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Competing to Learn: A Pedagogical Approach to Enhance Higher Level Learning Across Discplinary Silos

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Abstract. An important outcome of student learning is the ability to evaluate and create new knowledge and information. This meta-level skill is frequently sought by employers and is a central component of senior-level capstone courses where students are required to apply higher level learning. While advanced courses within a given discipline (e.g. finance, marketing, management) train students to analyze, evaluate and create new knowledge, integrative capstone courses are unique in that they require students to demonstrate this higher level learning across functional domains. In this paper we describe a pedagogical approach that was designed to address this challenge. Specifically, we detail how a modified tournament style case competition can be meaningfully integrated into a capstone course to address the challenges of evaluating and creating knowledge across well-defined domains. We build on experiential learning theory to highlight how the discrete components of the tournament/course enhance learning through transformative experience, thus going beyond simple cognitive or behavioral explanations of how individuals learn. A student's ability to integrate higher levels of learning across various domains represents a valuable skill that is desired by employers. As such, we describe one method whereby this might be achieved and invite additional research in this area.

Keywords. case competition, strategic management, experiential learning theory

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1. Introduction

> For the things we have to learn before we can do them, we learn by doing them.
>
> Aristotle

The ability to analyze, evaluate, and create knowledge across multiple domains is a key skill for students entering the "real world" as employers look to recruit employees who can perform well in teams and can help address the complex and noisy problems that organizations encounter. While educational institutions often

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excel at teaching factual knowledge, they may be less effective at providing students with higher level learning (i.e., analysis, evaluation, creation) (Huba & Freed, 2000; Raelin & Coghlan, 2006; Wenger & Hornyak, 1999). This higher level learning provides students with the important mental schema and knowledge needed to interact and navigate unfamiliar situations (Cannon & Feinstein, 2005). Conequently, advanced phases of learning are often a primary objective of capstone courses, which require students to organize and integrate concepts and frameworks learned in separate disciplines (e.g., finance, marketing, management). A common pedagogical challenge of capstone courses is to facilitate first, an awareness of the various areas of knowledge and second, the evaluation and creation of knowledge across the related disciplines. In this paper we describe a pedagogical approach, a tournament-style case study competition with deliberate course integration, designed to assist professors and students in addressing this challenge by facilitating higher level learning.

The tournament style case competition and companion course were developed and launched at a business school located at a Midwestern university in the United States. Housed in the capstone Corporate and Business Strategy course that students take during their last semester prior to graduation, the case competition extends traditional case study approaches by embedding the tournament-style competition into the core elements of the curriculum and engaging multiple stakeholders (e.g., community leaders, executives, faculty, students). Community business leaders participate as judges in the competition and are keenly interested in both connecting with the business school and evaluating students as potential employees. Faculty benefit through the focused effort in preparing the students for the competition which enhances classroom dynamics and student engagement while students gain the most as they analyze, evaluate and create knowledge to address complex business problems.

The paper proceeds as follows. We begin by reviewing Bloom's Taxonomy (Bloom, 1956) and highlight the various phases of learning as well as relevant revisions to the model. We also provide a short review of experiential learning theory as it serves as the central mechanism for advancing higher levels of learning (Cannon & Feinstein, 2005). Next, we detail how experiential learning theory is incorporated into the various components of the case study competition and course. We also discuss important considerations when implementing the competition/course as well as the beneficial outcomes that have been observed. We conclude by highlighting limitations to our approach while maintaining that the adoption of experiential pedagogical approaches is especially beneficial for capstone courses that emphasize both evaluation and creation of knowledge.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Bloom's Taxonomy

Educators frequently utilize Bloom's taxonomy (Bloom, Englehart, Furst, Hill, & Krathwohl, 1956) in developing and presenting learning experiences for their students. The taxonomy establishes a classification hierarchy for cognitive learning goals and objectives. The original taxonomy specified six levels of "knowing" that increase in sophistication as the student progresses into higher levels of the hierarchy. The model was revised in 2001 (Anderson & Krathwohl) to better address modern education objectives that focus more on outcomes than process. A brief explanation of the six levels of the taxonomy is shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Bloom's Taxonomy, Arranged from Lowest to Highest Level of Learning

Level (revised/original names)	Definition
Remember/Knowledge	Student can recall theories, concepts, facts, and methods
Understand/Comprehension	Student can make sense of ideas and concepts and can explain them coherently
Apply/Application	Student can use previously learned information to solve basic problems
Analyze/Analysis	Student can break down information into discrete elements and make inferences to solve complex problems
Evaluate/Evaluation	Student can assess and judge a concept relative to other known standards, concepts, theories, and ideas
Create/Synthesis	Student can combine information in unique or novel ways to generate a new solution or concept

Adapted from Hugh M. Cannon and Andrew H. Feinstein. Bloom beyond bloom: Using the revised taxonomy to develop experiential learning strategies. *Developments in Business simulations and Experiential Learning*, 2005. p. 351.

