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# SUPERVISION AND EVALUATION PRACTICES TO PROMOTE FACULTY RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

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The competition among colleges and universities today to recruit and retain students has reached a point not unlike that of the for-profit retail marketplace. When choosing a college or university, one of the primary sources of information for aspiring students and their parents is *US New and World Report.* Among the many factors used by *US News and World Repor*t (Lindsay, 2015), in developing their ranking of the *Best Colleges in the United States*, 20% of the rankings are based on factors related to the faculty of these institutions of higher learning. Thus, recruiting and retaining faculty, like that of students, is a critical goal of all institutions of higher education (Klocko, Kirby, Hoffman, & Pehrsson, 2015). Competitive salaries and desirable living conditions are among just some of the many factors effecting a faculty member's decision to join and/or remain with a given institution. However, the working environment can also play a very important part of this process – especially as it relates to how the faculty are supervised, the goals that are set for advancement, and the methodology used by department chairs, deans and others in administration to help the faculty meet their goals. A review of the faculty handbooks of many of the most respected institutions in America reveals a common thread in this process – that is, a focus on teaching, service and research (McAllister, 1976) as common faculty goals. Google the term "teaching, service and research" and you will find over a quarter of a million hits, mostly focused on colleges and universities "honoring" their faculty who meet specific standards in these three areas.

Most people consider teaching as the exclusive purpose of a university and its faculty; however, university leaders generally have three major goals which include "promoting student and

faculty research, increasing faculty research and creativity, and hiring and investing in quality faculty and staff" (Klocko et al., 2015, p. 2). Students attend college to learn and faculty delivers the content and context in which that learning takes place. We often measure the value of an institution's ability to meet our expectations related to teaching in terms of the institution's reputation, size, and cost, as well, in many cases, based on the experiences family or friends have had with the particular institution. Other factors include the number and reputation of the faculty, the student/faculty ratio, the location of the college, as well as the number and type of majors and the facilities available to students. Publications such as *US News and World Report* are often used, in conjunction with the advice and support of high school guidance counselors, to help guide students and their parents in making such a critical and expensive decision. Unfortunately, those involved in the process often miss the most important component of this decision, that being the overall outcome of attending the institution. One should ask, "Why am I considering a higher education?" While most will answer this question with lofty terms such as "to gain an education," or "to become a better-rounded person," the better-informed answer should be "to provide myself with the tools to maximize my ability to succeed in life." One does not attend college (or, at least should not) for the process/experience of attending, but rather for the product – that is, "learning-to-learn," becoming thoughtful members of society, gaining the ability to contribute to society, and most important the outcome should be measured in terms of employment, salary, success and happiness in life, etc. Few, if any, institutions of higher education track, or if they do, make such data available to potential students or their families to be used in this decision process.

In this array of values and decision-making factors, faculty research can be one of the most important. Faculty who engage in research and scholarship are often among the more engaging and popular on-campus. They enrich the teaching and learning experiences of their students by offering them the ability to participate in a *constructivist* model (Papert & Harel, 1991) of learning, rather than the traditional, but much easier to accomplish, didactic lecture approach (Keller, 1968). Constructivism is a theory of education that argues that humans generate knowledge and meaning more effectively from interactions between their experiences and their ideas than traditional models of learning. Within such a research model, students become more involved and are able to observe the faculty engaging in research activities including hands-on conducting of the research as well as the intellectual work that typically accompanies such undertakings. Faculty that use this approach are not simply telling students what to do, or how to accomplish a task; students are able to observe and learn from the faculty modeling this behavior in real world and/or analogue

environments and learn to solve similar problems themselves. Students become problem solvers, creative and enthusiastic about their learning experiences. As one of the three keystone measures of faculty (i.e., teaching, service and research), perhaps research should be considered a component of teaching, as opposed to an independent, and sometimes neglected goal.

If encouraging research is a goal for the institution, the question for higher education administration—those who can support faculty research in a variety of ways--becomes, how do I create an environment that nurtures and supports faculty research as a means of enhancing the student learning experience? Rather than depending on hypothetical constructs (MacCorquodale and Meehl, 1948) such as "taking pride in one's work" or "loyalty" to the institution, the most direct and effective route is to treat research simply as an operationally defined behavior and to utilize the principles of behavior as described by B.F. Skinner (1957). Skinner's principles of behavior can be used to increase, generalize and maintain *research behavior* within the institutional setting. There are literally tens of thousands of peer-reviewed journal articles that provide empirical evidence that human behavior can be described and altered scientifically. All human behavior, be it an individual or a group, is a function of the environment in which the behavior occurs. The field of science that addresses socially significant human behavior in applied settings is referred to as *applied behavior analysis* (ABA). ABA is a science unto itself, as much as is biology, chemistry, geology or medicine. While ABA has historical roots in psychology, it is also deeply tied to education, sociology, and biology. ABA is an independent profession, marked by large-scale professional organizations, a Code of Ethics (Behavior Analysis Certification Board, 2015), professional licensure/certification, a skill-set based on esoteric knowledge, training provided within university settings, and a history of altruistic service to humanity. ABA is an empirical approach to understanding and changing human behavior. ABA is a data-driven approach that focuses exclusively on observable/measurable overt behavior, as opposed to internal *private events* (Skinner, 1957). The application of such a behavioral model to business and industry is generally referred to as *organizational behavior management* (Bucklin, Alvero, Dickinson, Austin & Jackson, 2000). *Organizational behavior management* is a sub-discipline of ABA, whose focus is the improvement of organizational and employee performance through the application of a scientific method. Also known as *performance management*, the process involves the analysis of antecedents and consequences supporting the behavior of individuals and groups within the organization, and systematically altering these variables to increase productive performance and meet institutional goals (Austin, 2000; Daniels and Daniels, 2004). Common

behavioral elements used in *performance management* include job aids, lotteries, goal setting, feedback, etc. (Diener, McGee & Miguel, 2009).

## BASIC PRINCIPALS OF APPLIED BEHAVIOR ANALYSIS

Like any other science, for a behavior analytic approach to work, one must respect the underlying assumptions of the profession. ABA is based in general on what is called a *four-term-contingency*. The four-term-contingency provides a framework within which to understand behavior and set the occasion for successfully creating an environment in which desirable behaviors can be shaped, increased and generalized (Cooper, Heward & Heron, 2012). The four basic components of the model include the following:

- The *Motivating Operation*: refers to the state of the individual prior to the delivery of the consequence that can impact the effectiveness of the consequence. For example, if food is to be used as a reinforcing consequence, being hungry (deprivation) can increase the effectiveness of the food, while having just eaten a large meal (satiation) can reduce the effectiveness (Cooper et al., 2012).
- The *Antecedent*: refers to the environment in which the behavior occurs. Who is present, the level of interaction or demands on the person, expectations (both explicit and implicit by supervisors/managers), available resources, etc. (Cooper et al., 2012).
- The *Behavior*: refers to the focus of the behavior change effort. Target behaviors must be observable, defined in clear operational terms, with each behavior representing the smallest operational unit that cannot be broken-down into smaller units (e.g., while one could define research, there are likely many other behaviors that could be subsumed within the term research, such as proposal writing, data collection, etc.). Thus, rather than measuring the larger group of behaviors within one defined term, one should define and measure each component individually (Cooper et al., 2012).
- The *Consequence*: refers to the event that most immediately follows the target behavior. Consequences can take the form of *reinforcement*, *punishment*, or *nothing*.
    - Reinforcement: All reinforcement serves to increase the future probability of the behavior it follows. Reinforcement is idiosyncratic to the individual, a relationship that must be empirically validated prior to attempting to increase a specific behavior. Reinforcement comes in two forms – *positive reinforcement* and *negative reinforcement*. Positive reinforcement is the presentation of a desirable inducement

(see reinforcer selection procedures) contingent upon the behavior of interest. The key is to be sure that the inducement used is a *reinforcer* for the individual whose behaviors you wish to change and not a *reward* you hope he/she will like. Negative reinforcement is the removal of an unpleasant event contingent upon the behavior you hope to increase. Again, you must be certain that the unpleasant event is actually something the individual wants to avoid or escape and not something you hope they consider unpleasant (Cooper et al., 2012).

- Punishment: Punishment is the presentation of an undesirable event contingent upon the occurrence of a behavior that tends to reduce the future probability of a behavior. For our purposes, we will not be addressing the application of punishment; however one should note that the unplanned or unintentional delivery of an unpleasant event contingent upon a behavior can have unintended consequences and may reduce or eliminate a behavior you wish to nurture (Cooper et al., 2012).
- Nothing: Doing nothing (Daniels, 2000) after the occurrence of a behavior can also have undesirable and unintended consequences. Humans never predictably and repeatedly engage in a behavior for which there is no positive consequence. That does not mean you can always observe the positive consequence maintaining the behavior, as many such consequences are reinforced by self-satisfaction or enjoyment and undetectable by others; however there is always a positive outcome to such behaviors. Unfortunately, the most common consequence (or, better yet, non-consequence) for behavior is to do nothing – not reinforce the behavior or punish it. The result is that desirable behaviors that are not reinforced will eventually be eliminated and undesirable behaviors that are not punished will flourish (given that there was a source of reinforcement maintaining the behavior within the natural context of the individual's environment).

## ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS OF A PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT APPROACH

When considering the use of a performance management approach to affect the individual behavior of university faculty, attention to all of the elements of the four-term-contingency is vital. Without a clear and measurable definition of the behavior and positive consequences to help motivate the faculty, such an approach will surely fail. However, the most important element that must be addressed is the antecedents (i.e., the environment in which the behavior is to occur and the events that precede the behavior; Cooper et al., 2012). In the case of faculty research, if the

system's design is not supportive, the behavior will not happen. The environment in which research occurs is much broader than most non-behaviorists would conceive. Focusing on the environment and the antecedents that serve to evoke desirable behavior is commonly known as *antecedent control* or *antecedent interventions*. There are six different antecedent control procedures that can be useful to increase the probability of a given behavior (Cooper et al., 2012). These include:

1. Ensuring that cues are present in the environment that serve to set the occasion for the desired behavior;
2. Arranging for motivating operations that increase the value of the reinforcer used to increase the desired behavior;
3. Decreasing the response effort required to accomplish the task;
4. Removing cues for undesired/competing behaviors;
5. Increasing response effort for undesired behaviors;
6. Removing the establishing operations for undesired behaviors.

In a university setting, administration must be committed to assessing the environment in which the faculty behaves and follow these simple steps. The Table 1 outlines how the ABA antecedent control procedures can be utilized by higher education administration in order to effectively increase the publishing behavior of faculty.

Without the attention to details related to the environment in which faculty are expected to produce research, the chances of success are greatly diminished. An example of the use of a behavioral approach to address the need to ensure that higher education faculty engage in research and scholarly activity is the universally accepted practice of imposing a *publish or perish* contingency. First described by Logan Wilson (1942) the term publish or perish refers to a common contingency employed in higher education in which there is an explicit relationship between one's employment and productivity of published research. Publish or perish can best be defined as a negative reinforcement paradigm in which the individual publishes, not for positive reinforcement,

Table 1. Uses of ABA Antecedent Control Procedures

| ABA Antecedent Control Procedure | Use of Antecedent Control Procedure in Increasing Faculty Research |
|---|---|
| Using the environment to set the occasion for research | Make sure that faculty has the tools and resources necessary to accomplish their research goals, including space, materials, and students to run the labs, technology and other equipment (Klocko et al., 2015).<br>Create a monthly faculty meeting designed to share new research |

| | |
|---|---|
| | proposals, review on-going projects, and create a supportive peer community (e.g., teaming and collaboration, peer-review feedback sessions, etc.).<br>Provide a public forum for faculty to share their research accepted by peer-reviewed journals with faculty from other departments and students. |
| Arranging motivating operations | Create a community in which research is valued, not just by the faculty, but also by the administration; and that there are role-models, peers and others in the environment to set the occasion for faculty to engage in such behavior.<br>Identify the reinforcers that will be used to motivate the behavior and ensure that the individual faculty does not have access to them without first engaging in the targeted behavior (i.e., conducting research and/or publishing). Funding for professional travel or conferences (Klocko et al., 2015), should be contingent upon meeting specific research goals, could be an example, especially if this is their only source of such funding.<br>Provide time for professional development regarding research methodology and literature reviews (Klocko et al., 2015).<br>Remove punishers that are associated with annual research quotas. Instead, organize a tiered reinforcement plan that rewards heavily faculty member that publish in peer-reviewed journals, author book chapters, and engage students in research projects. |
| Decreasing response effort to complete research | Reduce the amount of paperwork required to submit research proposals, department funds, access to graduate assistants, etc. The process should be as streamlined as possible as a lengthy proposal process may be intimidating. Provide workshops and other support around this process (Klocko et al., 2015). |
| Removing competing/undesired behaviors | Examine other day-to-day environmental demands and work to reduce job requirements that compete with the targeted behavior. Evaluate in-load teaching demands (Klocko et al., 2015), advising, access to research assistants, and committee responsibilities, ensuring that the faculty has the time to meet their research goals. |
| Increase response effort for undesired behaviors | Making travel to conferences at which the faculty is not presenting the results of their research less available.<br>Eliminating the opportunity to take sabbatical leaves without explicit goals for conducting research or writing publications during the leave.<br>Eliminate the opportunity for faculty to teach “over-load” courses for compensation above their salary without first meeting research/writing goals. |
| Removing the establishing operation for undesired behaviors | As to undesirable (competing) behaviors, first identify what are the other high probability behaviors a faculty may choose to engage in as opposed to research. Evaluate the reinforcers associated with those behaviors and work to make gaining them easier via research than other activities. Build a system where access to undesirable behaviors is contingent on research. |

but rather to avoid negative punishment (e.g., being terminated from one's job). Daniels (2000) notes: "in my many visits to organizations of all kinds, I can tell you without a doubt that negative reinforcement is still the dominant management style." He goes on to note that the problem with negative reinforcement is that it tends to generate behavior at a level "that is just enough to get by, just enough to escape or avoid the some unpleasant consequence," while positive reinforcement produces a less stressful working environment and motivates staff to maximize their performance.

The other problem with publish or perish as the basis for continued employment is the likelihood of a successful career of continuous publications. Ioannidis, Boyack, and Klavanas (2014) reported their findings of a comprehensive review of publication rates among researchers. Their goal was to identify a sub-group of those authors who have had an uninterrupted history of peer-reviewed publications between 1996 and 2011. The authors report that over 15 million distinct authors could be identified during this period, but that less than 1% was able to maintain a continuous record of publications within this 16-year period. The point is that the expectation of publish or perish may not only be antithetical to motivating such a lofty goal, but may in fact be unattainable.

## BUILDING A SUCCESSFUL RESEARCH ENVIRONMENT

**Making the Commitment.** Before taking the steps necessary to create an environment that nurtures and supports research behavior within a university setting, administrators should take the time to evaluate the mission of their institution and decide if such a goal is consistent with the vision of both the program as well as the stakeholders involved. Such a decision should involve all level of administration, from department chairs to deans, to the president of the institution and the board of trustees. Of primary importance is the need identify potential reinforcers for publishing through *preference assessment* (Cooper et al., 2012) in order to determine if the products of a successful research program will serve as reinforcers to maintain the behavior of administration in supporting the research faculty in their efforts on a long-term basis. If this sounds like a circular analysis, it is. Administration must, not only create a supportive environment for research, but it must identify and dispense, in a contingent relationship, reinforcement to the research faculty for meeting research goals. However, at the same time, the completion of these same research goals must function as reinforcers for the administrators in order for their behavior supporting the research faculty to be

maintained. At any point that the assumptions related to the reinforcing properties of the behavior of either party on the other is no longer valid, the entire system will fail.

**Defining Research.** The traditional definition of research is based on publications in *peer-reviewed* professional journals. Additionally, the publication of books and/or chapters within books written for a specific profession often meets this criterion. However, as was discussed previously, the work by Ioannidis et al. (2014), demonstrates empirically that an institution is setting faculty up for failure when such standards are applied. In defining the term to benefit the institution, one should consider if limiting the definition to a final permanent product such as publications is sufficient, or if other components of research behavior should be considered. As was discussed previously, the goal of establishing a research culture within the institution is based primarily on enhancing the popularity of faculty by involving students in an apprenticeship model of learning – there by working to impact enrollment and student retention. With that in mind, one should ask if both process as well as product components of research behavior should be included within the overall definition. Examples of this could include:

- Participation in an institutional review board (IRB) approved research project;
- Teaching a *capstone* research project course as a terminal requirement for specific degree curriculum;
- Chairing/serving on both undergraduate and graduate thesis/dissertation committees;
- Establishing/coordinating/presenting in departmental colloquia series that include both faculty and student presentations;
- Presenting research papers at local and national professional conferences that include students as authors;
- Holding routine student research lab meetings to encourage and shape student research;
- Writing book(s)/book chapters, with students as co-authors, in texts appropriate for professional audiences;
- Publishing research articles, with students as co-authors, in peer-reviewed professional journals;

While many of these behaviors will not routinely lead to professional publications in a peer-reviewed journal, they will create a culture for the appreciation of research, teach students to design and participate in research activities and provide, especially where students present their work at conferences and other public forums, reinforcement for the student and faculty. With the

proper guidance, such a culture can result in the shaping of some students who go on to a successful career in research.

**Setting Goals.** The establishment of objective goals for individual faculty is an important part of the shaping process (Cooper et al., 2012) for faculty to eventually engage in productive research behavior. Behavioral goals must include:

- The person(s) for whom the objective is written (the faculty or students);
- The behavior targeted for change, defined in objective and observable operational terms;
- The conditions under which a behavior will be performed;
- The criteria for determining when the acceptable performance of the behavior occurs;

Goals for new faculty can include activities such as:

- Establishing/coordinating/presenting in departmental colloquia series that include both faculty and student presentations;
- Holding routine student research lab meetings to encourage and shape student research;

Once these faculty successfully meet their goals over a period of several years, additional goals related to research development can be added sequentially that shape the terminal goal of publishing in peer-reviewed journals, beginning with presenting research at conferences to eventually publishing.

**Selecting Reinforcers.** The selection of reinforcers for faculty to increase the probability of engaging in research behavior is a critical step. For administration to pre-determine what an effective reinforcer is, or to assume that there are generalized reinforcers that will change the behavior of all faculty is a mistake. Reinforcers are idiosyncratic to the individual and must be selected with that individual in mind. A simple solution to this problem is to use a process known as preference assessment (Cooper et al., 2012). The only true way to determine of a consequence will actually increase the future probability of a target behavior is to make the consequence contingent on that behavior and not allow access to the consequence under any other conditions. However, this is very time consuming process that may involve a number of false-starts when testing what turn out to be natural, rather than positive consequences. The process of preference assessments (Wine, Reis, & Hantula, 2014) is an indirect method, often including surveys, rankings, or exposure to potential reinforcers, as a means of predicting the eventual success of the consequence in changing behavior. This methodology has proven successful with a number of populations and avoids the issues related to directly testing potential reinforcers in-vivo.

Finally, using the motivating operation approach is critical to the success of any reinforcer. Simply put, once an activity, event or tangible product is identified as a reinforcer, it can only be accessed by the faculty contingent upon the occurrence of the target behavior. An example would be funding to attend professional conferences. In many cases, institutions of higher education provide faculty with a pre-determined budget for such trips, which can be for many a very enjoyable time away from the routine day-to-day activities of work. In a performance management approach, such funding would be reserved for only those faculty which whom meet their individual research goals (e.g., publishing, student research groups, etc.). However, be aware, that such trips may not be a reinforcer for all faculty. Some may dread travel, attending conferences, public speaking, etc. In those cases alternative reinforcers must be identified. Simply put, a reinforcer is defined by its effect on behavior. If it increases the probability of behavior, it is a reinforcer; if not, it is nothing more than a reward.

**Measuring Success.** A critical feature of a performance management approach is a valid and reliable objective measurement system to evaluate success of the intervention(s). Additionally, a hallmark of these approaches is the dependence of *within-subject evaluation designs* (Cooper et al., 2012), in which behavior is measured in a repeated-measures methodology as opposed to traditional group designs. The advantage of such a measurement approach is that administrators can follow the success of the interventions as the behavior occurs and make changes in the interventions "on-the-fly," as opposed to having to wait in a pre-post measurement format until the end of the semester or academic year to evaluate success/failure.

Once the behavior is operationally defined, selecting the measurement system is the next step. Traditionally, a simple frequency count, direct measure, of the number of responses (or in situations where the unit of time in which the responses is uneven, the frequency count can be converted to a "rate measure" by dividing the number of responses by the unit of time – resulting in a response per time statement). In more unusual situations, indirect measures of behavior can be employed (Cooper et al., 2012). The key is to establish a measurement system in which data is collected contemporaneously with the occurrence of the targeted behavior(s) and converted on a daily basis into a graphic format in order to help enhance the ease of assessing the impact (or, lack thereof) the effectiveness of the intervention. If the intervention is working to meet your goals, keep going, if not, revise your plan.

## PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

Implementing a performance management system for the first time can be a daunting task. It requires attention to details not necessarily in areas common for academic administrators. However, this approach is one with a great upside. It gives the administrator a clear picture of success and allows for making changes to enhance the effectiveness of the intervention(s). Critical to this approach are the components described above: operationally defining the behavior, selecting effective reinforcers, measuring the impact of the intervention and shaping more-and-more complex behaviors that increase the positive impact on the institution. Keep in mind this approach is based on the *science of human behavior*. While we have focused here on increasing the rate of research behavior of university faulty as a means of indirectly impacting student recruitment and retention, such an approach can be applied to any behavior of faculty, administrators or students that can be observed, operationally defined, and measured. Performance management can be used to change the culture of an educational institution with respect to issues of global sustainability (Heward & Chance, 2010) in modifying recycling behavior of students and faculty, the reduction of appetitive behaviors (Borsari & Carey, 2001) in reducing student alcohol consumption, etc. Performance management is a tool that is useful across a number of areas that face administrators on a daily basis.

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# ORGANIZATIONAL CITIZENSHIP BEHAVIOR IN HIGHER EDUCATION: EXAMINING THE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN BEHAVIORS AND INSTITUTIONAL PERFORMANCE

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Colleges and universities have been increasingly faced with public pressures for accountability, both in state houses with policy makers creating performance indicators and the general public looking to private rankings to determine an institution's worth (Harvey & Green, 1993; Carey, 2007). These accountability calls are not new to higher education, although they have intensified for public institutions as financial competition for public dollars has increased. The result for nearly half of all states has been the creation of performance incentives that require institutions to complete different tasks or pursue different priorities (Fincher, 2015).

Many institutional priorities are tied to student-based outcomes, such as graduation rates, student learning measures, or even student indebtedness. The commonality among all of these measures is that they are in some way tied to how the institution performs, forcing institutional leaders to develop programs, incentives, and other efforts to enhance the institution's performance. Moreover, a significant component of an institution's performance is influenced by the individual performance of the employees in the organizational system (Huselid, Jackson, & Schuler, 1997). Thus, we argue that attention must be paid not only to institutional performance, but also to the performance of the employees. One growing trend, and one that is historically rooted in the human resource development movement (Alagaraja, Cumberland, & Choi, 2015), is grounded in how institutional employees perform their jobs and what variables impact or influence employee performance. Agreement on what defines employee performance is rare, particularly given differing

institutional missions and the evolving nature of higher education. Nevertheless, management and human resource literature suggests several variables that may be useful in understanding how performance can be defined, particularly in the domains of individual productivity and interpersonal behavior (Capelli & Neumark, 2001; Purcell & Hutchinson, 2006). For the purposes of this study, we chose to focus on one set of employee behaviors known as organizational citizenship behavior.

A significant amount of research and effort has been devoted to the concept of organizational citizenship. These organizational citizenship behaviors (OCB) are the unwritten actions of employees directed at other employees or at the organization that go beyond the formal job description and, arguably, may reflect an individual's commitment, passion, and perspective on employment (Organ, 1988). OCBs reflect the commitment of an individual to go above-and-beyond a typical job expectation, or conversely, exert as little effort as possible in completing a job expectation. Research has consistently shown in private sector work environments that high levels of OCB are positively correlated with variables such as workplace morale, job commitment, and ultimately, individual, team, and organizational performance.

OCBs are difficult to assess in the collegiate environment due to the wide range of professional employment and the often intangible outcomes associated with the work of a college. Institutions employ college faculty members, for example, who are driven by curiosity and academic pursuits that may have little to no tangible outcome other than the summative action of offering classes. Also employed by colleges, however, are professional employees who develop business plans, raise money, and offer programming that has a direct fiscal impact on an institution and the community.

As OCBs have been studied in descriptive, exploratory terms within the industry of higher education, there is a need to look at the impacts of such behaviors on performance. Therefore, the purpose for conducting the study was to explore organizational citizenship behavior as an important variable in the understanding and conceptualization of institutional performance. Due to the nature of OCB reporting and the lack of consistent, reliable research, the study was conducted within only one type of institution, those being research-centered institutions.

## Background of the Study

Organizational Citizenship Behaviors (OCBs) have been an area of study since the mid-1980s when Organ (1988) wrote about what he framed as the *Good Solider Syndrome*. Organ (1988) defined the concept as "individual behavior that is discretionary, not directly or explicitly recognized

by the formal reward system, and in the aggregate promotes the efficient and effective functioning of the organization" (p. 4). In creating this definition, Organ outlined three criteria for OCBs: discretion, lack of formal reward, and positive organizational impact. The criterion of discretion is particularly central to understanding OCBs, as an employee's exertion of behaviors is specifically tied to individualism (Williams & Anderson, 1991).

Evolving from Organ's seminal work, OCBs have been defined in multiple ways and consisting of many different perspectives, ranging from a categorization of different personality dimensions (LePine, Erez, & Johnson, 2002) to behavioral dimensions (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Paine, & Bachrach, 2000). Research has even contested the question as to whether OCBs can be differentiated from other behaviors and ultimately manipulated to produce different overall employment behavior (Vigoda-Gadot, 2006).

Chughtai (2008) argued that OCBs are considered an extra-role for an employee, meaning that the behavior falls distinctly outside of normal job responsibilities and that they are positive influencers on the workplace. Related to this, Kelloway, Loughlin, Barling, and Nault (2002) found that OCBs are different from counterproductive workplace behaviors that detract from the overall office's performance, a finding reinforced and highlighted by the positive outcomes of OCBs, such as happier emotions, higher workplace morale, worker retention, enhanced productivity, etc. (Miles, Borman, Spector, & Fox, 2002; Sackett, Berry, Wiemann, & Laczo, 2006).

OCB behaviors have been correlated to perceptions of being treated and treating others fairly (Johnson, Truxillo, Erdogan, Bauer, & Hammer, 2009) and that attitudes toward justice in the workplace are enhanced with high levels of OCB (Burton, Sablynski, & Sekiguchi, 2008). Individuals with high OCB levels also have been found to be self-monitors, meaning that they are more respectful of others and can use social cues to monitor their behavior and interactions with others (Blakely, Andrews, & Fuller, 2003). High OCB levels have also been strongly linked to altruistic behaviors in the workplace (Emmerik, Jawahar, & Stone, 2005).

Perhaps most importantly in the consideration of OCBs as a potential factor in organizational performance has been research by Podsakoff and MacKenzie (1997) and Walz and Niehoff (1994) that has found positive correlations between OCB levels and organizational performance, meaning that the more positive extra-role activities of employees positively benefits how the organization completes its objectives. Chahal and Mehta (2010) noted that "organizational citizenship behavior has been recognized as a key factor to organizational performance" (p. 29). Similar findings have been identified in work in different cultures, such as the United Kingdom

(Messersmith, Patel, & Lepak, 2011), in service industries (Nishii, Lepak, & Schneider, 2008), and in industrial settings (Podsakoff, Ahearne, & MacKenzie, 1997).

Higher education as an industry does not fit neatly into any of the categories of OCB research that has been conducted over the past 20 years. Colleges and universities do not manufacture goods, so efficiency measures do not match production mechanisms, and the idea of institutions being customer-service oriented are also difficult. The idea that students as customers is relevant in the provision of institutional services, such as the bursar's office functioning, but does not translate well to an environment of testing and academic and personal growth, making quality identification measures extremely difficult to identify (Alexander, 2000; Giroux, 2001; Liefner, 2003).

Documented efforts to attempt determining higher education quality have spanned multiple contexts and the identification of multiple criteria sets. Burke (2003) identified criteria such as funding, affordability, participation, job placement, and sponsored research as performance criteria. Other listings have included Umayal and Suganthi (2010) 14 different performance criteria, and Brogue (1998) offered a listing of five criteria. Shin (2010) ultimately developed a strategy of focusing on teaching and learning, but then deconstructing those two into at least eight other categories. Across all of these listings, however, especially in regard to research-centered institution, has been the constant of graduation rates and research performance, and ultimately, these two measures were selected for inclusion in the current study.

Research has consistently demonstrated that the single most important criterion for determining institutional success is the college faculty member. Although there are studies and arguments that suggest that their leadership, development, and retention is critical, it is ultimately the faculty member who interacts with students daily in the classroom and conducts the research that advances knowledge (Kang, 1999). With such a reliance on faculty members in determining institutional performance, they were selected to be an independent variable in the study of organizational citizenship behavior and institutional performance.

## Research Methods

Data were collected from two sets of doctoral granting institutions, classified as very high research activity, as identified by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching (2011). The first set of institutions, including four universities, was classified as high-performing based on research grant activity and high graduation rates; conversely, four institutions were selected and classified as low performing.

Once institutions were identified for participation in the study, five common academic disciplines across all eight institutions were identified (business, education, engineering, liberal arts, and natural sciences). Within each of these disciplines, 15 faculty members were randomly selected from those listed as tenured/tenure-track, resulting in a total of 75 possible respondents per institution and 300 per classification of high- and low-performing. Additionally, 15 staff member names and corresponding email addresses were collected from each academic discipline at each institution resulting in 300 staff members at the high- and low-performing institutions. The total sample size was 1,200 faculty and staff members.

Data were collected using the Lee and Allen (2002) OCB Measures Survey. The instrument contains 16-items equally divided between OCB behaviors directed at individuals and those directed at the organization. The instrument has consistently reported an internal reliability measures of .83 and higher over a decade of use.

In addition to the OCB measures, individual self-reported data were collected from faculty and staff members at each institution. These self-report measures for faculty members were identified from the National Study of Postsecondary Faculty (US Department of Education, 1999). For the staff members, variables were selected that measured performance drawn from Messersmith, Patel, and Lepak (2011). The authors reported an internal reliability of greater than .84 in their administrations of these questions with staff members in the private sector. All data were collected electronically through 2012.

## Results and Findings

The survey was distributed electronically in waves, approximately one week apart, with one-third of the potential respondents being sent the survey in each wave. A number of potential respondents email addresses were no longer active, resulting in the distribution of 1,168 surveys. Two email reminders were distributed to the active sample, with 250 surveys returned, of which 184 were usable responses for use in data collection (staff n=98; faculty n=86). The return rate was 21.4% (overall), which although low, is consistent with other electronic collection of survey data. Additionally, the response rate was deemed acceptable considering Settle and Alreck's (1985) argument that response rates over an n=100 generally do not differ significantly considering the effort expended to increase the collection of responses.

The Organizational Citizenship Behavior survey consisted of three sections: OCBs directed at individuals, OCBs directed at the organization, and an overall score. Cronbach alphas were

computed on received responses and resulted in acceptable alpha levels (.848, .890, and .896, respectively). Reliability tests were also computed on the items for job satisfaction (Cronbach alpha .888), organizational commitment (.778), and self-reported work performance (.866), with all being identified as acceptable for the current study.

