JOURNAL OF EDUCATION FOR BUSINESS, 85: 145–152, 2010

ISSN: 0883-2323
DOI: 10.1080/08832320903252363

Routledge
Taylor & Francis Group

Understanding Learning Preferences in the Business School Curriculum

Prateek Goorha and Vijay Mohan
Deakin University, Melbourne, Australia

The authors aimed to understand the learning preferences of business school students and generally understand the teaching strategies and course contents that would be conducive to these preferences. They began by making some observations on the nature of the ideal business school curriculum, and they present the results of a student survey on learning preferences that served to test some of these observations. They conclude by proposing a general unified approach to learning and teaching.

Keywords: Business curriculum, Case-study approach, Learner types, Learning models, Learning preferences, Teaching methodology

Business schools offer differing programs, yet are similar in their fundamental objective of providing students with a powerful signaling tool for their intrinsic ability and worth to a prospective employer. This observation forms the basic motivation for this article; to the extent that a signal can vary in its efficiency, the question arises whether it is possible to characterize an ideal business curriculum that best serves its purpose as a signaling tool.

In this article, we argue that understanding the preferences of learners at business schools is a necessary first step in thinking about an ideal business school curriculum. We propose that there are potentially five overarching objectives key to the business curriculum: to (a) provide an effective job-market signal, (b) demonstrate relevance of theory, (c) maintain a flexible approach to education, (d) cater for the acquisition of nontraditional or soft skills, and (e) be continuously innovative. Our analysis lead us to believe that the learning style preferred by business school students is one of an assimilator and a converger. This creates an interesting hybrid learner: an individual who at once prefers logical soundness over practical value yet is best at finding practical use for theory. A business school student would therefore not be satisfied, the *ex ante* inclination might assume, with only being taught on the basis of the practicality of concepts alone; he or she would need an optimal balance of theory and the facilitation of discovering logical practical use. Our survey results support this view in a number of ways, for example, by suggesting the preference among students for a balance of theory and application in lectures and the value ascribed to case studies. The understanding of learning preferences is, admittedly, a small first step in the direction of designing an effective business school curriculum; nevertheless, we believe that it is an essential one to take.

In the following section, we attempt to bring out some general characteristics of the business school curriculum to address this issue. Because an ideal business curriculum must necessarily be a function of its learners and teachers, educators must acknowledge the eclectic nature of business school programs. Many educators who teach in business schools have received specialized training in their area of expertise, such as economics, statistics, or finance. As such, their past training accustoms them to a particular teaching methodology that is tempting to replicate in a business school. Yet, given the unique nature of business school students, these methodologies often have to be modified to suit their special needs and circumstances. Therefore, the bulk of our investigation focuses on unraveling the learning preferences of business school students and how teaching practices can best accommodate them. Although our experience is based on teaching analytically oriented courses, such as public policy, economics, and finance, we hope an investigation of the learning preferences of our students provides some guidelines to all educators.

There are numerous studies on the methodical conceptualization and measurement of learning preferences of students and we subsequently review some useful constructs from this vast literature for the purpose of the present study. We

Correspondence should be addressed to Prateek Goorha, Deakin Business School, 221 Burwood Highway, Burwood, VIC, 3125, Australia. E-mail: prateek@deakin.edu.au

then particularize aspects of the abstract theories on learning preferences to a business school curriculum by presenting the results of a survey conducted among our students. We subscribe to the common view in the literature that an understanding of learning preferences is an important component of a successful and effective teaching methodology. Therefore, we summarize some of the relevant literature on teaching methodology and present the results of our survey on this aspect as well.

THE BUSINESS SCHOOL CURRICULUM

Given the objectives of a business school education, a natural question to ask is what a business curriculum should entail. Arguably, there are five desirable properties of the business school curriculum.

