

## An Evolving Model of the Use of Feature Films in Undergraduate and Graduate Business Curriculum: The Education Awakens

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**Abstract:** This paper/exploratory analysis presents an evolving model for enhancing the use of full-length, feature film as a tool in undergraduate and graduate business curriculum. This model includes processes for determination of student perceptions of the efficacy of the use of feature film to teach business, including marketing and human resources competencies. Therefore, this work considers student perceptions of the use of film in undergraduate and graduate business education and their final outcomes. Awareness of students' views of this tool can be valuable information during the design of business curriculum. To date, limited research has coupled the business students' perceptions of film in business curriculum along with implementation of feature films in business pedagogy. Therefore, the evolution of a working model aims to contribute to the understanding of students' expectations when film is used in business curriculum. There is a dearth of literature that covers the use of popular, full-length films in Marketing and in MBA Human Resource courses. This paper helps to fill that gap.

**Key words:** business competencies; film; marketing; human resource functions

**JEL codes:** M1, M3, M520, M530

### 1. Introduction and Literature Review

The use of film in business, including marketing and human resource education is a useful tool. This paper describes benefits of using popular full-length, feature film for undergraduate and graduate students at a time when business curriculum is coming under increasingly close scrutiny and criticism. Furthermore, if business faculty decides to utilize film as a learning tool, they must decide what films and how to maximize their impact. This paper describes how business concepts are interwoven into the use of these video tools as a creative way to engage students in a systematic approach. This paper delineates an evolving model for enhancing the use of full-length, feature film as a tool in business higher education. This model includes processes for determination of student perceptions of the efficacy of the use of feature film to teach business, including marketing and human resources competencies. This research considers student perceptions of the use of film in undergraduate and graduate business education and their final outcomes. An awareness of students' views of this cinematic teaching tool can be valuable information during the design of business curriculum. Furthermore, this research aims to contribute to the understanding of students' expectations when film is used in business curriculum.

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Literature describes the varying use of film. “The use of videos is pedagogically sound.... The integration of video into any classroom format also takes advantage of multiple modality learning (MML), which has been found to increase long-term retention (Shipper, 2011). Furthermore, “film can be used in direct reference to concepts” (Cardon, 2010, p. 150). Cardon (2010) found that movies are useful as intercultural learning tools for several reasons... Current and immensely popular movie[s]...increases interest among students and allows instructors to gather teaching resources developed by many other educators. Gabriel (1998) found that films can create interest, stimulate discussion and encourage enquiry when they are used effectively.

“Entertaining movies can educate, inspire, and change the way we view the world. Their stories, enhanced with persuasive actors and aided by camera and lighting techniques, are compelling windows into other lives” (Moohr, 2015, p. 119).

To further explain the benefits of using popular films in courses, O’Boyle and Sandona (2014) stated, “films are effective instructional tools that can be selected by subject to provide the closest match possible to the degree programs in which the students are enrolled.” Films chosen can enhance students’ ability to think analytically, which is crucial in today’s business world. “The literature indicates that using movies in a college classroom has been successful in educating students” (Palmer, 2009, para. 1). Additionally, O’Boyle and Sandona note that “feature films offer considerable promise because they do what case studies cannot: by stimulating our visual and auditory senses they dramatize the issues and the consequences. [They]...offer opportunities for learning, which are grounded in the visual image and spoken word, that are superior to case studies that are based on the written word alone (O’Boyle, Sandona, 2014). Werner (2014) found that films “help bring to life management topics, and abstract ideas, concepts and theories related to the workings of organizations (Huczynski & Buchanan, 2004; Hassard & Buchanan, 2009; Berger & Pratt, 1998)....Feature films in particular offer a more dramatic, engaging, motivating and memorable experience than conventional classroom methods (Hassard & Buchanan, 2009; Hassard & Holliday, 1998), not least because of their ability to depict emotional aspects of experience (Hassard & Buchanan, 2009)”. Ventura and Onsmann (2009) noted that “films are especially good at motivating students into believing that a topic is important in society” (p. 662). Taylor and Provitera (2010) research found that “students had an overall positive reaction to the exercise [using films as part of the curriculum] ...written comments mostly indicated positive student reactions” (para. 23).

