rankings fuel global competition in higher education and can lead to problematic practices, such as undervaluing teaching quality or incentivizing research with little practical relevance (Grolleau & Meunier, 2023).

At recent conferences, scholars have reimagined a future for higher education that goes beyond performative metrics. Jones (RMLE 2023), for example, advocates for a “heterotopic” academic space—one that centers on academic well-being and addresses the power imbalances exacerbated by ranking systems. Similarly, Jandrić (RMLE 2018) critiques rankings as mechanisms that commodify students, treating education as a market-driven transaction rather than a journey toward personal and social growth.

In light of these discussions, how can we—whether as universities, faculties, or individual educators—prioritize academic well-being over competitive metrics while still maintaining global relevance and fostering environments that support student learning, genuine academic growth, and integrity?"

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OMG I have to release the grades! The impact of grading on professor mental health

Justin Knibbe

Haskayne School of Business, University of Calgary, Canada
justin.knibbe@ucalgary.ca

Catherine Heggerud

Haskayne School of Business, University of Calgary, Canada
Catherine.heggerud@haskayne.ucalgary.ca

Leighton Wilks

Haskayne School of Business, University of Calgary, Canada
leighton.wilks@haskayne.ucalgary.ca

You have spent hours grading papers, providing feedback, entering letters into a spreadsheet, and the grades are all ready to be released. And now your stomach is in knots. Your finger hovers over the “release grades” button while you prepare to unleash hell. How long will it be until you receive the first email? The email from a student complaining about a grade, demanding that they see you, or upset because this is the “worst grade that they have ever received!?” Do you avoid your inbox or obsessively watch it to prove to yourself that nothing bad is going to happen? And....there is the first email. OMG.

If you have ever felt overwhelmed or stressed over grading and the releasing of grades, you are not alone. Professors are often tasked with grading large volumes of assignments, exams, and projects, which can be time-consuming and mentally taxing. With class sizes increasing (in the past two years our class sizes have increased from 60 to 80-100 students), it becomes even more taxing to finish grading. The need to provide timely feedback adds another layer of pressure, as students increasingly expect prompt responses.

And performing the grading is only half the battle – you still have to face the students! According to Rickey et al. (2023), grade obsession is one of the top challenges in education, and Kouyoumdjian (2012) states that one of the most stressful aspects of teaching is “managing student responses to their grades (para. 1). Professors spend a lot of time explaining and defending grades that were given, while also trying to provide constructive feedback and ensure that students are learning. This problem is exacerbated by the fact that tenure and promotion often rely on student satisfaction as a major input. Professors must juggle fairness and feedback while also trying to ensure that the students are happy with them – a difficult task. Due to the high stress facing many students, they often externalize blame instead of accepting responsibility (Kouyoumdjian 2012). Some faculty feel that they are being harassed by students and even fear student retaliation when they stand firm on the grades that they distributed (O’Grady, 2023).

As professors, we understand this fear. We have faced students who cannot speak because they are crying about their low grade, students shaking with anger, and others begging for extra credit assignments. And we understand where they are coming from: grades have major ramifications for their lives. Higher grades lead to more scholarships, better access to post-secondary opportunities, and even higher paying jobs (Rickey et al., 2023). Grades can lower students’ self-esteem, increase anxiety, and even change how students learn (Rickey et al., 2023).

The question we want to explore is: is there a better way? Is there a way to evaluate students while decreasing the stress on professors (as well as students)? Can we evaluate the work that students have done while focusing on learning and growth instead of arguing, negotiating, begging, and hounding?

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Should We Consider Bringing the Spiritual Mind to Business Education and Business Students?

Long S. Le
Santa Clara University
lle@scu.edu

In Howard Gardner's *Five Minds for the Future* (a), the (1) synthesizing, (2) disciplined, (3) creating, (4) respectful, and (5) ethical minds are prescribed as cognitive capabilities for students to effectively navigate and positively impact a fast changing world. Amid the need to limit his prescriptive list, there were two additional candidates that Gardner considered but, in the end, were not selected: technical mind and spiritual mind.

Being in Silicon Valley since 2015, it is often noted that innovative products and services are rarely ever launched and targeted to locations where the greatest needs are, and the benefits of advance technologies are usually over promised and under delivered. Thus, I often think whether it would made any difference had Gardner included the spiritual mind when his book was published twenty years ago.

To be sure, Gardner's consideration of the spiritual mind – one that is contemplative in being opened in order to connect one's interior awareness to one's external actions – is not at all surprising. Indeed, for Gardner, [the spiritual mind](#) is seen as interlocking with the more analytical and sensory minds like gears in a clock.

Twenty years later, it is really interesting to find that students are, in fact, becoming more spiritual in college, while significantly become less religious. In one study, nearly 75% of students agreed that most individuals can grow spiritually without being religious. For students, spirituality on college campus appears to be a search for meaning and purposes – an interior quality such as values, attitudes and beliefs that align with “ethic of caring” and to something that is larger than themselves.

Based on the above, I decided to only integrate Gardner's *Five Minds for the Future* in my core business courses, but also extend and instruct the spiritual mind as the six minds for students to cultivate.

To my surprise, I discovered how difficult it is to teach the spiritual mind. That is, spiritual mind is a humanistic capacity to live and balance within the tensions of interior and exterior being in both the professional life and corporate life. However, how do I teach students that when they activate their spiritual mind, their journey could entail [more obstacles and uneven success](#)? Furthermore, how do I teach students that they will wrestle with the temptations of hubris and that they will make small and big mistakes? And how do I reassure them these struggles will make them more resilient and they will learn how to keep calm in moments of chaos?

While I still struggle how to teach spirituality in the business classroom, it doesn't stop students from asking how their careers fit into a larger world that they believe is falling apart compare to [previous generations](#). Perhaps the question to ask is not whether faculty thinks spirituality should be taught or not, but whether our students think spirituality belongs in the business school curriculum?

(a) See: <https://www.howardgardner.com/five-minds-for-the-future/>

The new 'F-bomb'- Fundamental British Values, more damage than good?

Susan Barry, Liverpool John Moores University (s.h.barry@ljmu.ac.uk)

Helen Collins, Liverpool John Moores University (h.collins@ljmu.ac.uk)

Deborah Humphreys, Liverpool John Moores University (d.m.humphreys@ljmu.ac.uk)

Patricia Jolliffe, Liverpool John Moores University (p.a.jolliffe@ljmu.ac.uk)

Paul Lees, Liverpool John Moores University (p.lees@ljmu.ac.uk)

Context

Fundamental British Values (FBV) originate from a politicised, securitised agenda (Lockley-Scott, 2019), and the 'Prevent' programme to address radicalisation and extremism, imposed upon HEI lecturers (Henshall, Sanjakdar, & Prosser, 2024), embedded into curriculum and policed by the government, with non-compliance judged and penalised by Ofsted and associated ratings. They consist of:

- Democracy
- Rule of Law
- Respect & Tolerance
- Individual Liberty

Discussion Points

FBV is based on an assumption that they encapsulate 'Britishness', but can Britishness be branded (Alexander and Weekes-Bernard 2017)?

Who decreed these values are exclusive to the essence of being British and may this imply we are 'culturally superior'? Can Britishness be measured?

Does inclusion of FBV in degree apprenticeship programmes suggest pick 'n' mix policy borrowing from other sectors?

Furthermore, could the inclusion of the word fundamentalism, may be viewed as negative rather than positive, often decoded to fanaticism, extremism, and militancy and this troublesome wording and ill-defined term may be perceived as a toxic brand?

Is a rethink of FBV required in order to develop a more appropriate branding via discussion with wider stakeholders to ensure they are more aligned to 'generic human virtues and values that unite us' (3D Eye, 2015.p 1). Others have suggested:

- Universal Values (Richardson, 2015)
- Human Values (Struthers, 2017)
- Principles for Life (Warner, 2022)

Do we (HEI professionals) have permission (and from whom) to encourage critique, debate and challenge, rather than merely present FBV to apprenticeship learners?

HEI's are directed to challenge 'opinions or behaviours that are contrary to FBV (Henshall, Sanjakdar and Prosser, 2024), however, in practice, does this occur, are we prepared to 'police the classroom' and what issues might this raise?

Are FBV's in danger of alienating marginalised groups and contributing to a 'them' and 'us', relating to those 'others' which do not fit the 'normal mould' (Chaturvedi, 2023 p1)?

Does the concept of FBV possess contemporary relevance?

Could FBV be more holistic and explicitly consider diversity, inclusion, equity, belonging and respect for all (DEIBR), and even more so to consider values in relation to sustainability and United Nations sustainable development goals?

Currently, are FBV missing the mark? Instead, are they instilling fear in HEI's, with more emphasis placed on ticking the FBV box to avoid poor Ofsted judgements and its ramifications, instead of channelling attention into providing education for multi-culturalism and a diverse society?

Whilst research examines FBV through an educationalist lens, there remains a paucity of research from degree and post graduate degree apprenticeship learners, of which there were 621,000 in 2022/23 (DfE, 2024). We must question in their current form, the extent to which FBV's hold value and relevance particularly to those learners' following degree and post graduate degree apprenticeship pathways in HEI's, many of whom are mid-level and senior managers.

