



Taking An Experiential Approach:
Learning How to Teach Academic Research

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Development Project Report
March 2008



Author(s) Steven L. Crawford	Type of Publication Development Project Report	
	Pages 70	Language English
Title Taking An Experiential Approach: Learning How to Teach Academic Research		
Degree Programme Teacher Education College		
Tutor(s) Eila Burns		
Abstract <p>This report describes how an introductory academic research course was developed over two years based on an experiential learning model proposed by David Kolb in 1984. Kolb's model was also employed as a primary learning method for the students, which resulted in the students creating their own group and individual research project during the course year 2006; in 2007 the group project was dropped.</p> <p>This created a novel scenario in which both the teacher and the students were developing their respective practices in parallel under the same theoretical bases. The decision to focus on experiential learning methods emerged from the teacher's own studies at the Jyväskylä University of Applied Sciences Teacher Education College.</p> <p>The project resulted in the creation of a course and a content delivery method that also linked the course to other aspects of the degree program where the course was taught. The project also produced a critical analysis of and discussion about the experiences of students when experiential learning methods are used for teaching an introductory course in academic research at the undergraduate level. The perspectives produced by the project may serve to inform other teachers who may be exploring the use of experiential learning methods in their own practice.</p>		
Keywords Experiential, experience, learning styles, Kolb, course development		

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1 BACKGROUND

In the summer of 2006 I was contracted to teach an introductory academic research course at the Jyväskylä University of Applied Science, School of Culture's Degree Programme in International Music Management. I had previously taught individual modules on qualitative research at the University of Jyväskylä, but had not yet taught an entire course about academic research. In order to prepare for the course I had to assess my own state of qualification and content preparedness to teach the course, and I also had to assess how the course fit into the degree program's overall curriculum. In addition, and perhaps most importantly, I needed to develop a plan for how best to teach the course in spite of my lack of experience across an entire course in academic research.

At first I was tempted to create, before the start of the course, a primarily lecture format for the course content and delivery, one that would perhaps reflect traditional teaching approaches in Finland (Haussier, S., Paavillainen, E., Åstedt-Kurki, P., 2003). I decided, however, to defer the design of the course implementation until after I met with the students. This decision was partly based on my own lack of familiarity with the degree program and the development of its compulsory thesis component, especially considering that the degree program was relatively new and had not yet graduated any students. I also felt it would be useful to know where the individual students were relative to their own thesis projects. Finally, my curiosity was raised regarding how the students might believe that they each learned best, because I was contemplating the idea of taking an experiential approach to teaching and student learning in the course.

On the first day of class in the fall semester of 2006 I queried the students about both their preferred learning styles and their present progress toward their own theses (see Appendix 2). Assessing the students' preferred learning style as a form of responsive pedagogy (Kinchin, 2004) proved to be influential to designing the course itself and subsequently provided the opportunity to further the development of the thesis component of the degree program by linking the course directly to the thesis component.

The students' replies to my first day inquiry supported my own desire to split the course between a traditional lecture format and a purely experiential format in which the students 1) set out as a group to design and conduct a research project during the fall term, and 2)

produce a substantial academic research proposal which they might transition into their own thesis project in the degree program. The present report documents both the development of the course and elaborates my ideas about its possible synergistic relationship to the degree program, including the thesis requirement and a new thesis-tutoring program.

In spite of the fact that I had completed many of the courses in the Teacher's College program at the time of the teaching appointment, my assessment of my own preparedness for teaching this course was mostly subjective in nature. I believe that to a large degree teaching is a performance art, and this brings up certain aspects of my development since childhood. The notion that teaching contains a performance aspect may also in some way set me apart from many of my Finnish colleagues. I grew up in a family that frequently moved from one place to another due to the nature of my father's employment. I recently learned that I lived in nine different places before I was seven years old! This sort of lifestyle places a heavy burden on a child in terms of developing socialization skills. I had to constantly introduce myself and navigate new social environments. Constantly being the "new kid on the block" forces one to learn how to make new friends, even though they may not be there the following year, or just as likely, you may not be there next year. I recall the saying that, "what does not kill you makes you stronger." I feel that in my youth I was compelled to develop social coping skills in spite of a deeply rooted shyness, and that over the years since then I became adept at entering new situations and communicating my thoughts while entertaining the thoughts of others, seeking and negotiating outcomes, producing positive feedback for others, and in general establishing good working relationships and partnerships.

Now, recently past fifty years of age, I have over twenty-five years experience in sales, communications and marketing, most recently for a U.S. Fortune 500 company. I am used to preparing and making presentations to groups large and small. My reliance on developing communication skills helped put food on the table, so to speak, but also prepared me for a second career as a teacher. I also recognize that just having the basic human skills needed for communication does not necessarily qualify one to teach. Thus the addition of pedagogical training and qualifications hopefully will further expand the primary bases for growing my teaching service. Since 2001 I have completed two degrees, a bachelor's degree in liberal studies and a master's degree in intercultural communication. After completing the master's degree in 2004 I began to teach, albeit in small steps. But I was invited back at each institution and from here I began to build my teaching service. Now (2008) I have taught five different complete courses in two higher education institutions, and I recently assumed thesis

supervision and assessment duties as well. I believe that the teacher's college program meshes well with my prior life experiences and will certainly help to develop and further my teaching potential.

2 DEVELOPMENT PROJECT INTRODUCTION

2.1 The Degree Program at JAMK

The Degree Program in Music Management¹ at the Jyväskylä University of Applied Sciences (JAMK) in Finland was formed in 2003. The program was formally linked with two other European degree programs, Hedmark University College in Norway and INHOLLAND University Haarlem in the Netherlands. According to the official program description, the primary goal of the bachelor's level program is to educate and prepare students "... seeking employment and early progression within diverse management structures of the European/international music industries" (Appendix 1). In order to complete the degree the student is required to complete 240 ECTS credits over a four-year period. The annual intake of students is presently limited to ten, and thus the competition for admittance to the program is quite high. The program comprises a series of basic, professional and elective studies combined with an internship and a bachelor-level thesis requirement. Students in the program study primarily in the English language, which for most is not their native language.

2.2 The Students in My Course

The students comprised a range of ages, from late teens to the late twenties. All were undergraduate-level students and most were studying in the Degree Programme in International Music Management. Those who were not were studying in the school's other music and media programs. It quickly became clear that many of my students were already actively and professionally engaged in the music business as performers, managers or employees of music related companies. Curiosity was thus formed about whether the practical and applied aspects of their combined student and work life would lend itself to a course based on a practical approach that would result in a product, as opposed to the traditional lecturing format followed by essays or a test.

¹ The Jyväskylä University of Applied Science's English webpages are at <http://www.jamk.fi/>

The majority of the students in both years (06 and 07) were Finns, and most of the remainder of the students came from central European nations, Africa, Russia and Canada. There were more males than females in the two classes, however sex was not a variable in the planning of the project or the analysis of the results. Although the course is targeted for students who are in the first half of their four-year program, some of the students taking the course were already in their final two years of study.

2.3 Designing the Course

The degree program was still freshly minted when I secured my first teaching assignment for the spring 2006 semester, and had not yet graduated any students. When I was contracted to teach the academic research course my research experience at that time was limited to my own bachelor's and master's research projects (Crawford, 2004), a symposium paper published in the event's proceedings (2003), and a conference paper that was subsequently published in a book (2006). My teaching experience in research was limited at the time to presenting a handful of modules focused on qualitative research in my master's program (intercultural communication) at the University of Jyväskylä. I felt at the time that my own preparedness for teaching this particular course was lacking, and this would provide the key impetus for this development project, in the sense that "necessity is the mother of invention" (Plato, *The Republic*). In short, I needed to create the course from scratch and develop a means and pedagogical approach to teaching it.

When conferring with colleagues at the school it became clear that the program's thesis requirements had not yet firmly been established, essentially because no students had yet neared the thesis stage in the new program. As well, I discovered an interesting thesis tutoring program that had recently been established to assist students in getting their thesis project going. I began to communicate with the teacher running the tutoring project about various aspects of student research at the school, and through other teachers and managers I learned more about what the students were doing, including their internships and other coursework and projects.

I discussed with the head of the program and the thesis-tutoring teacher my vision for developing the Introduction to Academic Research course and connecting it to the thesis-tutoring program. The degree program itself being new, the topic of this development project was thus timely and relevant. The first step was to develop the course itself, and to link this

process to my own development project research, including: assessing the students, creating the lectures, collecting data, facilitating and observing classroom discussions, monitoring the progress of the class group project (06), and assessing the final report (06) and the students' thesis proposals.

Taking the school's point of view, I hoped the development project would be useful in terms of furthering the development of the degree program. The project would hopefully enhance the overall curriculum, and it was also hoped that the integration of the two program components (thesis-tutoring and the Introduction to Academic Research course) would eventually produce quality thesis topics and projects that could be completed in a timely manner. Key to this would be the expected early and steady progress each student would make on his or her thesis topic during the academic research course. The assumption was that if the students could get through the initial phases of uncertainty related to understanding the research process and developing their own ideas, and develop a workable and appealing plan, then the thesis itself at least for some students would be "activated" and stand a good chance of keeping moving during their studies. Delay and procrastination was thought to be a common limiting factor in the development of thesis projects, thus placing undue stress on the students during their final year of studies.

The development project was implemented at the start of the fall 2006 school session. By the end of December the class research project was concluded, and shortly thereafter the students were to have completed and submitted their own final thesis research proposals. The second course began in the fall 2007 school session, and as of March 2008 I am still continuing to work with students from both groups in an advisory or supervisory support role.

3 THEORY BASIS

Experiential learning is perhaps one of, if not the most researched and elaborated theories in the field of education. John Dewey, Kurt Lewin, Jean Piaget and David Kolb are recognized as founding theorists and developers in the study of experiential learning. Kurt Lewin is also considered by some to be the father of action research, a methodology that has recently begun to achieve acceptance as a research methodology in the field of education. As in Kolb's elaboration of experiential learning theory based in large measure on the preceding work of Lewin, action research also places emphasis on experience and reflection by the practitioner as a means toward improving one's own practice. Miettinen describes experiential learning as

“an important approach within the theoretical tradition of adult education,” and notes that the theory is rooted in “western, postmodern” Anglo-European cultural contexts (2000: 54-56). Kolb built his theory of experiential learning on his previous work on individual learning styles, which has also enjoyed extensive theoretical elaboration in the education field. In fact, in his theorizing Kolb casts a web across numerous fields and theorists ranging from psychology, philosophy and education as means to develop an “integrative perspective on learning that combines experience, perception, cognition and behavior” (1984: 21).

Kolb’s theory can be summarized as an ongoing iterative process involving four steps: 1. Concrete experience, 2. Observations and reflections, 3. Formation of abstract concepts and generalizations, and 4. Testing implications of concepts in new situations (1984: 21). In this model the learner begins with step one and proceeds through step three, thus completing one cycle as indicated in Figure 1. Recognizing that Kolb’s theory was originally applied to group learning scenarios, I decided to experiment, using the term rather loosely, by including a group project in addition to individual aspects to the course. The data for this report comes from two iterations of the Introduction to Academic Research course. In the first course, during the school year 2006-2007, I chose to introduce both the individual and the group project to the syllabus (see Appendix 3). In the second iteration of the course, during school year 2007-2008, I chose not to include the group project, for reasons that will be explained later in this report.

