Experiential pedagogy and the moral duty of business schools

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Experiential learning and the moral duty of business schools

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Institutions and professional organizations in higher education are calling for increased

experiential pedagogy as a core learning approach, citing lasting and more effective learning

outcomes as arguments for its inclusion (Gallup & Purdue University, 2015; National

Association of Colleges and Employers, 2015; National Survey of Student Engagement, 2017).

Within the business and management education domain, accreditors such as the Association to

Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB Seminars, n.d.; Delaney, 2015) and

institutional consortia (e.g., Global Business School Network, 2018) expressly encourage

experiential learning in business education. Yet, these calls for experiential pedagogy can present

unforeseen challenges.

Consider this scenario:

Professor A teaches in a highly ranked business school where students are accustomed to

a traditional, lecture-based learning environment. After reading an article about a labor

relations teaching exercise designed to have students simulate forming a union, Professor A – a

tenured senior academic – decides to use that exercise with students in his final year course.

Halfway through the semester, Professor A has a colleague, Professor B, enter the classroom in

his stead to tell the students that Professor A has been suspended indefinitely from teaching

duties pending an investigation, and that Professor B is now taking over the course. Professor B

tells the students that new assignments will be introduced and previously graded assignments

will not be used in the final grade calculation. Professor B also declines to answer any of the

students' questions about the new arrangement. A number of students express outrage and

visible distress; one student walks out in tears. The exercise lasts about 10 minutes and ends

when the enraged students organize themselves into a group and plan how they will fight back

against these changes. Professor A then enters the classroom and informs students of the

deception and its purpose. Students are debriefed about this intentional act, designed to break trust between the instructor and students and make them angry enough to experience how union organizing comes about in business. While Professor A reassures the students that course marks remain intact and that the activity is over, several students, and in some cases their parents, complain to the dean about the excessive distress students experienced due to the exercise. A few students tell the dean they do not want to go back into the classroom with Professor A, but are concerned that they would fail this required course.

The dean, troubled by the clear anxiety of the students, invites Professor A to help him understand why the students are so upset. Professor A responds that the exercise is representative of what students will experience in the real world, and as such provides a valuable opportunity to drive home an important lesson. Professor A knows that there are neither business school or university policies nor professional teaching guidelines that prevent him from using such an activity, and so further responds while exiting the dean's office, "This is ridiculous. I've been teaching for nearly 30 years and I know what's best for my students!"

In this scenario, Professor A has used an in-class experiential activity based on Taras and Steel (2007) that he believes offers a very powerful learning experience. The activity, involving the exploitation of power, subordination of others, and the manipulation of interpersonal dynamics, is designed to generate emotions such as fury, anxiety, powerlessness, and a loss of self-confidence.[1] However, using the activity as a learning opportunity also raises ethical issues related to the use of deception, the lack of informed consent or ability to genuinely opt-out when class participation is mandatory, and the uncertainty that the educator had the skills required to

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[1] We recognize that any of these outcomes are possible in faculty/student interactions as a result of an inherent power differential between faculty and students. Our focus here is on the unmanaged outcome of the activity and not the interpersonal behavior of any one individual.

effectively facilitate and debrief such an intense experience. While Taras and Steel's (2007)

activity offers students an opportunity for deep, lasting learning about the management-worker

dynamic and how unionizing activities occur, positive learning outcomes do not necessarily

follow after running it.

Experiential pedagogy represents an enactment of experiential learning theory (Kolb &

Kolb, 2009), and includes activities where students are actively involved in the learning process

and where learning outcomes are stimulated by direct experience (Bowen, 2005). A core

differentiator between experiential and rote or didactic pedagogy is that experiential pedagogy *by*

design taps into student emotional engagement and personal commitment to their own learning

(Bradford, 2019; Chickering & Reisser, 1993; Dunsmoor, Murty, Davachi, & Phelps, 2015;

please see Kirschner, Sweller, & Clark, 2006 and Schmidt, Loyens, Van Gog, & Paas, 2007 for a

seminal debate about active vs passive teaching modes and learning outcomes). Deliberately

generating emotional engagement with students through classroom-based experiential pedagogy

can result in transformative learning outcomes that change a student's perspective and behavior

in lasting and positive ways. On the other hand, if managed poorly, deliberately generating

emotional engagement can damage students' expectations of what will happen in a classroom

setting. It can make learning difficult or even impossible when student distress remains

unmitigated.

Students enter our classrooms with some general assumptions in place (Keith-Spiegel,

Whitley Jr., Ware Balogh, Perkins, & Wittig, 2002). They assume we will in fact teach them and

they trust that we know what we are doing. They assume we respect their autonomy and desire to

learn, and that we have their best learning interests at heart. They assume that we will not harm

them and that we will preserve their dignity as people (*op cit*., p. xviii-xix). These assumptions

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rarely are negotiated openly or even acknowledged. Here, implicit trust is an aspect of the

psychological contract between educator, student and, importantly, institution (Kuh, Gonyea, &

Williams, 2005) and such trust is necessary for learning to occur (Booker, 2008; Wooten &

McCroskey, 1996). As the opening vignette was meant to illustrate, classroom-based experiential

pedagogy neither coalesces around a set of accepted professional norms nor always adheres to

taken-for-granted assumptions of trust and psychological safety.