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Supporting Student Success through Friendship: Implications for Educators

Maliheh Mansouri
University of Calgary
mmansour@ucalgary.ca

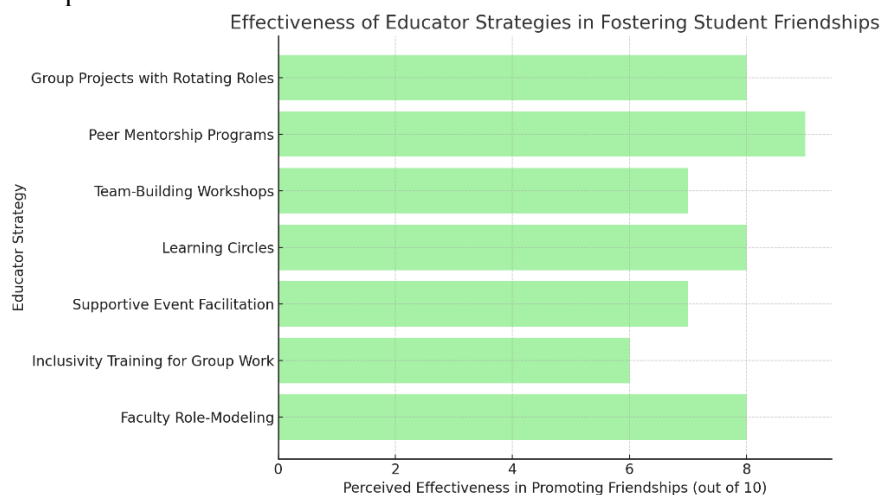
This research originated from a meaningful interaction: a student shared how class group assignments helped forge lasting friendships that transformed their university experience. This, along with feedback from students about the influence of friendships on mental health, underscored the need to delve deeper into the effects of friendship on stress and well-being.

University friendships provide emotional support, foster belonging, and help students navigate both academic and personal challenges. A growing body of research emphasizes the significance of friendships in supporting college students through transitional and challenging times. High-quality friendships are linked to reduced stress and improved mental health outcomes (Cleary et al., 2018; Hartup & Stevens, 1999). Research also suggests that students with supportive friendships perceive daunting tasks as more manageable (Schnall et al., 2008) and experience both emotional and academic benefits from these connections (McCabe, 2023; Morelli et al., 2023).

Methodology and results:

This study employed a cross-sectional survey targeting over 360 undergraduate university students aged 18-25. Participants rated their satisfaction with friendships and the quantity of close friends, as well as self-reported their stress levels. Categorical comparisons and Spearman's rank-order correlation were used to analyze how friendship satisfaction and quantity related to stress. A negative correlation was observed between friendship satisfaction and stress levels ($r = -0.45$, $p < 0.01$), indicating that greater satisfaction with friendships is associated with lower stress. Conversely, the quantity of friends showed no statistically significant impact on stress levels, suggesting that the depth of friendships is more influential on well-being than sheer social quantity.

The study also examined the perceived effectiveness of various educator strategies in promoting friendship and collaboration. The following horizontal bar chart illustrating the perceived effectiveness of various educator strategies highlighting strategies like peer mentorship and group projects with rotating roles as highly effective for promoting collaboration and friendship.



Management education research Questions, Ideas, And Concerns (QICs):

To explore the implications of this research, the following questions are proposed for discussion at the RMLE Unconference:

1. What role can faculty and institutions play in creating environments that support high-quality friendships?
2. What are some evidence-based practices that faculty can adopt to make classrooms not only spaces of learning but also communities of support?
3. What are the unique challenges and opportunities in fostering friendships among students from diverse backgrounds, and how can institutions address them?
4. How might these findings inform mental health initiatives, particularly during times of widespread stress?

Proposed Ideas for Fostering Friendships Among University Students:

College administrators, faculty, and student support staff play a crucial role in supporting students' social well-being. Recognizing the significance of friendships, particularly for marginalized groups, educators can help students cultivate lasting and meaningful friendships through the following strategies:

1. Faculty can create a supportive classroom environment by encouraging collaborative work and open discussions on well-being.
2. Programs that encourage peer mentorship and small group projects help students form supportive connections. Emphasizing quality interactions over quantity can ensure students build meaningful relationships.
3. Friendship-building initiatives such as social mixers, workshops, and skill-building sessions tailored to foster connections can increase friendship satisfaction (Hudson & Rockenbach, 2024).
4. Providing communal study areas where students can work alongside each other can deepen friendships and enhance academic identities, even if collaborative study isn't always the most efficient method (McCabe, 2022).
5. Universities should continue to invest in a range of clubs. These clubs provide students with a space to meet others who share their experiences and support one another academically and socially.
6. Educators should support marginalized groups by promoting inclusive social structures. Creating inclusive environments, and paying attention to racial, social, and economic diversity will help to ensure all students feel supported in forming friendships (Johnson et al., 2019; Ragins & Ehrhardt, 2021). Universities can also invest in training students to interact across diverse backgrounds, promoting inclusive friendship networks (Hudson, 2018).

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Group “Sewer System”

Rethinking academic relevance and pathways for growth

**Sam
Kristen
Anne
Tricia
Leighton**

Fun Fact: The development of a sewage system in urbanised areas first began in Liverpool in 1848, when James Newland led a sewer construction programme which, upon completion in 1869, saw over 300 miles of sewers built and more than doubled life expectancy in the city, which had been just 19 years of age.

See: <https://www.adph.org.uk/resources/the-history-of-decontaminating-our-water/>

Questions, Ideas and Concerns from a Programme Management and Development Perspective

Samantha (Sam) Buxton
Swansea University
s.l.buxton@swansea.ac.uk

As a programme director in a changing higher education landscape curriculum redevelopment to update a programme is of vital importance to future proof its longevity (Bentley, Richardson, Philpott, Owen, He, Duan & Ong, 2010). Is co-creation of curriculum the best way to foster learner engagement? According to Hitchcock, Seno-Alday & Chandra (2024), we need to remove erroneous assumptions associated with how engaged students are or desire to be in relation to their university experience. Our current programme is very culturally diverse with students from a variety of backgrounds and countries, and this is something I feel adds value to the programme, and is not something I would want to lose when we redevelop, but will the ideas we are considering work for them?

One of the things we are considering is strategic enrolment management (SEM), which, in higher education is moving towards multiple entry points and understanding how this will affect the curriculum, and programme redevelopment is important to keep in mind as ultimately, we want the students to be successful. Would having November and April entry points in addition to September and January really be an advantage to students? (Bischoff, 2007)

Curriculum development and how we teach management education is also of vital importance because we are creating the managers of the future. We want them to be prepared (Dent and Fearon, 2024) and need to keep in mind what the curriculum looks like from a student perspective (Prideaux, 2003). So, questions about how we move from 15 to 20 credit modules on a 1-year course brings several concerns. My questions, ideas and concerns center around three key themes, and I would like to invite those interested in these topics at the 2025 RMLE Unconference to share their experiences and ideas about these issues in discussions together.

1. Curriculum Redesign – the big question here is what do we keep and what do we lose if we move from 4 modules to 3 per semester? How do we address the issues around artificial intelligence and academic integrity within a redesigned curriculum?
2. Staff Buy-in – How do we engage staff early enough in the process that they have a voice? What happens when they do not want to be involved but then later have complaints about the changes? How have you dealt with this scenario when staff are averse to change?
3. Student Impact – how do the changes impact student learning? How would they prefer to be taught? Difference between international and home student experiences?

Within the curriculum redesign process, we also need to address how we teach. There are two main approaches to focus on and we need to understand not only the pedagogical differences between them, but also the practical implications for their delivery and engagement. These are:

1. The traditional model – teaching all modules concurrently over 10-12 weeks
2. Block teaching – how would this work? Where does teaching and assessment come in?

Within this do we have the traditional approach with lectures and seminars, or do we become more practical and have flipped learning? What happens when students do not engage with the learning before coming to the practical session (Dent & Fearon, 2024). I would very much like to discuss all of these questions, and others, with fellow educators at the 2025 RMLE Unconference.

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Cultivating Responsible Leaders: Integrating DEI into Business Education for Lasting Impact

Jessica McManus Warnell
Mendoza College of Business, University of Notre Dame
jmcmanus@nd.edu

Kristen Collett-Schmitt
Mendoza College of Business, University of Notre Dame
kcollett@nd.edu

Amanda McKendree
Mendoza College of Business, University of Notre Dame
amckendr@nd.edu

Kelly Rubey
Mendoza College of Business, University of Notre Dame
kelly.rubey@nd.edu

Our faculty team from the departments of management & organization, finance, and the Office of the Deans of our business college, would like to more effectively collaborate across our institution to enhance opportunities for all of our students to feel welcome, to engage with their courses and each other in meaningful ways, and to be equipped to contribute to inclusive, ethical organizations after graduation. Societal shifts have led to increasing attention to diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) initiatives in business schools. As the training ground for future leaders, our schools are critical stakeholders in the move toward more inclusive and equitable workplaces. We offer our experiences of pursuing a more integrated strategy to DEI pedagogy by focusing on case study teaching and experiential learning, and we continue to seek ideas and opportunities for more effective and holistic incorporation of these topics into business education.

