A new approach to speaker relevence using a logistics executive in residence course

Stephen M. Rutner
Georgia Southern University, srutner@georgiasouthern.edu

Scott R. Cox
Athens State University, scott.cox@athens.edu

Maria E. Aviles
Georgia Southern University, maria_e_aviles@georgiasouthern.edu

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Stephen M. Rutner
Georgia Southern University

Scott R. Cox
Athens State University
and
Maria E. Aviles
Georgia Southern University

ABSTRACT

This article addresses a new method to bring real world relevance into the Logistics, Transportation and Supply Chain Management classroom. A different type of Executive in Residence course focuses on using multiple industry speakers to provide a unique learning environment for today's Millennial majors. While the majority of the paper is a thought based overview, a statistical analysis of student responses was used to compare various types of relevant courses. A simple comparison of various appropriate items was examined to identify if the Executive in Residence course increased learning. Both the anecdotal and statistical evidence suggests that the Executive in Residence course increases interaction and improves learning with majors. It highlights a non-traditional type of approach to incorporating executives into the curriculum and results in a more robust learning environment. The inclusion of active executives also creates a number of practical benefits for the practitioners, students, faculty and university.

INTRODUCTION

Understanding the absorption of knowledge is a complex exercise and the different approaches in which people learn vary as widely as any individual human characteristic. These processes have been studied for many years by people intent on explaining, predicting and manipulating the ways in which people learn (Potter and Maccaro, 2000). One of the most important objectives of an institution of higher learning is the ability to effectively convey knowledge to the largest group of students possible. Students experience a variety of approaches employed by instructors designed to balance theoretical learning and practical application. In business education, the challenge of providing opportunities for undergraduate students to learn how to apply the concepts of their discipline has been discussed in the literature for more than forty years (Achenreiner and Hein, 2010).

One of the key drivers of this research is that business education has been admonished by practitioners for not training students with the specific knowledge and skills necessary to become practicing business professionals (Beeby and Jones, 1997; Cannon and Sheth, 1994; Byrne, 1992). There are a number of factors that make bridging the gap between theory and practice a challenge for business schools. One of the most glaring is the lack of business experience by an increasing number of academics (Conant et al., 1988). However a study conducted by Conant et al. (1988) notes that students had a higher regard for teachers that possessed real world perspective.

One approach to bridging the gap between theory and practice is to bring business professionals into the classroom. This brings a broader perspective and understanding of current relevant business practices to the students. One method is to hire recently retired practitioners

into an Executive in Residence (EiR) position. The EiR then complements the traditional university faculty. An EiR course allows business practitioners to meet with students and provide undergraduates with examples of "real-world" practitioner experiences in a university setting (Johnston, 2004). However, this is only one method to bring EiR onto campus to interact with students.

This article will examine a different type of Logistics and Transportation EiR course and attempt to evaluate the effectiveness of this unique approach. The overall goal is to present academics and executives a new model to improve the overall education of Logistics, Transportation and/or Supply Chain Management students. After this introduction, there is a review of the appropriate literature and a discussion of the methodology to evaluate the course effectiveness. Also, there is a discussion of the perceived strengths and weaknesses of the new EiR type class. Furthermore, there is an overview of the course mechanics to allow other academics to replicate or modify the course at their location. Finally, the article addresses some key conclusions and future research opportunities.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theory of Learning

Learning is commonly defined as a process that brings together cognitive, emotional, and environmental influences and experiences for acquiring, enhancing, or making changes in one's knowledge, skills, values, and world views (Illeris, 2004; Ormrod, 1995). An active process, learning builds knowledge and skills through practice within a supportive group or community (Kim, 2000). Most human behavior is learned through observing others behaviors and using new knowledge to guide action (Bandura, 1977).

The theory of learning addresses three philosophical views. First, a behaviorist view focuses on the objectively observable aspects of learning (Skinner, 1953). Second, a cognitive view looks beyond behavior to explain brain-based learning (Mandler, 2002). Finally, there is a constructivist view where the learner actively constructs or builds new ideas or concepts (Driver et al., 1994). Behaviorism dominated the educational landscape twenty-five years ago, while the foremost learning theory today is constructivism (Boghossian, 2006).

Social constructivist learning theory suggests that collaboration between students and others outside the university community is essential for effective learning (Hodgkinson-Williams et al., 2008). The theory focuses on the learning that occurs within a social context and how both environmental and cognitive factors interact to influence human learning and behavior (Bandura, 1977). The interdependence of social and individual processes helps to facilitate co-construction of knowledge (Palincsar, 1998). This is especially true of millennial learners, who have been described in the literature as being both socially and team oriented (Howe and Strauss, 2000). Millennials, born between 1981 and 1999, are described as children who grew up central to their parents' sense of purpose. Their parents have often sheltered them, which tends to extend adolescence and delay their development of independence (Price, 2009). Millennial students who do not see the benefit in learning the material presented may become apathetic (Haytko, 2006; Kothari et al., 1993).