In this essay, we discuss what we believe are business schools' unaddressed moral

responsibilities when they call for educators to embed experiential pedagogy in their courses and

programs. While "experiential pedagogy" is a large umbrella term (Wright, Forray, & Lund

Dean, 2019), for our purposes it includes experiential teaching practices that advance important

learning outcomes for today's management students. We focus on classroom-based experiential

teaching activities that individual educators choose to fit their learning goals, as there is great

variability in those choices and how they are individually facilitated. Our opening vignette is

again illustrative: any educator may choose any activity s/he wants, has to manage it *in situ* and,

in this case, has to deal with it when it goes awry. We frame business schools' experiential

pedagogy advocacy as an explicit moral duty (Hosmer, 1995), making the case that a dilemma

exists in encouraging experiential teaching approaches without knowing how faculty use them

and what student safeguards are in place. We draw upon practice theory, primarily as it has been

articulated by Nicolini (2012), to argue that individual experiential teaching actions represent a

de facto set of practices that currently lacks even rudimentary community-based normative

boundaries for determining how experiential teaching should be done. Using Nicolini's practice

taxonomy provides a nuanced lens by which to examine this dilemma and avenues for ways

forward. We end the article with recommendations and a set of research questions by which the

experiential pedagogical community, as a community, may develop its own understanding, structures, and rules (Nicolini, 2012) for ethical experiential teaching practices.

WHY EXAMINING EXPERIENTIAL PEDAGOGY PRACTICE MATTERS

A practical outgrowth of Dewey's work (Dewey, 1938) on reflective thinking and experience-based inquiry (Rodgers, 2002), experiential pedagogy in business and management education fosters direct application of students' experience with organizational situations to enhance learning of essential management competencies that are, at root, relational in nature. Such competencies include "managing ambiguity, managing clients, collaborating, and communicating" (Global Business School Network, 2018), gaining enhanced decision making and critical thinking skills (Bruni-Bossio & Willness, 2016), enhancing cultural intelligence (Ng, Van Dyne, & Ang, 2009), cultivating empathy and innovation (Nissley, 2002, 2010; Welsh & Dehler, 2012), and increasing ability to understand and navigate organizational power dynamics (Bolman & Deal, 1979), among others.

Teaching experientially, then, is often the most appropriate modality by which to help students learn essential management competencies and make impactful, intelligent organizational decisions as leaders. But to engage student learning in those competencies experiential educators may deliberately place students in emotionally difficult situations. The management education literature has described, in detail, activities in which educators deceive students (Barkacs & Barkacs, 2017; Taras & Steel, 2007), position them in intentionally ambiguous and unmanaged situations, sometimes for an entire term (Chappell & Thomas, 2019), simulate power abuses (Bolman & Deal, 2017a, 2017b), model dictatorial managerial disrespect (Fornaciari & Lund Dean, 2005), and embarrass, shame or ridicule students (Stewart, LaDuke, Bracht, Sweet, & Gamarel, 2003), all in the name of learning. Certainly, many experiential activities do not

involve negative or difficult emotional engagement, but many do, and that fact raises our concerns.

Common experiential teaching activities include *role plays* (students act out the part of a person or character in a pre-created or instructor-provided scenario), *fishbowl discussions* (students sit in two concentric circles; students on the inner circle engage in discussion while students on the outer circle observe and evaluate the discussion), *in-class interpersonal simulations* (students experience the 'reality' of a scenario), and *self-assessments* (students complete a psychosocial inventory, often with sharing of results). As our opening vignette demonstrated, some activities may include deception to heighten the personal stakes in a classroom situation (e.g., Bolman & Deal, 1979; Landrum, 2001; Taras & Steel, 2007) or manipulate students' emotions when experiencing powerlessness or frustration (e.g., Adams & Buono, 2011; Fornaciari & Lund Dean, 2005). Thus, experiential activities range from a mild stirring of emotional energy to activities designed to provoke high-arousal reactions.

Because all types of experiential activities involve some level of emotional engagement (Wright et al., 2019), there are possible impacts on students' psychological safety (Edmondson, 1999). For example, although self-assessments may generate important self-awareness (Whetten & Cameron, 2012), educators may require students to disclose their results to others without considering privacy, or the effects of labels and stigma. Role plays can promote empathy and perspective, but if not carefully facilitated can lead to embarrassment and shame that persist beyond the classroom itself. Fishbowl discussions can provide a structure within which students debate opposing perspectives of complex issues. If not skillfully managed, however, a fishbowl experience can result in aggressive or disrespectful arguments among students who hold competing views, particularly when the issue involves values-based positions. Any experiential

activity can lead to unrecognized and/or unmanaged distress that compromises the learning environment.

