



Adjunct Profs a Big Plus In Business Courses

By EVAN MOSKAL

NYU's Business and Technology Management (BTM) program strives to instill in students the deep roots of business principles, while fostering the creative and technological aspects of their minds. In other words, it sticks to the proven strategies in textbooks while staying current on what is new in the business world: a modern match made in heaven.

And that is where adjunct professors fill the bill. They are well suited to teach such a hybrid curriculum. Because their job as teachers is secondary, they primarily focus on their careers outside of the university. And that's not such a bad thing. In fact, it brings crucial value to the BTM program. "We've actually done what we are teaching," said Alan Hyman, adjunct professor teaching the course Management of Information Systems and Technology and co-teaching Data Communications and Computer Networking. Hyman believes intense - even heated - classroom discussions become even more relevant for students when they graduate and start their careers. After all, give - and - take such as this is an important aspect of corporate life, he says.

Hyman, a Polytechnic graduate himself, is the co-founder of Make Simply, a

firm specializing in business and customer development, manufacturing, product development, 3D printing, and other needs common to fledgling firms. The role his company plays is a prime example of the marriage of the world of technology and business, and his presence as an instructor in the BTM program could not be more fitting or more valuable.

Although adjuncts rarely spend many hours here on campus, the value they provide far outweighs this drawback. Tony Ruggieri, who co-teaches Data Communications and Computer Networking alongside Hyman, has made an effort to leave more time dedicated for contact with students. In doing so, he says, "I've had to make some minor schedule adjustments in my professional life, especially workload prioritization." Ruggieri is the managing partner of a global technology firm, Velstar, which focuses on providing resources to solve technological problems pertaining to voice, video, data, hardware, software, support, and project management.

Value is a recurring theme when discussing adjunct professors in this program. Practicing what is preached is not always true when it comes to traditional teaching. Textbooks can become dated rather quickly. New versions come out often,

but in general the fundamentals in them remain fixed. This is where the adjunct instructor comes in. How does one teach what is not in the book? The short answer is, one can't. But just think about it. Both Hyman and Ruggieri agree on one of the most valuable benefits to students: having professors in their desired career fields.

Adjunct professors exchange anecdotal dialogues in their classes. This not only presents an opportunity for students to learn about their field of interest, but also to get to know the professor personally and professionally. In the long term, students interacting with adjunct professors in the BTM program "have the opportunity

to participate and engage with us, and might even be able to develop mentorships, internships, and ultimately full-time employment," Ruggieri says. These instructors train students in how to act in professional settings. They learn body language, jargon, and the importance of face-to-face interaction.

This program does indeed differ markedly from engineering programs, especially with adjunct professors teaching more courses than tenured professors. However, they are here for a reason, Hyman emphasizes: to teach students how to communicate with all types of people they will meet in their careers.

Companies do not consist of one department, he says. "The real-world experience that adjuncts provide bridges the silos between more systematic minds and those that are more business savvy." He says the students who come out of the BTM program will not only be more tech savvy, but will also be potentially able to demonstrate more useful skills than the average business graduate. These adjuncts are creating an advantage, he feels. They teach synergy. They are giving back to younger minds and creating potential. In all regards, students are encouraged to get to know them. It could be more beneficial than you think.



Alan Hyman (left) and Tony Ruggieri, adjunct professors

Entrepreneur

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Inno/Vention contest, which takes place during the spring semester, requires that students develop a working prototype and demonstrate some basic function by the end of the contest's three-month cycle.

During the process, students work with mentors, faculty, and entrepreneurs to develop both the technical and business sides of their invention. Finally, they must present the prototype before a panel of industry judges, who select winners in the software

and hardware categories and provide important feedback on the idea. Several winners are invited to attend the Lean Launchpad program, which assists the students with product development and ways to incorporate their business. "So, start thinking about developing your prototype now, during the fall semester," Knox says. "This way, you get a head start on the competition. You'll also have more time to focus on the business aspects of your idea during the actual competition."

For more information about entrepreneurship and idea development, two student clubs are here to help you: the En-

trepreneurship and Innovation Association (EIA) and the Patent Pending Club. These groups invite guest speakers who work at start-ups to share their business ideas and experiences on how to go from an idea to actually having a company like the BotFactory at one of the university's three incubators. In addition, other resources are available to Poly students to take an idea from concept to a working prototype, such as, for instance, the newly created prototyping lab, located on the lower level of the Dibner Library (Room LC 015).

Other competitions include the \$75,000 NYU Venture

Competition, which started in 2010 as part of the larger NYU Entrepreneurs Challenge to serve as a catalyst for the creation of new start-up ventures based on technologies, and IP, developed by NYU students, faculty and researchers across the life science, information technology and physical science sectors.

Ambassador Program

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joined Polytechnic in 2010 and has had "the pleasure of watching the ambassador program grow from a newly formed activity that provided mostly administrative assistance only in the office to its current form, in which the students are the face of the school."

Students interested in receiving more information about the ambassador program should visit the Brooklyn office, JB158.