Walking the Talk: 
A Report of Teaching Methods in PRME Topic Areas

Dr. Jeanie Forray, Western New England College and Dr. Jennifer Leigh, Nazareth College

Overview
This study examined instructor teaching methods and teaching styles in all business disciplines when covering issues of ethics, social responsibility, sustainability/natural environment, or social entrepreneurship in their courses. The descriptive findings focus on similarities and differences between pedagogical approaches to undergraduate, graduate, and executive education for PRME related topic areas.

Methodology
Samples. We collected data from an on-line survey tool from November 2009 to February 2010. The sample (N=286) included participants from 29 countries. 21.8% of respondents teach at all three levels (undergraduate, Master’s, executive), 33.6% teach at UG and Master’s level, 21.4% teach at UG only, 11.4% teach at Master’s only, and 10.0% teach at Master’s and Executive. Of those indicating the location where they conduct the majority of their teaching, 65% teach in North America, 19% teach in Europe, and 19% teach in other regions.

Analysis. To date our analysis has focused on exploring descriptive and cross-tabbed statistics.

Findings
Our findings involve universal and unique patterns of how PRME related content is delivered in business classrooms across levels and the extent to which instructors are aware of their institution’s PRME involvement. Specifically, we note the widespread use of class discussion and case studies methods across all levels. In addition, we find that instructors who teach at multiple levels employ more instructional strategies across all levels and that those who teach only at one level - for example, the master’s level - utilize fewer instructional strategies. Finally, we note that currently PRME involvement does not appear to have an influence on breadth or type of teaching methods.

Business Student Instruction Level

Conclusions
We extend the conversation about pedagogical methods by offering the first descriptive snapshot of the learning process from the instructor’s perspective for PRME related topics. Our survey broadens the instructional methods conversation by assessing the use of classroom discussion, so far excluded from the writings on the topic. Additionally, we include all levels of business education instruction in our sample. This we hope will help bring our attention to other marginalized levels of business instruction, namely undergraduate level. The inclusion of undergraduate in the pedagogical conversation is essential since the majority of business degrees offered in the U.S. are at this level and the undergraduate business students today are the potential graduate MBA students of tomorrow.

The limitations of the study include reliability issues such as the use of self-report data, the lack of quantified or rank ordered data on instructional methods that could provide quantification of actual usage, and the statistically insignificant subsamples for many business disciplines. Future studies should work to capture data from more non-management business disciplines and include rank ordered or quantified data.

References

Acknowledgements & Contact Information
The research was conducted in cooperation with the OBTs Teaching Society for Management Educators and PRME.

Dr. Jeanie Forray
Associate Prof. of Management
Western New England College
1215 Wilbraham Road
Springfield, MA 01119
Email: jforray@wnecc.edu
Phone: 1-413-782-1702

Dr. Jennifer S. A. Leigh
Assistant Prof. of Management
Nazareth College
4245 East Avenue
Rochester, NY 14618
Email: jleigh@naz.edu
Phone: 1-585-383-2515