To be clear, we are not arguing that emotion stemming from experiential activities is always harmful to students, nor are we arguing that experiential activities are the only or best techniques used in management education. Rather, we are challenging the assumption that all teaching modalities in management education require the same skill set and engender the same risks. The good intentions that surround our choices of experiential activities are not enough to compensate for the potentially damaging outcomes that can result from their use. Experiential pedagogy requires a unique set of teaching skills because it is different from didactic pedagogy in several important ways:

- Experiential pedagogy is designed to engage students' emotions and self-involvement in learning activities;

- Experiential pedagogy may require suspension of expected or accepted teaching norms, such as the use of deception or manipulation, and may remove students' ability to opt-out of an activity;

- Experiential activities may result in outcomes that persist well after class ends, such as in altered student-to-student relationships or diminished interpersonal trust;

- Experiential activities may result in unanticipated or one-off outcomes even when planned and facilitated skillfully; they may result in genuine student distress or harm if used improperly.

Experiential teaching modalities challenge business and management education on every level - individually, interpersonally, institutionally, and communally - by embodying ethical

paradoxes. Experiential educators work to develop students' agency in navigating real organizational situations but adopt an authoritarian stance toward experiential activities that can negate student choice and power. Experiential educators seek to enhance students' learning by 'forcing' them to participate in potentially fraught experiential activities for which the educator her/himself may not be adequately trained or skilled to facilitate. Experiential educators depend upon students' trust for learning, only to break it by using deception in a variety of activities or simulations. Experiential educators signal the importance of such activities through the marking system, only to leave students fearful of opting-out of experiential activities if their participation marks might suffer.

All of this indicates that there are power, transparency, and trust issues in experiential teaching that requires ethical consideration from business schools. In the next section, we discuss how experiential pedagogy includes a set of particular teaching practices that should be recognized as distinct from other teaching practices. By doing so, we make the case that business schools' experiential teaching advocacy is an explicit moral duty that is ethical only in conjunction with developing faculty's experiential teaching as a unique set of skills.

TRUST AND THE MORAL DUTY OF BUSINESS SCHOOLS

Although faculty members enjoy much autonomy, their work to create meaningful curricula and program offerings is performed in conjunction with others in the business school. No individual faculty member creates a business school ethos, and a business school is more than a collection of atomistic free agents. Considering a business school as a particular form of community clarifies the moral duties associated with experiential teaching. Here, we draw on Hosmer (1995) to frame experiential educators as a community whose members craft and uphold norms of behavior such that *individual practice* connects with *organizational ethical duties.*

Hosmer's conceptualization of an organizational morality can be applied to business schools as a reciprocal and relational responsibility. Conditions of uncertainty and vulnerability exist within any organizational setting, including within a business school context, and those conditions can be mitigated by developing trust among its members. Hosmer noted that 'trust' includes both dependence on others for decisions that carry uncertain outcomes as well as confidence that others will not take advantage of one's vulnerability (see p. 391 for Hosmer's summary of behavioral definitions of trust). For our purposes, we only slightly adapt (shown in brackets) Hosmer's unified definition of trust that includes a communal aspect:

> *Trust* is the expectation by one person, group, or [institution] of ethically justifiable behavior—that is, morally correct decisions and actions based upon ethical principles of analysis—on the part of the other person, group, or [institution] in a joint endeavor… (p. 399, italics in original).

Hosmer moves the trust construct from *individual actions*, to *interpersonal relationships* and *economic transactions*, and finally into *social structures* by recognizing a community's

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interdependence of actions and manifestations of vulnerability. Because an individual educator's experiential activities have impacts on students that fall along a wide continuum, the combined sum of a business school's experiential practices has ethical implications for many stakeholders. Experiential teaching practices engender the same interdependence of actions and expressions of vulnerability by educators and students as "a joint endeavor" (op cit.). When students feel their own vulnerability during experiential activities, they do so through a largely unarticulated but assumed trust that educators will not harm them. As such, our relationships with and responsibilities toward students and other stakeholders contain what Hosmer suggests is "an explicit moral duty" (Hosmer, 1995, p. 381). Connecting the relational concept of trust with organizational moral duties, Hosmer's conclusions (p. 391-392) echo those of Keith-Spiegel and colleagues (2002) but move such duties to an *institutional* level rather than remaining on an individual or interpersonal level. Hosmer's descriptions may be extended to inform what students might reasonably expect from their involvement in our experiential teaching efforts:

1. Students enter our classrooms trusting that the educators are part of an institutional paradigm associated with mentoring and development;

2. Students come into our classrooms expecting that we have their best interests in mind when we build and deliver class activities;

3. Students generally expect to learn something valuable, to cooperate with educators to enhance their learning, and not to be forced into a learning environment or situation against their will;

4. Students generally expect that the institution will protect their rights and interests, and exhibit "generous or helpful or, at the very least, nonharmful behavior" (p. 392) during their time as students.

If we consider experiential teaching with Hosmer's insights, it is clear that experiential

pedagogy is foundationally a trust-based endeavor with impacts well beyond our individual

pedagogical choices and that the institution has a vested interest in what individual educators are

doing. When we choose experiential teaching, that choice also impacts our interpersonal

relationships with students, the economic transaction of students attending our institutions, and

the social structures that make up any teaching community. Along with its trust aspect,

experiential pedagogy has a moral underpinning due to its intent to capture students' emotional

engagement through activity design that often necessitates a violation of accepted ethical

principles, as we've discussed above.

The degree to which we need to draw out strong emotional responses with the intention

of meeting learning objectives varies substantially, and as the dean encountered in our opening

vignette, there is no agreed-upon frontier that justifies meeting those learning objectives.

