

BCEN Perspectives

Department of Business Communication and Entrepreneurship—Middle Tennessee State University—Spring 2013

Chairperson's Corner

Dr. Stephen Lewis, Professor & Department Chair

Did I Miss the Train?



Holy cow! All of this new technology to master, and now I must learn a new language, too!

As a lad growing up in Fentress County, Tennessee, even

in my wildest dreams I could not have imagined today's communication technology. Realizing that I date myself when I say it, I recall when my family did not have a television or a telephone. Foreign languages were not required for high school graduation. As a matter of fact, the high school I attended did not even offer a foreign language.

After living in the North for a few years, I realized I was bi-lingual—English and “hillbilly southern.” What I’ve learned recently, however, is that to fare well today, I also need to know the language of the millennials; and that’s frustrating for an “old fogey.”

Social media have introduced a totally new set of terms into the English lexicon. Most who read this are old enough to remember when birds “tweeted” and “twitter” was what a young man’s heart did when he saw a pretty girl. Texting, likewise, and electronic mail to some degree, have introduced new acronyms and symbols into our communication. Facebook

Inside this Issue

- **Alumni Spotlight**.....2
- **Faculty Focus**.....3
- **Student Spotlight**5
- **Raiders' Closet**6

doesn't even appear in my 1960s vintage dictionary, and now I'm learning that “Facebook” can be used as a verb. A current radio commercial suggests that listeners call or “Facebook” the business. Am I behind the times, or what?

The reality is it's not just millennials who are using this shortcut language. Many business messages are now exchanged through tweets. This is not necessarily what business communication teachers have in mind when they preach “conciseness”; however, a high-level executive in a large consulting firm recently told my class that much of his communication is accomplished using Twitter.

Do too many acronyms frustrate you? Technology will not remain static. The folks at Microsoft and Apple are sure to develop communication devices that will make today's smartphones look antiquated. And as a former English professor and later dean of liberal arts at MTSU once told me, “English is an evolving language.” So get on the train!



Alumni Spotlight

In August 2010, Marlena Dixon was equipped with a Master of Business Education degree and a wealth of knowledge provided by the faculty and staff of the Business Communication and Entrepreneurship (BCEN) department at Middle Tennessee State University. She was excited to take all that she'd learned to change the world as a high school teacher in the local area. In September of 2010 Marlena was fortunate to land a teaching position in the Career and Technical Education (CTE) department at Wilson Central High School in Lebanon, TN. She teaches computer programming, honors economics, and work-based learning.

In addition to the graduate courses taken, Marlena credits opportunities such as being a BCEN graduate assistant, and judging for FBLA state competitions for being successful. "As a BCEN graduate assistant, I had the opportunity to learn from several brilliant professors and instructors and be a part of rewarding activities like judging for a FBLA competition. Assisting professors who taught online also helped me to gain valuable experiences in developing and conducting online courses." As a result, Marlena has been teaching online courses for K12, a virtual academy, for the past year.

Marlena's experience with FBLA judging proved valuable when she prepared her DECA students for district competitions and served as a judge. Eight of ten of her students placed in the state competitions.

When asked about advice she'd give to an aspiring MBE student, Marlena emphasized the importance



of asking questions! "The BCEN department has top-notch professors and staff, all willing to help guide and direct students to help them get the most from their education. I am very grateful for my time in the department as a graduate student and a graduate assistant," Marlena states. "I learned so many things, and made many life-long friendships during that

time." She also suggests developing working relationships with other students while there because they may be your future colleagues with whom you can collaborate. Marlena also suggests taking Praxis exams in as many of your content areas as possible and to join the Tennessee Business Education Association (TBEA), an organization of which she is currently the President-Elect. "The more you learn, the more you can teach," says Marlena.

• • •

"The BCEN department at MTSU has top notch professors and staff, all willing to help guide and direct students to help them get the most from their education. I am very grateful for my time in the department as a grad student and a grad assistant. I learned so many things, and made many life-long friendships during that time."

• • •

Marlena is married and has four beautiful children ranging in ages 8 to 25. During her free time, Marlena enjoys reading, crocheting, and participating as a volunteer in her church's youth group.

Faculty Focus



Dr. Robert B. Blair will begin a two-year term as President of the National Association for Business Teacher Education (NABTE) on July 1. He serves as the Southern Business Education Association

(SBEA) Director on the National Business Education Association (NBEA) Board, Chairperson of the NBEA Awards Administrative Committee, and President of the Tennessee Association of Parliamentarians. Dr. Blair presented “Dopey Things Teachers Do: What You Don’t Know Can Hurt You” at the 2013 NBEA Convention and “The Role of the Advocate” at the 2013 NBEA Academy for Leadership Excellence. He co-authored a chapter in the 2013 NBEA Yearbook, “Planning for Instruction,” with **Drs. Lewis and Smith**. He presented “Parliamentary Procedure Essentials” at the Tennessee Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) State Officers Training Conference and “Sustaining the Fire with Parliamentary Procedure” at the Tennessee FBLA Leadership Camp (Camp Clements) for regional/local chapter officers. Dr. Blair also presented “Creative Teaching Strategies for a Stellar Performance” at the 2013 National Association of Parliamentarians (NAP) District III Conference. Blair served as Parliamentarian for the NBEA Executive Board, NABTE Executive Board, National Chinese Shar-Pei Club of America, Inc., Tennessee Delta Unit of Parliamentarians, and the Tennessee Court Reporters Association.



