

APPENDIX A: Film Themes						
Theme	Crazy People	Boomerang	Picture Perfect	What Women Want	How to Lose a Guy in 10 Days	In Good Company
Competitive/Cut Throat	X	X	X	X	X	X
Stealing other's ideas				X		
Think tank	X	X	X	X	X	
Creative	X	X	X	X	X	
Researching target audience & product	X	X		X		
Synergy	X	X		X		X
Selling						X
Fun/Exciting		X	X		X	
Hierarchy		X	X		X	X
Lots of Money to be Made	X					X
Somewhat mental (crazy)	X					
Perfection					X	
Paid to party					X	X
Luxurious/Glamorous		X		X	X	X
Lying/Deceitful	X	X	X			
Sleazy/Slimy		X		X	X	
Flexibility/Freedom		X		X		
Client rules/Pleasing Customers		X	X		X	

## Advertising Students' Perceptions of Skills and Attributes for Future Employment

David S. Waller, University of Technology, Sydney

Anurage G. Hingorani, University of Technology, Sydney

Changes in the tertiary education are making universities and academics more accountable to the various stakeholders. This can be difficult as there are multiple objectives from different stakeholders, including academic colleagues, employers, students, the university hierarchy, alumni, the local community and governmental bodies (Moore and Ortinau 1993; Young, McIntyre and Gilbert 1994). For academics, the objectives of tertiary education could include ensuring that students gain a solid understanding of the theory and practical skills which are applicable to various business situations, as well as maintaining appropriate "academic standards" within their subjects and discipline (Polonsky and Waller 1998). In the case of business and advertising-related education, this is often criticized by the community, with suggestions that Universities teach theory that is irrelevant to industry practice and do not equip students with skills that are applicable to jobs in the marketplace (Peters 1980; Henke et al. 1988; Magner 1993; Conant 1996; Hughes 2006). Obviously, students who are the recipients of this education and become future practitioners in the business/advertising environment are important stakeholders. Students have their own views and expectations regarding what may be relevant for their advertising education. Consequently, it is important that academics have an understanding of students' expectations of work skills and attributes required in industry, as this could lead academics to be better at managing their learning expecta-

tions, encouraging their engagement with curricular and extra-curricular activities, and preparing them for their working life. This could ultimately enhance, and increase satisfaction of, students' university education experience.

### Literature Review

#### Business Skills

Management education in general has been changing over the years from a traditional "chalk 'n' talk" classroom approach to more innovative, practical approaches (Raelin 1995; Vicere 1996; Polonsky and Waller 1998). Yet there is concern that there is still a "gap" between what business practitioners want and what academics are providing (Lewis and Ducharme 1990; Levenburg 1996; Davis, Misra, and Van Auken 2002; Stern and Tseng 2002). To bridge this gap it has been suggested that there should be more emphasis on teaching particular skills, such as communication or analytical skills (Malhotra, Tashchian and Jain 1989; Shipp, Lamb, and Mokwa 1993; Tapper 2000; Tanian and James 2001; Duke 2002), particularly for entry-level positions (Deckinger et al. 1990; Gault, Redington and Schlager 2000; McCorkle et al. 2003). According to Shipp, Lamb, and Mokwa (1993) a "skill" is "an underlying ability that can be refined through practice, such as communication, analysis, creativity, intuition, leadership, decision making, and planning" (p. 2). They further suggest that skills can be shaped, must be exercised to be effective, and are often performed at the same time. There are a number

of skills that various researchers have indicated are important for business students, including problem solving, analytical, and computer/work skills, but it is communication skills (written and oral) that has been regularly cited as an important but underdeveloped skill (Malhotra, Tashchian and Jain 1989; Gault, Redington and

Schlager 2000; Tanian and James 2001). Table 1 provides various skills identified from studies that have utilized either a particular sample of respondents, such as academics, practitioners, and/or students, or previous literature. All the studies listed identified Communication as a major skill.

