

MARKETING EDUCATION AND "CHILDREN (STUDENTS AND FACULTY) OF A LESSER GOD"

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A growing interest in ethnic and/or cultural marketing designed to address the changing composition of the market place is also changing the composition of the classroom as well as marketing faculty. As universities across the nation deal with the demographic shifts in our classroom composition and confront the impact of a 25% plus faculty retirement rate, marketing educators and administrators are encountering a drastically changing work environment. Are we ready to face these changes? Are we capable of addressing them? "Children of a lesser god" is a term we employ to describe the increasing number of marketing students who come from a vast array of disadvantaged backgrounds including immigrant, racial or ethnic minority, gender minority, and poverty-ridden students. In addition, as we attempt to hire new faculty members to fill vacated positions; we sometimes encounter a similar portrait of "children of a lesser god." This portrait often results in isolation and low morale for such faculty members and lower productivity for the schools they join. If we continue to remain oblivious to the different needs of "children of a lesser god," whether they are students or the new generation of faculty members, the future is dim. We will not only fail in the effective delivery of a quality education to all students, but we will also fail in creating and nurturing the future of marketing education and the marketing discipline as a whole.

This session was developed to look at all sides of this pressing issue, heighten awareness about it, acknowledge the different needs that may exist, and suggest conceptual and tactical methods for serving such "children of a lesser god" in the context of marketing education. Over the last few years, several WMEA sessions have focused on innovations in teaching methodology such as active learning, experiential learning, making the most of field cases, and developing self-sustained learners just to name a few. All would agree that these are valuable techniques and that time on task correlates positively to learning. All would also agree that a person's cultural and economic background, etc., has a strong influence upon how they learn. Are there new paradigms that require

different pedagogy and different perceptions of time on task for "children of a lesser god"? If one is not a "child of the lesser god," how does one know the paradigms and pedagogy being utilized to ensure time on task and to meet the needs of these students and faculty? Can we assume that because we are treated a certain way that "children of a lesser god" want to be treated in the same way or will utilize the same logic that we do in determining the attainment of success?

As we move further into the information era, it is critical that we advance from the "banking system of education" to the "transformation system of education". "Children of a lesser god" tend to enter college and the academic arena from an academically challenged background. How do we get them to become active participants in the process of consuming and delivering marketing education? Numerous examples and techniques, some old, some new, and some borrowed were shared as they related to marketing education and "children of a lesser god." Emphasis focused on faculty views as instructors and administrators in addressing student and faculty needs. The panel members discussed successful processes, frustration with tried processes as well as suggested ones. Special emphasis was placed on helping students understand their unique learning styles and the emerging importance of multiple intelligences in enabling them to identify and cultivate their own expertise and abilities. Processes for using critical thinking to foster respect for all intelligences, while focusing on business and marketing paradigms and pedagogy were highlighted.

As marketing educators, we must realize we do not have full command authority in the classroom. Ideally, we must cultivate ways to enable marketing students and faculty, particularly "children of a lesser god," to develop the ability to empower themselves through information. To ensure career success for "children of a lesser god," marketing educators must embrace a holistic model of learning with engaging pedagogy that embraces education as the practice of freedom.