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## Conference inspires future leaders

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*Louis S. Csoka and Jeffrey L. Fannin both spoke at the leadership event held on April 23.  
Photo by Charles Purnell/Daily Titan Staff Writer*

Experts cultivated leadership skills in students at a leadership conference entitled “Leading in Times of Scarcity” on April 23, in Steven G. Mihaylo Hall.

The conference supported the growing trend of imbuing leadership in students.

Leadership may even be offered as a minor soon, said Associate Dean of the College of Communications and Director of the conference, Irene Matz. Matz currently teaches a class on leadership for human communications and encouraged her students to attend.

During a question and answer forum at the conference, the founder and president of Apex Performance, Louis S. Csoka, said leadership should not be just a minor.

“It ought to be a major,” Csoka said. “It ought to be a key focus of an MBA program because that is what we are supposed to be putting out, people who are leaders.”

The first panel discussion started at 9 a.m. in front of an audience that filled the room to capacity.

Print Media Leadership in a Competitive Age featured four media executives: Rich Archbold, executive editor of the Long Beach Press Telegram; Ken Brusic, senior vice-president of content for the Orange County Register; Kate Lee Butler, vice-president of newspaper markets for the Associated Press and Maria De Varenne, editor and vice-president of news at the Press-Enterprise Co.

The executives talked about leadership and the challenge of print media in a competitive age of technology.

Brusic described the media industry as a burning platform because the industry has lost 44 percent of its revenue in the past four years.

Revenue for the print media industry peaked in 2005, generating \$49.4 billion, Brusic said. In 2009, the industry brought in \$27.6 billion.

“It’s a huge loss,” Brusic said. “We need to rethink the whole business model.”

A member of the audience, thinking about the print media business model, asked Butler which organization had the answer to the problem of shrinking audiences and revenues?

“I don’t think there is any one organization I can think of that really has the answer,” Butler said. “But there are a lot of interesting things happening. And I think the recession means that in the past 18 months... so many people were just trying to get the cash to pay loans and their staff and I think now people are really starting to do new things and try things.

“So, I think we are about to enter a very interesting phase in that regard,” Butler said.

New Mexico State University Professor Peter Dorfman, who has been a co-principle investigator of the Global Leadership and Organizational Behavioral Effectiveness Research Project, opened up the next discussion, “Leadership Across Cultural and National Boundaries,” on how leadership styles are effective and ineffective across cultures and regions.

The G.L.O.B.E Research Project is a study of 62 societies and how leadership is executed in those societies.

Dorfman said the ideal that people generally have about leadership is to influence, motivate and enable others to contribute to the success of the organization.

Jon P. Howell, professor emeritus of management at New Mexico State University, lectured second and brought the second panel discussion to an end. Howell presented his findings from extensive research in leadership and followership, substitutes for leadership and leadership across cultures.

"Communications is critical in the flow of ideas and knowledge, improving coordination of work, in problem solving and in team performance," Howell said.

Angela Angels, 28, a graduate student majoring in communications studies, heard about the dialogic process in Matz's class the day before the conference.

"I think there was a lot of useful information regarding leadership style," Angels said. "And I think it's all applicable. If you're a student here and you take what you've learned in a classroom apply what the presenters are teaching, I think it will be very useful."

Students also found the third panel discussion useful.

Csoka and Jeffrey L. Fannin, executive director of the Center for Cognitive Enhancement, talked about brainwave mapping and how it could be used to help executives and leaders develop skills that will help their performance.

Csoka and Fannin had lectured in 25-year-old Josh Wilbur's class the day before the conference.

"I think it is really interesting to see the future of neurological leadership," Wilbur said. "How they can track that (brainwaves) and use that to help train future leaders and kind of see the ideal. I think it's really, really fascinating to be honest."

Following a luncheon, keynote speaker Jay Cogner, D.B.A, a world renowned expert in leadership, talked about the idea of how leaders sit under a spotlight.

"Any of you holding a leadership role, you get extra scrutiny," He said. "You are held to a higher standard than an ordinary person. You can't afford to have a bad day because that will project so powerfully against you. You can't afford to have a tantrum. You can't afford to act child-like. You can't afford to let one little thing slip. And you can't afford to turn your eye away from something that somebody shouldn't do."

