Examining the Undergraduate Teaching Practices of Faculty in the School of Management

University at Buffalo Libraries

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Introduction

Background

In 2018, the University at Buffalo (UB) Libraries joined thirteen other U.S. academic institutions as part of a multi-site study aimed at examining the teaching practices of faculty providing undergraduate level instruction in business. The project was led and coordinated by Ithaka S+R, a non-profit organization that provides guidance and support for academic and cultural communities. The goal of the study was to “understand the pedagogical support needs of faculty”\(^1\).

This report serves as a site recommendation report for UB after interviews were conducted with eight members of the teaching faculty from the School of Management (SoM). The local report serves to highlight several themes that emerged from the responses of those faculty interviewed. Many of the responses focused on the role of the library in teaching undergraduate business courses, tools and resources utilized in teaching, open educational resources, and time spent by faculty in preparing for teaching students. From a broader perspective, a cumulative analysis report will be created by Ithaka S+R after analyzing all anonymized transcripts of interviews from all participating institutions.

Local Context

The SoM at UB has had an undergraduate business administration program since 1923. The SoM states 2,902 undergraduates were associated with the program for the 2018-2019 academic year, with another 886 in masters level programs, and 40 students in the PhD program. The SoM has 76 full time faculty members and has more than 41,000 alumni from 87 countries\(^2\). Six academic departments make up the SoM: Accounting and Law, Finance, Management Science and Systems, Marketing, Operations Management and Strategy, and Organization and Human Resources.

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1 [https://sr.ithaka.org/blog/Joining-together-to-support-undergraduate-instruction/](https://sr.ithaka.org/blog/Joining-together-to-support-undergraduate-instruction/)
2 [http://mgt.buffalo.edu/about/facts-figures.html](http://mgt.buffalo.edu/about/facts-figures.html)
The author of this report serves as the Head of Science and Engineering Library Services as well as the Engineering Librarian. The liaison librarian to the SoM retired shortly after UB Libraries expressed an interest in participating in this multi-site study. There is a great deal of crossover between the School of Engineering and Applied Sciences (SEAS) and the SoM at UB with activities and coursework focused on entrepreneurship. Also due to the author’s educational and work background in business, it was decided that the author would pursue this as a solo project.

**Research Methods**

The study was conducted in accordance with the guidelines provided by Ithaka S+R prior to the start of the study as well as the information relayed during a two-day training workshop. The author participated in the training workshop in October 2018 with other participant institution researchers. The workshop was held at the University of St. Thomas in Minneapolis, Minnesota. The study protocol was approved by the UB Institutional Review Board (IRB) in July 2018.

With the assistance of the Associate University Librarian for Research, Education, and Outreach, the author approached the SoM Associate Dean for Academic Programs, who then sent a generic recruitment email message to all SoM faculty. This recruitment effort only yielded one respondent. As such, the author then identified thirty individual faculty members as teaching undergraduate level courses in the SoM in either the fall 2018 or spring 2019 semesters. The six departments within SoM were all represented among the thirty faculty members who were contacted and represented all ranks, from adjunct lecturers to full professors. Recruitment emails were sent to the identified faculty members (Appendix A) by the author. Of those faculty contacted, eight expressed an interest in participating in the study.³

Interviews were arranged at the convenience of the faculty members. All interviews were conducted in faculty offices, except an adjunct faculty member who did not have an office at the time the interview was conducted. In this instance, a location in Lockwood Memorial Library at

³ Teaching faculty from all six departments, of all ranks, were approached to participate in the study. However, only four of the six departments were represented by those who volunteered to be interviewed.
UB was utilized for the interview. All interviewees signed informed consent forms following UB IRB policy (Appendix B). The semi-structured interview (Appendix C) lasted between 30 and 60 minutes; no follow up questions were given to interview participants.

Interviews were recorded and transcribed using the iPhone application Otter4. Immediately following each interview, the audio file from each interview was saved to two backup locations. The Otter application provided basic transcription, but all interview recordings and transcripts were reviewed by the author and manually edited as needed. The author also de-identified all transcripts of personally identifiable data. Once transcripts were finalized, all copies of the audio file were deleted. In preparation for writing the UB site report, transcripts were then manually coded and analyzed by the author.

