

MUSINGS ON A DISTINGUISHED METHODS CAREER AND BEYOND*

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More than 40 years after the first edition of *Multivariate Data Analysis* (now in its 8th edition, Cengage Learning, UK, 2019), Dr. Joe F. Hair, Jr. continues to be actively engaged in doctoral education, research, and publishing.¹ With over 220,000 citations, Professor Hair is the author of many books and articles, and his methods contributions transcend his original marketing disciplinary boundary with widespread application and importance in organizational and management research. He has also authored *Essentials of Business Research Methods*, which is in its fourth edition and a more recent book on partial least squares, *A Primer on Partial Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM)*, as well as several marketing textbooks. In 2019, many of his coauthors and former students honored his contributions to business research in a book of commemorative essays *The Great Facilitator: Reflections on the Contributions of Joseph F. Hair, Jr. to Marketing and Business Research*. We are honored in this volume of *Research Methodology in Strategy and Management* to have Dr. Hair provide learning observations from his career and advice for business scholars today.

MY EARLY BACKGROUND

I earned my PhD at the University of Florida almost 50 years ago. My journey as a professor has been interesting, rewarding, and quite surprising. During my

*Adapted from “Meet the Methodologist” Interview with Larry Williams before Joe Hair’s CARMA TALK on October 26, 2018 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MxiBYCdyQU0>.

¹Larry Williams and CARMA have graciously allowed us to use this video recorded interview with Meet the Methodologist, a conversation before the methodologist delivers a CARMA video talk.

program, I learned a lot about marketing, but almost nothing about publishing and very little about research. In fact, none of my professors had ever published a journal article and the topic of publishing was seldom discussed. In my first job at the University of Mississippi, several other young colleagues had begun to recognize the need to conduct research and publish, but none of us had been trained much in that area. We were all assistant professors wanting to be successful, and we quickly developed a culture of working on articles and presenting papers at conferences. When we left town, which was often since Oxford, Mississippi was very small, the first thing we would do when we returned home was go to the College of Business to check the mail and see if there were any revise and resubmits, or perhaps, and not frequently enough in those early days, acceptances. Indeed, we were conditioned to react sort of like Pavlov's dogs, and our wives even made fun of us for being like them.

What really got me into research was my early interest in multivariate data analysis. When I say early interest, it really was not early in my doctoral program. It was actually late in my doctoral program when my fellow PhD students and I were required to learn multivariate. Learning multivariate data analysis is one of the worst memories of my doctoral program because we had no courses on this topic (which reflected the criticism of business education at that time as being too vocational and not sufficiently empirical or theoretical following the Carnegie and Ford reports).² As a reaction to these reports, the University of Florida, as did many other universities in a similar situation, hired several new professors to upgrade the business college curriculum to include scholarly activities and programs that involved empirical research, and particularly quantitative methods. One of the new professors hired by the University of Florida, Gainesville, was from UCLA, and he basically mandated that all the marketing doctoral students apply multivariate in our dissertation research. This requirement was quite frightening to all of us since we could hardly spell the word multivariate much less apply these techniques in our dissertation research. At that point, we had all finished our coursework, passed our comprehensive exams, and were ready to undertake our dissertation research. But we had very few quantitative tools in our toolbox.

In the days and weeks that followed, I said to myself, "Wow, I've done very good in marketing courses and now I'm going to have to use multivariate data analysis in my dissertation. By the way, I had a year to finish my dissertation and Ole Miss had said if I came there without my degree, I would earn only 50% of what they were offering me – \$14,500 on nine months. I was newly married then too, so you know I had to get the dissertation done." So my worst memory is being required to learn multivariate data analysis after becoming ABD, and yet I had never had a course in that topic, and all the statistics books were full of equations and matrix algebra – neither of which I had any courses in either. The truth is, however, one of my best