Considerations of diversity, equity, and inclusion in practice situate within an interrelated set of issues that demand new approaches. Businesses consider social and environmental impact in the face of a complex and changing regulatory environment; stakeholder awareness and greater demands for accountability; and “grand challenges” such as climate change, inequity, and social unrest. In addition, the politicization of DEI topics increases at alarming rates. Business responsibilities for creating diverse, equitable, and inclusive environments has only increased in this context. Education of future business leaders is critical in the move toward more inclusive and equitable workplaces, yet meaningful DEI content remains inconsistent within and across universities and colleges. New textbooks, case collections, and teaching activities are introduced almost daily as institutions seek useful material. As educators grapple with incorporating these themes, collaboration is key as best practices and innovative activities are tried out and assessed. Case study teaching and experiential learning allow for training on key terms and concepts, variability that allows for alignment with specific goals, and a focus on equipping students with practical tools to effect change, which meets these recommendations. While case teaching and experiential learning are not new, we consider how more effectively and intentionally integrating these pedagogies can help all of our students flourish.

Our examples illustrate a variety of experiences that include undergraduate-level courses in inclusive leadership, an online certificate program for practitioners, a professional development program for a variety of learners, experiential service learning projects for graduate students, and a co-curricular DEI case competition. To signal institutional commitment to DEI, we emphasize the importance of coordination and promotion with a member of the senior academic administration team who works closely alongside the dean and other leaders. We demonstrate that case study teaching and experiential learning can bridge the gap between academic and student affairs by connecting classroom learning to career development, alumni, corporate and nonprofit engagement, and hands-on programming outside of the classroom. These initiatives not only help students progress towards degree completion, but also increase their sense of belonging in the business field. This, in turn, could lead to students taking positions post-graduation with organizations that foster more equitable workplaces and communities. We welcome the opportunity to discuss successes, and ongoing barriers to success, in integrating DEI pedagogy in our business schools.

Business Education in Turbulent Times

Anne M. Greenhalgh

The Wharton School, University of Pennsylvania

greenhaa@wharton.upenn.edu

Moses Pava

Yeshiva University

mpava@yu.edu

Harris Sondak

David Eccles School of Business, University of Utah

harris.sondak@eccles.utah.edu

The scope of current societal challenges – in the aftermath of the pandemic, in anticipation of increasing civil unrest, in the deluge of disinformation, in the face of climate change – compel us to reconsider the purpose and trajectory of business education. What do fields typically embedded within business schools have to contribute to these issues? Our experience with the Aspen Institute’s initiatives on business education lead us to think that going beyond the usual fields to explore how disciplines in the liberal arts -- philosophy, literature, and history, for example -- can contribute to the educational reform of business schools and programs. We invite scholars to bring their insights from a wide range of fields – from business to the liberal arts – to respond to the question of how business schools and programs might meet the challenges that confront all of us in turbulent times, now and in the future.

Questions:

- What challenges do we face in business education given these turbulent times?
- What should change about business school curricula?
- How can business schools be sufficiently nimble to address those challenges successfully?

Ideas:

- Business schools and their faculty members will not be able to continue doing the same things they have done for decades because AI will force changes.
- Demands for change will come from students and other stakeholders.
- Wise judgment will take center stage as the essential learning outcome from business education.
- Liberal arts are likely to be a valuable source of recommendations for content and method.

Concerns:

- What kind of pushback will we get as we replace technical expertise with broad-minded judgment as the goal of business education?
- How can we leverage the forces encouraging change?
- Where are examples of best practice?
- We believe it is timely to revisit this topic, which was featured in a *Journal of Management Education* special issue in 2018, and a broader approach informed by scholars’ experience in the last six years would offer new insights.

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The new 'F-bomb'- Fundamental British Values, more damage than good?

Susan Barry, Liverpool John Moores University (s.h.barry@ljmu.ac.uk)

Helen Collins, Liverpool John Moores University (h.collins@ljmu.ac.uk)

Deborah Humphreys, Liverpool John Moores University (d.m.humphreys@ljmu.ac.uk)

Patricia (Tricia) Jolliffe, Liverpool John Moores University (p.a.jolliffe@ljmu.ac.uk)

Paul Lees, Liverpool John Moores University (p.lees@ljmu.ac.uk)

Context

Fundamental British Values (FBV) originate from a politicised, securitised agenda (Lockley-Scott, 2019), and the 'Prevent' programme to address radicalisation and extremism, imposed upon HEI lecturers (Henshall, Sanjakdar, & Prosser, 2024), embedded into curriculum and policed by the government, with non-compliance judged and penalised by Ofsted and associated ratings. They consist of:

- Democracy
- Rule of Law
- Respect & Tolerance
- Individual Liberty

Discussion Points

FBV is based on an assumption that they encapsulate 'Britishness', but can Britishness be branded (Alexander and Weekes-Bernard 2017)?

Who decreed these values are exclusive to the essence of being British and may this imply we are 'culturally superior'? Can Britishness be measured?

Does inclusion of FBV in degree apprenticeship programmes suggest pick 'n' mix policy borrowing from other sectors?

Furthermore, could the inclusion of the word fundamentalism, may be viewed as negative rather than positive, often decoded to fanaticism, extremism, and militancy and this troublesome wording and ill-defined term may be perceived as a toxic brand?

Is a rethink of FBV required in order to develop a more appropriate branding via discussion with wider stakeholders to ensure they are more aligned to 'generic human virtues and values that unite us' (3D Eye, 2015.p 1)? Others have suggested:

- Universal Values (Richardson, 2015);
- Human Values (Struthers, 2017)
- Principles for Life (Warner, 2022)

Do we (HEI professionals) have permission (and from whom) to encourage critique, debate and challenge, rather than merely present FBV to apprenticeship learners?

HEI's are directed to challenge 'opinions or behaviours that are contrary to FBV (Henshall, Sanjakdar and Prosser, 2024), however, in practice, does this occur, are we prepared to 'police the classroom' and what issues might this raise?

Are FBV's in danger of alienating marginalised groups and contributing to a 'them' and 'us', relating to those 'others' which do not fit the 'normal mould' (Chaturvedi, 2023 p1)?

Does the concept of FBV possess contemporary relevance?

Could FBV be more holistic and explicitly consider diversity, inclusion, equity, belonging and respect for all (DEIBR), and even more so to consider values in relation to sustainability and United Nations sustainable development goals?

Currently, are FBV missing the mark? Instead, are they instilling fear in HEI's, with more emphasis placed on ticking the FBV box to avoid poor Ofsted judgements and its ramifications, instead of channelling attention into providing education for multi-culturalism and a diverse society?

Whilst research examines FBV through an educationalist lens, there remains a paucity of research from degree and post graduate degree apprenticeship learners, of which there were 621,000 in 2022/23 (DfE, 2024). We must question in their current form, the extent to which FBV's hold value and relevance particularly to those learners' following degree and post graduate degree apprenticeship pathways in HEI's, many of whom are mid-level and senior managers.

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Rethinking Relevance: Cultivating Academic Growth Beyond Higher Education Rankings

Catherine Heggerud
Haskayne School of Business, University of Calgary, Canada
Catherine.heggerud@haskayne.ucalgary.ca

Justin Knibbe
Haskayne School of Business, University of Calgary, Canada
justin.knibbe@ucalgary.ca

Leighton Wilks
Haskayne School of Business, University of Calgary, Canada
leighton.wilks@haskayne.ucalgary.ca

“Global rankings demonstrate how globalization has transformed higher education into a marketable commodity.” (Hazelkorn, 2014)

University rankings have become deeply embedded within the higher education sector since the introduction of *US News and World Report*. Following this, professional programs, including law and MBA programs, were also ranked, and in 2008, the *Financial Times* introduced its own rankings for business schools. These rankings offer students a single metric to base complex decisions about where to apply and attend, often simplifying a nuanced choice.

In pursuit of these rankings, some business schools have shifted away from their core mission, at times with serious consequences, as seen in the Fox School of Business case, where Dean Moshe Porat manipulated data to inflate rankings (U.S. Attorney’s Office, 2021). Research suggests that rankings fuel global competition in higher education and can lead to problematic practices, such as undervaluing teaching quality or incentivizing research with little practical relevance (Grolleau & Meunier, 2023).

At recent conferences, scholars have reimagined a future for higher education that goes beyond performative metrics. Jones (RMLE 2023), for example, advocates for a “heterotopic” academic space—one that centers on academic well-being and addresses the power imbalances exacerbated by ranking systems. Similarly, Jandrić (RMLE 2018) critiques rankings as mechanisms that commodify students, treating education as a market-driven transaction rather than a journey toward personal and social growth.

In light of these discussions, how can we—whether as universities, faculties, or individual educators—prioritize academic well-being over competitive metrics while still maintaining global relevance and fostering environments that support student learning, genuine academic growth, and integrity?"