Table 1: Business Skills Literature		
Reference	Categories/Items	Sample
<b>Business Skills</b>		
Malhotra, Tashchian and Jain (1989),	communication skills, problem solving, critical thinking, analytical skills, computer skills, ethical dimensions, interpersonal skills, managerial skills and real-world skills.	Literature: Approaches to teaching marketing
Lewis and Ducharme (1990)	Recruiting criteria, including communication skills, analytical skills, extracurricular activities, work experience.	135 academics, 60 practitioners
Shipp, Lamb, and Mokwa (1993)	Communication skills, creativity skills, intuition skills, and computer usage skills	70 marketing educators
Levenburg (1996)	eighteen "Skills and Abilities" to the respondents, which included oral communication, written communication, presentation skills, multimedia presentation skills, teamwork, diversity or multicultural appreciation, problem analysis skills, statistical analysis skills, computer skills, decision-making skills, leaderships skills.	165 practitioners 218 academic faculty members
Gault, Redington and Schlager (2000)	Communication skills (oral presentations, proposal writing, and written communication); Academic skills (analytical skills, computer applications, creative thinking, information search, and problem solving); Interpersonal skills (leadership/teamwork and relationship building); and Job acquisition skills (resume writing, job interviewing, and job networking).	144 business major alumni
Tanian and James (2001)	oral, written, organisational and employment communication skills, including practical workplace skills such as critical and creative thinking, working in a team, reasoning and problem solving.	Literature: Skills identified for a student-centred subject
Davis, Misra and Van Auken (2002)	11 "skills and knowledge" including technical preparation, oral communication skills, written communication skills, quantitative skills.	66 alumni
Duke (2002)	45 items with 9 Learning outcome categories: Leadership Skills, Communication Skills, Interpersonal Skills, Analytical Skills, Decision-Making Skills, Technology Skills, Global Economy, Ethics, and Business Practices.	502 students
Hyman and Hu (2005)	26 items, including oral communication, written communication, critical thinking, problem solving and decision making. The original items were then reduced to 17 items forming five factors: Management, Cognitive, Communications, Bridging, and Interpersonal skills	US based marketing faculty 133 respondents 1995, 215 respondents 2002
Berman and Ritchie (2006)	17 skills included in four factors: Managing self, Communicating, Managing people and tasks, and Mobilizing innovation and change	Business students

Malhotra, Tashchian and Jain (1989) used previous research to assist in identifying various skills to be included in business courses. These included the following: communication, problem solving, critical thinking, computer, interpersonal, managerial and real-world skills. The study encouraged the use of the project method approach as a form of assessment and suggested that projects would assist in developing and fostering these action-orientated skills.

Unlike the Malhotra et al. (1989) study which was based on secondary research, there are other studies that have conducted primary research to identify skills that should be developed and advanced in students undertaking business courses or programs. Some studies have surveyed the views of academics (Shipp, Lamb, and Mokwa 1993; Hyman and Hu 2005), and others have compared academics' views with those of industry practitioners (Lewis and Ducharme 1990; Levenburg 1996). Shipp, Lamb, and Mokwa (1993) encouraged marketing educators to develop and enhance marketing students' skills by identifying their importance and giving teaching tips, and selected four main skill areas: communication skills, creativity skills, intuition skills, and computer usage skills. No ranking of the skills occurred but each skill was described as important. Hyman and Hu (2005), on the other hand, asked marketing faculty members about the importance of various job skills. In descending order of importance, the various job skills were oral communication skills, written communication skills, critical thinking skills, problem-solving skills and decision-making skills. A factor analysis was run which resulted in 17 items forming five factors ranked in the following order: management, cognitive, communications, bridging, and interpersonal skills. So, although communications as an individual item was important, as a group of items in a factor, management skills were perceived as more important. This study follows a similar analysis method as Hyman and Hu (2005) but analyzes responses from students rather than faculty members.