A part of constructivist learning, the theory of action learning, can be explained as a process for the development of managers using a live issue or problem in the learner's workplace as the primary vehicle for learning (Pedler,1997). Active learning is based on the theory that learning is a dynamic, social construction. Growth occurs where one's world view is challenged in an environment which links theory, action and reflection. Instructors should design and structure courses that encourage students to exercise their knowledge formation capabilities (Crawford, 1996; Doolittle and Hicks, 2003). The EiR course is a type of active

learning that motivates students to learn by applying course content ,and providing students with relationship building opportunities in the classroom that contribute to their future career's success (Borges et al., 2010). The next section highlights the importance of active learning with Millennial students.

Pedagogy

Since the Theory of Learning highlights the challenges of teaching Millennial students, and the value of active learning, it is important to identify the pedagogical aspects that could support the use of executives in the classroom. The educational psychology literature has explored the ways in which students acquire, retain and retrieve information. This defines the individual's learning style (Claxton and Murrell, 1987; Schmeck, 1988). Students learn in a number of different ways; by seeing and hearing; reflecting and acting; reasoning logically and intuitively; memorizing and visualizing (Felder and Henriques, 1995).

In addition to addressing students' learning styles, understanding the student's characteristics help teachers maximize the students' learning and appropriately prepare them for their future careers (Sojka and Fish, 2008). Millennial students for example, are characterized by their immense need for affiliation, and as a result, they are great team/group participants with tighter peer bonds and greater needs to achieve and succeed (Borges et al., 2010). Due to a strong desire to achieve, Millennial students continuously expect new challenges, and they also require more attention and feedback. High-achievers expect to gather significant experiences and skills that guarantee them future jobs (Matulich et al., 2008).

Regardless of the materials that academics teach, educators are faced with the challenge of how best to design a given course (Kennett-Hensel et al., 2010). "Effective teaching requires inputs and processes to ensure that activities provide relevance and contribute to desired outcomes for students" according to Metrejean et al (2002).

The pedagogical method involving guest speakers from logistics, transportation and supply chain organizations in the course helps to addresses Millennial students desire for affiliation and job placement.

Practitioner speakers bring real-life learning experiences, inspire and orient logistics majors into various logistics and transportation careers and increase credibility of the course materials (Metrejean et al., 2002; Eveleth and Baker-Eveleth, 2009; Fawcett and Fawcett, 2011). Davis and Snyder (2009) observed that students consider their education to be a relevant if it includes guest speakers. Furthermore, Davis (1993) suggests that guest speakers with relevant or practical expertise are good alternatives to traditional lectures. Lowman (1995) suggests using alternate class formats, such as a guest speaker, can enrich learning experiences and reinforce knowledge concepts in the classroom (Davis, 1993; Lowman, 1995; Eveleth and Baker-Eveleth, 2009; Rutner, 2004).

Therefore, the literature identifies the challenges presented by Millennial students and their expectations for new challenges and material. Furthermore, they require more "experiences" and relevance. This leads to a potential solution of using practitioners as guest speakers to better meet the expectations of Millennials.

COURSE HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT

The concept of executive faculty is not new (Achenreiner and Hein, 2010). Mentioned in a 1969 Business Horizons article, executive in residence programs date back to the early 1970's (Wellemeyer, 1983). AACSB defines Executives in Residence as permanent additions to business school faculty with most having the rights, privileges and voting power of traditional faculty but without traditional research demands (Achenreiner and Hein, 2010).

According to Schrader and Thomas (2004) almost half of the AACSB schools have some type of traditional EiR course or program. For the purpose of this article, a "traditional" EiR

course is a full semester's class taught by a practitioner, often recently retired. Therefore, students can experience a number of approaches employed by instructors to balance theoretical learning and practical application (Achenreiner and Hein, 2010). The intent of this type of EiR course is to bring business practitioners into a university campus classroom in an effort to provide students with a "real-world" perspective, including practitioner experiences (Johnston, 2004). In sum, the traditional EiR teaching model basically focuses on a "permanent" faculty addition.

Johnson (2004) clearly states that students, instructors, and the university all benefit from the input of practitioners. The main benefit of any EiR course is the real world experience and examples that a practitioner brings into the classroom (Achenreiner and Hein, 2010). Other benefits include a stronger connection with the business community, introduction of students to potential employers, and the ability for students to learn current business practices (Schrader and Thomas, 2004, Gutterridge, 2007). Many of these benefit areas strongly align with the learning styles and personality traits of Millennial students identified previously (Matulich et al., 2008). Table 1 summarizes both the benefits and costs of a traditional EiR type of course.