The OCB surveys were keyed to a 7-point Likert-type scale that progressed from a low OCB orientation (1) to a very strong orientation (7). Overall, faculty had a mean overall OCB of 5.058 (SD .851), with a slightly higher OCB-organizational orientation (mean 5.2073, SD=1.012) and a slightly lower OCB-individual orientation (mean 4.861, SD=1.007). This means that faculty felt slightly more of a commitment to the organization than those they worked with. Staff members had the same pattern of OCB means, with an overall mean of 5.348 (SD=.8911), a slightly higher OCB-organizational orientation (mean 5.3855; SD=1.042) and a slightly lower OCB-individual orientation (mean 5.278; SD=.9785). A t-test identified that the differences between the OCB-individual orientation mean scores were significantly different ($t$[180]=1.22, $p$=.226, alpha=.05), and that the overall OCB mean score was significantly different between faculty and staff ($t$[180]=2.55, $p$=.012, alpha=.05).

Faculty members were next asked to self-report their productivity on 13 different measures (see Table 1). Over half of the respondents indicated that they served on 1-2 broad committees (58.5% of faculty respondents), served on a departmental or college curriculum committee (55.3%), published 1-2 articles (54.4%), and taught 3-4 classes over an academic year (51.9%). These data were then correlated with the three OCB results (other, individual, and overall). The strongest, positive significant correlations were identified for the overall score between making multiple presentations during the academic year ($r$=.228), holding office hours for students ($r$=.229), serving on a personnel committee ($r$=.238), and serving on other committees ($r$=.281). For the OCB-organizational orientation, significant correlations were identified between three of the same productivity measures (presentations, $r$=.226, personnel committees $r$=.286, and other committees, $r$=.346).

Staff members were asked to self-rate their productivity based on five performance measures (see Table 2), with personal perceptions of high performance productivity being the highest mean response (mean 5.921; SD=.7961) followed by a high level of job satisfaction (mean 5.827; SD=1.184). Correlations were computed based on the mean scores of self-reported

Table 1. Faculty Performance Profile

| Variable | n | Most Common Response (% of n) | Median | Mode | SD |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Publications | 79 | 1-2 (54.4%) | 2 | 2 | 1.031 |
| Presentations | 79 | 1-2 (40.5%) | 2 | 2 | 1.031 |
| Undergrad committees | 74 | 0 (59.5%) | 1 | 1 | .934 |
| Grad committees | 79 | 3-4 (24.1%) | 3 | 3 | 1.358 |
| Classes taught | 79 | 3-4 (51.9%) | 3 | 3 | .774 |
| Contact hours | 78 | 1-2 (43.6%) | 2 | 2 | 1.217 |
| PI | 78 | 0 (44.9%) | 2 | 1 | .954 |
| Grants | 79 | 1-2 (49.4%) | 2 | 2 | 1.028 |
| Curriculum committee | 76 | 1-2 (55.3%) | 2 | 2 | .544 |
| Governance committees | 75 | 0 (47.2%) | 2 | 1 | .783 |
| Personnel committees | 72 | 1-2 (50.7%) | 2 | 2 | .784 |
| Other committees | 65 | 1-2 (58.5%) | 2 | 2 | .704 |
| Turnover intention | 79 | Very unlikely (33%) | 2 | 1 | 1.955 |

productivity and OCB, with the overall OCB mean being significantly, positively correlated to job satisfaction (*r*=.229), commitment (*r*=.287), and job performance (*r*=.455). The same three measures were significantly and positively correlated with OCB-organizational orientation mean scores (*r*=.253, .308, and .446, respectively), and the OCB-individual orientation mean was significantly and positively correlated to job performance (*r*=.361).

Table 2. ANOVA Test for Faculty and Staff Performance Groups

| | | Sum of Squares | Degrees of Freedom | Mean Square | F Values | Significance |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| OCB | | | | | | |
| | Between | 6.194 | 3 | 2.065 | 2.739 | .046 |
| | Within | 102.506 | 136 | .754 | | |
| | Total | 108.701 | 139 | | | |
| OCB-I | | | | | | |
| | Between | 8.913 | 3 | 2.971 | 3.218 | .025 |
| | Within | 127.409 | 138 | .923 | | |
| | Total | 108.701 | | | | |
| OCB-O | | | | | | |
| | Between | 4.125 | 3 | 1.375 | 1.278 | .284 |
| | Within | 151.759 | 141 | 1.076 | | |
| | Total | 155.884 | 144 | | | |

Next, data were compared to identify if significant differences exist between the OCB levels of high-performing and low-performing employees. For faculty, each of the 12 surveyed indicators were averaged to determine an overall performance score (excluding turnover intention). The overall mean for the entire sample of faculty was then considered a baseline for high- and low-performing faculty, with those faculty members with a performance score above the mean considered high performing (mean=2.17, SD=.513). Similarly, performance scores were computed for staff members with a staff performance mean score of 5.35 (SD=1.04). Because faculty and staff performance were measured using different variables and scales, standardized z-scores were computed for each, and an ANOVA was then computed on the four groups: high performing faculty, low-performing faculty, high-performing staff, and low-performing staff (see Table 2). The ANOVA indicated a significant difference in group means for OCB and OCB-I, and a Tukey HSD revealed a significant difference between group means of high performing staff and low performing faculty (p=.03) on the overall OCB and between high performing staff and low-performing faculty for the OCB-I variable (p=.012). This means that high performing staff have a greater organizational citizenship orientation than low performing faculty and that this same differential exists for organizational citizenship focused on individuals.

Finally, respondent responses were categorized into high- and low-performing institutional groups and again compared using an ANOVA (see Table 3). The test identified a significant

Table 3. ANOVA Results for Institutional Performance Groups

| | | Sum of Squares | Degrees of Freedom | Mean Square | F Values | Significance |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| OCB | | | | | | |
| | Between | 8.702 | 3 | 2.901 | 3.903 | .010 |
| | Within | 102.398 | 162 | .743 | | |
| | Total | 129.099 | | | | |
| OCB-I | | | | | | |
| | Between | 16.614 | 3 | 5.538 | 5.903 | .001 |
| | Within | 153.862 | 164 | .938 | | |
| | Total | 170.476 | 167 | | | |
| OCB-O | | | | | | |
| | Between | 6.089 | 3 | 2.030 | 1.945 | .124 |
| | Within | 177.423 | 170 | 1.044 | | |
| | Total | 183.513 | 163 | | | |

difference between the mean scores and the subsequent Tukey HSD post-hoc test revealed significant differences between the OCB means of faculty and staff in low performing institutions (see Table 4). The largest difference was identified between low-performing university staff and faculty members on the OCB-I variable, and that staff also had higher overall OCB scores than faculty at these low-performing institutions.

Table 4. Tukey HSD Post-hoc Test Results for Institutional Groups

| | Faculty in Low-Performing Institutions (B) | Staff in High-Performing Institutions (B) |
|---|---|---|
| OCB Mean Differences (A-B)<br>Staff in Low-Perform Inst (A) | .49166<br>(p=.018) | .48618<br>(p=.041) |
| OCB-I Mean Differences (A-B)<br>Staff in Low Perform Inst (A) | .74823<br>(p=.000) | .59509<br>(p=.020) |

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Findings from the study, although from a small sample of institutions, does show that data cannot determine that faculty citizenship or commitment makes a high performing institution, but does support that faculty dispositions are critical to an institution's success. Further, data clearly showed that staff commitment is important in institutional performance, a contention argued clearly by Birnbaum (1988) in his discussion of decision-making coupling. By coupling, he referred to the strength of associations regarding decisions, particularly noting that staff who are the most closely committed to the institution are those who assure the execution of decisions made in more senior administrative positions.

The data in our study indicated that faculty who are more likely to exhibit OCBs are also more likely to engage in other pro-social behaviors such as committee work and holding office hours. These relationships seem consistent with the kind of disposition or commitment that might engender cooperative behavior among individuals. Prior research supports the connection between these individual level behaviors and, ultimately, organizational performance. However, our current study did not test for this kind of relationship. On the surface, it may appear that these behaviors may be beneficial for the individual and the organization. However, pro-social behaviors in an

environment that rewards individual endeavor, such as a research university, may ultimately harm the individual (Bergeron, Ostroff, Schroeder, & Block, 2014; Lawrence, Ott, & Bell, 2012). Faculty who spend too much time serving on committees, helping students, assisting colleagues, and other citizenship-like behaviors may find that their individual performance suffers as a result. A notable exception to this conclusion is that faculty roles and responsibilities differ as one's career progresses. Perhaps high levels of OCB would be more appropriate for senior faculty, while junior faculty maintain higher individually focused behavior.

The importance of role distinction applies to academic staff as well. As the professional staff of institutions has grown in both number and importance, increasing attention has been paid to their professional development, career paths, and overall contribution to the mission and functioning of the institution. Unlike faculty, however, perhaps the roles of staff may benefit more from OCB on the whole by providing positive working environments and cooperative teams. Our study showed that faculty and staff differ significantly in their levels of OCB and perhaps this difference is an indication of the differing natures of work for each group.

Organizational citizenship as a construct may be of value to academic leaders as an area for further exploration and for possible training and professional development. Further research could expand on the type of institution and academic disciplines included in the study, broaden participation, and use an expanded data set to build models of prediction for employee performance and level of citizenship. Further exploration such as this could also lead to the creation of professional development modules that seek to better inform staff and faculty about how their actions impact the overall performance of the college or university, and the consequences of certain types of actions. Such discussions should importantly differentiate organizational citizenship from academic freedom, but should stress providing an understanding of how individual behaviors impact the overall institution.

From a very practical perspective, the findings of the study suggest that managers commit time and resources to developing institutional commitment with the hope that citizenship levels will increase among employees. Higher levels of citizenship might be the result of personal attention, reward systems that encourage effort, and morale enhancing activities that promote individuals and the efforts they make. Managers may find that citizenship promotion relies on human resource development, and as such, may be a reflection of how professional development and workplace culture is developed rather than the actual content of training programs or incentives.

Study findings suggest, as so much of the literature has, that colleges and universities are human capital based, and their success or failure will largely be the result of how the people who run the institutions behave. If they go above and beyond their formal job descriptions to help students and colleagues succeed, then ultimately institutional leaders will find themselves at the helms of more productive, efficient, and effective institutions.

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# BUILDING MULTI-GENERATIONAL TEAMS AND AVOIDING FATAL LEADERSHIP

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## INTRODUCTION

Today, leadership in higher education is becoming more challenging as leaders are faced with growing budgetary constraints, scarce resources, downsizing, competition from for-profit universities, as well as competition among colleges and universities for the same pool of students. Additionally, the "graying" of current leaders in academia and the decrease in the number of tenured faculty, which directly affects succession planning, are among many other factors facing higher education. It is therefore, necessary for leaders including board of trustees to make a concerted effort to build high performing ethical multi-generational teams and at the same time, avoid making fatal leadership errors in their pursuit of organizational effectiveness. A study by Findlay and Findlay (2006) has identified the pathway to fatal leadership as well as over 20 themes that contribute to the lack of organizational achievement and result in leaders falling prey to suicidal leadership. The authors define suicidal leadership as a series of downward spiraling fatal errors that depletes leaders' effectiveness and eventually culminates in their termination (Findlay & Findlay, 2006).

In this paper, we will examine the impact that leaders may have on colleges and universities as they attempt to lead the different generations in the workplace. Based on findings in the literature, we will suggest strategies that leaders can use to avoid suicidal/fatal leadership. Additionally, we will propose some strategies that will help higher education leaders re-examine and

question their own leadership styles and their decision-making process and re-assess the challenges that they need to overcome in order to achieve organizational effectiveness. Therefore, the purpose of this article is to offer strategies to build multi-generational teams while avoiding fatal leadership errors.

Howell and Costley (2005) examined a variety of leadership behaviors, both effective and ineffective and concluded that effective leaders must be able to match their leadership styles to the circumstances. They emphasized that leaders are expected to be intelligent, visionary, inspirational, self-confident, assertive, and that leaders who successfully carry out these behaviors and make measurable progress in their groups and organizations are viewed as effective leaders. Afolter and Findlay (2002) and Tackie, Findlay, Baharanyi and Pierce (2004) concluded that leaders are not able to solve problems unless they have the requisite leadership skills to do so. As a new generation of leaders prepare to enter mid to senior level positions in colleges and universities, it is important to understand how generational differences can influence leadership styles and approaches (Orrell, 2009). Today, given the competitiveness for students and scarce resources at institutions of higher education, leaders must make tough decisions regarding infrastructure and personnel matters. Internal and external issues, including the perceptions of the community and the institution's alumni may put undue pressure on leaders. Findlay and Findlay (2006) emphasized that if the leaders are unable to solve problems, they may start to experience a series of downward spiral fatal errors that lead to suicidal leadership. They also found generational differences in the frequency of fatal leadership – Gen X leaders and early Boomers were more likely to succumb to fatal leadership errors than late Boomer leaders.

Today, effective academic leadership and management are crucial, particularly because a different leadership approach is needed to deal with the different generations of faculty, staff and students in colleges and universities. The American Council on Education (ACE, 2012) has identified what is described as the graying of the academy (Jaschik, 2007). Many members of the current senior leadership in colleges and universities will be preparing for retirement over the next decade (ACE, 2013). So a new generation of leaders will need to be prepared to take the reins. However, some question whether these potential leaders have the skills to address the most pressing issues of the academy. Issues include budgetary constraints, and the competition among colleges and universities for the same pool of students, which make leadership and management even more challenging. Coupled with these situations is the need for accountability at all levels of higher education institutions. In their book titled, *Getting Results Through Individual and Organization*

*Accountability: The OZ Principle,* the authors stated that: "Accountability for results rests at the very core of continuous improvement, innovation, customer satisfaction, team performance, talent development… getting people to rise above their circumstances and do whatever it takes within the bounds of ethical behaviors to get the results they want" (Connors, Smith & Hickman, 2004, p. 14). Therefore, it is important that higher education leaders make every effort to understand the various generations at the workplace and hold them accountable.

## UNDERSTANDING THE DIFFERENT GENERATIONS AT THE WORKPLACE

The different generations in higher education should be working to achieve the same mission. However, Bernstein (2006) indicated that "everyone has a different perspective on the meaning of employment, how work should be done, and what workplaces should be like – all of which add to the potential for conflict" (p. 6). Table 1 describes the major generations at the workplace and some of their characteristics.

Table 1. Generations and their Characteristics in Today's Workforce

| | |
|---|---|
| The Traditionalist | **(Born 1930-1945**)… Silent Generation watched their parents struggle to make ends meet during Great Depression of 1930s; very careful with money, conservative, have great respect for authority; fought in World War II or Korean War; grew up without television; very loyal to their employers ; job security very important; switching jobs not easily embraced. |
| Baby Boomers | **Baby Boomers (Born 1946-1964**)… Represent largest group in workforce; will inflict largest "brain drain" when they retire; often involved in both child care and elder care; fought in wars abroad such as the Vietnam War; highly educated; desiring of better lifestyle than their parents |
| Generation X | **Generation X (Born 1965-1976)…** Witnessed many dramatic changes in economy and technology; first generation to be entertained by video games like Atari; high number of divorced parents; dual-income families and "latch key" kids; accustomed to recurring economic recessions; familiar with oil shortages, terrorist attacks, soaring inflation; skeptical, independent and entrepreneurial; most well educated generation and usually considered as great candidates for leadership positions. |
| Generation Y/ Millenials | **Generation Y (Born 1977-1991)…** Grew up with technology such as the Internet, computers, voice mail, video games; more globally minded than previous generations; population three times bigger than Gen Xer population; dual-income parents; very protective parents (often termed 'helicopter parents'); accepting of others' differences in race, gender, sexual orientation and ethnicity; inquisitive, socially and environmentally conscious, concerned about the future; highly entrepreneurial and often described as the generation with a sense of entitlement. |

Adapted from Managing to Manage Across Generations at Work
http://www.psychologyfoundation.org/pdf/publications/GenerationsAtWork.pdf

Given the above characteristics, it is not surprising that leaders have begun to contend with problems that arise from generational differences in the organization. Some of the differences include differing mindsets and communication styles of workers born in different eras; frictions aggravated by new technology and work patterns that mix faculty and staff of different ages in ever-changing teams (http://guides.wsj.com/management/managing-your-people/how-to-manage-different-generations/); and different expectations (Hymowitz, 2010).

Stein (2007) examined some of the challenges facing the generational divide at the work-place and concluded that "the real challenge for organizations is identifying a set of workplace motivating circumstances that apply to workers across the generational divides." He suggested the following as ways to minimize the generational divide:

- Hire capable people who love the work they do and show how they contribute to the bigger picture
- Compensate people fairly
- Don't overwork (or underwork) people
- Build strong teams with shared purpose and viable goals
- Make sure managers can manage
- Treat people with respect and leverage their unique talents
- Be proactively responsible by doing the right things to win the hearts and minds of your people (p. 1).

Regardless of age differences, there are still some basic traits, dispositions, and abilities that leaders must possess in order to work successfully with people and move an organization forward. Harvey, Smith and Sims (2003) suggested that high performing leadership teams are those who possess the following behavioral characteristics: (1) Build values and ethics, (2) hold people accountable, (3) lead by example, (4) use values to drive decisions, (5) ensure in sync policies and practices, (6) provide values and ethics education, (7) pay attention to perceptions, (8) focus on steady, incremental change, (9) hire and promote ethical people, and (10) encourage initiative. Harvey et al. (2003) also stated that the important task of (and responsibility for) building high-integrity and values-based organization falls squarely on the leaders' shoulders.

It is worthy to note that while leaders may possess the conceptual, technical and problem solving skills to perform their jobs, their dispositions are equally important. Findlay and Findlay (2006) found that leaders, who displayed unwholesome dispositions by engaging in certain negative

behaviors such as controlling, threatening, coercing, micro-managing employees, or by practicing devious leadership strategies, were likely to succumb to fatal or suicidal leadership (SL).

## HOW SUICIDAL/FATAL LEADERSHIP BEGINS

Too often individuals elected or appointed to positions of leadership fail to recognize the value of leadership development training. Even when things are not going right, they are not willing to engage in professional leadership development. They believe that such training is not for them because they are already in leadership positions or because they "know it all". They are of the opinion that they possess the necessary traits and skills needed to move an organization forward. Freeman and Kochan (2014) caution that even if individuals have been serving in professional capacities for a extended period of time, they still have to learn how to lead. Indeed, if leaders do not learn to lead, they are likely to make fatal leadership errors from which they are unlikely to recover. Such leaders are eventually terminated from their leadership position.

Findlay and Findlay (2006) have identified the pathway to suicidal/fatal leadership among leaders in higher education. As defined earlier in this paper, suicidal leadership is a series of downward spiraling fatal errors that depletes leaders' effectiveness and eventually culminates in their termination. These errors and/or behaviors occur in phases and include: (1) disequilibrium phase; (2) the reactive phase, (3) the impulsive phase, (4) the weakened phase, (5) the neurotic phase, and finally, the termination phase or SL. Each phase and some of the behaviors and actions of the leaders are summarized in the Table 2:

It is of paramount importance to note that leaders who have succumbed to suicidal leadership generally have at least some of the following characteristics at the beginning of their administration: 1) lack requisite leadership skills and competence, which often leads to serious blunders in decision-making; (2) see their appointment to leadership positions as an occasion for self-aggrandizement and social applause rather than as an opportunity to move the organization forward; (3) lack the core values needed to guide their actions. In such cases, they tend to lead by contradiction -- they declare to espouse a laudable philosophy, yet their actions contradict their words; (4) do not understand the relationship between governance and administration, (5) hire or surround themselves with incompetent team members. These characteristics seriously affect organizational effectiveness because they impede the leader's ability to facilitate governance, make wise administrative decisions, and manage the future.

Table 2: Leaders Behaviors/Actions in the Different Phases of Suicidal/Fatal Leadership

| | |
|---|---|
| 1.The Disequilibrium Phase | ❑ Lack of focused vision<br>❑ Implement vision without earning the trust of others<br>❑ Lack of communication<br>❑ Attempt to bury legacy of predecessor(s)<br>❑ Have incompetent people in inner circle<br>❑ Tend to make decisions by self, ignoring the intellectual capital at the institution<br>❑ See self as the sole repository of good ideas |
| 2.The Reactive Phase | ❑ Make reactive decision<br>❑ Focus on minutiae, blame and fault finding<br>❑ Focus on self and tends to become intolerant of others<br>❑ Afraid of losing control<br>❑ Failure to listen even when individuals offer good ideas or advice<br>❑ Tend to be preoccupied with an aggrandized image of self |
| 3.The Impulsive Phase | ❑ Make unpredictable and confusing decisions<br>❑ Make many unplanned changes -- usually haphazard, annoying, and threatening to employees' careers<br>❑ Practice quid pro quo<br>❑ Assert authority often: *'I am in charge; don't you know that I am the …'* |
| 4.The Weaken Phase | ❑ Become vulnerable as leader is weakened<br>❑ Very little work is accomplished<br>❑ Sometimes employees begin to covertly form coalitions to unseat the leader<br>❑ Tend to distort facts, and compromise the judgment needed to make informed decisions |
| 5.The Neurotic Phase | ❑ Display high degree of moodiness<br>❑ Display narcissistic behaviors<br>❑ Shrinking of the inner circle |
| 6. The Suicidal/Fatal Phase | ❑ Important duties are neglected<br>❑ Display behaviors that are incongruent with the leadership position<br>❑ Leader is terminated |

**THEMES FROM SUICIDAL/FATAL LEADERSHIP**

Cottrell (2005) emphasized the importance of having a positive attitude at the workplace. He indicated that a positive attitude makes employees happier, more productive, more successful, and reduces negativism. Negativism can have a serious impact on worker productivity. Findlay and Findlay (2006) reported that negative attitude toward faculty and staff can have serious consequences for both the leader and the institution, in general.

Furthermore, they contended that the heart of suicidal leadership is the leader's ineffectiveness caused by inappropriate dispositions and attitudes, and lack of knowledge and skills, which result in his/her inability to achieve organizational goals (Findlay & Findlay, 2006). They reported several themes related to fatal/suicidal leadership. These themes created negativism at the workplace and resulted in less than stellar performance by the leaders, faculty and staff. These leaders eventually succumbed to suicidal leadership because of a lack progress – they lost their capacity to advance their institutions as well as their ability to empower faculty and staff. Eventually, they were terminated from their leadership position. The themes listed in Table 3 are derived from the suicidal leadership study and are generally self-explanatory. However, where there may be confusion about any particular nomenclature, a brief description is provided.

## THE NEED FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN LEADERSHIP

It well established that each of the current generations at the workplace have different habits, attitudes, levels of motivation, behaviors, expectations, and thinking skills. Although Deal (2007) admonishes that: "(1) fundamentally people want the same things, no matter what generation they are from, and (2) leaders can work with (or manage) people from all generations effectively without becoming a contortionist, selling their soul on eBay, or pulling their hair out" (p.1). Leaders must develop the skills that will allow them to work across generations effectively and be prepared to get their staff to work harmoniously where there are incongruities. This situation is becoming even more urgent as the traditionalist and baby boomer administrators approach retirement, leaving the Gen X and millennial to assume leadership roles.

Primarily because universities unlike business and industries have been reluctant to engage in succession leadership planning, it appears that a viable pool of well-prepared candidates is not available to succeed the two generations that have reached retirement age. Furthermore, search firms that are normally hired to screen and make recommendations to boards of trustees do not seem to know how to determine in a practical way the conceptual, interpersonal, intrapersonal, problem solving and technical skills that presidents, for example, need to run a university efficiently. Search firms as well as boards seem easily swayed by "impressive talk" rather than analyzing and scrutinizing the candidate's core values and the skills mentioned above.

Table 3: Themes from Suicidal/Fatal Leadership Among Higher Education Administrators

| Themes | Explanation of Themes as Appropriate |
|---|---|
| 1. Lack of relationship building | |
| 2. Narcissistic behaviors | |
| 3. Low level of emotional intelligence | |
| 4. Leadership by contradiction | It is a leadership philosophy where the leader espouses one thing but does the opposite, primarily because the philosophy is not based on core values. |
| 5. Trickle down leadership | Based on the assumption that if there is an incompetent leadership of the board of trustees level, the board is likely to employ an incompetent president, then the incompetent president will likely employ an incompetent provost, the incompetent provost is likely to employ incompetent deans, etc. |
| 6. Inability to influence others | |
| 7. Lack of a shared vision | |
| 8. Incompetent people in the inner circle | |
| 9. Energized incompetence | The leader displays a great deal of energy, pretending to be working but very little is accomplished |
| 10. Self-aggrandizement | |
| 11. Belief to be the sole repository of good ideas | |
| 12. Focused on minutiae | |
| 13. Lack of integrity and ethics | |
| 14. Abdication of responsibilities | |
| 15. Personal indiscretions | |
| 16. Unauthorized decision-making | |
| 17. Nano-management | In-your-face intrusive supervision |
| 18. Leading with threats | |
| 19. Jealousy of high skilled people | Afraid such employees may show up leaders' ineptness; therefore, leaders do everything to frustrate and ostracize them |
| 20. Ineffective board of trustees | |

Consequently, the attrition rate of higher education administrators, including presidents seems to be on the rise, leading to a decline in the half-life of leadership. Findlay and Findlay (2006) define the half-life of leadership as the time it takes leaders to remain visionary, focused and effective without succumbing to burnout. The authors concluded that the half-life of leadership in higher education is about 6-10 years for department chairs, deans, vice-presidents and presidents. Beyond this period, without structured professional development, leaders remaining in the same

position tend to become less effective. The question arises as to how to increase the half-life of leadership, given the new generation of leaders, many of whom seem to suffer from an illusion of personal power. The leader's engagement in structured professional development may help to alleviate the situation.

The Wall Street Journal blog gives sound advice on training to help managers manage different generations (http://guides.wsj.com/management/managing-your-people/how-to-manage-different-generations/). This advice is equally sound for college and university leaders. Higher education leaders can and should engage in structured professional development to learn to recognize generational differences and adapt. It is important that they change rather than try to change the faculty and staff. They need to learn to facilitate mentoring between different aged employees to encourage more cross-generational interaction. They should learn how to manage adults, to differentiate between character issues like immaturity, laziness or intractability and generational traits, and to adapt their preferred style to match the work style of faculty and staff. They should learn strategies to encourage workplace harmony as well as productivity in research, teaching and service without resorting to threats, coercion or a rigid management structure that undermine efforts to build intergenerational teams.

Leaders' professional development should also include exercises in which leaders examine their dispositions and leadership styles. They need to be aware that fatal leadership practices can negatively impact the organization, derail their careers and render their management ineffective (Findlay &Findlay, 2006). The authors concluded that in spite of all the studies on leadership, it is difficult to isolate any single trait or characteristic and attribute it to successful leadership. What is clear is that leaders need to have a vision and the emotional intelligence to be able to work with others; facilitate the present, and manage the future. In working with others, they need to be able to function as coach, mentor, motivator, and/or serve as role model (Findlay & Findlay, 2006).

## APPROACHES TO BUILDING MULTI-GENERATIONAL TEAMS

According to a Wall Street journal blog "How To Manage Different Generations," Baby Boomers are competitive and think workers should pay their dues; Gen Xers are more likely to be skeptical and independent-minded and Gen Ys—also known as Millennials—like teamwork, feedback and technology. To have these individuals work harmoniously and productively, the key is to be able to effectively address and take advantage of the differences in values and expectations of each generation. Leaders must be careful not to follow blanket stereotypes, not to disadvantage

older workers, even inadvertently, or risk retention problems and legal headaches (http://guides.wsj.com/management/managing-your-people/how-to-manage-different-generations/). It is crucial that leaders become knowledgeable about generational habits, dispositions, expectations, behaviors, and their ways of thinking and communicating as a lack of understanding can negatively impact the overall climate of an institution and prevent leaders from building high performing multi-generational teams.

Therefore, it is incumbent upon leaders to build multigenerational teams by earning and re-earning the respect of the various workplace generations. Bernstein (2006) emphasized that regardless of how one does the job, electronically or in person, each individual worker shares the responsibility of constantly looking for ways to be more considerate of others. Furthermore, she stated that leaders must make a sincere effort to be less judgmental and more accepting. They should "avoid pointing fingers at others and labeling them "wrong", and instead pursue heightened levels of appreciation as contributing co-workers, unique individuals, and inherently valuable human beings" (p, 41). Ventura and Templin (2005) suggested that leaders should follow strategies to build what they referred to as five-star team work: (1) Make efforts to know their co-workers "as people", (2) look for opportunities to contribute to others' success, (3) be considerate of others, (4) keep their promises and agreements, (5) embrace diversity, (6) provide recognition, (7) carry their share of the load, (8) set the example (pp. 12-13).

In an effort to build multi-generational teams, higher education leaders must facilitate cross-generational interaction to encourage younger faculty and staff to work collegially with older faculty. Younger faculty can benefit from the experience and wisdom offered by senior employees. Older employees can benefit from the fresh perspectives offered by younger employees. Furthermore, according to "How To Manage Different Generations", leaders should "accommodate the different learning styles" of intergenerational teams. They should avoid rigid management structures as Millennials generally don't work well in rigid environments. In fact, they prefer open collaborations that allow employees to share information and for everybody to contribute to decision-making. The author also advised leaders to "keep employees engaged" by providing "regular educational and training opportunities as well as career advice, and "fuel the high expectations of ambitious Millennials with special assignments that are outside of their job descriptions" (http://guides.wsj.com/management/managing-your-people/how-to-manage-different-generations/). Provosts, deans and department heads would do well to follow this advice. These strategies lead not only to harmony and productivity but also to succession planning.

Younger faculty are more likely to become interested in and ready to assume leadership positions when they are given opportunities to develop leadership skills. When they are put in positions of leadership, they are less likely to commit fatal leadership errors. http://guides.wsj.com/management/managing-your-people/how-to-manage-different-generations/. Additionally, leaders should avoid rigid management structure. Millennials generally don't work well in rigid environments. They prefer open collaborations that allow employees to share information and for everybody to contribute to decision-making.

**LEADERSHIP AND ACCOUNTABILITY**

The progress that higher education institutions make depends on the quality of leadership and accountability. The accountability movement in higher education is gaining momentum (retrieved at http: www.insidehighered.com, June 24, 2010). In recent years, there has been growing pressure on these institutions to demonstrate their value through various accountability measures with a strong focus upon the assessment of student progress and success (Mazzeo, 2001). This pressure has come from state and federal governments (Ewell, 2002; Kochan, & Locke, 2010), accrediting agencies (Lubinescu, Ratcliff & Gaffney, 2001), parents, (Huba & Freed, 2001), and the general public (Baker, 2004). Additionally, the changing environment within the teaching and learning process is impacting the ways in which students will be assessed and the purposes of this assessment (Hainline, Gaines, Feather, Padilla, & Terry, 2010; Huba & Freed, 2000). Thus, there is a growing recognition that higher education leaders will need to be prepared to address these and other complex issues that will inevitably affect higher education institutions (Freeman & Kochan, 2012).