Lewis and Ducharme (1990) compared samples of academics and practitioners to determine if there was a gap in academic/practitioner expectations towards a number of educational

objectives for undergraduate business students. The main skills identified as important included problem-solving skills, analytical skills, and the ability to apply to business, subjects such as forecasting, personnel management, report writing and statistics. When it came to criteria for recruiting new staff, both groups indicated grades, communication skills and personality as the top three criteria. Communication was also identified by Gault, Redington and Schlager (2000) who discussed career skill preparation and grouped items into four career skill categories: communication skills (oral presentations, proposal writing, and written communication); academic skills (analytical skills, computer applications, creative thinking, information search, and problem solving); leadership skills (leadership/teamwork and relationship building); and job acquisition skills (resume writing, job interviewing, and job networking).

Levenburg (1996) also compared samples of academics and practitioners to observe the importance of various general management skills. The study offered eighteen "Skills and Abilities" to the respondents. The items analyzed included oral communication, written communication, presentation skills, multimedia presentation skills, teamwork, diversity or multicultural appreciation, problem analysis skills, statistical analysis skills, computer skills, decision-making skills, leaderships skills, self-initiative, honesty and integrity, reliability (taking responsibility), project management, technical report writing, research/library skills, and global awareness. The study found that there were significant differences between practitioners and academics. General management skills like oral and written communication were perceived as very important, with oral skills ranking first in the practitioners' responses, but third in the preferred skills by academics; the latter ranked problem analysis skills and written communication skills, first and second, respectively. While Levenburg (1996) presented eighteen "Skills and Abilities", this study expanded the research by observing a larger number of business skills and attributes, and analyzing them separately.

A number of studies have used student samples to analyze attitudes towards various business skills (Davis, Misra and Van Auken 2002;

Duke 2002; and Berman and Ritchie 2006). Davis, Misra and Van Auken (2002) asked alumni about the importance of particular skills and the degree of preparation provided by their studies. The sample was presented with eleven "skills and knowledge", including technical preparation, oral communication skills, written communication skills, quantitative skills. Oral communication skills was rated by the respondents as the most important item in relation to their current employment, but was rated third in terms of how well they felt that they were prepared by the marketing program they completed.

Duke (2002), who analyzed 45 items presented to students, found that oral communication, in the form of "ability to speak effectively in groups" was ranked first, followed by "ability to communicate electronically" and "ability to use word processing". Again, communication is seen as a highly important skill. Duke's (2002) analysis of items also resulted in the identification of nine learning outcomes: leadership skills, communication skills, interpersonal skills, analytical skills, decision-making skills, technology skills, global economy, ethics, and business practices. Further, he suggested that an analysis of student perceptions of learning outcomes would assist in the implementation of a learning outcomes approach to curricular design.

Based on the previous literature review on business skills, it is evident that there is a lack of research relating specifically to advertising. This research addresses this gap by determining the general business skills perceived as important to students studying advertising for their future employment. Additionally, an examination of prior literature revealed that certain items assessing business skills occurred repeatedly. This research utilizes these repeated items in developing the list of items for analysis. Other gaps in the literature on business skills pertain to methodology issues, such as, sampling as well as scale development and analysis. For example, although this research follows a similar analysis method as Hyman and Hu (2005), it analyzes responses from students rather than faculty members, and while Levenburg (1996) presented eighteen "skills and abilities", this study expands the research by analysing a larger number of business skills

and attributes, and analyzing them separately.

#### Business Attributes

Compared to business skills that have been studied by several researchers, business attributes that might be important for employment has been under-researched (see Table 2). In this study "business attributes" are personal characteristics or qualities that are associated with work. Deckinger et al. (1990) looked at ways to better prepare students for entry-level advertising agency jobs by comparing teachers' and agency practitioners' views regarding the importance of various attributes. They suggested that the attributes analyzed are "more native than teachable" (p. 39). The attributes included: can defend a point of view, team player, strategic thinker, leader, punctual, interviewability, neat appearance, personable, well-spoken, persuasive, among others. While the two groups held similar views, there were some perceived differences that indicated that there was a gap in expectations.