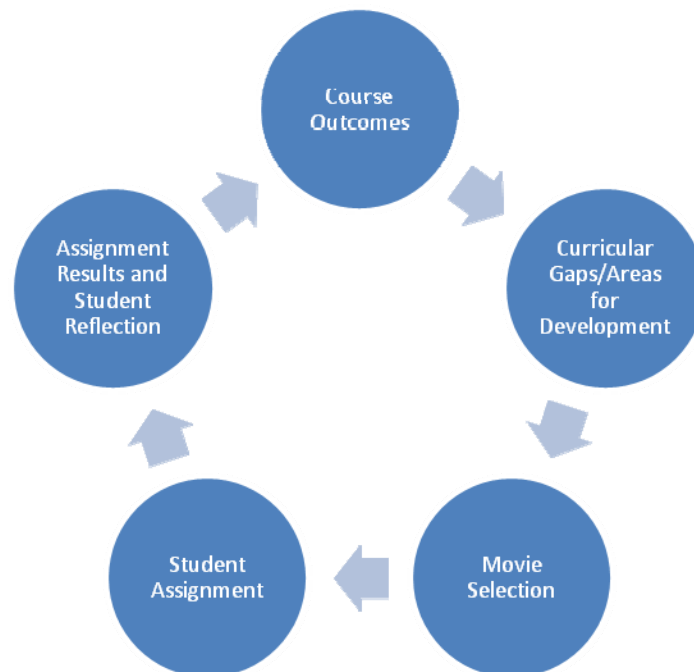
Regarding marketing college education, “much of the marketing curriculum had been designed to equip students with strong communication skills, flexibility, decisiveness, professional skills, and professionalism, by providing more active learning elements in the marketing classroom (Glaser-Segura et al., 2010; Peltier, Scovotti, & Pointer, 2008), especially experiential methods (Abernathy & Padgett, 2011)....Some industries even recognize that hands-on, or experiential, education inspires students to become innovators (Almgren, 2010)....Active course designs are based on the assumption that an active learner, or one who is more engaged in the learning process, learns much more effectively than a passive learner and active learning experiences are more intense and permanent than the passive experiences of a traditional lecture-style course (e.g., Derrick & Carr, 2003; Hargrove, 2003; Kolb, 1983; Orsmond & Stiles, 2002). ...participate more in class (Kenney & Newcombe, 2011)” (cited in Black, Daughtrey, Lewis, 2014, pp. 213-214). The Black, Daughtrey, Lewis (2014) review of undergraduate marketing teaching techniques state several different elements, but does not specifically list the use of movies for development of market planning skills. This paper will address that gap.

In the courses discussed in this paper, the professor utilizes multiple modality learning and combines the use of full-length video, short video-clips about business settings and performance criteria, case studies, hands-on

learning simulations and/or reflections, along with content-driven quizzes and/or other assignments. A systematic approach has been found to enhance the meaningfulness of the film usage in business courses. It is important to first establish the course outcomes and then decide how a full-length video supports one or more of those outcomes. “Experiential educators are generally aware that experiences alone are not inherently good for learning. The experiences have to be relevant to the learning goals and then the learners must have time and opportunity to reflect on the experience.... Classes that could be classified as truly experiential or participative in nature, while still allowing some lecture to cover necessary information, are rare (Black, Daughtrey, Lewis, 2014, pp. 214-215).

Typically, this author considers the use of popular, full-length films to develop a content-rich, yet perhaps not previously engaging aspect of the course, to develop a “dull” element of the course and to transform it into an engaging element of the course, or to develop a module surrounding fundamental concepts of the course which students have not previously been “convinced” is valid and pervasive in business. “Some US movies ...contain strong cultural references specific to U.S. audiences” (Moon, Mishra, Mishra, Kang, 2016, p. 93), and therefore, movies that highlight various aspects of business culture are likely choices for these assignments.

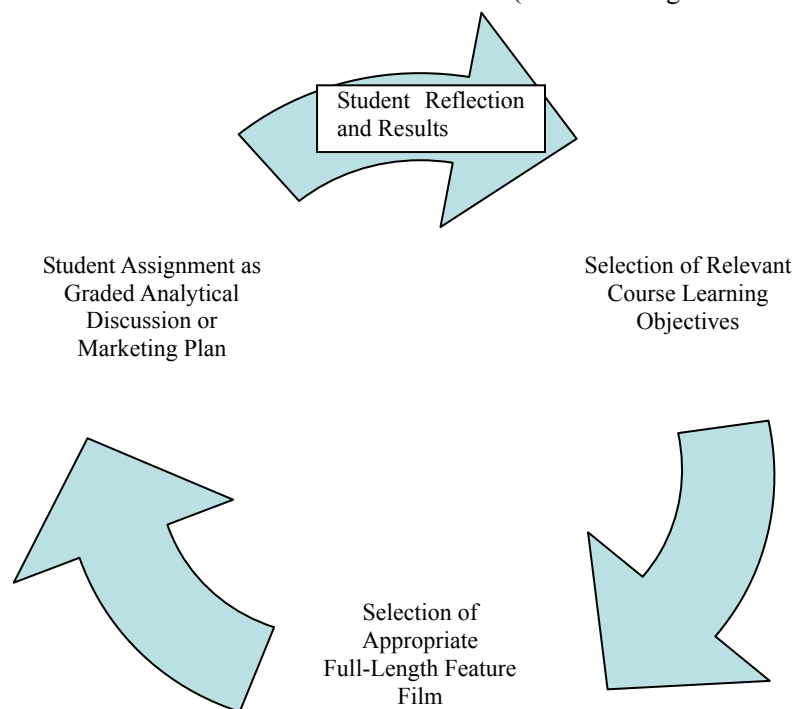
Once that part of the course has been chosen, the selection of the most appropriate film becomes a creative problem-solving endeavor. Typically, film content that is rated PG-13 or G, which occurs in a work setting, that is conducive to analysis and/or debate, and is demonstrative of concepts presented in the course materials is chosen. Periodically, the chosen film is rotated out of the curriculum and a new selection is made. A copy of the film is owned by the university library, and is available through instant streaming for students’ ease of access. Interestingly, in the case of the undergraduate marketing course studied for this paper, the movie, “Star Wars: The Force Awakens”, had not been released, so student research centered around Disney’s multiple-year, most elaborate marketing campaign the company had ever designed for a film up to that point (Please see Figure 1’s depiction of this design process).



**Figure 1 Assignment Design Process**

Preferably, the film hasn't been used in any other business course. Two of the movies highlighted in this paper are live-action, while the other is an animated film. Both formats have proven effective if properly synthesized with course content, presented to students as a serious assignment, and followed-up with students' reflections.

When the film is assigned, a series of "reflection questions" or guidelines, which ensure that students will dissect the film's events and characters in relation to course content, are posted for students' use. For the undergraduate assignment, students have been assigned to complete a corresponding marketing plan in the undergraduate marketing course. In the MBA course, the film is treated as an in-depth, "living" case study. Students are assigned questions to initially answer and different students' questions to reply to in a substantive manner. The student is expected to have privately viewed the film(s) scheduled for discussion at any given class period and to view the entire film prior to attending the relevant class period. This course design allows the use of the seminar method of instruction rather than the lecture method. (Please see Figure 2 which depicts this process.)



**Figure 2 Film Integration into Curriculum Design**

In the view of employers, business schools are in the business of developing leaders and entrepreneurs, and in order to be effective in this mission, need to do two things: "reassess the facts, frameworks, and theories that they teach (the 'knowing' component), while at the same time rebalancing their curricula so that more attention is paid to developing the skills, capabilities, and techniques that lie at the heart of the practice of management (the 'doing' component) and the values, attitudes, and beliefs that form managers' worldviews and professional identities (the 'being' component)" (Datar et al., 2010, p. 7 cited in Rao, Saxena, Chand, Narendran, Bharathan, Jajoo, p. 1). Datar, et al., list eight areas that business schools seem to be weak in, which include the following: developing leadership skills: learning to build with others; honing integration skills: framing problems holistically

and incorporating judgment and intuition into analytical decision-making; and understanding the roles, responsibilities, and purpose of business: balancing the financial and non-financial objectives of business and multiple stakeholder demands (cited in Rao, Saxena, Chand, Narendran, Bharathan, Jajoo, 2014, p. 2). The results of the use of movies in this research, discussed below, highlight the development of crucial business skills and competencies after the systematic use of film in business courses.