Clearly, there are many good reasons to consider a traditional EiR course(s). Many of the key strengths particularly align with the expectations and needs of Millennial students, however, it is

TABLE 1:
BENEFITS AND COSTS OF A TRADITIONAL EiR COURSE

	Benefits	Costs
Student	Learn what employers want in new graduates Access a network for potential job opportunities Learn to match expectations to reality in the real world Be entertained by speakers	Time spent in class, doing research, meeting practitioner Credit-hour costs(no additional cost if full-time students)
Instructor	Learn current business practice to use as examples of teaching Learn current career advice to give students	Time spent for class, coordinating visits, evaluating assignments, time in class Time spent getting a course added to the college catalog (one time)
College	Provide practitioner input to students in the business curriculum Contribution to achieving college mission and objectives Potential new "friends" of the college	Cost of meals Cost of faculty time
Practitioner	An attentive audience of students A chance to help others with his or her experiences Introduction to potential employees Association with the business school Recommendations about course requirements competencies	Time and travel costs

(Johnston, 2004)

not a "magic bullet" that solves all challenges. The table identifies a number of significant disadvantages as well. In addition to the items in the table, other challenges to an EiR class include the executive's longevity, availability, pedagogical skill, and ability to relate to Millenials. Incorporating practitioners that not only bring real-world experience to the classroom but are also engaging, familiar with the course content and learning objectives and versed in effective pedagogy is challenging (Fawcett and Fawcett, 2011). The net result is that traditional EiR class evaluations, and especially those that are often taught sporadically, often trend to extreme ends of the teaching spectrum.

COURSE STRUCTURE, REQUIREMENTS AND GOALS

Background

To attempt to garner the benefits of a traditional EiR course and simultaneously reduce the typical challenges, Georgia Southern University faculty developed a modified EiR approach. To differentiate between the modified and the traditional, the University's faculty approach is more of a speaker-based EiR course. The authors would love to take credit for the initial design of this process; however, like many successful teaching innovations, a very similar course was taught at the University of Tennessee in both the Marketing and Logistics/ Transportation programs. The Georgia Southern University faculty borrowed the basic elements of the course, but modified them to meet the needs of its students. One goal of this article is to allow other programs to evaluate whether the speaker-based EiR course format would benefit their students.

Over the last ten years, the speaker-based EiR course developed from a random, "special topics" course into a scheduled elective for the Logistics and Transportation majors. Due to the University's rules, the first two times the class was taught, it was as a special topics class without a unique catalogue prefix and course number. Although the evaluation of the course was very subjective, it was clear that it was both a strong learning experience and very popular with the students. Due to the initial successes, the course was then formalized through the curriculum development process into its current form of LOGT 4233 – Logistics Executive in Residence. The goal of the Faculty is to teach it once a year in the spring semester as an elective to graduating seniors. However, due to faculty constraints, it has been taught approximately every other year. Georgia Southern's catalog description follows:

> "Logistics Executive in Residence (LOGT 4233) - A capstone, integrative, case course in logistics and transportation strategy. Students participate in an Executive in Residence program that provides interaction with top-level logistics and transportation executives."

Course Structure

The structure of the class is very different from a traditional EiR course. A traditional EiR course would usually be built around a typical topic: principles of transportation or logistics, carrier management, logistics information systems/ERP, etc. The speaker-based EiR model attempts to maximize the knowledge of the EiR professionals and not focus on typical topics. Note that the term professionals with an "S" is used. The key is that the speaker-based EiR class incorporates a series of practitioners throughout the semester. According to Fawcett and Fawcett (2011) students believe that effectively involved guest speakers provide excellent validation for key concepts, theories and tools being taught in class. The goal of the class is to bring in approximately twelve executive speakers each semester. This number has been identified as fitting both the length of the semester while allowing a broad coverage of topics across the logistics discipline. An example syllabus in Appendix A provides a typical list of speakers (note: specific individuals' names were removed, but company

types were inserted to highlight the diversity of executive experiences.) As the syllabus highlights, the course spends the most time on the key element of the interaction between the students and the executives. Therefore, twelve weeks of the class are dedicated to the executives. The goal is to maximize the exchange between the students and executives.

The mechanics of the course are fairly straight forward and will become very familiar to the students across the semester since it is repeated for twelve weeks. It is recommended that a Tuesday and Thursday schedule be used for the class. On Tuesdays, students are preparing for the speaker that will present on Thursday. Two student groups will make fifteen minute presentations on two related topics. One group will review basic industry information that is germane to the speaker's field or industry. The second group will present background information on the speaker's career and company. For example, if the speaker is from BNSF, the first group would provide a review of the railroad industry. The second group would talk about the speaker's career and specifically address the BNSF railroad. The purpose of this is twofold. First, it provides a review to all the students to ensure they represent themselves well when the speaker is in the class. Secondly, it frees the speaker of the burden of providing a lot of background information during Thursday's class and allows he or she more time to focus on whatever topic he or she chooses. Frankly, the speakers' time is very valuable and anything that the professor can do to maximize that time is critical. The remaining time in class on Tuesday is used to cover administrative materials, critique previous student presentations and cover current logistics and transportation topics.