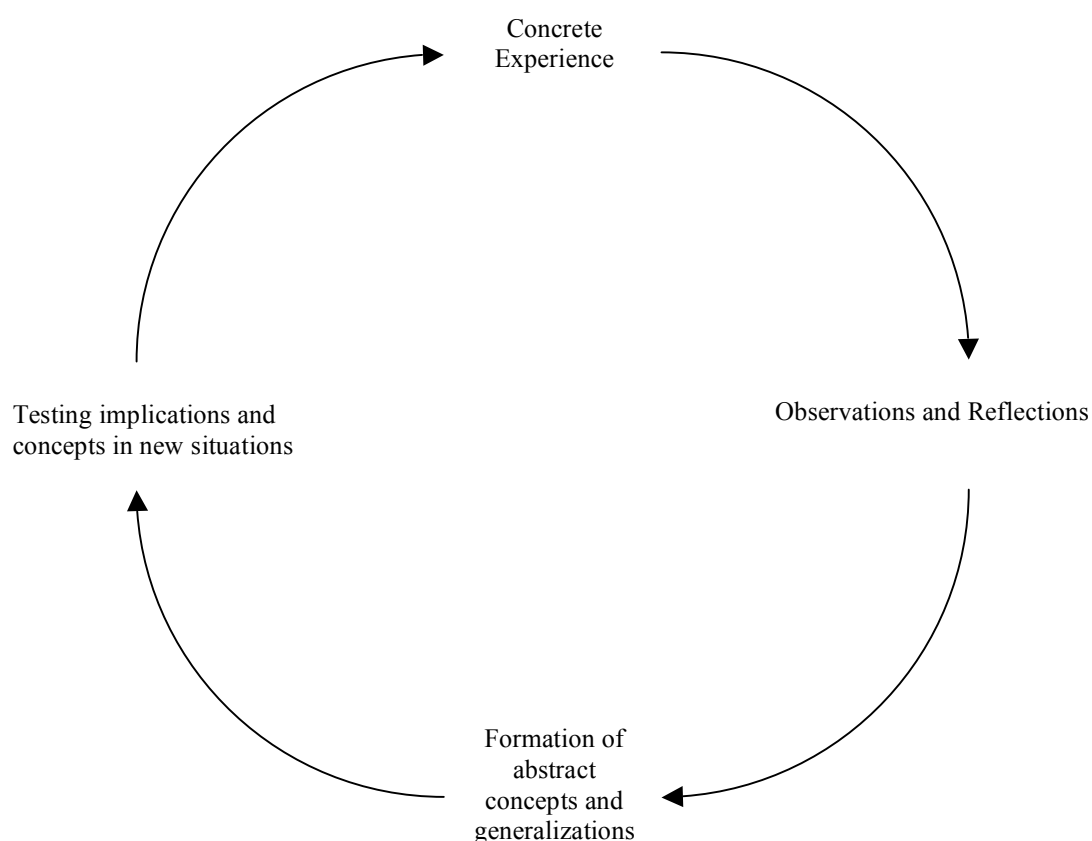


Figure 1. Kolb’s Model of Experience

Both the individual and group projects were conceptualized as separate and distinct products that the students would take responsibility for producing as active participants, as opposed to following the traditional Finnish lecture course format (Haussier, S., Paavillainen, E., Åstedt-Kurki, P., 2003). In both years I began the course by asking the students to formulate and submit to me their assessment and thoughts about their own preferred learning styles (see Appendices 2 and 4).

The syllabus stipulated that each student produce their own research proposal, one which may be suitable and desirable for their required future thesis project. Several objectives were reflected in this requirement. Firstly, at the beginning of the 2006 course I asked the students to describe at what point they were in the thesis process, and it became apparent that few of them had considered about what their topic might be, much less have a firm topic in mind. So I concluded that one thing the course could accomplish might be to help these students find a thesis research topic. Secondly, I wanted to be sure that the students began the processes of developing and implementing their thesis early in their program of studies, as opposed to waiting until the final year. Finally, I wanted to integrate the course into other aspects of the degree curriculum, namely the academic writing course, the thesis requirement, the newly developed thesis-tutoring program, and also the internship requirement in cases where the thesis and the internship might be combined.

Factoring all of these required components for the course: lecture, discussion, group project and individual project, I predicted that the activities the students engaged in would address steps one through three in Kolb's model of experience. The "concrete experience" would comprise the lectures, literature review, and discussions leading up to the point where the students began to formulate and execute their own ideas about either the group project (06) or their own research proposal project (06 and 07). The concrete experience would continue through the document draft phases and would include Kolb's step two wherein the students continuously observed and reflected on the processes of production, revision and production. Step three, the "formation of abstract concepts and generalizations," would likely materialize as a cogent image of their nearly completed thesis proposal project that would emerge in their final drafts. Kolb's model would continue iteratively further downstream as the students "test implications and concepts in a new situation," where the skills and processes of research they learn in the course will be tested when their actual thesis, as compared to their "proposal," will be realized.

Perhaps explaining my attraction to Kolb's model of experience, I was also influenced by the report of my College "support teacher" who observed my teaching practice in 2006 (Appendix 6). My support teacher noted that I "seemed inclined toward active and collaborative" teaching methods in a course I was teaching that was unrelated to the research course. Active and collaborative seem to support the theory and assumptions behind experiential learning approaches, particularly in group settings. The support teacher also perceived that "varied methods," including film and literature (in the literary sense), helped to convey difficult material to the students. I feel that the use of media creates an immersive environment through which students are able to "experience" the lives and social conditions of disparate others. In this sense, the experiential approach becomes evident again in my own preferred teaching approach. The support teacher also pointed out that creativity "adds value" to the organization. In this case I would posit that creativity is directly linked to Kolb's experience model and its featured aspects in this development project. Both the class project and the individual thesis proposals were creative by design, and as such provide the framework through which each of the steps in Kolb's model were operationalized.

It is important to note that Kolb advanced his theories after his seminal 1984 publication to include a significant exploration and elaboration of learning styles. Although I conducted a small direct survey of the students about their preferred learning styles, this research project is limited in scope to and focused on Kolb's original model of experience, which was applied and tested across the students in both course years. A more advanced study that would further the theoretical bases to include individual learning styles I believe would be beyond the scope of the teacher certification program and would be more suited to a master's level or higher work.

4 OBJECTIVES

The overarching objectives of this development project were:

1. To combine my past and present academic and professional studies and experiences to design and develop a course, *Introduction to Academic Research*, for bachelor-level students in the field of international music management.
2. To create the course and its teaching approach, *from a pedagogical perspective*, by using David Kolb's model of experience as a primary basis.

3. To develop a learning approach *for the students* based on the same model and assumptions.
4. To contribute to the development of the school's overall curriculum by exploring how the development of the Introduction to Academic Research course can be integrated into certain other aspects of the degree program, and to make recommendations to the school based on the results.

5 IMPLEMENTATION AND REFLECTION

5.1 Course I (Fall 2006)

One disadvantage I had in 2006 as a new teacher in the program was that I did not know much about the students and their study life. Partly for this reason I deferred creating a syllabus for the course until I learned more. It turned out that these students led complicated lives. Many of them were already involved in the music business, either as musicians or in some aspect of business pertaining to music recording, production, distribution, or marketing. Nonetheless, I expected that the students in the course would be able to accomplish both their individual thesis proposal project and a larger scale group project. In the end trying to do both proved to be quite stressful not only the students but for myself as well. Many of the music management students were quite busy during weekends and often appeared to be sleep deprived on Mondays. There is nothing wrong at all, of course, with working in and developing one's future career, but it seemed that overall the students had quite much to do. Many students were also active in the Campus Entertainment program, and this actively occasionally cut into class attendance and obliged the students' time before, during and even after particular Campus Entertainment events. In short, I found that in the face of so many student obligations, attempting both the group and the individual project was simply too much during the course.

5.1.1 Group Project

The final result of the group project comprised a pilot study focusing on the business challenges faced by Finnish music festivals, a topic chosen as a group by the students. Each student was assigned responsibility for contributing to one or more aspects of the pilot study, including for example the literature review, method and methodologies, participant contact

and interviews, and data gathering and translation to English. Other sections of the pilot study were done as a group.

The most challenging section for the students was the literature review section. This was likely due simply to the fact that no students had previously been exposed to the research process in “academic” contexts. Nonetheless, over time the literature review materialized although I was disappointed in its length. I conducted lectures pertaining to various other components of a study, including the research problem statement, research objectives, methods and methodologies, participant selection and management, data collection and analysis, discussion, limitations, conclusions and recommendations, as well as formatting and citation and reference management.

The final project was titled, “Discovering Business Problems in Finnish Music Festivals: A Pilot Study Focused on International Contexts,” and was completed on December 31, 2006 (Appendix 5). Ten students were acknowledged as co-authors, and I as the lecturer for the course. Three major Finnish music festivals agreed to participate in the study: Ruisrock, Savonlinna Opera Festival, and the Kaustinen Music Festival.

The students responded well in class to the mixing of lecture, discussion and individual and group activity. Although some contributed more than others to the group project, all of the students seemed to benefit from what I perceived to be an “activation” of their attention toward the production of a “live” project. I posit that music students, who are often also music professionals in their own right, are oriented to the “performance” and “production” nature of music and music management. So an active project seemed to fit right in with their chosen vocation. That said, the development of the group research project had its starts and fits, and as the end of the semester neared there was a fairly high level of stress apparent in the class, and in myself as well. I continually tried to connect the group and individual activities to the theories and lecture content of the course, and in fact the entire group project followed, more or less, the progression of lecture topics. This in itself probably led to something of a time crunch at the end, because the final parts of any research project may take a large portion of the project time.

When the final draft was completed I felt that many of the students were surprised at the results. The study report fulfilled most if not all of the research proposal goals discussed and developed early in the course, and this particular document had each of their names on it as a

co-author! I emphasized that the study was a “pilot” study and not to be confused with an actual thesis in scope or content, and also that pilot studies often serve to create, develop and inform subsequent studies of a larger scale. Thus it could be the case that students in our program in the future will pursue the option of utilizing a portion of our study to help develop their own thesis. In spite of the difficulties related to limited resources, particularly time, I felt the project met its goals and at the same time met my own pedagogical objectives for the students. Yet again, due to the overall time constraints and pressures from other obligations, I later felt that I needed to choose between the group and individual projects for the next iteration of the course, and concluded easily that the individual thesis proposal project carried much more weight in terms of the students’ development in the program.

5.1.2 Individual Thesis Proposals

As mentioned previously, each student in the 06 course was, in addition to participating in the group project, required to produce his or her own research proposal. These two course requirements developed in parallel over the semester. Two difficulties emerged rather quickly with the individual proposals regarding the literature review process. Again, there was a general sense that investing time into searching deeply for academic sources of information was either not needed or not productive. This I perceived as simply reflecting that these students were new to the concept of academic research. Secondly, there seemed to be among some students a prevailing notion that they had already themselves achieved such a level of expertise in the business that they were free to employ a predominantly personal narrative in their introductory literature review, without the substantiation derived from the corpus of research reported in academic or the professional, or trade, sources. I emphasized that they, in fact, had not yet achieved a level of credibility in the field enough that they could approach a bachelor’s thesis proposal introduction completely from their already existing first-person perspective.

As the semester drew on I felt that some of the students, to my surprise, found the “active” nature of the thesis proposal difficult to deal with, although in hindsight I concluded that the students were simply experiencing the acute, perhaps it could be called “growing pains,” related to not only producing academic research but also learning about research and attempting it for the first time. It is usually the case that the first “attempt” at academic research comes only when a student is finally confronted with starting and finishing their actual thesis, and this may happen late in a study program. This “attempting” aspect of the

course in my view correlated with the “concrete experience” step in Kolb’s learning circle. The “observation and reflections” step in Kolb’s theory seemed to correlate with the part of the thesis proposal development process that coincided with the student beginning to absorb and activate the course lecture and discussion content, as well my own personal feedback provided to the students, as also from our ongoing individual discussions. The students were able to see not only “how things worked” (reflecting a traditional lecture environment) but more particularly how things worked or did not work for them. Kolb’s fourth step, “Testing implications and concepts in new situations,” I believe will pan out after the students complete the course and move forward with their thesis process. This will occur even if they change their topic, because the lessons learned in the process of these first two research projects, the individual proposal and group pilot study, will carry forward I believe through the completion of their final thesis. It may surprise the reader that I formulated the course in such a way that Kolb’s cycle would not be completed during the course. It should be acknowledged, however, that in addition to the goal of teaching about academic research, the essential objective of launching the actual thesis process through this course means that the course itself is just the first “stepping-stone” in a long and ongoing process.

There was a range in the quality of the final proposals, but I felt in the end that most of the students were able to grasp the process, and from the perspective of Kolb’s model I felt that the active, real and tangible nature of the two projects activated learning in most students as well. That said, I do feel that having two substantial experiential projects running in parallel was too much for the class, particularly given the overall strain that student and work life placed on many of the students.