“The private sector recruiters have certain initial expectations from the MBA graduates regarding their functional roles....These roles require a hands-on approach towards work....The implication is that business school curricula should not lose sight of developing a mix of knowing and doing, the knowledge and the skill sets necessary for their graduates to perform functional roles effectively....Skills set required [include]: Acting creatively and innovatively; Learning and adaptability; Creativity; Innovation” (Rao, Saxena, Chand, Narendran, Bharathan, Jajoo, 2014, p. 3). However, “one criticism of current curricula is that they are too specialized, producing graduates with an overly narrow understanding of business information. Such an understanding makes it difficult to apply knowledge and make decisions as contexts and circumstances change” (Brody, Coulter, 2002, para. 1, 3, 26). Rubin and Dierdorff empirically tested the notion and demonstrated that a broad list of skills important to practicing managers were not receiving significant emphasis or were not being taught or were not being required in MBA programs. Interestingly, one of their competency categories was Managing Human Capital (Datar, Garvin, Cullen, 2010). Business schools need to reassess the facts, frameworks, and theories they teach and focus more attention on skills development along with more instruction in values, attitudes, and beliefs (Stephens, Stephens, Kohl, 2013). Furthermore, there appears to be a clear juxtaposition between the well-established importance of so-called people skills in achieving success in organizations and the under emphasis of these very skills in training future managers by way of MBA programs (Rubin, Dierdorff, 2011). Additionally, Pandey (2012) found that the use of popular movies in an MBA course led to students reacting that the movies were effective in learning relevant theories, issues, and developing a competence. In this latter study, both instructor’s observations and students’ reaction were very positive regarding the effectiveness of movies as a classroom learning tool. The findings of the research study that is the focus of this paper demonstrate the development of business skills — some of which have been found to be weak in business programs — and the heightened competency of people skills in an MBA course. Given the relative dearth of literature that covers the use of popular, full-length films in Marketing and in MBA Human Resource courses, this paper helps to fill that gap.

## **2. Methodology**

Two courses are the focus of this study. One is an undergraduate marketing course. The other one is an MBA Human Resources Management (HRM) course. Both courses have integrated films into the curriculum as students’ assignments and learning experiences. Students’ results and perceptions have been studied to gauge the effectiveness of the use of film as a pedagogical tool in business curriculum. Student perceptions are valid pieces of information in the assessment of different elements of their educational curriculum (Ozan, Karademir, Gursel, Taskiran, Musal, 2005; DeVita, 2004). It has been stated that when making significant changes to curriculum design and implementation, the perceptions of students in the planning stages is beneficial so as to prevent concerns. Once a program is in place, modifications can be made based upon student perceptions (DeMoranville, Aurand, Gordon, 2000). This is a longitudinal exploratory study which is based on student feedback about their

perceptions and on classroom results that demonstrate attainment of various aspects of management competencies that can be taught via motion pictures. This research has expanded from the study of one undergraduate course to a marketing undergraduate course, and to an MBA course.

### **2.1 Undergraduate Marketing Course**

In the undergraduate Marketing course, students began their marketing plan-related assignments by being assigned a Malcolm Baldrige Award-winning company to analyze. Using the company's award summary document, the students developed a detailed marketing plan. Then a second, larger marketing plan was assigned. This work required the students, in teams, to develop a marketing plan for the Star Wars film, "The Force Awakens". Although the film was not yet released at the time, students were charged with analyzing the marketing plans for this movie. All of the students were too young to remember or to have experienced the beginning of this movie franchise, and that, unexpectedly, added objectivity to their analysis. By the end of the semester, during plan report-outs, students commented upon their anticipation of seeing if their view that the movie was well-marketed and would be a success would become reality. (Indeed, as of February 2016, the Walt Disney corporation posted a 13.8 percent rise in quarterly revenue, bolstered by the release of "Star Wars: The Force Awakens". Furthermore, this movie made a record \$861 million domestically and \$1.88 billion globally in five weeks of release (Gibson, 2016). The movie's marketing has been viewed positively. For example, Grauso (2015) noted that the marketing campaign "built goodwill with audiences ... from a place of low brand awareness, and through a savvy, year-round promo campaign that relied heavily on its cast marketing itself" (para. 4).

### **2.2 MBA HR Course**

The movies discussed here have been used in the MBA course studied for this report for approximately three years. The first movie used and studied in this paper is a "light-hearted movie" which is taken very seriously from an HR standpoint. The second movie is a comedic drama. Both films demonstrate the applicability of HRM principles in a wide variety of business settings. In the first phase of this work, graduate MBA, HRM course, students were required to watch "Monsters, Inc."; in the second phase of this work, the students were required to view the film, "The Devil Wears Prada" as a case study analysis. (Both movies are owned by the university library, and can be purchased in stores by students for individual viewing.) The students were subsequently assigned a series of questions that required synthesis of class material and correlation of film events with that information. Qualitative tracking of common phrases, ideas noted by students in final reflection Voice Thread presentations were coded and analyzed. Students performed very well in the assignment. Their reactions were also very positive, as noted below.