First, there should be a set of subjects that are conceptual in nature and provide students with a methodical academic perspective of how organizations function as a counterpart to the experiential knowledge they might accumulate while working. These subjects impart a conceptual framework that forms the backbone of a business education. In a seminal contribution, Spence (1973) argued that an important function of education is to provide a job-market signal. To the extent that the conceptual framework imparted by the business school curriculum is a significant component of the signal, it could become yet more credible with a stronger core conceptual foundation.

A casual look at the curriculum of several business schools confirms that the core subjects typically include some combination of managerial economics, financial management, marketing, accounting, empirical analysis, public policy, operations management, negotiation, ethics, and technology management. However, exactly which subset of these a student receives and in what measure depends on the school he or she attends and the choices he or she then makes on optional subjects.

Segev, Raveh, and Farjoun (1999) suggested that this core foundation is very different even for a select group of leading business schools in the United States. This variance in what each school considers to be the crux and substance of an education in business management is not unusual because business schools evolve differently from one another. Student profiles differ from school to school in large part due to the self-selection of student applicants who consider the curriculum offered at each business school. Over time, this self-selection affects the manner in which business school programs evolve.

Second, the business school curriculum must facilitate the retention of theory and concepts through the demonstration of relevance in applied settings. Studies routinely demonstrate this preference among business school students. For example, based on an interesting survey conducted at the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology, Ainsworth and Morley (1995) suggested that their business students preferred more emphasis being placed on courses that cater for the development of specific applied skills (e.g., negotiation), as well as for interaction with industry representatives. This is not surprising because abstract theories devoid of immediate application have little value for a career professional. The case-study approach, pioneered, among others, by the Harvard Business School and the Darden Business School at the University of Virginia, is testament to the awareness among certain business school of the importance of applicability of theory in a business school curriculum.

The third observation relates to the impact of globalization of business networks and the response of business schools in providing curricula to suit the global manager. A growing appreciation of the fact that global managers require certain soft skills, such as cultural sensitivity, the awareness of local customs, and fluency in a second or third language, has led to an interesting philosophical division among business schools. Providing courses that cover these skills usually comes at the expense of traditional, and often more rigorous subjects, and a divide now exists on whether to place emphasis in the curriculum on the issue of doing business in an increasingly networked global village or to eschew that in favor of traditional rigor.

The fourth observation pertains to the increasing need for business schools to keep pace with the changing business environment. This has led to an increased recognition of the value of flexibility in the business school curriculum. Education, after all, is an investment in human capital. Similar to many investments, there is an aspect of irreversibility—once a student has commenced a degree at a particular school business school, there is a real, and possibly high, cost of changing the decision by transferring to another program. There is therefore a real value to the student of having the flexibility of changing the exact design of the curriculum midstream. As Dixit and Pindyck (1994) pointed out, in the presence of irreversibility and uncertainty, the ability to postpone an action until more information becomes available has a value, which is similar to the value of the added flexibility of a financial option. Many business schools now offer specializations that afford the student the opportunity to customize and fine tune their business degree. Frequently, once a set of core subjects is completed, students have the ability to mix and match specialized courses to suit their needs.

Last, the rapidly changing business environment also fosters innovation, in terms of course content as well as the incorporation of technology in teaching methodologies. As examples of the former, Harvard Business School offers a half-semester class on the peculiarities of doing business in China and the European Institute of Business Administration (INSEAD) offers a course on the first 100 days of a business. The growth of the Internet provides business schools the opportunity to cater better to long-distance students, widening the pool of potential students available. Simulation games, Internet-based assignments and testing, and live Internet chat

sessions between instructors and long-distance students are now a regular feature in most business programs, and are conspicuous only in their absence.

METHOD

Theories of Learning Preferences

Owing to the considerable variance among students in their preferences over learning processes, the manner in which a concept presented to them is comprehended, evaluated and internalized (or retained) invariably differs. For instance, Dunn (1984) suggested that there are at least 16 different broad categories of variables that can influence the learning style of a student and that most employ between 6–14 of these variables in their own learning preferences. Some students are vocal, whereas others are reticent; some are self-motivated, whereas others need inspiring; some procrastinate, whereas others plan; and some prefer logical, empirical, and methodological material, whereas others prefer conceptual, substantive, and applied material. In one of the first articles we came across on learning in our own field, Charkins, O'Toole, and Wetzel (1985) emphasized how different learner types (e.g., dependent, collaborative, independent learners) needed conducive teaching styles for the effective learning of undergraduate economics. Moreover, the student body at a business school is typically more diverse than that of any other program at a university, further exaggerating this issue.