To deal with the complexity of their job, leaders must not only build competent multigenerational teams, but they also be able to make tough decisions and understand how organizational politics work in order to achieve organizational effectiveness. To be successful, leaders must have a focused vision with buy-in from the faculty and staff. To gain buy-in, they must be able to exert influence over their employees. Maxwell (2007) pointed out that the higher education leaders want to climb and the greater the impact they want to make, the more they need to exude influence (Maxwell 2007). However, leaders lose their impact and influence when faculty and staff start to lose confidence in their ability to move the organization forward and in their vision. As a result, organizational progress wanes and accountability issues develop.

The various generational needs, budgetary constraints, creating a technology-rich environment are only a few of the many challenges colleges and universities are facing. These

challenges not only affect the day-to-day operation of these institutions, but also affect the extent to which boards of trustees use talent management to select presidents. Since generational differences will inevitably affect the quality of leadership in higher education institutions, board of trustees will have to become more mindful of the leaders they select and the impact leaders may have at the institution they oversee. Boards must be cognizant that prospective presidents can deceive them with “impressive talk” and sometimes such talk may hide incompetence. It is important too that boards know that incompetence masked with arrogance is a danger to effective leadership and those who possess such a disposition are detrimental to organizational effectiveness.

## EIGHT STRATEGIES TO PREVENT SUICIDAL/FATAL LEADERSHIP

### 1. Share the Vision

"Where there is no vision the people perish." The vision for the institution or department is probably one of the most powerful assets of a leader. Equally important, is developing and sharing the vision and getting buy-in. Without buy-in, SL is likely to occur. The leader should be able to visualize the future more than any other member of the institution or department; but together, they build a vision that is shared by all. Faculty and staff, therefore, cannot help but buy into a vision that they help to create. This shared vision motivates the faculty and staff to work with passion and commitment.

### 2. Create a Culture of Integrity and Ethical Leadership

Ethical leadership must be central to the every leader. To achieve this every leader must develop an administrative vision, values and criteria for hiring and promoting people. Only those individuals who believe in the announced criteria and who have good work ethic and integrity should be included in the administration. The leader should communicate the administration's shared values and ethical standards and ensure that they are understood, supported, and accepted at all levels. This may mean the development of a values and ethics education program to help employees to acquire the confidence and skills necessary to transform those beliefs into good and acceptable behaviors.

### 3. Appoint a Competent Team to the Inner Circle

Theodore Roosevelt once said that "The best executive is the one who has sense enough to pick good men to do what he wants done, and self-restraint enough to keep from meddling with them while they do it" (Strategic Performance Partners, 2003). A leader's potential to be successful will be determined largely by the people closest to him/her. If the leader has the right people in the inner circle, the institution's effectiveness will grow exponentially. The leader should avoid cronyism and transactional leadership - the 'you scratch my back and I will scratch yours' practice.

### 4. Engage in Self Development

Leadership is about solving problems and challenges, for without them a leader is not tested. Maxwell (2001) stated that "Good leaders are not developed overnight. They can't be made in a microwave; they must be simmered in a crock-pot" (p. 211. We believe that organizational

effectiveness can be increased with pre-emptive leadership development training and leaders should not be afraid to participate in such activities.

5. **Practice Emotional Intelligence and not Emotional Management**

As effective interpersonal relationships are based on respect, a leader must treat people with respect, realizing that good results are achieved through people. President Dwight D. Eisenhower once said: "You do not lead by hitting people over the head; that's assault, not leadership" (http;//www.leadershipnow.com/leadershipquotes.html). If people are constantly beaten down, they are more likely to resort to passive resistance and sabotage, which eventually contribute to the leader's downfall.

6. **Accept Responsibility for Actions Regardless of Outcomes**

A leader should not use up his energy to cover up failures that may be experienced in policy implementation; rather, the leader must learn from the mistakes and move forward. Sir Josiah Stamp, a former director of the Bank of England stated, "It is easy to dodge our responsibilities, but we cannot dodging the consequences of our responsibilities" (http://thinkexist.com/quotation/it_is_easy_to_dodge_our_responsibilities-but_we/212043.html).

7. **Build Trust and Inspire Commitment**

Building trust inspires commitment (Garman & Tyler, 2004). A leader exemplifying this competency is perceived as honest about situations and about himself or herself. Faculty and staff will see him or her as someone who can be counted on to follow through on promises and decisions. This competency inspires faculty and staff to work collaboratively with the leader to achieve organizational goals, even in face of difficulties. Failure to build trust in faculty and staff leads them to lack of confidence in the leader and they are likely perform below their capacity. Consequently, the leader's power and influence are undermined and SL is likely to occur.

1. **Invest in Wise Choices**

Making wise choices is central to prevent SL. Cottrell (2005) stated, "Success is ultimately realized by people who make more right choices and recover quickly from their bad choices" (p. 8). Cottrell also adds that making good choices requires constant focus and attention (p. 1 0). Leaders must be aware that making good choices is a challenging process with numerous obstacles, but they can overcome them with an articulated team of professionals whose ideas are respected.

*Note: The above strategies were adapted from Findlay & Findlay (2006) article titled: Analysis of Suicidal Leadership: Causes, Symptoms and Prevention. The International Journal of Learning, 13(8),12-19.*

## CONCLUSION

The traditional approach to governance by boards of trustee as an overseer for the institutions needs to change. Boards must become more visionary and strategic to include succession leadership planning as a priority for institutions. If not, we may be approaching a period within the next 10-15 years, where higher education institutions will have major problems in filling crucial top leadership positions. Employing individuals who are unprepared and unskilled will result

in a decrease in the half-life of leadership or longevity in the position and seriously affect the stability of the institutions.

If such leaders remain in the leadership position for an extended time, then faculty and staff become less productive. Many may feel trapped and uncertain about their positions and their future within the institution. Some faculty and staff may experience feelings of defensiveness, anger, distrust, apathy, and/or helplessness. The leader tends to lack the coping skills to effectively function as visionary and focused leader, and thus irrationality and ambiguity become their preferred style of leadership. The progress of the institution depends to a large extent on the quality of the leadership starting with the board of trustees. Moreover, leadership effectiveness is based on a number of multifaceted factors including leader traits, the amount of power that comes with the position, the skill and competence of the individual closest to the leader; the demands and constraints of the position, the levels of initial successes, and feedback from colleagues and others in the organizations about performance.

Some ineffective and weakened leaders may remain in the leadership position because they are favored by a board of trustees or by top administrators. Institutions of higher education cannot afford to keep weak leaders in place for any protracted period of time because a weakened leader makes the organization vulnerable and causes serious damage to the brand of the institution. Leaders need to be open to professional development through activities such as summer leadership institutes. These individuals should see themselves as lifelong learners.

Higher education leaders should also be open to working across generational divides. Although various generations share diverse characteristics, empathy and respect should be defining attributes of leaders (Wolfe & Freeman, 2013). No one person can do everything; higher education issues are too dynamic and complex. Successful leaders are those who understand that and are willing to work with those who can contribute diverse areas of strength.

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# SUPPORTING FACULTY IN THE ERA OF ACCOUNTABILITY: HOW POSTSECONDARY LEADERS CAN FACILITATE THE MEANINGFUL USE OF INSTRUCTIONAL DATA FOR CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

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*Data driven decision-making. Data mining. Learning analytics.* These buzzwords are all the rage in postsecondary education these days. From the halls of federal and state congresses, to institutional research offices, to academic departments, the pressure is on to ensure that decisions are informed by rigorous evidence about student learning, degree completion, and success in the labor market. The trend is the result of a perfect storm of improved analytic technologies, performance-based funding models, and stakeholders' growing desire for more transparent institutions whose "quality" can be measured and tracked over time.

The focus on data driven decision-making is largely driven by the popular view that the methods that educators have traditionally used to make decisions – drawing on their storehouse of expertise, anecdote, and intuition – are inferior to more rigorous statistical analyses of student assessment and classroom activity data. But, actually, little is known about how faculty[1] think about and use teaching-related data in their daily work. Insights into the real-world data practices of faculty is key to improving the use of pedagogical data, as well as changes to the organizations that are supposed to support them.

To address this gap in the literature we interviewed 59 faculty and 20 administrators at three research universities about their use of instructional data and found that: (a) in practice,

[1] By *faculty* we mean all people who hold undergraduate teaching positions—whether full- or part-time, in a tenure track or not—in postsecondary institutions, with the exception of graduate teaching assistants.

faculty consider *multiple forms* of data – not just numeric – as salient to their daily work, (b) most faculty lack structured opportunities for collecting, analyzing and interpreting meaningful data, which (c) limits regular reflection on one's own teaching performance, and yet (d) many faculty have created their own often private, ad-hoc and low-tech systems for self-monitoring their own teaching practice.

We elaborate on these findings and advance recommendations for postsecondary leaders as they work to encourage data driven decision-making at their institutions. These recommendations are based on the assumption that the accountability movement is quickly coming to higher education. As a result, administrators and faculty must be proactive in setting up their own accountability systems based on local criterion and needs, instead of waiting for policy mandates from external agents such as state legislatures who may be unfamiliar and/or uniformed about the day-to-day realities of faculty work. Towards this end, we recommend that institutions cease their exclusive reliance on end-of-term student evaluations in favor of more robust sources of data about teaching and learning and procedures for educators to regularly reflect on their own practices and development as professionals.

## WHAT IS DATA DRIVEN DECISION-MAKING AND WHY IS IT SO DIFFICULT IN EDUCATION?

For some time, data has served as the cornerstone of organizational decision-making in fields as diverse as health care, business, and sports. In education, data driven decision-making can be considered "the systematic collection, analysis, examination, and interpretation of data to inform practice and policy in educational settings" (Mandinach, 2012 p. 71). Of course, this focus on data did not arise out of thin air. In K-12 schools and districts, the use of standardized test results to evaluate school and educator efficacy has a long history, and reached a pinnacle with *No Child Left Behind*. Enacted in 2001, NCLB mandated all public districts track and report student outcome data to gauge to what degree they were attaining adequate performance. Data systems are now a central part of K-12 schools and districts in the US. This has spurred a considerable amount of handwringing about the worth of these systems, but the fact remains that a "culture of accountability" is now a dominant and defining force in U.S. education.

While the systemic use of educational data has not yet reached higher education as in K-12 settings, we see signs that a similar culture of accountability is coming down the pike. Signs include performance-based funding of institutions (as by the state of Florida) and the Obama Administration's proposed Postsecondary Institution Rating System (PIRS). Accrediting agencies of

professional programs (such as engineering's ABET and teacher education's NCATE) are also advocating for more data driven decision-making, notably at the level of individual programs. Indeed, we see as imminent the imposition of rules requiring institutions of higher education to collect and report individual educator- and learner-focused data as a way to "prove" efficacy and quality to the taxpaying public.

One may think that our nation's colleges and universities would be well situated to respond to such impetus, given that many institutions already employ sophisticated data-based systems for guiding financial and programmatic decisions (Lane, 2014). Yet while examples of robust data systems at the classroom level are increasing (via learning analytics approaches, as seen at the University of Michigan and Purdue), at many institutions few *instructional data systems* exist beyond the ubiquitous end-of-term student evaluations (Henderson, Turpen, Dancy & Chapman, 2014). This reality is especially problematic when we consider one of the core features of data driven decision-making in fields such as business and health care – that of *continuous improvement* via an organizations' ongoing self-analysis of procedures and practices. Our own research has found that in most postsecondary institutions, student evaluations are not part of cycles of continual improvement, with associated data often delivered months after teaching, via unreadable or meaningless reports, with no institutionalized follow-up driving actual data use.

But a larger problem exists beyond the basic availability of high-quality and timely data. As Coburn and Turner (2012) argue, "[pedagogical] data are only as good as how they are used" (p. 173). While good accessibility to rigorous data are essential components of an effective data system, so too are (a) educators with "pedagogical data literacy," or the ability to interpret data to inform practice, (b) well-designed organizational structures that shape productive interactions of educators around data, and (c) cultural norms that support continuous improvement at individual and organizational levels (Mandinach, 2012; Spillane, 2012). Consequently, a top-down approach to reform that focuses entirely on technical solutions to problems – an approach that unfortunately has a long history in education - has been roundly criticized in relation to the data driven decision-making movement, at least in K-12 education.

## MOVING BEYOND THE TECHNICAL: THE NEED FOR PRACTICE-BASED RESEARCH ABOUT THE REALITIES OF FACULTY WORK

A similar critique has been waged against data-related initiatives in higher education, often based on assumptions that "once we create sufficiently good measures, widespread institutional

improvement in student learning will follow" (Blaich & Wise, 2010, p.67). We too question this "magic bullet" ethos, advocating for a shift from simply instituting the latest and greatest data analytics system to, instead, considering what makes data useful and meaningful for actual educators in the field. Data systems aimed at educators must be constructed on a *user-based design*, to ensure that a final product is useable, intuitive, and meaningful to the end-user-educator, especially important as we ask postsecondary educators to engage in regular self-monitoring and continuous improvement, a significant shift from the current state of affairs.

To craft instructional data systems that are useful and meaningful to educators, leaders and developers must appreciate that effective data systems implicate a combination of technical, structural, and socio-cultural elements such that a "top-down" or technology-based solution is unlikely to alter educator practices at the department and classroom levels. We join scholars of data use in K-12 settings spearheading a movement called *practice-based research* that focuses on how educators and administrators in the field actually think about and use data (Coburn & Turner, 2012). We argue that one of the missing pieces of the educational improvement puzzle in higher education is not just the lack of data for measuring quality, but in the field's general lack of knowledge about how faculty think about and use data as part of their daily work. Towards addressing this gap in the literature, we sought to uncover how faculty, themselves, use and respond to teaching-related data.

Why does this matter? Unfortunately, we do not see a similar recognition of the complexity of data use and the need for user-based design by those calling for data driven decision-making at the postsecondary level, where the problem and solution still appear to be viewed as primarily an issue of technology. We argue that a void of inquiry into educators' pertinent realities will doom data-related interventions towards outright rejection or what Brown and Campione (1996) term "lethal mutations." We argue that documentation of educators' real-world practices can allow for the design of data systems that are actually supportive of faculty in their daily work, and that help them to diagnose and address challenges in their classrooms (Fullan 1994). In the absence of such continuous improvement systems, external actors such as state legislatures will fill the void by creating their own accountability measures that will effectively operate as a system of punitive compliance ala K-12's NCLB.

## THE TRACKING THE PROCESSES OF DATA DRIVEN DECISION-MAKING IN POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION (TPDM) STUDY

Our NSF-funded[2] study involves two interrelated phases of data collection and analysis. In 2013, we studied how faculty members used teaching-related data by interviewing faculty and administrators in the fields of mechanical engineering, biology, geology, and physics, asking them about the types of data that they used to plan and evaluate their classes and how these led to decisions about teaching.

Then, as a field experiment to see if a new type of teaching-related data would enhance this decision-making process, we collected data using classroom observations and student focus groups and compiled the results into brief reports that were immediately sent back to participating faculty. To see if and how our data reports were useful, we conducted follow-up interviews in 2014.

### Key Findings About How Faculty Think About And Use Data

**Faculty Perceive And Use Many Different Types Of Information To Inform Their Teaching, Not Just Numeric Assessment Data.** In response to our question about the types of instructional data used, several faculty were first confused, asking "what do you mean by data?" For some, the notion of data to inform teaching was foreign. This finding speaks to the fact that instructional data use proponents have a way to go if a population they are targeting is confused by the very notion of "data to inform teaching."

Once the intent of the question became clear, only two faculty reported using no data to inform their teaching. In fact, most faculty described many different types of information used to inform their teaching. One of the first data types mentioned by respondents was that of numeric assessment data. Twenty-six (26) faculty discussed using quiz and test scores and 13 used end-of-term student evaluation scores to evaluate their courses or adjust their teaching. Such numeric data are what most advocates of DDDM are thinking of when they champion teachers using "real data" over anecdotes.

That said, we were struck by the fact that faculty also reported use of many other types of teaching-related information and that these sources were often viewed as superior in quality and utility to quantitative measures from assessments or student evaluations. These included formal qualitative data, such as those gathered via open-ended responses on student evaluation forms (10 respondents) and education research findings (10), billed as tips and suggestions for teaching. Many

[2] This study was supported by The National Science Foundation, under Award #1224624.

faculty also discussed the importance of "word-of-mouth" information that spreads among departmental colleagues and students (each mentioned by 13 respondents).

Additionally, some faculty created their own procedures for gathering student satisfaction data, based on the view that institutional evaluations were less than useful. For example, a physicist noted that she administered mid-term student evaluations because "I can get some pretty useful feedback on things like 'too much text on your slides' or 'going too fast,' that you can actually change that make a difference for the next six weeks."

Similarly, we found a widespread reliance on more "personalized" sources of information, in the form of educator knowledge and expertise about the material (20) or student misconceptions (10), deemed helpful in "diagnosing" problems in teaching or students' learning, often in real-time. Such findings make it clear that the conventional wisdom that numeric data alone merits inclusion in "evidence-based teaching" runs counter to how postsecondary educators may view and utilize information on a daily basis to inform their practice.

**Current Institutionally Supported Teaching-Related Data Are Viewed As Unreliable And Insufficient.** Of the many different information sources faculty draw upon to inform their teaching, it is notable that only two were based on formal, institutionally-mandated and -supported data systems. These data, end-of-course student evaluations and peer observations of teaching, share the unfortunate distinction of being widely pegged by our respondents as unreliable and inadequately diagnostic.

In regard to student evaluations, this dissatisfaction boiled down to three limitations. First, the results yielded few insights regarding specific features that could be changed. Questions posed were viewed as being overly vague and results were seen as equating to "a popularity contest." Further reducing the usability of these quantitative data was the form in which the results were reported back to faculty. While the reports include descriptive statistics of each survey item, perhaps some bar graphs, no detailed or interpretive analysis of items were typically provided. Second, the timing of results was such that they came months after the conclusion of class, so results could only barely inform the subsequent term. Third, low response rates had faculty questioning the representativeness of the data.

At many postsecondary institutions, regular peer observations are required as part of the tenure, promotion, or annual review process. But according to our respondents, these observations were rarely used with any regularity or structure, partially due to skepticism about colleagues'

ability to accurately and reliably observe and judge others' teaching. One interviewee summed up sentiments about peer reviews with:

> [They were] a complete waste of time…we had no common language about which to discuss what was happening in the classroom. There was no common understanding of what was trying to be achieved, so you know you can't really go and criticize someone teaching if you don't have any idea of what the goals [are].

**Most Faculty Lack Structured Opportunities For Engaging In Data Collection, Analysis, And Interpretation.** In lieu of formal, institutionally supported systems, most faculty had developed their own system(s) tailored to a specific course or degree program, and collected and reflected on these data privately. In our study, only 10 respondents discussed use of data outside of their own private systems and, in most of these cases, the course referenced was team-taught and/or part of a fixed curriculum.

Thus, one of the primary goals of data driven decision-making – to encourage the development of formal and public mechanisms for the collection, management, and interpretation of data as part of organizational continuous improvement systems– is not being realized. Instead private, potentially idiosyncratic instructional data systems are being developed and utilized. Given the importance of educators' structured routines for interacting with data that researchers of data use in K-12 settings have identified (see Spillane, 2012), the private and ad-hoc nature of postsecondary faculty data use should raise some red flags.

**The Absence Of Reliable Data And Structured Data Systems Limits The Prospects Of Reflective Practice.** The deliberate reflection on one's own practice is at the heart of much of the literature on teacher growth and professional development, grounded in Schon's notion of the "reflective practitioner" (1983). A core aspect of reflective practice is that, in order to continually improve, a professional needs to take time to carefully consider evidence about the efficacy of their performance, whereupon the individual must be willing to make changes (Kane, Sandretto, & Heath, 2004).

Indeed, we encountered many faculty who took very little time to reflect upon teaching-related data. Of course, given the lack of data available for most faculty, save their own exams and quizzes, such reflection is made rather difficult. Instead, available data were quickly ignored (e.g., student evaluations) or used solely for grading/reporting purposes (e.g., exams). When reflection did occur, it was often described as a quick and unstructured behavior, such as a quick glance at student exam data to identify problems towards revision of next term's exam.

In less frequent cases we found more deliberate and structured attempts to engage in reflective practice. For instance, a three-person team of faculty created a system to manage and continually improve a yearlong sequence of courses. The group met weekly to discuss results from assessments and informal interactions with students in order to ensure that the course was meeting goals. The group held an annual retreat to consider improvements to the entire sequence the following year.

This example is notable for three reasons: (1) the department or institution did not mandate its creation – it was created by faculty teaching the course, (2) the data that the group analyzed was not solely numeric data, and (3) the concerted, collective reflection resulted in both individual and organizational learning.

**Despite These Challenges, Some Faculty Are Using Highly Sophisticated Instructional Data Systems.** Like the case above, we did hear about and observe some instructional data systems that appeared very promising, despite the lack of institutional mechanisms promoting educators' data use. Many of these systems could be considered formative assessment systems, such as the gathering of data via clickers or exit papers, with faculty members' more immediate (during or immediately after class) modification to their teaching. In some cases, informal student feedback gleaned from "hallway conversations," office hours, and in-class discussion provided the impetus for change. When compared to student evaluations of teaching, these data were more faculty-driven and timely, allowing for faculty to reflect on information that was directly salient to their immediate tasks, for instance as they planned for a next class or term. Others implemented data systems in a way that provided them with summative data, via content-based exams or mid-term surveys meant to gather students' general perceptions of a course. Quite a few faculty relied on both formative and summative feedback, of various data types, towards continuous practice improvement.

These examples of individually driven data systems suggest that reflective practice is possible without structured routines and policies governing the use of data. However, for the individuals who had developed sophisticated data systems, they were in most cases highly motivated educators who did not have traditional research obligations (i.e., not on the tenure track). Thus, having the time and drive to create personalized data systems seem key in organizational settings that generally do not provide other meaningful options.

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR HIGHER EDUCATION LEADERS

Based on the results from our study, as well as evidence from the literature on data driven decision-making in K-12 settings, we offer five recommendations for higher education leaders to consider as they wade into the era of Big Data.

**Enlist Help tTo Navigate The Political Waters Of Data Use And Interpretation.** Postsecondary leaders should move carefully and thoughtfully when designing and implementing instructional data systems and related data-driven agendas. In particular, unless outright rebellion is desired among a cadre of professionals known for their disciplinary expertise and pedagogical autonomy, it will be particularly important to emphasize the continuous improvement part of the data driven decision-making equation, rather than compliance with rules and regulations.

This view was echoed by an associate dean who told us, "All data are political units and their interpretation will vary according to the user." As such, while honest and rigorous data interpretation must be the first priority, attention should be paid to the differing agendas of various parties (e.g., tenure-track faculty, contingent faculty, administrators) and how they may influence the creation and/or interpretation of data. In light of these political realities, leaders should employ the help of well-respected disciplinary leaders that can help convey the importance of instructional data, identify discipline-palatable data forms, and alleviate threats to ego (Bouwma-Gearhart 2012).

**Don't Ignore Existing Cultural Norms By Adopting A Top-Down Approach.** Creating or fostering what Mandinach terms "a culture of data use" (2012) is a fool's errand if assumed it can easily be created or manipulated by administrators neglecting what realities of faculty work and routines are already in place. As one respondent put it:

> I can tell you my faculty and I feel very confident in our ability to be teaching these students what we think they need to know. And if we start to get to a place where there will be a lot of constraints and requirements placed upon us to prove that we know what we are doing, it's going to piss people off.

Changing educator behavior will require far more than imposing new policies or training. Research on reform implementation and the diffusion of innovations shows that "top-down" initiatives often suffer from a mismatch between policies and the realities of practice (Fullan, 1994; Spillane, Reiser & Reimer,2002). We argue that to improve the chances of continuous improvement systems being instituted at both individual and organizational levels, initiatives must be aligned with or build upon existing practices and norms, including those at the levels of individual and department or discipline.

**Involve Faculty In The Design And Implementation Of Instructional Data Systems.** An issue regarding the adoption of instructional innovations is that K-12 educators, themselves, are often sidelined regarding critical decision-making (Spillane, Reiser, & Reimer, 2002; Tagg, 2012). When weighing something as potentially threatening as data that could be used as part of evaluation systems, faculty voices must be heard. Said one respondent:

> As the assessment culture came to the university, people started saying we had to write student learning outcomes. For me, the priority that I give to an outcome is inversely proportional to how easy it is to measure. And I get very concerned that we're going to start being held accountable to particular articulated student learning outcomes…the ones that are easy to measure but not the ones that we really value.

Thus, one of the challenges facing higher education leaders is figuring out how to build faculty capacity for using data while also acknowledging the individual beliefs and disciplinary norms that govern what faculty view as valid problems and the data that are best suited to address them. In the case of teaching-related data, leaders must avoid overly inflammatory claims regarding the relative worth or efficacy of certain types of instruction that may alienate substantial numbers of faculty (e.g., all lecturing is bad and those that practice it are flawed educators) (Hora & Ferrare, 2014).

**Don't Fetishize Numeric Data - Acknowledge Sources Of Pedagogical Information That Are Meaningful To Faculty.** Instead of a myopic focus on numbers alone, we advocate for a shift towards appreciating the variety of information that faculty may consider meaningful and useful. While numeric assessment data may remain the gold standard for data advocates and many educators alike, it is not the only pertinent source of information that faculty view as salient to their practice. As one respondent put it, there is "a human or personal element to this [teaching and learning] that cannot always be directly quantified."

Of course, considering information sources such as a hallway conversation between colleagues as "data" may strike some as questionable. In this era of "evidence" the currency of the moment is test scores. Yet no single data type or assessments of teaching quality should be used to guide most teaching-related decisions. Ideally, leaders must acknowledge and support multiple sources and types of data (e.g., portfolios) towards illuminating practice (Seldin, 1997).

At the same time, leaders must also remind faculty about the limitations of anecdotal data. Our respondents, in fact, often recognized these limitations. Initially, the goal should be to

encourage faculty to adopt a continuous improvement approach to their teaching regardless of the data they collect, analyze, and reflect upon. Later, as faculty become more conversant with this approach to their own teaching, more sophisticated sources of data can be introduced into this newfound routine.

**Consider Instituting Systems That Foster (Collective) Reflective Practice.** Research on use of effective data systems in education highlights the importance of routines for using data, and an organizational culture that supports this (Jenkins & Kerrigan, 2008; Spillane, 2012). In particular, two features are viewed as critical: the inclusion of mechanisms that "feed back" data to teachers, and structured opportunities for teachers to reflect on these data and consider implications for future practice (Banta & Blaiche, 2011; Tagg, 2012).

How might such structured and timely reflection be encouraged? In cases where a course is not being team-taught, a possible solution lies in the ruminations of a biology respondent who, upon consideration of the lack of data systems in her department, wondered "maybe my department chair should require us to write up a reflective piece about our teaching and student evaluation data at the end of each semester." Importantly, administrators need to consider how to encourage such reflection without inviting backlash from already busy professionals.

A variety of external motivators may also encourage faculty use and consideration of data, including funding of such work in the form of release time and as stipends, teaching awards, affiliations with esteemed colleagues and disciplinary foundations and initiatives, a free lunch or happy hour event over which to have discussions about data and pedagogical improvements (Bouwma-Gearhart, 2012). Edicts from accreditors (disciplinary or regional institutional accreditors) and other policies forcing departmental or faculty instructor review (such as peer reviews of teaching) may be leveraged gently to encourage faculty members' better and more standard data driven decision-making.

## CONCLUSIONS

What is exciting to us is that faculty, generally, are ready and wanting to be part of building of data systems that truly inform, and can inform others of, their teaching. As one faculty said:

> I will forever be a student to teaching. I mean, it's an organic system. It's always evolving. It's always learning from mistakes. It's always taking in certain quantified data and qualitative data and re-adjusting. So, I picture myself doing that 'til the day I stop teaching.

Faculty generally want teaching-related data, especially about student learning and how students are more generally experiencing their teaching and courses. The respondent who claimed peer reviews of teaching to be "a complete waste of time," in fact, recommended improvement to these through "formalized feedback structure…multiple visits or being able to plan the visit so that you can talk specifics about the goals of that day, rather than just broadly." Thus, while existing data systems are widely perceived by faculty as less than meaningful, there does exist a desire for something better and that may not necessitate throwing out the baby with the bathwater.

So as the field moves towards a more evidence-based approach to decision making at all levels of the academy, we strongly urge postsecondary leaders to resist the urge to design and employ instructional data systems for compliance purposes first, and professional growth and development second. Postsecondary educators and leaders must work to forge a postsecondary destiny that privileges the later, before the alternative is forced upon us. As we have learned in the K-12 sector, the "pendulum has swung far to one side" in focusing on "hard" evidence over information that is relevant and responsive to the needs of real-world educators (Mandinach, 2012 p. 81). This is not to argue against a more careful, deliberate, and evidence-based approach to making decisions as well as identifying pockets of ineffective teaching practice. But the desire for improvement and accountability should not trump the interests of those most central to the teaching and learning enterprise – that of educators and their students.

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# TROUBLING CHANGES IN CAPITAL STRUCTURES AT SMALL PRIVATE COLLEGES

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## INTRODUCTION

Colleges and universities often need to fund large capital projects on campus by issuing bonds. Schools construct new academic buildings or dormitories, refurbish labs, and update classrooms. New developments are funded through a variety of methods. Institutions may raise funds through donations or grants, by reallocating currently available money, by making withdrawals from the endowment, through venture capital firms, or by borrowing. Any combination of funding methods can be used to fund capital projects on campus. A school's long-term goals and current financial constraints will dictate the combination of funding methods used (Tuckman, 1993).

The basic dichotomy of funding methods is split between those using immediately available funds and those borrowing funds. Using immediately available funds allows the institution to avoid financing costs (e.g., fees paid to financial institutions and interest paid to the loaner), to reduce the future financial obligations of repayment, and reduce the amount of current assets currently being promised as collateral. However, if an institution uses currently available funds it reduces its liquid reserves (i.e., funds or assets that can be quickly converted to cash) and reduces the possibility of investing currently available funds in interest bearing vehicles (Blustain, Cobine, Gore, Palmucci, Townsley, & Van Gorden, 2008**)**.

Each college and university sets its level of debt adversity. Some schools use debt, primarily in the form of bonds, to finance most capital projects on campus while others avoid floating debt as much as possible. An institution's Board of Trustees and senior administrators may be wary of or uncomfortable with taking on significant long-term debt because of the uncertainty of future

financial situations. Other institutions may not be able to find an individual or company to lend it money (under desirable terms) because of the institution's current financial situation. Still others, which are on financially sound footing, generally do not worry about taking on debt but nonetheless structure loans in a manner that are sound and judicious not only for the institution's present circumstances but also its future. However comfortable a school is with debt, it is important for the institution to understand how to use debt effectively (Anderson & Meyerson, 1990).

In this paper I discuss the long-term debt market and outline how colleges and universities access funds. I will then use two theories of how organizations structure their capital to examine the current literature of postsecondary long-term debt. I will explore the specific position small private colleges in this market, and capital structure issues these schools face. Finally, I will critique the current financial regulation and suggest how capital structure theories can inform policy.

My purpose in doing so is a dearth of literature on nonprofit capital structure and higher education in particular. As Robert Yetman notes, "[i]t is unfortunately a simple task to summarize the existing body of research on nonprofit capital formation and use: we know slightly more than very little" (2010, p. 59). My argument shall be that the current state of the long-term debt market puts some colleges in a vulnerable position. Specifically tuition-reliant, less wealthy, and highly-leveraged institutions are in danger of being overcome by financial deficits. The efficient use of federal funds, existence of faculty autonomy, and equity to students are all potentially in jeopardy if institutions are not more thoughtful with their borrowing practices.

**Reasons Why Institutions Use Long-Term Debt Financing**

The alternatives to long term debt face several limitations. Howard Tuckman and Cyril Chang (1993) note that while venture capital from foundations is available to the nonprofit sector, it generally is limited to more well-known institutions and this funding can fall well short of a college's need. Endowments are linked directly to institutional prestige (Brewer, Gates, and Goldman, 2009) thus colleges and universities hesitate to deplete their stores. For example, despite struggling with financial hardships in the 1970's, Yale opted not to utilize its endowment funds (Tuckman & Chang, 1993). Colleges and universities receive dividends from their endowments in addition to raising money through charitable donations. While typical grants from foundations may be small, program-related investments (PRIs) can supply more significant funding. PRIs are grants from foundations that are outside the normal granting process. In exchange for funds, the receiving

nonprofit must give the foundation equity in the organization, which for a nonprofit generally means claims to some of future earnings (Yetman, 2010).

As an alternative to these sources of capital, institutions use bonds to fund projects. Non-profit organizations, such as colleges and universities, can leverage their worth to issue bonds. Schools can offer their assets as collateral and rely upon their creditworthiness in order to borrow funds over long periods of time. A school can rely upon the value of its physical plant, expected earnings (such as tuition revenue), and cash holdings as proof it is able to fill the obligations of debt repayment. Factors such as institutional reputation, projected demand for specific programs, and anticipated income (e.g., from medical facilities) all contribute to an institution's creditworthiness and thus its ability to borrow money (Moody's, 2014; S&P, 2014).

**How Bonds Work**

Bonds are a form of long-term debt. An institution may issue a bond in order to secure funds over an extended period of time. When a bond is issued, the owner of the bond produces the requisite money in exchange for a promise from the issuer to repay the funds with interest. While the bond itself is a single piece of paper that can be transferred between individuals or corporations, they are generally backed by an indenture. This is a larger document that details the specific lending and repayment agreements as well as the potential assets pledged as collateral and any restrictions on future borrowing or asset sales (i.e., restrictive covenants) that are intended to protect the bondholder from losses (Seitz, 1983). Assets pledged as collateral provide assurance the lender will be repaid; restrictive covenants, or explicitly written constraints, guarantee that the borrower will not take on too much debt and thus be unable to meet its payment obligations. Restrictive covenants can set various levels and lengths of debt agreements and the borrower is legally obligated to adhere to these provisions.

In addition to listing assets that may be posted as collateral, the indenture will provide the details of the speed of repayment. Bonds are generally issued in increments of $1,000 and can be repaid between five and thirty years (Seitz, 1983). More recently, a handful of institutions have ventured beyond 30 years and are issuing 100-year bonds (Gregory, 2014). The so-called century bonds can have extremely low interest rates due to the length and stability of the investment. They also reflect the trust investors have in the longevity of the institution. Because of this trust, these bonds may only be available to prestigious institutions. All the funds are typically given to the institution at the beginning of the debt term, but each agreement can differ. There are numerous

types of bonds with varying repayment terms and each agreement is generally tailored to the specific situation and achieved through negotiations between the two parties (Seitz, 1983). Table 1 describes eight types of bonds commonly used by postsecondary institutions.

Table 1: Common Types of Bonds

| | Bond Type | Description |
|---|---|---|
| Fixed Rate | Term | Single maturity date |
| | Call Provisions | Specific dates throughout the life of the bond that allow repayment ahead of schedule |
| | Lease Structure | Specific ownership of property as part of the debt agreement |
| | Zero Coupon | Debt instrument with no interest payments that is issued at a deep discount and redeemed at face value |
| Variable Rate | Variable-Rate Demand | Interests rates are recalibrated quarterly, semi-annually or annually; investor has a put option |
| | Tender Option | Rate are recalibrated based on a specified time of six months to 10 years, investor has a put option |
| | Multimodal | Issuer can change the interest rate |
| | Auction Rate Securities | Interest rate is established at periodic auctions, typically monthly, with no put option for investor |

Source: Adapted from text (Blustain et. al, 2008)

**Bond Issuing Process**

To issue long-term debt in the form of bonds, an institution first determines the specific types of debt it will use and for which it is eligible. The college or university then contracts with an investment banker to act as the middleman between the institution and the buyer of the bond. The investment bank provides this service by constantly communicating with and monitoring financial markets. The bank will generally use its knowledge of the market to negotiate an interest rate given the desired repayment terms and write the formalizing documents (Seitz, 1983).

Larger investment banking firms are able to guarantee a bond to be sold once all terms are agreed upon between the firm and the institution. Firms that do this are also referred to as underwriters. In some cases, the investment banking firm will purchase the entire issue, and then resell it to other firms or individuals, or manage a group of other investment firms that each buy a portion of the debt. Before any debt is sold in the public market place, the investment bank registers the bond with and seeks approval from the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC). Institutions and firms may agree to sell bonds in the private market (generally through the professional connections of the investment bank) in order to avoid compliance with certain regulations and to

bypass the SEC approval process (Seitz, 1983). The Securities Act of 1933 seeks to provide investors with important financial information regarding public offerings and to foil deceitful and fraudulent offerings. In accordance with these laws, institutions issuing bonds must file a prospectus with the SEC that describes the institution and its mission, explains the details of the bond, includes information regarding institutional management, and lists financial statements. The SEC reviews the documents to ensure compliance, but it does not judge the merits of the investment. The SEC makes the documents available to the public and potential investors (Securities and Exchange Commission, 2015). Institutions' publicly available financial reports will indicate outstanding bonds and necessary payments. The specific terms of privately held bonds may be kept secret by an institution, for example, Burlington College's private loan from the diocese selling the parcel of land.

In addition to selling debt through investment banking firms, some colleges and universities are eligible to sell bonds in the municipal bonds market. Municipal tax-exempt bonds are issued on behalf of a college or university by governments (local or state) or their agencies. These bonds have been in wide use in higher education since the 1980's and can be issued by both public and private schools, depending on the state and local laws. The major benefit is that the interest paid on the loans is tax-exempt thus incentivizing the lender to provide a lower interest rate (Blustain et. al, 2008). Interest paid on debt is tax exempt. Although many colleges and universities are non-profit institutions, they also may have income sources that do not qualify for tax-exempt status. Because of this, there may be strategic reasons for borrowing through municipal bond markets (Calabrese, 2011). However, as demonstrated by the 2015 cancellation of Louisiana State University's $115 million municipal bond, public borrowing may be thwarted by political maneuvers. State budget battles caused investors to become wary of the municipal bond investment and may even impact the institution's credit rating (Chappatta, 2015).

The market for municipal bonds, of which some are issued for colleges and universities, is a secondary market. Secondary markets differ from typical bond markets in that there is no public trading forum or exchange for the bonds (CDIAC, n.d.). Unlike municipal bond markets, debt obtained through taxable methods is free from these regulations and can be traded in more common markets. Issuing bonds in the capital bonds market faces fewer restrictions and bureaucratic rules. Colleges and universities may want to use taxable debt in order to expedite the process or because the projects being funded do not qualify for tax-exempt bonds (Blustain et. al, 2008).

## CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

There are two main theories of nonprofit capital structure, or the combination of various modes of financing: the static trade-off and pecking order theories (Calabrese, 2011). Thad Calabrese explains the two theories broadly: "The static trade-off theory proposes that nonprofit managers balance the costs and benefits of debt to reach an optimal leverage level, while the pecking order theory suggests that managers simply prefer internal funds to external borrowing" (p. 119). These theories, originally derived from more general, for-profit-focused capital structure theories, have only been employed a few times in assessing nonprofit financial management (see Bowman, 2002; Calabrese, 2011; Denison, 2009; Jegers &Verschueren, 2006; and Yan, Denison, & Butler, 2009). Much of the work in this area has focused on hospitals in particular.

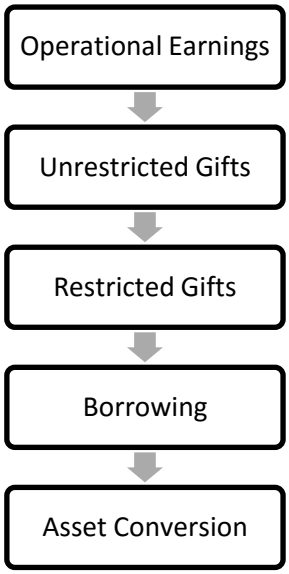
Capital structure is generally operationalized as leverage which is the debt to asset ratio (Bowman, 2002). An organization that has a higher debt to asset ratio is considered to be more leveraged, and vice versa. Institutions choose a capital structure based on their internal, political, and financial situations. The amount a school is leveraged is a decision made by the institution's leaders, but is also affected by exogenous variables such as the lending market's willingness to provide funds. The growing body of work examining the capital structure of nonprofits seeks to understand and explain how endogenous characteristics of an organization (e.g., size, endowment level, and revenue structure) and exogenous factors (e.g., lending environment, public and government support, and political atmosphere) impact how leveraged the institution will be.

The pecking order theory states that an organization will prefer to use unrestricted internal capital generated by operational earnings. Because these funds are unrestricted, the organization is free to use them how it wishes (Calabrese, 2011). This differs from received restricted funds from a donor in which the philanthropist specifically dictates how the money is to be used (Denison, 2009). The firm will also prefer self-produced earnings over unrestricted donations because even though the funds have not been explicitly earmarked, the donor may still influence how they are used the organization may be loosely held socially accountable (Denison, 2009).

Organizations will then consider external borrowing under the pecking order theory (Bowman, 2002). Taking on debt is a long-term commitment (even short-term borrowing is a longer term than using immediately available internal funds) that involves risk of default and bankruptcy (Kraus & Litzenberger, 1973). Although default does not always result in bankruptcy, it may tarnish an organization's reputation which is also avoided by nonprofit managers (Bowman, 2002). If borrowing is not an option, managers will reach the lowest level of the pecking order: asset

conversion. The liquidation of an organization's financial assets, mainly its endowment, is deemed the worst option because of the opportunity cost relative to borrowing. An institution's endowment is comprised of stocks and bonds which generally have a higher rate of return than the interest rate an organization would pay on its debt (Bowman, 2002). Figure 1 summarizes the hierarchy of capital structuring under the pecking order theory.

Figure 1. Pecking Order Theory Capital Structure Hierarchy




Hence I define pecking order theory as an organization's preference to use unrestricted internal capital generated by operational earnings and gifts over issuing long-term debt in order to fund campus projects.

Static trade-off theory is the competing explanation for how organizations structure capital. As Calabrese (2011) explains, this theory explains organizational decisions to borrow through a cost-benefit analysis framework. Institutions seek to optimize how leveraged they are by weighing the costs of borrowing compared to using internal funds (e.g., interest, transaction fees, etc.) with the benefits of seeking external capital (e.g., maintaining larger reserve funds, avoiding asset conversion, obtaining large sums of cash for expansion or immediate projects, etc.).

Static trade-off theory also provides an opportunity for boards or executive management to control an institution. By leveraging the organization, future earnings must be used to pay off debt obligations. Guaranteeing future earnings will be used to service long-term debt prevents the organization from using earning for other activities (e.g., raising salaries, funding new programs,

expanding the organization is ways other than directed by the board, etc.). Furthermore, as earnings increase the organization will leverage itself more in order to tie this available cash to future payments on new debt. This control is critical to the static trade-off theory as it justifies the importance of debt in capital structuring (Bowman, 2002).

Static trade-off and pecking order theory have been widely used in explaining how organizations structure capital, and have recently began being explicitly tested in the nonprofit sector. The findings have been mixed thus far, presumably because of the wide variety of nonprofit institutions. Bowman (2002) finds that high earnings and a large endowment result in increased leverage and uncertainty in the consistency of earnings leads to a decrease in borrowing. This finding is in line with the stat trade-off theory as institutions do not simply use all available internal funding first but rather they consider their earnings streams to determine an appropriate leverage rate. Similarly, Denison (2005) finds that total assets and revenues increase the likelihood of an organization to utilize debt financing thus supporting the static trade-off theory.

Calabrese (2011) concludes nonprofits use a modified pecking order for capital formation. He finds that organizations prefer using internal funds first, however, they resist draining all internal funds. These organizations reach a point where they switch a trade-off oriented capital structure in order to preserve institution-specific minimum internal reserves. Jegers and Verschueren (2006) find that institutional size, as measured by number of employees, and assets impact whether an institution uses a static trade-off or a pecking order mechanism for determining capital structure. Larger institutions prefer static trade-off methods and organizations with limited assets rely more on a pecking order method of structuring capital.

## ANALYSIS OF THE CURRENT DEBT MARKET

Costs associated with long-term debt and interest expenses have both increased significantly; the amount institutions are spending on interest payments for their long-term debt grew nearly twice as fast as the amount being spent on instruction from 2002 through 2008. The compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of instruction costs was 4.8 percent compared to a 9.2 percent CAGR for interest expenses. Furthermore, over this same period long-term debt totals at institutions had a CAGR of 11.7 percent (Denneen and Dretler, 2012). The increasing debt burden contributes to the financial strains on colleges and universities and is cause for research into the implications of such debt.

Although these debt costs are rising, fewer colleges increased their debt in fiscal year 2013 than in the preceding four years (Ortiz, 2014). This may indicate colleges are now more cognizant of the potential issues they are facing with the increasing debt financing costs and are scaling back their borrowing. Schools may have also been borrowing during the recession due to low interest rates or because their revenues had fallen with the economy and there was a need for immediate cash; in either case, borrowing may have slowed as the economy recovered. These hypotheses indicate that during the recession there was an increase in the number of schools forming capital under a static trade-off theory either due to low borrowing costs or an immediate need for capital. The shift back to limited borrowing may be because a pecking order method for capital formation became more feasible as the economy recovered or borrowing became too expensive and moved long-term debt down the pecking order ladder to below internal funds.

A third possibility is that the costs of financing long-term debt is ballooning due to rising interest rates (on bonds with floating rates), administrative costs, or restructuring of debt under higher rates. These possibilities all indicate an institution that strayed from pecking order toward a static trade-off model and is now grappling with unexpected consequences. All forms of higher education are grappling with debt considerations and there is a dearth of research in the field. However, different types of institutions may be facing different types of debt-related problems. Specifically, small private colleges may be most at risk for financial instability and debt-related issues. The nuances of the higher education industry are integral to assessing the state of colleges and universities.

**Cases of Massive Debt**

Three cases of long-term debt expansion at Burlington College, Colby College, and University of California, Berkeley demonstrate shifts from a pecking order method of capital debt formation, or the reliance on internal funds for capital, to a static trade-off model where institutions take on long-term debt in lieu of using currently available funds. These three institutions represent different types of schools and thus face different challenges as detailed below.

A 2014 exposé on Burlington College is one example of the current financial instability facing the institution (Johnson, 2014). The college, which has an annual operating budget of $4 million, purchased 32 acres of land for $10 million in 2010. The college received a $6.5 million bond from the Vermont Educational and Health Buildings Finance Agency and a private $3.5 million loan from the church diocese that sold the property to Burlington. Before the debt was issued to Burlington, a

private consulting firm provided an independent recommendation on the viability of the institution's ability to repay the debt. The firm noted that repayment hinged on the school's ability to meet planned increased enrollments and a successful fundraising campaign. Burlington has fallen short of both of these goals. After a year of no payments, the diocese is claiming the loan is now in default and the college is selling assets, including houses used as student residences, to meet the repayments.

Another example of rapidly increasing debt at small private schools is found at Colby College in Maine, which borrowed over $100 million in January 2015. Michael McDonald (2015) of Bloomberg reported on the borrowing, noting a public focus on rankings as the primary driver. In order to achieve gains in U.S. News & World Report rankings, Colby seeks to increase its applications via spending on student-luring projects such as new sports and arts facilities. It remains to be seen if the school will receive payoffs (e.g., increased rankings that lead to increased prestige and yield more alumni donations and higher net tuition revenue) large enough to justify the debt. Calculating these payoffs and attributing them directly to projects funded by the incurred debt is challenging and may not be possible for many years after their completion. If the facilities do not achieve the intended increase in applications and subsequent financial gains, the debt may be damaging to the institution as Colby will have to pay the money back by increasing revenue (e.g., tuition or endowment revenue) or diverting funds from other costs (e.g., financial aid, facilities maintenance, or student services).

A third, and more troubling, example of large institutional bonds is the University of California at Berkeley's Memorial Stadium. Part of the logic behind the use of bonds to build the stadium was that the institution would make significant profits from luxury seating that would pay off the massive debt. The sales of the premiere seating were $120 million short of the goal in 2013. The terms of the debt and the need to repay the $445 million bond may force the University of California into using tuition and tax revenue to meet obligations (Eaton, Dioun, Godoy, Goldstein, Habinek, & Osley-Thomas, 2014).

The three examples come from varied sectors and demonstrate potential risks in taking out large bonds or shifting from a pecking order to a static trade-off model of capital formation. Colby and UC Berkeley are prestigious institutions with sizable endowments. Increased tuition revenue and endowment drawdowns could be used to pay off bad investments thus protecting the institutions from the risk inherent in the static trade-off theory. Burlington College, however, may not have the demand, large endowment, or wealthy donors to ameliorate the impact of bad

investments on the institution. The risks of borrowing, and thus a shift to a static trade-off model, are exacerbated. Although all three examples may be cause for concern, the story of Burlington is particularly troubling because of the insufficient safety net. Burlington's troubles may be more indicative of most small, private colleges with limited market share that see long-term debt as a short-term solution. As these types of institutions gamble with future revenues, more of them may become unstable and face difficult choices including the decision to close.

**Trends at Small Private Colleges**

As debt financing costs grow, it is important we understand how this financial burden impacts the sector. Jeff Denneen and Tom Dretler (2012) give the following warning: "Universities simply cannot afford to increase costs in nonstrategic areas and take on more debt, if they want to survive" (p. 12). They are joined by Moody's in their apprehensive outlook for the financial stability of postsecondary institutions. The investment agency's 2014 report indicates continued financial stress on higher education institutions. It cites increased competition for students and sector pressures to expand facilities (projects often financed by long-term debt) as key issues. Long-term debt needs to be carefully considered by an institution. An institution should assess its financial health and projected ability to repay the debt. Furthermore, it is important to recognize that projected future incomes are not guaranteed, but the institution will still have to repay the borrowed funds and the associated interest. As previously noted, schools with less reliable future revenue (i.e., schools with smaller endowments, less student demand, or smaller student populations) may struggle to pay debt obligations if the investments do not achieve the projected revenue goals.

Dawn Lyken-Segosebe and Justin Cole Shepherd (2013) studied 57 small private institutions, similar to those described above, that closed between 2004 and 2013. The authors note that debt-servicing expenses, or interest and principal payments due over an extended period of time that include those made on long-term debt, at these schools were very high. At the 57 closed institutions, debt-servicing expenses were approximately five times those of other small institutions and in many cases larger than high-enrollment schools. The link between debt payments and school closure reflects the warnings provided by Moody's and Denneen and Dretler. The increasing cost of debt and debt servicing (Denneen & Dretler, 2012) coupled with decreased revenues (Schwarz, 2013) has created a challenging environment resulting in financial instability and institutional closures (Lyken-Segosebe & Shepherd, 2013).

Although debt is a concern for any institution, Lyken-Segosebe and Shepherd (2013) find that of private four-year institutions, small institutions are more likely to close. The average enrollment of the closed institutions was 377 students. Furthermore, the 57 institutions that failed had a higher proportion of part-time students than those that have remained in operation and their student bodies were also more heavily comprised of undergraduate students than successful schools. These institutions were also more heavily reliant upon tuition revenue, as it made up nearly half of total revenue at schools that closed. Finally, amortization costs averaged nearly $1.4 million each year compared to under $200,000 at institutions that remained open. The findings demonstrate that small, private four-year institutions that are tuition reliant and have large portions of part-time and undergraduate students are susceptible to large debt payments and should be particularly wary of long-term debt.

Current literature notes that smaller institutions without large endowments are more inclined to subscribe to a pecking order method of capital structure. The 57 institutions in the Lyken-Segosebe and Shepherd (2013) study deviated from this scheme. They lacked the large size, diverse and stable income sources, and large endowments associated with successful nonprofit organizations' decisions to employ a static trade-off approach to leveraging the institution. Despite not fitting the profile of the typical highly leveraged nonprofit organization, these institutions opted to take out significant levels of debt which eventually contributed to their closing.

Similarly, Burlington College had a profile similar to nonprofits engaged in a pecking order style of capital structure. The small school with limited sources of revenue would have engaged in a pecking order method of financing itself according to the conceptual literature. The institution's insistence on its ability to diversify revenue streams, grow its endowment, and increase its student body were lofty goals that would make it more similar to a school capable of successfully engaging in a trade-off mechanism of leveraging itself. Burlington College proceeded to take on significant amounts of long-term debt which ultimately overwhelmed the institution and has caused it to default on its obligations.

Contrary to the case of Burlington are UC Berkeley and Colby College. Both schools are larger, have sizable endowments, and diversified revenue streams. These two institutions are more similar to those described in the static trade-off literature. Although there is risk involved in their debt contracts, static trade-off theory helps us understand how these institutions have weighed the costs and benefits of such risks in order to determine an optimal amount to be leveraged. Their

stark contrast in resources to small liberal arts colleges highlights the utility of these capital formation theories in understanding institutional risks and decisions.

**Future Growth in Borrowing**

Institutions that are taking on debt and lenders loaning money consider a school's debt capacity (i.e., the amount of debt an institution can handle while maintaining financial stability). While some colleges' and universities' borrowing is governed by static policies, many base their creditworthiness on the institution's debt capacity. Two common ways to measure this are: portion of total revenue used to pay costs associated with current debt, and the ratio of debt to assets. Nationally, colleges and universities are using between four and six percent of total revenues to service their debt (Blustain et. al, 2008).

The National Association of College and University Business Officers and Commonfund collect data on institutional debt in an annual survey. In fiscal year 2013, average outstanding debt was directly related to the size of an institution's endowment. Those with the smallest endowment, under $25 million, had an average of $26.5 million in debt, and had the highest ratio of debt servicing costs to total operating budget at 6.5 percent. Less-endowed institutions also have the highest percentage of their debt at a floating interest rate. This is important because the costs to service the debt will increase as market interest rates increase thus causing instability in payments. One third of the institutions with small endowments plan to significantly increase their debt over the next two years (institutions were not asked to qualify what they mean by significant increases). The survey data is aggregated so it is impossible to pair this with institutional data, but smaller institutions are more heavily reliant upon tuition revenue and have higher percentages of floating interest rate debt, both of which cause instability and unpredictability in the already higher debt servicing rates (National Association of Colleges and University Business Officers & Commonfund Institute, 2014).

The current levels of debt with floating interest rates and high ratios of debt servicing at small institutions is unnerving. The plans for one third of small institutions to significantly increase debt indicates a large shift from pecking order to static trade-off methods of capital structuring at institutions that are conceptually ill equipped for the latter. As exemplified by the Lyken-Segosebe and Shepherd study and the Burlington College case, this shift in capital structuring may lead to serious financial issues. These planned changes are reason to be concerned about small private colleges and their striking desire to deviate from a capital structure that, according to conceptual

literature, is best suited for them. Small tuition-dependent private colleges that fail appear to be linked with shifts from a pecking order to a static trade-off model of capital formation.

**Bond Ratings and Institutional Creditworthiness**

Institutions are also rated on their trustworthiness of fund repayment. The two largest agencies which provide bond ratings for postsecondary institutions are Moody's Investment Service (Moody's) and Standard and Poor (S&P). Analysts at the two firms evaluate the creditworthiness of an institution to determine a bond rating. The ratings signal to potential loaners the risk associated with loaning money to a specific institution. The risk associated with lending money to an institution directly impacts the interest rate of the loan. Loans to institutions that have a greater risk of defaulting generally pay a higher interest rate. These additional costs compensate the firm or individual that purchases the bond for taking on the additional risk of a less creditworthy institution being able to fully repay the bond. According to a 2014 Washington Post analysis of Moody's credit ratings only 23 of 509 currently rated institutions received an Aaa bond rating, the highest awarded. On the other end of the spectrum, 18 schools were rated below investment grade. Furthermore, three times as many schools received credit downgrades than upgrades from July 2013 to July 2014. That is, Moody's concluded during that year-long period 37 institutions were less creditworthy than they had been previously rated, and only nine institutions had increased their creditworthiness. The remaining 473 institutions that are currently rated either remained unchanged or were not reevaluated in that year (Anderson, 2014).

Moody's methodology is based on five factors: market position, operating performance, balance sheet and capital investment, governance and management, and legal security and debt structure (Moody's Investor Service, 2011). Standard and Poor's credit ratings of colleges and universities are based on "an analysis of demand, enrollment, debt, and financial ratios, as well as qualitative factors" (Standard and Poor, 2014a, p. 7). S&P ratings are separated into investment grade and speculative grade, indicating two tiers of creditworthiness (Standard and Poor, 2014b).

The downgrades in credit scores as institutions are actively increasing and seeking to increase debt loads are clear market indications that support the dichotomy of conceptual theories of capital structure. The credit ratings are based on similar institutional and financial qualities that determine the appropriate method of capital structuring in the nonprofit literature. Despite this alignment, institutions are still seeking to engage in trade-off methods of increasing debt when their organizational characteristics appear to favor a pecking order style of capital structuring.

**Government Regulation**

The Unites States Department of Education (2014) currently rates institutions' financial responsibility using four metrics: sufficient reserves for government aid refunds, the ability to return funds in a timely manner, being current on all debt obligations, and a financial health composite score comprised of a primary reserve ratio, an equity ratio, and a net income ratio. The composite score uses ratios that measure the expendable resources available for ongoing obligations, the portion of an institution's assets it actually owns, and the institution's capability to function within its means. The ratios are combined and scored from -1.0 to 3.0. Institutions scoring below a 1.0 are considered "not financially responsible" and may only continue to participate in Title IV funding under a provisional status. Schools scoring between 1.0 and 1.4 are considered responsible; however, they are subject to additional financial monitoring. Institutions at 1.5 or higher face no penalties and are considered financially viable (Department of Education, 2014). Examining the fiscal year 2012 data from the Department of Education, 80 nonprofit institutions received a composite score below 1.0, which indicates financial irresponsibility. In fiscal year 2010, the most recent data available for Burlington College, the school scored a 2.3 and was deemed a healthy institution.

The financial standards only collect data and evaluate schools based on current and previous metrics. There are no standards or regulations colleges are subjected to when planning to carry out financial changes, such as significantly increasing the institution's indebtedness. The Department does not actively monitor schools' attempts to become highly leverage. Given the theoretical literature and the data presented over recent years of financial instability, it may be appropriate for the Department to regulate changes in capital structure at institutions. Even if an institution is on sound financial ground, preventing institutions that receive Title IV funding from engaging in highly risky leveraging may be in the best interest of students, institutional employees, and taxpayers.

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The literature examining capital structure theories at nonprofit organizations is quite limited and nearly nonexistent in the higher education industry specifically. By examining the current set of postsecondary institutional debt financing literature with respect to the pecking order and static trade-off theories, this paper has elucidated how institutions of higher education choose to spend and borrow. The variability within the postsecondary sector is important for understanding capital structure and potential issues.

In examining the nonprofit capital structure literature, it becomes clear that larger, well-endowed organizations with diverse revenue streams gravitate towards the static trade-off theory where they seek an optimal level of institutional leverage that considers their other sources of revenue. In terms of the postsecondary sector, these organizations are akin to large research institutions with stable enrollment, auxiliary incomes (e.g., hospital or patent revenues), consistent donors, and varied sources of grant funding. These types of schools are better prepared to leverage themselves and utilize a mix of internal equity and debt to finance activities and projects.

The literature also notes that smaller organizations without diverse revenue streams or a large endowment prefer to use internal funds over external borrowing. These nonprofits adhere closely to the pecking order theory of capital formation with some evidence that they will strive to preserve at least a base-level of reserve funds and will access the debt market to avoid depleting all these reserves. These nonprofit organizations are similar to small private colleges with limited enrollments, small endowments, and that are reliant upon tuition revenue. The recent increases in debt at these types of institutions indicate a shift from a pecking order method of capital structure to a static trade-off method. This shift has been accompanied by institutional closures. Furthermore, the intended increase in borrowing from small schools is cause for concern. The literature demonstrates that small schools that have changed from a pecking order method to a static trade-off method of capital structuring often face significant financial hardships and closure. This is likely because they lack the qualities of other nonprofit organizations that meet the conceptual requirements for increased institutional leverage: a large endowment and size and a variety of income sources.

Although the Department of Education has financial responsibility requirements, the focus on institutional debt is limited. There are no regulations constraining how nonprofit colleges enter the debt market to finance campus activities. Given that institutional closure gravely impacts students and faculty, more attention should be paid to the debt-related activities of colleges and universities. Schools that receive Title IV funds should be monitored to ensure they are not making risky decisions about debt that would waste this student aid money. Institutions that are ill prepared to enter the debt market may over-leverage themselves, be forced into high interest rates, or accept restrictive covenants that promise future tuition hikes to repay loans. Allowing colleges to make risky debt decisions that may be paid off through students' tuition and Title IV money is wasteful and warrants closer government oversight.

Examining the current postsecondary debt literature through a capital structure lens helps understand the decision to take on and the negative consequences of large debt. It also highlights the need for additional research on capital structure theories in nonprofit organizations. Specifically, future studies should focus on the postsecondary market as it incorporates a wide range of institutional types. A better understanding of capital formation at various types of schools will provide guidance and understanding for institutions seeking to alter their current mix of funding and for government oversight policies.

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# LIVING IN THE MIDDLE: THE ROLE OF NEW DEPARTMENT CHAIRS

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## OVERVIEW

The role of the department chair is considered one of the least understood leadership positions in American higher education. According to Carroll and Wolverton (2004), 80% of academic decisions emerge from the department and chair level. Despite notable essays surrounding preparation for the role (Hecht, 2006; Wolverton, Ackerman, & Holt, 2005), implementation (Gmelch & Burns, 1993; Tucker, 1984), and the nuances addressing what the job involves (Boyko, 2009; Seagren, 1993), a need exists for research addressing the complexities of the position. For new chairs, these complexities involve transitioning from faculty member to administrator while maintaining the responsibilities of both positions. Although fewer than 3% receive formal leadership training in preparation for the position, nearly one in every three faculty assumes the position of chairperson at some point in their career (Gmelch, Reason, Schuh, & Shelley, 2002).

Department chairs serve as conductors of vital information between faculty and administration. The chairperson must thoroughly understand their role, posturing as they attempt to facilitate effectiveness with faculty, the department, and senior administration (Lees, Malik, & Vemuri, 2009). The expectation to obtain the required skills to perform the role of chair at a minimum competence level, without specific training opportunities, presents a conundrum for new department chairs. According to Gmelch et.al, (2002), every year, one out of five chairs struggles with the uncertainty of their position, eventually leaving the role of department chair. An

institutions ability to enhance the utilization of this position is key, for change requires a greater understanding of the leadership skills necessary to the department chair role.