## **3. Findings**

Since this study used the phenomenological data analysis process, notations were made of significant statements that led to the generation of meaning units and the development of "essence" descriptions (Moustakas, 1994, cited in Creswell, p. 191) of management knowledge learning. The coding of these data was quasi-deductive or inductive as well as selective and analytic (Miles & Huberman, 1994). The data were analyzed using open coding, closed coding, and axial coding. Open coding was used to identify themes found in the data, closed coding to refine themes, and axial coding to facilitate content analysis of management content factors (Miller & Salkrind 2002). It is useful to code these to facilitate content analysis (Cooper & Schindler, 2003).

The exploratory research process was three-fold. First, in this research process, marketing undergraduate

students were given an unannounced pre-test, which included a question about the Malcolm Baldrige award, as well as marketing mix, SWOT, and marketing plan questions. The first quiz was at the beginning of the term. The average score earned was 30%. No students could describe the Malcolm Baldrige Award well or sufficiently. During the last, full week of classes, an unannounced, post-quiz (with the same questions as the pre-quiz) was given. The average score was 90%. Furthermore, 65% of the students described the Malcolm Baldrige award above the required standard; another 15% described it to the required standard; 20% could describe it approaching the required standard of performance. All students had knowledge of the award. Therefore, one of the research's objectives, which was that students would learn about the MBNQA at the same time as gaining knowledge about marketing fundamentals, was attained. Second, those same 51 students in an undergraduate Marketing course were asked to complete a reflection document about the curriculum change that had been made in class as a regular part of the course analysis process by the professor. The questions were open-ended, short completion statements. The students were asked to complete questions related to the marketing mix and project management skills utilized through the assignment. This report will discuss the latter questions' results. Students were required in all cases to synthesize course readings and lectures with the films' content. Data was collected for each participant's survey. Students' responses were tallied and analyzed for similarity of students' responses.

Third, as part of the graduate film assignment, a reflection guide sheet was distributed prior to the student viewing to focus their thoughts on issues relevant to the course material. After the students watched the film, a discussion of the major learning points ensued. Finally, to ascertain the level of knowledge acquisition gained through the movie, they were asked to articulate their evolved level of competency based upon the completion of the film-as-case-study assignment. Therefore, the students in the graduate course reflected upon the use of film to enhance their knowledge of the subject matter.

The data from the initial phase's student reflections were further drilled to identify themes, and then to refine the themes. This categorization facilitated analysis of student perceptions by individual students as well as the aggregate class group.

### **3.1 Undergraduate Marketing Students and Development of Key Business Competencies**

Black, Daughtrey and Lewis (2014) noted that marketing curriculum has been re-designed to equip the undergraduate marketing students with strong communication skills, flexibility, decisiveness, professional skills, and professionalism, by providing more active learning elements and experiential methods in the marketing classroom (p. 213) and that integrating as many active course elements as possible into the classroom will likely lead to better outcomes for students...acquiring the knowledge and skills needed to compete in a job market (p. 223). In this study, the main skills enhanced through the Star Wars marketing project were, as follows (in descending order): team building, interpersonal relations skills, time management, organizational skill, leadership skills, communication skills, delegating, managerial skills, writing skills, research skills, decision making skills, analytical skills, and stress management.

These results proved to be statistically significant (see Table 1). This appears to indicate that, whereas the students differed to a significant level about the importance of which project management-type of skills were enhanced through the Star Wars project, the participants' responses also varied enough to indicate that these skills were not seen as relatively the same level of enhanced skills as a result of the Star Wars marketing plan project. Any variation, which existed within the sample was significant.

The top five ranked project management-related skills were (in order of highest to lowest): team building, interpersonal relations skills, time management, organizational skill, leadership skills, and communication skills.

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These results proved to be statistically significant (see Table 2). This appears to indicate that, whereas the students differed to a significant level about the importance of the five skills enhanced during the Star Wars marketing plan project, the participants' variation of ratings did appear to show different views by the students.