Findings
Several themes became apparent to the author following the coding and analysis of the de-identified interview transcripts. These themes, which are detailed in individual sections below, include the prioritization of the student experience by faculty, library usage and involvement (or lack thereof in some cases), open education resources, and tools and resources, broadly speaking, used in teaching undergraduate business courses.

Prioritization of the Student Experience by Faculty
The first major theme that was observed by the author centered on faculty prioritizing the student experience. Many of the interviewees provided examples of when they spent additional time, beyond what was specifically required of them as far as in-class or office hours, to improve the teaching and learning experience for students.

Interviewees prioritized the student experience in an attempt to satisfy at least one of two goals: (1) to make the classroom experience more impactful and beneficial, and (2) to reduce student costs. To provide some context concerning reducing student costs, interviewees were focusing on selecting course textbooks that were not overly expensive, even if that meant creating their own

4 https://otter.ai/login
course materials. It also meant selecting additional tools and resources for the class by keeping
the students’ out-of-pocket costs for these resources top of mind. Both of these points related to
student costs are examined in more detail in additional sections below related to study findings.

Several of the interviewees spoke about experiential learning teaching methods utilized in their
courses and the use of case studies to illustrate how the course lecture topics relate to their future
careers. UB Libraries does not currently subscribe to Harvard Business Publishing (HBP), a
popular source for case studies. Faculty are aware they do not have access to these case studies
through the Libraries. One faculty member stated he does use HBP on his own, paying for case
studies when he needs them. More often, out of the faculty members interviewed for this study,
interviewees stated they would create their own case studies or similar experiential learning
projects for their courses. One interviewee stated, “I write many cases that I provide to the
students for homework for in-class assignments…I don’t think you really need to spend $15 to
buy a case from Harvard.”

Another faculty member not only would write cases for his courses but also teamed up with local
organizations and businesses, such as local environmental non-profit groups, to create an
experiential learning network for his students. The faculty member would research and reach out
to a new organization each semester to design course assignments. Students would learn to create
various forms of technical communication and marketing literature that would also directly
benefit the organization and help to solve a specific problem they were looking to overcome. For
example, create a volunteer handbook for a local non-profit organization. The faculty member
admitted this was a time-intensive process, and not something other faculty members teaching
other sections of the course did. He felt the additional time was worth the added time and effort
on his end, to improve the learning experience for the students. As he stated, “students really like
it, I think, because they get a little bit tired of writing about imaginary situations and it feels a
little bit like busywork” whereas the students would feel their work was “meaningful” when
working directly with real organizations.

Other interviewees mentioned tactics such as group projects with a built-in competition
component, and developing micro-credentials, small programs aimed at teaching students
specific and relevant skills needed in today’s workforce. Yet another interviewee commented that she readily seeks out guest speakers from the community to provide students additional insight. As she stated, “I’m one of those who does things outside the box. But I think it adds a little touch to this educational experience because it’s beyond a textbook. It’s beyond an exam.” All of these activities shared a common thread of a commitment to the students’ learning and their specific learning experience within the SoM at UB.

A sub-theme that emerged, relating to faculty focus on improving the student experience, was the prevention of cheating and even more specifically, the sharing of assignments and test questions. This sub-theme became evident as two interviewees specifically took time to address the problem of students sharing assignments. These interviewees expressed their concern over the problem, even if a very small percentage of students engaged in such prohibited behavior. One interviewee stated, “much [of my] time goes into writing the exam and writing multiple versions of it. My theory is that most students would not cheat, even if given the opportunity. So you go through all these hoops to make it very tough to cheat for the few people that might.”

Several faculty members interviewed stated they took a good deal of additional time to create new assignments and test questions each semester, as opposed to choosing to recycle assignments and test questions over the years. One participant specifically noted, “Course Hero is my nemesis” and as such, spent additional time ensuring he was creating new test questions, or collaborating with fellow business faculty, here at UB and elsewhere in the country, in a continual attempt to thwart cheating or even sharing of past homework assignments.