The second class in the week is on Thursdays and is primarily for the executive. The entire class period is dedicated to whatever topic the speaker chooses. Usually, they will pick a topic that is related to their current position or discuss a topic that is critical to their company. However, some speakers have gone "off topic"

and spoken about leadership, skills for new hires, or presented case studies. Regardless of the topic, the breadth of speakers will ensure a great learning experience based on materials from across the supply chain. Furthermore, most speakers will use some form of PowerPoint, but not all. Again the format is not important; the message to the students will be the critical item. The final event immediately follows class on Thursday. The speaker, professor and the related student group(s) will go to an early dinner. This gives the executive a chance to interact with students in a small group setting. It also allows for very interesting and free flowing discussions with topics ranging from current logistic trends to stories about exotic business dinners around the world. Regardless, it is one of the best learning opportunities for majors.

Specified and Implied Professor Tasks

There are a number of necessary tasks required of the professor to ensure a successful course. While the points noted below are more reflective of the rural setting of Georgia Southern, schools in more urban areas may have a far easier time using the model discussed here. In either case, first and foremost, the faculty must identify and schedule approximately twelve available executive speakers. Executives are likely to have very busy schedules. Especially in non-urban settings,steps must be taken to minimize the burden placed on the executives with regard to things such as time and travel costs. One approach is to prioritize the speakers by distance. Normally, the speaker that has to travel the farthest is given their choice of dates. In the event of unforeseen circumstances, it is wise to have a local, thirteenth speaker that can fill in on short notice. Also, there are some politically sensitive considerations about the make-up of the speakers. It is strongly suggested that the speakers come from a cross-section of race, gender and industry. The faculty has had some success in mirroring the demographics of the university in the speakers. This seems to have a positive impact on the students as well.

Another implied task for the faculty is to secure adequate funding. There are two financial costs to the course. The largest is the twelve dinners. The second significant cost is for token speaker gifts. The total cost of both is approximately $2,000 a semester. At the University, Georgia state funds cannot be used for either of these items. Fortunately, a logistics and transportation company, which chooses to remain anonymous, has agreed to fund these costs each year. However, this could be an excellent opportunity to promote themselves to students while funding the "fill in the company name" Executive Speaker Series.

A final specified task is the course structure during the non-speaker weeks. There is not a "best" answer for these weeks. Often the faculty uses them to familiarize the students with the process since it is a very different structure than the traditional lecture format Millennials are used to. Another task is to bring the Career Services representative to class to help students understand the resume and interview process on campus. This works well since the vast majority of students are seniors within one or two semesters of graduation. Finally, exams can be put into some of this time, but that would usually only be one day of a week which creates scheduling problems with the Tuesday/Thursday process during the majority of the weeks.

Hidden Goals

At Georgia Southern, there are a disproportionate number of first generation college students when compared to many other universities logistics and transportation programs.. Therefore, one of the goals of the entire faculty is to "polish" the students as they prepare to go into industry. This includes helping them interact with industry professionals. The Logistics EiR course is an excellent vehicle to help educate the students on some of the more subtle aspects of business etiquette. To accomplish this, one requirement of the student groups is to interview the executive before he/she comes to campus. Obviously, an implied task for the professor is to

follow up behind the scenes to ensure the executive is comfortable with the process.

Additional tasks are included to meet other course goals. The students are also required to coordinate everything with the executive including time and location of the class, parking passes and any additional requirements. This is to help them learn all the logistics of planning a simple visit. The next goal is addressed during the student presentations. The students are required to make their presentations (Tuesday's class) in formal business attire. This affords the faculty an opportunity to critique the clothing they will wear to interviews. Again, the class helps to address the "polish" as a hidden goal. There are a number of other hidden benefits, but many may be specific to the demographics of the University.

Professor Learning Points

To conclude the speaker-based EiR course development and structure, there are a number of learning points that the faculty have identified over the years. First, the two day a week schedule is critical for success. Furthermore, the Tuesday/Thursday schedule is more popular with the speakers than a Monday/Wednesday schedule. This allows some executives the opportunity to turn the visit into a three day weekend for tourist possibilities, or in the case of an urban university, for conducting additional business. The class time that has worked the best is from about 3:30-5:00pm. Although late in the afternoon, this allows the group to proceed immediately to an early dinner. Many of the speakers will travel after dinner, especially if they are visiting a more remote or rural area. So, a later class time can create potential travel issues for some speakers.

Another issue is the exam schedule. More frequent exams work better. If the professor only gives a mid-term and final, there may not be enough responses discussing each speaker (see example exam in Appendix B.) There are two solutions: require the group that presents about a speaker to write about that speaker

(therefore a minimum of 10% of the students will cover every speaker on the exams), and/or give three or four examples which will reduce the number of speakers to choose among for each exam. Finally, the professor is likely to find that most of the speakers very much enjoy the process and are willing to come year after year. Therefore, it is likely that the professor will only have to replace two speakers each year due to job changes, retirements or for other reasons.