It is imperative, therefore, for educators to understand student preferences over different learning processes and thereafter link these preferences with teaching strategies and course content. Discovering student preferences for learning but having no means for employing them in teaching practice is hardly useful. And, naturally, the adoption of a teaching practice that has only weak links to student preferences is inefficient. Both must be analyzed together, which we attempt to do in the following sections.

Understanding Learning Preferences

For our purpose, Kolb's (1984, 1985) analysis on the types of learners was useful. Although there are numerous other approaches, such as the onion model suggested in Curry's (1983) study, we found Kolb's approach more readily relatable with aspects of teaching, the focus of this article. Kolb suggested that there are four dimensions to the learning process, and different learners combine different dimensions. These four dimensions are the following: (a) gathering concrete experience of a concept, (b) reflecting on the concept and making observations, (c) abstractly conceptualizing the concept by drawing on the reflections, and (d) applying the concept through experimentation. Figure 1 summarizes this process.

Because every learner need not adopt every one of these dimensions, four primary learning styles emerge from this model. They include the following:

1. Divergers, who learn through *a* and *b*;
2. Assimilators, who learn through *b* and *c*;
3. Convergers, who learn through *c* and *d*; and
4. Accomodators, who learn through *a* and *d*.

Fox and Ronkowski (1997) found that although physical science students prefer the diverger and converger forms of learning, social science students are generally more comfortable with the assimilator style of learning. Because the business curriculum comprises mainly social science courses, this model suggests that business students learn better through reflection and conceptualization. The immediate implication for us was that, in general, business school students prefer

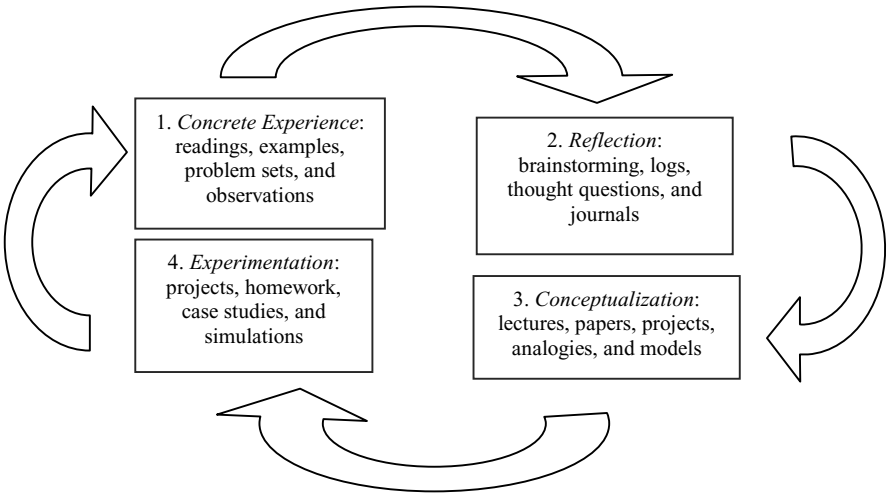

FIGURE 1 Kolb's learning preference dimensions (based on D. A. Kolb, 1984, 1985).

to learn through lectures rather than self-motivated reading, thought questions and brainstorming rather than homework and analogies, and models rather than problem sets and simulations. However, Fox and Ronkowski's study was based on undergraduate students. Also, although many business school students have a social science background, an appreciable number do have a physical science background, such as engineering.

To see the validity of Kolb's (1984, 1985) model and Fox and Ronkowski's (1997) results for a business school context, we presented our students with a survey to gauge their learning preferences. We subsequently turn to the results of our survey.