**Table 1 Enhanced Skills, Marketing Undergraduate Students (n = 51)**

Descriptive Statistical Test	Top 5 Criteria
Mean (F)	10.22582***
Variance: Levene	22.224416***

Significance: \* $p \leq 0.05$ ; \*\* $p \leq 0.001$ , \*\*\* $p \leq 0.0001$

**Table 2 Top 5 Criteria, all Marketing Undergraduate Students (n = 51)**

Descriptive Statistical Test	Top 5 Criteria
Mean (F)	6.25***
Variance: Levene	125.812***

Significance: \* $p \leq 0.05$ ; \*\* $p \leq 0.001$ , \*\*\* $p \leq 0.0001$

In the undergraduate Marketing course students began their marketing plan-related assignments by being assigned a Malcolm Baldrige Award-winning Company. Using the company's award summary document, the students developed a detailed marketing plan. This gradual, developmental approach had not been used in the past, but it was theorized by the professor that this would develop their understanding of the Malcolm Baldrige Award, as well as developing skills for completing the marketing plan process. Indeed, student comments were very positive about this approach. Table 3 shows the notable improvement in the students' knowledge of the Malcolm Baldrige Award and how its information could benefit a business person. Furthermore, students remarked that the smaller assignment helped them to learn in-depth about the marketing mix and to learn what type of information had to be researched to develop a solid marketing plan. As one student noted, the initial assignment helped to "open up" the student's awareness and knowledge for the larger "Star Wars" assignment.

**Table 3 Enhanced Knowledge of Malcolm Baldrige Award Information**

Marketing (Undergraduate) Assessment Questions	Pre-Assessment Scores Based on "Best" Value of 4  <i>Score earned:</i>	Post Assessment Grades Based on "Best" Value of 4  <i>Score earned:</i>
Describe the Malcolm Baldrige Award	+4 score = 0% of respondents +3 score = 0% +2 score = 2% 0 score = 98%	+4 score = 69% of respondents = Strong knowledge +3.5 score = 4% = Above satisfactory knowledge +3 score = 25% (Satisfactory knowledge) +2 score = 2%

The larger marketing plan assignment required the students, in teams, to develop a marketing plan for the new Star Wars film, "The Force Awakens". As one student noted, the class worked with every aspect of a successful marketing approach and used their marketing knowledge to analyze the facts surrounding the marketing of the film. Since the film had not been released at the time of the assignment, the current, dynamic nature of the assignment engaged the students. 87% of the students knew why marketers plan by the end of the year compared with 28% of the students at the beginning of the year. Furthermore, 98% of the students had working knowledge about marketing plans by the end of the year, compared to 22% of the students at the beginning of the year. See Table 4 for specific phrases students used to describe their progress. Students saw applicability to marketing plan assignments.



**Table 4 Undergraduate Marketing Students' Common Phrases Regarding "Star Wars: The Force Awakens" and their Enhanced Marketing Knowledge**

Students saw relevant real-world use of marketing concepts, including use of target marketing, demographics and benchmarking by Disney in a marketing campaign	75% of students
The use of Star Wars: The Force Awakens movie demonstrated why marketing actions are needed: facilitated analysis and appreciation of inter-relationship of elements of the marketing mix	57% of students
Influence of pricing research on final corporate outcomes	14% of students
Enhanced use of marketing research	34% of students
Enhanced appreciation of promotion strategy, including advertising,	24% of students
Enhanced appreciation of promotion strategy, including social media use	6% of students
Note: All students experienced learning benefits	

### **3.2 MBA Students and Development of Human Capital Competencies**

The MBA students in this study discussed the value of seeing the various HRM functions interwoven into one company setting depicted in a full-length feature film. This demonstrated the impact on employee performance and the need for several HR actions to be implemented properly by management. As one student noted, the "connectivity" of the actions showed HR as a strategic partner. This analysis "enriched" the students' comprehension and understanding. Several students were surprised that "Monsters Inc" was assigned and yet reflected afterwards about how effective and eye-opening the film was to successfully portray the significance of the HRM role and of the HR-related issues and practices.

Furthermore, in the initial phase of this study, graduate students were asked to discuss what functions of HRM were better understood as a result of the film case study. The top three aspects are noted below (Table 5). This indicates that one film can enhance an understanding of at least two fundamental HR functions, as well as an appreciation of the ramifications of ethical and unethical actions at the workplace. A fewer number of students listed enhanced understanding of employee relations, performance management, workforce planning & employment, strategic Human Resource Management, safety, and leadership.