Hosmer's insistence upon the interdependence of our actions and what it means to be an

organization means the aggregate of our experiential teaching actions accrues upward to a

business-school level. Each business school may vary in its degree of community ethos among

faculty, but, individual faculty certainly operate within that institutional structure. In the next

section, we extend this discussion that experiential teaching can be re-framed as a community-

based paradigm and as a unique set of practices, using Nicolini's (2012) interpretation of practice

theory. The theory frames why experiential pedagogy adheres to a notion of what makes a

community and a subsequent set of standards and responsibilities for ethical practice. Nicolini's

theorizing shows us not only what experiential pedagogy is, but what it must be among

experiential educators and the business schools in which they work.

EXPERIENTIAL TEACHING AS A COMMUNITY PARADIGM

A practice theory approach reinforces the idea that choosing and enacting experiential teaching is not merely an individual's prerogative, complete with individual agency, initiative, creativity, and performance (Nicolini, 2012), but is *necessarily* a set of socially constructed and distributed practices that create social reality. By assigning business schools a moral duty for experiential pedagogy, we borrow Nicolini's notion that any particular practice community must first recognize its work as unique—as a praxis that has customs, expectations, boundaries, and norms. 'Praxis' includes all the activities associated with implementing experiential pedagogy - what experiential educators actually do (Whittington, 2006, p. 619) - whereas the word 'practice' represents a "routinized type of behavior" that "represents a pattern which can be filled out by a multitude of single and often unique actions reproducing the practice" (Reckwith, 2002, p. 250).

Practice theories recognize that praxis is widely distributed without articulated *individual* rules of behavior or structures to connect or monitor it (Nicolini, 2012; Schatzki, 2005; Whittington, 2006) and moving toward communities of practice includes power, conflict, and politics as intrinsic components. As Nicolini notes, "Practices are, by definition, social because it is only at this level that morality, meaning, and normativity can be sustained" (p. 227). Moving experiential teaching "practice" from an individual event to a collective web of activities allows us to examine experiential pedagogy in terms of expectations, structures and norms, and ultimately the moral frames within which experiential teaching practices reside, using Nicolini's four analytic elements (Schatzki, 2005, as developed in Nicolini, 2012).

Practical understanding: Practical understanding is "the knowledge that derives from being a competent member of a practice" such that the shared understanding makes sense to the individuals involved in the practice, even though all may not agree with the actions taken (Nicolini, 2012, p. 165). Practical understanding is necessary in order to know what to do or how

to react, and signals cohesion within a community. Within the "universe" of experiential

teaching practice in the management education community, there is no practical understanding of

how experiential activities can be or should be facilitated to achieve learning outcomes. We do

not have an articulation of shared principles, or context-specific modifications for experiential

activities. Business faculty are not normally required to be qualified, credentialed, clinically

trained or demonstrably experienced to facilitate experiential activities. The individual educator,

usually alone, assesses her/his own skill and competence for experiential activity facilitation.

There exists no overall credentialing body or professional association that prescribes, or even

describes, competent or responsible experiential teaching practices (Wright et al., 2019).

Rules: Rules constitute "programmes of action that specify what to do …" (Nicolini,

2012, p. 166). There exist few rules about the 'how' of experiential learning facilitation (Lund

Dean & Wright, 2017). Aside from voluntary participation in experientially-oriented

conferences, or blogs and listservs that allow practice-sharing, there are no shared programmatic

specifications around what must happen during experiential teaching practices for business

education[2]. The lack of rules as a connector of practice allows individual interpretation of right

and wrong behaviors in experiential teaching. Additionally, the lack of rules does not allow

shared understanding of and reflection about "material consequences" (Nicolini, 2012, p. 166) of

our practices. This is especially apparent when the exercise does not go well or students have

reactions that were unforeseen. Such material consequences of experiential pedagogy in

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[2] We contrast business education with other professions' standards and rules for experiential teaching in education. Medicine (see, for example, the AMEE International Association for Medical Education); Psychology (see the APA American Psychological Association); or Law (see the AALS Association of American Law Schools) have strict and non-negotiable requirements for experiential teaching practices and educator credentialing.

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management education can include a retreat from using experiential activities (Taylor, 2018) and

unexpectedly poor learning outcomes (Edelson et al., 2018), among others.

Teleo-affective structure: Community members of a practice use teleo-affective

structure, or a set of prescribed 'ends,' to socialize newcomers into that practice (Nicolini, 2012,

p. 167). Through socialization, novices learn practices through instructions and corrections;

proper techniques are reinforced by "repetition, sanctions, and peer pressure" (p. 166-167). In

experiential management education, we have no teleo-affective structure; that is, we do not share

a definition of "novice[3]" nor a socialization process that informs new educators about what

"doing a practice correctly" means. Traditionally, teaching in higher education institutions takes

place within a closed, private environment, reinforcing the notion that this is "my classroom, so

stay out" and creating a barrier to interactions among educators. The nature of experiential

teaching allows educators to embed experiences and activities in their courses in ways they see

fit, without deliberately connecting course practices to an enunciated structure that has defined

those activities as appropriate and responsible practice. Anyone can use experiential teaching

practices and call them such without working with 'experienced educators' and without

acknowledging their novice status. Additionally, who constitutes an 'experiential educator' is

contested in this frame of analysis. While some experiential educators lead teaching-focused

consortia or workshops, we lack agreed-upon credentials or demonstrated expertise by which we

determine who is qualified to lead such training seminars.

