

Contextual Teaching and Learning in Marketing Education

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Contextual teaching and learning using a variety of teaching approaches including project-based, problem-based, service, work-based and collaborative learning with an emphasis on self-directed learning and authentic assessments. The Bowling Green State University (BGSU) Contextual Teaching and Learning website provides the following description of CTL with links to a variety of resources for learning more about the individual components of the concept.

“Contextual teaching and learning represents a concept that involves connecting the content that students are learning with the context in which that content could be used. Connecting content with context is an important part of bringing meaning to the learning process.

For that connection to take place, a variety of teaching approaches may be used. Over the years, a body of literature has emerged based on research and development on how people learn. The following teaching approaches include context as a critical component and are found in the literature on teaching and learning.

- problem-based learning
- collaborative/cooperative learning
- project-based learning
- service learning
- work-based learning

"Contextual teaching and learning emphasizes higher-level thinking, knowledge transfer, collecting, analyzing, and synthesizing information and data from multiple sources and viewpoints" (Howey, 1998). Of critical importance is that the above approaches be used at the student's developmentally-appropriate level of learning, that the environment be established to support self-regulated learning, that culturally-relevant pedagogy be applied, that knowledge about multiple intelligences be considered, and that appropriate authentic assessment be included.”

Dr. Robert Berns

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Integrating contextual teaching and learning strategies into Marketing Education can provide students with an opportunity:

- * for extensive research and study in their specific area of interest within the marketing field,
- * to further develop independent, self-directed learning and research skills including decision-making and problem-solving at increased levels of complexity,
- * to use community and business resources to assist students in their education, and
- * to complement the transition of the student to the worlds of college and work.

General Expectations for Contextual Teaching and Learning Activities of This Type

- Includes a mentor from the business or community agency
- Includes a detailed project/problem/experience proposal developed by student in consultation with mentor and instructor
- Requires a written contract (training plan/agreement) outlining marketing skills to be addressed, transportation and supervision arrangements, safety issues and other relevant issues
- Includes an authentic assessment experience including a written and oral presentation to interested parties (business panel, non-profit board, CEO, mentor, etc.) of each project addressed
- Requires documented on-site supervision and regular contact between student, mentor, and marketing education instructor
- Requires contextual projects that are comprehensive and in-depth

Projects are enhanced educational experiences that emerge out of a strong student interest. Some projects may primarily consist of onsite work/activities, while others may be a combination of primarily offsite activities or a combination of the two.

Examples of Projects:

A student interested in owning his/her own business may choose to complete a business plan which meets industry standards. The mentor could be an entrepreneur/business owner in the same or similar field.

A group of students choose to create a plan for a product or service of their choice for retail to a selected target market. The mentor could be the marketing director for a retail business. The marketing plan would meet industry standards. If the product is a viable choice, students may choose to implement the plan. This type of project might include seasonal retailing, personal services or website design, for example.

A student interested in media communications could develop a public relations plan for a non-profit organization. As part of that process, the student may volunteer for the agency to learn about its processes, research its history and fundraising processes, and develop a public relations plan. In cooperation with the agency, the student would develop press releases, newsletters or articles for newsletters, website materials, fundraising plans and goals with related activities, etc. The student could coordinate a community race for a cause, donation processes for a Veterinarian's services to injured animals without funds, coordinate parts of large campaigns for a community agency, etc.

The student may choose to create a website, developing the plan, learning the technology, writing the materials, creating recognition on search engines, selling advertising and links on the site, etc.

A student may choose to work with a local business where they will be assigned responsibility to organize, buy and stock a department based on research and supervision.

A student may choose to shadow a technical, pharmaceutical, etc. salesperson for several visits, and then participate in sales visits. As part of the process, students will develop a sales presentation and sales materials. Students will learn about management of sales quotas, sales techniques, and product knowledge. Students will do extended research to advance their knowledge of the industry chosen.

Students may choose, individually or as a group, any of the DECA Written Projects.