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OMG I have to release the grades! The impact of grading on professor mental health

Justin Knibbe

Haskayne School of Business, University of Calgary, Canada

justin.knibbe@ucalgary.ca

Catherine Heggerud

Haskayne School of Business, University of Calgary, Canada

Catherine.heggerud@haskayne.ucalgary.ca

Leighton Wilks

Haskayne School of Business, University of Calgary, Canada

leighton.wilks@haskayne.ucalgary.ca

You have spent hours grading papers, providing feedback, entering letters into a spreadsheet, and the grades are all ready to be released. And now your stomach is in knots. Your finger hovers over the “release grades” button while you prepare to unleash hell. How long will it be until you receive the first email? The email from a student complaining about a grade, demanding that they see you, or upset because this is the “worst grade that they have ever received!?” Do you avoid your inbox or obsessively watch it to prove to yourself that nothing bad is going to happen? And....there is the first email. OMG.

If you have ever felt overwhelmed or stressed over grading and the releasing of grades, you are not alone. Professors are often tasked with grading large volumes of assignments, exams, and projects, which can be time-consuming and mentally taxing. With class sizes increasing (in the past two years our class sizes have increased from 60 to 80-100 students), it becomes even more taxing to finish grading. The need to provide timely feedback adds another layer of pressure, as students increasingly expect prompt responses.

And performing the grading is only half the battle – you still have to face the students! According to Rickey et al. (2023), grade obsession is one of the top challenges in education, and Kouyoumdjian (2012) states that one of the most stressful aspects of teaching is “managing student responses to their grades (para. 1). Professors spend a lot of time explaining and defending grades that were given, while also trying to provide constructive feedback and ensure that students are learning. This problem is exacerbated by the fact that tenure and promotion often rely on student satisfaction as a major input. Professors must juggle fairness and feedback while also trying to ensure that the students are happy with them – a difficult task. Due to the high stress facing many students, they often externalize blame instead of accepting responsibility (Kouyoumdjian 2012). Some faculty feel that they are being harassed by students and even fear student retaliation when they stand firm on the grades that they distributed (O’Grady, 2023).

As professors, we understand this fear. We have faced students who cannot speak because they are crying about their low grade, students shaking with anger, and others begging for extra credit assignments. And we understand where they are coming from: grades have major ramifications for their lives. Higher grades lead to more scholarships, better access to post-secondary opportunities, and even higher paying jobs (Rickey et al., 2023). Grades can lower students’ self-esteem, increase anxiety, and even change how students learn (Rickey et al., 2023).

The question we want to explore is: is there a better way? Is there a way to evaluate students while decreasing the stress on professors (as well as students)? Can we evaluate the work that students have done while focusing on learning and growth instead of arguing, negotiating, begging, and hounding?

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Group “Orthopaedic Surgery”

Creating a manifesto of care (one RMLE Unconference at a time)

**Ash
Jen
David
Kate
Amanda H.**

Fun Fact: Up until the late 1800s fractures and joint disease were treated crudely by general surgeons and often resulted in limb shortening, gross deformity or amputation. Hugh Owen Thomas changed all this by inventing splints, among many other medical innovations. Known as the Thomas Splints, they could be applied to a fractured femur to provide stability and prevent infection. He set up a workshop where a blacksmith and leather workers created the splints which came to revolutionise the management of bone and joint disease.

See: <https://www.ljmu.ac.uk/about-us/news/articles/2018/7/4/liverpool-key-to-improvements-in-health-care>

Taking Care into Our Own Hands

Amanda Hay
Nottingham Trent University
amanda.hay@ntu.ac.uk

Kate Black
Northumbria University - Newcastle
kate.black@northumbria.ac.uk

Jennifer S.A. Leigh
Nazareth University
jleigh4@naz.edu

Sarah Robinson
Rennes Business School
sarah.robinson@rennes-sb.com

Ashley Roberts
Warwick Business School
Ashley.Roberts@wbs.ac.uk

David Jones
Northumbria University – Newcastle
david9.jones@northumbria.ac.uk



Taking Care into Our Own Hands

Our shared *concern* which emerged at RMLE 2023 in Banff, Canada, relates to the careless doxa (Gaudet et al., 2022) pervading our various institutions on both sides of the Atlantic. It was clear that the neoliberal academy has “neither an effective practice of, nor, a vocabulary for care (Chatzidakis et al, 2020: 7) leaving us to echo the searching question posed earlier by academics Smith & Ulus (2020: 3) - ‘who cares for us?’. We were especially concerned that despite some efforts to restore care, for example in the form of various ‘care manifestos’ (Benozzo et al., 2022; Compton & Lindner, 2022), little has changed, and in the post Covid era, carelessness has seemingly intensified. Our pressing concern then is how we might create ‘care with teeth’ to construct more a care-ful future for ourselves and others.

We have *issue* with this carelessness as it matters both to our individual well-being and to the learning possibilities that we can create for our management students. Studies increasingly show that academics experience mental health issues, for example, Bourgeault et al (2021) found that two-thirds reported issues such as anxiety, psychological distress, depression and burnout, at some point in their careers. These issues matter for our students too, since as Lister & Riva (2024) observed, while rarely considered, as educators we first have to attend to our own wellbeing before we are able to help our students.

Our Questions

- How can we take care into our hands?
- How can we reposition care as an ordinary, everyday act not an extraordinary, remarkable one (Lawrence & Matlis, 2012)?
- What might care defined in our own terms look like as opposed to those imposed on us by others (Johansson & Edwards, 2021)?
- How can we mobilize care as a collective responsibility to care with others rather than an individual’s dispositional burden to care for (Askins & Blazek, 2017; Tronto, 1993)?
- How do our structural conditions enable and constrain care?
- What do our own concrete examples of remarkable enactments of care tell us about possibilities for a more care-ful future?
- What do our concrete examples of unremarkable enactments of carelessness tell us about possibilities for a more care-ful future?

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Group “Grand Olympic Festival”

Teaching to disrupt, unlearn, revitalize, renew, explore, and expand

**Helen
Monika
Martin
Sarah**

Fun Fact: Athens, 1896 is considered the first modern Olympic Games, but thirty-four years earlier, on June 14 1862, Liverpool Athletic Club was hosting a Grand Olympic Festival before a crowd of up to 10,000 spectators.

See: <https://manuscriptsandmore.liverpool.ac.uk/?p=6669>

The new 'F-bomb'- Fundamental British Values, more damage than good?

Susan Barry, Liverpool John Moores University (s.h.barry@ljmu.ac.uk)

Helen Collins, Liverpool John Moores University (h.collins@ljmu.ac.uk)

Deborah Humphreys, Liverpool John Moores University (d.m.humphreys@ljmu.ac.uk)

Patricia (Tricia) Jolliffe, Liverpool John Moores University (p.a.jolliffe@ljmu.ac.uk)

Paul Lees, Liverpool John Moores University (p.lees@ljmu.ac.uk)

Context

Fundamental British Values (FBV) originate from a politicised, securitised agenda (Lockley-Scott, 2019), and the 'Prevent' programme to address radicalisation and extremism, imposed upon HEI lecturers (Henshall, Sanjakdar, & Prosser, 2024), embedded into curriculum and policed by the government, with non-compliance judged and penalised by Ofsted and associated ratings. They consist of:

- Democracy
- Rule of Law
- Respect & Tolerance
- Individual Liberty

Discussion Points

FBV is based on an assumption that they encapsulate 'Britishness', but can Britishness be branded (Alexander and Weekes-Bernard 2017)?

Who decreed these values are exclusive to the essence of being British and may this imply we are 'culturally superior'? Can Britishness be measured?

Does inclusion of FBV in degree apprenticeship programmes suggest pick 'n' mix policy borrowing from other sectors?

Furthermore, could the inclusion of the word fundamentalism, may be viewed as negative rather than positive, often decoded to fanaticism, extremism, and militancy and this troublesome wording and ill-defined term may be perceived as a toxic brand?

Is a rethink of FBV required in order to develop a more appropriate branding via discussion with wider stakeholders to ensure they are more aligned to 'generic human virtues and values that unite us' (3D Eye, 2015.p 1)? Others have suggested:

- Universal Values (Richardson, 2015);
- Human Values (Struthers, 2017)
- Principles for Life (Warner, 2022)

Do we (HEI professionals) have permission (and from whom) to encourage critique, debate and challenge, rather than merely present FBV to apprenticeship learners?

HEI's are directed to challenge 'opinions or behaviours that are contrary to FBV (Henshall, Sanjakdar and Prosser, 2024), however, in practice, does this occur, are we prepared to 'police the classroom' and what issues might this raise?

Are FBV's in danger of alienating marginalised groups and contributing to a 'them' and 'us', relating to those 'others' which do not fit the 'normal mould' (Chaturvedi, 2023 p1)?

Does the concept of FBV possess contemporary relevance?

Could FBV be more holistic and explicitly consider diversity, inclusion, equity, belonging and respect for all (DEIBR), and even more so to consider values in relation to sustainability and United Nations sustainable development goals?

Currently, are FBV missing the mark? Instead, are they instilling fear in HEI's, with more emphasis placed on ticking the FBV box to avoid poor Ofsted judgements and its ramifications, instead of channelling attention into providing education for multi-culturalism and a diverse society?