General understanding: Any general understanding "… gives the practice its identity,

both discursively and practically" (Nicolini, 2012, p. 167). Among the four analytic frames of

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[3] In the management education community, novice includes not only Ph.D. students and early career faculty but also those at any career stage who have not used experiential pedagogy.

practice, a general understanding of experiential teaching is perhaps the most developed within

the management and business education community. The wide literature associated with

experiential pedagogy shares what learning outcomes tend to be best associated with experiential

teaching practice, and what we hope our students will learn using experiential instead of passive

teaching modalities. However, the extent to which experiential educators consider "experiential

educator" as an aspect of who they are, rather than simply what they do or how they teach, is

questionable. The extent to which they see "experiential educator" as a shared identity within a

distinct community is also questionable.

Ultimately, Nicolini's conceptualization of practice theory emphasizes what experiential

pedagogy in business schools lacks: a community-based, shared set of socially-constructed

norms that are perpetuated via peer-based monitoring and boundaries. Experiential teaching

practice means a set of organizational structures that "define[s] its distinctiveness and its

boundaries" (Nicolini, 2012, p. 168) as a self-monitoring and self-perpetuating system that is not

neutral in its impact on others. Thus, the ethical issues embedded in experiential pedagogy as

practice within management education – and the absence of a set of widely distributed and

individually understood manifestations of experiential pedagogy - constitute a dilemma with

which business schools must engage.

CALL FOR ACTION: THE MORAL DUTY OF BUSINESS SCHOOLS WITH AN EXPERIENTIAL TEACHING COMMUNITY

We have argued that business schools possess an explicit duty to foster responsible and

harm-mitigating experiential teaching practices. Thus, the first action for business schools is to

accept that the management education experiential teaching 'community of practice' (Lave &

Wenger, 1991) exists, where Nicolini's understandings, structures, and rules apply. Wenger

(1998) defines community of practice as a group of individuals participating in communal

activities, which includes social learning, and shared socio-cultural practices that evolve when people who have common goals interact. The notion of community of practice, as we broadly apply it in this essay, refers to a group of management educators who share a passion for experiential teaching, who recognize experiential teaching as a unique praxis, and who know they can learn how to do it better by regularly interacting with other practitioners. This view relies on sharing tacit skills, and includes acknowledging that experiential pedagogy generates real-life emotional consequences for both students and educators. Accepting experiential teaching as a community of practice also represents a "voluntarily accepted duty of recognizing and protecting the rights and interests of others" (Hosmer, 1995, p. 393), and that it may not be obvious what to do next.

Recognition of this explicit moral duty creates opportunities for empirical research and has implications for business school educators as members of a community. We suggest an agenda that responds to the current lack of boundaries as a community and answers the questions posed in Nicolini's four elements (practical understanding, rules, teleo-affective structure, and general understanding) noted above. Considering these four elements prompts our recommendations for community-building actions, captured in Table 1. These recommendations are predicated on faculty thinking about their teaching practice from an ethical perspective and on business school administrators supporting them in this process. There also needs to be a shift away from traditional social norms associated with educator 'ownership' over their classroom. Academic freedom does not mean that educators have access to unbounded or uninformed teaching practices. Instead, educators need to be more willing to have others provide feedback on their teaching practices. Just as the formal Institutional Review Board (sometimes called "Human Subjects" or "Research Ethics" boards) process is used to protect research participants

from harm, our recommendations for best practice are designed not to halt the use of experiential

pedagogy in the classroom but rather to ensure that educators have anticipated possible harms

and taken steps to mitigate them.

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Please insert Table 1 about here

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Practical understanding: As a community, we must decide what distinguishes an

experiential teaching novice from a skilled experiential educator, how that competence comes

about, and the practices that contribute to expertise. A collective process of determining what

competence looks like in experiential teaching, rather than individual self-screening, will

facilitate our practical communitarian understanding. Brown and Duguid (1991), for example,

share the power of intra-community storytelling as a way of spreading skills, norms, and

ultimately the expertise that defines a community of practice. They note that "complex causal

stories" among practitioners supply "highly informative war stories" that "also act as repositories

of accumulated wisdom" (p. 45). Routine, widespread experiential educator dialogues and

storytelling could contribute to an accepted understanding of 'expert' and reinforce the

"obviously communal and thereby *collaborative*" (Brown & Duguid, 1991, p. 46, italics in

original) nature of experiential teaching.

While competence is typically viewed as an individual's skills and bodies of knowledge

that generate performance, others view competence as a 'way of being' and collective capacity

emphasizing the impact of action, sensemaking and practice (Sandberg & Pinnington, 2009;

Weick, 1995). Adopting this latter view, competence involves not only performance but

trustworthiness because collective variability is reduced. Similar to other professions' collective

understanding of competence for their educational corps, 'being' a competent experiential

educator involves understanding, anticipating, and demonstrating what is collectively regarded as

a skilled action for a particular classroom practice.