Chairpersons find themselves in the middle of navigating a complicated, turbulent, and sometimes convoluted process of decision-making and realization within higher education settings (Waltzer, 2002). They nurture internal connections of the institution while simultaneously being constrained by policy obligations they do not guide (Clegg & McAuley, 2005; Ghoshal & Bartlett, 1998; Kanter, 1986). These constraints pose a variety of challenges to a *new* chair striving to do a good job in such an environment. While it is true, the meaning of doing a *good job* varies widely, a clear understanding of the phrase does not mitigate the effects of knowing what the job is about. As such, the present study suggests, *doing a good job* as a new department chair is first dependent upon how new chairs figure out the role (Gmelch 1991). The period of "discontinuity and flux" (Ashforth & Saks, 1995, p. 157), particularly relevant to the department chair job, impairs a newcomer's ability to be certain about what the role entails and subsequently how to react to any conclusions reached. This study suggests a way, that is beyond current theory and research, for new department chairs to understand and moderate the barriers of their leadership role within departments.

## THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Broadly connecting the frameworks from two adjoining disciplines: academic middle management in higher education and career transitions from organizational literature, this study builds upon the writings of Dill (1982, 1984), and Clegg and McAuley (2005). Dill, the author of *The Management of Academic Culture* (1982) and *The Nature of Administrative Behavior in Higher Education* (1984) argues that drawing on managerial techniques only makes sense if institutions are vying for reduced financial resources, quality students, or for capable faculty, when pursuing greater institutional recognition. Dill (1982) posits that higher education is similar to the corporate sector where personnel, budgets, and priority-based decisions exist. Institutions that promote individual development, in turn encourage worker longevity. Applications, according to Dill's treatment of management in academic culture, include institutional methods for recruiting, socializing, and training of department chairs, the implications of which are worth considering in a more systemic way.

Similarly, the work of Clegg and McAuley (2005) both support and challenge Dill's work by suggesting that the prevalent conversation within the literature moves beyond

"managerialism/collegiate duality" (p. 19) within higher education. Perhaps more critically, Clegg and McAuley (2005) offer an open invitation for additional conversation on the benefits of middle management to higher education within the general literature. Their work brings to light the idea that management is a multifaceted phenomenon that, generally, is a poorly understood concept in academic circles. They point to the rise of academic middle management discussions occurring because of the transformation of many institutions from highly selective to largely open institutions, a perspective supported by this study in the selection of comprehensive regional universities within the sample. The author's reference as evidence academic middle management positions that support long-lasting change in important areas. In the current landscape of higher education, these areas translate into the shaping of significant pedagogical decisions surrounding teaching and learning. Presenting their case, Clegg and McAuley (2005) encourage further conversation concentrated around the administration of organizations. This exchange should support an investigation into the claim that transitioning from faculty member to administration is a factor affecting the quality of how well the job of chairperson is done – an outcome where the consequence of error shows up, for example, in faculty and administration relations, as well as resource support for programs.

Pinder and Schroeder's (1987) idea of time to proficiency following a work role transition, and Nicholson's (1984) theory on work role transitions, offers a second perspective for studying new department chairs. The perceived amount of support someone receives after a work role transition, according to Pinder and Schroeder (1987), is a critical predictor of the time needed to become proficient at a new job. Pinder and Schroeder (1987) stress the importance of the supervisor and supervisee relationship and highlight the predictive value of role support. Within this study, the discovery of leader support for new department chairs is expected to essentially confirm Pinder and Schroeder's observation that "support does not by itself cause change…it makes change possible" (p. 341).

Additionally, Pinder and Schroeder (1987) offer a rationale for the transitional affects experienced by individuals and the larger organization, a notion paralleled in Nicholson's (1984) work. When it comes to the topic of transitions, most individuals readily agree that interruptions of schedules and habits both at work and at home can result in anxiety and stress (Brett, 1982, 1984) among people who transfer from one job to another. Where this agreement usually ends, however, is on the question of how transitions affect the larger organization. Pinder and Schroeder (1987) extend the conversation by suggesting that organizational investments for new employees far

exceed the rate of return newcomers make in actual contributions for some time after a work role transition. In short, the more time needed for new employees to make sense of the position and become proficient, the "greater the cost of a transfer to an organization" (Pinder & Schroeder,1987, p. 338). In other words, transfers initially hurt the organization or institution due to the time employees take to learn a new job.

This study is consistent with previous research on two generally accepted ideas about transitions. First, the individual is important when thinking about the transition process, an idea that supports Nicholson's (1984) work. Second, leader support is a critical piece to mitigating negative effects of transitions – an idea consistent with Pinder and Schroeder (1987). Most essential, however, department chairs make significant contributions oftentimes without recognition by senior administration and are, in effect, the catalysts for profound change in undergraduate education (Clegg & McAuley, 2005; Dill, 1982; 1984; Nicholson, 1984; Pinder & Das, 1984; Pinder & Schroeder, 1987).

Each chair brings with them previous work experience and personal attributes which interact with the immediate social system created or influenced by the dean or existing department climate. Role certainty, when appointed to the position of new chair, may have an influence on the level of interaction new chairs exercise within an existing system, warranting the study of this outcome variable. Role certainty is defined as a firm conviction that one's beliefs about a role are true. Role confidence, personality needs, and role support comprise the predictor variables and their combined influence should challenge future research to consider the department chair role as one that is dynamic rather than static and devoid of shifting academic priorities. Separate from role certainty, role confidence refers to the experiences of the individual and the job. To address the select concepts related to a person's psychological attributes related to work, the variable personality needs is included within this study. Role support refers to the environmental components associated with the job. Measured using a Likert scale, each of these variables, when combined, make up the totality of the respective predictor variable. The variable of *role confidence* includes the scales *novelty* and *discretion*. *Personality needs* includes the scales need for *control*, *need for feedback*, and *intolerance for ambiguity*. Lastly, *role support* includes *leader feedback* and *department climate* scales. The dependent variable used within this study is role certainty. Further discussion surrounding the topic of role certainty in new department chairs is needed within higher education literature, specifically in response to daily operations. These discussions invariably raise questions by those seeking to fulfill the position's demands such as, *What's going on here? What*

*can I do about it?* and, *Do I have the latitude to do something about it?* Currently no studies in higher education have looked at the relative contribution of these variables with respect to the role certainty of new department chairs.

## PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study is to examine the influence of role confidence, personality needs, and role support of new department chairs in predicting role certainty. Framed using theory to address academic middle management in higher education and career transitions from organizations, this study utilizes the factors currently debated within the literature when determining leadership effectiveness. Using a multiple regression analysis, this study will determine the role certainty in new department chairs while controlling for confounding factors known to affect leadership effectiveness. The following research question guides this study: To what degree does role confidence, personality needs, and role support predict the role certainty among new department chairs?

## METHODS

### Data and Sample

To answer the research question, we employed a cross-sectional survey of department chairs in the spring of 2011. To have comparative results from all our participants, we narrowed the institutional type to include American Basic Master's Colleges and Universities as defined by the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education. This institutional type includes institutions that award at least 50 master's degrees and less than 20 doctoral degrees per year (The Carnegie Foundation, 2010). Representing a common group of institutions, and providing the rationale for its use within this study, Basic Master's Colleges and Universities have a recognizable administrative level without being too small (e.g., liberal arts college) or too large (e.g., major research university). Excluded from the sample due to the low number of participants were Tribal Colleges and Special Focus Institutions. Within the remaining institutions, it is common for the department chair position to have an assumed *look* and function within middle management. This survey was distributed online to 1,820 department chairs at 64 institutions (see Table 1). Of the 1,820 invitations, a response rate of 36% resulted in the collection of 659 survey responses. These responses were further disaggregated to create the analytical sample containing 238 participants for this study.

Table 1. *Breakdown of New Department Chair Sampling Chronology*

| Description of Eligibility Criteria | N |
|---|---|
| Total number of persons initially emailed | 1,820 |
| Total number of persons who started the survey | 659 |
| Total number of persons meeting eligibility criteria for "new department chair" | 279 |
| Total number of new chairs with complete data (i.e., no missing values in responses) | 238 |

**Measures**

The survey instrument was designed primarily to collect data on three independent variables thought to influence the dependent variable: role certainty. Each variable is comprised of multiple scales. The independent variables consist of: role confidence (i.e., novelty, discretion), personality needs (need for control, need for feedback, intolerance for ambiguity), and role support (leader feedback, department climate). The dependent variable, role certainty, is comprised of three scales: role development, role ambiguity, and role self-efficacy. All scales were adapted from prominent studies in the higher education literature, organizational literature, and portions of The IDEA Center's *IDEA Feedback for Chairs System.*

Each of the measures used were previously established (Ashford & Cummings, 1983; West, Nicholson, & Rees, 1987; Benton, Gross, Pallett, Song, & Webster, 2010) as having internal consistency (i.e., reliability). Moreover, nearly all of the scales adapted for the present study are highlighted in Cook's (1981) seminal and often cited work, *The experience of work: A compendium and review of 249 measures and their use.* The original Likert-type format of the scales (e.g., Strongly disagree to Strongly agree) was preserved. However, five-point continuums were newly employed as response options allowing for more nuances among degrees of difference in scores. The scales were re-validated in this study using a principal component analysis.

**Analytic Approach**

This study aims to understand the factors influencing role certainty experienced by new department chairs in their job – an outcome based on the premise that one cannot effectively do a good job until they have first learned what to do (Pinder & Schroeder, 1987). That is, the amount of variation in new department chairs' certainty of their role can be explained by a combination of factors: confidence in the role, personal needs, and the support they receive while in the

department chair role. The scale used for role certainty is a sum of three other separate scales. Role development (Black & Ashford, 1995), which measures the extent to which the respondent re-defined the role, altered procedures, instituted new work goals, and changed the mission of the role, reported a Cronbach alpha of .90 indicating good internal consistency. Role ambiguity comes from role theory and classical organization theory and subscribes to the idea that formal positions in an organization ought to have clear expectations of tasks and responsibilities (Cook, 1981, p. 199). Adapted from Jones' (1986) scale, role self-efficacy measures individuals' assumptions that they are capable of performing the duties asked of them. Bauer suggested role self-efficacy is about gaining an understanding of the tasks in the role and growing in confidence respectively (2007).

In order to determine the relative importance each predictor has on role certainty, a multiple regression analysis was performed using the nine scales derived from the principle components analysis (PCA) in combination with two structural variables: career aspirations and mode of entry. Multiple regression analysis is an appropriate method of analysis for this study as it predicts the effect of multiple predictor variables upon a continuous dependent variable. This assumes that all of the independent variables have a direct effect on the dependent variable (Mujis, 2010). By holding each of the independent variables constant within the regression analysis, an estimate of the average value for the dependent variable can be determined. The statistics selected to run within the regression analysis included: estimates, confidence intervals, model fit, descriptive statistics, and collinearity diagnostics. A normal probability plot was requested for reasons of inspecting the assumption of normality of errors. SPSS was instructed to exclude cases pairwise.

## RESULTS

This summary of results details the relative importance of the nine scales in explaining the differences in the perception the dependent variable role certainty has among new department chairs. Table 2 displays Cronbach's alpha and the rotated loadings for a nine-component solution, in addition to the Pearson product moment correlation coefficient where two items are present.

A principal component analysis (PCA) with Varimax rotation utilizing the 26 scales makes up the survey items. A nine-component solution explained a total of 70.9% of the variance with both components 1 and 2 contributing the most with 15.1% and 13.6% respectively. The rotated solution showed very little ambiguity in the components, i.e., no item loaded highly on more than one component. The results were used to form nine scales, all but one with multiple measures (one scale—opportunity for feedback—contained one item). The scales were created by using unit

weights, i.e., adding together the responses to items loading significantly (loading > 0.5) on a component. For example, component 2 included 5 items, each with a possible value of 1-5. Each scale has good internal consistency as measured by Cronbach's alpha.

Table 2. *Summary of Items, Reliability, and Factor Loadings*

| Item | Loadings |
|---|---|
| **Department Climate (α=.89)** | |
| My department is an atmosphere in which there is cooperative effort among individuals to carry out difficult tasks. | .904 |
| Within my department there is open communication and trust among faculty and staff and the atmosphere is characterized by friendly relations. | .885 |
| Within my department individuals feel the atmosphere is conducive to the expression of individual opinions, ideas, and suggestions. | .861 |
| The faculty who comprise my department take pride in the department. | .796 |
| My department is seen as able to produce work of higher quality and quantity than other groups in the institution. | .692 |
| **Intolerance for Ambiguity (α=.76)** | |
| I don't like to work on a problem unless there is a possibility of coming out with a clear-cut and unambiguous answer. | .790 |
| I function very poorly whenever there is a serious lack of communication in a job situation. | .741 |
| If I am uncertain about the responsibility of my role, I get very anxious. | .696 |
| A problem has little attraction for me if I don't think it has a solution. | .663 |
| In a decision-making situation in which there is not enough information to process the problem, I feel very uncomfortable. | .631 |
| **Discretion(α=.75)** | |
| Freedom to set my own work objectives/targets | .830 |
| Freedom to prioritize when different parts of the role are done | .762 |
| Freedom to act independently of my immediate supervisor | .704 |
| Freedom to choose whom I deal with in order to carry out departmental work | .662 |
| **Novelty(α=.82)** | |
| The skills required for the job | .860 |
| The tasks involved | .841 |
| The methods used to do the job | .840 |
| **Need for control over department performance(α =.69)** | |
| Performance standards in the department | .845 |
| The quality of the faculty's work | .835 |
| **Need for control over own tasks** | |
| The variety of tasks performed | .811 |
| Decisions as to when things will be done in the department | .783 |

Table 2. *Summary of Items, Reliability, and Factor Loadings*

| Item | Loadings |
|---|---|
| **Leader feedback** | |
| Ask the [immediate supervisor] | .860 |
| To what extent do you find out from the [supervisor] how you are doing on the job? | .783 |
| **Indirect feedback** | |
| Compare yourself with others | .822 |
| Observe the characteristics of those praised by the [immediate supervisor] | .759 |
| **Opportunity for feedback** | |
| How much opportunity exists to find out how well you are doing in your job | .822 |

**Descriptive Statistics**

Table 3 presents the means and standard deviations for the scales created above as well as the dependent variable role certainty. All the factors have been averaged and thus means are reflected on a five-point scale. Novelty, indirect feedback and opportunities for feedback are the low values with department climate and need for control over tasks reflecting higher values.

Table 3. *Means and Standard Deviations*

| Factor | *M* | *SD* |
|---|---|---|
| (DV) Role certainty | 3.48 | 0.60 |
| (1) Department climate | 3.70 | 0.91 |
| (2) Intolerance for ambiguity | 3.21 | 0.79 |
| (3) Discretion | 3.86 | 0.78 |
| (4) Novelty | 2.52 | 0.98 |
| (5) Need for control over department performance | 3.60 | 0.95 |
| (6) Need for control over own tasks | 3.86 | 0.88 |
| (7) Leader feedback | 3.24 | 1.07 |
| (8) Indirect feedback | 2.75 | 1.02 |
| (9) Opportunity for feedback | 2.02 | 1.65 |

Note: *n = 238;* * $p < .05$ (2-tailed); ** $p < .01$ (2-tailed)

Table 4 presents the results of the regression predicting role certainty. The total variance explained by the model as a whole was 32.1%, ($F$ (11, 222) = 9.519; $p < .001$) suggesting the model is a better fit of the data and is also better at explaining role certainty than using the mean. The

finding leads to an answer of moderately well for the research question, How well do a new department chair's role confidence, personality needs, and role support predict role certainty among new department chairs? The difference between $R^2$ and the adjusted $R^2$ is .321 - .288 = .033, signifying if the study's model began with the population instead of the sample it would account for 3.3% less variance in the outcome.

***Relative Contribution of Each Scale***

The following variables were significantly related to the outcome, role certainty: discretion, need for control over department performance, department climate, leader feedback, and career aspirations. The following variables were not significantly related to the outcome, role certainty: novelty, intolerance for ambiguity, need for control over own tasks, opportunity for feedback, indirect feedback, and mode of entry (see Table 4). The standard coefficients for scales significantly related to the outcome role certainty, and in order of Beta weights are: department climate (β = .244), discretion (β = .210), leader feedback (β = .201), need for control over department performance (β = .172), and career aspirations (β = .164).

Table 4. Multiple Regression Analysis
Summary of how the analysis will answer the research question

| Variable | β | *t* |
|---|---|---|
| Role Confidence | | |
| Discretion | **0.21*** | 3.48 |
| Novelty | 0.00 | 0.02 |
| Personality Needs | | |
| Intolerance for ambiguity | 0.09 | 1.50 |
| Need for control over department performance | **0.17*** | 2.67 |
| Need for control over own tasks | 0.01 | 0.21 |
| Role Support | | |
| Department climate | **0.24*** | 4.16 |
| Leader feedback | **0.20*** | 3.52 |
| Opportunity for feedback | 0.07 | 1.22 |
| Indirect feedback | -0.019 | -0.32 |
| Structural Variables | | |
| Career aspirations | **0.16*** | 2.78 |
| Mode of entry | -0.08 | -1.27 |

**Department Climate**

The department climate scale proved to contribute the most in predicting role certainty (β =

0.24) at a level of significance ($p < .05$) – an unexpected finding. The word climate refers to a group of characteristics gleaned about an organization and its component parts, which may be perceived from the way the organization treats their employees and the environment of employment (Hellrigel & Slocum, 1974). The scale was initially meant to establish a contextual basis for the model, however, the scale proved to be more important in explaining how people were making sense of their environment (Gioia & Thomas, 1996). When compared to a meta-analysis of 51 relevant studies published by Carr et al., (2003) the findings are similar to numerous other psychological climate studies. These studies have shown that climate has an influence on cognition, individual work outcomes, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment. Additionally, Brown and Leigh (1996) found that an environment thought by employees to be psychologically safe was positively related to an understanding of what the position required. On average most individuals from the present study viewed their department with optimism ($M = 3.70$, $SD = 0.91$) agreeing their work environment displayed cooperation among individuals, as well as produced work of higher quality and quantity than others on campus. The variance of 5.6% for the department climate scale represents only the unique contribution of this variable when all shared variances are removed.

**Discretion**

The discretion scale was intended to capture the perceived latitude individuals have to accomplish the demands required of the department chair job. High scores on the discretion scale mean participants were afforded the leeway to do the job of department chair. Responses on average were moderately high ($M = 3.86$, $SD = 0.78$). West, Nicholson, and Rees (1987) argue that *a priori* reasons result in higher job discretion means among those entering into newly created department chair positions when compared with the means of individuals entering into well-understood or established positions. The results from the present study support their argument if one accepts the chair's role as inherently vague (Boyko, 2009; Bennet & Figuli, 1990; Werkema, 2009). The data indicate discretion was the second largest predictor to role certainty.

**Leader Feedback**

Leader feedback is the third largest predictor of role certainty ($\beta = 0.20$, $p < .05$). The finding is positively associated with an increase in role certainty and is consistent with previous research. Notably, Hancock and Hellawell (2003) found that the middle managers they interviewed agreed, performing effectively demanded an awareness of how the administrative level above them thought about situations. When this knowledge was missing, middle managers believed their performance was handicapped. Previous research also determined that new hires require information from

supervisors in order to figure out their organizations and themselves (Louis, 1980; Ostroff & Kozslowski, 1992). The expanding literature on career transitions also attests to the importance of relational support in reducing ambiguity and "generally making things easier" for newcomers (Pinder & Schroeder, 1987, p. 340). Finally, Parker et al. (2003), in their meta-analysis of 94 studies with a total sample size of 65,830 found elements relating to job tasks and leadership had the strongest association with psychological wellbeing of employees. Furthermore, when upper administration was thought to be supportive, employees were more likely to be engaged in their job and maintained greater determination (Brown & Leigh, 1996).

**Need for Control Over Department Performance**

The need for control over department performance measure was meant to capture whether new chairs had high needs for control. On average participants desired control over department performance (M = 3.60, SD = 0.95) having a desire to develop the role where the outcomes of their behaviors can be predicted, i.e., job change (Black & Ashford, 1995). Black and Ashford (1995) found need for control was not significantly associated with job change – a notion similar to role certainty. Need for control over department performance positively contributed at a level of significance in describing the role certainty ($\beta = 0.172$, $p < .05$). Moreover, the scale explained 4.8% of role certainty among new chairs showing more explanatory power than originally thought. The finding becomes important particularly as one considers a desire for control over department performance may actually fuel role development (Nicholson, 1984; West, Nicholson, & Rees, 1987) amidst ambiguous circumstances and reportedly high discretion felt by participants (M = 3.86, SD = 0.78).

## DISCUSSION

The purpose of this research was to discover if the scales comprising the independent variables of role confidence, personality needs, and role support were effective in explaining the variance of role certainty among and between new department chairs. Based upon theory and research, each of the nine scales was posited as having a similar amount of influence, making each of them important in their own right. The results show role certainty among new chairs is greater when they know the thinking of their dean, the dean has nurtured a freedom to adjust the goals and relationships of the department, and the new chair views their departmental climate as positive. The following is an account of three of the five variables shown to explain the most variance among respondents. Department climate, discretion, and leader feedback are highlighted in particular

because they offer guidance to institutions; unrealized interactions between the department chair, department climate, and the dean may contribute to the operations of administration of higher education and ultimately effect on the quality of undergraduate education.

**Department Climate**

The relative contribution of department climate was greatest in uniquely explaining the role certainty among and between new chairs. This finding shows that how chairs perceive the workplace carries slightly more influence over their confidence about the role than does receiving feedback from peers or the dean. Based on the data this means the degree to which new chairs can do a good job for and on behalf of the department is first dependent upon the perceived level of cooperation among faculty, faculty productivity, open communication, and an environment conducive to the expression of opinions, ideas, and suggestions (Jones & James, 1979). Among this sample, most people viewed their present departmental climate as positive. On the one hand, this perspective is coming from persons who may still be in a transitory state (Nicholson, 1984) and enjoying the challenge of new leadership for the benefit of their colleagues. On the other hand, the response may be entirely reflective of Hargreaves' (1995) assertion that managers often miscalculate the ability of personnel to hide things from them. As a result, they may perceive everything to be fine because there is no one around to tell them the department is in disarray.

The status of the climate by the observing new hire has a direct bearing on their certainty of what the job is about. This is not to say the outlook of the department must be a positive one, rather, the ability to quickly assess what is happening within the department is critical. There is an argument to be made that congenial departments may contribute to a fast orientation for the new chair since employees do well for the organization when they sense the environment is secure. A congenial department allows chairs to work without fear of destruction to their awareness, influence, or position (Brown & Leigh, 1996; Kahn, 1990). The fact that department climate best explains role certainty for this model means new chairs ought to hone skills for assessing the departmental environment if they are to move quickly towards figuring what to do about it, if anything.

**Discretion**

This study shows discretion as the second largest contributor of role certainty among and between new chairs. For new chairs, this means the degree to which they are afforded the latitude

to modify the structures of relationships and goals within their department affects what they think the job as chair is about (Fenner & Selmer, 2008; Nicholson, 1984). Increased freedom precedes psychological adjustment and becomes important when it predicts the capacity for contributing to the department. In particular, the data suggests that when freedom is provided for chairs to act independently of their dean, set their own work objectives and targets, prioritize when different parts of the role are done, and choose whom to deal with in order to carry out departmental work, chairs fare better psychologically than those who have limited or no freedom. Admittedly, the idea of giving new chairs lots of freedom to do a job they have never done before, where little institutional and professional help is available, is somewhat counterintuitive. The notion is made worse, when one considers the generally accepted difficulty of the job (Bennett & Figuli, 1990; Boyko, 2009; Seagren, 1993). This study originally proposed the position of department chair is one of high discretion because of the ambiguity of the role's chief objectives, which, while sometimes explicitly laid out in formal job descriptions, are never fully realized by newcomers until the individual begins the actual work of the position. Based upon the data, awarded discretion is an essential element for sorting out role certainty among new department chairs. Where there is high discretion the capacity for doing a good job increases because the core questions of *What can I do about it?* and *Do I have the latitude to do anything about it?* have been answered even if other peripheral ones have not. The most common form for adjustments to discretion levels is through the dean-chair relationship (Tucker, 1984) a feature of this research discussed next.

**Leader Feedback**

Pinder and Schroeder (1987) found that in addition to the levels of difference between new and previous roles impacting time to proficiency, the degree of seeming support for newcomers was the most important factor predicting role certainty. One implication of considering leader feedback alongside discretion is that the dean is the potential source for the new department chair's freedom to act independently, set objectives, establish priorities, and choose with whom to carry out departmental work. As such, an assumption made going into the study was that the dean is more or less a gatekeeper for the chair getting up to speed (Ostroff & Kozlowski, 1992). Perhaps this is why the relative contribution of leader feedback was the third largest contributor in explaining role certainty among new department chairs. The finding that leader feedback is important supports the work of Klein, Fan, and Preacher (2006) who found that agent helpfulness – a term similar to leader feedback – is related with role clarity, or in this case, role certainty. Offering regular opportunities

for new department chairs to find out how well they are doing in their job also supports Katz's (1980) perspective that newcomers require ongoing information to construct a view of their new employment situation and how they are to operate within it. Additionally, according to Louis (1980) as well as McCall and Simmons (1978), key people within organizations hold vast influence on how newcomers come to figure out their role, making the dean a major player in how new chairs will respond to their post. Thus, increasing opportunities for feedback may be a start for addressing ambiguity among new department chairs so long as the increased feedback is purposeful and useful (Lurie & Swaminathan, 2009), which raises questions on what exactly is helpful to new department chairs. This too, however, is interesting because too much information may actually get in the way of sorting out what is going on and fail to encourage positive job performance (Ilgen, Fisher, & Taylor, 1979). Each new chair requires different levels of support based upon their desire for control, which places the skill of discernment at the top of a dean's set of leader support skills.

The parallels between the findings of this study and those of Hancock and Hellawell (2003) heightens concerns as to how much cognitive space new chairs dedicate to managing the perception of their own image (Gioia & Thomas, 1996) to cope with the deficit of what their deans are thinking. When deans are not forthcoming with information, role certainty is unlikely to take root among new chairs. Translating these observations for the new department chair may mean newcomers need to develop strategies for building trust with the dean to shore up a lack of supervisor discernment and feedback.

## IMPLICATIONS

In his article *The management of academic culture: Notes on the management of meaning and social integration* (1982) Dill argues that institutions can no longer rest entirely on historical reputation. In the face of increasing competition for funding from a wide class of donors, top-notch students and faculty, as well as a spot in the top rankings of the day challenge the reputation of today's institutions (Boyko, 2009; Smerek, 2010; Wolverton, 2005). Dill posits, that the institution that invests in the development of its workforce will gain "uncommon loyalty and commitment" from workers resulting in a university where doing a good job (Pinder & Schroeder, 1987) is accomplished out of a surplus of goodwill and not in reaction to pressing mandates (Cullen, Joyce, Hassall, & Broadbent, 2003). Dill's questions compel the reader to at least consider how the professional development of new department chairs may have contributed to the chairs ability to affect the quality of undergraduate education programs and more broadly the operations found in

the administration of higher education.

When looking to appoint department chairs, institutions ought to consider faculty who desire to advance the institution and are not necessarily ambitious to build their own national reputation. This may be a contrary position to some who feel that to qualify as an academic figurehead, one must first secure large grants, publish an acceptable amount of peer-reviewed articles, and be well versed in matters of technology, governance, diversity, government affairs, and fundraising. Institutions should not want faculty to become chairs simply because they have checked off the right boxes, are taking one for the team, or because they can get along with faculty (Chao et al., 1994). If the goal of the department is to provide for the advancement, maintenance, and engagement with the curriculum (Coats, 2000) through programs, then a chair should have a proven record of being engaged at all levels of the university because managing programs and the resources to support them also means dealing with an array of people across the university. By engaging at various levels with a variety of individuals future new chairs will have constructed systems of relationships, understand where to go for information, and how to navigate the complexities of the institutions (Rhoads & Tierney, 1990; Tierney, 1988; 1990).

Additionally, departments may benefit by identifying faculty who have the ability to quickly and skillfully assess their surroundings to produce a "cognitively based description of the situation" (Jones & James, 1979, p. 205). By realizing the composite picture of the department climate, new chairs will be able to get beyond the question, *what is going on here?*, and focus on exploring solutions to various situations thereby doing a *good job* in much less time. Considering the ability for new chairs to assess department climate makes sense because a department chair does not work in a vacuum separate from others.

Nominating committees might also weigh any new chair recommendations against current levels of discretion offered by the dean to existing chairs. If no practice of discretion exists, then a stronger desire for control may be required in chair candidates who are more resolute in seeking information to help clarify their role.

The findings of this study suggests that there is need for deans to be involved in the development of new department chairs. For the dean's part, there exists a responsibility to make clear their thinking on how a new chair is doing irrespective of the frequency of such feedback. By extension, the productivity significance of organized and purposeful feedback by the dean to new department chairs may mean everyday tasks (e.g., budgeting) become easier to accomplish sooner. Additional responsibilities include providing the chair with the freedom to adjust the structures of

relationships and goals within a department. These findings also support the need for new conversations at an institutional level about the responsibility of the dean in the future development of the department chair. Such efforts may translate into less time spent by new chairs figuring out their role and more time spent in overcoming the hurdles inherent in meeting the demands of internal and external decision-makers. As a result, cognitive space would be freed up for chairs to ponder the important questions of teaching and learning in undergraduate education to say nothing of questions of access, accountability, and affordability of higher education posed by today's public and government officials (Altbach, 2005; Duderstadt, 2000; Gayle, Tewarie, & White, 2003).

## CONCLUSION

The data from this research show that doing a good job as a chair is bound up in finding (Ashford & Cummings, 1983, 1985; Miller & Jablin, 1991) and making sense (Gioia & Thomas, 1996) of the contextual knowledge (Dutton, Ashford, O'Neill, & Lawrence, 2001) surrounding the role of department chair. New chairs who fail to realize the knowledge that one *lives* as a subordinate, an equal, and as a superior (Clegg & McAuley, 2005; Uyterhoeven, 1972) will miss leveraging change for the department (Huy, 2001) resulting in a lack of upward influence for the benefits of the colleagues they represent (Falbe & Yukl, 1992). The interaction between new department chairs and the social system they enter offers opportunities for new discussions about changing from faculty member to department chair (Ashforth & Saks, 1995; Nicholson, 1984; Pinder & Schroeder, 1987) and supplies the higher education literature with empirical data on the role certainty of new department chairs. Furthermore, in an age of state appropriation reductions (Adams, Robichaux, & Guarino, 2010), and increasing competition between and among for-profit and non-profit higher education organizations, post-secondary institutions cannot afford to ignore the time needed for new department chairs to become comfortable and competent in the new position.

Based upon the findings of this study, more research is needed to seriously look at the role of the dean, the personal attributes and career aspirations of chair candidates, and current organizational development offices and programs in providing support to newcomer department chairs. More measures of accountability will invariably trickle down from state and federal policy makers (Boyko, 2009) in an effort to judge the performance effectiveness of state employees (e.g., university). Therefore, what is ultimately more helpful is to direct the focus away from endless lists of department chair responsibilities and how these responsibilities are carried out (Seagren, 1993), toward the factors influencing the quality of completed tasks. As many universities continue to

transform from exclusive classrooms to global organizations, higher education must recognize department chairs can be the catalysts for change in critical areas such as teaching and learning and in the implementation of pedagogical missions at the local level (Clegg & McAuley, 2005). The university that pays attention to the role of newcomer chairpersons has the capacity to realize gains for undergraduate education while building superior loyalty and commitment (Dill, 1982) in people living in the middle of institutional decision-making.