5.2 Course II (Fall 2007)

Based on the results of the 2006-year course I decided to drop the group project from the 2007 course and focus more time on the individual thesis proposals. The syllabus and content of the course was much the same as in 2006 but without the group project. I surveyed the students about their preferred learning styles and again found support in their responses for active learning methods (see Appendix 4). In the 2007 course we spent much more time as group discussing the students ideas about their possible thesis topics. As a group we discussed these topics and “brainstormed” about possible methods and methodologies each student might employ. As in 2006 I found myself pushing the students hard about finding suitable literature sources to support their research ideas. In the 2006 course we brought in a school

librarian to conduct a seminar on various ways to locate journal and professional trade publication articles using the school's electronic search resources, but I arranged this too late in the course only after seeing how difficult this part of the process was for the students. So in the 2007-year course I brought the librarian in very early, and even once again later in the course. This seemed to help a great deal, but I still had to deal with the fact that students did not easily grasp or accept the reality that their own voice, at this point in their studies and career, would not alone carry them in an academic research project and would not be an accepted practice in academic research anyway. Many of them seemed to feel that they were already experts in, for example, digital rights management, music piracy, music production and marketing. It could be that some are indeed already experts to some degree, but I had to impress upon them repeatedly that in academic contexts they were not viewed as experts at this stage of their career, and must rely on developing their proposals around qualified academic and business source materials. Although we were easily able to discuss various other aspects of the research process, getting the students to embrace searching for reference material was at times like, "pulling teeth," although in the end most of them met the basic requirement for source material, and some even surpassed it. Ultimately, it is simply a matter of taking the time and investing the effort to get what one needs.

After the students submitted their final draft they seemed quite happy with their work, in much the same way that the 2006 students felt about their work. I feel that steps two and three of Kolb's model were once again reached in each of the students that completed their final proposal, and for some students their proposal will transition into their theses. I have continued to work with some of the students in the spring of 2008 to continue their projects. Although I make recommendations, I emphasize with each student that the work is their product, and I am simply an advisor and part-time supervisor at this point, particularly since most of the grades for the course have already been assessed for the course. Several students are now working to improve their proposals and their grades for the course.

6 RESULTS ACHIEVED

The primary result has been that the course itself has been created and operationalized. This satisfies the most urgent personal need I had going into the course as a new teacher in the subject area. The process of creating the course content and teaching method was itself an experiential process conducted over two years that resulted in a fairly well defined and tested system. As such, I was able to myself to experience Kolb's fourth step, in which the learner is

able to test new applications and concepts in a continuing iteration of the process. In this process I was able to reflect on the experiences of the first course, talk to the students about their own experiences, and evaluate the content and teaching methods. This process led up to the 2007 course and continues to this day as I reflect on the new results, and as I continue to work with students as advisor and supervisor and, most importantly, plan and prepare for the future.

A secondary but important result is that the course has been dovetailed into other aspects of the program, including the students' internships in some cases, as well as the ongoing thesis-tutoring program. Perhaps the best overall result is that there are now in excess of twenty students that have at some significant level begun their thesis projects. Even considering that some students may wind up altering their plan or even changing their topics, the fact that so many now have a sense of direction in addition to a new awareness of academic research demands is itself rewarding.

7 CONCLUSION and RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 My Own Experiential Learning Process

The primary conclusions resulting from this development project are subjective in nature due to the qualitative approach of the project design. Before the course started I considered between two approaches to teaching: the traditional lecture format followed by essay or test assessments, or a format in which I relied principally on the combination of lectures and active projects based on an experiential format. Going into the course I found experiential approaches appealing and this bias certainly emerged in my approach to creating the course. I clearly identify with a "learn by doing" approach as my own preferred learning style.

And it is clear that I operationalized my own preferred learning style in this case to create the course content and delivery methods. I also did this in response to the fact that I had no pre-packaged set of content and assessment means, and also because I hypothesized that the experiential approach would help me to develop a better course through experimentation, activation and reflection, much as was described in Kolb's model. This mirrors the recent acceptance in teaching of action research methods as a means to continually assess one's teaching practice (Sherman & Torbert, 2000, Whitehead, 1993). The reflective nature inherent in any development process demands that any substantive assessment be drawn from a range

of time involving more than one iteration of the overall process, and this project report was drawn from two successive years of instruction. Another year would improve the report significantly, but the teacher's college program is limited in terms of the years one is allowed to study.

7.2 The Students' Experiences

As already mentioned, I did find in my initial inquiries at the beginning of each of the two course years that some of the students also identified with an active, doing approach to learning. I also thought that it might be possible that some of the other students did not have much exposure experiential learning approaches in Finnish contexts, and therefore may be unable to identify with the approach. In the end the choice of relying to such a significant degree on the experiential approach was a risky one. My conclusion in this case is that experiential teaching methods, namely engaging students in their own active projects, can work well as long as the teacher also employs in parallel some traditional lecture and discussion formats. It also seems to me that the teacher changes from being strictly a lecturer, one who leaves at the end of the course, to an advisor, one who develops a working relationship with each student that can, if the environment allows, endure past the final date of the course. In the spring of 2008, after the fall 2007 course had concluded, I found that working one-on-one with students in my capacity as supervisor and advisor has led me to believe that it would best if more time could be set-aside during the course semester for personal attention. Unfortunately this was limited during the course semester due to my own limited time available as an adjunct instructor.

The experiential learning cycle, as described by Kolb, continues in this case for both the students and the teacher. The teacher has the option, if he or she wishes to further advance their practice, to employ action research methods as a means to continuously improved their course content and pedagogical approaches. This option is one that I am exploring now in more detail, and may take advantage of it myself in the future.

7.3 The Degree Program

Courses are positioned in an educational curriculum because the designers have likely put much systematic thought into planning the program. However, it often seems to me that courses in reality operate too independently, and are not directly and actively linked. My

conclusions about the International Music Degree Programme, based on my observations and thoughts during these two years, lead me to believe that the Introduction to Academic Research course could be more strongly linked to other aspects of the program, including aspects pertaining to: academic writing, other discipline-specific courses such as marketing and law, and to other activities, programs and degree requirements already present in the program. In this vision the thesis actually begins, at least conceptually, during the first year of the student's studies and intersects with other aspects of the program until the thesis is completed. It is important in my mind that students get an early start on their thesis, or at least begin early to learn about what it takes to produce a good research product. Intersecting the course more actively with the other degree requirements might also produce a more efficient and streamlined study period. For example, if a student had the option of combining their internship requirement, their Campus Entertainment activity requirement, and their research course and thesis tutoring, would this not make their studies more efficient overall? It would be interesting to test the hypothesis over a span of several years, and this is my recommendation to the program's management. Although the degree program no doubt was planned in such a way that each component complimented the others, I wonder whether this integration could be more actively evident in the actual and ongoing relations between different courses, teachers, and other program requirements. These proposed links between the various program aspects are illustrated in Figure 2.

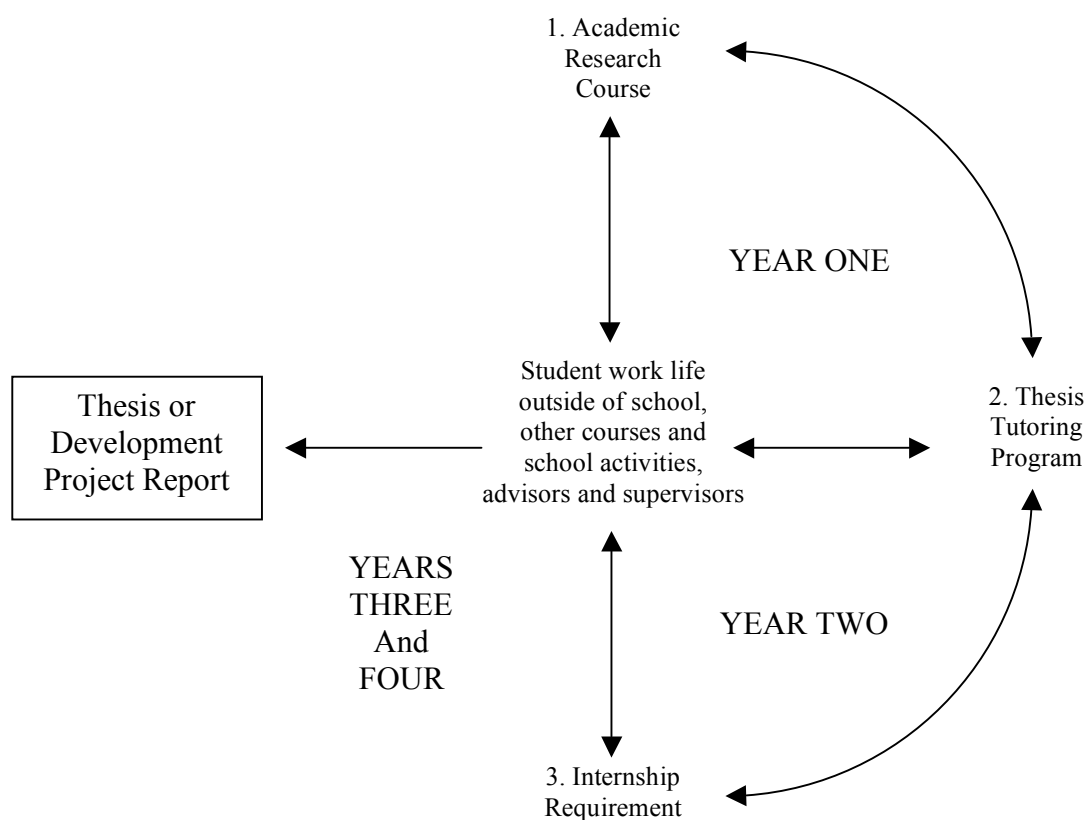


Figure 2. Proposed Integrated Thesis Development Cycle

In Figure 2 we see that the academic research course is not just one stop on the trail of courses taken by students over four years. Instead, the course is taken in the first year of studies, as compared to its present second year appearance. Most importantly, the course and subsequently the research process connect to other important experiences a student will encounter during their studies. It is important to note that the teachers are included in this cycle, and not just the students. The research and thesis development processes benefit when teachers are aware of how their courses, activities, and professional competencies can help to facilitate progress. It is likely that teachers are already involved at some level in the development of some student research projects, but in the proposed schema the cycle would be promoted across the curriculum and teachers would be asked to lend support to the overall process. For example, a marketing teacher might visit the academic research course or the thesis-tutoring seminar and present and discuss important research in the marketing field. Or, the academic research instructor might be included at some part in the planning for the Campus Entertainment student activity program in order that the opportunity for students to use that experience in their thesis or development projects is promoted. There are many possibilities for the thesis process to connect to, influence and be influenced by myriad existing components of the degree program, and it would benefit the students if these connections were established and supported openly by the school's management and teacher community.

8 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

At the date of publication, a survey of the students that completed the 2007 course was not yet returned by enough students to include in the present report. Not being able to include the added perspectives this survey would have brought to the study limits somewhat the findings and conclusions.

Scale and resources primarily limit the study. The project is ongoing, yet the study period available for the teaching certification is soon drawing to a close and decisions had to be made about what else to include or not include. The project and its report could easily be extended to a master's thesis level project, and perhaps this will be case in the future.

I have been performing my teaching duties as an adjunct lecturer, and many of the goals and initiatives that I have identified would require a more substantial commitment of time normally associated with full-time employment. In short, I have conducted this project within

my own limited resources as compared to my other obligations, and within the scope of how much influence an adjunct lecturer can expect to accomplish given his or her part-time configuration outside of the organization. That said, I have received good support and encouragement from the management of the school and look forward to possibly continuing my work there in the future.

It would be informative and productive I believe to follow the students through several years, so that I could continue to develop the course and other factors as part of the cyclical nature of experiential, active learning. As well, I am intrigued by the possibilities offered by action research methodologies that might be employed by these students. The limiting factor for this in my opinion is how exactly to characterize and fit the short-term nature of a student's internship, for example, into the multiple iterations of practice commonly associated with action research. It may be that some aspects of action research methodologies could be incorporated into this degree program, but this will require substantial thought and planning in the future and may result in a new set of methodologies for bachelor's level theses.