Adopting Bloom's taxonomy in the education of students in organizational studies, particularly in strategic management, typically begins at the analysis level and drives students to progress to higher levels of knowing (Bagchi & Sharma, 2014). The assumption we make is that students enrolled in a business capstone course have mastered essential facts, concepts, and theories of core business disciplines before entering the course. Therefore, in referring to Table 1, they have moved beyond the first two or three levels of the taxonomy as learners. Indeed, it is possible that students that have exceled in their core courses may have moved all the way up to evaluation and creation phases within a given discipline. In addressing complex business problems, however, students must

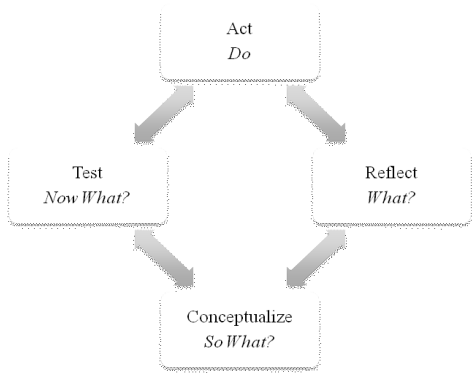
integrate learning across distinct disciplines as it is at this level that meta-cognitive knowledge is employed. Given the importance of this higher level of learning in a capstone course, a salient question emerges: what facilitates learning towards evaluation and creation and how can it be meaningfully deployed? To address this question, we turn now to a discussion of experiential learning.

2.2. Experiential Learning

Experiential learning presents students with a chance to not only acquire knowledge, but to apply that knowledge in a meaningful way (Merritt, 2010). Bonwell and Eison (1991) define active learning as anything that "involves students in doing things and thinking about what they are doing." This deliberate reflection facilitates the refinement of knowledge and promotes higher levels of learning. This clearly distinguishes passive pedagogical methods from engaging activities that draw students into course content and allow them to make the connections between "knowing" and "doing."

Experiential learning is a powerful methodology to facilitate learning through connecting "knowing" and "doing" (i.e., Kolb, 1984, 2014; Sarason & Banbury, 2004). Experiential learning theory (ELT) focuses on how knowledge is *created* through transformative experience; thus, going beyond a simple cognitive or behavioral explanation for how individuals learn. Knowledge emerges when the student moves through the learning phases of concrete experience and abstract conceptualization, and transforms that experience through the learning phases of reflective observation and active experimentation. Learning occurs as a result of the process of moving through all four of these integrated phases; no single phase on its own produces learning (McLeaod, 2013). Learners may begin their "learning cycle" in any of the four phases, with none being better than any other. However, it is in cycling through the four phases (act, reflect, conceptualize, and test) that the learner attains/acquires knowledge.

Figure 1. Experiential Learning Theory



Source: Adapted from www.edbatista.com/2011/09/experiential-learning.html

Experiential learning is especially valuable when the goal of education is to promote student learning at advanced levels of Bloom's taxonomy (i.e., analyzing, evaluating, and creating) because it presents students with a complex and dynamic learning environment. As argued by Cannon & Feinstien (2005), experiential learning "…confronts students with patterns that represent the essence of a real, and somewhat prototypical, situation. Insofar as the exercise has educational validity, the students will recognize the desired pattern from amid the "noise" of extraneous stimuli and manipulate it successfully" (p. 350). It is through experience that students gain competencies in evaluating and creating knowledge in a complex and noisy environment.

In summary, active experience is one effective method whereby students progress towards higher levels of learning (i.e., analyzing, evaluating, creating). These lived experiences introduce students to the virtuous cycle of deliberate reflection and experimentation, phases that enhance higher level learning in complex environments. The integration of feedback, both formal and informal, use of individual knowledge, and engagement across the affective, cognitive, and behavioral dimensions promote increased learning and facilitate the integration of previously siloed knowledge. While we have briefly reviewed how experiential learning serves as a catalyst for analysis, evaluation and creation, we next discuss how these objectives can be meaningfully embedded within a pedagogical instrument (i.e., tournament/course). This is particularly germane given the importance of evaluation and creation upon a student's entry into the professional domain.