The Logistics EiR course structure appears to meet the goals of the faculty. Also, executive feedback continues to be very positive. Furthermore, the willingness of practitioners to continue to travel half way across the country on their own time and money provides solid and positive, but anecdotal, evidence of the benefits they perceive. Finally, the students have been very positive in their comments. However, a better analysis was required to validate the success of the Logistics EiR course.

COURSE EVALUATION AND METHODOLOGY

As with any course evaluation, the challenge is to assess the learning and benefits for a student using various measures. To improve upon typical university in-class questionnaires, both student course evaluations along with student course achievement were considered for analysis. As with most universities, student course evaluations at Georgia Southern serve as the primary tool for formative and summative evaluations of faculty teaching and course comparison. The student course evaluation contains twenty-three questions intended to assess student perceptions of the course, including elements relating to faculty. This data was collected for both multiple sections of the Logistics Executive in Residence class as well as numerous other courses for comparison. To move beyond the traditional university course evaluation as the only data for consideration, student grades were collected for comparison as well. The second set of data was used to provide

additional verification of any outcomes. Since grades serve as the measure for student achievement at the University, it provides another solid method to evaluate the effectiveness of the course.

To gather a representative and testable set of data, both student course evaluations and overall course grades were used from four different logistics courses taught at Georgia Southern for the years 2001 through 2011. The three additional courses are part of the core and major degree requirements for the Bachelor of Business Administration with a major in Logistics. These courses include Business Logistics, International Logistics, and Principles of Transportation. The fourth course was the Logistics EiR course (note: data included both the special topics version and permanent iterations of the class). To improve consistency and minimize variation, evaluations and grades for the all the courses were collected from only one faculty member. A total of 517 student evaluations were collected, all of which were usable. The sample was fairly evenly split in terms of number of evaluations per course. Table 2 provides a summary of the demographic data of the student respondents.

TABLE 2
RESPONDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

Number of students' evaluations 2001-2011	517
Evaluations completed	
Principles of Transportation	19%
Business Logistics	28%
International Logistics	32%
Executive in Residence	21%
Student's major	
BBA Logistics	76%
Other majors	24%
Student's classification	
Junior	47%
Seniors	53%

TABLE 3
COURSE EVALUATION QUESTIONS

Questions	Courses						
	EiR	Business Logistics	Sig.	Princ. of Trans	Sig.	Int'l Logistics	Sig.
To what degree where you intellectually challenged in this course?	3.29	3.63	.006**	3.82	.000**	4.11	.000**
How much did you learn in this course?	4.03	3.77	.024*	4.14	.338	4.13	.343
The instructor's encouragement to class participation, discussion, or questions was?	4.59	4.41	.071	4.38	.038*	4.36	.006**
Overall, how would you rate this instructor?	4.63	4.33	.001**	4.44	.043*	4.34	.002**
* - Sig. p-value<.05; ** - Sig. p-value<.01			Likert Scales of 5 is the best and 1 is the lowest				

FINDINGS – ANALYSIS OF STUDENT REPSONSES AND ACHIEVEMENT

Using student responses from the student course evaluations, an independent sample t-test was conducted to compare the mean responses. Answers to the relevant questions on the evaluations for the Logistics EiR course were compared to answers on the evaluations from each of the core logistics courses. The questions used for comparison are detailed in Table 3.

A review and analysis of the relevant questions from the course evaluations proved thought-provoking. Of particular interest was the idea that students did not feel as though they were as intellectually challenged in the Logistics EiR course versus other logistics courses. The students' perception was that they did not need to work as hard in the EiR course as they did in other logistics courses. This is a key finding and should be viewed as a positive given that Millenials respond more to an active learning environment and less to a traditional learning environment involving memorization. The class increases the level of interaction and active learning when compared to a traditional logistics course. Additionally, when compared to the students learning of the basic concepts in a traditional course format (i.e., a principles course), the logistics EiR course provides for a greater diversity of subject matter related to real world situations. This may contribute to the students perception of lack of intellectual challenge. As documented in the following paragraphs, the overall impact of the guest speaker EiR model appears to be higher levels of learning when compared to other classes without the "traditional" effort on the part of the student.

In addition to the opinions provided by the students in the course evaluations, course grading and assessment was also considered for analysis. Table 4 details the mean grades for each of the courses used in this study by comparing the overall average grade by course to the overall average grade in Logistics EiR (Note: an "A" equaled a 4, "B" = 3, … "F" = 0.)