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APPENDIXES

Appendix 1

Degree program description details selected from the official school program.

DEGREE PROGRAMME IN MUSIC MANAGEMENT, 240 ECTS Cr

The global music and entertainment industry has emerged as a leading employer in the leisure field. The industry employs an increasingly vast number of practitioners involved in a wide range of managerial and professional activities. Both the industry and the higher education sector have recognized the lack of formal education and training for management and administration positions in music and entertainment, especially in Europe.

The Degree Programme in Music Management was planned as a jointly developed degree in collaboration with three European institutes in the field of music and entertainment management: Jyväskylä University of Applied Sciences in Finland, Hedmark University College in Norway and INHOLLAND University Haarlem in the Netherlands.

The idea is that students begin their studies at one of the three partner institutes and spend their second year abroad at another partner institute. The students return to the home institution to complete their third and fourth years of study.

Qualification Awarded

Degree	Bachelor of Culture and Arts
Length	240 ECTS Credits (EU), 4 years
Specialisation Options	None
Annual Intake	10

School of Cultural Studies/Music
Pitkätatu 18-22, FI-40700 JYVÄSKYLÄ, FINLAND
Tel. +358 (0)14 444 7372; Fax +358 (0)14 444 7399

Educational and Professional Goals

Degree Programme

The aim of the programme is to offer preparation for graduates seeking employment and early progression within diverse management structures of the European/international music industries. The students are able to address issues directly related to the music industries in the context of their relationship with management, information technology and business across Europe and globally.

Compulsory Interdisciplinary Studies

The students of all the degree programmes have the same basic competencies for polytechnic studies and for work in their profession.

Basic Studies

The students have been orientated and equipped with the basic tools for professional skills and knowledge in the field of music management.

World of Music modules: The students have general knowledge of western music (classical to 20th century pop, rock and jazz) and a cultural-historical perspective of the music industry.

Ethnomusicology: The students are familiar with the various multi-cultural influences in both western and non-western music and have an overview of the main music cultures of the world.

Management and Musicianship module: A complementary part of the basic music studies to enhance music managers' empathy and understanding of the practice and qualities of performing musicians.

Business Mathematics module: The students have the basic numerical and accounting competencies as a demand of professional practice.

Professional Studies

Professional Studies consist of law and copyright, business industry, management, live event and music studies, as well as language and communication modules. The students have the core competencies to succeed in professional managerial practice.

Law and Copyright studies: The students understand the legal framework within which record labels, managers, publishers and artists operate. Special emphasis has been placed on intellectual property and contract law.

Core Management Theory modules: The students are familiar with management theory and have applicable management skills in order to face the challenges of the music industry.

Global Industry Framework module: The students understand the key national and international organisations which govern the operations of the music industry.

Finance for International Music Managers: The students understand the essentials of financial management and know its application in the international music industry.

International Music Marketing: Focus on the basic principles of the marketing theory (marketing plan and publicity) as well as the interrelationships between markets.

Live Event, Music and Other Specialization Studies: The students have a perspective of agency and festival management and promotion. They will deepen their own music abilities as their understanding of the role of music in our society.

Language Studies for the Music Management degree programme have been designed to equip the student to function in an international environment with multi-cultural communication and language skills. The student is not only competent in foreign languages and cultural principles but also masters the "learning to learn" strategies and academic research writing.

The Project Study module has been designed to facilitate students' learning and involvement in applied scientific and social research. The students have studied the theoretical approach and the literature and applied this knowledge to the implementation of practically oriented projects.

Elective Interdisciplinary Studies

The students have broadened and deepened their professional and personal development in accordance with their choices.

Internship

The students have been required to gain extensive practical experience in projects and/or internships. The internships have been defined as a process of learning through working life and networks. A close interaction between specialisation studies, the internship and the bachelor's thesis has been highly recommended. The students have had the possibility to do the internship abroad.

Bachelor's Thesis

The students have the ability to combine analytical, critical and creative thinking processes. This module has facilitated students' learning and involvement in social, scientific and management research. The thesis has preferably been done in close cooperation with the professional milieu and in the context of the internship as a feasible development project with regard to the music industry. It has been recommended that the thesis formulation process commence already during the second academic year.

Appendix 2

Student answers to the preferred learning style question: 2006

1. I learn best by doing. I've never been a good "reader", so I don't really do that well in academic courses. Practical work is my thing, so to say. Learning from the mistakes I make.
2. I learn best by doing in things in practise. I tend to forget theoretical information after an exam quite easily, if it isn't in any use afterwards.
3. By making in practice.
4. I learn best when different teaching methods are used together. Powerpoint is in my opinion easy to understand, effective and easy. Different methods shouldn't overlap, as personally I find it very difficult to listen and write effectively at the same time.
5. I learn best by reading books and answering questions afterwards, for example small random tests or exams. Those forces me to read and learn.
6. By doing.
7. I learn best by getting interested. If I am not interested, I wont learn no matter how carefully I read or listen. In my opinion concrete examples are a best way for a teacher to make students remember and learn.
8. If a lecture is heavy in academic content, I find it best to learn by having lecture notes printed out in advance and then complementing them by writing down notes during the lecture. When a lecture is more practical, and in a small group, I think group discussion along with taking notes is my preferred method.
9. I learn best when different teaching methods are used together. Powerpoint is in my opinion easy to understand, effective and easy. Different methods shouldn't overlap, as personally I find it very difficult to listen and write effectively at the same time.

Appendix 3

2006 Course Syllabus

ZWPR0100
 Mondays 9:30-11:00
 Steve Crawford, MA
 Email: stevecrawford@mac.com

Fall 2006
 Room 104
 Meeting Hours: By Appointment

Introduction to Academic Research, 3 ECTS

Course Description

This compulsory course serves as a basic introduction to academic research. The students will be introduced to the basic concepts of applied research, and topical emphasis will be placed on ten major themes: the purpose and relevance of their research, resources needed, originality, accuracy, accountability, generalization, objectivity, ethics and proof. The course is designed to help the students direct their attention to the conception of and an implementation plan for their future thesis project.

Class organization and tasks

The course will be comprised of interactive lectures and discussions. A class project will focus on identifying applied research needs in the professional and international music management business. The student project will focus on developing ideas and options regarding their own research, which will result in the completion of a qualified research proposal that may ultimately transition into their own thesis project.

The course would normally include two contact sessions per week. However, in this case because there are two projects (class and student) underway simultaneously, the second session will be focused on the students managing tasks that are directly related to these two projects.

No books are required to complete this course. However, the student will benefit from most any introductory text dealing with aspects of research. Suggestions include:

Social Research: The Basics, by Matthew David and Carole D. Sutton. Sage Publications.

Doing a Literature Review: Releasing the Social Science Research Imagination, by Chris Hart. Sage Publications.

Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches, 2nd Edition, by John W. Creswell. Sage Publications.

Other recommended readings as well as sources used to create the lectures will be introduced during the semester.

Grading

Attendance (20%), class participation (20%), class project participation (20%) and final student project (40%).

Attendance will be taken each class.

Appendix 4

Student answers to the preferred learning style question: 2007

1. I think that the best is to read some material about the subject you would like to learn, after that find some points you don't get and write down some questions. After that a lecture would do fine and great if you have opportunity to ask your teacher the questions you had reading the material the first time. Discussions with friends can help well. But the best is to learn something on practice.”
2. I definitely learn best by doing. It seems that the muscle memory just kicks in and I feel more confident in my knowledge of the new skill or idea. I like when a teacher explains what it is we are doing and also makes me write it out or gives me the notes and then I am made to put that which he/she has just said into some practical use, either by brainstorming on it, or physically doing it, or just questioning the actual meaning of it in conversation.
3. The best way to learn for me is talking and interacting, not just reading and teacher lecturing. Interaction between students and teacher(s) is important. Depending on the subject, sometimes the theory needs some real life examples to make it easier understanding it.
4. I believe I learn best through discussions and debates. I think I am an active learner rather than a passive one. For me reading a book/material is only the basis for learning, not the main thing. A good teacher, in my opinion, guides the discussion but also leaves room for personal opinions and debate.
5. I learn best I suppose, when I make mindmaps and write down what I try to learn with my own words. Reading without making my own notes is worth nothing to me. The most important thing is to somehow add the new issues to the knowledge I already have. Interactive discussion during class are also good. And I also good visual memory.
6. I learn best with a mix of ways. I think the usual ”teacher gives lectures” is essential, but self-learning is important, too. By this I mean that assignments like writing an essay gives good opportunity to find information yourself. So I like to be told things and then find more about stuff myself.

7. In general I like summaries in the end (pointing out the most important fact). I don't like "Powerpoint sheets only" (I always need the oral explanation only). I also have an image-oriented brain (so I like metaphors, illustrations, etc.). I like nice little printouts. Repetitions are always good.

8. I am visually oriented person. I get a lot from pictures and film clips that are connected to the studying subject. I also prefer to get lots of reading material where I can myself get other aspects to the subject besides the point of view that the lecturer is giving me. In the end I still believe that best way to learn is by doing yourself.

9. By doing and thinking. Usually its doing before thinking.

10. I learn probably the best in lectures that also have a practical learning part in them. Also important for my learning is not just to listen but write down notes as well. The more interactive the lecture is, the better I can memorize what I've heard and learned. When studying independently its important for me to think of some sort of examples or applications of that specific matter that I've read.

11. I best learn when I am actively engaged in an activity. When I am interested in the subject matter. A friendly supportive atmosphere in a classroom is beneficial however not necessary. I also learn well when food is involved. One of the most important factors is good health, when I am sick or hung over I don't learn very well.

12. In class the best way to learn for me is when the teacher gives me practical examples. In courses it is very important that I have the opportunity to practice what I learned before. If I want to learn for an exam for example, I'm not able to do it just having a written text. I must have a summary of the most important things.

13. I learn best by overviewing a general perception of the subject at hand by visualizing it as a whole. After the "introduction" I'd like to hear an in-depth explanation about it followed by practical exercises or a discussion about the subject.

14. If I have a text or the complete materials of a course I got used to make a summary only for me, which I learn by heart. The other possibility is, to learn about practical things. To do something and get to know why I have to do so, is a good thing to learn.

15. By an interesting teacher who explains some of the material in class and has class discussions (not too long!) about it. Also provides you with background material. Not a teacher who just reads from Powerpoint and does not keep you interested. He should also have a story which gets to a point and you can take notes from. Then I like to read notes/background material at home in silence.

Appendix 5

2006 Student Research Project Group Report

Discovering Business Problems in Finnish Music Festivals:
A Pilot Study Focused on International Contexts

Conducted by the students of the course:

Introduction to Academic Research

Michael Genrich, Risto Grönberg, Joel Hypén,
Laura Immonen, Jaakko Joensuu, Reetta Kauranen,
Juuso Maasara, Nikke Österback, Petrus Syvänperä, Ilkka Unnbom

Jyväskylä University of Applied Sciences

Degree Program in Music Management

Steve Crawford, Lecturer

December 31, 2006

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1.0 Background

The student of international music management that thinks critically about the problems faced by organizations in the field links the theoretical with the applied, and this fits well the mission of an applied sciences university. And because social sciences research aims toward clearly identifying research problems, we plan to direct our attention in the present pilot research project to identifying opportunities to develop a deeper understanding of what problems music businesses in Finland face in international contexts. We set out to accomplish this by planning and conducting a class research project that will not only inform our students about aspects pertaining to the music business but will also provide ample opportunities to learn about academic research.

2.0 Research Problem Statement

The present pilot study sets out to qualitatively study music festivals in Finland from a management perspective, with a particular focus on international contexts. Employing an inductive methodological approach, we interview selected festival managers and analyze the data collected (David and Sutton, 2004: 27). Departing somewhat from the traditional qualitative research process of first identifying a specific research problem(s) to be studied (Creswell, 1998: 19), the present group of researchers make few *a priori* assumptions about what specific problems festival managers in Finland face in international contexts, other than to speculate casually about what problems may be present.