An interviewee mentioned she would work with a colleague in her department in the SoM each semester on test questions. Both instructors taught different sections of the same course and took a good deal of extra time to ensure new assignments and test questions were made, so older versions would be deemed useless if shared. As she put it, “I would never take a test bank question and put it on my exam. Just forget that. That’s a dumb idea. So I write new exams [each time].”

[5](https://www.buffalo.edu/micro-credentials/about.html)
Ultimately, even though it would save the faculty members a great deal of time if they could reuse homework assignments and test questions, the end goal of providing an authentic and meaningful learning experience won out. While instructors taught different types of classes and had varying levels of teaching experience, the theme of preparation time, in relation to teaching, was persistent when analyzing the interview transcripts.

**Library Usage and Involvement**

Another theme that presented itself from the analysis of the interview transcripts related to library usage and involvement. Several interviewees stated they encouraged their students to go to the library or seek out a librarian for help with research, and only one interviewee brought his students to the physical library space. However, only one interviewee confirmed working directly with a UB librarian, and in that case, it was not a current or past business liaison librarian, but a librarian from another department within the Libraries. One interviewee specifically stated he did not work with a librarian or the Libraries and did not feel the need for that support with his specific courses. In many cases, interviewees expressed working with the Libraries more deliberately was an area for their own improvement as an instructor.

To contextualize this relationship between the SoM and the Libraries, it is important to note that the SoM faculty have, for many years, had low involvement and engagement with the Libraries. This low usage was not for lack of trying by the librarians from an outreach perspective.\(^6\) One interviewee recalled hearing from the Libraries in the past but did not have a need for library instruction in her class. Nor is the low usage indicative of negative faculty perceptions of the Libraries. The Libraries, in the case of the SoM, tends to work directly with students. Faculty from the SoM will also reach out to the Libraries with book and journal recommendations, but otherwise do not typically request or require much from a library instruction standpoint.

That being said, the theme that emerged from the analysis of the interviewee transcripts rather related to the opportunities that exist for SoM/Libraries interaction that goes beyond library

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\(^6\) It is important to note local context here, as UB Libraries have had interim liaisons for several years. In August 2019 a new business liaison librarian was hired.
resource instruction. For example, as one interviewee stated, “I always thought of [the library] as solely for my research, [but] I know I need to think of it as it’s there for the students, too.” This realization presents an opportunity to work with faculty members in making students aware of the assistance the Libraries provide, even if that does not directly translate to an in-class library lecture. Academic liaison librarians are continually inventing new outreach avenues, and the interviewees make it clear these opportunities exist; for instance, awareness and support of library services, beyond research. A faculty member mentioned the trend of digitizing lectures and then asked directly if technology equipment like microphones and cameras could be checked out of the library. To the surprise of the interviewee, the author confirmed that is a service offered today. The author asked the faculty member if he believed there was an awareness issue with other faculty members regarding certain library services or offerings, the faculty agreed but added that support for these services, like in the case of the technology equipment, would also be a need as well. If the support does not exist, faculty would be unlikely to utilize such a service, according to the interviewee.

Open Educational Resources (OERs)

Open educational resources (OERs), per The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, are “teaching, learning and research materials in any medium – digital or otherwise – that reside in the public domain or have been released under an open license that permits no-cost access, use, adaptation and redistribution by others with no or limited restrictions.” The use and creation of OERs were another theme evident from the analysis of the interview transcripts. This could be considered as a sub-theme of the previous topic related to faculty prioritization of the student experience, especially in relation to keeping student costs low. However as the conversation around and the need for OERs continues to grow, it has become a larger initiative within the UB Libraries. Further, the creation of, or even the process of identifying appropriate OERs is no small job, and therefore the author felt it was imperative to separate this topic as another theme from the interview transcript analysis.