3. Competing to Learn: Case Competition & Course Integration

The Case Study Competition (CSC) and accompanying capstone course were designed to facilitate higher levels of learning through competition. While individual case studies are utilized by strategy professors around the world, this semester long tournament and accompanying course uniquely leverage experiential learning to facilitate the evaluation and creation of knowledge. At the beginning of each semester, students are oriented to the competition and assigned to cross-sectional teams of four or five students. Teams are also intentionally created to be interdisciplinary—comprised of students concentrating in different majors. This, combined with the integrative nature of the course, requires students to consider the unique challenges that businesses are facing in a more holistic manner. Student teams then compete in the semester long tournament-style [case study] competition that consists of three rounds. Each round, teams of students are given one week to digest a complex business situation, develop a creative and practical solution, and build a presentation that communicates their perspective, analyses, and recommendations to a panel of

judges from the business school and the local business community. Teams are either advanced or eliminated following each round of the competition.

Strategic management cases often focus on complex and undefined problems with no single "right" answer. Subsequently, students must work collaboratively and utilize the frameworks they are learning in the course as well as knowledge acquired in their discipline-specific courses to assess the situation and develop creative solutions. By design, critical thinking is embedded in each stage of the competition. It starts with the analyses students perform as they prepare for their presentation and continues through to the end of the presentation as students are asked questions by a panel of judges to critically examine their analysis, recommendation(s), and respond appropriately. Upon completing each round of the competition, students receive immediate feedback from a well-rounded panel of judges made up of business executives and academics, increased confidence, and a real-world, real-time experience. This experience allows "for learning that goes beyond the transfer of knowledge to include the development of analytical, decision-making, and communication skills, and the cultivation of self-awareness, judgment, and the capacity to lead" (Garvin, 2003).

4. Evaluating and Creating Knowledge via the Competition

The CSC and accompanying course engage the four experiential learning phases to aid students in achieving higher level learning. In this section we identify and discuss how the various components of the CSC/course operate to achieve these goals. In doing so, we focus on the four operating phases of ELT: (1) experience, (2) reflect, (3) conceptualize, and (4) test. To demonstrate how the components accelerate students through the phases of the experiential learning cycle, and consequently advance up Bloom's taxonomy, we emphasize four elements of the competition/course: the strategy case assigned for the competition, the design of the student teams as both cross-sectional and with varying domain expertise, the utilization of external judges, and the integration of the tournament into the capstone course. We detail each of these four elements below.

4.1. The Strategy Case

The case method has a prevalent role in the teaching of strategic management (Alexander et al., 1986). Cited as a means for students to learn strategy through practice, cases allow students to role-play and make decisions based on salient information. One of the unique advantages of the case method, and a likely contributor to its widespread adoption in integrative courses, is its ability to engage all of the phases of experiential learning. While the relative importance of each phase of ELT in the case method varies by the instructor, case based

approaches begin by requiring students to identify a problem, synthesize relevant information, and prepare and present a recommendation. This process initiates the experience phase of ELT, as students experience the role of a consultant. Importantly, however, the case method is not a one-way communication ending with the presentation of the recommendation. Rather the case method is characterized by an ongoing discussion between the student/s (consultant) and the instructor (manager).

Through this communication, instructors that are adept in the case method encourage students to engage in reflective observation and abstract conceptualization. It is often at these phases of ELT that students encounter the difficulties of navigating the interdisciplinary nature of strategy cases. For example, a student specializing within a functional area of marketing may initially generate a recommendation that builds extensively on marketing principles and neglects financial, operational and higher level strategic considerations. Successful strategies require the coordination and integration of the various functional domains of business to build and sustain a competitive advantage. Strategy cases allow students to directly experience the shortcomings of narrow conceptualizations and invite immediate reflection regarding what "went wrong." This process also prompts a more inclusive or broad conceptualization of the problem. Lastly, students are asked to refine or defend their original recommendations resulting in active experimentation. Importantly, the CSC and companion capstone course extend the utility of individual case studies by applying the case method across multiple rounds of competition. The embedding of the tournament into the course allows for discussion and reflective assignments between each round thereby engaging students in a rigorous and continuous cycle of acting, reflecting, conceptualizing, and testing.