Although we begin with no clear *a priori* assumptions, we feel that more than enough evidence exists on the surface of the limited direct experiences of the student researchers to warrant further investigation regarding what problems festival managers in Finland face in international contexts. Problem areas speculated about thus far that participants might cite include issues related to foreign artists (fees, arrangements, agents), management and partnerships problems, dealing with specific problems related to accommodating and communicating with foreign visitors, festival marketing challenges, and the image of Finland as a prospective festival destination across European and global markets.

2.1 Music Festivals in Finland

Music festivals have long been popular in Finland, a small Scandinavian country with a rich

tradition in cultural production. Seppo Nummi (1932-81), after observing the success of other European festivals, promoted the idea of a series of cultural festivals that would follow the movement of summer weather from Helsinki to Lapland, eventually covering the entire country and giving each region its time in the sun (Valkonen, K and Valkonen, M. 1994: 9). The website of Finland Festivals ry presently lists 85 music festivals held in Finland, and provides links to each of them (On The Web). Requests to participate in the present study were sent to seven festivals, three of which agreed to participate and followed through in the data collection phase.

According to a press release issued by Finland Festivals ry, attendance at Finnish festivals in 2006 was steady compared to 2005. Fourteen festivals' attendance figures declined 20 percent or more over 2005 figures, while nine festivals increased attendance by 20 percent or more (Finland Festivals ry, On The Web). The press release did not identify any specific reasons for the variances in attendance patterns between festivals other than to suggest that a myriad of reasons might account for year-to-year changes.

The five largest festivals based on ticket sales for 2006 were: 1. Pori Jazz Festival (75,000), 2. Savonlinna Opera Festival (63,500), 3. Helsinki Festival (59,200), 4. Kaustinen Folk Music Festival (31,400), and the Tampere Theatre Festival (30,000). Based on the total number of attendees, the top five festivals in 2006 were: 1. Helsinki Festival (247,000), 2. Pori Jazz Festival (156,000), 3. Kotka Maritime Festival (150,000), Tampere Theatre Festival (100,000), and 5. the Kaustinen Folk Music Festival (85,000). In total over 1,700,000 people attended festivals in Finland in 2006, accounting for over 665,000 tickets sold (ibid).

Finland Festivals ry describes the economic health of festivals in Finland as challenging. The organization states that resources are tight, tempting some festivals to take increased risks in order to prosper. The state's level of funding remains flat, but in real terms decreases over time as a percentage of festival revenues as attendance grows. As well, local municipalities that help fund festivals are themselves under financial pressure for reasons outside the direct scope of the festivals, without regard to the perception that festivals have a positive net effect on local economies. On a positive note, the organization projects an increase in state funding over the next few years (ibid).

3.0 Research Objectives

The research objectives for this project are:

1. To compare and contrast the cases of several festivals in order to discover what challenges the Finnish music festival manager faces in international contexts. This objective meshes well with the present academic research course, which sets out to expose students to the processes of academic research through an experiential approach to learning.
2. To use the resulting data to develop a deeper understanding of the problems and challenges that music festivals in Finland must deal with in international contexts.
3. To identify ideas for our students to pursue in their future thesis projects. The present study is characterized as a “pilot” study from which future studies may emerge. Of primary importance is to locate opportunities for future thesis research projects that are within the scope of time and resources available to our students in the course of their degree studies.
3. To create an active link between the academic research course and the thesis tutoring program underway for students that have completed the third year of their degree program.

4.0 Methodology

A pilot study approach to learning about problems faced by music festivals fits well the limited scope of time and resources available to the present set of researchers, particularly in view of the fact that this pilot research project must conclude by the end of the present fall, 2006 school term. A qualitative approach allows the researcher to work with texts and to analyze them inductively as a means of focusing on and interpreting the meaning of the participants (Creswell, 1998: 14). As well, qualitative research reporting allows for a more “rhetorical” form of writing, thus allowing the researcher to present a more accessible form of report text than might typically result from quantitative methods (see Agger, 1991 and Creswell, 1998).

Action research intersects research and practice (Avison, Lau, Myers and Nielsen, 1999: 94), making it ideally suited to the mission of an applied university. Action research often begins with a “fuzzy” picture of the participants’ world, and we began the pilot study with no firm *a priori* assumptions about specific problems that our participants face (Dick, 2006: On The Web). Ideally an action research project operates in an iterative process that allows the

researcher and practitioner to act together, “on a particular cycle of activities, including problem diagnosis, action intervention and reflective learning” (ibid). Some students may opt to pursue an action research project in their future thesis, in which they set out to help the participants solve problems that are identified in the present research study results (David and Sutton, 2004: 30).

In the present pilot study two rounds of interviews were conducted using email in anticipation that issues and questions would emerge from the participants, while focusing on and developing an increasing understanding of the participants’ worlds (Creswell, 1998: 19 – 20). The objective of this process was to resolve the initial fuzziness of the participants’ worlds into a clearer picture of how things work in music festivals in international contexts. The data analysis was conducted through the isolation of themes used to organize and describe the participant’s texts (ibid: 20). As well, we set out to probe for the problems informally speculated about earlier by the researchers regarding what problems Finnish festival managers face (see David and Sutton, 2004: 40).

The texts were scanned in order to find overlapping data that identifies problems and challenges shared in common among the participants. Because the present study was limited to two rounds of interviews, the most that was hoped for was to identify the most visible problems and challenges the participants face in their business activities, perhaps extending as far as to conceive of novel ways in which they may manage these problems in the future. Due to the limited time resources of the present class and course, the project group will be unable to pursue actions in partnership with their participants that would ultimately lead toward solving complex business problems, and this means that the overall scope of action research will be only partly fulfilled. As mentioned earlier, we do hope that student researchers in the international music management program may choose to pursue one or more of the problems identified in this pilot study in their future thesis project.

4.1 Research Questions

We believe that managing and promoting a large-scale music festival is a complex process, and in the present study we are interested in isolating only those aspects that feature international contexts.

Creswell justifies the selection of a qualitative method in part based on whether the inquiry begins with a *how* or a *what* (1998: 17-18) question word. Both question words are important to the present inquiry. We are interested in what problems our participants face in international contexts and also how they deal with them. In our initial and second round of participant questions we hoped to discover what these problems are and how they deal with them.

Our primary research questions are:

1. What are the most compelling problems that music festivals in Finland presently must deal with in international contexts?

A second part of our agenda addresses the need for our students to identify future theses projects:

2. Assuming that we can identify a wide range of internationally contextualized business problems in this sector, which of these problems might some of our students be able to realistically pursue in their future thesis projects?

4.2 Participants

Ruisrock²

Ruisrock is held annually on an island near the coastal city of Turku in southwestern Finland. This festival is focused on youth entertainment, specifically popular music.

Savonlinna Opera Festival

The Finnish city of Savonlinna is located on lake Pihlajavesi, part of the larger lake Saimaa in eastern Finland, approximately eighty kilometers from the Russian border. Erik Axelsson, a Danish knight, began construction on a castle there in 1475 as protection against invaders from the east (National Board of Antiquities, On The Web). The first opera festival was held at Olavinlinna Castle in 1912, but after five years the festival closed its doors due to

² Portions of this section include information gathered from the Wikipedia online encyclopedia.

compelling national issues of the time, including World War I and the declaration by the Finns of independence from Russia following the Bolshevik revolution. The festival was restarted in 1967 and has steadily grown to become an internationally acclaimed gathering for opera enthusiasts.

Kaustinen Folk Music Festival

Started in 1967, the same year in which the opera festival restarted, Kaustinen is the largest folk and dance music festival in the Nordic countries. The city of Kaustinen is located in western Finland between Vaasa and Oulu.

4.3 First Round Interview Questions

Several initial interview questions served to focus the participants on describing their experiences. Based on the replies, follow-up questions were subsequently developed in order to stimulate the participants to more deeply describe themes identified in the initial replies.

The respondent

1. What is your own job description within your festival's management organization?

The festival

2. How many people attended each of the last five years of your festival?

3. How many of these people came from outside of Finland?

4. How many bands performed in each of the last five years of your festival?

5. How many of these bands came from outside of Finland?

More details

6. Please think about your festival in international contexts. What sorts of problems and challenges come to mind?

In Finnish

Kansainvälinen tapahtumatuotanto Suomessa

Kiitos paljon osallistumisestanne suomalaisia musiikkifestivaaleja koskevaan tutkimukseemme. Olemme erityisen kiinnostuneita oppimaan haasteista joita tapahtumanne on kohdannut kansainvälisellä tasolla.

Toivomme teidän pohtivan tapahtumanne järjestämistä seuraavien osa-alueiden kannalta:

Suunnittelu, markkinointi, rahoitus ja budjetointi, sisällöntuotanto ja artistibuukkaukset, sekä lavamanagerointi, kommunikointi ja logistiikka.

Kysymykset

1. Kuvaile omaa työtehtävääsi organisaatiossanne.
2. Kuinka paljon festivaalinne on kerännyt yleisöä vuosittain viimeisen viiden vuoden aikana?
3. Kuinka paljon yleisöä tapahtumaanne tulee ulkomailta? Jos teillä ei ole tarkkaa tietoa, arvioikaa.
4. Kuinka monta esiintyjää teillä on ollut viimeisen viiden vuoden aikana?
5. Kuinka monet näistä esiintyjistä ovat olleet ulkomaalaisia?
6. Pohtikaa festivaalianne seuraavien osa-alueiden kannalta: Minkälaiset osa-alueet ovat tyypillisesti olleet haastavia / ongelmallisia? logistiikka, esiintyjät, markkinointi, työvoima, aikataulu ja rahoitus

4.4 Website Reviews

Each of the festivals' websites was reviewed in order to probe to what extent the websites provide needed support for international visitors. Subsequently the websites were compared in order to assess common problems and opportunities.

5.0 Results

5.1 Interview Questions

Two rounds of questions were imposed on each of the three participants in the study. From the answers supplied in round one we were able to clearly see how distinctive each of the three festivals were compared to each other. Kaustinen's festival is clearly folk-oriented, while Savonlinna specializes in classical music and operas, and Ruisrock reflects a decidedly hard rock genre. Each of the individuals that responded to our questions seem well qualified to describe their respective organization. The Savonlinna respondent functions as the festival's managing director and artist producer. The Ruisrock respondent functions as the festival's production coordinator and artist producer. The Kaustinen respondent functions as the festival's program, booking, travel, logistics and communication manager.

All three of the festivals reported strong attendance over the last five years, although the Ruisrock and Kaustinen festivals both showed a slight decrease in 2006. In terms of the percentage of total attendance that is estimated to comprise foreign attendees, Ruisrock estimated theirs at 2.5 percent, Kaustinen at 5 percent, and Savonlinna at 10 percent. Kaustinen reported that approximately 10 percent of their artists come from outside Finland, while both Savonlinna and Ruisrock report as many as 30 percent of their artists coming from outside of Finland.

When asked to discuss what they perceived to be their challenges in international contexts, all three participants emphasized problems related to marketing, demographic awareness, and funding, particularly regarding sponsors and state and local support.

Both Savonlinna and Ruisrock pointed out that their venues were located on islands, and both seemed to describe their locations as being remote. Ruisrock described the access road to their festival as "very narrow" and that attendees, "have to walk across the bridge" in order to reach the stage areas. This respondent described this aspect of logistics as "extremely difficult."

In terms of marketing issues, Savonlinna stated that they presently produce their marketing materials in several languages. It seems that most of these materials are produced in Finnish and English, and some are produced in Swedish, German and Russian. The Savonlinna

participant stated that 15 percent of their marketing is presently directed to foreigners. Savonlinna also cited increased competition among European opera festivals as a factor, as well as the perception that the festival also competed with other free-time entertainment options that people may choose from.

Ruisrock stated that much of their marketing has moved to the Internet, where over 50 percent of their attendees claim to have found relevant information on their website. Ruisrock stated that they view the development of new Web-based content to serve their customers as important, and that they also wish to find new ways to use the Internet in their business operations. Ruisrock also stated that they would like to establish stronger links with European travel agencies and receive more assistance from the tourism offices of the Finnish government. Kaustinen reported that their festival capacity is “very limited” and they wish to focus more effort at increasing revenues from the existing attendees. Interestingly, it appears that marketing is less a problem and a concern for the Kaustinen festival than dealing with the sheer size of their event relative to their available space and resources.