Dr. Virginia Hemby (along with **Ms. Jaye Kiblinger**) initiated the MTSU Raider’s Closet, a project designed to provide MTSU students with professional clothing for the workplace. She recently presented “Security

Challenges in Technology: Does BYOD Mean Bring Your Own Device or Bring Your Own Disaster?” at

the 2013 National Business Education Association (NBEA) Convention in Atlanta; she also presented at the 2012 Association for Research in Business Education-Delta Pi Epsilon (ARBE-DPE) National Conference as well as the Association for Business Communication (ABC)-Southeast Conference. Her educational supplement “Professionalism in the Digital Age” has been accepted by Southwestern/Cengage publishers. Dr. Hemby serves on several committees and is a reviewer for national organizations such as ARBE-DPE, NBEA, and ABC; she continues to serve as the technology section editor for the *Business Education Forum*.



Dr. Ronda Henderson co-authored an article, “Business Educators’ Perceptions Concerning Mobile Learning (M-Learning)” in the *Delta Pi Epsilon Journal*. She co-presented at the National Association of Business Teacher Educators

(NABTE) Conference, and presented at the National Business Education Association (NBEA) Convention in Atlanta. Dr. Henderson was selected as the first MTSU College of Business (COB) professor to spearhead the COB Ipad Initiative Pilot Project where her business students were equipped with ipads during the fall 2012 semester to investigate student perceptions and best practices regarding this use of technology in the classroom. She served on the search committee to assist in selecting the new dean for the College of Business. Additionally, she was recently awarded the 2012 MTSU Outstanding Achievement in Instructional Technology Award.



Dr. Sherry J. Roberts co-authored a textbook entitled Technology Projects for Career and College Readiness. She is currently the President of the Tennessee Business

Education (TBEA) and was recently awarded the 2012 Southern Business Education Association (SBEA) Outstanding Leadership Award in Atlanta.



Dr. Wayne Rollins published an article in the fall 2012 issue of the *Journal of Organizational Culture, Communications, and Conflict* entitled “A Comparison of the Readability of Newspaper Columns Written by National Journalism Award Winners”. He also presented a paper at the 2012 Allied Academies International Conference in Las Vegas entitled “A Comparison of Process Used by Business Executives and University Business Communication Teachers to Evaluate Selected Business Documents”. Dr. Rollins currently serves on the Board of Directors for the Wesley Foundation as Treasurer, the Better Business Bureau, and the Blue Raider Athletic Association as Past President.



Dr. Vincent W. Smith serves as Vice President of the Business Division of the Tennessee Association of Career and Technical Education and is an advisor for the Business Marketing and Finance Career Cluster. He is also the Past President of the Tennessee Business Education Association (TBEA). Currently, he is the Communication Section Editor for the Business Education Forum and recently completed the Tennessee Educator Acceleration Model (TEAM) Training where he earned the Certified TEAM Observer designation with **Dr. Robert B. Blair**. In addition, Dr. Smith was recently awarded the 2012 SBEA Collegiate Teacher of the Year Award.



Dr. Raholanda White attended and presented “Business Communication: Innovative Instructional Practices for Intercultural Communication with an Emphasis on Afro-Brazilian Culture” at the 2012 Delta Pi Epsilon Conference in Cincinnati, OH.

2012 SBEA Leadership

Award Winners!

Three members of the Business Communication and Entrepreneurship Department were honored with awards at the Southern Business Education Association Leadership Awards Luncheon in Atlanta, GA at the 2013 National Business Education Association Convention:

Dr. Stephen Lewis

2012 Supervision Distinguished Service

Dr. Sherry J. Roberts

2012 Outstanding Leadership

Dr. Vincent Smith

Collegiate Teacher of the Year



Pictured—SBEA Award Winners: (L- R) – **Dr. Vincent Smith**, **Dr. Sherry J. Roberts**, and **Dr. Stephen Lewis**.

Congratulations to Vince, Sherry, and Steve for a job well done!

Student Spotlight

BCEN Student Teachers

Fall 2012 Student Teachers

Sam Blevins

Erica Cason

Anbria Crawford

Danyelle Hawkins

Derrick Murphy

University Supervisors

Dr. Martha Balachandran

Dr. Robert B. Blair

Dr. Vincent Smith

Spring 2013 Student Teachers

Kimberly Frasier

Catherine Jones

Dara King

John McMillian

David Moody

Alexander Seaton

Elizabeth Silva

Larry White

Phi Beta Lambda

PBL Student Advances to Nationals!