²Gordon, R. A., & Howell, J. E. (1959). Higher education for business, Ford Foundation, New York, NY. Retrieved from <http://www.questia.com/library/3137696/higher-education-for-business>; Pierson, F. C. (1959). The education of American businessmen, Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, Stanford, CA. Retrieved from <https://www.amazon.com/Education-American-Businessmen-Pierson-Others/dp/B0000CKIUD>.

memories is how that one development has changed my career and really my life and initially led me to think about writing the multivariate book. While working on my dissertation, I quickly learned to love data analysis. I cannot say that I loved statistics early on, but I eventually began to love multivariate analysis and to really enjoy it. Mastering multivariate led me to doing scholarly research because I could always find someone who was interested in the theory, in the conceptual side, and my specialization was in data analysis. So that is really how I got started in my early years at Ole Miss and then continued my academic journey with a lot of colleagues, very good colleagues, at Louisiana State University, and later on at the other universities where I have been on the faculty, as well as presented many multivariate workshops in Europe, Asia, Australia, South America, and Africa.

An important consideration for young faculty, therefore, is developing a specialization or strength in an area that differentiates your skillset from others. This will enable you to identify and contribute as a coauthor on topics that make a contribution to your discipline. If your coauthor team has no differential advantages or unique skillset, it will be very hard for you to write articles that make a contribution and enable you to get published and cited by colleagues in your discipline as well as others.

MANAGING MY PUBLISHING CAREER

In terms of managing my career, I was very lucky, but I also worked hard. I invested early on in the area of multivariate and worked with my colleague from the University of Florida, Rolph Anderson, to write the first few editions of our multivariate book. The two of us recognized the opportunity in the textbook market for writing an applied multivariate book that would appeal to a broader market. All of the books on multivariate statistics at that time included equations on almost every page, and also matrix algebra. For example, the text *Multivariate Data Analysis* by Cooley and Lohnes (1971) claimed the authors were not statisticians, but rather data analysts. It also claimed “multivariate statistics held the keys that would unlock the secrets of human social behavior” – something that young scholars would certainly be interested in learning more about. But for students with limited math or statistics backgrounds, which was typical of most students in doctoral programs in those days, this text and others were still a huge challenge to read and comprehend. The applied statistical concepts were simply overwhelmed by the formulas, calculus, Greek symbols, and matrix algebra, not to mention the new and strange sounding vocabulary associated with statistics and data analysis! The other popular text of that time, *Multivariate Statistical Methods* (Morrison, 1967), claimed to be written as “an elementary source for multivariate techniques,” but it was far from being elementary for virtually all business doctoral students.

The initial challenge for my doctoral cohort was to learn enough multivariate statistics to complete our doctoral dissertation. This task opened my eyes to the potential of multivariate techniques, but it also clearly identified the need for a more user-friendly approach to teaching multivariate statistics concepts and methods. After much frustration in seeking a relatively readable source to learn

multivariate, and finding none, we decided to write the multivariate book. Our goal thus became to write a book that had no formulas and emphasized what the types of analysis techniques were designed to execute, how to select the correct method to achieve a particular research/statistical objective, how to properly apply the techniques, and finally how to correctly interpret the results when applying a particular technique. We almost achieved that in the first edition – there was only one formula. It explained the concept of a variate – which is a linear combination of multiple variables and considered the basic building block of all multivariate analysis – and also demonstrated in equation format how to calculate a variate.

One of the challenges of writing that first edition (1979) actually was not writing the book, but getting it published. At that time, my coauthors and I were unknown scholars on the faculty of relatively less prestigious universities located in the southern part of the United States. In addition, the field of multivariate statistics was viewed as a niche area with little potential. It took more than 6 years and a lot of persuading to find someone to publish the first edition of the book, and even then it was a small publisher new to the area of business and willing to take a risk. The first edition sold about 3,000 copies, enough to make it successful for the publisher. As interest in the field of quantitative tools expanded, the book was later acquired by a major publisher, MacMillan, and eventually by Prentice Hall, and now Cengage Learning. It was the applied approach of the book along with improved, more user-friendly software and PC technology that in combination made the book the leading text in the field today by a wide margin.

Writing the multivariate book helped me to learn data analysis, but I did not neglect the other areas. Today, my academic position is much different. I have the flexibility of working on a wide variety of topics with my doctoral students, so I can just pick up and explore new areas and really enjoy learning about emerging research opportunities. This flexibility contrasts with my earlier years, when I had to say, “no, stay focused.” You know when you are focused, it helps you to stay on track, manage your time, and ultimately to publish. As an example, when I started out, I used to say I needed big blocks of time to get meaningful work done. Since then, I have learned that as few as 5 or 10 minutes is enough time for you to write a paragraph or two, and those paragraphs have then been written and they are finished.

Knowing the literature is really essential to be successful in publishing. So, in my earlier years, I also had to spend a lot of time keeping up with the literature. I am not saying I do not know the literature today, but I have the flexibility that I can follow my students’ interests and learn new areas with them. A good example is in the last two or three months working with a particular doctoral student I have become interested in the field of social robotics and the impact of that in business, and particularly marketing. I am also looking at opportunities to explore this topic in management as well as other business discipline applications. In my earlier years, I probably might have had to dismiss that, but now I can learn about that topic because I am interested in this emerging area and have a lot more flexibility.

Looking back on my career, I would describe my interests other than methodology as being quite eclectic. What I would say is I have been able to be eclectic because of my methods skills. After about 10 years, I had sufficient skills in

statistical methods, as long as I maintained them, that I could publish and continue to be a contributing scholar. That balance and the desire to be involved in the content or the substance side of research enabled me to pursue areas that I was interested in. But if you are a methodologist and only a methodologist, then you are limited to the situation of waiting to find a colleague who can prepare the literature and theory side and work with you. Thus, when you have skills and interests beyond methods, you can identify ideas and talk to colleagues about them. Social robotics is one example of my searching for research opportunities based on what is happening. I constantly read the business literature, not only on the scholarly side but also on business publications, *Wall Street Journal*, *Business Week*, and so forth, and I look for trends that are emerging because that is where I get my ideas. I am constantly seeking what is new and different. How are emerging innovations and issues potentially going to impact marketing, management, and scholarly research? What about the possibilities that this might open a new area of interest in research in marketing, management, or the social sciences in general?

MANAGING MY TEACHING CAREER

I think it is most unfortunate, but like most doctoral students in my day, I had no training in teaching. It was just assumed that if you get your doctorate, you know your field, and therefore you can be an effective teacher. There are so many things to educate doctoral students about, and never enough time, and so my priorities have typically been substance, theory, and methods, and too little focus on teaching my doctoral students how to teach. I think to me not emphasizing teaching has been a problem for 50 years, and it continues to be a problem. But the awareness of the need to help doctoral students become excellent teachers has improved some, with several education-focused journals now being published and scholarly conferences offering workshops on the topic – just not enough.

How did I grow? Well, you know, it was experiment and fail, and experiment and success, and I learned from both my mistakes and my successes. How did I do that? Well, over time, it was like I reflected on what worked and what did not work. I listened to others, I observed what the successful teachers were doing, I read books and articles on communicating and public speaking, and I constantly asked myself what was not working, and what is working. For young professors, my advice is to identify two or three professors you recall as being good teachers and ask yourself what made them a good teacher – what teaching methods did they use and why do you remember them as being good. Basically, I observed people, professors, and scholars, and they became mentors, but probably not true mentors as specifically defined. They were mentors in the sense that I learned from them, but they probably did not know that I was learning from them, and the exposure to them was very limited instead of an extended opportunity to learn from them. But I was able to absorb, reflect, and build upon what these outstanding teachers did and identify and adapt approaches that would work for me. As an example, I am not the type of person

to tell jokes while lecturing so that was not a tactic that would work for me. But I have learned how to tell stories about my experiences that relate to an important concept and to bring that concept to life with a real world experience that students have often also been exposed to, such as a good or perhaps bad service quality experience.

That is how my teaching has evolved. I continue to be committed to investing more time in my teaching, but I do not know that I will have time because I have learned a lot about it over the years, developed a good foundation on teaching approaches, and there is always the pull of research and publishing, and also my administrative duties as Director of the PhD program. I get very good evaluations, not bragging there, but it is really because to be a good teacher you need to be sensitive to whether you are doing a good job or not doing a good job, are you communicating effectively, and to do so, you must consider the nonverbal signs of students as well as the verbal responses. You must constantly update your knowledge and monitor your presentations. In addition, ask for feedback from your students, and listen to and respond to their questions, and then help particularly the doctoral students to learn to be better teachers, since that is one of the roles they will be expected to excel in as an educator. Your school likely requires student evaluations, but too often only a few students complete them, and I find informal discussions are an excellent way to learn how effective your teaching is and what needs to be improved.

I do have some specific advice about teaching methods courses, but it likely could be useful for other types of courses. As I mentioned above, no students in my doctoral program at the University of Florida had any training in multivariate statistics, or even in advanced statistics. I tell people that I never had a course in statistics, except probability at the undergrad level, and I made a C in that course. "I promised myself I'd never take another statistics course, and I haven't." People just cannot believe it. What that has done is to motivate me to demonstrate to people the value of statistics in their career and their life in general, and how it can be useful above and beyond learning some fundamental formulas. You do need to understand what is happening in the black box and how to apply it. But even more so, you need to understand research design, how to select the correct statistical method, and then how to interpret the results, and particularly how to recognize whether initially the results are valid, or perhaps need to be examined further. That is been my focus much more so than formulas and solving equations.

When you teach methods, it is a complicated subject. There is a limit to how much most people can process in their minds and still understand the difficult concepts of statistics. When I teach it, I like to talk a little bit about the methods, what each method can do, and not do, and then give examples. A number of years ago, I wrote an opinion piece where they asked me about teaching multivariate.³ One of the things I emphasized was in teaching include examples,

³Successful Strategies for Teaching Multivariate Statistics, *Proceedings*, International Conference on Teaching Statistics, Salvador, Brazil, July 2006, pp. 53–56.

examples, and more examples. We often say well this is what discriminant validity is, and we give students the definition or point it out in a Powerpoint file. But if you do not give an example, then it is often too difficult to make sense of these complex concepts. The same thing is true when you are trying to explain convergent validity and goodness of fit. You need to include examples that demonstrate and support the concepts. Those examples often come from the literature and the substantive side because that brings the concepts to life. It is the real life examples that people can relate to. Particularly individuals who lack a lot of knowledge about methods and they're finding it challenging. It's enough of a hurdle for students to just learn the basic concepts and ideas about multivariate and statistics. But it is equally important for them to be able to have an example, a practical example in a substantive area that they've been exposed to and can relate to in their everyday lives. As one example, I often discuss statistical concepts using restaurant experiences that almost all people have, such as slow service, waiters who cannot answer your questions, and food that does or maybe does not taste as you expected it to. This enables people in my classes to better understand the statistical concepts since they can apply them to their own experiences.

One of the most effective teaching strategies for multivariate, as well as research design, involves having students actually apply the techniques. To do so students must have access to their laptop or be in a computer lab. They also must have the appropriate software – in many instances, I use *SPSS* and more recently *SmartPLS* (www.smartpls.de), but other software is available today such as *R*, *M-Plus*, *PSPP*, and so forth. For the most part, selection of software depends upon what is available and you are familiar with, as there are several excellent alternatives. It also depends on the approach of the software. I prefer software packages that are point and click and drag and drop, since the focus can be on learning the multivariate technique, and not the software. But some of the open source software includes types of analyses that are not included in the major packages. As a further method of facilitating learning multivariate concepts and techniques, I include databases in all my research books that produce logical, believable results. For example, in one of my books, *Essentials of Business Research Methods* (Routledge, 4th ed., 2020), I created the Samouel's and Gino's case study that includes customer experiences that are marketing related and employee work environment concepts that are management related. Samouel's Greek Cuisine is a restaurant that competes with Gino's Italian Ristorante. Students have eaten out at restaurants many times and can relate to the situation. The two databases – one is survey data on customers' perceptions of the two restaurants and the other is a survey of employees' perceptions of the workplace environment of Samouel's Greek Cuisine. I typically show students how to apply the techniques with one of the databases and then assign them an exercise that enables them to replicate my initial examples on their own computers. Similar assignments with other databases (e.g., the *HBAT* database from the multivariate text) are given and students are asked to apply the appropriate techniques to solve the problem. Rather than telling the students which variables to use, the learning starts with asking them to review the database, identify the appropriate variables

and statistical techniques, and then use the software to execute the solution. The assignments are graded to identify areas of concern, and later in class, they are summarized to reinforce the concepts in class, often using a group format. While the students are completing these assignments, I move through the class to clarify questions and ensure students are moving in the right direction. Students often have very limited experience or knowledge of statistical analysis and software, so I prepare handouts and Powerpoint slides that summarize examples from the textbook and articles, and the click-through sequence to obtain the results using all the statistical techniques. Students use these supporting materials while taking the class and also use them after class to obtain statistical analysis results for new research situations.

ADVICE FOR MANAGING YOUR CAREER

When I think back on my transitions in academia – from assistant, to associate and full professor, and then to a chaired position – I have continued to invest in learning new research designs and techniques and how to apply them. Even after rigorous doctoral programs, newly minted doctoral students still need to learn about the specifics of research and publishing. We simply cannot teach everything in a doctoral program that students need to learn. Newly minted doctoral students need to develop an interest in and focus on how to transition as an individual from the book learning and the concepts and the skills you learned in the doctoral program to how you actually apply them in the field. The early years are really important because that teaches you a lot about time management, and it also teaches you about what it takes to be published. You also need to identify good coauthors and partners in your research, and if a coauthor is not contributing do not be afraid to stop working with them and move on to others who invest their fair share of effort. Finally, you need to find mentors along your journey, so the early stage really is an investment in additional learning and expanding your skillset into areas where your knowledge is limited.

The second stage, as you move to associate professor, is about expanding your knowledge footprint and trying to work more broadly with other faculty, both at your university and other universities. This might be viewed as networking, but it also involves spreading the knowledge that you gained not only in your doctoral program but also in your early years as a faculty member. Then, as you evolve into a full professor or a chaired professor, you will likely be invited to present keynote addresses or workshops on your area of specialization or teach a short course at a university outside the United States. That is the time I believe you really need to be committed to serving your university community, your students, and your discipline. Success in your scholarly journey really is based upon being intellectually curious and pursuing lifelong learning. I encourage colleagues, particularly young colleagues, to pursue lifelong learning. We hear about it a lot, but it is too often overlooked. As you get to the full professor level, what you need to say is, “It’s time for me to give back, and it’s time for me to share with others what I have learned so that the young professors and the associate

professors, and truthfully even some of the full professors can learn from your experiences.” So that is how I would make sense of my transition.

To return to the theme of continuous learning, I would like to share something I have observed. Once people are out of their doctoral programs and in their careers, they often quit making a commitment to learn new methods. What I have heard is, “Well, I like multiple regression and I know it, why do I need to work with SEM, or if I know SEM then why do I need to learn hierarchical linear modeling?” And others say, “Well I’ve learned and applied covariance-based SEM with AMOS or LISREL for the last 30 years and it’s worked well for me, why do I need to learn variance-based partial least squares SEM (PLS-SEM)?” Most of these individuals do not even know what PLS-SEM is, even though the method was developed in the 1970’s and we have had excellent software for the last 20 years. In short, most scholars have been unwilling to invest even a little bit of time to learn it. This is quite surprising given it is a combination of two techniques that they have all been exposed to and almost all of them you have used – the two techniques are multiple regression and principle components analysis.⁴ They say it is not useful or it is different or it is not needed because we have covariance-based SEM. But in fact, PLS-SEM objectives and its value as a research tool are very different from covariance-based SEM, and there are many areas PLS-SEM can be applied that the covariance-based SEM cannot be used. To summarize, many times researchers are not open enough to what is happening in the methodology area and are not investing enough time to become aware of and be able to say, “Wow, this might be something that would be useful to me. Either I need to learn it, or I need to find a colleague and a coauthor who can help me in terms of supporting this new methodology in my research.” In fact, for the past decade, I have been writing in the area of PLS-SEM as well as other emerging methodologies. I have never stopped learning!

A commitment to learning and improving methodological skills also encompasses appreciation for other research approaches. Early in my career was when the multivariate area really began evolving, and people became excited about it. It helped us to publish, and realistically in my opinion, we forgot about qualitative. I am guilty of it just like I am sure a lot of others are. But by the time we hit the mid-1990s, or certainly the early 2000s, people began to realize that as a discipline we have been overlooking the qualitative side. In the last 15 or so years, maybe 20 in marketing and management, we began to reawaken our interest in the qualitative side and to pursue a much more balanced approach toward methods. Unfortunately, I think there are some individuals who have not caught up with that trend. One of the criticisms I have of scholarly journals these days is that too many of them continue to be too quantitative and not enough are balanced in their approach to accepting scholarly articles.

⁴The two techniques of ordinary least squares (OLS) multiple regression and principle components analysis (PCA) are executed simultaneously, instead of separately, and the statistical objective is predicting the maximum variance in the dependent constructs.

GLOBAL SHIFTS IN METHODS: QUANTITATIVE AND QUALITATIVE METHODS

When I was young in my career, we talked about qualitative, but then the business disciplines became very quantitative. More recently, we have moved toward mixed methods. It is kind of like I said earlier, marketing and management to me are very similar and we have been parallel, but sometimes it is kind of like competition. You know sometimes you are focusing on the idea of matching your competitor and then you think about well I need to move ahead, not just be equivalent to. In marketing and management, sometimes the management scholars have moved ahead of us and sometimes we have looked ahead of them, but to me overall, it is so great that we are now much more in the arena of mixed methods than we were for many years.

When we talk about the international market, I have had some opportunities in Europe for a number of years because they were slower than the United States in moving toward quantitative approaches and continued to focus on the qualitative side and not really learning enough about the quantitative side. They are catching up in many ways, however, and now I think that we are all in a very similar area of development and growth. If we extend that really to our more recent colleagues from Asia, they are beginning to see the value of mixed methods as well. Although they initially became interested in the quantitative side, because I think the perceptions were scholarly journals were emphasizing quantitative when accepting scholarly articles. My observations are that these days they are moving much more toward mixed methods because qualitative methods are a fundamental building block for quantitative approaches. I have seen so many people over the years that think a quantitative approach can make them successful and they do not need to learn qualitative approaches. Recently, we are moving into an era where reviewers and editors appreciate that you really need both approaches to be successful long term in a scholarly career.

How does one move to a more balanced approach between qualitative, conceptual/theoretical, and quantitative over time? First, both management and marketing now have conceptual/theoretical journals, but we need more outlets for this type of scholarly research.⁵ I still strongly believe in quantitative methods and approaches, but it would be good to have more scholarly journals that focus on qualitative methods, and particularly conceptual and theoretical articles, because I think that would motivate more scholars to devote additional time to those research approaches.

Second, in the area of research, I think there still continues to be, and this is probably a result of the 30 or 40 years at least in marketing and to some extent management, that we have focused so much on methodological and quantitative approaches, that we still have too many journals that focus too much on the quantitative side, and that emphasis on the quantitative side means that the

⁵The primary conceptual/theoretical journal in management is AMR (Academy of Management Review) and in marketing the journal is AMSR (Academy of Marketing Science Review).

audiences for some journals are very small. You end up developing a small clique. As a good example, a number of years ago, I published in the *Journal of Marketing Research*, but it is so narrow today that I can hardly read it much less publish there. I might be able to find a quantitative colleague who could help me, but it is just too narrow, and truthfully, I cannot remember the last time I ran into more than one or two people who said the *JMR* is my type of journal. We need to move beyond that stage and say okay, how about we focus not only on the conceptual and theoretical but also the applied side of marketing and management ideas and concepts, so that we can speak to a much broader audience with a more meaningful message.