Additional project ideas:

Create a logistics plan for a product to be marketed in another country (ies)

Complete research in the study of marketing management, shadow 10 managers across industries, analyze the skills and abilities of these managers, develop a comprehensive DECA project and create a management plan. Implement.

Analyze the channels of distribution used by a local company. Complete a comprehensive SWOT document for the company. Present ideas for improving channel relationships, expanding channel members (if profitable), and creating a more profitable distribution system

Intern in a Logistics company. Analyze the components of the system. Offer suggestions for improvement.

Develop a relational database for use by a marketing company or by the student for a marketing purpose. Student should locate names, create, edit and operate database in efficient and effective manner and use database for marketing.

Using a local business, analyze the product/service mix. Research opportunities for additions to the mix (ROI, market share opportunities, etc.). Present recommendations.

Create a brand for a new business or product. Research branding. Study copyright issues. Design a brand. Develop a promotional program to launch the brand.

Analyze the marketing plan for a sports team. Shadow the marketing director. Complete research on the sports marketing industry and on the sports area chosen. Make recommendations for new target markets, marketing activities, etc.

Intern/work in a theme park. Research the industry. Analyze popularity and revenue of park rides and attractions. Identify new rides and/or attractions. Determine the process used by the theme park to acquire new rides/attractions. Prepare a proposal for management to convince them to purchase an additional attraction.

Develop a marketing plan for a veterinarian, doctor, lawyer, or other professional services provider.

Intern in a government agency. Research government processes for purchasing/contracting for services/products. Identify levels of complexity of purchasing/contracting in the agency. Research a product for purchase consideration using the standards of the agency. Make a recommendation.

Develop a risk management plan for a large public event such as a sports event, outdoor festival, etc.

Develop a promotional plan for a local Arts agency, foundation, etc. Volunteer with the agency to see operations. Develop a volunteer development plan.

Intern in a radio/TV station. Research the target market. Identify businesses whose target market is similar. Develop a sales plan. Complete a sales presentation to one or more of these businesses.

Operate a small business at a sports event, festival, fair, etc. Analyze operations and profitability. Recommend adjustments for the next year.

Volunteer with the local fair. Develop a promotional plan for the fair.

Research pricing in the sports, lodging, etc. industry. Identify the pricing strategies, company objectives, fan or target market base, pricing structures, etc. Identify strategies for pricing new products and services. Develop a price/price structure for a new service.

Resources

Websites for additional project ideas and resources include the following:

<http://www.swlearning.com/marketing/gitm/gitm.html>

<http://www.marketingteacher.com>

<http://www.kn.pacbell.com/wired/bluewebn/contentarea.cfm?cid=2>

Sample Implementation Strategies:

Project: Develop a risk management plan for a large sports event.

Student chooses to intern with or complete project for the Cleveland Indians. Student works with risk manager and marketing director (if not same)

Student Activities

Research risk management in sports industry

Identify potential risk areas

Research methods to reduce, limit or transfer risks

Complete portfolio elements such as

- Diagram of stadium with fire exits, alarms, etc. identified

- Policies for reduction of internal theft

- Policies for reduction of external theft

- National emergency evacuation plan

- Congressional policy on airplane promotion

- Procedures for opening/closing

- Policies for robbery situations

- Policies for security personnel

- Security plan for a sports event

- Plan for crowd control

- Policies for handling accidents

- Hazardous conditions policy

- Public relations plan related to security, accident, key personnel problems

- Recommended insurance plan

- Risk management plan

- Emergency records

- Crisis management plan

Analyze concept of recovery marketing

Research organizations to try to predict crises

Develop a crisis management plan for event-day and non-event day crisis

Create reputation management strategies

Identify emergency records

Identify best choices for spokesperson for business

Recommend process for dealing with media

Recommend solutions to problem

Evaluate management of previous crisis

Analyze all aspects of risk management and identify strengths and weaknesses

Prepare written and oral report with suggestions for needed changes (if appropriate)

(Items identified above are possible components of a student project proposal. In order to provide detail in the contract, the student may need to do preliminary research.

Therefore, there may be two phases to the contract.)