Two of the interviewees specifically referenced OERs in the course of their respective interviews. The first faculty member mentioned the need for an OER in his course as he teaches

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[7] https://hewlett.org/strategy/open-educational-resources/
several sections of the same course, a course that has nearly two dozen sections in all each semester. He stated he currently uses a textbook, but that he has trouble finding case studies or materials to coincide with the textbook. If he was to create an OER for the course, it would be designed to work with the course materials he already uses, or even those he would like to use but has been unable to previously. Further, he noted that there could be consistency among all the sections, as all the instructors for the course could utilize the OER. Since many instructors facilitate the course, they could also be involved in the creation of the OER. However, he was quick to acknowledge that there were likely many challenges to creating the OER, the primary challenge being time. He stated that it would be difficult to “wean off the textbook” because of the ease of using a resource that has already been created.

Another interviewee mentioned he currently uses OERs in his class. In this case, the faculty member did not create the OERs used, but rather utilized existing OERs created by others. He learned of the resource while getting his doctorate at another institution. These open resources were mostly case study based, as opposed to a textbook, but were still a primary material used in the instruction of his course.

In both cases, the utilizations of OERs stemmed from the desire to customize the course and the instruction, as opposed to saving students money. However, several other interviewees mentioned in their interviews that saving the students money or, at the very least, being aware of the costs students incur, was a motivating factor when it came to selecting course materials, tools, or other resources. Therefore, it is reasonable to believe that if more OERs were available to instructors, or if they had the time and ability to create their own OERs that open resources would be used, if not preferred.

None of the interviewees participating in this study mentioned the UB Center for Educational Innovation (CEI), which partners with “university deans and faculty to positively impact student learning outcomes through the art of teaching and the science of learning.” CEI also educates faculty on OERs including how to locate existing OERs to use in the classroom. Further, none

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8 https://www.buffalo.edu/ubcei/about-us.html
9 https://www.buffalo.edu/ubcei/teaching/open.html
of the interviewees mentioned the Libraries when referencing OERs. This was not surprising, though, as the Libraries only recently created a position devoted to scholarly communications. This librarian does assist faculty interested in creating OERs, but has other goals and duties, as well. It does indicate a need, as will be discussed in the Recommendations section, to increase awareness of OERs and their benefits.

**Tools and Resources**

The topic of tools and resources used in teaching undergraduate level business courses was a major area of the semi-structured interview guide provided by Ithaka S+R (Appendix C), so it was expected that this became a major theme in the findings. However, it was surprising to the author to learn the variety of tools and resources utilized by faculty in activities related to their teaching.

Faculty interviewed for this study use tools and resources such as assignment and assessment platforms such as Cengage MindTap and McGraw-Hill Connect, video resources including YouTube and TedX videos, and video conference applications including Webex and Zoom, as well as video recording tools like Panopto. It should be mentioned that Webex and Panopto are UB approved tools that the Information Technology group provides UB faculty. Other tools mentioned included Grammarly (for grammar checking purposes), Poll Everywhere (a classroom response application), Medium.com (an online publishing platform), and Qualtrics (a survey tool). UBLearns, the Blackboard learning management system implemented at UB, was mentioned by all interviewees, although with varying degrees of enthusiasm. All interviewees did acknowledge using the tool in the classroom, even if they had used and preferred other tools in the past. Even those faculty members who utilized UBLearns and were generally happy with it admitted they should spend more time with the tool to better understand all the available features and functions.

An underlying theme related to tools and resources that became apparent to the author upon analysis of the interview transcripts was how all interviewees used tools to enhance student learning and the experience in the classroom. Several interviewees shared they had tried many tools to find one that worked best. By “worked best,” the faculty would clarify this meant what
was easiest and most affordable for the students. One faculty member stated that choosing one assessment platform and textbook over another meant sacrificing some of the “slick” additional features she prefers for a tool that was affordable for her students. In her decision, she forfeited “fancy” statistics on engagement, which would ultimately cause her to spend more time compiling this data manually. Another interviewee stated she elected to work with a specific tool chiefly because she knew other faculty members also used it, and while there was a cost to the students to use the tool, they would get more for their money if the tool was used in multiple courses.