Crafting an accepted experiential educator teaching credential, uniformly recognized and

reliably assessed, would allow for more trustworthiness. It would allow business schools to

create, support, and diffuse faculty training in experiential teaching practices, philosophy,

controversies, and appropriate care behaviors. Routinely practicing experiential skills in a

community, such as at a professional workshop for those using a "classroom-as-organization"

course structure, or at brown bag sessions within business schools for role-play practitioners,

would offer peer-based support by which expertise can be honed. Additionally, by attending

teaching-oriented conferences, workshops or online/recorded demonstrations, educators can

observe an experiential activity before engaging students.

Rules: Keith-Spiegel et al., (2002) and Taras and Steel (2007) have already identified

risk mitigation techniques that provide an initial start to establishing community-based norms

and codes of conduct for experiential pedagogy. Relevance and context are important

considerations in developing appropriate professional behavioral codes, and deciding how to

handle issues such as transparency, deception, and risk are key aspects of such a code. For

example, transparency about experientially-designed courses is an especially important rule for

courses that use deception in simulations, personal self-disclosure, or intentional high-arousal

emotion to achieve learning outcomes. Sharing the experiential nature of course activities with

students prior to enrollment gives them a chance to decide whether to enter the course. Course

designations or internal identifiers for experiential courses should be considered a norm. Meta-

structures, such as activity-to-debrief time proportions and actions designed to identify students

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in distress after an experiential activity, outline ways to minimize distress and enhance learning outcomes.

Teleo-affective structure: One way to develop educator competence is to use existing degree structures (e.g. doctoral programs) to lay the foundation for experiential teaching education. Extending the call from Marx, Garcia, Butterfield, Kappen, and Baldwin (2016) to implement experiential teaching education in doctoral programs, we call for coursework on experiential teaching's unique praxis, challenges, and ongoing controversies as essential to doctoral business education. Likewise, thesis-only doctoral programs could require students to participate in experiential teaching workshops and courses as part of their degree requirements. Akin to supervised practica in other professions, such as psychology and social work, mentoring is a key characteristic of professional practice, and we recommend building a corps of mentors available to all members of the experiential teaching community. Mentoring can take many forms and may include sharing a debriefing session, having a colleague co-teach a particular experiential exercise or discussing plans for an experiential activity with colleagues before actually using it with students to help identify and mitigate potential trouble spots.

We also call for creating a mechanism by which to assess whether an activity or experiential engagement is 'worth' the learning outcome when potential risks are taken into account. Taras and Steel (2007) candidly say that, despite their belief that their deception-based simulation was the most effective activity they had ever used to teach about unionization, the risks to students were not worth their continuing to use that activity. Giving experiential educators a tool by which to weigh out their own risk-reward balance would help them be more intentional about choosing learning activities.

General understanding: Any professional body needs a "general understanding" of what constitutes practice such that each practitioner comprehends the knowledge base and distinct expertise needed to perform. Through day-to-day enactment, sharing, and transforming knowledge into practice (Orlikowski, 2002), important values become part of the fabric of a collective body. Thus, general understanding informs the proper pursuit of practice and helps create professional identity. From a socio-cultural perspective, professional identity is about internalized mental models located within individuals, and reflects the individual's experiences, values and practices which are, in part, created from experiences within a social structure (Coldron & Smith, 1999; Reckwith, 2002). As management educators, we '*become*' experiential educators through our motivations and reasons for adopting these teaching practices, we '*do*' experiential teaching by transforming our knowledge into action through our perceptions and conceptions of experiential teaching as practice, and we '*are*' experiential educators through the various personae, emotions, and values that are present in enacting experiential management education. By recognizing the interplay between individual and context, Wenger (1998) helps us see a pathway from *enacting* individual teaching to *becoming* a collective identity by linking it with practice:

> Developing a practice requires the formation of a community whose members can engage
> with one another and thus acknowledge each other as participants ... In this sense, the
> formation of a community of practice is also the negotiation of identities (p. 149).

Multiple elements need to be considered when crafting professional identity. We *become*, *do*, and *are* experiential educators within our own educational institution's context, responding to social, cultural and workplace values and norms. The richness of identity also can take various forms among local and global contexts. For instance, as experiential management educators,

Wenger would argue that we can achieve a professional identity by negotiating local ways of being while "belonging to broader constellations and manifesting broader styles and discourses" (p. 149).

These elements advance a general understanding of the characteristics that constitute the experiential management education community and contribute to a professional identity construct. One analogy is with physicians' professional identity as those who 'do no harm' no matter what their respective specialization or medical context. So, too, can general understanding among experiential educators be achieved over time through the shared day-to-day enactment of experiential teaching practices, integrating the theoretical base for experiential education as a pedagogy, and building an identity within and across business schools.

We call for empirical responses to the above recommendations; there are many questions about the practice of experiential pedagogy that would benefit from empirical investigation. Sitting behind these recommendations is the need for business schools to encourage norms of curiosity about experiential pedagogical instructional modes and outcomes in lieu of unsupported assumptions of positivity in students' learning and experiences. Nicolini (2012, p. 225) calls this aspect of practice "bounded-ness" and asserts that creating community-crafted, accepted, and sustained boundaries of what is right practice and what is wrong practice is the only way of maintaining accountability among members. It is important to understand that Nicolini is not talking about constraining academic freedom, educator autonomy, or standardization; in fact, he understands practice as creating infrastructure that *protects* educator choices as a result of communitarian accountability. Practice "…is fundamentally a poietic and creative affair, not 'everything goes'…" (p. 225); it is only within such a communitarian framework that practice may be sustained with any sense of durability.