4.2. Cross Sectional Teams & Domain Expertise

The experience of "consulting" begins as students are assigned cross-sectionally, whereby two students from one class section are paired with two students from a different class section. Further, teams are intentionally interdisciplinary such that members of each team represent different business specializations (i.e., marketing, accounting). This is a central design element in the CSC/course that promotes experiential learning and activates integration of higher levels of learning. When students working in teams experience a collision of opinions resulting from differences in training (cross-sectional) and/or expertise (domain specific knowledge) several beneficial outcomes result, each of which can be viewed as operating through ELT phases.

These intended collisions provide students feedback and promote reflection. While all students are assumed to have core knowledge, the division of domain expertise on the teams requires that the "specialist" carry the burden of analyzing,

evaluating and creating within their particular domain promoting additional learning. Specifically, this design element forces the domain specialist to defend his/her knowledge and ultimately reevaluate existing knowledge, which invites reflection as challenges emerge from peers and judges. Moreover, team members have different training even within the strategy course, which forces them to consider various interpretations of the situation and promotes reevaluation and discussion as the teams work toward a solution. In sum, the various areas of expertise and training, both within and across domains create opportunities for experiential learning to occur as students are required to reflect, conceptualize, and test knowledge across multiple domains.

4.3. Judges

Another key facet of the CSC is the interdisciplinary judging panels comprised of professionals with specializations in strategy, communications, marketing, finance, etc. The varied specializations of the judges represent an important design element to promote student learning and facilitate integration of higher levels of learning. As students present to a diverse panel, they again engage the "experience" phase presenting and answering questions just as they would in the "real world". Since the judges come from various firms and possess different areas of expertise, students must defend their positions to individuals across the business spectrum as they field questions. Students must thoughtfully respond to a diverse set of challenging questions enhancing the reflection phase of ELT and moving them toward reconceptualization and experimentation. Altogether, the judges' role is one of the most critical aspects of the CSC because it effectively makes the experience real. This added realism forces students to contemplate how the entire suite of business disciplines can be brought to bear in addressing organizational issues and pushes each individual student to compare and contrast approaches from his/her own discipline. Ultimately the use of interdisciplinary judges accelerates the ELT cycle and helps students integrate higher levels of learning across disciplines.

4.4. Course Integration

Given the high level of learning that is required to succeed in the CSC & course (i.e., analyze, evaluate and ultimately create), repetition and feedback are essential. It is through repetition that students actively engage the ELT process and hone their skills in evaluating and creating knowledge. Repetition is provided throughout the semester within the classroom and through three formal rounds of competition. All students compete in the first round, which takes place approximately nine weeks into the semester (about the halfway point, after

business level strategy has been covered). However, students are engaged well before the first round of competition. For example, in-class strategy case duels often begin early in the semester. In this assignment, class teams "duel" in front of their classmates, thus simulating the competitive environment and providing valuable feedback. Just as in the competition, the teams prepare the case before class and then present their recommendations, but instead of presenting to a panel of interdisciplinary "real world" judges, they present to their instructor and peers (who are also interdisciplinary). Here again, all students become active learners. Those presenting are directly engaged in the experience ("act" phase), while those in the audience reflect and conceptualize in preparation for their own presentations. As such, multiple phases of the experiential learning cycle are triggered.

The first official round of competition moves outside of the classroom "duels" and takes place with the judging panel during non-class times. Upon completion of the first round approximately 50% of the teams do not advance. However, it is important to note that the integration of the course into the tournament allows teams/students that do not advance past that first round to remain actively engaged with the competition. Students not advancing are required to prepare the same case as teams that advance to the second round and are assigned to act as internal consultants to those teams that have advanced. In their role as internal consultants, these students critique and analyze the performance of the team they are consulting (all presentations are recorded) prior to the second (and third) round(s) of competition. Oftentimes this triggers additional reflection, conceptualization for the students on their own performance. Moreover, an additional benefit of this unique design element is that it frequently results in increased student engagement for the consultants as they are incorporated into a larger, well performing team and given the opportunity to contribute albeit in a different role. In short, regardless if students advance on to the second (or third) round of competition, all students remain engaged with the competition and continue to experience, reflect, conceptualize, and test.