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# TERRY SANFORD AT DUKE UNIVERSITY: A LEADERSHIP EFFICACY MODEL FOR NON-TRADITIONAL COLLEGE PRESIDENTS IN ADJUSTING TO ACADEMIC CULTURE

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## INTRODUCTION

Non-traditional college presidents are gradually becoming a more common fixture across all levels of American higher education. They are generally defined as college presidents who lack an academic doctoral degree (Ph.D. or Ed.D), held an immediate prior position outside of higher education, and/or have no faculty experience (Birnbaum & Umbach, 2001; Cotnam, 2006). Over the past few decades, non-traditional presidents have become more common across all institutions, increasing in representation in higher education from 10.1% in 1986 to 20.3% in 2011 (*The American College President*, 2012). However, relatively little is known about the issues that they face in adjusting to academic culture. This is significant since non-traditional presidents would have typically been exposed to different organizational structures than traditional presidents (Cotnam, 2006).

Recent higher education history is full of highly publicized examples of non-traditional college presidents (Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower at Columbia University, former U.S. Sen. Robert "Bob" Kerrey at New York's New School, etc.) who had serious difficulties making the adjustment to academic life. Their problems ranged from disputes with faculty leaders to trouble adjusting to the collective decision-making process found in many areas of higher education. However, there are other examples of non-traditional presidents who made the cultural transition quite effectively. The purpose of this study was to examine the adaptation strategy of one such non-traditional president, Terry Sanford of Duke University, and derive what lessons may be useful for aspiring or currently

serving non-traditional presidents, as well as the faculty members and administrators who serve with them.

Terry Sanford (1917-1998) was a high-profile attorney, businessman, and politician who served as Duke University's president from 1969 to 1985. According to Gordon (1998), his storied career read like the resume of a dozen men combined: four decorations as a paratrooper during World War II, two years as a state senator, four years as governor, 15 years as Duke's president, two runs for the U.S. presidency, and six years as a U.S. senator. Moreover, while certainly confronting some challenges during his tenure, Sanford transformed Duke from a respected Southern liberal arts institution into one of the nation's "preeminent academic powerhouses" (Gordon, 1998, p. 1). This success later led one biographer to refer to Sanford as Duke's "patron saint" (Gordon, 1998, p. 1). Sanford's noteworthy service to his native state as well as to Duke also prompted former North Carolina Gov. James Hunt to call him "one of the greatest leaders in North Carolina history" (Gordon, 1998, p. 1). Even today, Sanford is still considered a legend by many North Carolina residents.

During Sanford's presidency, he also earned the lasting respect and admiration of the entire Duke community, including the institution's faculty (Covington & Ellis, 1999; Egerton, 1973). Former Duke University President Nan Keohane described Sanford as a "leader-hero," and she argued that Sanford surpassed the usual expectations of political leadership in pursuing his many projects and overcoming institutional challenges (Rubin & Stroup, 1998, p. 1). Many others admired his unique leadership style, which was once described as a "rare knack and ability to get ordinary people to do unordinary and extraordinary things" (Rubin & Stroup, 1998, p. 1). Ultimately, Sanford represents a non-traditional college president who effectively learned the ways of academic culture. Using data derived from his personal and official correspondence, along with selected secondary sources, this study found that his success stemmed from a combination of factors. These included Sanford's ambitious vision for Duke that coincided well with its institutional needs; his strong personal commitment to Duke; his prior exposure to higher education as an education-focused governor; and his highly relational approach as a leader. To put these factors into perspective, this study situated them within a broader framework that included Sanford's personal history, a historical context of the 1960s-era higher education landscape, and Duke's institutional context during that period. Those sections follow below.

**PERSONAL HISTORY**

Terry Sanford was born on August 20, 1917 in Laurinburg, North Carolina and came of age during the Great Depression (Barone & Ujifusa, 1987; Gordon, 1998). He paid his own way through the University of North Carolina – Chapel Hill by washing dishes, graduating with an A.B. in 1939 (Covington & Ellis, 1999; Gordon, 1998). After college, he served briefly as an FBI special agent before volunteering for the U.S. Army during World War II. As a paratrooper, Sanford saw combat during five separate campaigns and participated in the Allied invasion of southern France as well as in the Battle of the Bulge. Following his discharge as a first lieutenant, he attended law school and became active in the North Carolina Democratic Party (Barone & Ujifusa, 1987; Covington & Ellis, 1999; Gordon, 1998). During this period, he also married Margaret Rose Knight and would go on to have two children (Gordon, 1998).

Sanford served briefly in the North Carolina Senate before being elected governor in 1961. A firm believer in the value of education, he made that a hallmark of his administration, nearly doubling the state's expenditures on public schools during his tenure (Covington & Ellis, 1999; Gordon, 1998). Moreover, Sanford consolidated the University of North Carolina school system to ensure its solvency and strength and developed the state's Governor's Schools as well as the North Carolina School of the Arts (Gordon, 1998). Most notably, Sanford fought for racial desegregation during a time when that was highly unpopular politically (Covington & Ellis, 1999; Gordon, 1998). To demonstrate his commitment to that cause, Sanford even sent his son to a desegregated public school despite safety concerns (Gordon, 1998). In recognition for Sanford's work, a 1981 Harvard University survey named him one of the best governors of the 20th century (Gordon, 1998). As recently as the 2012 Democratic National Convention, political leaders continued to heap praise on Sanford. Speaking of Sanford's North Carolina legacy, former Gov. James Hunt said:

> Fifty years ago, this was a poor state – poor, rural, rigidly segregated. But we had a governor named Terry Sanford – a hero of mine…. He broke with most southerners in 1960 and endorsed John F. Kennedy. When other southern governors stood in the schoolhouse door, Terry Sanford stood up for civil rights. He worked with business leaders, political and education leaders to build our great universities, our 58 community colleges and our public schools (Mercola, 2012, p. 1).

Throughout Sanford's administration, his work attracted the interest of national Democratic Party leaders. A close friend of President John F. Kennedy, Sanford was even rumored to have been Kennedy's choice for vice president in the 1964 election (Covington & Ellis, 1999). Although that

campaign never materialized because of Kennedy's tragic assassination, Sanford was regarded as a respected and highly influential political leader throughout this period.

After Sanford's gubernatorial term ended in 1965, his star continued to rise nationally as he reentered the fields of law and Democratic Party politics (Covington & Ellis, 1999). He interacted extensively with President Lyndon Johnson and was even offered a position in Johnson's cabinet as secretary of agriculture (Covington & Ellis, 1999). Sanford also managed Hubert Humphrey's 1968 presidential campaign with an eye toward his own run for president in the early 1970s. During this period, a growing number of people began to see Sanford as a possible successor to President Richard Nixon (Egerton, 1973). However, despite all of this political promise, Sanford's career took an unexpected turn when he received inquiries from Duke University's board of trustees about serving as their next president.

## HISTORICAL CONTEXT

In many respects, the 1960s was a difficult period for American higher education. The nation's colleges and universities were nearing the end of their "Golden Age," and new challenges were beginning to materialize, ranging from desegregation to student unrest (Thelin, 2011, p. 260). To be sure, certain institutions still benefitted immensely from the post-World War II funding boom as well as from record student enrollments (Thelin, 2011). However, considering the time and cost involved with building construction, the question was whether those colleges could respond quickly enough to accommodate the increases in funding as well as enrollment (Thelin, 2011). A common solution during this period was for public institutions to rely upon "formula funding," which awarded institutions with increased subsidies as they enrolled more students (Thelin, 2011, p. 285). Thus, many public institutions continued to expand rapidly during this period.

However, the environment was more precarious for private institutions. Just as public institutions enjoyed rapid expansion in the 1960s, many private colleges and universities struggled to stay open (Thelin, 2011). One major problem was that private institutions could not keep up with the low tuition prices offered by state-supported public schools (Thelin, 2011). The shortage of funding that resulted from this disparity also made it more difficult for private institutions to hire new faculty members (Thelin, 2011). However, as the 1960s progressed, private colleges and universities turned the tide by designing innovative fundraising programs and capitalizing on the increasing public desire for their children to attend "prestigious" institutions (Thelin, 2011, p. 294).

The more difficult problems for public as well as private institutions during this period stemmed from the challenges of desegregation along with growing student unrest (Thelin, 2011). During the 1950s and 1960s, desegregation was a politically explosive issue for many educational institutions throughout the South (Cole, 2013). According to Thelin (2011), 17 Southern states had legally segregated public educational systems following World War II. While the 1954 Brown v. the Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas court case outlawed such practices, the subsequent desegregation efforts of many Southern states were slow and half-hearted (Thelin, 2011). At various Southern state universities, court-ordered desegregation often resulted in violent student protests as well as gubernatorial opposition (Thelin, 2011). Further, a number of black student sit-ins occurred across the region, with one of the more notable incidents taking place at Greensboro, North Carolina in 1960 (Cole, 2013). Overall, desegregation was a difficult issue that tested the leadership prowess of many college presidents (Cole, 2013; Covington & Ellis, 1999).

Another challenging issue involved increased student unrest across many of America's colleges and universities (Egerton, 1973; Thelin, 2011). Some of this protest was in reaction to the mass expansion of higher education institutions, which some critics referred to as the growing "impersonality of the multiversity" (Thelin, 2011, p. 307). Consequently, there was growing sentiment among students that they were viewed only as numbers or statistics instead of individuals (Thelin, 2011). Thus, students across the nation protested large lecture classes, cramped housing, and the over-automation of campus services in response to this impersonal, mass expansion (Thelin, 2011). A result of this movement was a trend toward establishing formal student assembly organizations in order to continue the fight for better student conditions (Thelin, 2011).

The national political upheaval of the period, fueled by the tragic assassinations of John F. Kennedy, Robert F. Kennedy, and Martin Luther King, also shook college campuses across the country (Covington & Ellis, 1999; Egerton, 1973; Thelin, 2011). Moreover, the unpopular war in Vietnam spurred further and widely publicized student protests (Thelin, 2011). Some of these demonstrations, such as the May 1970 protests at Kent State University and Jackson State University, resulted in violent confrontations between students and National Guard troops (Thelin, 2011). The resulting student deaths prompted intense national outcry and received widespread media coverage (Thelin, 2011). Thus, many higher education leaders were at a loss for how to respond, as "universities everywhere were caught between the desire to be above the battle and the demand that they be in the midst of it" (Egerton, 1973, p. 29). Overall, it was a very challenging time for college and university leaders across the nation.

## INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT

In many ways, the wide range of 1960s-era challenges found at higher education institutions across the nation was also present at Duke University. Renamed Duke University after industrialist James B. Duke donated a fortune in 1924 to then-Trinity College, the institution was still struggling to find its identity, even though it aspired to become a preeminent national university (Egerton, 1973). As with many other private schools during the period, Duke's finances were unsettled as it struggled to attract high quality students (Egerton, 1973). The institution even ran its first budget deficit in 1970, prompting many to worry about its future (Covington & Ellis, 1999). Duke also had poor relations with the surrounding City of Durham, which created further problems for its institutional image (Egerton, 1973). Moreover, a lack of strong presidential leadership, along with the absence of a compelling institutional vision, had resulted in "fading and discouraged" support from alumni (Covington & Ellis, 1999, p. 378). By all accounts, Duke was stagnating and in dire need of bold and decisive leadership (Covington & Ellis, 1999).

Although the institution had remained relatively quiet in regards to student protests for much of the decade, Martin Luther King's assassination triggered an intense student reaction, with over 1,500 staging a silent campus vigil in April 1968 (Covington & Ellis, 1999). Further protests followed when students began campaigning for minority student rights and higher wages for black employees (Covington & Ellis, 1999). This all culminated in a black student sit-in at the Allen Administration Building on February 12, 1969 (Covington & Ellis, 1999). The students, who then declared the building to be the "Malcolm X School of Liberation," then presented a list of demands, which included the establishment of a black studies curriculum, a black student union, and the elimination of the SAT as a requirement for black student admissions (Covington & Ellis, 1999, p. 368). With little patience for such activity, the board of trustees demanded quick and decisive action from Duke's then-president, Douglas Knight. Fearing violence, Knight secured assistance from the governor, who sent in state police to dislodge the protesting students. Meanwhile, other police officers in full riot gear fired tear gas to break up the boisterous group of 2,500 students who had gathered to watch the events unfold (Covington & Ellis, 1999).

Although no one was hurt and the crowd was dispersed, the event inflicted "grievous wounds" on Duke's reputation (Covington & Ellis, 1999, p. 368). Seeing his days numbered as Duke's president, Knight resigned shortly thereafter (Covington & Ellis, 1999). To respond to this problem, coupled with minimal state support and decreasing alumni involvement, Duke desperately needed a compelling new leader.

## SELECTING A NEW PRESIDENT

Following Knight's resignation, the board named a three-person search committee, known internally as "the Troika," to find his successor (Covington & Ellis, 1999, p. 369). Initially, the committee looked at conventional candidates, ranging from Duke faculty members to up-and-coming academic leaders from other institutions (Covington & Ellis, 1999). However, at one particular committee meeting, a board member named Mrs. Earl Brian suggested Terry Sanford. Brian had known Sanford for years and was impressed by his leadership style (Covington & Ellis, 1999). Combined with his extensive professional background, she believed that Sanford was just the type of level-headed problem solver that Duke needed (Covington & Ellis, 1999). Other board members immediately liked the idea and cleared an impediment to Sanford's nomination by changing the requirement that the president hold an earned doctorate (Covington & Ellis, 1999).

However, Sanford appeared to be a risky selection to others in the Duke community. In the minds of many, he was a non-academic politician who had graduated from Duke's bitter rival, the University of North Carolina – Chapel Hill (Covington & Ellis, 1999). These reservations were best summarized by one senior Duke faculty member, who said "putting a great university in the hands of a politician seemed to me a perilous course of action" (Egerton, 1973, p. 29). As an up-and-coming politician, others in the Duke community wondered how long Sanford would even remain at the university if he was selected president (Covington & Ellis, 1999). Nevertheless, the board forged ahead and put out official inquiries to Sanford, who was interested but skeptical about his prospects (Covington & Ellis, 1999). Duke's board members believed that the benefits Sanford would provide Duke would far outweigh any potential liabilities (Covington & Ellis, 1999).

However, since Sanford still harbored political ambitions, some of his advisors warned him against accepting the position, arguing that it would "embroil [him] in internal affairs at Duke and compromise any chance he had to build a national constituency" (Covington & Ellis, 1999, p. 372). Sanford was intrigued by the possibilities of academic leadership, though, and felt that obtaining Duke's presidency – for him a lifetime achievement in itself - was worth the risk (Covington & Ellis, 1999). Therefore, he accepted the position and reported for work on April 2, 1970, putting his political ambitions aside temporarily to embark upon a new career in higher education.

## SUMMARY OF STRATEGIES

Over the next 15 years, Sanford would go on to have a highly successful tenure at Duke, which he often described as the best years of his life (Covington & Ellis, 1999; Gordon, 1998). He

was responsible for constructing 40 new campus buildings at a cost of more than $190 million (Covington & Ellis, 1999). Moreover, Sanford led two successful fundraising campaigns, accumulating more than $435 million total (Covington & Ellis, 1999). He also more than doubled the Duke endowment from $80 million to $200 million and helped to increase annual alumni giving from $750,000 in 1970 to more than $6 million in 1985 (Covington & Ellis, 1999). Further, he was responsible for the creation of several academic programs, including the Institute of Policy Sciences and Public Affairs and the Institute of the Arts (Covington & Ellis, 1999). Sanford was also instrumental in the development of Duke's prestigious Fuqua School of Business (Covington & Ellis, 1999). These achievements led some to label Sanford as an "academic miracle worker" (Egerton, 1973, p. 28). In 1985, then-U.S. Secretary of Transportation Elizabeth Dole, a Duke graduate, summarized Sanford's tenure by writing:

> The historians of higher education will doubtlessly credit you, as they should, with a strengthened program of arts and sciences, the new Institute of Policy Sciences and Public Affairs, [and] a school of business…. They will write that it was during Terry Sanford's presidency that Duke became a truly national university (Covington & Ellis, 1999, p. 435).

Along with achieving success in the realms of fundraising and infrastructure development, Sanford earned the respect and admiration of Duke's academic community. Although he certainly endured some major controversies, including troublesome early 1970s student anti-war protests as well as a major clash with Duke's faculty over the possible placement of the Richard Nixon Presidential Library on the campus, Sanford concluded his tenure on good terms with Duke's academic community (Covington & Ellis, 1999). In fact, many felt that Sanford's presidency represented "a very special time in the university's history" (Egerton, 1973, p. 29). Duke Endowment chair Mary D. B. T. Semans, a grandniece of the institution's principal benefactor James B. Duke, once wrote, "Terry Sanford was our hero… he made us feel that we were on his magic carpet and that he expected us to do things we never dreamed we were capable of" (as cited in Rubin & Stroup, 1998, p. 1). Echoing that sentiment, a later Duke president, Nan Keohane, wrote "we are all better, and stronger, and more optimistic about the future because of the lasting legacies of Terry Sanford's life and leadership" (as cited in Rubin & Stroup, 1998, p. 1). Duke trustee Isobel Craven Lewis Drill, who has sometimes opposed Sanford on certain initiatives, once reflected he was "the leader Duke needed during perilous days of student unrest and academic uncertainty" (as cited in Covington & Ellis, 1999, p. 435). Drill also wrote that her strongest recollection of

Sanford was his "courageous action in restoring our university to its intended purposes" (as cited in Covington & Ellis, 1999, p. 435).

Terry Sanford represents a clear example of a non-traditional college president who adjusted well to academic culture (Covington & Ellis, 1999; Egerton, 1973; Gordon, 1998). The purpose of this study was to determine the specific reasons behind his successful adjustment to academe. To investigate this question, over 300 documents from Sanford's presidency were examined. Approximately 225 of those documents were letters, interviews, and memoirs produced by Sanford, while the other roughly 75 documents were newspaper articles about Sanford and his Duke tenure. Located in the Terry Sanford Papers at Duke's David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library, these materials included personal and official letters, speeches, newspaper clippings, and other related documents. In consultation with North Carolina higher education historian Dr. Eddie Cole, these specific papers were selected for analysis because they were most germane to this study. Following close examination, all of the papers were coded. For the purposes of data triangulation, the coded data were then compared to analysis by historians as well as the relevant reflections of Sanford's Duke colleagues to ensure that the findings were consistent.

Open coding identified nine applicable codes that appeared multiple times in his papers. Axial coding later narrowed these codes down to four central themes (or strategies) that helped explain Sanford's success in adapting to academic culture. These included Sanford's ambitious vision for Duke that coincided well with the university's institutional needs, his strong personal commitment to Duke, his prior experience with higher education as an education-focused governor, and his highly relational approach as a leader. As the data ultimately demonstrated, all of these dynamics enabled Sanford to overcome some significant challenges and adjust effectively to academic culture.

Vision. Sanford's ambitious and compelling vision for Duke University was a central theme that appeared repeatedly in his papers. Possessing a lifelong interest in history, he was fascinated by Duke's evolution as a higher education institution (Covington & Ellis, 1999). Thus, upon assuming the presidency, Sanford took time to study the university's history as well as the successes and failures of presidents who had served before him (Covington & Ellis, 1999). He then used this information to help craft his own unique vision for Duke's future based on its institutional needs and where it had been in the past. Further, as an education-focused former governor, Sanford had the ability to ponder this vision in the context of state and national educational needs. What resulted was a compelling vision for Duke's future that generated excitement and enthusiasm among Duke's

academic community (Covington & Ellis, 1999; Egerton, 1973). Among the approximately 300 documents examined for this study, Sanford discussed aspects of his Duke vision in over 16, primarily in his speeches.

An analysis of Sanford's speeches revealed that he had gone to great lengths to reflect on the purpose of higher education, particularly at liberal arts institutions, before assuming Duke's presidency (Sanford, 1977a, 1979a). This approach was likely a result of Sanford's gubernatorial term, which was noted for its strong focus on developing North Carolina's higher education system (Covington & Ellis, 1999). Thus, upon becoming president, Sanford had specific ideas about the role of America's higher education system that he often articulated in his speeches. In one address, Sanford asserted, "the seeker of truth, the insister of truth, may be the ultimate mark of the person with a liberal education" (Sanford, 1979a, p. 5). He echoed that sentiment in another speech, when he argued, "to keep alive a vision of hope and confidence for humanity is probably the greatest responsibility of liberal arts education and of graduates of liberal arts colleges" (Sanford, 1977a, p.1). Thus, this clear perspective on the uses of a liberal arts education likely assisted Sanford in formulating a clear and compelling vision for Duke itself.

This focused and thoughtful vision for Duke's institutional future also appeared in several of Sanford's speeches. He envisioned Duke as a university focused primarily on undergraduate learning with a goal of producing well-rounded leaders with a passion for seeking knowledge and truth (Sanford, 1970a). In his inaugural address, he touched on these concepts by remarking:

> Duke University can lead, therefore Duke University must lead. We must lead in the strengthening of the internal structure of universities, making them freer to fulfill the aspirations of students. We must lead in providing the dynamic dimension of higher education that will provide students with the developed capacity to add to civilization. We must lead in preserving the ancient truths of civilization and in solving the recent distresses of society. Duke University accepts leadership as its hallmark… Duke has led and is positioned for leadership today not by chance but by careful, deliberate design (Sanford, 1970a, p. 1).

Sanford's inspiring language empowered a Duke community that had been in a malaise of sorts based on recent institutional challenges (Covington & Ellis, 1999). Sanford's aspiration to transform Duke into a nationally prominent university resonated with its community and triggered a renewed enthusiasm and focus (Covington & Ellis, 1999). In many ways, Duke needed a meaningful institutional purpose and Sanford was able to provide it by developing a premier center for learning, leadership, and creativity that remained true to its North Carolina roots (Covington & Ellis, 1999). The heart of Sanford's Duke vision was also evident in his inaugural address:

> I want to see for Duke University a spirit that makes a Duke graduate a Renaissance Man with a purpose. I want to see Duke University applying its special resources in its special setting to seek out and develop as our primary interest men and women who will exhibit and apply both creativity and leadership, no matter what occupations they might pursue (Sanford, 1970a, p. 3).

The power and reach of Sanford's vision, along with its noticeable impact on Duke's development as a university, has also been commended by university officials as well as historians over the years. Duke's first African-American faculty member, Samuel DuBois Cook, once wrote that Sanford represented "the ultimate in vision, decency, and integrity… I don't know what I'd do without Terry. I just feel less secure in the world without Terry Sanford" (as cited in Rubin & Stroup, 1998, p. 2). According to Covington and Ellis (1999), even in Sanford's earliest interviews with Duke's presidential search committee, the members were impressed by his knowledge of the institution and his compelling ideas for its future. According to Duke Endowment Chair Mary D. B. T. Semans, she believed that "he would bring Duke back into focus as the kind of place Mr. Duke would have wanted" (as cited in Covington & Ellis, 1999, p. 374). Indeed, Sanford and the committee were in full agreement about the need to keep building Duke as a national university while reconnecting with its local roots in North Carolina (Covington & Ellis, 1999). Consequently, early in Sanford's tenure, a new professor remarked, "Duke is a smug, tweedy place being shaken up by Sanford… they're trying to decide whether or not they like it – I think they're about to decide they do" (as cited in Egerton, 1973, p. 29).

According to Egerton (1973), the key objective behind Sanford's Duke vision was to find a way to mitigate the contradiction between "academic eminence and social usefulness" (p. 29). Sanford believed firmly that Duke could be one of the nation's great universities while being "actively engaged in seeking and applying solutions to the nation's problems" (Egerton, 1973, p. 29). Thus, much of Sanford's presidency was dedicated to this pursuit. According to Covington and Ellis (1999), this aspect of Sanford's vision was highly effective as it culminated in a strong partnership between Duke and multiple local, state, and national constituency groups. Ultimately, as these data indicated, Sanford's compelling vision for Duke was an integral factor in his adjustment to academic life. He formulated a powerful vision for the university's future that generated excitement and enthusiasm among many members of the Duke community. This vision also allowed Sanford to endure some significant crises during his tenure and keep the university moving in one, unified direction.

Commitment to Duke. A second theme that appeared multiple times in Sanford's papers was his strong, personal commitment to Duke University. Although Sanford engaged in many outside political activities over the course of his presidential tenure, he consistently made it clear that Duke was his number one professional priority. Sanford discussed his commitment to Duke in approximately eight of the letters and personal memoranda examined for this study. This dedication to Duke was significant, since many in the university community wondered initially how long he would remain as president (Covington & Ellis, 1999; Egerton, 1973). Some speculated that he would quickly succumb to the pressure he was under to run for offices ranging from U.S. senator to president of the United States (Covington & Ellis, 1999).

However, Sanford typically resisted such entreaties, arguing that he could not "be president of Duke and keep one eye cocked on a political future" (as cited in Nordheiber, 1970, p. 1). Ultimately, while Sanford did run for political office twice during his Duke tenure, he pursued those campaigns in a manner that was mindful of his university responsibilities (Covington & Ellis, 1999). Specifically, he built his political activities around his Duke schedule instead of neglecting his presidential responsibilities for the sake of his campaign schedule (Covington & Ellis, 1999). Consequently, while Sanford did not give those ultimately unsuccessful campaigns his full energy and attention, it did remind the Duke community that the institution itself was most important to him.

According to Covington and Ellis (1999) and Egerton (1973), Sanford had major political ambitions during his tenure at Duke and dreamed of one day becoming president of the United States. However, he also truly enjoyed serving as Duke University's president (Covington & Ellis, 1999; Egerton, 1973; Sanford, 1974). This became a challenge as he tried to plan U.S. presidential campaigns in 1972 and 1976, and it often resulted in his campaign timetables being extended (Covington & Ellis, 1999). As Sanford recalled:

> I was far [more] fascinated with running Duke… I was in love with Duke. I thought it would be great to be the first [modern] Southern president but not all that damned great… I had accomplished more than I thought I was going to, but I saw how much more I could accomplish here. I could see how this would be a worthy ambition in anybody's life if they didn't do anything else. I was really dedicated to Duke and that's probably why I was reluctant to leave (Covington & Ellis, 1999, pp. 417-418).

Sanford retained this commitment to Duke even when offered significant political appointments. In summer 1977, he was offered two such opportunities (Covington & Ellis, 1999; Sanford, 1977b, 1977c). First, then-North Carolina Gov. James Hunt offered Sanford an appointment to the State

Board of Education, which Sanford promptly declined (Sanford, 1977b). In a letter to Duke's board of trustees' chairman, Sanford wrote, "I simply felt that I could not devote enough time to it to do the job the way it should be done" (Sanford, 1977b, p. 1). Actions like this underscored Sanford's commitment to Duke.

Shortly thereafter, President Jimmy Carter asked Sanford to become U.S. ambassador to France (Covington & Ellis, 1999; Sanford, 1977b, 1977c). True to form, Sanford also declined this prestigious appointment, remarking, "I felt morally obligated to stay at Duke, having told everybody that I would not accept a federal job" (Sanford, 1977b, p. 1). Echoing the same sentiment in a private memorandum, Sanford wrote "I simply felt that I could not leave Duke right now" (Sanford, 1977c, p. 2). He believed that there would be plenty of other opportunities in the future and that he wanted to stay at Duke in order to complete the work he had started there (Sanford, 1977c). Overall, these data demonstrated that Sanford considered his position at Duke to be his most important professional responsibility, even though he was offered many other high-profile opportunities during his tenure.

Sanford's strong commitment to Duke has also been discussed over the years by university officials as well as historians, providing effective data triangulation for this study. Reflecting upon Sanford's presidential tenure, one faculty member stated, "I thought he would try to make this a base for his political ambitions… but he hasn't. The man really works at being president (as cited in Egerton, 1973, p. 32). McKnight (1969) seconded that point, arguing that Sanford was genuinely motivated to serve Duke University, along with its students and higher education in general. Covington and Ellis (1999) also echoed that sentiment, asserting that Sanford "approached his responsibilities at Duke with the same high ambition that he had carried into the governor's office" (p. 379). These data concluded that despite his non-traditional background, Sanford genuinely wanted to serve as an academic leader.

Overall, while Sanford retained a strong interest in politics throughout his Duke tenure, he never felt it necessary to totally abandon his work at the university in order to pursue elected office (Covington & Ellis, 1999). While Sanford was viewed as a serious presidential or vice presidential contender in American politics for much of the 1970s, his work at Duke was ultimately more important to him (Covington & Ellis, 1999; Egerton, 1973). According to Gordon (1998), Sanford "never needed a [political] title to do the work of kings" (p. 1). As these data indicated, Sanford's commitment to Duke earned him a lasting respect among the institution's academic community. This respect was vital in facilitating his successful transition to academic culture. However, it also

came at the expense of Sanford's failed political campaigns, as he had to choose Duke as his top professional priority.

Prior academic exposure. A third central theme in Sanford's writings pertained to how his prior government service prepared him for his academic leadership role at Duke. Although Sanford appeared to assume Duke's presidency with a non-academic background, he came into office with more higher education exposure than many realized (Carroll, 1969; Covington & Ellis, 1999; East, 1970; Jackson & John, 1969; McKnight, 1969). According to Jackson and John (1969), Sanford's gubernatorial term had been known as "an administration whose reputation [was] founded on its concern for education" (p. 5). Specifically, higher education was an area of great focus during Sanford's tenure, and the budgets for state colleges and universities increased by 70 percent during that time (Covington & Ellis, 1999; Jackson & John, 1969). Moreover, Sanford spearheaded the effort to create three new liberal arts colleges and a system of community colleges while in office (Jackson & John, 1969). This commitment to higher education likely generated a spirit of goodwill for Sanford within North Carolina's college and university campuses.

Along with pursuing educational goals as governor, Sanford had extensive personal ties to higher education prior to assuming Duke's presidency (Jackson & John, 1969). He had served for several years as chairman of the board of trustees for both the University of North Carolina and Methodist College (Jackson & John, 1969). Further, Sanford had served on the governing boards for Shaw University, Berea College, Chowan College, Davidson College, Appalachian State University, Guilford College, and Wake Forest University (Jackson & John, 1969). Such extensive board affiliations likely gave Sanford at least a basic understanding of academic culture before even assuming Duke's presidency. Further, upon accepting the appointment as Duke's president, Sanford immersed himself in preparing for the job (Covington & Ellis, 1999; East, 1970). For several months, he attended dozens of meetings with Duke officials and pored over briefing books to prepare for his presidential duties (Covington & Ellis, 1999; East, 1970). Thus, between his successful, pro-education track record as governor and his prior higher education exposure, Sanford was well prepared to engage with academic culture, even as a non-traditional president.

In the primary source materials examined for this study, references to this academic exposure were discovered in nearly 10 documents. Appearing primarily in interviews as well as in personal and official correspondence, these references were present in roughly one out of every eight documents examined. As these data indicated, Sanford's prior experience with North Carolina's higher education system provided a degree of confidence that he brought into office

(Covington & Ellis, 1999; Egerton, 1973; Sanford, 1974a). Because of Sanford's unique educational background, academic culture was not entirely new to him, and he felt comfortable engaging with it (Sanford, 1974a). For instance, in response to critics who predicted that as a non-academic, Sanford would have a hands-off approach as an academic leader, Sanford reflected:

> Several people said, 'well, he'll come in here as a great fund-raiser.' I said, 'I'm not coming as a fund-raiser. I'm coming as president of the university and as the president of the faculty. That's my position.' So occasionally when somebody wanted to categorize me and say, 'well, he's not really a PhD, he's here for this,' I slapped that down right then and there. I said, 'I'm president of the university from start to finish'" (Covington & Ellis, 1999, p. 380).