Whilst research examines FBV through an educationalist lens, there remains a paucity of research from degree and post graduate degree apprenticeship learners, of which there were 621,000 in 2022/23 (DfE, 2024). We must question in their current form, the extent to which FBV's hold value and relevance particularly to those learners' following degree and post graduate degree apprenticeship pathways in HEI's, many of whom are mid-level and senior managers.

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Bullshit, Blues, and the Black experience (extended version)

Monika L. Hudson, University of San Francisco
mhudson@usfca.edu

Pier C. Rogers, North Park University
progers@northpark.edu

Keith O. Hunter, University of San Francisco
kohunter@usfca.edu

“blues in black music can best be understood as “the expression of the culture...immune to bullshit”.

-Amiri Baraka/LeRoi Jones, *The Changing Same* (R&B and New Black Music), 1967

In his seminal essay, *On Bullshit* (1986) philosopher Harry Frankfurt defined bullshit as speech or writing that is characterized by a lack of concern for the truth. Unlike a liar, who intentionally misrepresents the truth, Frankfurt indicated the bullshitter was indifferent to truth altogether, which is what he believed distinguished bullshit from lying.

Various researchers (Bowles, 2020; Christensen, Karreman & Rasche, 2019; Spicer, 2013) have explored bullshit's prevalence, its cognitive and social implications, and its impacts on the overall concept of what constitutes “truth” within particular communities. They note that bullshit is now everywhere: politics, advertising, social media, corporate speak. It appears to thrive in environments where appearances matter more than substance, where there are more incentives to *sound* smart, without being held accountable. Despite frequently being a social lubricant – after all, in response to the question “how are you”, most of us do not want to hear a recitation of one’s physical ills - as it becomes habitual, bullshit dulls one’s ability to think critically, to ask questions and to engage authentically.

Frankfurt’s definition speaks to the intent and character of the speaker, while other researchers (Pennycook et al., 2015; Pennycook & Rand, 2020) examined individuals’ ability to detect what these researchers classified as “pseudo-profound” bullshit. In 2015 and subsequently further developed, Pennycook and his team used computer generated sentences that possessed syntactical coherence yet were constructed using buzzwords that were both random and vague. They found several personality characteristics and traits correlated with an inability to detect pseudo-profound bullshit including a lack of reflectiveness, lower cognitive ability, conspiratorial ideation, religious and/or paranormal belief, and favorable views toward alternative medicine, which they believed made these individuals less talented at detecting bullshit and more prone to fall for it.

Fredal (2011) noted that bullshit arises from arrogant gestures of disregard. Our recent conversations with university students found that associating oneself with bullshit that outrages others elevates some learners’ sense of relevance and allows them to signal power while concurrently allowing them to denigrate and undermine those whom they oppose or feel threatened by. They no longer have to play games of reason and evidence that create dissonance with respect to their capability, legitimacy, or righteousness; rather, they can rely on anecdotal evidence to support their claims but criticize counterarguments advancing anecdotal evidence as not being empirical enough. This type of anti-intellectual bullshit allows tribal factors, being “one of us” and referent power to concurrently deepen the follower’s addiction to bullshit. We theorize these factors may be one of the challenges facing residents in the US today.

But we wanted to further explore whether there were differences in the ways various communities within the US classified this notion of “bullshit”; more specifically, we wondered about the differences in the ways that white and non-white individuals classified both the word itself as well as the meaning associated with “bullshit”. A brief review of the literature indicated that, in predominantly white contexts, “bullshit” is commonly employed to denote disbelief, skepticism or dismissal of a statement perceived as false. Whereas, in non-white communities, the term “bullshit” often transcends its literal meaning, embodying a critique of systemic issues and historical injustices. For example, in his letters and almost all of his public statements, James Baldwin used the term “jazz” (1961) as a synonym for “bullshit”, spitting out “all that jazz” and “later for that jazz”, making it obvious he was using the term to mean far more than what it evoked in the popular mind. And while there are clearly non-whites who are affiliated with the

various MAGA memes in the US, the relative dearth of black faces among these groups indicates significant difference in the ways “bullshit” is viewed within this ethnic context.

Assuming the perspective of the listener, we offer that the ability to detect bullshit may vary depending upon the intersection of one’s ethnicity and gender. As limited evidence, we compared 2016 and 2024 voting patterns within the US and conjectured that differing patterns of bullshit detection among those sitting at the intersection of race and gender might have influenced the same.

While Donald Trump – an acknowledged bullshit artisan – was able to persuade a significant portion of the US population that he offered a renewed path to US “greatness”, his 2024 pull among black voters and particularly black women did not increase much over 2016 patterns. According to the Pew Research Center (2018), 98% of black women voted for Hillary Clinton in 2016, while 90% of black women voted for Kamala Harris in 2024 (Navigator Research, 2024). Thus, we note black female voting patterns contrasted in large part from those of whites and other non-black groups, who skewed less favorably for the then candidate in 2016 but were more evenly divided in 2024.

Why might this racial and gender gap exist as it relates to perceptions of the bullshit nature of statements from this individual? We offer it may involve three of what are now US-forbidden words – intersectionality, marginalization and unacknowledged privilege.

As descendants of formerly enslaved people, African Americans, generally, and African American women, in particular, tend to operate from a baseline of mistrust. This is the result of over 400 years of generational trauma and lived experience in the US, frequently based upon actual lies as well as “bullshit”. Given that history, we believe “bullshit” may transcend mere taxonomy to encompass less engagement from blacks than other non-whites and whites in the US.

We want to leverage this project to apply evidence from social psychology, political science and related fields to unpack this phenomenon. Our purpose is to support understanding, prediction, and intervention on the efficacy of deception and misrepresentation, whether blatant or subtle, to manipulate or exploit perceptions within particular populations. Where the current environment of “bullshit” has arguably faced only limited challenges (which we believe may be rife with poorly informed assumptions about the power of its proponent speakers [Murkowski, 2025]), we hope to use this project to identify strategies that can support movement toward responses that engage more directly with the antecedents of the bullshit addiction currently being exploited by societal players.

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Can the use of aesthetics aid in making sense of ‘Wicked Problems’ in our classrooms?

Martin Quinn (Lancaster, m.quinn@lancaster.ac.uk)
Divya Jyoti (Lancaster, d.jyoti@lancaster.ac.uk)
Marta Gasparin (Copenhagen Business School)
Enrico Maccio (Copenhagen Business School)

The world as we know it is rapidly changing. From geopolitical tensions to climate crises, our comprehension of what ‘is’ and what ‘might be’ is becoming increasingly complex. In a time where attention-spans are fast reducing, as management educators we are confronted with the challenge of translating the ‘intense’, ‘theoretical’, ‘deep’ and ‘philosophical’ analytical and conceptual understandings to students and professionals. How do we offer provocations for organising ‘better’ and indeed managing ‘better’? How do we transform our classroom into thinking laboratories where questioning and debating become the norm?

As a mixed group of early career and experienced management educators, across four higher education institutions and executive and professional development settings, over the past five years, we have been experimenting with the use of contemporary cinema and games as integral components of the modules we design and teach. We have introduced media and film as core elements of the pedagogical approaches and have developed several games which attempt to place students in the role of organizations and individuals within imagined business and societal settings. A few examples of our work include an international trade game, a responsibility matrix game, and playful learning with Lego and films such as the Big Short, Laundromat and The Insider. As we have designed and delivered the experimental pedagogical design, a series of questions, issues and concerns have emerged which we are keen to explore further in the setting provided by the Unconference to share emergent insights and compare our experiences with other colleagues. These include, among others:

- How and why are games successful in enabling students to place themselves into contexts they may not have any real-life experience of? What are some of the ethical burdens that such role-plays generate for students?
- How do interactive games which adopt an agile approach (where rules change mid-way) interrupt power dynamics and challenge students to think on their feet?
- What role does film and media play in translating theory and complex ideas to the students through a differing aesthetic experience?
- How do we further and embed aesthetics-led educational experiences into the curriculum?
- What reassurances do students need to understand the value of alternative educational experiences?
- How do we ensure that such games and reflective exercises are carried out in a safe environment and are inclusive of diverse learning styles?
- How can we develop a learning environment which is able to respond to the eco-anxieties and ethical dilemmas which might be generated as a consequence of provocation for deep and situated ‘thinking’?
- How do we accommodate for the emotional labour required from educators to incorporate aesthetics in their pedagogical designs? Which educational practices and policies might help reduce the burdens?
- What might be the unintended consequences in the classroom of adopting and including such approaches and how do we mitigate against those?

The Future is a Canvas, Not a Curriculum: Teaching to Disrupt, Unlearn, and Create

Sarah Williams
Liverpool John Moores University, UK
s.j.williams@ljmu.ac.uk

The current educational paradigm operates within entrenched norms that shape how we envision the future, often dictated by colonial, capitalist, and neoliberal forces (Dei, 2019). Where there could be an infinite canvas of possibility, these systems present instead a pre-drawn future, with boundaries already marked and paths already traced. This results in the colonisation of the imagination as past and present political direction and cultural realities, as well as specific views and perspectives, constrain the capacity to imagine radically different, ethical, and sustainable futures. A key question emerges: **Whose futures are being prioritised, and whose are being sidelined?** (Death, 2022).