CONCLUSION: WHERE WE GO FROM HERE

Table 2 offers vital empirical questions designed to provide evidence-based support for enacting the recommendations in Table 1. These specific research questions within each of Nicolini's four frames will support business schools' duty to develop ethical experiential teaching pedagogy.

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Please insert Table 2 about here

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The research questions in Table 2 are of a fundamental nature: there is much we do not know about experiential pedagogy as a community-based construct. Within *practical understanding*, we have limited collective knowledge of what is actually happening in experiential teaching and how educators are making sense of their own teaching praxis. We need to know educator goals for students and how experiential teaching matches hoped-for outcomes. We need to know how experiential educators are considering the links among activities, student experiences, and learning outcomes, and expand current assessment processes specifically to integrate student outcomes from experiential teaching activities. Assessment documentation might also include activities that have had unintended consequences, or that have resulted in student harm.

Within *rules*, as a community we need to know what aspects of experiential teaching facilitation are prescribed, what are proscribed, and who decides what those rules should be. Curating and supporting best practices within professional structure(s) involves knowing who curates and who builds such professional opportunities. We need to define the steps that must take place before, during, and after an experiential activity, both for students and for educators.

This is a contentious assertion; creating collective standards is challenging enough, and deciding "who guards the guardians?" (Shapiro, 1987, p. 645) adds another layer of complexity. Who, in a community, simultaneously lives by and upholds normative behaviors? Without rules, though, we cannot determine best practices from any other type of practice.

Within *teleo-affective structure*, as a community we need to know who will lead, who must follow, and how those two types of experiential educators will connect developmentally. Teleo-affective structures could be formed by investigating why, from any educator's perspective, some praxes are deemed important and how they are justified. We need to determine, for example, when it is appropriate to use deception to arrive at learning outcomes and the rationale by which we come to that decision. It is within teleo-affective structures that new generations of experiential educators will be normed. Identifying stable resources and socialization opportunities is critical since community-building is long-term, iterative, and inclusive in nature. Coming to agreement about learning outcomes from a normative perspective also is an empirical opportunity, as business schools intentionally may define their own priorities in learning outcomes. Empirical work within this frame may also explore experiential teaching's use of emotion: as a variable to be manipulated for learning; as an identity construct for educators; or as a vehicle by which students may try out different selves (Ibarra, 1999; Lund Dean & Jolly, 2012).

Finally, within *general understanding*, experiential educators have an opportunity to define the 'we' of the community, and what 'we' mean when we own the identity of "experiential educator." Who are 'we' who call ourselves experiential educators? The tension between conformity and creativity is an important investigation here, as is defining how both conformity and creativity affect experiential teaching practices.

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When considering empirical methods by which to examine those questions, Nicolini (2012) warns of exploring this intertwined expression of the inner and outer lives with any method that serves to privilege one or the other alone. Surveys alone, for example, offer insights into an individual's self-reports of their teaching without simultaneously connecting them to an observable practice. External observations alone, too, privilege what is happening or has happened without the benefits of understanding the educator's inner life. Ethno-methodologies, micro-ethnography, creative forms of qualitative interviewing (Nicolini, 2012, p. 225), examining written, visual, or verbal artefacts such as video or journals, and conversational analysis are only some of the empirical methods he suggests that are appropriate for the complex interplays of practice, emotion, reflection, performance, and identity in public and private spheres.

We do not believe that educators in business schools are intentionally malevolent, using experiential teaching to reinforce power differentials or harm students. Rather, they are dedicated individuals trying their best to develop their students' knowledge and skills to be successful, competent managers and leaders. It is important for us to say that delimiting behaviors based on ethical norms and demanding accountability to those norms is never an easy effort, particularly among educators who fiercely guard their autonomy. Just like embedding any other new or perceived accountability processes, the energy for sustaining them comes from one of two places: either an external force with legitimate power demands it, like accreditors or governments, or an internal initiative stemming from the community accepts responsibility for change and creates ethical practices. We prefer the latter mode, and our recommendations are predicated on experiential educators in schools of business deciding *as a community* to accept these responsibilities for our own practical and moral engagement. In our business schools, the

moral duty that experiential teaching requires involves exploration and formulation of standards

for responsible experiential teaching practice, support for an experiential community of practice,

and identification of and support for experiential teaching leaders.