Further, Sanford believed that his work as Duke's president was not much different than his previous work as governor (Covington & Ellis, 1999; Egerton, 1973; McKnight, 1969; Sanford, 1974a). In one interview, Sanford drew parallels between the two roles by asserting, "essentially, both jobs require you to deal with people… I think both of these jobs have a number of similarities and one would probably prepare you for the other" (Sanford, 1974a, p. 1). He also believed that universities and government bureaucracy were fundamentally similar, arguing "both are fairly good at resisting change as institutions. On the other hand, individuals within both are ready for change if the climate is right…" (Sanford, 1974a, p. 2). Thus, Sanford believed that his work as a state government executive ultimately provided him the skills he needed to be an effective university president (Sanford, 1974a).

Sanford's conclusions about how his previous experiences prepared him for Duke's presidency have been supported over the years by his Duke colleagues, media observers, and historians (Covington & Ellis, 1999; Egerton, 1973; McKnight, 1969; Nordheiber, 1970). As one faculty member noted, "when Sanford arrived, he made it clear he was going to run the university, it wasn't going to run him" (Nordheiber, 1970). Echoing that point, McKnight (1969) wrote that in appointing Sanford as president, "the trustees undoubtedly were motivated in part by the knowledge that Sanford is a strong man who lets everybody know who is in charge" (p. 1). Nordheiber (1970) noted that even among Sanford's critics, they recognized "Mr. Sanford's adeptness as an administrator and as a man who is not easily intimidated" (p. 1). Further, Covington and Ellis (1999) and Nordheiber (1970) both noted that radical students intent on testing Sanford's leadership discovered quickly that they were up against a true professional. According to one Duke graduate, such students came to believe that "it's impossible to outfox him… he's just plain smarter than the radicals are" (as cited in Nordheiber, 1970, p. 1). In certain cases, this contrasted with

other North Carolina college presidents during this period, who sometimes struggled to find ways to respond to the era's tumultuous challenges (Cole, 2013). Ultimately, while Sanford was not a professional academic, his commitment to education and significant involvement with North Carolina's colleges and universities helped provide him the necessary skills to engage with academic culture effectively.

Relational approach. The final and most apparent theme derived from an examination of Sanford's papers pertained to his leadership style at Duke. The data revealed a highly relational approach that appeared to endear him to Duke's academic community. Specifically, Sanford utilized a leadership style that encouraged transparency, welcomed outside input, and interjected humor to ease stressful situations (Covington & Ellis, 1999; Egerton, 1973; Sanford, 1970b, 1971, 1974b, 1975a, 1975b). He was also highly approachable and made it a point to interact extensively with his followers, particularly students (Covington & Ellis, 1999; Egerton, 1973). Sanford's policy was to be highly visible to Duke students, faculty, and staff when he was on campus (Egerton, 1973).

Moreover, Sanford was a humble leader who never took personal credit for the considerable achievements of his tenure (Egerton, 1973). Often embarrassed by praise, Sanford would typically respond by saying, "changes were coming to Duke anyway… it's not proper for me to take credit" (as cited in Egerton, 1973, p. 28). In other situations, Sanford would react with self-deprecating humor, remarking:

> I told the chairman of the board of trustees when he offered me this job that I didn't have sense enough to be president of Duke, and his reply was, 'I know that, but I've always admired your luck'" (as cited in Egerton, 1973, p. 29).

Sanford's unique leadership style was consistently evident in the materials examined for this study. Examples of his relational approach were found in over 30 primary source documents, including letters, interviews, and personal reflections. These data indicated that Sanford's leadership style played an important role in facilitating his adjustment to academic culture.

Sanford's relational approach manifested itself in many ways through his writing. He believed strongly in transparency and open communication, and regularly sent personal letters to the Duke community to keep them updated on university affairs (Sanford, 1970b, 1971, 1974b, 1975a, 1975b). Throughout Sanford's tenure, he also solicited and welcomed input from all members of the Duke community (Sanford, 1974b, 1978). For instance, in letters to alumni, he used phrases such as "you are an integral part of Duke University," and "your participation is essential to the future of Duke" (Sanford, 1974b, paragraphs 2, 6). This pattern was the same with Duke's

faculty, and Sanford requested a special mass meeting with them at least once a year where he would address their ideas and concerns (Sanford, 1978). Sanford also kept up to date with faculty research and praised professors for their professional accomplishments (Sanford, 1977d). In one such letter, he wrote, "I want you to know how much I appreciate the work you are doing and the great credit your work reflects on Duke University" (Sanford, 1977d, p. 1). This approach helped Sanford to develop a strong, working relationship with much of Duke's faculty.

Sanford also forged a strong connection with Duke's students, who referred to him as "Uncle Terry" for much of his tenure (Sanford, 1984, p. 1). Sanford preferred open communication and direct dialogue with students, encouraging them to take an active role in building Duke's future and inspiring them to pursue excellence (Sanford, 1979b, 1981, 1984). It was also Sanford's habit to write personal letters welcoming incoming freshmen to the university (Sanford, 1981). In one such letter, he wrote:

> Duke is what it is, and what it is to become, because of many people who believed in it, who gave part of their lives to it, and who knew it was worth the love and effort they shared… it cannot flourish without the intellectual excitement you will add to it for the next several years. It cannot continue to flourish without your love, attention, and support, including financial support, after you have left (Sanford, 1981, p. 1).

Along with inspiring students to be active Duke citizens, Sanford challenged them to do better when their behavior did not meet the university's expectations (Sanford, 1979b; 1984). For instance, responding to rowdy student behavior at Duke home basketball games, Sanford sent letters directly to students to express his concerns (Sanford, 1979b; 1984). In his now legendary "An Avuncular Letter," addressed "To My Duke Students," Sanford wrote:

> Resorting to the use of obscenities in cheers and chants at ball games indicates a lack of vocabulary, a lack of cleverness, a lack of ideas, and a lack of respect for other people… I suggest that we change… This request is in keeping with my commitment to self-government for students. It should not be up to me to enforce proper behavior that signifies the intelligence of Duke students. You should do it. Reprove those who make us all look bad. Shape up your own language. I hate for us to have the reputation of being stupid. With best wishes, Uncle Terry (Sanford, 1984, p. 1).

In a sign of respect for their president, Duke students chanted, "we beg to differ" at the following game when they disagreed with a referee's call (Covington & Ellis, 1999, p. 433). This was indicative of the deep bond that Sanford shared with Duke's students (Covington & Ellis, 1999; Egerton, 1973).

Over the years, members of the Duke community, historians, and media observers have also written extensively about Sanford's relational leadership style. These reflections provided effective data triangulation for this study. Regarding Sanford's accessibility to students, one Duke undergraduate claimed that he could see Sanford more easily than some of his professors (Egerton, 1973). Similarly, some historians claimed that no senior Duke administrator had ever provided a more receptive ear to students about either public issues or campus matters than Sanford (Covington & Ellis, 1999; Egerton 1973). According to Covington and Ellis (1999) and Egerton (1973), Sanford was also known to directly intervene whenever members of the Duke community needed help, on matters ranging from admissions to job searching. This approach fostered a spirit of goodwill and respect that endeared Sanford to many members of Duke's academic community (Covington & Ellis, 1999; Egerton, 1973).

This goodwill was in turn essential for Sanford when it came to enduring some of the major crises of his administration – most notably the Vietnam War-era student protests and his clash with Duke faculty over the possible placement of the Nixon Presidential Library on the Duke campus (Covington & Ellis, 1999). In both instances, Sanford faced intense pressure and criticism from many faculty members, alumni, and students (Covington & Ellis, 1999). To counter these threats, Sanford maintained a high visibility level on campus and engaged in both formal and informal meetings with members of the Duke community (Covington & Ellis, 1999). Sanford was also highly transparent in his communications, explaining his actions in full detail through official letters as well as through personal appearances (Covington & Ellis, 1999). Thus, although members of Duke's academic community may have disagreed with Sanford – sometimes intensely – over various matters during his tenure, the goodwill cultivated by Sanford's relational approach helped him to weather those storms (Covington & Ellis, 1999). Thus, the data examined for this study indicated that Sanford's leadership style was integral to his successful adjustment to academic culture.

## SUMMARY

Terry Sanford represented a non-traditional college president who adjusted successfully to academic culture. Even today, Sanford is a beloved figure on the Duke University campus because of his achievements and the impact he had on so many people (Gordon, 1998; Rubin & Stroup, 1998). As the findings from this study concluded, Sanford's success stemmed from four central issues: he possessed a compelling presidential vision that aligned with Duke's institutional needs; he made Duke his top professional priority throughout his tenure; he possessed prior experience with

higher education and government bureaucracy that helped smooth his transition into academe; and he had a unique, relational leadership style that endeared him to many members of the Duke community. Thus, Sanford's experience at Duke demonstrates that it is possible for non-traditional college presidents to adjust successfully to academic culture. Further, his adaptation approach is one that can and should be emulated by aspiring non-traditional college presidents.

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# A NEW PARADIGM FOR STUDENT AND INSTITUTIONAL SUCCESS IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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Penn State is in the process of substantial institutional change: a new provost and a new president are in place. The football program has begun to recover, with the recognition that the record of permanence established by Joe Paterno may never be reached again, for good or ill. Enrollments remain strong and are improving, at least at the flagship campus of University Park. Penn State's crisis precipitating change is atypical, but the necessity for institutional change in higher education is a constant for all colleges and universities.

When he was president of the University, Graham Spanier stated that he would not build a Penn State with the existing commonwealth system of campuses, but that legislative and political pressures prevented change. Pennsylvania Governor Tom Corbett established an educational task force that recognized the need for change to the states' higher education structure, emphasizing the redundancies in the system. Bureaucratic structures, in government and in education, do not lend themselves to institutional change on a wholesale level. Compounding this glacial movement, technological change moves at a faster rate than policy change at the legislative and institutional levels. Yet the market continues to facilitate adjustment and one measure is enrollment: students select pragmatic options and do not hesitate to transfer should reality not meet expectations.

Thomas Kuhn in his landmark work *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* discussed this societal preference for incremental change and the difficulty of mounting structural change. When paradigm shifts occur ideas once thought far outside the realm of consideration become accepted as fact. Thus our task: if we were to build a college or a university from the ground up, based on what pragmatically does and does not work, what truths would we discard and what truths would we

accept? There are ten principles that should shape our decision-making and should guide our path towards a revolution in higher education.

**1. Students mature in college: providing early structured support enables them to succeed.**

We hold in our heads an ideal: the student arriving at college prepared and eager to learn. This construction may once have been true, and more importantly this ideal guided the development of the structures of higher education. To retain this ideal suited to the highly-motivated and intellectually strong and prepared student is damaging to our conceptions of our students as they are and the associated structures of our institutions. To define the typical student as deficient, either in intellect or maturity, and to define the accompanying support structures as remedial, limits the provision of these services and more critically limits our conceptions of our students.

Students move from the structured environment of high school to the relatively unstructured environment of college. Students select their majors and choose their classes and while guidance is provided it is not mandatory. Technological change enhances the ability of students to adjust their schedules, often on the ill-informed advice of fellow students, without institutional checks and balances. The successful student takes advantage of access to the faculty and to the staff. The focus here however is on the growing number of less successful students. Those that need help are the least likely to seek it out. Thus, structural assumptions must change to increase student success.

The solution: build support structures into the system that enable students to succeed. Examples of specific measures that could circumvent academic failure include requiring students to see their advisor to schedule, adding supplemental group instruction to difficult courses, encouraging faculty to proactively work with students to recognize and prevent irreversible failure, encouraging advisers to meet with students throughout the semester, and integrating extracurricular activities into the academic structure. These are not difficult measures to implement, they are in fact incremental and exist at many institutions, including Penn State. We must redefine the new normal, to meet students where they are, and to not define them as deficient thus hindering their success from the start.

**2. Career paths change throughout our lives: exploration of majors and careers should be mandatory and exhaustive.**

It is common for students to change their majors; it is a commonplace that adults change their jobs throughout their working lives. The trajectory is constant change: our psychological selves requires it, the workplace requires it, and technological change and societal innovation requires it. Our institutions of higher education are very good at assisting students in finding their majors. This is done in multiple ways: from orientation activities that begin the career exploration process, through general education courses to help students explore options, and by delaying the choice of major (in typically the sophomore year) to prevent multiple starts and stops hindering the ability to graduate in four years. Yet it is the confession of many a graduating student that had they the ability to have a college do-over, they would choose a different path. They may come to this realization after the difficulty in finding a first job or after working in a field and concluding that it is not a good fit. If the only constant is change, returning to school and lifelong education will be necessary in any given career. It is imperative that colleges and universities are programmed to facilitate change.

It has long been the justification for the liberal arts that they most capably provide students with the education necessary to succeed, and indeed lead, in any field. This is so because the liberal arts teaches the skills of critical thinking requisite to success. Colleges and universities echo this refrain in touting the benefits and necessity of general education, producing a well-rounded student able to think and therefore adapt to a changing society. Students not wanting this broad type of education are encouraged to attend a vocationally-oriented school, and students are increasingly selecting this option. As a result, traditional colleges and universities are adding pragmatic skills to their course selections and majors to increase enrollments as well as to enhance the ability of their graduates to get jobs.

In sum, students need flexibility at the outset in choosing majors and throughout their careers in adapting to both their changing interests and abilities and to changing societal needs. It is in this initial exploration that colleges and universities should aggressively enable students to explore interests and opportunities, for students' assumptions about possibilities are often limited by their histories. Instituting policies and procedures to systematically implement intense career exploration will save students' time and money and will most importantly lead to academic and personal success.

**3. Rigorous standards must exist at all institutions of higher learning. Articulation agreements should guide transfers and facilitate seamless transitions, especially important in core, building-block courses.**

Much has been written about declining standards in higher education: examining both the performance of college students and the expectations and requirements of faculty members. Assessment efforts are increasing: a welcome step echoing the long-successful accreditation efforts in scientific and technical fields. Consistent standards and high expectations are necessary to student success and are especially important as students increasingly transfer between institutions.

The traditional-age, resident student proportion of the college population is declining. Accordingly, the mobile, non-traditional proportion of the college population is increasing, and this population is more likely to transfer. Articulation agreements between institutions of higher education facilitate academic planning and increase student success. They also allow administrators to anticipate student demand and track the effectiveness of transfer programs. This is most critical in math and science programs. In-house monitoring of student success rates should be instituted. This is in no measure an indictment of the quality of teaching, rather it is a measure of the need to examine course content to facilitate the ability to transfer between institutions and to succeed in sequenced courses at any institution.

**4. An appropriate balance of faculty must exist, and all faculty, whether adjuncts, instructors, or tenure-line must ensure scholarly standards through their own professional development and currency in the field.**

The traditional notion of a tenured and stable core of faculty has gone the way of the traditional residential student. There has been an increase in the number of non-tenure line instructors, both full-time and part-time. There are excellent instructors among all types of faculty: tenure-line, full-time instructors, and adjuncts. What distinguishes distinct faculty lines is the balance that must be struck between teaching, research, and service. Community colleges emphasize providing an education at a low cost, resulting in full-time instructors and a heavy use of adjuncts. Universities emphasize the advancement of knowledge, stressing research and relying on tenure-line faculty and graduate students. Liberal-arts colleges hold a middle-ground: combining research with teaching and blending tenure-line faculty and full-time instructors. This fundamental balance has been shifting, at all levels, away from tenure-line, full-time faculty. In an era of economic uncertainty, a lifetime investment in a faculty member through tenure is a financial

obligation that limits institutional academic flexibility although providing the advantages of stability and commitment.

While faculty and administrators are keenly aware of the distinction between faculty lines, students are blissfully unaware and unconcerned. They desire good teaching and tend to not include in their definition a distinction between faculty who do and do not engage in scholarship. So where does that leave us? All faculty must be treated as professionals and conduct themselves as professionals. Institutions of higher education operate on this premise, and there is no system of checks and balances to systematically assure that faculty conduct class for the appropriate amount of time, stay current in their field, and demand high standards. Student evaluations of teaching effectiveness provide some measure of feedback, but participation rates have significantly declined since evaluation measures have moved online. Faculty evaluations must appropriately weight and rate the categories of teaching, research, and service. Service is easily dismissed, and obligatory committee work often masquerades as legitimate contributions. Faculty are the essential element of the scholarly community on campus and as institutional structures change, the role of the faculty in all elements of the institution must be appropriately measured and rewarded.

**5. Faculty should build a community on campus through scholarship and through service.**

At commuter campuses and for the growing number of adult students, engagement for faculty and for students is often the missing link, as students and faculty perform their relevant classroom duties to the exclusion of other activities. Students increasingly have family and work obligations. It is therefore critical that faculty encourage and model an engaged scholarly community culture.

The ideal of an engaged faculty and an involved student population is not disputed, however the reality is that this model is most appropriate for the residential student body and the tenure-line faculty. A fundamental reexamination of the college experience is necessary to adapt to the changing student population. A first question is to examine the premise that activities outside of the classroom are necessary. There is no dispute concerning the benefits of extracurricular activities. For the traditional, residential student extra-curricular events and clubs are a critical element in maturation and for interpersonal relationship-building. But for adult student with families and jobs, extra activities are simply too time-consuming and decrease the time available for study. Thus institutions must think about how to integrate the benefits of extra-curricular activities into the daily

schedule, whether attached to classwork or designed in pragmatic chunks to encourage participation in limited amounts.

Traditional and non-traditional students alike do not routinely seek out faculty, whether in office hours, for informal discussions, or for formal research. Therefore we need faculty to routinely seek out students. Retention improves with involvement: with clubs, in activities, through mentoring, or through interaction with faculty. It is relatively easy for faculty to adequately meet service requirements through rote participation in a committee or numerous other limited, perfunctory tasks. With the increasing number of adjuncts, the service requirements for full-time faculty members is elevated. If service is defined as a necessary burden and if it is treated as an afterthought for tenure-line faculty, it will never reach the level of importance requisite for serious consideration and noteworthy contributions. Here the strategic leadership of administration is needed to adequately reward service, to encourage and financially support faculty engagement inside and outside the classroom, and to provide mechanisms and institutional structures that promote an intellectually engaged community.

**6. Staff should be accorded professional development opportunities and should be represented on campus governance bodies.**

When academic institutions discuss shared governance, it is defined as participation by faculty in recommendations and decisions concerning policy. Faculty are most appropriately engaged on curriculum issues. Institutional executives are represented on campus management groups and boards. It is a truism that while administrators come and go, faculty remain. So do staff. And staff are left out of the discussion on shared governance.

If administrators are capable managers and staff are competent employees, delegation and appropriate job descriptions should result in considerable decision-making authority. Administrators in higher education, similar to new faculty untrained in teaching, are often new to the management game and therefore must learn on the job. Because turnover is high for upper-level administrators, and because there is a steep learning curve in mastering the complex bureaucracy in higher administration, it is the staff that provides continuity in operations.

Staff performance, like faculty and administrator performance, is evaluated in annual reviews, and takes into account performance of job duties, contributions in service, and professional development. These standard institutional reviews, however, may neglect the opportunity to development the capabilities and professional contributions of staff. Instituting staff associations

with accordant representative capabilities on campus governance boards is a first step in assuring a voice. A second step is providing for professional development beyond campus-based activities. Conference attendance and involvement is deemed critical for faculty and higher-level administrators; the same opportunities must be provided for staff. One hallmark of improvement in policy is the development of best practices, and professional conferences and workshops are a foundation for the networking necessary to compare policies and procedures.

The continuity of staff provides the tremendous benefit of the smooth workings and steady improvement of policies and procedures. The continuity of staff on a campus is one measure of their dedication. Universities and colleges must reciprocate, according staff professional respect and benefits.

**7. Shared governance shall be the guiding principle, with full recognition of where decision-making authority exists on relevant issues, yet preservation of the status quo cannot interfere with necessary change.**

A perennial issue in governing is a question of representation: does a representative represent the interests of their constituency or the interests of the republic as a whole, should they conflict. The same conundrum exists in institutions of higher education. In the U.S. government, the president is charged with representing the interests of the whole. Presidents and chancellors of institutions of higher education are charged with the same responsibility. The chief executive, of a country or of an institution, is responsible for leadership: for a strategic vision. Hence there are decisions that only the chief executive can make. In the United States, the president is limited to two terms for a total of eight years. In higher education, the typical tenure for a president is even shorter. Eager to make their mark, this results in the typical problem of too much change too fast, resulting in faculty rebellion. Presidents of colleges and universities walk a tightrope of leading change while preserving peace, of operating under the principle of shared governance while making significant final decisions.

Presidents of the United States' ability to govern and definitions of success change with the times. In a crisis, a strong president is needed. After a period of turmoil, stability is valued. Yet a caretaker president will not be defined as successful for leadership is required. It does not matter so much the direction of this leadership, Democrat or Republican, liberal or conservative, it is the requirement of leadership that is the measure of success. In an institution of higher education, however, a caretaker may be appropriate. The institution may not move forward, but it can

continue to exist. At Penn State, President Rodney Erickson was a suitable placeholder following the long tenure and then downfall of President Graham Spanier. President Eric Barron has just completed one year of his administration, and has brought stability and consensus to the Penn State community. Football led to the end of Spanier, and this tragedy of epic proportions highlights the precarious balance of academics and athletics at schools with notable football and basketball programs.

Whether athletics, a staid faculty, or a board of trustees desiring a different rate or type of change (i.e. the University of Virginia), the successful president maintains a delicate balance. In our time of rapid technological developments and the resultant need for a new paradigm in higher education the ability of a president to manage and lead change is increasingly important. The urge to preserve the status quo, most prevalent among faculty, cannot hinder change. While traditions are important to institutions of higher education, and carry with them a necessary aura of academic and social permanence and gravity, they cannot obstruct reforms for a new era. They may do so through inaction, through inertia, through inattention, and through the assumption of implied permanence that always obstructs paradigm change. It is the job and the duty of a presidential leader to lead an examination of harmful implied permanencies.

**8. Checks and balances must exist at all governance levels, and tolerance of dissent and disagreement, a hallmark of a free and democratic society, must also guide debate in the educational arena.**

The success of an institution of higher education is in large measure dependent on the ability of its chief executive. This is a stressful, highly-compensated job, and turnover is high. Successes tend towards the incremental; failures tend to be catastrophic. Leadership is key at any size institution, even though the parameters for action are dependent on institutional constraints. Presidents must balance the demands of the university and the needs of the campus and the community. They must consider faculty, staff, and student desires. They must not just profess the need for shared governance, they need to know how to implement it successfully. And it this cog in the wheel that is most important for success. Faculty, with the protection of tenure, are the most likely to voice unpopular opinions, a necessary element in avoiding groupthink. It is administrative managers, however, that are most often at the table where decisions are discussed and recommended. Institutional structure sets the boundaries for discussion; institutional leadership determines the effectiveness of debate.

Leaders tend to be egoistic. Strong leaders possess a vision and accompanying goals. Effective leaders encourage the airing of alternative views, and yet this is much more difficult in practice than in theory. Presidents may be perceived as encouraging debate, as tolerating debate, or as dismissing debate. Perception is key, and it may be based on truth or it may be wholly inaccurate. Yet perception drives action. It is precisely because senior faculty have the protection of tenure that they are able to advocate for and lead change. If not dismissed as cantankerous or as the devil's advocate, faculty are a critical element in voicing unpopular viewpoints. Executive staff serve at the whim of the president and they are least likely to speak truth to power for they are most likely to be subsequently dismissed.

Yet even faculty can be silenced if they are faced with public humiliation through verbal harangues and dismissal of opinions. While this seems unlikely and extreme, it is all too possible if an executive wields unchecked power. If the bureaucratic structure leans towards protecting ones' own, absolute power will corrupt. It seems unseemly that debate could be stifled in an academic community that prides itself on the advancement of knowledge, the deliberation of ideas, and is based on academic freedom. It is precisely these basic premises that lead to a structure that fails to protect unpopular opinions and the articulation of disruptive ideas. If we examine the debate concerning the need for change in the academic paradigm, it is largely occurring through theoretical texts rather than through widespread practice. Executives who assuage and pacify trustees, or any vocal opposition, are protected and practices that promote stability are rewarded.

In sum, there exists a very real silencing of unpopular opinions in institutions of higher education due to its structure promoting powerful executives with great burdens to lead change. When scandal ensues, calls for transparency abound. Continuance of practice as usual is more common. In this era when proceeding as usual is extremely detrimental, vigilance in recognizing the necessity of change despite its difficulty is imperative.

**9. The leadership in higher education must work with the leadership in government to examine and revise the higher education structure, as technological developments outpace the rate of legislative change.**

Demographic trends, technological changes, and the global economy all contribute to the necessity of examining the model of higher education in the United States. In Pennsylvania, Governor Tom Corbett established a task force to examine the delivery of higher education in the state. He questioned the redundancies in the system, and one issue he raised was the distinction

between the mission of a Penn State commonwealth campus and a community college. With the increase in articulation agreements and the movement of adjuncts between institutions there is an overlap in delivery systems and missions. In theory the distinction is easily defined. In practice the distinction is easily erased. Penn State has a tenure-line of faculty, advancing knowledge through research while teaching undergraduates. With the growing number of instructors not on the tenure-track and the increasing use of adjuncts this distinction is disappearing.

Penn State continues to attempt to incrementally improve the campus system, sharing programs and faculty among campuses in an attempt to arrive at economic efficiencies in the face of declining enrollments at campuses other than the flagship at University Park. The decline in enrollment at the commonwealth campuses is paralleled by the growth in enrollment in Penn State's online entity the World Campus. Penn State's institutional problems are a microcosm of higher education's institutional problems. Inertia due to political pressures and the difficulty of enacting change affect all colleges and universities.

The convening of a task force with leaders in politics and in higher education to examine the existing structures and the need for change is promising. The initial result of this group, that further study is needed, is not. Institutions need to examine not only bricks and mortar configurations, but the impact of online course delivery and online institutions of higher education. The marketplace will ultimately guide change, as students vote with their pocketbooks. Existing trends in enrollments are already guiding change, as universities retrench in the face of declining enrollments, add programmatic options to increase job placements, and add online courses and options. Technology has increased the pace of change. Leadership in higher education can no longer be satisfied with incremental adjustments, for while the existing structure can accommodate minor changes it will not thrive. Fundamental shifts in society and technology require a paradigm change, and the institutions of higher education that adapt accordingly will prosper.

**10. Tenure remains an essential element for academic freedom: all else must be fundamentally reexamined.**

While there have been calls for changes to the tenure system, and while the proportion of tenure-line faculty has been steadily declining, the protections of academic freedom provided by tenure remain necessary to a vital educational structure. To expand the limits of knowledge scholars must be able to challenge the boundaries of conventional thinking. There is also a practical necessity for tenure protection in the institutional structure of higher education. Speaking truth to power

needs protection, yet this will only suffice if faculty are able to exercise this right within the institutional system. It is true that tenure can lead to complacency, and safeguards guarding against this possibility must be developed and utilized. While academic freedom is typically defined as necessary for the classroom and for scholarship, it is equally necessary for effective shared governance.

The heart of the college and the university is its faculty and its students. The pace of change in the university has not kept pace with the pace of change in society. Students are most sensitive to these changes, and at this point are the driving force behind college and universities moves into the 21st century. It will be critical to distinguish between traditions that have merit and add to the educational experience and traditions that are relics of antiquated structures. It will even more imperative to examine the structure of knowledge and the necessity and ability of students to acquire and understand the essential elements of a given field. While the liberal arts stressed the critical thinking abilities acquired through study, the STEM fields of science, math, and engineering also provide critical thinking skills while transmitting pragmatic knowledge leading to more immediate employability and financial gains.

Students are gravitating towards community colleges, technical institutions and online classes and programs. There remains a demand for an elite education accommodating a very small proportion of total students, and traditional Ivies have the least need to change the existing structure of education. But insofar as this traditional structure guides education at all levels it must be critically examined and modified. Year-round education may provide more benefits than the traditional summer break. On-line instruction and the flipped classroom may provide great opportunities for students unable to attend traditional residential institutions as well as providing greater student-centered interactions between faculty and students. Preserving the traditional structure has led to tuition increases that most students simply cannot afford. The necessity of working accordingly increases, creating an additional impediment to students' ability to succeed. Nothing can be sacrosanct: faculty workload, general education requirements, instructional delivery mode, student support services, and out-of-classroom experiences must all be open to examination and change. This will require leadership at all levels, and courage to move beyond inertia and act in the face of resistance to change.

## CONCLUSION

The United States system of higher education is working: it is producing capable graduates able to be productive employees and citizens. It continues to attract students from all over the world. But it can be better, and it needs to move from glacial evolution to fully embracing rapid societal and technological change. These ten principles are a guide to approaching change at the more fundamental level needed and they address actions on all fronts and involving all parties: students, faculty, staff, and administration. Government must also recognize this need for structural change and can provide regulatory changes and financial incentives to increase the likelihood of institutional cooperation and success.

The biggest impediment to change is the bureaucratic structure of our institutions of higher education. They do not encourage or reward dramatic departures from the status quo. While faculty often produce groundbreaking research advancing knowledge under this structure, there is no equivalent movement on the administrative side of the house. In fact, quite the opposite occurs, as leaders who attempt to institute more rapid change are quickly shown the door.

To most effectively enact these ten principles of change, more study, while beneficial, is not needed for action is what is required. The most basic premise for action is implementing what is working: what institutions are students attending, what courses are they taking and in what delivery formats, what majors are they selecting, and how are students succeeding in their coursework, in their extracurricular activities, and in securing employment?

If the higher education structure does not reward or incentivize paradigm change, benchmarking best practices is a first step in recognizing what is successful. It is also worth noting how change is best implemented and how success is best understood: is strategic planning a top-down, a bottom-up, or a mixed approach process. While easy to choose the middle ground, to espouse the latter process, we must do more than pay lip service to the benefits of a strategic plan. It cannot sit on the shelf, it cannot result in an unwieldy document, and it cannot ultimately obstruct change through the parameters of the process or of the participants. We need to celebrate our successes, embrace the need for change, and recognize the necessity of each individual in contributing to fundamental change. The United States system of higher education is on the brink of substantial and necessary transformation, and the courage and action of faculty, staff, administration, and students must be brought to bear to move towards success in the 21$^{st}$ century.

# LEADERSHIP AND INSTITUTIONAL CHANGE IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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The intent of this paper is to present a process of institutional change in higher education. It is a framework meant to be applied across many types of institutions. I believe the leader's experience influences most processes, and this should be disclosed. As president of Philadelphia University, my belief in entrepreneurial behavior has influenced our process. I define entrepreneurship as "a way of thinking and acting that is opportunity obsessed, holistic in approach, and leadership balanced for the purpose of value creation and capture" (Spinelli, Adams and Timmons 101).