If education is to truly transform, there must be a fundamental shift in how we approach the future itself. By extending the present into the future, we risk perpetuating the same structures of inequity (Bal and Brookes, 2022). When sustainability is added into current capitalist structures, it can become a hollow term—conveniently checked off by corporations seeking to maintain the status quo while reaffirming systems of exploitation. This calls for a fundamental reimagining of how we relate to each other and the world, yet the path to such reimagining remains contested and complex.

The challenge extends beyond simple reform or new methodologies. Instead of guiding students to adapt to these systems, should educators focus on empowering them to unlearn the dominant structures they are conditioned to operate within? This act of unlearning begins with the decolonisation of imagination, challenging the narratives that define educational and managerial landscapes (Miller, 2018). While tools like Futures Literacy might support this journey—helping us become aware of the sources of our hopes and fears (Larsen, Mortensen and Miller, 2020)—the core task remains to create educational spaces that liberate imagination from current constraints.

This tension between prescription and possibility becomes particularly acute in management education. Education must become less about mastering existing patterns and more about fostering collective, ethical creation (UNESCO, 2021). Can we shift away from developing traditional leaders to nurturing those willing to dismantle the ladders rather than climb them—those who question why these ladders exist in the first place? This represents not just a pedagogical shift but a reimagining of agency—students should not just fit into the future; they should question and reshape its very foundations.

The educator's role in this context becomes increasingly complex. Rather than providing paint-by-numbers, we must create spaces where uncertainty and possibility coexist, discomfort becomes generative, and exploration leads to transformation (Ryan and Tilbury, 2013). Yet a critical challenge persists - any alternative frameworks we develop risk being absorbed back into the logics of control, efficiency, and capital. Dundon and Rafferty (2018) remind us that even the most innovative approaches can be co-opted by the very systems they aim to disrupt.

The path forward requires us to cultivate new ways of thinking and acting that embrace plurality and non-linearity. Students must be equipped to navigate ethical dilemmas, environmental crises, and social upheavals with creativity and resilience. But this raises further questions about the nature of education itself: Can transformative learning exist within institutions built on colonial and capitalist foundations? What happens when we approach education not as a curriculum to be followed but as a canvas of collective possibility?

In this journey of disruption and questioning, several provocations arise:

- What would it mean to build a curriculum where students are empowered to imagine and create alternatives that challenge the ideological foundations of capitalism and coloniality rather than simply adapting to current systems?
- How can we design educational experiences that dismantle the cognitive and cultural boundaries limiting our collective capacity to envision radical futures rather than settling for simulations of predictable scenarios?
- How might we move beyond traditional and alternative pedagogies to create spaces where multiple ways of knowing, being, and becoming can flourish?
- What role does unlearning play in educational transformation, and how can educators create environments that help dismantle entrenched paradigms while nurturing new ethical, ecological, and social imaginaries?

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Group “Football Goal Net”

Navigating turbulent times with the goal of creating inclusive (program) leadership

**Susan
Maribel
Clara
Amanda Mc.
Moses**

Fun Fact: In 1891, Liverpool engineer John Brodie, inspired by the large pockets on his trousers, devised the goal net. His invention was a simple yet revolutionary solution to the prevalent ambiguities in goal scoring. The concept was straightforward: if the ball entered the net, a goal was scored; if not, play continued. This clear visual cue dramatically reduced disputes and enhanced the flow of the game. Brodie's goal nets were first trialled in a game in Nottingham and quickly gained acceptance. Their official debut came in the 1892 FA Cup final, marking a significant milestone in football history. The introduction of goal nets was met with widespread approval, as it not only helped referees make more accurate decisions but also added a new, dynamic visual element to the sport.

See: <https://www.ramsayladders.co.uk/a-history-of-the-football-goal-post.html>

The new 'F-bomb'- Fundamental British Values, more damage than good?

Susan Barry, Liverpool John Moores University (s.h.barry@ljmu.ac.uk)

Helen Collins, Liverpool John Moores University (h.collins@ljmu.ac.uk)

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Learning to listen: Leader humility and intergenerational learning for sustainability leadership at business schools

Maribel Blasco, Copenhagen Business School, mbl.msc@cbs.dk

Carole Elliott, St Andrews University, cje7@st-andrews.ac.uk

Annemette Kjærgaard, Copenhagen Business School, amk.msc@cbs.dk

Sarah Robinson, Rennes School of Business, sarah.robinson@rennes-sb.com

Issues and Concerns

Despite decades of initiatives and debates, including PRME, about the need to educate for sustainability leadership at business schools, these insights have still only been translated on a small scale into real change, with sustainability issues still inadequately integrated in business curricula, and their relevance often not being clear to students (Abdelgaffar, 2021; Colombo, 2023; Edwards et al., 2020). Business schools have a particularly vital role here, since they train the sustainability skills and awareness of tomorrow's business leaders (Marathe et al., 2020; Mason et al., 2024).

Yet academia is not yet sufficiently proficient at delivering curricula that can produce graduates with the competences needed to effectively tackle sustainability challenges (Hensley, 2024; Tasdemir and Gazo, 2020); and the pace of change when it comes to sustainability (for instance standards and other regulations that frame business activity) is such that 'keeping up' with the latest developments and requirements is a major challenge for business school pedagogy and curricula.

In line with recent policy initiatives, we propose that *intergenerational learning* holds considerable potential for business schools seeking to address the planetary sustainability challenge (Mannion, 2018: 2). Specifically, we suggest that recognizing students as a crucial sustainability learning resource and a 'voice from the future' is key. This calls for humility on our side as we must acknowledge that we do not have the better solution (Hannah, 2024). Although in many countries students are increasingly being involved in university quality assurance and governance mechanisms (Cardoso et al., 2017), student curricular input, they are often not included as full partners in this process (Isaeva et al., 2020). Moreover, their voices and experiences are still few and far between in sustainability classrooms, despite calls for greater emphasis on teacher-student partnering, learner-driven curricula and co-inquiry, as well as evidence of the benefits of these approaches for all involved (Dmochowski et al., 2016; Herranen et al., 2018). Many students have cutting edge knowledge and experiences garnered outside their studies that can add valuable insights into the classroom, bringing outdated curricula up to speed, contributing much-needed real-life input to the sustainability theories and models taught, and enhancing engagement (Dmochowski et al., 2016).

For this to work, however, business schools' leadership must become more open and less hierarchical in order to embrace the possibilities of intergenerational learning (Mannion, 2018). We therefore propose that university leaders need to adopt an attitude of 'educational humility' (Greenleaf, 1991: 10; Hannah, 2024), which includes 'learning to listen' actively to their students. Just as great teachers take their students' ideas seriously, engage them in shared decision-making and recognize when their teaching is not having the desired results and search for new approaches (Waks, 2018), so too should university leaders if the sustainability agenda is to be inclusive, contemporary and engaging. Humility is, moreover, recognised as essential to issues of intergenerational justice (MacKenzie, n.d.) such as sustainability.

Questions

- How can we conceptualize and implement 'educational humility' for intergenerational learning at business schools?
- What experiences do others have with intergenerational learning at business schools, including student input into sustainability curricula?

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Reimagining Management Research and Education in the context of Decolonising Indigenous NGOs in Africa

Clara Kansiime
Liverpool John Moores University
C.Kansiime@2024@ljmu.ac.uk

Much as Africa is not a country (see, Faloyin, 2023), it still shares a colonial legacy in different spheres of life including education and research as has been indicated by different post colonialists and decolonisation scholars like Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2013). For instance, management education in Africa is highly influenced by the North/Western models (see Engwall, 2007). Decolonialists have argued that knowledge production and education need to be contextualised within given locations and uniqueness of different organisations. NGOs are recognised by different individuals and agencies as actors in different aspects of African communities.

Indeed, since the 1980s due to the international development policies especially structural adjustment programmes, Africa has experienced an exponential growth of NGOs tackling various issues such as poverty, human rights protection, good governance agenda and health related issues such as HIV and Aids. But some authors like Sakue-Collins (2021) have criticised NGOs as tools of continued coloniality instead of advancing liberation of Africa economically, politically, socially and buttressing local and indigenous knowledge production. NGOs are unique from business organisations based on not being profit oriented; and different from state agencies since they do not rely on the mandate of their electoral constituents /dictatorial machinery. In addition, NGOs operations in Africa mainly target the marginalised and yet mostly rely on Northern external funding.

This makes NGOs an interesting category for Research in Management Learning and Education (RMLE) towards a decolonisation approach. Moreover, despite the current calls by international bilateral and multilateral agencies to enhance influence of local voices in decision making in NGO management, the reality is NGO management is still largely top down with the Northern actors determining how things are run in such organisations. NGOs operating in Africa are also unique from their North counterparts in terms of the economic, social and political contexts. Yet research in management of organisation is largely northern based or has not appreciated the nuances of different NGOs in different parts of the world.

As a PhD student in decolonising management knowledge, I am interested in having deep insights on contextualising research in management of NGOs with the potential impact of decolonisation. What tools, strategies/methods, approaches need to inform this research and whose voices need to be part of this agenda? Hence, my main questions in line with the RMLE Unconference are:

- how can research in management of NGOs in Africa be contextualised to advance decolonisation (how should researchers relate with NGO stakeholders especially the local communities);
- how should management education and learning in Africa be skewed towards decolonising the practices of indigenous NGOs in a globalised world; and
- what unique knowledge and skills are relevant for NGO managers in Africa that ME should prioritise beyond the universalised models and theories?

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Cultivating Responsible Leaders: Integrating DEI into Business Education for Lasting Impact

Jessica McManus Warnell
Mendoza College of Business, University of Notre Dame
jmcmanus@nd.edu

Kristen Collett-Schmitt
Mendoza College of Business, University of Notre Dame
kcollett@nd.edu

Amanda McKendree
Mendoza College of Business, University of Notre Dame
amckendr@nd.edu

Kelly Rubey
Mendoza College of Business, University of Notre Dame
kelly.rubey@nd.edu

Our faculty team from the departments of management & organization, finance, and the Office of the Deans of our business college, would like to more effectively collaborate across our institution to enhance opportunities for all of our students to feel welcome, to engage with their courses and each other in meaningful ways, and to be equipped to contribute to inclusive, ethical organizations after graduation. Societal shifts have led to increasing attention to diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) initiatives in business schools. As the training ground for future leaders, our schools are critical stakeholders in the move toward more inclusive and equitable workplaces. We offer our experiences of pursuing a more integrated strategy to DEI pedagogy by focusing on case study teaching and experiential learning, and we continue to seek ideas and opportunities for more effective and holistic incorporation of these topics into business education.

Considerations of diversity, equity, and inclusion in practice situate within an interrelated set of issues that demand new approaches. Businesses consider social and environmental impact in the face of a complex and changing regulatory environment; stakeholder awareness and greater demands for accountability; and “grand challenges” such as climate change, inequity, and social unrest. In addition, the politicization of DEI topics increases at alarming rates. Business responsibilities for creating diverse, equitable, and inclusive environments has only increased in this context. Education of future business leaders is critical in the move toward more inclusive and equitable workplaces, yet meaningful DEI content remains inconsistent within and across universities and colleges. New textbooks, case collections, and teaching activities are introduced almost daily as institutions seek useful material. As educators grapple with incorporating these themes, collaboration is key as best practices and innovative activities are tried out and assessed. Case study teaching and experiential learning allow for training on key terms and concepts, variability that allows for alignment with specific goals, and a focus on equipping students with practical tools to effect change, which meets these recommendations. While case teaching and experiential learning are not new, we consider how more effectively and intentionally integrating these pedagogies can help all of our students flourish.

Our examples illustrate a variety of experiences that include undergraduate-level courses in inclusive leadership, an online certificate program for practitioners, a professional development program for a variety of learners, experiential service learning projects for graduate students, and a co-curricular DEI case competition. To signal institutional commitment to DEI, we emphasize the importance of coordination and promotion with a member of the senior academic administration team who works closely alongside the dean and other leaders. We demonstrate that case study teaching and experiential learning can bridge the gap between academic and student affairs by connecting classroom learning to career development, alumni, corporate and nonprofit engagement, and hands-on programming outside of the classroom. These initiatives not only help students progress towards degree completion, but also increase their sense of belonging in the business field. This, in turn, could lead to students taking positions post-graduation with organizations that foster more equitable workplaces and communities. We welcome the opportunity to discuss successes, and ongoing barriers to success, in integrating DEI pedagogy in our business schools.

Teaching Students to Combine Organizational and Personal Values to Make Better Decisions

Moses Pava
Yeshiva University
Mpava@yu.edu

Nearly every major global business organization publishes a Values Statement on their website and organizational leaders at all levels are expected to use these values to improve decision outcomes. Recent research has focused on how organizational leaders use organizational values in a systematic way. The best guidance on Values-Based Decision-Making for both leaders and students that I am familiar with is Joseph Badaracco's four open-ended questions designed for leaders facing tough decisions, especially when these decisions present a clash of significant values. Badaracco's questions are as follows:

- 1: What really matters?
- 2: What are my responsibilities?
- 3: What will work?
- 4: What can I live with as a person and a professional?

Asking and answering each of these questions yields a narrative or multiple narratives that provides decision makers with a choice or set of choices of which direction to pursue. Further, the answers to these questions provide the language for a legitimate justification, after the fact, to all stakeholders in terms of shared organizational values. Thus, leaders are held accountable to the organization.

A limitation of these questions, however, is that they do not provide significant room to incorporate a leader's own personal values into the decision-making process. My recent research proposes a second set of questions to address this limitation. These new questions include:

- 1: What matters most *to me*?
- 2: What are *my aspirational values*?
- 3: How can I *change the way* the world works?
- 4: How can I contribute to creating a world *worthy of love*?

Asking and answering these questions promotes decision-makers to be accountable to their own imagined best selves and not only to the organizations in which they work.

QUESTIONS: Do leaders have a legitimate right to base decisions on their own values as members of a business organization? Or ought there be a strict separation between organizational and personal values? How transparent must leaders be about the use of their own values in organizational decision-making? What are the benefits of using personal values? What are the costs?

IDEAS: My main proposal is a two-stage model incorporating both organizational and personal values. In most cases where there is a significant clash of values, leaders should use the questions related to organizational values first. If the first stage produces a single narrative implying a single choice for decision-makers, the process is complete. By contrast, if the first stage produces multiple choices for decision-makers, they then use the second set of questions to determine their final decision.

CONCERNS: Will promoting the use of personal values in organizations improve decision outcomes from a broader social perspective? Is there a good definition of values to use to help students understand what values are? How can I identify useful cases to illustrate the proposed two-stage model of decision-making? Are there plausible situations where leaders might use the second set of questions first?

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Business Education in Turbulent Times

Anne M. Greenhalgh
The Wharton School, University of Pennsylvania
greenhaa@wharton.upenn.edu

Moses Pava
Yeshiva University
mpava@yu.edu

Harris Sondak
David Eccles School of Business, University of Utah
harris.sondak@eccles.utah.edu

The scope of current societal challenges – in the aftermath of the pandemic, in anticipation of increasing civil unrest, in the deluge of disinformation, in the face of climate change – compel us to reconsider the purpose and trajectory of business education. What do fields typically embedded within business schools have to contribute to these issues? Our experience with the Aspen Institute’s initiatives on business education lead us to think that going beyond the usual fields to explore how disciplines in the liberal arts -- philosophy, literature, and history, for example -- can contribute to the educational reform of business schools and programs. We invite scholars to bring their insights from a wide range of fields – from business to the liberal arts – to respond to the question of how business schools and programs might meet the challenges that confront all of us in turbulent times, now and in the future.

Questions:

- What challenges do we face in business education given these turbulent times?
- What should change about business school curricula?
- How can business schools be sufficiently nimble to address those challenges successfully?

Ideas:

- Business schools and their faculty members will not be able to continue doing the same things they have done for decades because AI will force changes.
- Demands for change will come from students and other stakeholders.
- Wise judgment will take center stage as the essential learning outcome from business education.
- Liberal arts are likely to be a valuable source of recommendations for content and method.

Concerns:

- What kind of pushback will we get as we replace technical expertise with broad-minded judgment as the goal of business education?
- How can we leverage the forces encouraging change?
- Where are examples of best practice?
- We believe it is timely to revisit this topic, which was featured in a *Journal of Management Education* special issue in 2018, and a broader approach informed by scholars’ experience in the last six years would offer new insights.

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Group “RSPCA”

Exploring the generative and extractive sides of hope: A focus on Ukraine

**Amy
Jessica**

Fun Fact:

The RSPCA Liverpool Branch is the oldest animal charity in the world. Founded in 1809 at a meeting in a coffee house in Bold Street, Liverpool 25 October, this group of stalwarts formed a society “for the suppression of Wanton Cruelty to Brute Animals.”

See: <https://www.rspca.org.uk/local/aboutus/history/-/rspca/liverpool-branch#:~:text=What%20is%20now%20the%20RSPCA%20Liverpool%20Branch%20is,the%20suppression%20of%20Wanton%20Cruelty%20to%20Brute%20Animals%22>.

Exploring the Woven Fabrics of Our Lived Experiences

Amy L. Kenworthy
Bond University, akenwort@bond.edu.au

“Two roads diverged in a wood, and I – I took the one less traveled by,
And that has made all the difference” – Robert Frost (1915)

My story, like yours, is a woven fabric of lived experience, the threads of which have varying thicknesses. Each thread represents a relationship, moment, action, sensing, emotion, or lesson learned throughout my life journey. The thickness of each thread represents its intensity in defining who I am.

In my woven fabric, there are some very thick threads – my family of origin and the family I have made, my health, my friends, and my career. Their respective thicknesses shift as I age and add more threads to my tapestry. There have been times when one thread dominated others in unhealthy ways. I now know that there were too many years when my career consumed me. Years within which my nights were too long – each spent writing and grading after I put the kids to bed, followed by mornings that started far too early because of the magnitude of responsibilities I had taken on. And yet I know my story is not unique. I am not alone in having chapters of my life with a deeply skewed work-life balance, a skew that was not intentional. Rather, it was an extractive and strained period in which my mind “never stopped working” as I struggled “trying to optimize” everywhere I could within my seemingly conflicting roles as a mother-professor-researcher (Pimentel and Bel Hadj Ali, 2025, p.4). The result was a gradual decline into what I now realize was a deep state of exhaustion and fatigue.

Looking back, and reflecting on the moment I am in now, it is so interesting to consider the tapestries that define our journeys. For many of us, our professional lives are intimately intertwined with our personal lives. As academics, it is often a blurry line between the two, with work-family conflict, cognitive overload, mental health issues, career progression tensions, rampant competition, marginalization, discrimination, and all of the “isms” confronting us everywhere we turn, not to mention increasing responsibilities, shifting KPIs, and pressure to innovate technologically and pedagogically which, when taken together, result in countless workload balance issues of varying intensities. And then, for many of us, all of this is wrapped up in a hierarchical and patriarchal system of tenure with a very small “inner circle” of gatekeeper decision makers which, statistically speaking, few of us will ever be.

But I knew this going in. As did many of you who are reading this at the 2025 RMLE Unconference. And that is why we are here. To take the road less traveled.

My questions, issues, and concerns are all tied to my desire to engage and reflect with others about the countless periods of our lives within which our meaning-making was defined primarily by professional achievements in imbalanced and unhealthy ways. I would like to discuss Champenois and colleagues (2025) comment, “We see a sharp and perilous divide between life’s potential for richness, interconnectivity, and variability – on the one hand – and the controlling, homogenizing, ossifying of the institutionalized organization” (p.41). I would like to consider Hannah’s (2025) call for greater humility in academia. And I would like to collectively shape the space and place we will be in when we are together in Liverpool, into one in which we reflect upon, embody, and celebrate Tronto’s (2023) conceptualization of *homines curans* (‘caring people’).

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Cultivating Responsible Leaders: Integrating DEI into Business Education for Lasting Impact

Jessica McManus Warnell

Mendoza College of Business, University of Notre Dame

jmcmanus@nd.edu

Kristen Collett-Schmitt

Mendoza College of Business, University of Notre Dame

kcollett@nd.edu

Amanda McKendree

Mendoza College of Business, University of Notre Dame

amckendr@nd.edu

Kelly Rubey

Mendoza College of Business, University of Notre Dame

kelly.rubey@nd.edu

Our faculty team from the departments of management & organization, finance, and the Office of the Deans of our business college, would like to more effectively collaborate across our institution to enhance opportunities for all of our students to feel welcome, to engage with their courses and each other in meaningful ways, and to be equipped to contribute to inclusive, ethical organizations after graduation. Societal shifts have led to increasing attention to diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) initiatives in business schools. As the training ground for future leaders, our schools are critical stakeholders in the move toward more inclusive and equitable workplaces. We offer our experiences of pursuing a more integrated strategy to DEI pedagogy by focusing on case study teaching and experiential learning, and we continue to seek ideas and opportunities for more effective and holistic incorporation of these topics into business education.

Considerations of diversity, equity, and inclusion in practice situate within an interrelated set of issues that demand new approaches. Businesses consider social and environmental impact in the face of a complex and changing regulatory environment; stakeholder awareness and greater demands for accountability; and “grand challenges” such as climate change, inequity, and social unrest. In addition, the politicization of DEI topics increases at alarming rates. Business responsibilities for creating diverse, equitable, and inclusive environments has only increased in this context. Education of future business leaders is critical in the move toward more inclusive and equitable workplaces, yet meaningful DEI content remains inconsistent within and across universities and colleges. New textbooks, case collections, and teaching activities are introduced almost daily as institutions seek useful material. As educators grapple with incorporating these themes, collaboration is key as best practices and innovative activities are tried out and assessed. Case study teaching and experiential learning allow for training on key terms and concepts, variability that allows for alignment with specific goals, and a focus on equipping students with practical tools to effect change, which meets these recommendations. While case teaching and experiential learning are not new, we consider how more effectively and intentionally integrating these pedagogies can help all of our students flourish.

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RESEARCH IN MANAGEMENT LEARNING & EDUCATION *un*Conference

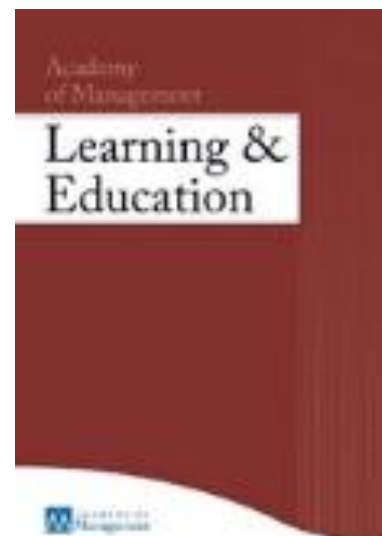
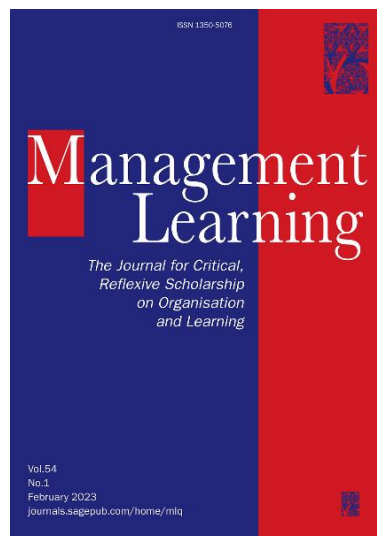
RMLE Unconference (Un)schedule - Thursday, June 19, 2025

TIME	ACTIVITIES	LOCATION
8:00am – 9:00am	Event sign-in, meet and greet and refreshments at The Museum of Liverpool (address: Pier Head, Mann Island, Liverpool L3 1DG, UK). A map of the venue is here .	Registration and refreshments will be outside Education Area 3 (first floor).
9:00am – 9:15am	Welcome to the 11 th RMLE Unconference held in collaboration with our dear friends at Liverpool Business School at Liverpool John Moores University.	Education Area 3 (first floor).
9:15am – 11:00am	Group Discussions: Session 1	Education Area 3 (first floor) Riverside Boardroom (next to Education Area 3) Global City Theatre (ground floor) museum spaces (all levels) Waterfront (outside).
11:00am- 11:15am	Morning tea	Outside of Education Area 3, near story tent.
11:15am – 12:00pm	Idea Sharing: Record and Review of Session 1	Education Area 3 (first floor).
12:00pm – 2:30pm	Working Lunch in Discussion Groups: Session 2 Continue in discussions following lunch together	Outside of Education Area 3, across from the story tent.
2:30pm – 3:30pm	Idea Sharing: Record and Review of Session 2	Education Area 3 (first floor).
3:30pm- 4:00pm	Continue conversations as we walk over to Mersey Ferries terminal departure point	Mersey Ferries terminal (3 mins walk, in front of the Museum).
4:00pm- 5:00pm	Session 3 takes place during the “ River Explorer Cruise ” on The River Mersey.	The River Mersey Our three amazing guides are: Margo Storey, Harriet Gilmour and Simone Peter 😊
5:15pm – 6:30pm	Continue conversations as we The Waterfront during a guided tour of The River Mersey.	Guided tour around The Waterfront.
6:30pm – 11:30pm	Working Dinner for all participants at The Beatles Story (for Unconference attendees only). Discussion, Session 4 starts with a self-guided tour of The Beatles Exhibition, followed by dinner (7.15pm) and live music (8.30-10pm). <i>Note: Wine, beer, and soft drinks are included with dinner. Bar closes at 11.30pm and we leave by midnight. There are also numerous (lovely) hotel bars in the area available for groups who would like to continue their conversations after dinner.</i>	The Beatles Story , Britannia Vaults, Royal Albert Dock, Liverpool L3 4AD.

RMLE Unconference (Un)schedule Friday, June 20, 2025

TIME	ACTIVITIES	LOCATION
8:00am – 8:45am	Excitement Resurgence & Tea/Coffee refreshments	Education Area 3 (first floor).
8:45am – 9:00am	Welcome to Day 2: Let's Jump Back In!	Education Area 3 (first floor).
9:00am – 11:30am	Unconference Group Discussion: Session 5 Time to Refine Ideas and Create Action Plans	Education Area 3 (first floor) Riverside Boardroom (next to Education Area 3) Global City Theatre (ground floor) museum spaces (all levels) Waterfront (outside)
11:30am – 12:30pm	Lunch is served and conversations continue	Outside Global City Theatre (ground floor)
12:30pm – 1:30pm	Final Sharing of Ideas, Action Plans, and Overall Impressions: Wrapping Up Our 1.5 Amazing Days Together	Education Area 3 (first floor).

A heartfelt special “thank you” to our ongoing partner organizations, the *Journal of Management Education*, *Management Learning*, *Academy of Management Learning and Education*, and Bond University, and to the truly wonderful organizing team of faculty and staff at this year’s host institution, Liverpool John Moores University. Thank you!



MAP OF THE LIVERPOOL DOCKLANDS
(3 minute walk from Museum of Liverpool [#1] to Mersey Ferry [#2])
(11 minute walk along the waterfront from #2 to The Beatles Story Museum [#3])