Savonlinna supplied the most detailed recent demographic attendance data: women comprise 68 percent of attendees; foreigners come mainly from Germany, Switzerland, Sweden, the USA, Great Britain and Austria; 6 percent of attendees are under the age of 29, 8 percent between 30 and 39, 19 percent between 40 and 49, 34 percent between 50 and 59, 24 percent between 60 and 69, and 7 percent are 70 years of age or older. Savonlinna stated that they conduct an annual demographic study of their attendees, but did not describe in detail how this study was completed. Ruisrock reported that two Finnish Internet ticket service companies supply data that provides a limited view regarding attendee demographics and about how many ticket purchases are made outside of Finland. Ruisrock acknowledges that a “real” research effort has not yet been directed to learning about the festival’s demographics, and it seemed that they would like to do this in the future. The Kaustinen participant stated that they do conduct research on attendee demographics, but also said that they have a “feeling” about their attendees, and that they would be surprised if more than 5 percent of their attendees came from outside of Finland.

Finance seemed by far to be the biggest challenge shared by these three festivals. Savonlinna lamented that state and local funding has been flat, placing more pressure on other sources of funds. Their respondent cited the overall highly pressured Finnish state and local budgets for the lack of increases in funding by these sources during recent years. The festival has worked

hard to increase the levels of sponsorship funding, and ticket sales account for only 63 to 65 percent of revenues for the opera festival. Savonlinna promotes their festival to regional tourism authorities in order to assure that the festival is prominently featured in their strategic plans for the region. Ruisrock stated that the festival is under a lot of pressure from rising artist fees, and this creates pressure to increase ticket prices. In response to this stress the respondent emphasized the need to increase sponsor support, particularly long-term sponsor support. The Ruisrock respondent described the festival as competing not with other festivals, per se, but more so with the sponsorships of sports events and teams. It was suggested that some notable sponsors might identify more readily with sports personalities than with a rock festival. The festival is able to generate revenues through VIP tickets and special marketing positions within the festival grounds. The Kaustinen respondent stated that finance was very challenging, but did not go into much detail, other than to say that 80 percent of their budget comes from ticket sales, about 8 percent from the government, and the rest from merchandising, sponsorships and municipal funding support.

5.2 Website Review³

Ruisrock

The website for the Ruisrock festival includes English pages that mirror closely the information presented on the Finnish pages. The English main page includes links to news, ticket information, artists (performance lineup), performance schedule, travel and accommodation information, safety, accreditation for journalists, a sponsor list and links, festival contact information and a links page for miscellaneous other activities and services. Ticket purchasers for Ruisrock are directed to various locations in Finland, and links are provided for online ticket sales in Finland (lippupalvelu.fi) and abroad (tiketti.fi). It seems that the Ruisrock web pages are comprehensive in both Finnish and English and accommodate the needs of international visitors quite well, although further study seems warranted.

Savonlinna

Like the Ruisrock website pages, the Savonlinna Opera Festival English pages closely mirror the Finnish pages. The English main page includes links to news, the opera program, links to

³ The websites were reviewed in December 2006.

the operas performed, the concerts program, the Club Opera membership page, a tourism and accommodation page, ticketing, festival services, an artist directory, sponsors, and links to other festivals and international opera organizations. The Finnish pages feature an elaborate history of the festival that is not available on the English pages. As well, reflecting the growing importance of Russian tourists, some information is available in the Russian language, but not as much as is presently available in English. Overall, the festival provides rather extensive information in English for foreign visitors, and this likely serves to facilitate their planning, traveling and local needs.

Kaustinen Folk Festival

The Kaustinen pages, in addition to Finnish, offer language service in English and Swedish. The presence of the Swedish pages likely reflects the location of the festival on the western and coastal side of Finland where Swedish speakers are quite prevalent. In terms of practical information the Kaustinen pages are in line with the other two festivals investigated in this pilot study. But like the Ruisrock festival Internet pages, there is no general or historical description of the festival in English that might provide for interesting and compelling background information for the festival. This implies that the organizers must feel that the festival is well known and thus does not need anything in addition to the practical information already provided on the site. Accommodation and services are well covered. The Contemporary Folk Art Museum also has extensive coverage on the festival website.

6.0 Discussion

Although the scope of the pilot study was limited, the resulting data provided for some interesting discussion and analysis in the classroom, and which revolved around several main issues: 1) The degree to which each festival understood its demographic patterns related to attendance, 2) The numbers of attendees coming from outside of Finland and the importance of this to each festival, 3) Marketing trends and objectives, as well as the image of Finland as a destination, 4) The challenge of funding, particularly as it relates to state and municipal funding, and 5) The interrelatedness of these issues to the vitality and future prospects for these festivals.

It seemed that the Savonlinna festival presently conducts the most thorough research pertaining to demographics, and our informant there provided the most extensive information

pertaining to audience measurement of the three participants. The Kaustinen festival seems to have reached its potential, at least in terms of its physical capacity, and thus seemed to express less interest in exploring their attendance demographics. The Ruisrock festival relies on its Internet-based ticket seller for basic information about tickets purchased from abroad, and also seemed to express strong interest in investing resources into learning more about their festival attendance. It became apparent that demographic data could help a festival manager to more clearly see how the results of their efforts, e.g. pertaining to marketing and sponsorship, can help to adjust the details and focus of their plans. As well, it may be particularly useful to know how many attendees come from outside Finland, especially when promoting (or perhaps “defending”) one’s organization to state and regional tourism organizations where important funding decisions are made.

The question arises when discussing tourism whether we should make a distinction between tourism within Finland and tourism from outside of Finland. Funding decisions made by the state may or may not presently favor tourism from outside of Finland, but there may exist some logic for favoring foreign visitors because clearly foreigners bring money into the economy that would not appear otherwise, thus adding value to the economic role of an attendee. Therefore a strong performance by a festival in terms of drawing visitors and revenues from outside of Finland may present a more attractive picture from the perspective of state and local funding decision makers, assuming that these festivals compete with other tourism businesses in Finland for that same funding. But clearly each festival has its own set of concerns and needs, reflecting its unique programming characteristics and geographic circumstances in terms of location and complementary or competitive entities in its region. Even so, we presently feel that most festivals would benefit from increased demographic awareness, and the Savonlinna festival already does to a significant degree.

Savonlinna is aware of significant trends in terms of what nationalities are visiting in numbers. The fact that their marketing materials are produced in several languages reflects this. They also indicated that they are able to serve the special needs of certain foreign visitors, e.g. by providing translators when needed. It seemed that foreign visitors, however, might be something of an economic demographic match for the genre of opera music in particular and classical music in general. These genres no doubt appeal to a broad set of middle to upper economic class prospective attendees residing outside of Finland. As well, the festival’s supplied demographic data indicates strength in the 50 to 59 year-old age group. Certainly it would be expected that many of those fitting into this demographic would have

the financial ability to fund a trip to Finland, a destination that our participants seem to describe as “remote.”

The increasing importance of the Internet to festivals became clear in our analysis and by comparing the participants’ websites and their comments regarding their marketing strategies. The Ruisrock festival estimated that more than 50 percent of their attendees use the Internet to facilitate their festival participation. All three of the studied festivals offer information online in English. The primary functional strategy of a parallel English-language site seems to be related to helping international visitors plan their trip by offering ticket purchasing, travel and accommodation arrangements, as well as local services information. The Internet provides both a push and pull capability, and many business organizations are now moving toward placing an emphasis on the pull strategy in terms of drawing their customers into their world, as opposed to simply pushing out a static package of information (Cross, On The Web). It is not clear how formal the overall Internet strategy is for these festivals, and they do seem to rely on the traditional push schema in terms of linking their marketing and advertising materials.

Designing and implementing an effective pull strategy requires that an organization recognize the fact that much of the Net is, “increasingly plagued by the seemingly-never-ending unwanted traffic, manifesting itself in large volumes of unsolicited bulk emails...” (Duan, Gopalan and Dong, 2005). Marketing one’s business becomes more complicated when push strategies are diluted by a morass of competing messages, many of which are unwanted to such an extent that consumer cynicism toward push campaigns diminishes the prospects for effectiveness. In the future there will be an increasing emphasis on pulling customers into the business and securing their long-term participation (Simon, Ebel and Hofer, 2003: p. 11). One recent study of the motivational effects of push and pull strategies on traveler behaviors concluded that pull factors “exerted more influence on destination choice than push factors, and different pull factors motivated travelers to select different destinations” (Lee, G., O’Leary, Lee, S. and Morrison, 2002). Other studies conclude that a combination of push and pull strategies may provide the best results (see Woodward, 2000).

A pull strategy cannot be effective unless the organization creates a set of attractive and compelling options and services within their website. We posit that one approach to this is to combine new and novel user options and functions specific to the festival with direct and synergistic links to other local resources, and this would require a more integrated approach to

catering to the complete needs of the traveler (food, lodging, shopping, and other activities in the local area are a few possibilities). Presently the extent to which the festivals cooperate with other local businesses and services seems limited to listing resources and in some cases providing links to them.

The Savonlinna festival provides a subscription email mailing list service on their Finnish pages, and we feel that their pull capabilities, in terms of attracting foreign attendees, would be enhanced by including the link to this service on the main front English page, where it would be more visible.

It would seem desirable that the festivals would make available background and historical information about their festivals available on their English web pages in order to stimulate the viewers' interest in attending the festival. Presently none of our participants do so, although the Savonlinna festival does provide an extensive biographical section on their Finnish pages.

Overall we feel that each festival presently studied employs a practical approach to using the Internet as means of marketing and information distribution. The Ruisrock festival's web pages seem to convey a youthful take on technology, perhaps reflecting the constantly changing nature of the popular culture of youth. The Kaustinen Festival website is attractive yet basic and functional. The Savonlinna Opera Festival website is ambitious by virtue of its need to cross over cultures and languages. As well, the Savonlinna festival makes extensive use of print materials, some of which are available in languages other than Finnish and English. All three of the studied festivals are very large and complicated affairs, and no doubt the prevailing financial pressures cited by each participant is a limiting factor in terms of expanding and updating their Internet presence and functionality. However, in terms of either growing their festival or maximizing their financial returns on each attendee, the Internet does seem to offer the potential for novel solutions.

It has become obvious that funding and finance is a key to the future of these festival organizations. All three festival managers describe funding as challenging, and cite several areas of funding as being particularly challenging. In the end, we must conclude that every link in the finance chain affects the others. Stress resulting from continuing flatness in state and local funding puts increased pressure on sponsorship. Stress from rising costs related to performers puts stress on ticket prices. Competition from other tourism and recreational choices places more stress and urgency related to investing in novel and therefore riskier

marketing and production programs. And of course stress on funding sources, such as that experienced by municipalities as regards tax revenue and expenses, helps to exacerbate the problems that festivals face in terms of funding their activities. The degree to which a festival adds value to the local community goes beyond the subjective value society places on cultural programs. A festival has the potential to bring income across Finland's borders, and into local communities. In this regard it is hard to argue with the general notion that festivals contribute in a positive way to the bottom line financially of the state and local governments, and to private businesses as well. But the economic impact of each festival must be studied in purely local contexts in order to assess the sustainability in the future of any given festival.

7.0 Limitations of the Study

The present study was constrained primarily by time. The project had to fit within the fall, 2006 academic term, and also within the overall schedule of the students in the degree program. Even so, we feel that the project does fit into the scope and objectives typical of pilot studies, and we feel that most of the objectives of the study were accomplished. As well, it should again be acknowledged that a pilot study is as the name implies, limited, and often is used to inform future studies. Even so, with some additional work this project comes within reach of a level of work suitable for thesis status in the Jyväskylä University of Applied Sciences system.

The use of email as our principal data collection method proved unsatisfactory primarily because of the limited interaction nature of the medium. We would have benefited from a third round of interviews, but time did not allow. And we would have much preferred to conduct onsite, recorded interviews, but this did not fit the limited scope of resources mentioned above for the class. Even so, we feel that we were able to penetrate the subject matter to some significant degree, and we were also able to locate other information resources pertaining to festivals in Finland that helped to round out our perspectives.

It would have improved the project to have more than three active participants. This would have deepened our perspectives across a broad range of festivals held in Finland. However, we were pleased that we were able to obtain data from three very different sorts of festivals: rock, folk and classical. This allowed for a qualitative diversity in our data and served to illuminate the fact that each festival has its own unique concerns and problems, in addition to having shared concerns and problems.

There were some difficulties related to translating the interview questions developed in class in English into Finnish, and subsequently translating the responses from the participants into English for discussion, analysis and this report.

8.0 Conclusions and Recommendations

8.1 Conclusions

The present pilot study provides a very limited view to the topic of music festivals in Finland. However, it does present a good introduction to three very different festivals, and has provided an informed perspective for the development of future studies. We feel that every festival should be knowledgeable about the demographics of their attendees. This would serve to better understand how current strategies are working and may also identify opportunities to either expand their attendance base or increase their return on investment based on existing levels of attendance. It can also be concluded that festivals today are under increasing financial pressures stemming from a variety of directions, particularly the recent general decrease in real terms pertaining to state and local funding of festivals. Although state funding is projected to improve slightly in the near term, we must conclude that the festivals themselves are chiefly on their own to navigate an uncertain future.

What helps to ensure a strong future for these festivals is that each has enjoyed success and growth in recent years. It is apparent that they are up to the task of keeping their festivals on the minds of their existing customers, yet at the same time they each have differing needs pertaining to improving results, maximizing resources and getting more out of existing funding sources, sponsors and customers. Finally, we conclude that movement toward a pull strategy in terms of the leveraging the Internet should feature an integrated approach with local synergistic business organizations. Of course this will require significant buy-in from local tourism and retail businesses, and an effort must be made to identify and communicate clearly the benefits of working together to achieve a more customer-centered experience. This is not unlike the vision described in the introduction of Seppo Nummi's, in which he presented a national festival plan that integrated the entire country into a cohesive program across the entire summer. By thinking about how organizations can work together synergistically, the risks are diluted across the group, yet each entity benefits from the rewards.

8.2 Recommendations

The second of the two research questions pertaining to the present pilot study addressed the need for students to identify opportunities for future research projects, and clearly the present pilot study has identified myriad opportunities for follow-up research. At the state and local level there appears to be a need to measure the economic impact of festivals in order to more strategically assess and deal with funding issues. Many festivals likely need help in order to measure demographics, develop comprehensive marketing strategies, develop novel applications for the Internet, develop integrated marketing programs across local and regional organizations, and produce effective sponsorship programs. And excellent results may be obtained from future research that identifies and focuses on significant challenges shared across a large number of festivals. Therefore it would be wise to expand the present study to include more festivals, and this may also require a shift toward more quantitative methods, or better still a combination of quantitative and qualitative measures.

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Appendix: Interview Questions and Answers

Savonlinna Opera Festival

1st round questions and answers

1. What is your own job description within your festival's management organization?

CEO, my main responsibility is general economical management and other executive issues.

2. How many people attended each of the last five years of your festival?

53.000 - 63.000 people

3. How many of these people came from outside of Finland?

Approximately 10% of our audience comes from abroad.

4. How many bands performed in each of the last five years of your festival?

It varies from 400 to 500, a choir, an orchestra including the visiting opera as well.

5. How many of these bands came from outside of Finland?

Approximately 20 - 30 % (including the guest opera house)

6. Please think about your festival in international contexts. What sorts of problems and challenges come to mind?

logistics, performers, marketing, labor, scheduling and finance

- logistics: challenging because of the venue (Olavinlinna Castle situated on a small island)

- marketing; challenging, competition has tightened

- scheduling: total duration approx. 2 months (including rehearsals approx. 1 month and performances approx. 1 month respectively) > everything must be constructed from ground zero every year

- finance: government funding (State & City) has been on the same level for a long time, private sponsorships bigger (over 80%) regarding other European opera festivals. Ticket sales cover 63%-65% of revenues.

2nd round questions and answers

1. You stated that approximately 10% of your audience comes from abroad. Do you presently measure your audience demographics and if so, how do you do this?

We research by doing an annual customer research.

2. How important to your organization is the foreign marketplace for your festival? Does this somehow tie into local and regional tourism objectives?

Foreign attendees are at the moment approx. 10% of attendees. Foreign markets will be even more important as we try to expand our customer base. I don't quite get where you want to go with this. We are an "aatteellinen"⁴ association and we get funding from both the government and the city. Tourism is one of our city's primary focuses and we try to keep us as one of the regional summertime marketing priorities. We are cooperating with regional tourism agency.

3. In what ways do you accommodate foreigners who travel to Savonlinna for your festival?

We don't do any accommodation ourselves but the attendees use regional hotel services, rent cabins and use vacation villages.

4. Do any particular problems or challenges come to mind when thinking about foreign guests? How do you manage having so many languages present during the festival?

I don't see a problem here if it's a case about a rarer language, we usually hire interpreters. Generally our workers do well and almost everyone has general knowledge in English language so that we are able to avoid problems. Context helps, opera, production of opera, performing, the production of "musical theatre"...we have similar understanding as music works as an international language.

5. What are your overall target demographics for attendees?

*- women 68%,
- foreigners mainly from Germany, Switzerland, Sweden, USA, Great Britain and Austria.*

*- 0-29 years old 6%
- 30-39, 8%
- 40-49, 19%
- 50-59, 34%
- 60-69, 24%
- over 70, 7%*

What percentage of your marketing efforts are targeted at prospective foreign attendees?

Hard to say, we produce almost all of our material in Finnish-English- format and some in Swedish, German, and Russian. I could assume that approx. 15% of marketing (inc. all of our marketing actions) is directed to foreigners.

6. You stated that competition has increased, and we wondered if you meant this in terms of opera festivals around the world? How do address this development?

In "Opera business" we compete with European Opera Festivals. We don't only compete with other culturally related entertainment but the free time that people have. Free time can be spent in many ways not just culturally.

7. You stated that state and city funding has not increased for some time, and we wondered if you knew why this was the case? How has this affected your festival?

⁴ In English this means third-sector, or non-profit organization.

The reasons for this should be found in how the Finnish economy has been developing and how the funding of culture has developed. From the perspective of government and regional economical situation From the point of view of the government and the city (kunta) public funding won't be increased.

8. In what novel ways have you attempted to expand your festival beyond the original opera experience?

We've been working even harder to get private funding but this has always been the case with Savonlinna Opera Festival. Our funding is 80% private including the tickets.

9. Finally, and since we last communicated, has any particular new problem or challenge come to mind regarding your festival in international contexts?

- *Good quality performances,*
- *Unique milieu*
- *The Olavin Castle is exquisite as a venue surrounded with clean, beautiful nature*

Ruisrock

1st round questions and answers

1. Please describe your own responsibilities within your festival's management organization?

Production coordinator, responsible of artist production.

2. How many people attended each of the last five years of your festival?

*2002: 45 000,
2003: 53 000,
2004: 44 000,
2005: 72 000, (in year 2005 the festival changed to 3 days)
2006: 65 000*

3. Do you know how many of these attendees came from outside of Finland? Finland? If not, can you estimate how many?

About 2,5%

4. How many bands performed in each of the last five years of your festival?

Viime vuonna oli yli 70 artistia

5. How many of these bands came from outside of Finland?

Last year 20 artists

6. Please think about your festival in international contexts, for example as regards logistics, talent, marketing, and finances. What sorts of problems and challenges come to mind? In what ways have you dealt with these challenges, or plan to deal with them in the future?

Logistics: The road to Ruissalo is very narrow which limits the transportation of people to the island. People have to walk across the bridge in order to get to festival area. Logistics is extremely challenging for our festival.

Performers: Ruisrock is one of the biggest rock festivals in Finland. Finland being not the most interesting location for bands, Ruisrock festival is one of the most potential places for the international bands to come. Finland is isolated as a country and the bands coming here have the sea to cross which limits the number of acts that are willing to come here on their tour. In addition festivals (in Finland) have clearly lost the top artists, eg. The ticket prices in middle Europe have risen up to 200€ and the number of visitors up to and over 100 000. We can't compete with such figures. However Ruisrock has managed to book great bands like last years, Rammstein and Tool but in these cases the artist has started or ended their tour in our festival.

Marketing: Notable proportion of marketing has moved to internet. Over 50% of our customers say that they found information about our festival through the net. The challenge is to serve the customers with best content and to find new ways to use internet marketing.

Workforce: At the moment education on this field is plenty and finding workforce is not a problem. The challenge comes from trying to commit the voluntary workers to the festival in which we have succeeded fairly well past years.

Timetable: I believe, that there is a rule of producing a festival and which is, you will always be in a hurry with timetables. Experience teaches you things like setting up the main stage in time etc. But there is always something small that you forgot to do. Our workers start the production already in January so I believe that we will improve our schedule year by year.

Finance: Artist fees create lot of pressure to the ticket price and funding is needed through sponsors. The challenge is to find suitable and long term sponsorship partners.

2nd round questions and answers

1. Your festival has enjoyed strong overall growth since 2002. Can you tell us how you accomplished this?

I believe that the main factor has been a clear vision of growth and the success of past years which has provided the necessary resources. Saturday evenings have always been sold out.

2. You stated that approximately 2,5% of your audience comes from outside of Finland. Do you do anything to measure your attendance demographics? If not, would it surprise you if the number of foreign attendees is higher than your estimate?

The control has come through our ticket sales system (tiketti & lippupalvelu). It has provided us with a reference of people coming outside Finland, although a real research has not been conducted. We would be willing to develop our system but for now we have just few contacts to travel agencies in middle-Europe. In Europe the festivals get support through their own tourism agencies centres and we should move towards same kind of arrangements here in

Finland. In all honesty we haven't done all the work we could to find out the demographics of our visitors.

3. You stated that Finland, as a prospective destination for rock music festival attendees, is "isolated." Could you please elaborate your views about Finland's image as a destination for rock music festival enthusiasts? How, in your opinion, could this image be improved?

Finland needs to get the kind of artists that draw more interest. We have noticed that bands like The Rasmus, HIM and Nightwish bring the most of people outside Finland. Their positive experiences will bring more visibility.

4. You mentioned the high price of festival tickets in central Europe and the high number of attendees there. Do you feel pressured to increase ticket prices in order to attract high profile foreign acts to your festival?

YES

5. Many of your artists come from outside of Finland. Does this create special problems for your management team? If so, can you describe them?

Foreign artist naturally bring more work than a domestic artist who knows the "house rules" of Ruisrock. Foreign artist needs flights, transportation and hotel, compared to Finnish artist that come there with own transportation and then continue to the next gig. It's a challenge for us to grow as organization.

6. Why do you state that finding long-term sponsors is so challenging? Is there a lot of competition for these sponsors in the music festival business? What do you feel attracts a sponsor to your festival?

I don't believe that music festivals compete with each other rather than competing with sport events. It's about the brand image. If you want a healthy image which will you choose Jarkko Nieminen (hockey player) or a smoking rocker? Ruisrock offers different kind of visibility, VIP-tickets and marketing spot in the festival itself. Sometimes the sponsor has a clear vision how they could use the festival in their own marketing eg. (KOFF hot-air balloon) which we look through individually.

Kaustinen Folk Music Festival

1st rounds questions and answers

1. Please describe your own responsibilities within your festival's management organization?

I am in charge of the festival program at Kaustinen folk music festival . My duties include booking artists, making travelling arrangements, logistics, and taking care of the some of the communication. I do all this for approximately 250 concerts.

2. How many people attended each of the last five years of your festival?

In 2002-2005 every year approx. 100.000 people and in 2006 approx 85.000.

3. Do you know how many of these attendees came from outside of Finland? If not, can you estimate how many?

Maybe about 5 %

4. How many bands performed in each of the last five years of your festival?

Approximately 1500 bands with about 8000 musicians.

5. How many of these bands came from outside of Finland?

About 150.

6. Please think about your festival in international contexts, for example as regards logistics, talent, marketing, and finances. What sorts of problems and challenges come to mind? In what ways have you dealt with these challenges, or plan to deal with them in the future?

All of the above. Kaustinen is a mega event that lasts nine days and nine nights. All of these areas have been very challenging. The most challenging has been Finance.

2nd round questions and answers

1. You stated that approximately 5% of your audience comes from outside of Finland. Do you do anything to measure your attendance demographics? If not, would it surprise you if the number of foreign attendees was higher than your estimate?

All of the information on the demographic of our audience is based on dated market research. We often just have a "I think" feeling about this topic. We would be surprised to here that more than 5 % come from abroad.

2. Would you like to increase the number of foreign attendees to your festival? If yes, what ideas do you have in order to do so?

Our accommodation capacity is very limited and therefore we are more aimed at getting the existing attendees to spend more money at Kaustinen.

3. How do you view the image of Finland as a destination for festival attendees?

I feel that it is pretty attractive. Finland has a good reputation as a producer of high culture and Finland is also a rather exotic place to spend a holiday in.

4. It seems that about 10% of your artists come from outside of Finland. Does this create special problems for your management team? If so, can you describe them?

No it doesn't.

5. You stated that finance has been the most challenging area for you, and we would like to ask if you could elaborate on that further.

a. Do you feel pressure to increase ticket prices?

See question 2.

b. Do you seek sponsorships or other ways to augment revenues? Are you able to obtain funding support from the state or local municipality?

About 80 % of our budget comes from tickets sales, about 8 % from the government, and the rest from merchandising, sponsorship and municipal money.

Appendix 6

Supporting Teacher Report

Report of Support Teacher

Regarding Steven Crawford

Observation Period: Spring Semester 2006

Support Teacher: David M. Hoffman, Institute for Educational Research, University of Jyväskylä, Finland (david.hoffman@ktl.jyu.fi)

Potential

According to Fairweather (2003), a *highly productive academic* uses active and collaborative teaching methods, as well as producing a significant amount of publications. The reason I begin this report with this definition is because I believe Steven has the necessary motivation, background and aptitude to aspire to this standard if he chooses. Not many people do. In the study in which Fairweather coined the term *highly productive academic*, less than 22% of a *highly* selective population actually fit the definition. In most national higher education systems, far less would qualify (Kyvik 1991).

It is possible that Steve's future positions would demand he focus on *either* teaching *or* research, which is a choice that all persons in his position have to make.

However, based on my knowledge of Steve's MA-level work and interests; observations of Steven's teaching and related discussions, I'm writing this report based on my belief that Steven is able to pursue the highest standards of scholarship including an excellent teaching practice.

This is not the same as saying this will be easy. It is saying it's possible. To aspire to such a standard is *not* a goal I'd encourage for most students. During the last 20 years in which I've undertaken various forms and types of instruction, I've actively encouraged only a few persons to become instructors in their fields of expertise. Having said that, I would put this challenge to Steven.

The Teacher-Training Practice: Direct Observations and Focused Discussion

Based on the classes I observed and our frequent focused discussions, I will point out some key strength areas Steven should continue to build on.

- **Active and collaborative methods.** Steven is inclined toward using active and collaborative methods that involve students to a much greater degree than conventional lectures. These types of methods demand more planning, knowledge and interpersonal skills than conventional lecturing. As Steven is very capable, engaging, personable, as well as having good sense of humor, I would encourage capitalizing on this strength area.
- **Varied methods.** In all observed courses, Steven used different methods of addressing and conveying his material. I particularly enjoyed his use of film and text in the college course I observed. It was easy to see the students also liked his novel approach to material which is difficult to convey for many instructors. In the research methods course I observed, his critique of his MA thesis was also a novel approach to research methods and one which took courage to carry out.
- **Creativity.** The use of these types of methods is linked to Steven's creativity. The work done recently on the *creative age* (Florida and Tinagli 2004) directly references the added value creativity adds to organizations, institutions, communities and regions. The type of creativity Florida et al. have explored recently cannot be taught. An individual, organization, community, etc. displays the attributes or potential of creativity or not. Steve is a creative person; it is one of his greatest strengths. Connected to this, he is also quite entrepreneurial in the best sense of that word (Clark 1998). In today's competitive higher education environment, creativity and an entrepreneurial flair are an extremely potent combination (Välimaa and Hoffman *forthcoming*) and any organization that engages Steven to teach will benefit from this.
- **Highly organized.** Steve has great organizational skills and his teaching practice will always benefit from this although the better organizational skills one has, the easier it is for his employers to overlook this or take it for granted. The value of this can be put into perspective by imagining the unorganized instructors each of us has had to suffer through. Throughout the teaching practice period, I never once observed anything but excellent indicators in this area. It should be noted that this is important in Steven's case because his use of active and collaborative methods, the variety of methods he used in addition to the fact that this involved a lot of electronic audiovisual equipment requires much greater preparation than conventional lectures.

- **Self-critical.** Steven can be self-critical in a healthy way, which is necessary to become a good instructor. Seeking out information which is what you need to hear (as opposed to what you want to hear) is refreshing in students, even more so in teachers. I would encourage Steven to continue, even develop this habit.
- **Interest in methodological and theoretical issues.** This is not a topic I'd normally expect to be writing about for a college level course. However interest in these areas is a genuine asset that separates very good from excellent teachers. However, this is a threshold area which underlies some of Steven's biggest challenges (see comments below). At the end of the day, however, a genuine interest in these areas is either present in an instructor or not; it can't be taught. Since Steven has it, I'd strongly encourage him to fully engage these areas and use his interest to inform his teaching practice.

Challenges

The metaphor I'll use to address challenges is *swimming*, as it applies to all instructors, including myself. The reason I articulate these challenges in this way is based on a few times when I 'drowned' – and the times I've seen it happen to others. (I should note I did not see Steven 'drown' during my observations). I would not offer this level of critique to an academic incapable of becoming a consistently excellent instructor; it would be a waste of time. However, as I mentioned above, Steven is capable of excellence to the highest standard. That excellence is not reached without honest and analytical critique. As is normal at the academic level Steven aspires, I offer the following observations for his consideration.

The essential challenge faced by any instructor is **the relationship between Needs and Topic**. For the sake of this report, I will operationalize needs on three levels:

1. The needs of a program
2. The needs of the students
3. The needs of the teacher or instructor

An optimal course is one in which all three of these areas are satisfied in terms of two additional factors: **Interest and Relevance**.

In the immediate future I would encourage Steven to develop a long-term approach to developing his scholarship, i.e. the relationship between research (established research and his own) and teaching and service – keeping the relationship between the two dimensions (above)

in mind, that is, the best courses – where we really earn our money – are *relevant* and *interesting* for the *program*, *students* and *teacher*.

The biggest tension in Steven's work is between his *interest* in research-orientated topics e.g. comparative methodological approaches to a given research question or context and the philosophical issues which underlay the relationship between ontology, epistemology, methodology and data analysis methods; whereas the *interests of the programs* most likely to hire Steven and the *students* in those programs, may have little to do with Steven's interest in these topics, or for Steven to instruct on those topics.

It is much more likely that Steven will be hired for to teach about substantive issues within disciplinary and field-of study frameworks that have already been articulated by leading scholars. This is what almost all new instructors begin teaching.

This is not to say Steven should not begin the preparation (today) for teaching about research issues which are preoccupying him at this stage of his career. It is to say it might be more efficient and effective for Steven to resolve key issues in his own research work; then incorporate that work into the appropriate existing bodies of knowledge of specific disciplines and fields of studies. As that is being convincingly done, the readiness to instruct in these areas will become apparent.

Objectives

Immediate objectives I would recommend are as follows:

- **Teaching Assignments.** Develop a more selective and realistic approach to accepting assignments. This is difficult as there are very few opportunities for new teachers. However, the small size of Steven's potential field – in Finland – guarantees that accepting assignments in areas he's not ready to teach can result in bad evaluations, because student and program needs are not met. This can result in fewer invitations to teach, not more.
 - Related to this is the habit almost all instructors develop of referring requests to others if the request does not fall within our competency areas.
- **Instructional Methods:** I'd encourage reflection on preferred methods of instruction regarding *instructor*, *student* and *program*. Every instructor has strength areas on which they can build and areas that need work. There's plenty of literature on this and

it's the favorite topic of good instructors, especially those who use active and collaborative methods. Steven should use both in order to build his practice. To use two broad generalizations, Steven is somewhat of a 'story-teller' and a reflective learner. These work well and are suited to other reflective learners, but he may need develop methods to engage students who prefer to focus on *concrete experience*, *abstract conceptualization* and *active experimentation*, all of who may become impatient, not wanting to wait to see the 'big picture' which Steve has in his mind. Reviewing material e.g. Kolb & Fry's work on *learning styles* and *experiential learning* might be a very good idea in order to engage a bigger group of the students, especially when larger groups are encountered.

- **Feedback.** Steven should develop multiple methods of obtaining feedback on his lectures, using program staff, peers and students wherever and whenever possible. Reading up on nonverbal communication would be of very quick benefit to Steven, as the nonverbal responses of students indicate a great deal with regard to how we're meeting their needs.
- **Substantive Topic Areas**
 - Intercultural Communication Recommendations:
 - Identify key areas of interest, for example, developing an introductory level course on intercultural communication, suitable for a wide variety of programs.
 - I think a course module concentrating on areas in which Steven is very well-read, e.g. value frameworks, would also be a very good course to work up (plan), especially as a lecture which can be delivered within an existing course or seminar.
 - I'd encourage Steven to think of any key area of his work as a potential topic for course development.
- **Research/Seminar-Level Courses**
 - I'd encourage very careful consideration before commenting on theoretical, methodological and data analysis issues, *unless* grounded in extremely solid knowledge and preferably experience. This area should mainly be addressed by the increasing awareness connected to PhD work and the differences between ontological, epistemological and methodological congruence

regarding a given research problem, topic or context and conventions regarding data analysis methods used in a given study. Competence and comprehensive knowledge in these areas is not required nor expected of almost anyone in society. However, teaching in these areas – as well offering advice to (impressionable) students demands nothing less.

- Regarding these issues, a good objective would be picking one or two topics related to key interest areas and begin to work on syllabuses for those courses *designed for a demanding audience*. The demanding nature of these topics becomes clear when planning a course for a demanding audience. I would encourage the use of peer-review before seeking out these types of audiences.
 - The course in which Steven critiqued his MA thesis is a good beginning, as the idea is good and the methodological issues Steven needs to resolve are present.
 - At the present time, the best venue for the majority of Steven's theoretical interests is probably at peer-level, with his fellow PhD students and key thesis advisors, research seminars, in methodologically orientated PhD courses and conferences. Some good benchmarks that indicate readiness to teach seminar-level courses are, for example:
 - After some PhD-level research is published
 - When a key advisor encourages a teaching assignment
 - When a peer approaches with the idea of designing a course or writing an article on methods.
 - Another good 'way in' to teaching methods is to volunteer to present a particularly interesting book or article to in a seminar; or to submit a methods or methodology paper at a conference.

Conclusion

The most important question I've ever asked anyone regarding teaching is: 'Why?'

Why do they want to teach?

Especially regarding Steven's main competence area, intercultural communication, the question becomes more important – if that's possible – than normally. What I mean, is that the topics which come up in intercultural communication, by definition almost always involve

human beings and extremely important sets of power-relationships. These are present in the majority of topics discussed, taught and in the way we address these topics in instruction and research.

I don't have the occasion to ask that many people this question, but I'd encourage Steve to answer it for himself, as he is a promising scholar with a potentially multi-faceted teaching, research and service profile. Steven has the aptitude for aspiring to quite a high level of scholarship which will undoubtedly always be reflected in his teaching. He has key strength areas to build on and is genuinely concerned about developing as a scholar.

If this training period had an assessment – as I understand, it does not – it would consist of that single word: *'Why?'*

I'll conclude the report on that note because I believe Steven will find an excellent answer to that question; hopefully someday posing it to others.

Respectfully Submitted,

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