Third, sometimes I believe reviewers are too picky about narrow kinds of things. In marketing, we call it common methods bias, and in management, they call it mono methods. Yes, we need to be sensitive to it, but it seems to me if you are knowledgeable about this issue, and you learn how to address it on the front end of your research, that it is not the fatal flaw that it is sort of been made out to be. I am not saying it is not important, but I think for a while the issue of common methods variance became well, if you did not focus on this in your research that you invested a lot of time in, it is no good. Another example of overemphasizing a single topic or issue is when we are reflecting on research in general. I think there continues to be too much emphasis on statistical significance and not enough on the concept of power. What we need to do is say yes, statistical significance is important, but power is also important, and by the way not finding significance can also provide useful information. And in some instances, the lack of significance is just as meaningful as finding statistical significance in theoretical relationships.

CHANGING UNIVERSITIES, NEW CHALLENGES

I recently moved to the Mitchell College of Business at the University of South Alabama (USA), and the transition has been superb. I had been very involved in starting a DBA program at Kennesaw State University. It is a nontraditional doctoral program.⁶ We had a lot of success and graduated 84 people in my 7

⁶Having worked in the area of nontraditional doctoral programs for almost 10 years, I have seen that more people are aware of DBAs and their research component. Many DBA programs are very comparable to a traditional doctoral program. What we have done is repackaged the content and graduate quality students who are competitive in the marketplace. Is it different? Yes, it is different, but in terms of the programs I have been involved in, the amount of face-to-face time in coursework is fairly comparable to most other doctoral programs that are the traditional doctoral programs. The students in the more recently developed DBA programs have management experience ranging from 5 to 10 years, and sometimes as much as 20 or 30 years. When you ask them about what problems do you want to investigate, they have personal experience with these problems. So their problem is not how do I come up with a topic to write papers on or how do I come up with a topic for my dissertation. It is how do I select from all the really interesting things that I have seen while in their industry career. Some of their experiences have gone right and some have gone wrong over the years, and they have to decide which one of these problems they are going to focus on in their doctoral research.

years there involved in the DBA program. We placed almost all of the graduates of the program in AACSB-accredited universities. My transition to the USA was to strengthen and enhance their DBA program, which was patterned after the one I developed at Kennesaw State. My task at USA is to work with the Mitchell College of Business to grow and expand their program. What I would say about managing this career transition, it is about learning a new system – what works here and what does not, and it is more of an administrative role. The transition to a new role at USA has been good and they are treating me very well. They have permitted me to continue to do workshops at universities around the world and to extend the global footprint of the university. They have also supported me in other ways, but it has been a struggle to keep up with publishing at the level I was at prior to this move because of the administrative component in what was initially a DBA program, but has now been converted to a PhD in business degree.

I continue to enjoy working with doctoral students, these days mostly with doctoral students in the Mitchell College of business, but to some extent former doctoral students now enjoying success in their academic career. For example, I just had one former student send me an email recently, and she said that she got her first journal publication. This is just her second year in the program. Others are presenting papers at conferences. In the area of management, we have an individual who just got recognized by the Southern Management Association for the outstanding graduate student paper, and other students presenting papers at AOM. Finally, my most recent project is writing a new book on marketing analytics (Hair, Harrison, & Ijjan, 2021) – coauthoring with a former doctoral student and a colleague I met through networking at the Academy of Marketing Science annual conference. All of these doctoral student successes are so rewarding and that is what I am committed to these days – helping my doctoral students and other young faculty learn how to be successful in an academic career. That is what this university supports, as do other universities with doctoral programs, and these efforts are working to advance doctoral education in marketing, management, and related business disciplines. It has been and continues to be a lot of fun!

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