Interestingly, although the level of learning appears to be greater than that of other logistics courses, students also attained higher levels of achievement in the EiR course. As an upper-level undergraduate course, the logistics EiR course is very "MBA like" in its course requirements and assessment of student

TABLE 4
COMPARISON OF COURSE GRADES

Course.	Mean	N	Std. Dev.	F.	Sig.
Principles of Transportation	2.48	238	1.03	4.03	0.000*
Business Logistics	2.51	338	0.97	38.18	0.000*
International Logistics	2.75	324	0.82	8.86	0.003*
Logistics Executive in Residence	3.33	123	0.49		
* - Sig. p-value<.05; ** - Sig. p-value<.01					

achievement. In addition to in-class quizzes and assignments, the examinations in the course are essay examinations requiring critical thinking skills rather than the multiple choice type examinations provided in other courses. Students are also required to give formal, 15 to 20 minute group presentations as a part of the logistics EiR course. When compared to other classes, the length and depth of the presentation requirements is much greater than other logistics courses.

In addition to a review of student responses to the relevant questions on the course evaluations and student achievement, the authors reviewed the written comments provided by students regarding the course. While there were not enough comments to perform a detailed qualitative analysis, there were enough responses to highlight both strengths and weaknesses of the guest speaker EiR course model. Table 5 provides a number of positive and negative comments representative of student observations about the EiR course.

The comments provided additional support that the speakers provided a unique and positive learning experience for the students. Even the "worst" speaker did a great job of helping to recognize the opportunities and challenges that

TABLE 5
REPRESENTATIVE STUDENT COMMENTS

Positive Comments: What did you like best about this instructor/course?	83%

"Learned a lot. Speakers were helpful"
"Instructor cares about the students' futures and he is there if questions need to be asked"
"Instructor is a good mentor"
"Instructor helps students learn more about logistics and enjoy it at the same time"
"Great course"
"Speakers coming in and talking about real life situations"
"Very intellectual course. Showed a lot of insight about what to expect in the Logistics world"
"The executives that came to our class"
"Learn a lot about my major, a lot more about the business world and the real world. Instructor did a great job scheduling speakers"
"The speakers and their information"
"Speakers"
"Guest speakers and practice in presenting"
"Guest speakers were phenomenal"
"Great opportunity to get the feel for real world applications of things I have learned in other logistics classes"
"The chance to interact with other logistics professionals"
"The speakers were very interesting and I learned a lot by listening to them"
"I like the enthusiasm of the instructor and the subject matter of the course"
"I enjoyed listening to knowledgeable people in the industry"
"Excellent course to expose students to various aspects of the transportation industry"
"Well organized and great to take right before you head out"
"The experimental learning got so much from this course, I am still getting stuff out of it"
"Learned from people in the industry that have tremendous experience"
"I liked that there was so much real word application"
"Everything in the class was great. I am very glad I took this course and was able to meet and learn from all the Executives"
"Instructor is interesting and great teacher. He has worked to bring is some of the most successful people in the industry. One of the best part of the class is when he does current affairs"
"In enjoyed most of the speakers"
"The whole class was interesting. Hearing from executives is priceless. Recommended course"

Negative Comments: How could this instructor/course be improved?	17%

"Easier exams (they are brutal)"
"By providing more real world"
"Time of day"
"Grade only on presentations, no tests"
"I would suggest a final exam only. No midterm"
"More discussion on current affairs"
"Have more tests, closer together"
"Unnecessarily harsh on many occasions"

new logistics managers will face. The comments support the basic concept of having a class centered around logistics executives. Furthermore, most of the negative comments are based on the difficulty of exams and presentations and are more pedagogy issues about the mechanics and not the value of the speakers. Ironically, the comments about difficulty contradict some of the findings about the "easy" nature of the course.

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

This study provides insight into the guest-speaker model of a Logistics EiR course. Any EiR model of learning potentially increases students' preparation for the job market and increases the acceptance and understanding of the course material (Eveleth and Baker-Eveleth,

2009.) The speaker-based EiR presents a different type of approach from the traditional one in which an executive teaches an entire course. There are some unique strengths and weaknesses to this model when compared to Johnston's findings (2004, summarized in Table 1.) In addition to Johnston's key concepts, the study identified a number of additional points. Some of the strengths of the speaker-based EiR class include a diversity of people, topics and experiences. For instance, the small group interactions, over dinner, helps learning as well. Another benefit is the branding of the university by including so many different companies on campus. One speaker actually interviewed over twenty of his customers about "what to say to the students." The "free" advertising is invaluable for the school and the company. Finally, it can serve as an early interview filter

TABLE 6
BENEFITS AND COSTS OF A SPEAKER BASED EiR COURSE

	Benefits	Costs
Student	Learn what employers want in new graduates and access a network for potential job opportunities Learn to match expectations to real world reality *Broad range of speakers and topics*	Time spent in class, doing research, meeting practitioner Credit-hour costs(no additional cost if full-time students)
Instructor	Learn current business practice to use as examples of teaching Learn current career advice to give students	***Time spent for class, coordinating visits, evaluating assignments, time in class*** Time spent getting a course added to the college catalog (one time)
College	***Provide practitioner input to students in the business curriculum*** Contribution to achieving college mission and objectives Potential new "friends" of the college 　*Potential source for placement of graduates* 　*Potential source of additional funding/resources*	Cost of meals *Costs of gifts* Cost of faculty time *(much lower in a speaker based vs traditional executive in resident type of class)*
Practitioner	An attentive audience of students A chance to help others with his or her experiences Introduction to potential employees Association with the business school *Input to course/curriculum*	Time and travel costs *Class preparation*

(Adapted from Johnston, 2004)

by potential employers. Some companies can use this as a method to improve their access to future employees. Table 6 incorporates both the Johnson conclusions (previously in Table 1) and this study's findings into one overall table. New items are italicized and items that are strongly reinforced by the speaker based EiR class are in bold.