Academics and practitioners were also compared by Lewis and Ducharme (1990) and Levenburg (1996). This comparison was made by Lewis and Ducharme (1990) to determine if there was a gap in academic/practitioner expectations towards a number of educational objectives for undergraduate business students. Their research investigated both skills and attributes; skills have been addressed in the previous section. The main attributes identified by both academics and practitioners included the following: personality, motivation, drive, maturity, and character. Like Lewis and Ducharme (1990), Levenburg (1996) investigated both skills and attributes. However, she found the main attributes to be the following: self-initiative, honesty and integrity, reliability (taking responsibility), and global awareness.

After reviewing the literature relating to business attributes, it is believed that the idea of connecting skills and abilities, or attributes, is a valuable development as it can give more insight into which items are perceived to be important for working in business. Also, the majority of the studies that used student samples utilized business or marketing students. Therefore, this study presents the results of a survey

Table 2:  
Business Attributes Literature

Reference	Categories/Items	Sample
<b>Business Skills</b>		
Deckinger et al. (1990)	can defend a point of view, team player, strategic thinker, leader, punctual, interviewability, neat appearance, personable, well-spoken, persuasive, ambitious/striver, keeps big picture in mind, qualitative, detail demon, hard worker, creative, informed on my company, informed on my industry, understands advertising, problem solver, wants job very much, "street smarts"/savvy, organized, will stay with us, fits in, persuasive, sense of humor, good references, school projects, experience, writes well, dependable, mature, and right chemistry.	132 academics 32 agencies
Lewis and Ducharme (1990)	Recruiting criteria, including communication skills, analytical skills, extracurricular activities, work experience.	135 academics, 60 practitioners
Levenburg (1996)	eighteen "Skills and Abilities" to the respondents, which included self-initiative, honesty and integrity, reliability (taking responsibility), project management, technical report writing, research/library skills, and global awareness.	165 practitioners 218 academic faculty members

of advertising students to determine which skills and attributes are perceived to be important for their future work. From the responses, a number of new categories, or factors, were generated that will be of interest to advertising academics, looking to enhance students' engagement and learning experience in the classroom, and at the same time enabling their transition from the classroom to the workforce.

#### Methodology

To determine advertising students' perceptions of the importance of various skills and attributes required for working in the future, a questionnaire was distributed to a sample of undergraduate and graduate advertising students at a large urban university. Although the aforementioned studies have surveyed academics and practitioners, the rationale for using university students as subjects follows from the research studies of Duke (2002) and Berman and Ritchie (2006) which have emphasized the importance of students as a stakeholder for business education, and indicated that it will assist in understanding student expectations and developing a student-based learning outcomes approach to business education.

Based on previous research discussed above (including Deckinger et al. 1990; Gault, Red-

ington and Schlager 2000; Davis, Misra, and Van Auken 2002; Duke 2002; McCorkle et al. 2003; Hyman and Hu 2005), a number of skills and attributes were identified to be included for the survey instrument to determine which ones the students perceive would be important for their future work. The researchers discussed the items for inclusion in the survey instrument and a questionnaire was developed and pre-tested with a group of undergraduate students. Eventually, a decision was made to use eighteen business skills items and sixteen business attributes items, as the main business skills and attributes to be tested for this study. After agreeing on the final instrument, the questionnaire was distributed to students studying introductory advertising subjects at the undergraduate and graduate level in a classroom setting and took approximately 10 minutes to complete. The respondents were anonymous and they voluntarily completed the questionnaire.

The main section of the questionnaire presented a five-point importance scale that was used to gauge students' perceptions of business skills and attributes. In this two part question (Part A: skills; Part B: attributes) they were asked:

*"To what extent do you believe that these skills (attributes) are important to your future work? Where 1 means that you believe it is*

not at all important to your future work and 5 means that you believe it is extremely important to your future work."