Eric Elwell, a Master of Business Education (MBE) student, competed in the PBL State Competitive Events in April and placed first in the area of Marketing Concepts! Eric competed against

other PBL students from colleges such as Union University, Lee University, and University of Tennessee at Knoxville. Mr. Elwell plans to represent MTSU at the national PBL competitions to be held in Anaheim, CA this summer.

Community Service Project

The Lambda Alpha Tau chapter of Phi Beta Lambda (PBL) sponsored its sixth annual community service project in November 2012. Once again the chapter partnered with Rooms at the Inn, a homeless shelter in Murfreesboro, TN. Students were able to provide Thanksgiving food boxes and turkeys to needy families in the local community! Special thanks to all of those who contributed a tax-deductible donation to assist in purchasing food!



Raiders' Closet

Faculty in the Business Communication and Entrepreneurship Department has been teaching Employment Communication in the Business Communication course for over 40 years. With each passing year, these instructors have noticed that students seem to know less and less about professional attire—what is acceptable to wear for an interview, for an internship, for a professional presentation, etc.

In the course of teaching this class, instructors have questioned students about their understanding of professionalism—including attire, attitude, actions, etc. While the students appear to have some grasp of the fundamentals of professional dress, many ultimately ask what happens if they cannot afford to purchase a suit. Each year brings an increase in the number of students asking this question—not an unusual phenomenon considering the economic climate and the rising cost of a college education.

Due to the economic hardships many students are facing, the Business Communication and Entrepreneurship Department decided to create a clothing closet project to help students acquire the needed professional attire. We want our MTSU students to be able to put their best “nonverbal” foot forward when seeking that internship or that first job post-graduation. The project has been named RAIDERS' CLOSET to continue our Blue Raiders theme.

Interested in Donating to Raiders' Closet?

We all know students who need professional attire because they simply cannot afford to purchase it on their own. Please help us stock our Raiders' Closet with gently used, professional attire for both men and women (suits, jackets, slacks, shirts, ties, skirts, scarves).

Any item of clothing that you wish to donate must be dry cleaned and on hangers except for men's dress shirts which should be dry cleaned and folded for storage on shelves.

The BCEN Department in the Jennings A. Jones College of Business (BAS N429) accepts clothing donations any time between 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.

DRESS FOR SUCCESS FASHION SHOW

WHEN: May 1, 2013 7 to 9 p.m.

WHERE: Jennings A. Jones
College of Business
State Farm Room, BAS S102

WHY:

- Learn about Raiders' Closet.
- See what to wear to make a great first impression on prospective employers and recruiters.
- See examples of both professional attire and business casual attire.
- Learn how your attire is connected to your personal brand.

**Department of
Business Communication
&
Entrepreneurship**

2012-2013 Faculty

Martha E. Balachandran, Ed.D., Professor
Robert B. Blair, Ph.D., Professor
Kay Blasingame-Boike, M.B.A., Lecturer
Dwight Bullard, Ed.D., Professor
Patrick Geho, J.D., Associate Professor
K. Virginia Hemby, Ph.D., Professor
Ronda Henderson, Ph.D., Associate Professor
Stephen D. Lewis, Ph.D., Professor and
Department Chair
Brock Patterson, M.B.E., Lecturer
Sherry J. Roberts, Ph.D., Assistant Professor
Wayne Rollins, Ed.D., Associate Professor
Vincent W. Smith, Ed.D., Professor
Doug Tatum, Associate Professor & Wright
Travel Chair in Entrepreneurship
Dorothy Warren, M.B.E., Instructor
Raholanda White, Ph.D., Professor
Rachel Wilson, Ph.D., Assistant Professor



**Find Us: MTSU BCEN Department &
Office/Administrative Services Management at
MTSU!**

**Click & Learn about our
BCEN Degree Programs**

Business Education: The Business Education major leads to a Bachelor of Science. Students who complete this degree are licensed to teach business and business technology subjects in Grades 7-12.

Business Education Non-Teaching or Business Education Training and Development: These two options lead to a Bachelor of Science degree with a minor in Business Administration.

Entrepreneurship: The Entrepreneurship major, which leads to a Bachelor of Business Administration degree, is designed for students interested in starting and running their own business.

Office Management: The Office Management major leads to a Bachelor of Business Administration and is designed for students interested in managing the administrative support functions of a business.

BCEN Minors: Business Communication, Entrepreneurship, Marketing Education, Office Management

Master of Business Education (available online): The graduate program leads to a Master of Business Education where students can teach business subjects at the junior high and secondary levels, technology centers, and community colleges. They can also train individuals in a corporate environment.

BCEN Communications Committee: Martha Balachandran, Ronda Henderson (chair), and Dorothy Warren.