The research findings for the proposed study on how to promote active learning in BBA Programme in International Shipping and Transport Logistics are reported in the paper: 'Zhu, Ling, Pan, Wei and Kam, Roy. "Self-perceived Feedback from Non-law Students to the Integration of Teaching-Research Linkage into the Undergraduate-level Transportation Law Learning". Cambridge Journal of Education. Under Review.' The contents in the below 'scholarly report' are extracted from the paper.

Previous research argues that non-law students should not be taught in the same way as law students, as many challenges are faced when teaching law modules to non-law students. Researchers have suggested integrating teaching-research linkage to enhance student learning. However, little empirical evidence is available showing the impact on student learning in relation to utilizing this innovative approach. This project examines the effect on non-law students' learning when teaching-research linkage is integrated into undergraduate transportation law education.

Research-teaching linkage
There have been a wealth of studies on the research-teaching nexus. Based on the frameworks developed by Griffiths (2004) and Healey (2005), there are following research-teaching nexus:

- Research-led: teaching that is based on the research findings of others;
- Research-oriented: teaching students about research methods and how to do research;
- Research-based: students learning through research that includes inquiry-based or problem-based learning;
- Research-tutored: active discussion of research findings and methods with students;
- Research-informed: teaching students using pedagogic research.

### Methodology

#### Research design

This research adopted the case study principle, which offers a strong grounding in reality and the ability to obtain an in-depth and analytical account of the unit of analysis (Yin 2009). The research used the transportation law discipline from the University as a proxy case study for those in other universities with similar characteristics. The Faculty of Business offers a number of transportation law courses to undergraduate students majoring in International Shipping and Transport Logistics. The courses involved in this research were ‘insurance in shipping and transport logistics’ (‘insurance’), ‘law of carriage of goods by sea’ (‘carriage law’) and ‘maritime law’.

#### Face-to-face class delivery and online resources for the research-teaching linkage

Guided by the above briefly described research-teaching linkage frameworks in the literature (e.g. Griffiths 2004; Healey 2005; Pan et al. 2014), a range of activities were designed to be integrated into the three courses studied. These activities included:

1. **Research-led**: The lecturers of the three courses used literature including academic research articles to illustrate key legal concepts and principles.
2. **Research-oriented**: The lecturers taught students about research methods and how to do research.
3. **Research-based**: The lecturers motivated students to learn in enquiry-based settings by designing a small-scale research project. Students were thus engaged in such research activities as locating, assessing, collecting, interpreting and critiquing the opinions stated in the existing literature, and subsequently making their own judgments.
4. **Research-tutored**: The lecturers encouraged students to present their own research findings as members of a group.
5. **Research-informed**: The curriculum would draw consciously on systematic inquiry into the teaching and learning process itself.

It is also worth noting that the most important literatures, which the students needed in their learning, were attempted to be placed in an innovatively designed platform called ‘Research Information Bank’ (‘the Bank’, see the below screenshot). The operation of the Bank was supported by ‘Blackboard’, which was the recognized learning management system in the University. It comprised literatures that were categorized into: a) Textbooks; b) law reports; c) periodicals; and d) industrial newsletters.

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**Research Information Bank**

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### Introduction

**Dataset: Shipping Law**

Marine insurance is an important but difficult subject, this matter what role you will play in the shipping industry in the future: shipowner, shipbroker, ship agent, ship manager, insurance broker, charterer, or whatever you will ultimately become assumes problems that we are going to tackle in this subject. Marine insurance is normally regarded as an advanced subject in universities offering shipping law studies.

This DataBank is set up under the guidance of ‘Research-Informed Teaching’. It is regarded as an effective approach to integrating discipline-based research into teaching. It recognizes the importance of the reciprocal relationship between research and teaching in enhancing students’ learning experiences. Research-informed teaching includes the following features: 

- **Research-led**: using research findings to illuminate your teaching
- **Research-oriented**: teaching students about research methods and how to do research
- **Research-based**: students learning through research that includes inquiry-based or problem-based learning
- **Research-tutored**: active discussion of research findings and methods with students
- **Research-informed**: teaching students using pedagogic research

This DataBank is designed to support the research-informed teaching of shipping law, providing students with a wealth of resources to facilitate their learning.

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**Research Information Bank**

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Methods of data collection
The research methods of data collection in this case study included two rounds of questionnaire surveys and structured interviews. These research methods enabled the discipline-specific and comprehensive insights into the different perspectives of research-teaching linkage in this study.

In total 120 students participated in the questionnaire surveys, and the students were registered with the following three courses: 'Insurance' (17); 'maritime law' (18); and 'carriage law' (85). The two rounds of questionnaires, one conducted at the beginning of one semester and the other at the end of the semester, were designed to be consistent, in order to enable the effective evaluation of the students' perceptions and attitudes towards the research-teaching linkage applications in the courses. The key questions included: 1) a set of 5-point Likert scales, with statements developed from the literature review on the research-teaching linkage at the higher-education level so as to measure students’ understanding and perceptions of the research-teaching linkage implemented in the study; and 2) a number of open-ended questions to allow students to elaborate on their understanding and perceptions.

After the two rounds of questionnaire surveys, nine structured personal interviews were carried out face-to-face with volunteered students. The aim of these interviews was to further explore the students' perspectives on: 1) learning law subjects in a business school; 2) the research-teaching linkage activities utilized; and 3) the use of the ‘Research Information Bank’. Each of these aspects was examined using several prepared questions.

Methods of data analysis
The students' perceptions of the research and teaching linkage reflected in both the two rounds of questionnaire surveys and those given in the interviews were assessed and compared. The results were also discussed alongside other secondary data collected from the subject syllabus and university documents. The quantitative data (i.e. measurements using the Likert scales) were analyzed using the descriptive and correlational techniques provided in IBM SPSS Software. The qualitative data (i.e. answers to the open-ended questions) were handled following the thematic analysis approach (Strauss and Corbin 1998), which uses the constant comparative method to reveal similarities and differences between responses.

Findings and implications
There are three useful findings of this study. Firstly, linking research and teaching deepened the students' engagement in the learning process. Secondly, most of the non-law students surveyed during this research considered that the research-teaching linkage approach offers them an enjoyable learning experience when learning law subjects. Thirdly, the Bank supported by the ‘Blackboard’ in this project provided a good online resource for students, which facilitated their active learning. The findings of this paper enable meaningful reflections to be made on the state of current transportation law education offered to non-law students at undergraduate level. They should also make a useful contribution to understanding how to teach law subjects to non-law students and how research-teaching linkage can help enhance law education in general.

Selected References: