Seeing "Unprepared" Undergraduate Business Students through a Bourdieusian Lens, or Making the Invisible Visible: An Essay

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It is a running theme at my school that our Business Administration students are unprepared to do the work asked of them. 'Unprepared' suggests both a manifest message and a latent message. The manifest message 'unprepared' sends is that students are literally not ready for the work we assign them to do. The latent message, implied by research, is that these students are not socialized into the middle class, though college is organized around middle-class norms. I argue for a rethinking of practical applications of handling unprepared students based on incorporating Bourdieu's work on habitus, cultural capital, and social class.

INTRODUCTION

I teach undergraduate management courses in the Business Administration department at a regional Northeastern state university. In October 2014, a colleague sent around an email summarizing the 2014 Gallup-Purdue poll of 30,000 recent college graduates, saying that Business majors were showing the least interest in their work, of all college majors (Gallup-Purdue, 2014). Some colleagues sent back their email concurrences. Another colleague chimed in, saying:

"You know, it's amazing. This is exactly what I see. For some reason, it is almost impossible to get the business majors to engage in debate, discourse or any discussion. I have noticed this for the past couple of years. I thought it was me." (Professor, email, October 2014)

This was not the first time faculty in my department complained about the students. It is a running theme, in my department, and elsewhere in my school, that our students are disaffected, disengaged, and unprepared to do the work we ask of them. In fact, the narrative of our students being unprepared has gotten enough traction that new faculty members are given Kathleen Gabriel's book Teaching Unprepared Students in faculty training. However, for various reasons, even when I followed the advice presented in by the book and in our faculty training, I didn't get the outcomes I expected, either in-class or via interactions with students. One gap I noticed was that our training programs and materials assumed a deficit – as in, our students were 'not good at school' -- and suggested corrective advice accordingly. That approach seemed incomplete to me, and led me to question what else I might not be seeing about my students, or might be mislabeling or misrecognizing. That in turn led me to Bourdieu's theories on habitus -- a largely taken-for-granted and unconscious collection of preferences, behaviors, and styles of self-presentation shaped during childhood (Bourdieu, 1980).

In this paper, I argue that labelling undergraduate Business majors, in particular, as "unprepared" carries both manifest and latent messages, and that most teaching advice addresses the manifest but not

the latent message. Research on both manifest and latent meanings of 'unprepared' are summarized in a concise research review. The manifest message is that unprepared students are just that: literally not ready for the work faculty members assign them to do because of the skills they did (or did not) learn before entering college. The latent message, implied by review of the research, is that "unprepared" students are not socialized into the middle-class, although college is organized according to middle-class norms. Unprepared students are thus often experiencing a habitus mismatch when attending college. It is the tension related to this latent message, and habitus mismatch, that is the focus of this paper.

I then argue that we as faculty should not expect students to assimilate into the habitus of the middle-class, but instead we should intervene, by making the rules of the game visible and explicit to students, so they are better able to understand what is expected of them and make different, better informed choices about how to respond. Assimilation puts all the burden on students to change, while we are not making equivalent changes in ourselves. Intervention, on the other hand, distributes the burden of change between students and faculty in ways that are more equitable to both. Finally, I discuss reasons that understanding unprepared undergraduate students matters for management education, and present practical implications for teaching. Please note that when I refer to students, I mean students, especially business majors, in public colleges and universities. Also please note that I use Stephens' et al's (2012) phrase 'working-class student' to describe students who are first-generation, low-income, or both.

MANIFEST MESSAGE: 'UNPREPARED' MEANS OUR STUDENTS ARE LITERALLY NOT READY FOR THE WORK WE ASSIGN THEM TO DO

Over three-quarters of 18 million undergraduates at degree-granting institutions (both two and four-year) in 2010 were educated in public universities (U.S. Department of Education, 2012). One-half of the U.S. college population (including community colleges) is made up of first-generation students, or those whose parents did not receive education beyond a high school diploma (U.S. Department of Education via Lynch, 2013). Many college students are first-generation college students, and many are educated at public universities. In my state in particular, public universities educate 70% of high school graduates staying in the state for college (Department of Higher Education, 2014).

First-generation college students also tend to come from lower socio-economic (SES) backgrounds compared to traditional college students, and are more likely to be less prepared for college than higher SES students (Tierney, 2002, Pike & Kuh, 2005), are less likely to persist, and are less likely to graduate (Warburton et al, 2001) than their higher SES counterparts. And students coming from lower-SES backgrounds tend to major in pre- professional fields such as business (Walpole, 2003, Goyette and Mullen, 2006, Glenn, 2011, Pinsker, 2015).

More specifically, business students are more likely than arts and sciences majors to have lower socioeconomic status and attend a less selective and more comprehensive university (Goyette and Mullen, 2006). Thus, working-class students are more likely than traditional college students to go to public universities, and to major in business. Business programs at public universities receive a disproportionately high share of working-class students, who tend to be less prepared for college than their traditional counterparts.

Working-class students tend to end up at nonselective, or relatively low-ranked, public and private universities for three main reasons. First, state governments have decreased investment in public education, so the large public universities that traditionally educate in-state students have begun recruiting out-of-state and international students. Out of state students and international students pay higher tuition rates, and often have higher test scores, than in-state residents. In fact, across these public institutions, "growth in the proportion of nonresident students was associated with a decline in the proportion of low-income students" (Jaquette et al, 2015: 2). Nonresident freshman enrollment at large public research universities increased from 20.7% of total freshman enrollment in 2002-03 to 24.7% in 2012-13 (Jaquette et al, 2015: 5). As a result, it becomes much harder to get into the selective flagship public universities for in-state students.

Second, families have a hard time accurately estimating the cost of college. Overall, nearly 70 percent of parents, across all social classes, are unable to accurately estimate college costs (Horn et al, 2003). Within the last ten years, a national study found that some low-income families overestimate the cost of attending college by two to three times, focusing primarily on the list prices (Grodsky and Jones, 2007), and their overestimation is higher for private colleges and public out-of-state colleges than that of public in-state institutions. This means that in-state regional public universities look especially economically attractive to low-income families, at least at first glance. Nonselective private universities, for their part, attract working-class students, particularly minorities, by offering attractive financial aid packages. In both cases, the schools look like a better value to working-class families than many of the other schools the student has applied to.

As you would expect, college costs are an important factor in the college-choice process for working-class students (Perna and Titus, 2004, Perna and Titus, 2005, Perna, 2006). Most (64%) chose a college because of low tuition, student aid, or both (Paulsen and St. John, 2002: 207). Further, more than half (54%) chose their colleges because they were close to their work, because they could have low living costs while attending, or both. Additionally, more than half (55%) considered work and/or living costs as very important in their college choices. A majority (58%) also considered tuition and/or student aid as very important in their college choices (Paulsen and St. John, 2002: 208).

And third, the process of picking which schools to apply to in the first place is both affected and to some degree constrained by social class background. Working-class college applicants tended to rely on a small social network of immediate family, school staff, extended family, and peers with regard to selecting a school (Person and Rosenbaum, 2006, Perez and McDonough, 2008); this phenomenon is especially heightened for certain low-income minority groups like Latinos. Working-class college students often stay in the same geographic location for their entire lives, interact frequently with family members, and tend to be embedded in densely structured social networks (Markus et al., 2004, Perez and McDonough, 2008, Stephens, Dittman, and Townsend, 2016), especially when compared to their middle-class counterparts.

A downside of this set of close connections for working-class students is that they tend to be surrounded by people with limited knowledge of the "college-going" process (Mehta and Newbold, 2011, Unverferth et al, 2012), and the many options available for school. Their parents and family members may also not fully understand the time and energy that must be invested in college to be successful (Mehta et al, 2011). As a result, family members may expect their children to contribute to the family even while in school. This expectation may contribute in part to working-class students attending schools near home.

Working-class college students also often perceive their parents to be less supportive and less encouraging of the college process than middle-class and upper middle-class students do (Terenzini, et al, 1996, Choy, 2001, Ceja 2006). Working-class students, overall, rely on a small, densely structured network of individuals with limited college-relevant cultural capital and ambiguous support for college to select the colleges they apply to and the one they ultimately attend. A related downside to that approach is that high-achieving, working-class students often 'undermatch' (Hoxby and Avery, 2012), meaning that they attend less selective schools than their grades and scores qualify them for.

In sum, there is a substantial association between social origins and college selectivity (Persell, Catsambis, and Cookson 1992, Davies and Guppy 1997, Karen 2002, Paulsen and St. John, 2002, Conner and Rabovsky, 2011, Torche, 2011). Working-class students tend to end up at less selective institutions, due to a combination of flagship public university incentives, inaccurate estimation of college costs, and a small, densely structured social network influencing their application and selection choices. Thus, class-based differences in student behavior and related assumptions will tend to be more visible in some types of schools than in others.

LATENT MESSAGE: MANY UNDERGRADUATE BUSINESS STUDENTS AT PUBLIC COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES ARE NOT SOCIALIZED INTO THE MIDDLE-CLASS, THOUGH COLLEGE IS ORGANIZED AROUND MIDDLE-CLASS NORMS

College student class positioning, even social class identity, is an under-theorized area (for a full description see Hurst, 2010). Those few articles that describe working-class students in college tend to focus on full time residential students in elite academic settings (Reay et al, 2009, Lehmann, 2014). Some work has been done on the challenges faced by working-class students who do not "do" college as well as middle-class and upper-class students (King, 2012, Hurst, 2013, Warren, 2007, Stephens 2007, Stephens et at 2011, Stephens et al 2014, Stephens et al 2015); and as King and Stephens highlight, the social class differences do not stop at students' families' lack of a college degree. In addition, research in management education rarely if ever addresses social class, which in turn is often operationalized as socioeconomic status, so bringing a discussion of social class/socioeconomic status to the forefront allows us to understand what it means to teach across social class lines in undergraduate management education.

Cultural Capital/Habitus

Pierre Bourdieu, the French sociologist, used the concept of cultural capital to explain why children from different social classes achieve different levels of educational success, arguing that 'cultural habits...and dispositions inherited from the family are fundamentally important to school success" (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1979: 14). These habits and attitudes, in the right conditions, can be passed down among generations (Lareau and Weininger, 2003). Further, cultural capital can exist in an embodied form (Bourdieu, 1986), as a competence or skill intertwined with the person holding it. Put another way, cultural capital represents a combination of non-economic forces such as family background, social class, varying investments in and commitments to education, different resources, etc. all of which influence academic success.

Acquiring cultural capital takes time, effort, and opportunity. When we see an individual with a skill, what we are seeing is the outcome of an investment, at the same time as we see the person himself, thus that person embodies the cultural capital. To apply the idea of cultural capital to college students, in general, American universities are organized according to middle- and upper-class practices and 'rules of the game' (Fryberg and Markus 2007, Stephens et al 2011). U.S. institutions of higher education reflect and promote an independent model of competence as the cultural ideal (Stephens, Dittman, and Townsend, 2016).

In a survey of administrators at a diverse range of research universities and liberal arts colleges, most reported that their institutions expect students to pave their own paths, to challenge norms and rules, to express their personal preferences, and to work independently (Stephens et al, 2012). Institutions of higher education tend to focus on exploring and developing students' personal interests along with their academic ones. Recognizable, and rewarded, institutional markers of student success include, but are not limited to, "academic attainment through student learning, general education, development of academic competence (e.g., writing and speaking in a clear manner), development of cognitive skills and intellectual dispositions, occupational attainment, preparation for adulthood and citizenship, personal accomplishments (e.g., work on the college newspaper, election to student office)" (Braxton et al, 2013: pp 1-2), and personal development (Braxton, 2008).

Those students who enter college with a substantial amount of college-relevant cultural capital are poised to do better, at least in part because they embody a recognized and specific combination of family background, social class, achievements, and resources, that enable them to 'do college,' for lack of a better term. Working-class college students hold a different habitus from traditional, middle-class college students, one largely left out of discussions of 'best college classroom practices,' or dealing with 'unprepared' students. I use habitus as Bourdieu (1980) does, to describe what we like, what we think is appropriate, what assumptions we hold about the larger world, why we think things should be a certain way, etc. Habitus also explains how different college students internalize, unconsciously, their objective chances for success based on their socio-economic and cultural background, and the related cultural

capital they have acquired. To apply this idea further to my students, many of which are, as mentioned earlier, working-class students, what appears at first glance to be 'unprepared' students may actually be students embodying a habitus based on, or deriving from, a lack of college-relevant cultural capital.

In many university classrooms, for example, class participation is a significant part of students' final grades. Class participation also contributes more generally to how professors evaluate students' potential and develop impressions of students. This widespread practice reveals how an independent model of competence—in this case, the act of expressing one's own thoughts, ideas, and opinions—is institutionalized in American higher education and dictates what it means to be a good or competent student (Kim, 2002, Stephens, Dittman, Townsend, 2016).

In contrast, working-class students may find enacting these cultural norms especially difficult. Many college students from working-class backgrounds report difficulty choosing a major, developing and expressing their own ideas in class, and planning out their schedules to manage multiple and often competing demands on their time (e.g., papers and exams) (Stephens, Dittman, Townsend, 2016:14). So what looks like passive or unprepared students is, at least in part, some students having less experience enacting an independent model of competence, and being found wanting as a result.

What looks like unprepared students may also be rooted in the categorization of college students, even though labelling is often unfair to students. College students are categorized as intellectualist (Katchadourian and Boli, 1994) or exploratory (Colby et al, 2011) when their words and behavior align with the expectations of faculty researchers, and careerist (Katchadourian and Boli, 1994) or instrumental (Colby et al, 2011) when they do not. Students who are 'intellectualist' or 'exploratory' attend college for the intrinsic value of learning, while those who are 'careerist' or 'instrumental' attend in order to get a credential that will help them get good jobs after college.

In her review of the dichotomy, Hurst (2013) contends that those categories refer to students who are, respectively, middle-class and working-class. It is the students' social class and habitus, she claims, that allows some students and not others to respond in ways that align with researchers' own ways of seeing and experiencing a college education. If we view the split and categories through a Bourdieusian lens, these categories might as well be 'upper and middle-class' and 'working-class or first generation college student' respectively, because the questions, answers, and interpretations are all grounded in our habitus (Hurst, 2013).

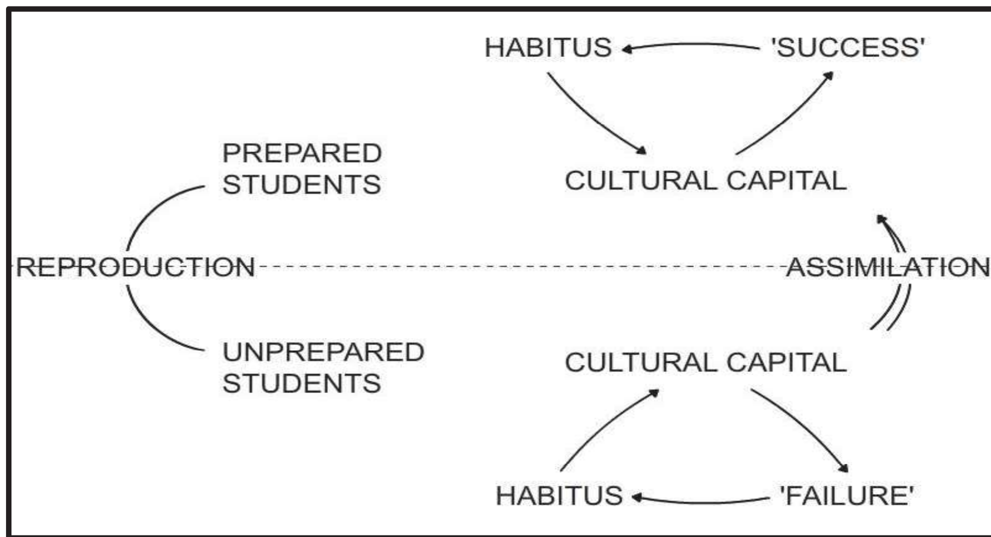
Students are more likely to "express… a desire for 'future financial security' [in choice of major] if they come from a family where this is <u>not</u> taken for granted" (p. 52, emphasis mine). In fact, Hurst argues that "both working-class and more elite students are primarily using college to gain access to these [professional and managerial] occupations; the difference lies in their differential understanding of how that process works, the relative ease of the transition reflecting underlying class predispositions" (p. 57). Habitus makes the possibility that a student will not always have financial security invisible to some students. For those students, future financial security is assumed (and therefore not stated), which leaves room for more 'intellectualist' answers to researchers' questions about how the students view school, or see the importance of their major. For other students, especially those from working-class backgrounds, the whole point of going to college is to get a better job and relieve financial anxiety (Longwell-Grice, 2003, Goyette and Mullen, 2006). The other option, that of going to college simply for the intellectual pursuit, is invisible to many of those students. Their answers thus do not fit in into an 'approved' category.

This disconnect, and the corresponding labeling of 'approved' or not, happens because educational institutions adopt the values of the dominant class as legitimate (Bourdieu, 1980), which ignores students' diverse cultural backgrounds (Harker, 1984). By assigning academic qualifications along a spectrum of 'intellectualist' to 'careerist,' the educational system reproduces existing structural inequalities. This matters because "academic qualifications are to cultural capital what money is to economic capital" (Bourdieu, 1977: 187).

To illustrate my point, I have slightly modified Harker's (1984: 118) figure below, since I believe that the current labelling of working-class students as unprepared implies that for unprepared students to succeed, a shift from the bottom cycle to the top is required. In effect, the appropriate (college-relevant)

cultural capital has to be acquired, with inevitable consequences for the students' habitus. In order to shift from "unprepared" to "prepared," or in order for "unprepared" students to "do school" according to the practices in the field of college (including public universities), they need to assimilate into the middle-class.

FIGURE 1: CYCLE OF SUCCESS OR FAILURE, FOR PREPARED AND UNPREPARED STUDENTS



Colleges and Universities, as Institutions, Reinforce and Even Exacerbate Differences Between Faculty and Student Habitus

In this section, I discuss examples and effects of differences between faculty and student habitus, and make explicit some related, embedded assumptions of each group's habitus. One assumption is that all students should take an intellectualist approach to college. Another is that if faculty members are clearer about their course and student expectations, students' behavior will change.

The first assumption is reflected in the materials distributed by the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U), which describes itself as having a mission to make liberal education and inclusive excellence the foundation for institutional purpose and educational practice in higher education (aacu.org, 2014). Part of this mission has involved developing rubrics for assessment of college and university students. "As part of AAC&U's Liberal Education and America's Promise (LEAP) initiative, the VALUE rubrics contribute to the national dialogue on assessment of college student learning. Since the initial release of the rubrics, more than 32,000 first time individuals have visited the VALUE website between June 2010 and January 2014. The VALUE rubrics have been viewed at more than fifty-six hundred discrete institutions, including schools, higher education associations, and more than thirty-three hundred colleges and universities in the United States and around the world." (aacu.org) One of the Association of American Colleges and Universities' rubrics for course development focuses on lifelong learning (aacu.org, 2014). The use of the phrase "lifelong learner" takes for granted that lifelong learning is (or should be) a goal for all students. But the rubric does not clearly articulate why it is not sufficient or acceptable for a student to focus simply on getting the college degree. Becoming a lifelong learner is not a necessary condition for completing college.

The assumption that lifelong learning should be a goal for college students, and that faculty should assess their students using a rubric focusing on lifelong learning, is but one example of student and faculty habitus difference. The assumption about lifelong learning also may be interpreted as privileging the intellectualist mindset vs. the careerist, outlined by Katchadourian and Boli (1994) and critiqued by

Hurst (2013). The labels matter here -- why “lifelong learner” and not “college student who can actually do enough work to pass without cheating”?

By taking for granted the lifelong learning goal, it is seen as ‘better’ than a ‘completing college’ goal, since lifelong learning is intellectualist (Katchadourian & Boli, 1994) or exploratory (Colby et al, 2011), reflecting aspirations linked to a higher social class. Getting a college degree, by contrast, is careerist, or more functionally driven. Working-class students tend to frame their college experiences in career terms; many think the purpose of college is real-world preparation, not personal or intellectual development (Longwell-Grice, 2003, Walpole, 2003, Goyette and Mullen, 2006).

The second assumption is reflected in advice espoused by Gabriel (2008), Collier & Morgan (2008), and others -- for faculty to make their expectations even clearer to students. I have found that, no matter how much I add to written instructions, it seems that someone always manages to find a new way to misinterpret them. Seeing this situation in light of habitus helps explain why this keeps happening. Collier & Morgan (2008) spend a lot of time describing the differences between faculty and student understandings of faculty making their expectations clear to students.

An assumption in exploring faculty-student interactions is that if we as faculty do a better job of making our expectations clear, our students will do a better job of meeting those expectations -- the problem will be solved (Gabriel, 2008, Collier & Morgan, 2008). But if we understand the faculty-student expectations gap through the lens of Bourdieu, being clearer will not solve the problem. First, there will still be a big gap in tacit knowledge: however clear we think we are being, there will still be unstated assumptions. Second, the habit of students giving more weight to spoken than written directions (Collier & Morgan, 2008) will not change after one faculty lecture on “you need to read this piece of paper here” because the student behavior is rooted in habitus, which only changes slowly, over time. Third, students are located in multiple environments – work, school, family, for example -- each with its own kinds of capital and its own set of practices. If students have developed cultural capital in other, more familiar environments in part by internalizing practices rewarded in those environments, they will apply those practices in the college classroom as well, without understanding that different rules may apply. For example, many of my students work in low-level service jobs while attending college, where they are expected to do what they are told without question. If they continue that practice in the classroom, students may still feel uncomfortable asking for directions or clarification.

Reproduction of Class Distinction

The collegiate, institutional focus on middle and upper-class norms is reinforced and enacted by faculty training and their place in the educational structure. Generally speaking, faculty attended, and were trained at, schools comprised primarily of traditional (not working-class) college students (Brightman, 2009, Bok, 2011, Krebs, 2014). The training they received in their doctoral programs tends to focus on research over teaching (Marx et al, 2015). Doctoral programs do not adequately prepare students for the realities of the careers they will face (for a full discussion see Mitchell, 2007, and Lewicki & Bailey, 2009), when the average doctoral graduate will take a professorial position with greater than 50% of responsibilities devoted to teaching (Marx et al, 2015). In addition, faculty members with PhDs, across all kinds of schools, tend to come from more selective schools (Hersch, 2014), and tend to be ‘good at’ school. The backgrounds of faculty matter at a macro level since they contribute to faculty expectations and behavior at micro levels, like the classroom.

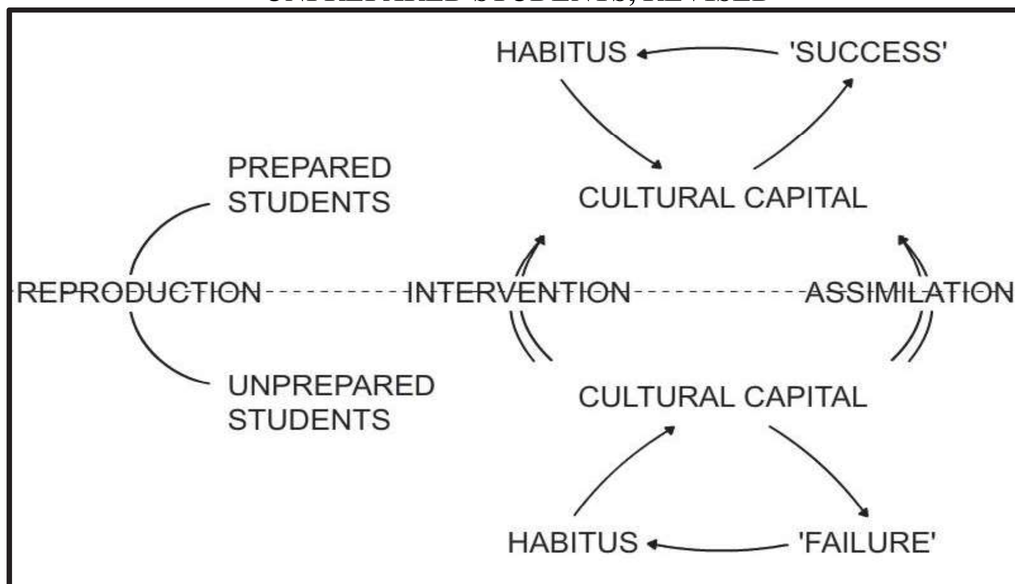
Faculty backgrounds and assumptions play out in classroom settings when faculty members take ideas like “lifelong learner” for granted, forgetting that we learned and internalized these ideas. This represents an over-reliance on ‘doxa’ (Bourdieu, 1977), unstated, taken-for-granted assumptions or ‘common sense’ behind the distinctions we make. Doxa happens when we (professors) forget how we got to be in a position of power and just accept how things are. Our over-reliance on doxa also fails to acknowledge students’ habitus, embodied in this case as a lack of understanding on the part of students that college is supposed to change you in some way. Together, this research suggests that unknowingly teaching across social class boundaries results in faculty enacting institutional norms, and seeing students as being “good at school” or “bad at school” rather than “like us” or “unlike us.”

INTERVENTION VS. ASSIMILATION

Habitus is deep-seated and largely unconscious, making it difficult to change. If faculty, and our students, persist in differentially occupying the same social space because of differences in habitus, then we will always be working at cross-purposes. The implications of intervening vs. expecting assimilation are important. To return to my earlier discussion of 'unprepared students' embodying a lack of college-relevant cultural capital, assimilation means socializing them into the middle-class. Leaving aside for the moment the question of whether faculty *should* be attempting to help students assimilate into the middle-class or develop cultural capital and change habitus, logistically speaking it is just not possible to do that.

I propose a model based on intervention. Intervention works in two important and intertwined ways. First, faculty members explicitly show students the "rules of the game" and let students choose to follow them or not. The second, and in some ways, harder, piece requires changing course structure, content, policies, and faculty behavior to acknowledge the students' existing constraints. I have modified my earlier diagram to show the other path I believe can work to help "unprepared" students succeed in college, and provide examples of both parts of the Intervention strategy below. Figure 2 shows the additional path.

FIGURE 2: PATHS TO SUCCESS AND FAILURE FOR PREPARED AND UNPREPARED STUDENTS, REVISED



Displaying the rules of the game involves demonstrating for students what we, as faculty, expect them to do (and not do). In the first two weeks of my lower-level required courses, I show students two real emails from students, without student names, and ask them to compare the two sentiments expressed. In one email, the student asks the professor 'to let them know if they missed anything' by not coming to class. In the second email, the student alerts the professor to the fact that he or she is not coming to class and also takes responsibility for catching up with a missed class. Through this example, students see how professors can draw a certain conclusion from reading each email, and they can choose to have the professor see them in a certain light. I have found that once students see the two examples side by side and we discuss it as a class, they do not send me emails like Example 1, shown in Figure 3. They send me (and other professors) emails like Example 2, shown in Figure 3.

FIGURE 3: TWO REAL EMAILS FROM STUDENTS

Example 1: Hey Professor, I couldn't come to class today, did I miss anything? Let me know! Thanks!
Example 2: Dear Professor, I just wanted to let you know that right now, I may be unable to make it to class. I am currently having car troubles, and am 30 minutes out, Unless I can find a ride to school, I will be missing class. I will, however, touch base with a classmate about our lecture today, and make sure I am caught up for next class.

One example of changing course structure or policies involves a return to the example of Gabriel's book, Teaching Unprepared Students. Gabriel argues that "significant change requires commitment and time" (Gabriel, 2008:13). While she mentions that professors need to change, she does not specify how, or what the change would look like. If you take an assimilationist approach, one interpretation, also touched upon by Collier and Morgan (2008), is that communicating expectations to students means students will change their behavior to conform to expectations. By extension it assumes that students have infinite amounts of time to change what they do to accommodate what faculty want them to do.

If you assume intervention instead of assimilation, then Gabriel's statement looks different. For example, due to work obligations (Bozick 2007, Collier & Morgan, 2008, McCormick, Moore, and Kuh, 2010), many working-class students may only have 15-20 hours a week to devote to studying and classroom preparation. Knowing what professors expect by way of assignments does not mean students can spend more than the 15-20 hours they have. Students do the best they can in the time they have. Professors have to decide where they want students to struggle -- is it printing off the reading, for example, or doing the reading?

IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSION

Why Unprepared Students Matter for Business Education

Why and how does student preparedness matter for undergraduate business education? Practically speaking, 21% of all undergraduate students are business majors (U.S. Department of Education, 2013), so our practices as faculty affect more than 1/5 of all undergraduate students in the U.S. today. The issue of undergraduate students being literally and figuratively unprepared is not going away; if anything, there will be more pressure on increasing the number of people going to and getting through college.

The typical college student – 18 years old, not working, full-time campus resident – actually describes only about 25% of the total college student population (Department of Education, 2012). More specifically, as of 2012, 40 percent of undergraduate students overall were over the age of 25, and nontraditional student enrollment is projected to grow faster than enrollment of 18 to 22 year olds (Hess, 2011, Sims and Barnett, 2015). Nationwide, 22 percent of high school graduates ages 25-64 have enrolled in some college but dropped out before earning a degree (Soares, 2013).

Recent reports in my state highlight both the shortfall in predicted degrees linked to public universities and the important role those universities play in state-specific jobs, meaning jobs that stay in-state. (Rocheleau, 2014). The approach suggested includes an "intensif[ied] focus on STEM programs, improved minority and low-income student success, and more adult learners and military veterans" (Rocheleau, 2014:1). The last two suggestions are directly linked to regional public universities, in particular, attempting to increase their enrollments by recruiting non-traditional students, who are likely to attend school with a lack of college-relevant cultural capital. With history as a predictor of future events, the phenomenon of working-class students choosing the Business major will continue. What all this means is that given these trends, and given that the selection effects of what kind of student ends up where are not dissipating, today's non-traditional student is tomorrow's traditional student.

Implications for Faculty Behavior

Whether working-class college students, in business and other majors, will continue to be forced to assimilate to middle-class norms in order to succeed, is a question only future events can answer (Hurst, 2010). More broadly, labeling students as "unprepared" perpetuates the same class divisions that a college education is supposed to be getting rid of, "reproducing social advantage instead of serving as an engine of mobility" (Leonhardt, 2004, p. A1). Reading student unpreparedness through a Bourdieusian lens matters for management education because it forces us to see ourselves as different from our students in very deep, tacit, fundamental ways and it forces us to re-examine practices, beliefs, and assumptions we often take for granted.

As faculty, we are in a position of power with regard to class in the classroom. Our power is both culturally and symbolically created, and constantly reaffirmed through an ongoing interplay of agency and structure (Bourdieu, 1980, Bourdieu, 1984). Ignoring our power means ignoring what we need to change, and ensures that we remain part of the structure, and to use a cliché, part of the problem.

But faculty have to be different in important ways for intervention to be a viable approach. If we, as faculty, see our "unprepared" students through a Bourdieusian lens, we have to change our power relationships with students in order to teach them more effectively. The intervention model only works if faculty are on board -- which in turn raises questions about curriculum design, consistency, the model being overly dependent on a few key professors, etc. It is not clear, yet, how much faculty want to be different.

Being explicit in thinking about class and habitus under an interventionist approach can be helpful for making course-level and instructor-level changes that can help students get better grades, master the material, develop self-confidence and good study habits, etc. Perhaps faculty make different choices about how and when to do things, and what to cover. A related question for professors becomes -- what 5-7 key things is it critical that students learn, given the weekly time students can devote to the class and related preparation? This is a hard question, and interventions often require difficult tradeoffs.

Faculty members might redesign their classes to incorporate weekly or biweekly online quizzes for a reasonable percentage of the grade (20-25%) instead of relying on the students to read because they have an innate love of learning. From personal experience, I have found that incorporating weekly online quizzes worth at least 20% of the semester's grade encourages enough students to do the reading that they can participate in classroom discussions and do better on the written assignments. Those that do not do the reading get poor grades on the quizzes initially, and do not do well on early semester assignments. They have a choice -- either do the reading and improve their grades, or end up with a poor grade in the class. The issue with students not doing the reading mostly works itself out with this approach within the first four weeks of the term.

Other options include integrating with other departments at the university in order to assist students with needed skills. Faculty could coordinate with library staff and require use of the library for a research project, or the Writing Center for revisions, as opposed to trying to teach all those skills in their content courses. Perhaps faculty could expand use of a 'flipped' classroom, to have students do the learning outside of class and apply their knowledge inside.

Much of what is on my list — teaching material that speaks to students' experiences, leading and facilitating discussion rather than dictating, continually assessing what works and what does not — might seem obvious. "But these methods have yet to be widely adopted in the universe of colleges educating the most vulnerable students. Teaching is rarely mentioned in doctoral programs, and at elite colleges and universities it is not nearly as relevant to the outcome for students" (Bellafante, 2014).

Business faculty's responsibility as professors may not be to socialize our students into the middle-class. Instead, it may be that our responsibility is to make our students aware of the rules of the game they want to enter, and reveal the choices related to those rules. In effect, we as faculty could attempt to make the invisible visible, by illustrating for our students what behavior is expected in order to play the game, as Bourdieu put it, and why. They then can choose to play or not.

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