

## Policy Statement 86

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### **This We Believe About Generativity in Business Education**

Generativity is a broad concept that describes the desire to give back to society, to grow and help others succeed, and to preserve the community of practice for posterity. In the business education profession, generativity is demonstrated by nurturing and guiding new teachers while contributing to the next generation of business educators. Ultimately, the success of efforts toward generativity depends on the intergenerational opportunities that are available to effectively shape our profession. **We believe** generativity is a process for ensuring longevity of the discipline and the well-being of the next generation. A positive legacy is established through teaching, mentoring, collaborating, participating in professional associations, and utilizing other creative contributions.

Variances exist in teaching skills from the beginning to the more experienced teachers. In this digital age, younger teachers are often technologically savvy; however, experienced teachers offer wisdom and broader perspectives in the learning environment. **We believe** generativity preserves a rich legacy of shared experiences. Thus, experiences enrich professional lives and the learning environments for both teachers and students, keeping the business education profession strong and energized.

**We believe** an effective mentoring program will help ensure that business educators develop as professionals. Generativity helps beginning teachers navigate the formal and informal institutional cultures while encouraging fresh ideas. As experienced teachers mentor these beginning teachers, they model the principle of giving back to their profession. Teachers who mentor and facilitate the growth of others—both internally at our institutions and externally in our profession—achieve satisfaction and a feeling of accomplishment through all stages of their careers. Therefore, **we believe** a proactive approach in retaining teachers engages educators of all generations by providing mentoring, professional development, and continuing educational opportunities.

Collaboration mutually benefits both new and veteran teachers with opportunities to share instructional strategies, develop curriculum, advise student organizations, attend conferences, present sessions, conduct research, and publish professional articles. Because beginning and experienced teachers offer different perspectives, **we believe** collaboration ensures generativity.

Professional organizations provide a network of individuals with common interests—a positive opportunity for generativity. **We believe** that professional organizations will continue to be vital as retired and experienced professionals mentor new members to keep business education strong and thriving. Professional organizations provide mentoring opportunities to share pedagogy, foster leadership, improve classroom management, and enhance all aspects of the profession. While professional organizations generally rely on experienced educators for leadership, new members must be given opportunities to share ideas and responsibilities in organizations. As beginning educators become involved with professional organizations, generativity creates enthusiasm for continuous engagement in professional organizations and fosters friendships while building global, professional networks.

**We believe** generativity is further enhanced by the number of retired people who remain active in professional organizations at the state, territory, province, regional, national, and international levels. Organizations should find productive roles for retired professionals—roles that offer opportunities to engage in activities that nurture emerging professionals. Activities might include writing circles that focus on grant writing or research leading to scholarly journal articles, workshops, panel discussions, oral history presentations, storytelling, coaching, and mentoring relationships.

**We believe that** business teacher education programs can facilitate generativity by requiring students to join professional associations and instilling in them the desire and responsibility to continue membership throughout their careers. Non-traditional teacher education programs should be identified, contacted, and encouraged to promote professional association membership both by the teacher educators themselves and prospective business educators.

**We believe that** generativity can be measured using multiple methods. Instruments, such as generativity scales, are available to measure or self-identify generative activities. Behaviors and actions that exemplify generative activities include learning a new skill, teaching a skill, developing new courses and teaching ideas, serving in a leadership role for a professional business education organization, and conducting research. While the level of one's generativity fluctuates during a

lifetime, highly-generative educators are concerned with leaving a strong legacy for future generations—the heart of generativity.

### **A Call to Action**

Experienced teachers bring a reservoir of real-world knowledge, shared experiences, collaborative skills, and expertise to the practice of generativity. New teachers bring fresh perspectives, innovative practices, and enthusiasm to the generativity paradigm. **We believe** all teachers, regardless of age or years of experience, can benefit from and enjoy the profession through generative activities throughout their career.

#### **We believe**

- business educators should recognize the importance of generativity and engage in activities that enrich teaching knowledge and experiences;
- professional organizations, when planning conferences and similar types of activities, should create opportunities for generativity and reward the participation of all members, especially retirees; and
- educational institutions should recognize and support teachers by providing time and funding to attend conferences, to nurture professionalism, and to facilitate the development of others.

Thus, **we believe** generativity embodies what we have received from others, as well as what we pass on to the future. Honoring the power of generativity through the activities of individual business educators and professional organizations is imperative.