**Table 5 Common Phrases Regarding "Monsters Inc" and enhanced HRM knowledge**

Training and Development function	47% of students
Total Rewards (compensation, internal equity)	47% of students
Ethics	32% of students

Additionally, in a later session of the MBA HRM course, students again noted the relevance of watching the film, "The Devil Wears Prada", as a case study. Students remarked that the film demonstrated many different HRM functions and how they may be applied or violated at the workplace. Students viewed the impact of imbalanced Total Rewards systems, Human Resource Development, Employee Relations, and various HRM laws that were followed or violated, and the importance of mentoring. Movies can be seen as "significant documents, artifacts, or texts' that reflect public attitudes"... (Hermann, 1998). Popular films can misrepresent the law" Moohr (2015, p. 124). Therefore, students are encouraged to critically assess the appropriateness of various managerial actions towards the employees in the film. "Viewers are likely to believe that error-ridden scenes are accurate, creating false expectations" (Moohr, p. 125). Part of the outcomes of this case study assignment is that students come to realize that what they have seen in movies that may have given them an impression of professional behavior was in reality a false impression. Movies take liberties with truth. "Many more movies have played fast and loose with the facts" (Queenan, 2015, para. 5). It is the challenge of the course professor to guide

students to use their new knowledge to differentiate between fact and fiction when making judgments about what is and is not accepted, ethical, legal and appropriate managerial actions. “Movies about business operations can lead to a public bias against business” (Moohr, p. 125), so it is important for the course’s professor to encourage students through lectures and course readings to gain a respect for business as an art and a science, and to realize the potential decisions they may have to make — or at least influence — in their careers.

As one student noted, this case study wove various course elements together. Furthermore, by using this movie as a case study, students’ comprehension of HRM activities was strengthened. The assignment required them to discuss various HRM functions and to reveal how they were implemented and the impact of the corporate actions upon the employees and the business’ outcomes. Additionally, the students enhanced their knowledge of the importance of HR policies and practices on a company by noting when HR-related errors, such as spotty onboarding, or ineffective HR-related policies, conducted by business unit managers, negatively impacted or “damaged” the development of employees and the growth of the company. Besides applying HRM concepts through a dynamic discussion of the film, students were required to synthesize other course materials into their analysis. They were, in some instances, able to connect the viewing to their own work experiences. Students became “active” learners who gained from this hands-on learning experience. Although the film was fictitious, the scenes conveyed offered a pragmatic, almost “real-life” view into a dysfunctional business setting in a very competitive industry. Students also had an opportunity to evaluate the ethical issues at play in the movies through various principles, including the Society for Human Resources’ Code of Ethics.

The results of this study reveal that students found course-related movies very relevant and effective in learning business Marketing and Human Resource Management concepts, and issues. They also enjoyed movies as learning experiences in the classroom. This may be particularly relevant for the vast number of Millennial students who are visual learners. Both this author’s observations and students’ reactions regarding the relevance and usefulness of movies as an undergraduate and a graduate classroom learning tool are very positive.

#### **4. Implications for Management and Business Education**

This exploratory analysis’ model for enhancing the use of full-length, feature films as a tool has implications for higher education business educators and business practitioners. The research here demonstrates that students’ ability to think analytically — a crucial business competency — can be developed using full-length, feature films. This knowledge can be extrapolated to business’ training and development endeavors. These active learning experiences can build students’ “doing” and “being” skills, as well as “knowing” skills. The assignments help to grow students’ critical thinking ability, and graduate students’ ability to apply knowledge and make decisions as contexts and circumstances change in a business setting. Business concepts are interwoven into the use of these video tools as a creative way to engage students in a systematic approach. The findings of this research study demonstrate the development of business skills — some of which have been found to be weak in business programs — and the heightened competency of human capital skills in an MBA course. Student feedback about their perceptions and actual classroom results demonstrate attainment of various aspects of management competencies that can be taught via motion pictures.

#### **5. Conclusions and Recommendations**

The effectiveness of film in the undergraduate and graduate courses studied in this paper convey the benefits

of film as a learning tool for a generation of learners who prefer hands-on, visual learning. The change implemented into the design of this undergraduate marketing course is very timely. As noted by Black, Daughtrey, and Lewis (2014) “marketing education needs to be revised and revamped” (p. 213). The techniques utilized in course design implementing use of full-length feature films demonstrates the educational value of this learning tool for undergraduate marketing courses and for MBA Human Resource Management courses.

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