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Table 1: Recommendations for experiential pedagogy as a community of practice

Practice theory element	What we need for community-building	Recommendations for community-building actions
Practical understanding	- Educator competence in experiential teaching facilitation and methods - Mutual understanding of practices and boundaries among experiential practitioners - Educator competence assessment - Formal training parameters and program structures	- Through collective and collaborative processes experiential educators will create criteria by which competence is identified and expertise is acknowledged. - Experiential educators will hold a relevant teaching qualification appropriate to the context of the employing institution, and this requirement will be integrated into selection and promotion criteria. - Experiential educators will establish and participate in non-canonical communities of practice based on specific experiential method or other relevant institutional contexts. - Business schools require and support training and development schemes for experiential pedagogy on both formal and informal bases.
Rules	- Programs of action defining how experiential teaching should be practiced - Best practices in experiential teaching - Infrastructure of a community of practice in experiential teaching	- Experiential educators will develop a code of conduct for those who use experiential pedagogy, relevant to the context of the institution and its values. - Experiential educators will create meta-structures defining best practices. - Experiential educators will establish and use a student notification procedure, including course designation, for courses that are experiential in nature. Experiential educators will include information about their teaching activities, rationale, and expectations, in course syllabi.
Teleo-affective structure	- Cause and effect: knowing that a practice will lead to a particular (positive, or desired) outcome - Novice socialization into rules and programs of action	- Experiential educators will craft experiential teacher training schemes to be embedded into doctoral programs. - Experiential educators will implement a mentoring scheme where acknowledged experts guide junior faculty or those new to experiential learning. - Experiential educators will invite existing organizations, such as accreditors or professional bodies, to follow their community-based

	• Identification of and access to 'instructors' of experiential teaching • Determination of goals, outcomes, projects, ends, and emotions for experiential teaching practice • Acceptance of community-based norms and 'teachings' in lieu of individualized conceptions of experiential teaching practices	norms and standards regarding experiential learning practices and behaviors, and will support adherence to them by being available to consult with faculties under evaluation. • Experiential educators will consider ways to determine whether the learning outcomes merit expected risks to students during learning activities.
General understandings	• What "we" mean by "experiential learning" • Outcomes and student learning experiences possible and probable with experiential teaching • "Experiential teaching practitioner" as an identity construct	• Experiential educators will create a shared values statement signaling the expertise and collective practices of experiential teaching and learning. • Experiential educators will reflect on forms of professional identity [*becoming*, *doing* and *being*] to help define aspects of an experiential pedagogy practitioner identity. • Experiential educators will develop processes by which defining learning outcomes and course structures to meet them are disseminated and supported among community members.

Table 2: Empirical questions to support an experiential pedagogy community of practice

Practice theory element	What we need for community-building	Research to inform community-building recommendations
Practical understanding	- Educator competence in experiential teaching facilitation and methods - Mutual understanding of practices and boundaries among experiential practitioners - Educator competence assessment - Formal training parameters and program structures	- What are educators doing & saying when using experiential pedagogies? - What makes sense for experiential educators in their teaching practice? - What are experiential educators' goals? - What's happening with students before, during and after experiential engagements? - What's happening with educators before, during and after experiential engagements? - How are experiential educators preparing for their learning activities? How do they know what to do? How do they know when they are sufficiently competent? - What is the connection between student experiences and learning goals? - How are instructors assessing that connection in experiential management education? - Who is evaluating educators about that connection? - What are ways of establishing organizing principles that are shared between institutional contexts, thus laying the groundwork for a more general description of 'the competent experiential educator'? - What are the formal or informal criteria used to assess competence applicable across contexts?
Rules	Programs of action defining how experiential pedagogies should be practiced	- Over time, what practices emerge as effective in experiential teaching? - Should empirically-supported effective practices be made into 'rules'? - Who gets to choose the rules?

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	• Best practices in experiential teaching • Infrastructure of a community of practice in experiential teaching	• For specific learning outcomes, what practices hold the most promise based on practical evidence? • Who curates effective practices as a holistic set of rules? • What are the professional structures that support creating a set of best practices?
Teleo-affective structure	• Cause and effect: knowing that a practice will lead to a particular (positive, or desired) outcome • Novice socialization into rules and programs of action • Identification of and access to 'instructors' of experiential teaching • Determination of goals, outcomes, projects, ends, and emotions for experiential teaching practice • Acceptance of community-based norms and 'teachings' in lieu of individualized conceptions of experiential teaching practices	• Over time, what practices routinely lead to identifiable positive outcomes and conversely, what practices must be avoided? • What are the practices, outcomes, and attributes of who is considered a 'leader' or 'instructor' in experiential teaching? • What emotions must ground experiential teaching practices? • How might novices be identified? • What structures currently exist to connect novices in experiential teaching with those considered leaders in such practice? • What outcomes must result from experiential teaching? What must not? • How do we manage emotional engagement as a result of, or by design within, experiential teaching practices? • What practices can 'we' agree on to make up experiential learning engagements? • How do we encourage experiential practitioners to understand, accept, and use community-based norms?
General understandings	• What "we" mean by "experiential learning" • Outcomes and student learning experiences possible and probable with experiential teaching • "Experiential teaching practitioner" as an identity construct	• Who makes up the experiential teaching community of practice? How would we know? • How do we support individual creativity within experiential teaching structures of best practices? • What learning outcomes are associated with experiential modalities, what outcomes might be possible with them, and what outcomes are almost never available through experiential teaching practices? • If an instructor owns an "experiential teacher" aspect to her/his identity, how does that affect practice?

		• What is the nature of the 'community' that characterizes who practices experiential pedagogy, and what 'commonality' is there in that practice?