While some of the interviewees were enthusiastic about researching and trying new tools and technologies, some interviewees expressed that they stay away from the latest tools, gadgets, and gimmicks when it comes to their teaching. One interviewee stated she felt other instructors placed too much emphasis on continually seeking out the next “cool thing.” She considered herself “old fashioned” in that she liked to talk to her students to get their opinions, rather than rely on gadgets for quick and anonymous answers to polling questions.

Another faculty member had a similar opinion, stating that even though she doesn’t “use a lot of technology, but that doesn’t mean I don’t recognize it. But in the position I’m in now, I realize that more and more it’s about the experience [and] the student is the priority.” Her focus on the student and their experience was further expressed when she pronounced,

I think there's still room for us as instructors to continue helping students to be more reflective and to be more interpersonally-committed in whatever development they are in, and to recognize that, yes, technology is going and is fast but the human touch is also important.

Overall, many, if not all, of the interviewees were open to trying and using tools and resources if they enhanced the learning experience, as long as the cost was not detrimental to the students. However, even those instructors who chose not to incorporate additional tools and resources always made the decision with regard for the students and not for their own reasons.
**Recommendations**

The author has identified four main recommendations that align with the four major themes identified in this local site report. These recommendations are listed below. Additional details on each recommendation follow in separate subsections.

Based upon the findings from the interviews, the author proposes the following recommendations are followed by UB Libraries:

1. Investigate new library resources, especially related to case studies and experiential learning practices in order to support faculty in their prioritization of the student experience;
2. Educate and encourage SoM faculty to use and create OERs; and
3. Explore new collaboration opportunities for the engineering and business liaison librarians, as a means of encouraging library usage and library involvement in undergraduate business courses;
4. Develop new workshop instructions sessions as part of UB’s New Faculty Academy to provide faculty with support for certain tools and resources that are (or could be) used in the classroom.

**Investigate New Library Resources**

Perhaps the simplest recommendation for the Libraries is to investigate new library resources that could help support the teaching practices of faculty in the SoM. As previously noted, several faculty interviewees mentioned Harvard Business Reviews by name as a resource they are aware of, but the Libraries does not currently have access to. While it may be cost prohibitive at the current time to add subscription resources to the Libraries arsenal, it would be beneficial to investigate free, open resources available. These resources could save faculty the time they would have each spent, individually, researching resources on their own or creating their own resources. One such resource that exists in the sciences and engineering is the National Center for Case Study Teaching in Science\(^\text{10}\). This open access resource provides a refereed collection of case studies in a variety of academic areas, beyond just the sciences, including business and

\(^{10}\) [http://sciencecases.lib.buffalo.edu/cs/collection/](http://sciencecases.lib.buffalo.edu/cs/collection/)
management. Case studies are free to access, but supplementary teaching materials, including teaching notes and answer keys, are password protected due to the sensitive nature of the information.

*Educate and Encourage SoM Faculty to Use and Create OERs*

Another recommendation for the business liaison librarian, as well as the University Libraries in general, is to continue to promote, grow, and cultivate, the open educational resource (OER) program through UB. Currently, the Interim Head of Scholarly Communication within the Libraries provides support for faculty interested in developing OERs. With only interviewing a handful of all faculty in the SoM, several specifically noted using or wanting to work with OERs. This leads the author to believe that it is highly probable additional SoM faculty would be interested in developing or using OERs in their own classrooms. However, as this is still a fairly new initiative, it is highly likely that many faculty are not aware of this support. Therefore, it is highly recommended the business liaison librarian make awareness of this service an integral part of outreach when communicating with SoM faculty.

Another related recommendation, and also related to recommendation to investigate additional resources, would be to encourage the faculty from the SoM who are already creating their own case studies, to submit these studies to the National Center for Case Study Teaching in Science database. Alternatively, creating an open access resource just for case studies in business could be a viable opportunity for SoM faculty and/or the faculty from University Libraries.