As with any new concept, there are some challenges with this type of class. The scheduling of twelve successful executives can be difficult. There can also be a significant cost for incidentals to the university (e.g., gifts, meals, etc.) and travel for the speakers. There is a significant time commitment for both the faculty member, in course preparation before the semester which includes the organizational activities necessary to schedule the executives participating in the course, and to the executives, who must commit to travel necessary to participate. Finally, there is a potential risk in having students interact with senior executives. According to the professor, there is generally at least one faux pas per semester from the students. Fortunately, the executives are prepared and have taken it with a sense of humor to this point.

The net result is a course that has proven to be very successful and popular at Georgia Southern University. While it is not a perfect course, it provides a different learning experience that seems to resonate with Millennial learners and the executives that participate. The hope of the authors is that other universities will consider whether a similar model can be applied to improve the learning of their Millennial students and increase practitioner involvement at their institution.

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BIOGRAPHIES

Steve Rutner is currently a Professor of Logistics and Transportation at Georgia Southern University. Steve received his Ph.D. in Logistics and Transportation from the University of Tennessee and earned a MBA in Marketing and Logistics from the University of Alabama. His research background has covered the areas of logistics value, logistics information systems, capacity problems in aviation, and alliances and partnerships in transportation. E-Mail: srutner@georgiasouthern.edu

Scott Cox is an Assistant Professor of Management at Athens State University. Scott is also presently completing his Ph.D. in Logistics/Supply Chain Management at Georgia Southern University. He holds both an MBA and a Masters in Management Information Systems from Georgia College & State University. His current research activities are focused on issues surrounding the relationship between supply chain management and information technology. E-Mail: scott.cox@athens.edu

Maria Aviles recently received her Ph.D in Logistics and Supply Chain from Georgia Southern University. She earned an Ed.S in Higher Education and a MBA from Georgia Southern University. Her research interests include logistics and supply chain evolution, collaboration, risk, and the use of cloud computing. Her pedagogical research focuses on Millennial Students. E-Mail: maria_e_aviles@georgiasouthern.edu

APPENDIX A
LOGISTICS EXECUTIVE IN RESIDENCE PARTIAL SYLLABUS

STATEMENT OF OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE
This semester's topic will be executive viewpoints in the field of logistics. The growth of logistics throughout industry has led to an equivalent growth in the professional opportunities for logistics managers. These new leaders in industry have unique insights into various logistics and transportation issues. The simple purpose of the course is to help students identify not only the current issues of the industry, but also gather various viewpoints about the topics.

The students will be expected to challenge themselves and the executives to broaden their understanding and critical thinking skills in logistics. Approximately once a week, an executive will speak with the students on a topic of his or her choice. The goal is to allow a broad collection of issues to be presented by and to the students. Both the executive and the class members should benefit from the interaction within the classroom and other outside settings.

The ultimate goal is to help students to become better informed about the "real world" of logistics and transportation. This, in turn, should continue to prepare the students to perform as entry level managers and analysts for shippers and carriers.

GRADING POLICIES
As mentioned previously, each exam, assignment, etc. has a point value. Based on the values of these assignments, final course grades will be based on the following minimum standards.

Item	Points	Total
2 Exams	100 each	200
2 Presentations	100 each	200
Attend/Assign		200
Participation		200
Total	Possible	800

Grade	Points	Percent
A	720 and over	90%
B	640-719	80%
C	560-639	70%
D	480-559	60%
F	Under 480	

STRUCTURE OF COURSE
This course meets twice a week throughout the semester. The principal types of classroom activities include the following:

- Class discussions of current and related topics;
- In class assignments, examples, and projects;
- Examinations to provide feedback and positive reinforcement regarding the level of knowledge and insight which is being gained throughout the course; and
- Group presentations on specific company topics.

The examinations that will be given this semester:

- The exams will be Exams #1, and #2 will count equally towards the final course grade.
- Both exams will be 3-4 short essay questions.
- The examinations are _TENTATIVELY_ scheduled as listed in the schedule.

Also, there will be various assignments during the quarter. Most of these will be either short and specific assignments (i.e., look up something on the Internet), or be part of the preparation for the coming speaker.
A group project will be required. It will consist of teams of 2-3 students working together to analyze a logistics company. The group will be required to prepare a 15 minute presentation in class discussing their findings. More details will be covered in class and on the web site.