The Survey

We designed our survey, included as an appendix to this article, to be more focused on ascertaining learning preferences, in general, and to test our assumption that business students preferred the assimilator style of learning, in particular. To minimize the scope for intervention bias, the survey was administered electronically, which not only added a layer of convenience and anonymity for our respondents but also enabled keeping our identity and those of the respondents confidential.

The survey consisted of 19 multiple-choice questions on various aspects of learning preferences as well as some questions, similar to end-of-term evaluations, that sought to measure present satisfaction. We received a total of 149 responses. The drawbacks of the survey were that it allowed us to analyze only aggregate results rather than the underlying data directly because the data were generated by a system that protected student identity extremely vigilantly. The survey was conducted by university administrators with a computer generated list of recipients who were enrolled or had some experience with managerial economics and other analytical courses; the extreme vigilance enforced by the administrators of the survey also disallowed us from reporting the overall response rate. We interpret our results with these caveats in mind.

RESULTS

In keeping with the expectation derived from Kolb's (1984, 1985) model and Fox and Ronkowski's (1997) empirical tests that business school students have aspects of assimilator-type learning preferences, our survey suggested that our students were rather attached to classroom lectures, with around 70% of respondents rating classroom lectures as important in their understanding of the material. This figure is, in fact, diluted by the fact that we also included long-distance students in our sample for whom classroom lectures only produce indirect benefits, such as lecture notes and online debates. When asked whether they would like problem sets to ensure their understanding of analytically challenging concepts, almost 35% of respondents answered in the negative. These results support an assimilator-type learning preference. Approximately 37% were willing to take on this form of assignment, but only if the total number of existing assignments was not to be increased. This is not entirely unexpected, either; virtually all business school students have either part- or full-time jobs, which understandably serves as a disincentive for any increase in the number of assignments. Indeed, when asked whether they would be interested in additional workshops and seminars organized outside classroom hours, approximately 40% suggested that they would certainly attend, whereas the rest were unable to categorically commit more time to such activities. These results suggest that the accommodative learning style may not be very appropriate for business students.

As mentioned previously, Fox and Ronkowski's (1997) tests were conducted on undergraduate students. However, they do suggest that as social science students mature they acquire a taste for convergence learning. Therefore, it seemed appropriate to test whether the students would prefer a unit that encouraged convergent and assimilative learning. Case studies and projects are likely to be desired by business school students because these methods enable the student to apply abstract concepts in different contextual settings to understand their relevance. We assessed this for the managerial economics course offered in our curriculum, in which the most selected choice was, by far, the inclusion of more applied case studies. Almost 45% of respondents selected this method.

MBA students often express a dislike for theoretical subjects especially when they carry with them a prerequisite for facility with mathematics and statistics. Indeed, we found that almost 70% of respondents suggested that they would likely fare better with a better grasp on mathematics and statistics and roughly 45% were even willing to enroll in a presemester workshop on these subjects. A related concern was that students might perceive theoretical subjects as being less relevant to their education. In this, the results are especially interesting. When students were asked whether they prefer studying theory- or policy-driven subjects, the split of responses was roughly equal. We approached this issue in a slightly different manner by asking students in two separate binary-response questions to suggest whether they would like to see an increased use of mathematical models or an increased use of empirics in their subjects. Although only 30% were in favor of increased mathematical models, more than 50% voted in favor of seeing more empirics. When seen in conjunction with our results on the preference for more case studies in a theoretical subject like managerial economics, this result reinforces the necessity of making theoretical subjects more germane to a business education by demonstrating the relevance of theory. Our findings are summarized in Table 1.