5. Implementation

5.1. Course Design & Logistics

Coordination among all of the course sections is imperative to create a consistent learning experience for all students participating in the case competition. At our university, the strategy professors meet prior to the start of the semester to discuss, manage, and align course incentives. While each professor still maintains academic freedom, aligning incentives regarding the CSC components in the

course reduces potential frustration among students and assists in standardizing the course.

Scheduling. Dates of the competition are typically determined during the prior semester. In addition to scheduling the competition dates, break-out and presentation rooms are also reserved prior to the start of the semester. While students receive the case a week prior to the competition, they also check in 90 minutes prior to the time they are scheduled to present. During this 90 minutes, they are assigned to a (reserved) break-out room where they can finalize and practice their presentation. In asking students whether this time is needed and how it is utilized, the majority of students report that this time is essential for finalization. Despite receiving the case a week ahead, finding time to physically meet as a team and prepare is difficult.

Teams sign up for a presenting date and time slot approximately one month before the first round of the competition. We use a participant pool management system to manage this process, though there are additional free systems that could also be utilized. The number of teams dictates the number of timeslots. Four or five presentation rooms run concurrently, and there are typically about 40 teams per semester (see Table 2). We schedule presentation windows at 30-minute increments, which allows judges time between teams to reflect, record evaluation scores, and provide feedback (see Appendices A and B for sample evaluation forms). After the sign-up, teams are organized into "pools", with four or five teams per pool. The ëpoolsí are randomly assigned. The pools allow us to manage the presentation rooms and groups of students, with typically one or two teams advancing out of each pool.

Table 2. Example of Scheduling

	TIMESLOT 1	**TIMESLOT 2**	**TIMESLOT 3**	**TIMESLOT 4**
	8:30 AM - 10:30 AM **10:00 AM* *Presentation*	9:00 AM - 11:00 AM **10:30 AM* *Presentation*	9:30 AM - 11:30 AM **11:00 AM* *Presentation*	10:00 AM - 12:00 PM **11:30 AM* *Presentation*
POOL A *Presentation Room 1*	1. TEAM 1 *Breakout room 101*	1. TEAM 5 *Breakout room 105*	1. TEAM 9 *Breakout room 201*	1. TEAM 13 *Breakout room 205*
POOL B *Presentation Room 2*	2. TEAM 2 *Breakout room 102*	2. TEAM 6 *Breakout room 106*	2. TEAM 10 *Breakout room 203*	2. TEAM 14 *Breakout room 206*
POOL C *Presentation Room 3*	3. TEAM 3 *Breakout room 103*	3. TEAM 7 *Breakout room 107*	3. TEAM 11 *Breakout room 203*	3. TEAM 15 *Breakout room 207*
POOL D *Presentation Room 4*	4. TEAM 4 *Breakout room 104*	4. TEAM 8 *Breakout room 108*	4. TEAM 12 *Breakout room 204*	4. TEAM 16 *Breakout room 208*

We solicit judges at the beginning of each semester. As noted, each interdisciplinary panel of judges consists of (1) strategy professors, (2) business professionals, (3) business professors, and (4) communications experts (faculty or graduate students from the Communications department). The mix of judges changes at each level of the competition. In the first round of competition, external judges are either alumni who have taken part (as past participants) in the CSC, recruiters from area businesses, or other mid-level managers. During the first round, we also have a communications expert whose sole job is to evaluate each individual's presentation skills.

While the setup for the second round of competition mimics the first, because teams now have prior experience, we challenge them by including additional business professors (from various functional areas) and higher level executives to sit on the judging panel. Specifically, for the second and third round of competition, business executives (e.g., VPs, CIOs, etc.) are invited to serve on the panel of judges. We have found that overall the judges respond favorably to the assignment and often ask to come back. While there are many moving parts, an internal CSC is fairly straightforward to implement.

6. Results

We originally implemented the CSC into our capstone strategy course in an attempt to simply engage students. After the initial pilot, however, we saw it as an opportunity to better help students integrate higher level learning (e.g., analyzing, evaluating, creating) across multiple disciplines which is a critical skill for students entering the "real world". The various components of the CSC provide an avenue for students to hone those skills.

As an integrative experiential assignment, students not only gain insight into real world expectations, but engage in active learning. The components (strategy case, cross sectional teams and domain expertise, judges, and course integration) present opportunities for students to gain knowledge through successive iterations of all four phases of ELT (experience, reflect, conceptualize, and test). As a result, students advance through Bloom's taxonomy toward evaluation and creation. Below are some insights from students when asked to reflect on the CSC:

> This competition gives me an opportunity to compete against other students in a business environment... This is another opportunity to test and apply my knowledge that I have earned from my course work here at [University].