Finally, class participation will be required. This will include both discussions in class and keeping current on logistics literature. Also, required questions each week for the speakers is part of the presentation grade. These will be used as the basis for increasing interaction with speakers. There are a number of points to keep in mind about participation. This class has a unique approach to participation. The grade will be made up of three parts: attendance, questions, and traditional participation in class.

Attendance will be required in every class. All students will be allowed to miss two classes for ANY reason. **AFTER THAT, EACH MISSED CLASS WILL COST ONE LETTER GRADE**. Finally, the professor will evaluate the students' discussion in class on current topics and with speakers.

Course Outline – Spring Semester, 2011

Day	Date	Section and Topics	General Field	Group	Assign
T	1/18	Course Overview & Organization (R&CT) Readings & Current Topics			
R	1/20	Career Planning – Career Services			Résumé
T	1/25	Student Presentations and R&CT		1,10	1
R	1/27	Speaker #1 – Class 1 Railroad	CS in RR		
T	2/1	Student Presentations and R&CT		2,11	
R	2/3	Speaker #2 – Large Private Logistics	Private Fleet		
T	2/8	Student Presentations and R&CT	Customs	3,12	
R	2/10	Speaker #3 – Custom Brokerage	Broker		
T	2/15	Student Presentations and R&CT		4,1	
R	2/17	Speaker #4 – Large Specialty Retailer	Retail SCM		
T	2/22	Student Presentations and R&CT		5,2	
R	2/24	Speaker #5 – Large Retailer	Distribution		
T	3/1	Student Presentations and R&CT		6,3	
R	3/3	Speaker #6 – Army Logistics General	Leadership		
T	3/8	R&CT and Review for Exam			
R	3/10	*** EXAM 1 ***			
T	3/22	Student Presentations and R&CT		7,4	
R	3/24	Speaker #7 – Mgt Recruiting Firm	HRM in Log		
T	3/29	Student Presentations and R&CT		8,5	
R	3/31	Speaker #8 – 2000 Olympics Logistics	Int'l		
T	4/5	Student Presentations and R&CT		9,6	
R	4/7	Speaker #9 – Class 1 LTL Firm	Motor		
T	4/12	Student Presentations and R&CT		10,7	
R	4/14	Speaker #10 – Major 3PL	3PL		
T	4/19	Student Presentations and R&CT		11,8	
R	4/21	Speaker #11 – Large Automotive	Intermodal		
T	4/26	Student Presentations and R&CT		12,9	
R	4/28	Speaker #12 – Smaller Consulting	Entrepreneur		
T	5/3	R&CT – Fill In Week for Speaker			
R	5/5	Hand out Take Home Exam	Last Class		
	5/10	** EXAM PERIOD – 5:30pm **	TURN-IN		

SAMPLE EXAM FOR LOGISTICS EXECUTIVE IN RESIDENCE

LOGT 4233 – Logistics Executive-in-Residence Mid-Term Examination

PRINT NAME:_____ **Last 4:**_____

READ THESE DIRECTIONS CAREFULLY: This is a take home examination that is due at the start of class on the assigned date. It MUST be type written and follow these basic requirements: Font 12 point Times New Roman, single spaced with a blank line between paragraphs, approximately one page per answer. Each answer should be about 600 words. You will type the speaker's name centered at the top of the page for each answer.

You will turn in both a hard copy and electronic file. For the hard copy make sure it has your name hand written on the BACK – not on the front. Each speaker will be on his own page (i.e., each answer on a new page). For the electronic copy create TWO files (one for each answer). Name the files as follows: SPEAKER LAST NAME_YOUR LAST NAME.docx. Make sure you name is not on the answers in the files. Bring the files on a USB/Flash drive when you hand in the hard copy.

Grammar and thought will both be graded. Therefore, proof read your answers and think about what you are trying to say. Do not "fill" a bunch a space recapping what the speaker said. Concentrate your efforts on why this it was important, how it will affect you, etc.

Essay Questions:
For TWO of the speakers answer the following question. For speaker X, what was the most interesting or important point to you and **WHY**? How will you try to apply something from his/her presentation in your business or personal life? What one thing would you like to have heard from the speaker that he/she did not cover?

See below for an example:
                    Mr. John H. Smith – The Joy Luck Company
Mr Smith visited us on xxx date and covered a number of key topics. The most important point that I got was xxxxxxxxxxxx xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx xxxxxxxxxxxxxxx xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

Another key point that I will be able to apply in my own life is xxxxxxxxxxxx xxxxxxxxx xxxxxxxx

xxxxxxxxxxxxxxx xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx xxxxxxxxxxxxxxx xxxxxxxxxx

Based on the material, the one thing I wished we could have learned more about was xxxxxx

xxxxxx xxxxxxxxx xxxxxxxx xxxxxxxxxxxxxx xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx xxxxxxxxxxxxx

In conclusion, Mr. Smith was a great speaker because xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx xxxxxxxxxxxxx xxx

xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx