

Kevin Watson, Associate Professor – Sustainable Supply Chain Management

Undergraduate Courses Taught

Year	Qtr.	Class No.	Course Title	Starting Enrollment	Final Enrollment	Eval
2023	S	333	Operations Management	26	22	
2023	W	460	Strategic Sourcing	34	32	3.7
2022	F	333	Operations Management	24	12	
2022	F	474	Logistics Technology, Innovation, & Management	28	27	4.0
2022	Sum	333	Operations Management-OL	38	28	
2022	S	333	Operations Management	92	51	2.7
2022	W	460	Strategic Sourcing	40	38	3.3
2021	F	333	Operations Management	59	32	3.1
2021	F	474	Logistics Technology, Innovation, & Management	29	27	3.1
2021	Sum	333	Operations Management-OL	48	36	
2021	Sum	333	Operations Management-OS	17	15	
2021	S	333	Operations Management	103	75	2.8
2021	W	460	Strategic Sourcing	39	36	3.1
2020	F	333	Operations Management	62	48	2.8
2020	F	474	Logistics Technology, Innovation, & Management	36	36	3.6
2020	Sum	333	Operations Management	51	37	
2020	S	460	Strategic Sourcing	1	1	
2020	S	333	Operations Management	99	63	3.0

Teaching Philosophy and Curriculum Development

In my last class as an undergraduate at Auburn University, I was introduced to a concept that continues to shape my philosophy toward teaching and student development, the marketing concept (a.k.a. market orientation or MO). MO states the best way to create superior customer value is by building an intimate understanding of customer needs and aligning corporate processes relative to those requirements. More simply stated, identify your customer, determine what their needs are, design and build products and services that satisfy those needs.

The first question that must be addressed under a MO approach is: who are your customers? This is an issue that is hotly debated by academics; are our customers our students or the companies that hire them? I firmly believe that the answer is BOTH. Most students, especially in the College of Business, come to college to get a degree so they can get a better job and make more money. What sometimes gets lost in translation is why companies are willing to pay college graduates more than someone with just a high school degree. The monetary value of their degree, as determined by the salaries our students earn at graduation, is based on market forces, but also the content taught during a student's program of study. Companies will not pay college students higher salaries for a degree if the content taught doesn't match their requirements.

Having identified our customer, the next question to address is: what are my customers' needs? To address this issue from a corporate standpoint, I have travelled at my own expense to speak face-to-face with our existing employer partners and potential future employers to identify the in-demand skills for new hires. To name just a few, I traveled to multiple Walmart distribution centers, Nissan, Continental Tires, Murphy USA, and the Navy Yard in D.C. The conversations always start the same: how can the Sustainable Supply Chain Management program at Louisiana Tech help you? Their answers help shape our SCM curriculum: APICS Body of Knowledge, Leadership, Analytics/Excel, Decision Making, and Teamwork. Dr. Inman, Dr. Roberts, and I have continuously improved our curriculum and co-curricular activities to emphasize these skills.

Having identified the content necessary from an employer point of view, the next step is to develop a means to effectively deliver that content to our students. This goes toward what our students need and how we satisfy those needs. Supply chain is very hands on; it is difficult to imagine how and why something is done if you have never seen it or experienced it. It is about like eating an elephant if you have never seen an elephant. The key is to make the bites manageable and to make it personal.

To help students personalize and understand our curriculum, I try to relate it to what they know and jobs they have held. Additionally, since the scale of contemporary manufacturing and distribution is enormous, in just the last two years, I have arranged tours and networking opportunities for our students at the Nissan Assembly Facility (Canton, MS), Continental Tire and Milwaukee Tool facilities (Clinton, MS), Walmart Distribution Center (Opelousas and Robert, LA), etc. I have also adopted live cases in my upper level classes to work with students

and companies to solve real problems. These are run just like consulting projects where teams developed project charters, schedules, and milestones. The team has contact with corporate sponsors, uses real data, develops alternatives and business cases, and then delivers both a written report and an oral presentation to senior management. To date, my classes have worked with:

- Lincoln Parish School Board - sourcing school supplies
- WorldInVsn - sourcing apparel, developing plans for international shipping, etc.
- Hunt Forest Products - developing a training plan for new purchasing hires
- Jane Marie - warehouse layout, sourcing displays
- Smitty's Supply - distribution network analysis
- D&H Medical Supply - warehouse layout
- Bear Walker - sourcing boxes, hardware, and apparel plus recycling manufacturing waste
- Department of Defense (Submarine Base) - skill development, location analysis, and additive manufacturing

Many of these projects included sourcing products from all over the world (US, China, Europe, South America, and Africa). This required students to develop professional boilerplate communications, contact suppliers, and learn about cultural differences (for instance the impact of Chinese New Year on business). These are the types of service learning projects where students really can see how the skills we are teaching are used in business.

Seeing the curriculum in action within corporate America and applying it to real problems may be the best thing I have done to help my students. Many students fail to realize they are not paying for a degree, they are paying for the right to acquire the education, knowledge, and improved critical thinking skills taught in our classes. They have to work to acquire that knowledge – and it's not easy. And, it is hard to manage as a professor, but showing them the application of the concepts in ways that translates to the jobs they will enter, motivates them to put in the work and earn their degree. The success of this approach is apparent to anyone looking at the starting salaries and placement rates of our students (generally 1st in the COB). It is evident in the program growth we have experienced in supply chain management since I arrived (nearly quadrupling the program in the last 8 years). It is also apparent as we track early career success and alumni satisfaction scores. Finally, it is apparent in the continued relationships the program has developed with major employers, relationships we hope to develop further with the creation of a corporate advisory board in the near future.

List of Teaching Innovations

- Full incorporation of Excel into core and upper level courses, including for the purpose of examinations. All quantitative material is currently taught using Microsoft Excel.
- Online delivery of MGMT 333 utilizing video, Connect homework management system, and online testing.
- Incorporation of “Live Cases” in MGMT 474 and 460.
- Adoption of practitioner oriented textbooks in MGMT 474 and 460 to increase the relevance of adopted textbooks to the roles students accept at graduation.
- Incorporation of APICS/ASCM certification material into MGMT 474 and 460.
- Use of Top Hat, Poll Everywhere, and other technology to increase student engagement.
- Inclusion of multiple guest speakers from across industries to provide advice and guidance to students conducting live cases – the best story regarding this is a Navy Lt CDR joining us in the (for him) middle of the night from the Horn of Africa.

List of Recent Publications and Select Working Papers

Impact of Production Activity Control Technique on Cost Allocation in Serial Production. 2022. Kevin Watson and John Lauck. *Journal of Managerial Issues*, 34(3): 245-263.

An Ethical Analysis of Medical Data Mining: An Argument for Business Restraint in the Face of Aggressive Data Mining Practices. 2021. Dinah M. Payne and Kevin Watson and Dinah M. Payne. *Southern Journal of Business and Ethics*. 13(2021): 10-42.

Big Data Analytics and Competitive Advantage: The Strategic Role of Firm-Specific Knowledge. 2021. Rajiv Dahiya, Son Le, Kirk Ring, & Kevin Watson. *Journal of Strategy and Management*. 15(2): 175-193. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JSMA-08-2020-0203>

Ethical Practice in Sharing and Mining Medical Data. 2021. Kevin Watson and Dinah M. Payne. *Journal of Information, Communication and Ethics in Society*. 19(1): 1-19. <http://doi.org/10.1108/JICES-08-2019-0088>

Workplace Safety Events and Firm Performance. 2018. Qazi S. Kabir, Kevin Watson, and Theekshana Somaratna. *Journal of Manufacturing Technology Management*. 29(1): 104-120.

Student Engagement in American Business Schools. Kevin Watson. Target Journal: *Journal of Management Education*.

Service, Awards, and Teaching/Service Grants

- Behavioral Standards Committee, Louisiana Tech, 2020 – Present
- Undergraduate Policy and Assessment Committee, Louisiana Tech, 2016 – Present
- SCM Club, Faculty Advisor, Louisiana Tech, 2017 – Present
 - Reconstituted the SCM Club after several years of dormancy, providing students additional opportunities to network with employers and display leadership in student led organizations.
- Information Technology Committee, Louisiana Tech, 2014 – 2018
- College of Business “Just Business” Grants, Louisiana Tech
 - SCM Club Travel (\$4,000 – Walmart and Target), 2023
 - ASCM Warehouse & Procurement Certification Materials, 2023
 - SCM Club Travel (\$5,000 – Continental Tire/Milwaukee Tool and Nissan), 2022
 - APICS CIPM Certification Exam Fee Payment (3 Students), 2022
 - APICS CPIM Certification Materials, 2018
 - SCM Club Trip to Nissan Assembly Facility, Clinton, MS., 2018
- 2019 Outstanding Faculty Advisor Award, College of Business, Louisiana Tech
- 2019 Innovation in Teaching Award, College of Business, Louisiana Tech