> This a competition that will help students improve thought process, decision making skills, practice all the notions learned throughout the four-year degree.

> Applying concepts from all business courses to demonstrate knowledge of material learned in undergraduate curriculum.

And when asked what is at stake:

> An opportunity to gain real world business experience. Possible prestige and honor awarded if your team does well. A chance to impress recruiters at local companies and possible employment opportunities.

> Creating impressions by utilizing knowledge gained in business curriculum. Showcasing ability to apply business theory to real world scenarios. Building and improving team effectiveness in high stakes situations.

Overall, the student experience has been a positive one, and students are coming away from the course with a deeper understanding and recognition of how to integrate disparate domains in the business curriculum. Recent graduates noted the following when asked "How did the experience of the CSC impact your career? And what did you perceive as strengths?"

> It gave me a lot of confidence for facing stressful situation and knowledge of how to deal with presenting recently learned information.

> How to work cohesively with three different personalities in a short time." One particular strength is that the CSC "forces students to think about big-picture business operations rather than day-to-day function.

> Learning how to work with individuals who think differently. Cross functioning teams is something that happens every day.

> It really helped me get the experience of presenting a real-life situation to the current board members of the company. This is an excellent way of building speaking and critical thinking skills.

> [it] gave me a more strategic focus in my role. Finding ways to create value at all levels.

> It really tests all the knowledge you get during the course of your college education.

Beyond the students, we have also witnessed unintended spillover effects in the college and local community. The CSC has been recognized by the Dean as a game changer for our students. Specifically, the competition helps unify the students as they prepare for graduation. It is a memorable experience they have all shared. Further, it has brought alumni, local businesses, and potential employers into the college. As judges and audience members, these individuals are seeing our graduates "in action." The competition has not only created opportunities for students to connect with other students and potential employers,

but also fosters interactions between alumni, business executives, and college faculty. As a result, the business college as a whole is becoming further embedded in the community. Comments from an alum who served as an external judge a few semesters following his own participation as well from an external judge who was the vice president of a Fortune 500 company help illustrate these benefits.

Alum: *"Thank you so much for having me to judge. I love the CBA, it's where I learned so much. It was enjoyable being on the other side. I would gladly come back and judge again."*

VP. *"while most senior executives would relish the opportunity to 'give back' by supporting local initiatives: especially those in our local colleges and universities and particularly the business programs in our local universities... I have never been contacted to bring current, 'real world' perspective to academic concepts either in support of or as a devil's advocate against those perspectives. ...Using the competition as a learning opportunity is innovative and engaging and, based on the interaction I witnessed and shared with the students and other judges, proved to be [a] very effective teaching tool as well. Of course, my hope as an outside 'business expert,' was to challenge the students with questions and perspectives that could bring current and tangible relevance to potentially benign case study concepts."*

Traditional case study methods have faced some criticism and come with known limitations (Jennings, 1996). However, many of these limitations (primarily, low stakes, known outcomes, and lack of course integration) are overcome by the described tournament style case study competition and companion course. Notwithstanding these advantages, we have noted several challenges and limitations of the CSC/course including: establishing an appropriate level of competition, balancing incentives across course sections, and the subjectivity inherent in evaluating realistic and creative solutions. For example, when incentives are not aligned appropriately, it can cause rifts between teams as well as among teammates, which is why we now meet prior to semester start. Similarly, while some students are generally more competitive than others, establishing a culture that nurtures competitiveness while still encouraging and engaging the full class can be difficult. The added components of the class (e.g., strategy duels and internal consulting roles) help balance this aspect. One of the most difficult aspects of the CSC is standardizing judging across each of the pools. To help address this challenge, a strategy professor is assigned to the judging panel in each room. Nevertheless, given the subjectivity of case analysis, preferences and biases can enter into the evaluation. External judges especially come with their own preferences and biases, and while this may serve to enhance experiential learning during the final round when only four teams are competing—it can become difficult to reconcile differences and determine a

winner. Despite these challenges and limitations, the benefits of the CSC far outweigh the disadvantages when we see our students develop the deeper understanding and knowledge integration.