TABLE 1
Summary of Key Findings

Category	Survey result
Student learning style	
Importance of lectures	67.8% reporting lectures as at least somewhat important
Importance of audio-visual recordings of lectures relative to classroom lectures	62.4% reporting that audio-visual recordings adequately substitute the need for in-class lectures
Importance of mathematics and statistics	67.1% reporting importance mathematics and statistics
Student learning preference	
Committing to preparatory course on mathematics	56% would not commit
Outside class learning events such as seminars and workshops	77.2% would attend at least sometimes
Committing to dealing with more technical concepts in class	75.9% would be favorable especially when not tested on these concepts
Committing to practice problem sets as homework	71.8% would not commit or only if ungraded
Student preferences on teaching style	
Lecturer discussing own research	79.2% reporting that they would be amenable at least sometimes
Preferred design for a unit on business economics	66.4% would prefer a unit that has a mix of casual and in-depth treatment of topics rather
Teaching applied issues versus theoretical skills	Evenly balance with 54.4% preferring units dealing with theoretical skills over policy issues
Main suggestion for improving a unit on business economics	44.3% requesting additional case studies

DISCUSSION

Issues of Teaching Strategy

As a logical counterpart to the results the present study generated on the topic of learning preferences, we turn to a review of mechanisms that may assist in developing a teaching style that is complementary with the identified learning preferences.

In this regard, Williams (1980) presented three items an educator needs to consider before settling on a teaching method that is compatible with the instructor's teaching style: the purpose of schooling, the learning process, and the learner. To a large extent, the purpose of education in business schools is inextricably linked to the third item, the learner. Because the learner in our context required the immediate application of education to the real-world managing of an organization—the satisfaction of this requirement must surely occupy an important place in the priority of all business school instructors. As for the learning process, the idea of a business education sending an effective job-market signal suggests that it should be done in a manner that pays attention to fundamental concepts, even if it comes at the cost of withholding the more advanced ones. In this regard, Schroder, Driver, and Siegfried (1967) presented a very elegant taxonomy of human learning processes. They suggested that the manner in which concrete learning differs from abstract learning is in how the input dimensions are initially integrated in the learning process into internalized or retained dimension(s). Therefore, once the student has a firm grasp on essential variables, he or she can then be challenged to move from low complexity learning to moderately and even highly complex additional material. This would then lend itself to moving from fundamental concepts to advanced ones more confidently. Related to this, Sweller and Chandler (1994) suggested that higher elemental interactivity makes concepts more difficult to learn. If basic elements are successfully understood by themselves, then complexity by this definition is likely to be reduced. Indeed, results from the present survey suggest that that almost two thirds of the students polled preferred a middle ground on the scope of a technically demanding offering in economics rather than doing too much at a cursory (easy) level or too little at an advanced (harder) level. This result also dovetails with our view regarding the learning process: it should be such that the student attains a sense of achievement at the end owing to having accomplished something truly challenging. When we asked students if they would be interested in being challenged with more advanced topics, almost 80% were in favor, although about 40% preferred that they not be tested on the advanced topics. We believe that the responses are indicative of this balance between the excitement from a challenge and the fear of failure.

The teaching style taxonomy that Joyce and Weil (1972) and Joyce (1987) suggested is remarkable in its suitability to the three components Williams (1980) used as inputs into the decision-making process for teaching styles. They suggested four broad categories of teaching styles that are not mutually exclusive. First, the social-interaction model encourages methods that promote group dynamics and discourages competitive behavior that mitigates the benefits of social interaction. Second, the information-processing model emphasizes the understanding of concepts through the organization and comprehension of information as well as through the careful interpretation of results. Third, the personal model links self confidence with student ability in information processing. Last, the cybernetic model sequences learning and rewards, which reinforce the entire learning process.

In our view, the information-processing and personal models are crucial components for achieving our teaching

objectives. This combination of teaching models encourages an understanding of the concepts by methodically making them integrate with each other, such that logical interpretations become easier. Moreover, it pays particular attention to the student's experience through building self-confidence with the material. The social-interaction model also forms an important part of instruction at business schools that require group work with the view of encouraging group dynamics. At the same time, the improvement in technology and access to the Internet diminishes the need for classroom interaction. Some of our results, for instance on the relative importance of attending lectures and being able to access audio-visual recordings of lectures, demonstrated this dichotomy. Admittedly these are questions that measure preference for social interaction imprecisely, but they do suggest that eschewing features of the social-interaction model is not entirely justifiable.