After distributing the questionnaire to the introductory advertising classes, a total of 283 students were sampled (95 male and 188 female). The average age of the total sample was 23.2 years and ranged from 19 to 42 years. The sample was made up of primarily second and third year undergraduate and second year graduate students.

### Results

#### Business Skills

The mean score for each "skills" item is found in the second column of Table 3. In relation to the eighteen individual items chosen for the final analysis, all the skills were perceived to be important, as they obtained a mean score above the midpoint value of "3" on the 5-point scale, with the top five skills being: oral communication (4.55), teamwork skills (4.50), relationship building (4.46), decision-making (4.42) and problem solving (4.36). These results address

objective 1.

The second and fourth objectives aim to discover what factors underlie work skills/attributes according to advertising students. This recognizes that to further understand the constructs of skills and attributes, it is needed to group the large number of items into factors which help explain what they are. Following the approach used in Duke (2002), Hyman and Hu (2005), and Berman and Ritchie (2006) in the area of business skills, this research factor analyzed the individual items. A factor analysis, using varimax rotation, was performed on the items relating to business skills. As shown in Table 4, the analysis of business skills resulted in six factors, which were labelled as collaboration (leadership skills, project management, teamwork skills, and relationship building), research (information search, research skills, understanding theoretical concepts, and technical report writing), communication (presentation skills, oral communication, and written communication), and

problem-solving (decision-making skills, creative thinking, and problem solving), technical (analytical skills, and statistical analysis skills), and practical skills (computer skills, and work experience). Based on the category mean scores, the most important skills category as chosen by the students was collaboration (4.36) followed by problem-solving (4.33), communication (4.27), practical (3.96), technical (3.80) and research (3.64). These results address objective 2.

#### Business Attributes

The mean score for each "attributes" item is found in the fourth column of Table 3. Of the sixteen individual items analyzed, all the attributes were perceived to be important, as they obtained a mean score above the midpoint value of "3". The top five attributes were: reliability (4.50), being hardworking (4.42), honesty & integrity (4.41), showing initiative (4.36) and strategic thinking (4.30). These results address objective 3.

The 16 business attributes items presented were also factor analyzed, using varimax rotation, and the analysis resulted in four factors (Table 5). The business attributes factors were labelled as self-focused (showing initiative, nice personality, honesty & integrity, reliability, and ethical understanding), work-oriented (fitting in with the company, commitment to stay with the company, attention to detail, dependable, industry knowledge, and being hardworking), management-oriented (ambitious, keeping big picture in mind, and strategic thinking), and world-focused (diversity or multicultural appreciation, and global awareness). Based on the category mean scores, the most important attribute category was self-focused (4.30), followed by management-oriented (4.18), world-focused (4.06), and work-oriented (4.05). These results address objective 4.

Skills	Mean	Attributes	Mean
Oral Communication	4.55	Reliability	4.50
Teamwork skills	4.50	Being hardworking	4.42
Relationship building	4.46	Honesty and integrity	4.41
Decision-making skills	4.42	Showing initiative	4.36
Problem solving	4.36	Strategic thinking	4.30
Leadership skills	4.30	Nice personality	4.28
Presentation skills	4.29	Dependable	4.22
Analytical skills	4.28	Ambitious	4.18
Creative thinking	4.22	Industry knowledge	4.17
Project management	4.19	Attention to detail	4.13
Computer skills	4.00	Diversity of multicultural appreciation	4.09
Written communication	3.97	Keeping big picture in mind	4.06
Work experience	3.91	Global awareness	4.02
Research skills	3.79	Fitting in with the company	4.00
Information search	3.73	Ethical understanding	3.94
Technical report writing	3.53	Commitment to stay with the company	3.36
Understanding theoretical concepts	3.52		
Statistical analysis skills	3.52		