7. Conclusion

Capstone strategy courses serve as an opportunity for students to demonstrate mastery across the entire business discipline by challenging them to analyze, evaluate, and create solutions to complex business situations. The ability to integrate siloed knowledge and navigate noisy real world problems requires more than an understanding and application of related concepts. Indeed, as competitive environments become increasingly volatile, dynamic knowledge achieved through experiential learning (Cannon & Feinstein, 2005), grounded learning (Corner et al., 2006), or active learning (Garvin, 1991), is critical for success. Pedagogical approaches that fail to engage the student in an "experience" may be insufficient in providing this important higher level knowledge. In this paper we have described a pedagogical approach designed to address this challenge and encourage higher level learning. We have highlighted how all four phases of ELT (experience, reflect, conceptualize, test) are embedded in the various components of the competition/course and briefly discussed its implementation. While the CSC and companion course were originally designed to encourage student engagement, initial evidence indicates meaningful advancements in students' abilities to evaluate and create knowledge. As such, the CSC advances the primary goals of a capstone course and readies students for their careers post academia. Given the success of the CSC and companion course, we encourage the continued adoption of experiential pedagogical approaches, and invite additional research in this area.

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Appendix A. Team Evaluation Form JUDGE: _____TEAM: _____

Item Description	1 (Poor)	2 (Fair)	3 (Average)	4 (Good)	5 (Exemplar)	Score
Strategic problem/ opportunity is *clearly stated, strategic in nature, and well-motivated*	Does not clearly identify a problem/opportunity	Clearly identifies a problem/ opportunity but it is not strategic in nature.	Clearly identifies a strategic problem/ opportunity but does not provide evidence of its importance (logic, data).	Clearly identifies a strategic problem/ opportunity and provides some evidence of its importance	Clearly identifies a strategic problem/ opportunity and provides persuasive evidence of its importance	
Analyses are *relevant, correctly applied and integrated with presentation*	Analyses are less relevant, not correct, and/or not integrated into the presentation	Analyses are relevant and mostly correct, but not integrated into the presentation	Analyses are relevant, mostly correct, and integrated into the presentation	Analyses are relevant, correct, and well integrated into the presentation	Analyses are ***novel***, relevant, correct, and seamlessly integrated into the presentation	
Recommendation(s) is *well-justified by analyses, logic, or data.*	No connection between analysis and any recommendation	Recommendation(s) loosely linked to analysis, logic or data	Recommendation(s) partially supported by analysis, logic or data but none fully supported	Recommendation(s) mostly supported by analysis, logic or data	Recommendation(s) fully supported by analysis, logic or data	
Recommendation(s) is *specific, feasible & creates economic value.*	Does not recommend a specific course of action	Recommended course of action is vague and feasibility is unclear	Recommended course of action is specific, but feasibility is unclear or unsupported	Recommended course of action is specific, feasible and adds value but impact is not fully explained.	Recommended course of action is specific, feasible and adds value. Impact upon organization and stakeholders is addressed	
Presentation is *persuasive/ convincing*	Presentation lacked cohesiveness, professionalism, or direction	Presenters were prepared but not cohesive	Professional and cohesive, but points were not clear or organized	Most elements of the presentation were convincing	Presentation was professional, cohesive, well-organized, and convincing	
Q&A addresses additional questions in a *clear and cohesive manner with supporting evidence.*	Failed to answer most questions posed - or answered "I don't know" to most questions	Answered most questions, though team members were not cohesive in the answers (some disagreement).	Answered all questions fully and credibly though answers not all complete or credible	Answered all questions fully and credibly and some with supportive evidence	Answered all questions fully, credibly and with supportive evidence	
TOTAL POINTS						

Comments for team

Appendix B. Individual Evaluation Form

Judge:	
Student:	
Team:	

Item	Item Description	1 (Poor)	2 (Fair)	3 (Average)	4 (Good)	5 (Exemplar)	Score
Nonverbal Communication	The individual: (1) makes good eye-contact with all group members; (2) has minimal reliance on notes; (3) uses appropriate movement; (4) has natural hand gestures; (5) does not isolate self from group with body position; and (6) dressed appropriately for the presentation.						
Speaking Ability	The individual: (1) has effective use of vocal rate, variety, projection and pronunciation; (2) sounds conversational; (3) speaks with confidence; and (4) paused effectively with minimal uhms.						
Listening Skills	The individual: (1) is attentive when others are speaking; (2) is actively engaged; and (3) interrupts minimally.						
Q&A Response	The student: (1) answers with confidence; (2) did not monopolize discussion; and (3) encouraged participation of other teammates.						