*Explore Collaboration Opportunities for the Engineering and Business Liaison Librarians*

Collaboration is another key recommendation, specifically between the new business liaison librarian and the author (the Engineering Librarian), with the goal of encouraging SoM faculty to utilize the library and its available resources in undergraduate business courses. The author observed that many of the SoM faculty are engaging in teaching methods that SEAS faculty are trying as well, such as experiential learning and the use of case studies in the classroom. The author has personally seen and heard issues from SEAS faculty firsthand as they struggle with finding and creating case studies, as an example. Therefore, a unique opportunity is evident, as the Libraries (and more specifically, the business liaison librarian and the Engineering Librarian)
could serve as the bridge between these two major schools at UB in making both faculty groups aware of resources and tactics used by the other.

It would likely be best to approach this as an outreach opportunity via email, where each subject liaison librarian reaches out to her respective faculty members to gauge initial interest. After forming a list of faculty interested in access to case studies for instruction purposes, the business liaison librarian and author could create a LibGuide webpage with links to case study resources (identified as per the first recommendation). This opportunity would build strategic partnerships, a current key initiative of the University Libraries Strategic Design process\(^{11}\), between the Libraries and the SoM and SEAS, but also between the two schools themselves. The existence of silos is a common topic of discussion within the Libraries and UB as a whole; this type of outreach and collaboration could help to break down some of the silos that exist.

**Develop New Workshops under the UB’s New Faculty Academy**

The final recommendation relates directly to the tools and resources that the interviewees spoke about and their need for support in finding solutions and user training. UB offers New Faculty Academy\(^{12}\), a special program focused on teaching and writing and publishing for new faculty members. The Libraries currently teaches the writing and publishing track of the program, where the Center for Educational Innovation (CEI) focuses on the teaching track. It is the recommendation of the author that a portion of the curriculum of the teaching track incorporate an opportunity for participants to learn from seasoned faculty members about what teaching tools exist, as well as how and why they might be used in the classroom. As the curriculum has already been set, it might make sense to offer this as a discussion topic at the conclusion of the normal teaching track schedule. An alternative would be for the Libraries to collaborate with CEI to create a LibGuide webpage where various tools could be linked to and explained. Video tutorials could also be included to maximize understanding of use and impact these tools can have.

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\(^{11}\) [https://library.buffalo.edu/aboutus/about-the-libraries/strategic-design/](https://library.buffalo.edu/aboutus/about-the-libraries/strategic-design/)

\(^{12}\) [http://www.buffalo.edu/provost/admin-units/faculty-affairs/Events/NewFacultyAcademy.html](http://www.buffalo.edu/provost/admin-units/faculty-affairs/Events/NewFacultyAcademy.html)
Conclusion

Overall while this was a small-scale study, the in-depth nature of the questions provided a wealth of insight into the needs of faculty teaching undergraduate level business courses at UB. Most of the SoM faculty that were interviewed, whether having taught for one year or a decade or more, all mentioned the need to spend more time on activities related to their teaching. This included more time researching other tools, more time investigating what other instructors do at UB or other universities, or more time thinking of ways to make the classroom experience better for their students. Despite vocalizing this desire, it was apparent to the author that the interviewees already spend a great deal of their time focusing on their instruction, potentially more time than some might imagine, especially when considering these faculty members may be on the tenure track or working on other jobs or research.

Making faculty aware of existing library services that could save them time, especially related to their instruction duties, is a key takeaway from this study. In addition, developing simple web pages that point instructors to existing subscription resources or freely available resources could also aid faculty by saving them time spent researching. Librarians and library staff are usually proficient if not excited by finding information. If instructors at the SoM were made aware of this ability to assist, it could help create strong relationships between the School and the Libraries. This is a partnership that could be emulated with other schools and colleges at UB and their respective liaison librarians.

The author will relay the findings of this report to the new business liaison librarian, Libraries faculty and administration, as well as the Chair of the SoM. The author also may expand this study to include engineering faculty to determine where possible collaboration opportunities exist among teaching faculty in both the SoM and SEAS.

Acknowledgements

The author would like to thank the School of Management faculty who took the time to share their thoughts and experiences regarding teaching undergraduates. The author would also like to thank Danielle Cooper and Rebecca Springer from Ithaka S+R for providing guidance and
training throughout the study. In addition, the author is appreciative of the University at Buffalo Libraries administration for their support of this project.
Appendix A: Sample Recruiting Email

Dear {FACULTY NAME},

The University Libraries at UB is conducting a research study on the teaching support needs of instructors in order to improve services for the School of Management. Would you be willing to participate in a one hour interview to share your unique experiences and perspectives?

Our local UB study is part of a larger suite of parallel studies with other institutions of higher education in the U.S., coordinated by Ithaka S+R, a not-for-profit research and consulting service. The information gathered at UB will also be included in a landmark final report by Ithaka S+R and will be essential for UB to further understand how the teaching support needs of Business instructors are evolving more widely.

If you agree to participate, the interview can be conducted in your office. If you do not have an office available, my office in Lockwood Library can be used instead.

If you have any questions about the study, please don’t hesitate to reach out and thank you so much for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Erin

Erin Rowley
Principal Investigator
Head, Science and Engineering Library Services
Engineering Librarian
University at Buffalo
epautler@buffalo.edu
Appendix B: Written Informed Consent Form

University at Buffalo Institutional Review Board (UBIRB)

Adult Consent to Participate in a Research Study

Title of research study: Supporting the Changing Practices of Undergraduate Business Teaching

Version Date: June 21, 2018

Investigator: Erin Rowley

Why am I being invited to take part in a research study?
You are being invited to take part in a research study because you teach a business course or courses at the undergraduate level at the University at Buffalo.

What should I know about a research study?
- Someone will explain this research study to you.
- Whether or not you take part is up to you.
- You can choose not to take part.
- You can agree to take part and later change your mind.
- Your decision will not be held against you.
- You can ask all the questions you want before you decide.

Who can I talk to?
If you have questions, concerns, or complaints, or think the research has hurt you, talk to the principal investigator, Erin Rowley, at epautler@buffalo.edu or 716-645-1369. You may also contact the research participant advocate at 716-888-4845 or researchadvocate@buffalo.edu.

This research has been reviewed and approved by an Institutional Review Board (“IRB”).
You may talk to them at (716) 888-4888 or email ub-irb@buffalo.edu if:
- You have questions about your rights as a participant in this research
- Your questions, concerns, or complaints are not being answered by the research team.
- You cannot reach the research team.
- You want to talk to someone besides the research team.
- You want to get information or provide input about this research.

Why is this research being done?
This study seeks to examine the teaching practices in undergraduate Business in order to understand the resources and services that instructors at the University at Buffalo need to be successful in their work.
How long will the research last?
We expect that you will be in this research study for 1 hour.

How many people will be studied?
We expect about 10-15 people in this research study.

What happens if I say yes, I want to be in this research?
You will be contacted by the investigator to arrange for a 60 minute, audio-recorded interview. The interview will be scheduled at your earliest convenience and shall be conducted in your office. If a private office is unavailable, the interview will take place in a private meeting room in the library.

The questions will focus on your teaching practices. Interviews will be transcribed. The findings from participants at the University at Buffalo will be analyzed and a report will be generated.

The information gathered at the University at Buffalo will be sent to Ithaka S+R, a not-for-profit research and consulting service, where it will be included in a landmark final report.

All interview transcripts will be anonymized. Audio files will be deleted after transcription takes place.

What are my responsibilities if I take part in this research?
If you take part in this research, you will be responsible to: participate in a 60 minute audio-recorded interview about teaching practices.

What happens if I do not want to be in this research?
Your participation in this research study is voluntary. You may choose not to enroll in this study.

What happens if I say yes, but I change my mind later?
You can leave the research at any time it will not be held against you.

If you decide to leave the research, contact the investigator so that the investigator can delete any associated data.

Is there any way being in this study could be bad for me?
There are no known risks associated with participating in this study.

Will being in this study help me in any way?
We cannot promise any benefits to you or others from your taking part in this research. However, possible benefits include increased insight and awareness into teaching practices and support needs.

What happens to the information collected for the research?
Efforts will be made to limit the use and disclosure of your personal information, including research study and medical or education records, to people who have a need to review this information. We cannot promise complete secrecy. Organizations that may inspect and copy your information include the IRB and other representatives of this organization.
**What else do I need to know?**
*You will not be paid for participating in this study.*

**Signature Block for Capable Adult**

Your signature documents your permission to take part in this research. By signing this form you are not waiving any of your legal rights, including the right to seek compensation for injury related to negligence or misconduct of those involved in the research.

________________________________________  __________________________
Signature of subject  Date

________________________________________
Printed name of subject

________________________________________  __________________________
Signature of person obtaining consent  Date

________________________________________
Printed name of person obtaining consent
Appendix C: Semi-Structured Interview Guide

Background and Methods
1. Tell me about your experiences as a teacher [E.g. How long you’ve been teaching, what you typically teach, what you currently teach]

   - Does your teaching incorporate any particular teaching methods or approaches? [E.g. experiential learning, case method, design thinking, problem-based learning, flipped classroom]?
   - Have you received any support/relied on others towards developing your teaching approach?
   - Are there any other supports or resources that you think would be helpful for you?

2. Do you currently teach more general research or study skills in any of your courses? [E.g. finding sources, evaluating sources, data literacy, financial literacy, critical thinking]

   - How do you incorporate this into your courses? Have you experienced any challenges in doing so?
   - Does anyone support you in doing so and if so how? [E.g. instruction classes offered through the library]
   - Are there any other forms of support that would be helpful in doing this?

Working with Materials and Content
3. What materials do you typically create in the process of developing a course? [E.g. syllabi, course website, online modules, lectures, assignments, tests]

   - How do you make these materials available to students?
   - Do you make these materials more widely available? [E.g. public course website or personal website, sharing via listserv]
   - How you experienced any challenges in creating and/or making these materials available?
   - Do you ever consult with others as part of creating and/or making these materials available?
   - Are there any supports that could help you in creating and/or making these materials available?

4. Beyond the materials you create in the process of developing a course, what other kinds of content to students typically work with in your courses? [E.g. readings from textbooks or other sources, practice datasets, films]

   - How involved are you in how this content is selected and/or created?
   - How do you make these materials available to students?
   - Do you make these materials more widely available? [E.g. public course website or personal website, sharing via listserv]
   - How you experienced any challenges in selecting, creating and/or making these materials available?
• Do you ever consult with others as part of selecting, creating and/or making these materials available?
• Are there any supports that could help you in selecting, creating and/or making these materials available?

Working with Tools
5. Have you considered using and/or are you currently working with data and/or analytics tools to understand and improve your teaching? [E.g. dashboard or an app through a course management system, early alert notification system on student performance via email]

• If no, why? (e.g. unaware of such offerings, current offerings are not useful, opposed to such offerings)
• If a tool could be designed that leverages data (e.g. about students) in a way that would be helpful towards your teaching, what data would feed into this and how would this tool ideally work?
• Do you have any concerns in relation to how this data is collected and/or leveraged (e.g. privacy)?
• If yes, what data and/or tools have you used and how? To what extent was this useful?
• Do you have any concerns in relation to how this data is collected and/or leveraged (e.g. privacy)?
• What are some of the greatest challenges you’ve encountered in the process of using these tools?
• Do you rely on anyone to support you in using these tools?
• Are there any other forms of support that would help you as you work with these tools?

6. Do you rely on any other tools to support your teaching (E.g. clickers, smart boards)? If so,
• What are some of the greatest challenges you’ve encountered in the process of using these tools?
• Do you rely on anyone to learn about and/or support you in using these tools?
• Are there any other forms of support that would help you as you work with these tools?

Wrapping Up
7. If there was a magic wand that could help you with some aspect of your teaching [beyond giving you more money, time, or smarter students], what would you ask it to do for you?

8. Are there any ways that library or others on campus have helped you with your teaching in ways that have not yet come up in this interview?

9. Are there any issues relating to your experiences teaching that you think that librarians and/or others on campus who support you and your students should be aware of that have not yet come up in our discussion? [e.g. on the role of the library in supporting teaching, what makes teaching in your specific area of Business or Business more widely that warrants unique support]