Concluding Remarks

A business school education is unique in that the learner's objectives are predominantly market driven. Thus, our article started with the basic principle that if the objective of a business school education is to provide the student with a more effective signaling tool for the job market, then a better curriculum needs to acknowledge the learning preferences of its students.

In the present study, we analyzed the learning preferences of business school students as well as the teaching strategies and course content that would be conducive to these preferences. Our results provide initial support to our expectation that business school students are likely to have a predilection for convergence and assimilative learning. This is an interesting result, in that the typical business school student, when assessed within a standard learning preference typology, does not neatly fall into one or the other category. A business school student is, in fact, a hybrid learner. Specifically, this suggests that business school students learn by reflecting on a concept and making observations, abstractly conceptualizing the concept by drawing on these reflections and by applying the concept through experimentation. Our survey, although not especially unique in its methodology, is useful, in that it reinforces these theoretical observations. We think that such learners, although undeterred by theoretical complexity in subjects, are more likely to retain information if conceptualization is facilitated with an active experimentation medium, such as case studies, a collaborative project, or a simulation exercise.

What is new in the present study s not the observation that most business school students appreciate the value of case studies as a method of instruction, but rather a conceptualization of the learning process mechanism that their revealed learning preferences for a particular method indicates. For example, researchers may well ask whether it is valid to deduce backwards, from a predisposition for the case-study method, that policy relevance would matter more than theoretical constructs to the typical business school learner. This study perhaps gives reason for more considered thought, at least in our sample of students, that both mattered equally.

Our analysis of teaching styles suggests how different a business school teacher must often be from a teacher at a specialized department. The focus for a teacher at a business school must encompass the processing of information in the learner from the stage of the initial conceptualization of concepts to their practical application. Further to this comprehensive approach, the business school teacher must also facilitate the development of confident interpretational and interaction skills in the leaner.

An interesting avenue for further research on this subject might begin with an evaluation of these ideas across different institutions. Apart from indicating the validity of our conclusions in a wider setting this might also suggest the feasibility of doing so for the wide variety of subjects at business schools that we unfortunately do not have experience with. Perhaps an interesting way to test the ideas we have presented is to design a course with the general guidelines outlined in this article with student-learning preferences in mind at the outset and, thereafter, adopting the teaching styles indicated.

REFERENCES

Charkins, R. J., O'Toole, D. M., & Wetzel, J. N. (1985). Linking teacher and student learning styles with student achievement and attitudes. *The Journal of Economic Education*, *16*, 111–120.

Curry, L. (1983, April). *An organization of learning style theories and constructs*. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Montreal, Canada. (ERIC document reproduction service no. ED 235185)

Dixit, A., & Pindyck, R. S. (1994). *Investment under uncertainty*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Dunn, R. (1984). Learning style: State of the science. *Theory Into Practice*, *23*, 10–19.

Fox, R. L., & Ronkowski, S. A. (1997). Learning styles of political science students. *PS: Political Science and Politics*, *30*, 732–737.

Joyce, B. R. (1987). Learning how to learn. *Theory Into Practice*, *26*, 416–428.

Joyce, B. R., & Weil, M. (1972). *Models of teaching*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Kolb, D. A. (1984). *Experiential learning: Experience as the source of learning and development*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Kolb, D. A. (1985). *Learning style inventory*. Boston: McBer.

Schroder, H. M., Driver, M. J., & Siegfried S. (1967). *Human information processing*. New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston.

Segev, E., Raveh, A., & Farjoun, A. (1999). Conceptual maps of the leading MBA programs in the United States: Core courses, concentration areas, and the ranking of the school. *Strategic Management Journal*, *20*, 549–565.

Spence, M. (1973). Job market signaling. *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, *87*, 355–374.

Sweller, J., & Chandler, P. (1994). Why some material is difficult to learn. *Cognition and Instruction*, *12*, 185–233.