SKILLS		Mean	I	II	III	IV	V	VI
<b>COLLABORATION</b> Mean=4.36	Leadership skills	4.30	.762					
	Project management	4.19	.756					
	Teamwork skills	4.50	.723					
	Relationship building	4.46	.666					
<b>RESEARCH</b> Mean=3.64	Information search	3.73		.811				
	Research skills	3.79		.811				
	Understanding theoretical concepts	3.52		.595				
	Technical report writing	3.53		.532				
<b>COMMUNICATION</b> Mean=4.27	Presentation skills	4.29			.852			
	Oral communication	4.55			.737			
	Written communication	3.97			.606			
<b>PROBLEM-SOLVING</b> Mean=4.33	Decision-making skills	4.42				.675		
	Creative thinking	4.22				.661		
	Problem solving	4.36				.601		
<b>TECHNICAL</b> Mean=3.80	Analytical skills	4.28					.806	
	Statistical analysis skills	3.32					.651	
<b>PRACTICAL</b> Mean=3.96	Computer skills	4.00						.828
	Work experience	3.91						.571

**Discussion**

In relation to skills, all the 18 items were perceived to be important, with the top five skills being: oral communication, teamwork skills, relationship building, decision-making and problem solving; and the 18 items formed six factors which, in decreasing order of importance are: collaboration, problem-solving, communication, practical, technical and research. For attributes, all the 16 items were perceived to be important, with the main attributes being: reliability, being hardworking, honesty & integrity, showing initiative and strategic thinking; and the 16 items formed four factors which, in decreasing order of importance are: self-focused, management-oriented, world-focused, and work-oriented.

Communication was seen as an important skill, which confirms previous studies, including Malhotra, Tashchian and Jain (1989), Lewis and Ducharme (1990), Shipp, Lamb, and Mokwa (1993), Gault, Redington and Schlager (2000), Tanian and James (2001), Duke (2002), and Hyman and Hu (2005). The items that

represented communication were: oral communication, presentation skills, and written communication. As individual items, oral communication was ranked as the most important skill for students' future work, with presentation skills ranked seventh, and written communication ranked twelfth. Therefore, although oral communication was perceived as very important, presentation and written communication skills were not perceived to be as important in the workplace. Also, with respect to the skill factors, communication was ranked third after collaboration and problem-solving skills. This confirms the results of Hyman and Hu (2005), which found that even though in terms of individual items, communication was found to be a very important skill, overall, based on factors, management and cognitive skills were perceived as more important than communication.

These results can be of concern to those who teach in the advertising and communication disciplines, as well as employers. It can be a problem if students assume that oral communication is the primary communication skill

in the workplace and that presentation, and particularly, written skills, are of much lesser importance. How then are those in a workplace able to communicate? Are students indicating that they assume that oral communication is the main way to send messages in the workplace? At a time when the importance of email as a method of communication is growing, it seems incongruent that students do not perceive written communication to be of particular importance. Possibly this may indicate an emphasis on courses in some advertising degrees which foster skills like teamwork, relationship building, decision-making and problem solving. These skills cannot be advanced solely by relying on email and other written means of communication, because they are also affected by, or dependent on, oral communication. Perhaps students have witnessed situations in their academic or advertising environment where a lack of good oral communication skills has resulted in miscommunication, confrontation or conflict, which has ultimately impacted the successful completion of a project.

It has been also suggested that an analysis of student perceptions of learning outcomes can assist in helping academics meet student expectations and make changes to curricular design (Duke 2002). From the students' responses, academics can try to ensure that assessment and teaching methods used in advertising subjects are able to develop skills in areas like leadership, project management, teamwork, and relationship building, as well as written, oral and presentation skills. Self-focussed and work-orientated attributes could also be emphasized when discussing what is required in work situations.

This research is significant as it is one of few studies, along with Lewis and Ducharme (1990) and Levenburg (1996), which have observed both skills and attributes as items for future employment. Unlike the majority of studies that have observed business or marketing students, this study has concentrated on students who were studying advertising. Although it might be reasonable to assume that many advertising students would go on to work in the advertising industry, they could, however, enter into a number of industries. There is no guarantee that

the findings from this study will only relate to graduates' future work in the advertising industry. Additionally, because the respondents were studying advertising within a business school, there might be differences with respect to how business skills and attributes might be perceived by those studying advertising in a humanities/communications school.