Williams, R. O. (1980). What teaching methods when? *Theory Into Practice*, *19*, 82–86.

APPENDIX

Questionnaire

For each available response, the number of responses (*n*) and the implied percentages (%) are reported.

1. How important are the classroom lectures in your understanding of the material in the units you have taken at the Business School?		
Very Important	71	47.7
Somewhat Important	30	20.1
Not important at all	48	32.2
2. Do you believe that you would do better at your studies at the Business School if you were better prepared in terms of mathematics and statistics?		
Yes	32	21.5
Yes, perhaps	68	45.6
No	49	32.9
3. Would you consider enrolling in a week long intensive workshop on mathematics and statistics before the start of the semester at the Business School?		
Yes	65	43.6
No	84	56.4
4. Do you feel that your level of familiarity with English creates problems in your studies and performance at the Business School?		
Yes, I need more help with English	10	6.7
Yes, but not too much	24	16.1
No	115	77.2
5. Would you prefer to get more short problem sets as homework from the lecturer to ensure your understanding of the material you have read?		
Yes	42	28.2
Yes, but instead of other assignments	55	36.9
No, that is not needed	52	34.9
6. When appropriate to the topic, would you be interested in learning more about the lecturer's own research?		
Yes, that would be interesting	56	37.6
Sometimes	62	41.6
No	31	20.8
7. If lectures were recorded and made available for your review in audio or visual format would you prefer using them over attending classroom lectures?		
Yes	93	62.4
No	56	37.6
8. Are you in favor of being challenged by the lecturer in the class with more advanced and technical concepts in the topic?		
Yes	56	37.6
Yes, but only if I am not tested on them	57	38.3
No	36	24.2
9. Would you like to attend more learning events such as academic seminars and workshops outside the classroom that are organized by the lecturers?		
Yes, I would certainly attend	59	39.6
Sometimes	56	37.6
No, I have no extra time	34	22.8
10. Which unit type have you found to be the most useful in your current occupation or expected future occupation?		
Units that teach theoretical skills	81	54.4
Units that deal with policy issues	68	45.6
11. Are you satisfied with your experience as a student at the Business School?		
Yes, very satisfied	72	48.3
Somewhat satisfied	73	49.0
Not at all satisfied	4	2.7
12. Upon graduation how comfortable would you feel hiring a graduate from the Business School for your own business or organization?		
Yes, very comfortable	66	44.3
Not at all comfortable	8	5.4
Does not matter. Depends on the person	75	50.3
Please answer the following questions if you have any experience with the business economics unit		
13. Which method of teaching would you prefer for this unit?		
Casual treatment of 12 topics	21	14.1
In-depth treatment of 6 topics	29	19.5
Mix of casual and in-depth (8 topics)	99	66.4
14. What would be your main suggestion to improve this unit?		
Reduce the amount of topics	29	19.5
Reduce the amount of technical theory	23	15.4
Provide more applied case studies	66	44.3
Does not need changing	31	20.8
15. Do you think there is a need for additional tuitions outside the classroom in order to do better at this unit?		
Yes	78	52.3
No	71	47.7

16. What type of assessment would you prefer?

Progressive assignments; no final exam	90	60.4
Only final exam	8	5.4
Assignments and final exam	51	34.2

Please answer the following questions if you have any experience with the unit on international economics and political economy

17: What do you think about assessment for this unit course being based on you maintaining a virtual blog or wiki on the topics presented? (A blog is an Internet-based journal and a wiki is a multi-user editable blog.) The lecturer would teach students how to do all this on the first day of class. You would then put down your thoughts on each of the topics on the blog with the help of other group members. There would then be no written research paper for this unit.

Yes, great idea	39	26.2
Maybe	61	40.9
No, I prefer a group written assignment	49	32.9

18. Would you prefer to be presented with more mathematical models in this unit?

No	106	71.1
Yes	43	28.9

19. Would you prefer to see more data and empirical presentations in the lectures?

No	72	48.3
Yes	77	51.7