As mentioned earlier, understanding student expectations could assist in providing curricula that can fulfill their expectations, and also assist in providing practical subjects relevant for their future work. While it is important to know the students' expectations towards what they feel is important in the workplace, it is also important to match this with what skills and attributes employers perceive as being important for new employees to possess. Therefore, there should be further research where employers are surveyed. Future research could also involve surveying academics or reviewing degree program course outlines to determine which skills and/or attributes are mentioned in subject descriptions. Clearly, it is important to research attitudes towards skills and attributes vital for the workplace to assist in providing universities with information that can help them fulfill the expectations of both students and employers.

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ATTRIBUTES		Mean	I	II	III	IV
<b>SELF-FOCUSED</b> Mean=4.30	Showing initiative	4.36	.786			
	Nice personality	4.28	.703			
	Honesty and integrity	4.41	.665			
	Reliability	4.50	.622			
	Ethical understanding	3.94	.616			
<b>WORK-ORIENTED</b> Mean=4.05	Fitting in with the company	4.00		.697		
	Commitment to stay with the company	3.36		.678		
	Attention to detail	4.13		.649		
	Dependable	4.22		.599		
	Industry knowledge	4.17		.580		
<b>MANAGEMENT-ORIENTED</b> Mean=4.18	Being hardworking	4.42		.540		
	Ambitious	4.18			.789	
	Keeping big picture in mind	4.06			.719	
<b>WORLD-FOCUSED</b> Mean=4.06	Strategic thinking	4.30			.571	
	Diversity or multicultural appreciation	4.09				.727
	Global awareness	4.02				.665

Andrew Lingwall, Clarion University of Pennsylvania

While the concept of Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) has gained significant ground among practitioners in public relations, advertising and marketing over the past 15 years, its success in assimilating into academic programs at universities has been less clear. Some departments, schools, and colleges of journalism, mass communication and business have integrated their curricula or built new programs based on IMC concepts. However, others have retained traditional walls between the disciplines or simply added IMC units into existing courses. Educators' academic backgrounds, ranging from academic discipline and educational level to years of academic or professional experience, may influence their perceptions of the value of curricular integration.

Over the last decade, only a limited number of studies have focused on the topic of curricular integration in journalism and mass communication programs, and on educators' perceptions of its value. In 2005, Charles Patti threw down a pedagogical challenge to all JMC educators. He underscored the need to find ways to integrate the social and behavioral sciences with marketing and business in the classroom. He also called on educators to acknowledge that IMC is an emerging discipline worldwide, and to make the effort to bring current thinking about IMC to students everywhere.

Some educators have echoed Patti's call. The 2006 Report of the Commission on Public Relations Education calls upon educators to provide their students with an education that is broad and

interdisciplinary in nature. Notably, the commission's list of necessary knowledge and skills includes marketing and finance, uses of research and forecasting, management concepts and theories, strategic planning, and technological and visual literacy. "More than ever, this knowledge base must be interdisciplinary," the report noted. "Principles of public relations and management must be intertwined with and related to business, behavioral science, technology and other disciplines. Changes in the field of public relations demand integration of the knowledge and skills of these disciplines." Among other items, the commission recommended more emphasis on the integration of messages and tools, and interdisciplinary problem solving.

This study builds upon the demonstrated need for a better understanding of the level and nature of curricular integration in university programs in 2009. Because faculty backgrounds and attitudes play a major role in how curricula are integrated, this study also attempts to gain a clearer understanding of their influence.

## Review of Literature

### IMC Defined

By definition, IMC is a combination of diverse disciplines. Duncan and Mulhern (2004) write that IMC (a) is more strategic than executional; (b) is about managing or influencing all brand messages, not just those sent by marketing communication functions; (c) combines two-way, interactive communication with one-way mass communication; (d) focuses on relationships

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