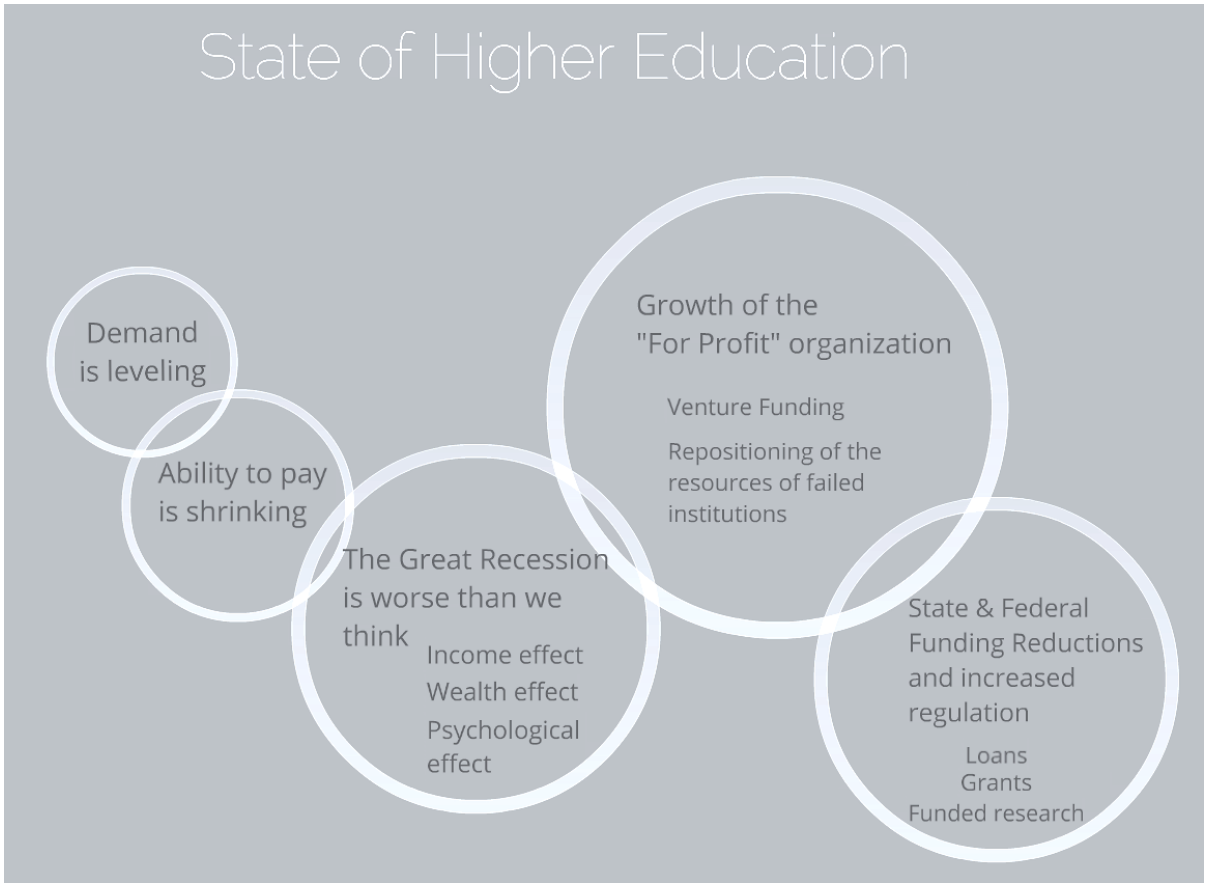
The change process I suggest manifests as a result of a well-planned strategy, which implicitly requires a vision of the future and an imperative to manage it. There are three initial components of my perspective on strategic planning. First is identifying the current reality of the industry – in this case, higher education. This macro view helps create a broader understanding of the landscape and reduces the instinct to perpetuate old thinking and entrenched ways. Once leaders have outlined a macro understanding, they must articulate the vision for the institution's future reality that they believe is necessary for success as the future unfolds. Again, an acute assessment of macro trends is important to make sure the college is being shaped for the future. Last is forming strategic imperatives that are measurable components of the strategy and are shaped by action research. Fact-based decisions, rigorous data synthesis, and Socratic debate are important.

The present condition of higher education anchors our planning process as it is compared to a future reality that we believe is evolving. A word of caution here: As I will note later in the paper, higher education is more in flux akin to chaos than any illusory evolutionary smoothness. The

difference between the current and future reality is what Peter Senge calls “creative tension” (Senge 140). Change is based on our vision of the institution that will thrive in the projected future. The leader’s role is to coalesce an organization around the vision and manage the tension between the current reality and that vision.

Figure 1 depicts a macro view of the state of higher education. “Market demand” is the number of traditional-age students who attend college. It has been leveling since 2009 (see fig. 2), and the ability or desire to pay for education is shrinking.

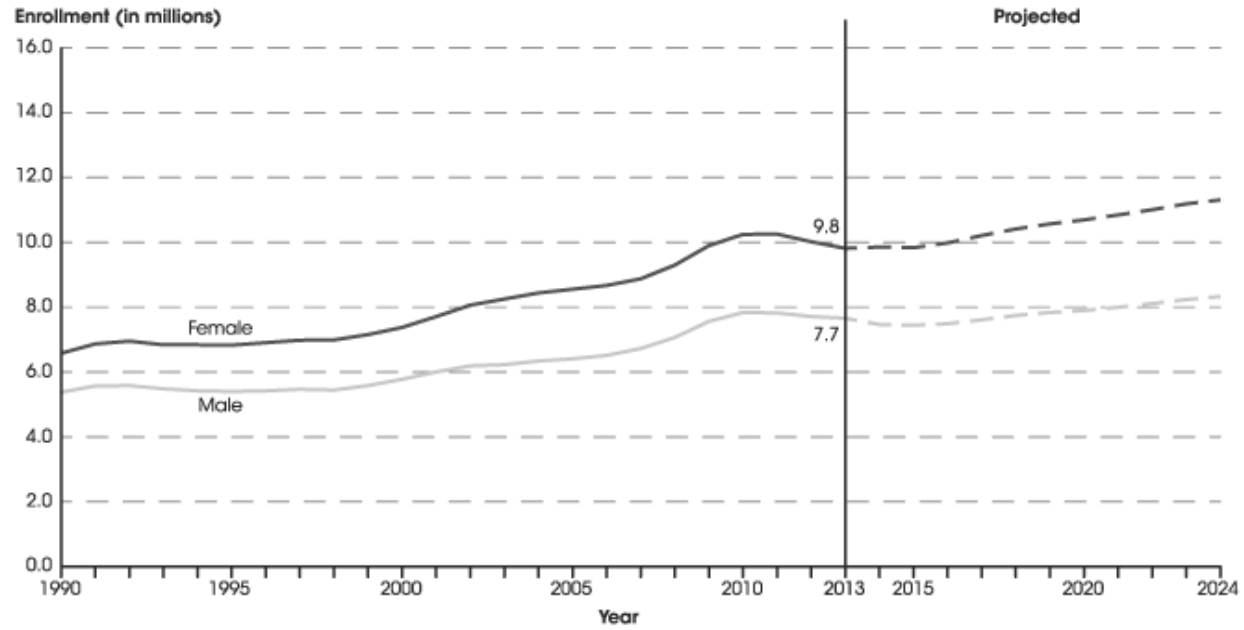
Figure 1. The macroeconomic view of the state of higher education.




Part of the reason for the shrinking desire and ability to pay for education is the recession that began in 2008. For those in higher education, the recession was worse than we may have originally thought. The recession clearly had a detrimental effect on income and wealth, but there was also a fairly severe psychological effect: Americans became more risk averse, investing less aggressively. The bursting of the real estate bubble partially drove the recession as well. Many

people store wealth in real estate and draw on it to pay for their children's education. The general public's faith in this wealth vessel has been shaken. A tighter credit market exacerbates the concern, and the muted seven-year recovery has supported caution.

**Figure 1. Actual and projected undergraduate enrollment in degree-granting postsecondary institutions, by sex: Fall 1990–2024**




NOTE: Data include unclassified undergraduate students. Data through 1995 are for institutions of higher education, while later data are for degree-granting institutions. Degree-granting institutions grant associate's or higher degrees and participate in Title IV federal financial aid programs. The degree-granting classification is very similar to the earlier higher education classification, but it includes more 2-year colleges and excludes a few higher education institutions that did not grant degrees. Projections are based on data through 2013. Some data have been revised from previously published figures.
SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), "Fall Enrollment Survey" (IPEDS-EF:90-99); IPEDS Spring 2001 through Spring 2014, Enrollment component. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2014*, table 303.70.

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In fall 2013, female students made up 56 percent of total undergraduate enrollment at 9.8 million and male students made up 44 percent at 7.7 million. Enrollment for both groups increased between 1990 and 2013, but most of the increases occurred between 2000 and 2010, when female enrollment increased by 39 percent and male enrollment increased by 36 percent. However, both female and male enrollments were lower (4 percent and 2 percent, respectively) in 2013 than in 2010. Between 2013 and 2024, female enrollment is projected to increase by 15 percent (from 9.8 million to 11.3 million students), and male enrollment is projected to increase by 9 percent (from 7.7 million to 8.3 million students).

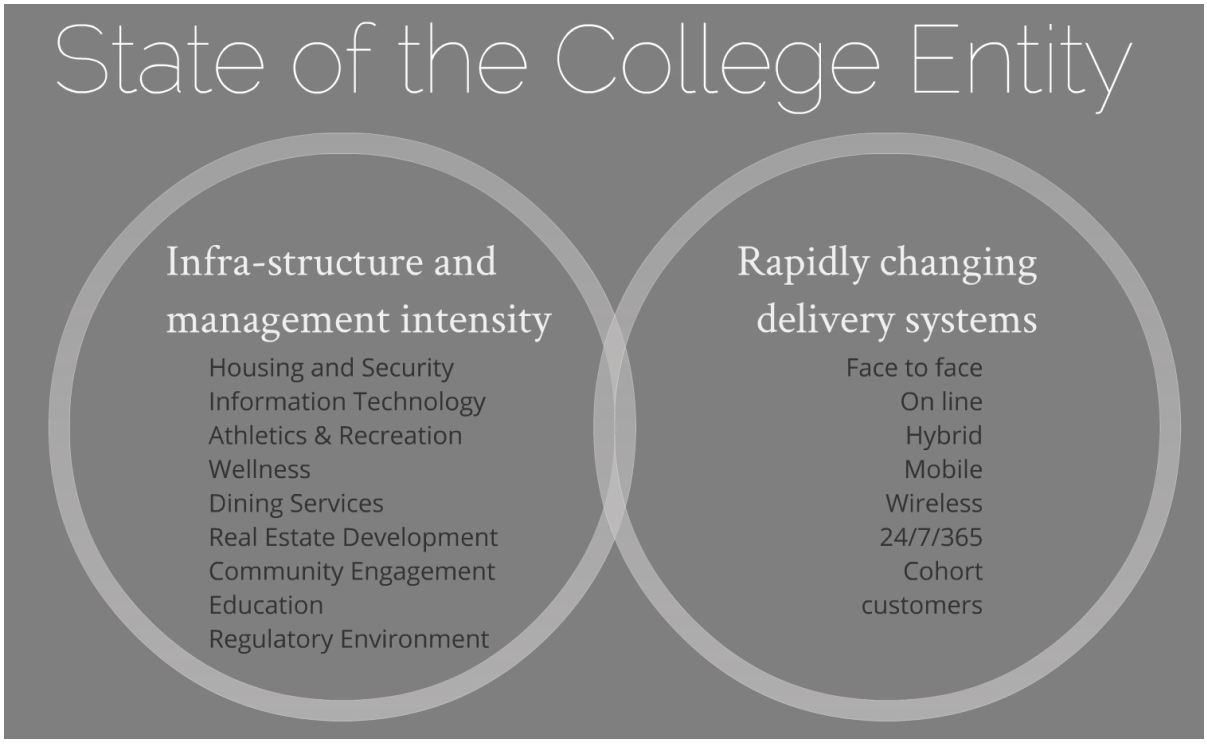
At the same time, growth of for-profit higher education organizations has increased supply. They have utilized venture funding and repositioning the resources of failed or failing institutions in both the non-profit and for-profit schools to offer a lower-cost education. State and federal funding

reductions, increased regulations, and reduced funded research for universities have also negatively impacted the higher education not-for-profit model.

**The microeconomic view of the state of college entity**

The state of the college entity is an increasingly complex set of variables. I group the variables in two categories: intensely managed infrastructure and rapidly changing delivery systems (see Figure 3).

Figure 3. State of the college entity.




Variables such as housing and security, real estate development, community engagement, and the regulatory environment are infrastructure and management intense.

Business model complexities are coupled with rapidly changing delivery systems. Most institutions offer traditional face-to-face learning, but there is increased market pressure to offer online education. Some education is delivered in a hybrid model (a combination of face-to-face classroom time and online learning). Also, there has been a mobile revolution in education: the student population in particular expects mobility. There is a 24/7/365 expectation of communication

with the university on various levels, including registration, finance, coursework, and even contact with instructors. Students increasingly see themselves as customers. The fluctuations in the education business model exacerbate financial pressures as schools must invest and experiment.

Statistics in the United States indicate that higher education is a great benefit in an uncertain job market. In May 2012, the unemployment rate of workers with a high school diploma or less education was 9.9 percent, whereas the unemployment rate of workers with a bachelor's degree or higher was 3.9 percent. More educated adults are also much more likely to be in the labor force. The labor force participation rate for those with a high school diploma or less is just 55 percent, compared to 77 percent for those with a bachelor's degree (Rothwell 6). Even with a declining unemployment rate in the last few years, compensation has remained stagnant (Bivens, Gould, and Mishel).

In the global marketplace, the United States is falling behind in college graduation rates compared to other wealthy countries. The Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development reports:

> U.S. college graduation rates rank 19th out of 28 countries studied by the OECD, which tracks education investment and performance of wealthier democracies… In 2012, 39 percent of young Americans were expected to graduate from college, compared with 60 percent in Iceland, 57 percent in New Zealand and 53 percent in Poland (Weston).

The severity and pace of disruption in higher education has created the imperative for change.

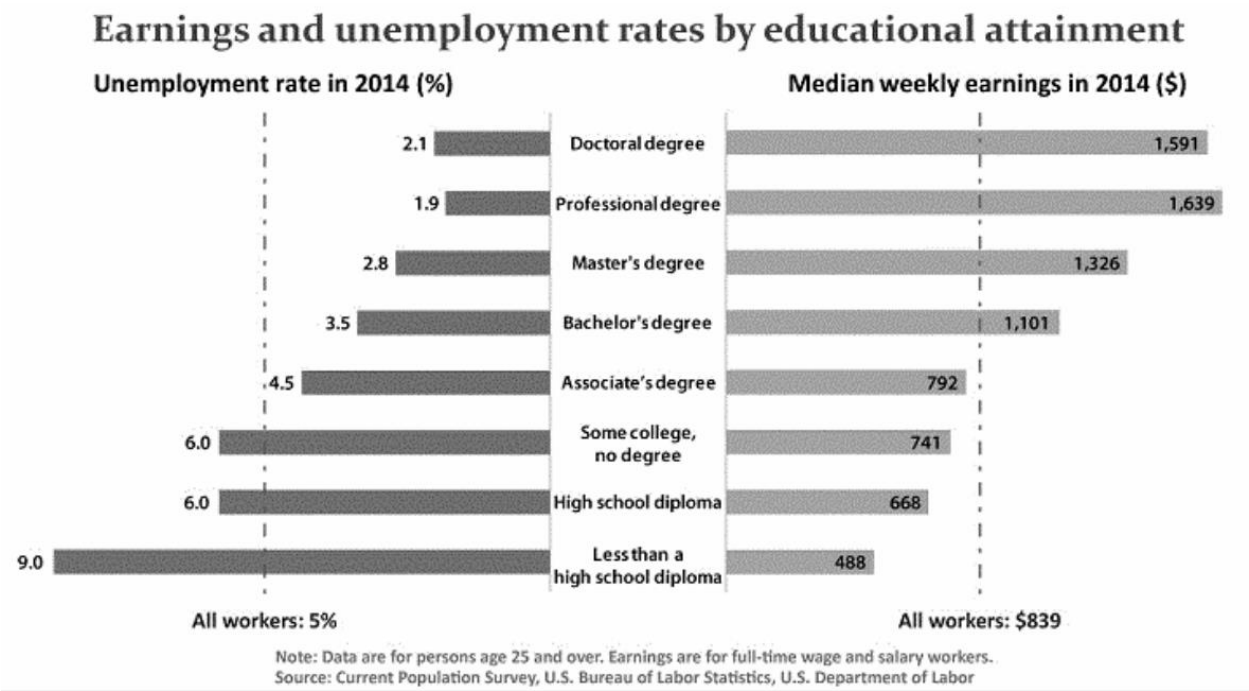
Earnings and unemployment rates by educational attainment are stark and direct proof that people can create better and more professional lives if they have more education (see figure 4). Therefore, changing higher education is de facto important to improving the human condition. The juice is worth the squeezing.

All of these factors create a perfect storm in higher education, but it can be managed with a process involving clear planning and action research.

**Strategic planning**

We started the strategic planning process at Philadelphia University with my "first 100 days" in office. I met with representatives from university stakeholder segments in an attempt to understand the culture, looking for hot button issues and land mines. I sought out key influencers to understand

Figure 4. Earnings and unemployment rates by educational attainment.



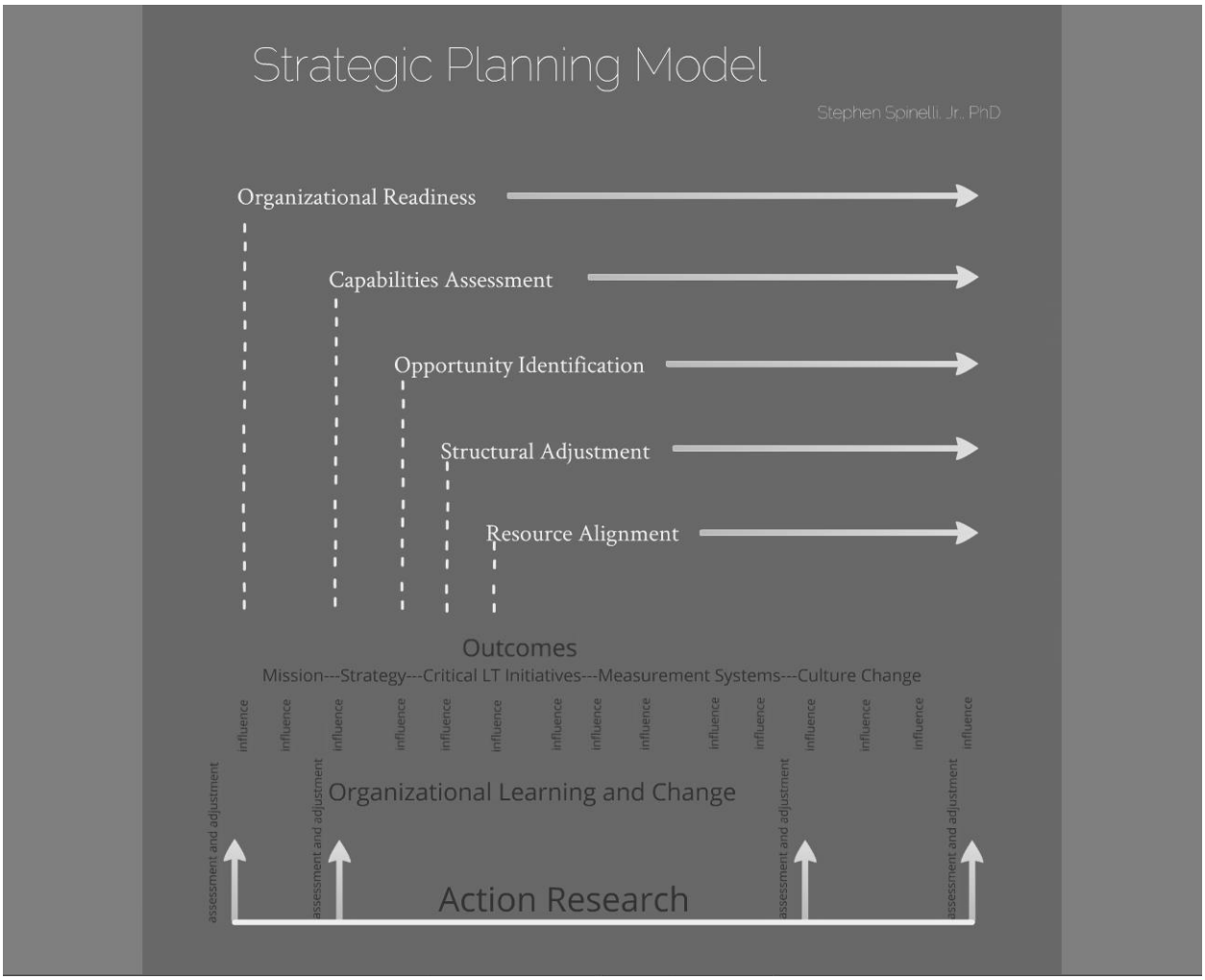

their opinions and concerns. After that, we began to map the attitudes and perspectives of the organization across all these constituencies (faculty, staff, students, administration, trustees, alumni, neighbors, industry partners), looking for competencies, competitive positioning, and aspirations. We paid particular attention to how these stakeholders defined value. Eventually, we reported to an executive committee of individuals who represented broad segments of the community.

While we made marginal changes to the mission, it was generally reaffirmed. This was a big advantage in time and reserved political capital. The updated mission statement was: "Philadelphia University is developing the model for university professional education in the 21st century." Institutions should be prepared for more substantial change.

Then, a combination of new and more experienced stakeholders formed planning committees – the committees included academics, student life, finance, facilities, research, alumni relations, industry relations, and development. Committees were provided data regarding the current state of the industry and the institution and were asked to create a vision of the future state of the university through the lens of their committee. Committee findings were presented to a committee of committee chairs and then shared with the Board of Trustees during a board "advance." (There is a psychological benefit to using the word "advance" versus the more commonly used "retreat." It demonstrates movement forward amidst the chaos of higher education, creating a more aspirational environment.)

Once we had established a requirement for change and a clear belief in the university's mission, we could begin to act on the model below (see Figure 5).

Figure 5. Strategic planning model.




It is important to ask some specific questions about competencies, culture, and aspirations when committees are brought together. At Philadelphia University, we examined disciplinary, organizational, and behavioral competencies: *Are we nimble? Does the organization react quickly? What are our disciplinary competencies in our academic divisions – what are we really good at?*

Then: *What is the culture around the mission, values, leadership, behaviors, and learning orientation? Do we believe in the liberal arts, professional education or both? Are we research or teaching oriented?*

The third point of analysis is the "aspiration index." This index prompted the questions: *How does the organization define quality? What is our vision of the future? What are our competitive impulses – are they competitive, collaborative, obsequious? Are we committed to growth or do we seek the status quo?* Understanding these questions and identifying answers to them is hard work. We analyzed these questions and answers in the context of the changes in the higher education environment we previously identified and which prompted the desire for institutional change.

Philadelphia University believed that we could develop the model for university professional education in the 21st century. We believed we were good but we knew we had to get better. Looking forward, we would focus specifically on professional education.

**A special note on the false dichotomy between professional and liberal arts education**

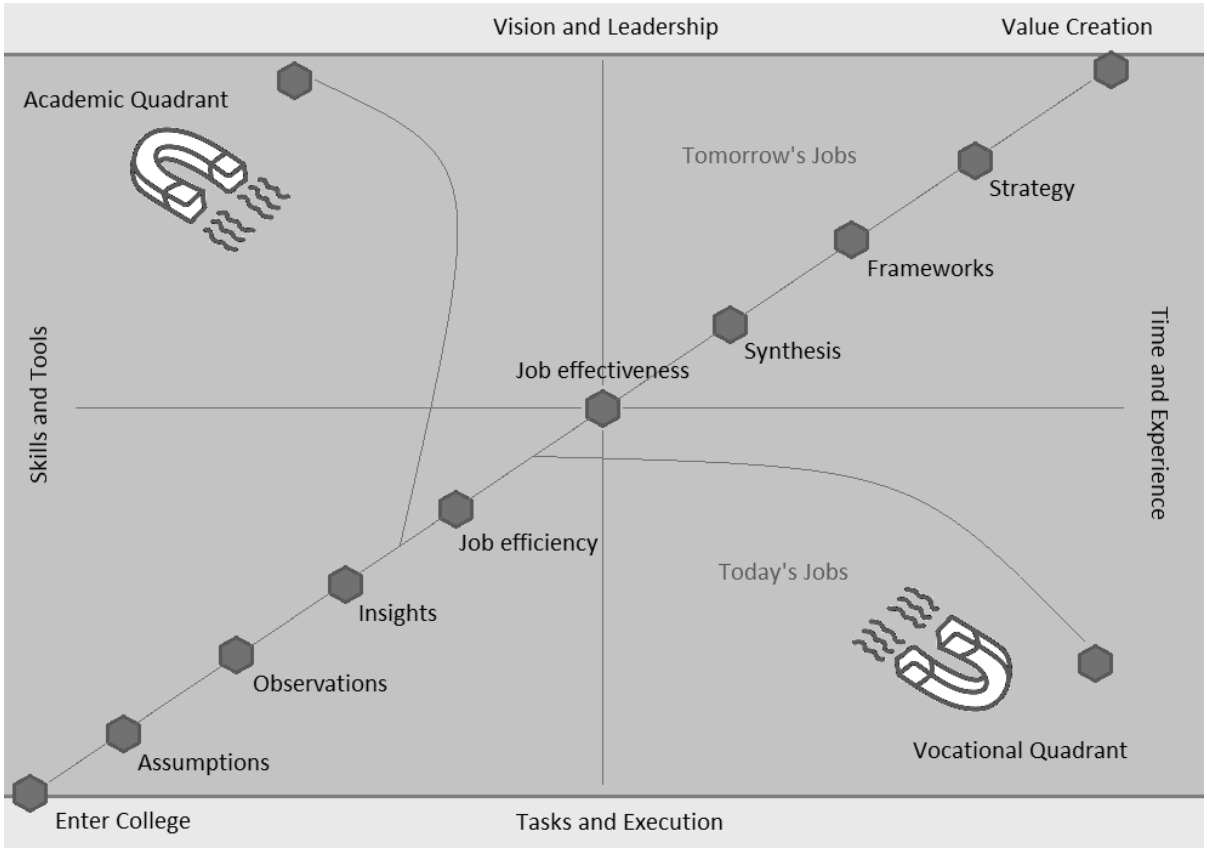
We understood that we needed to balance and manage the tension between the academic and vocational quadrants of education to create a professional and leader. Looking along the spectrum (see figure 6), the academic quadrants pull toward deep thought, the vocational quadrant pulls toward decisive action, and the tension between them (synthesis of information, frameworks for advancing, strategies for creating value, etc.) creates the professional and leader of the future.

With the vision of the future reality established, measurable key strategic initiatives emerged:

1. Formalize our signature learning approach;
2. Achieve innovation through the development of a College of Design, Engineering, and Commerce;
3. Define and advance applied research;
4. Invest in academic strengths;
5. Build graduate and professional programs;
6. Develop innovative facilities;
7. Integrate curricular and co-curricular learning.

The strategic plan became the thesis for a capital campaign. We defined additional required resources as leadership development, financial capital, and intellectual capital. We defined our

Figure 6. Academic/vocational dichotomy.

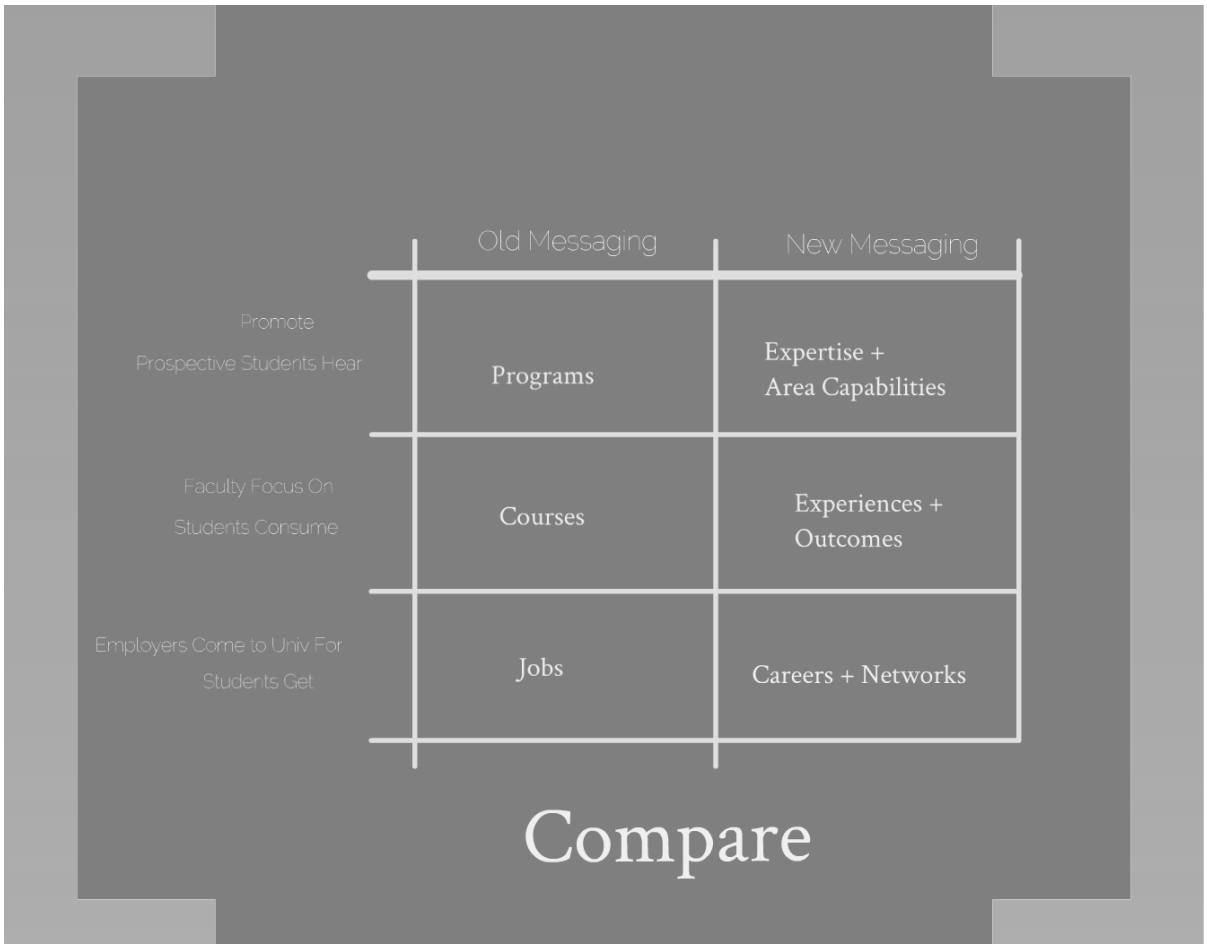



$40 million capital campaign goal and our leadership development and responsibilities plan.

It is important to note that our strategic plan shaped the language we use to communicate the brand of the institution. Philadelphia University's old messaging emphasized programs, courses, and jobs; the new messaging emphasized expertise and area capabilities, experiences and outcomes, and careers and networks (see figure 7).

We found that the new messaging was a paradigm shift. There was a lot of institutional work and marketing involved in getting that messaging to the internal and external population. Philadelphia University shifted from selling programs to parents and students looking for job security to selling expertise and capabilities to parents, students, and potential employers seeking careers and networks. The new language created a new perspective. Part of the messaging was that all of these capabilities were going to leverage students into careers that reached beyond the initial jobs after college. They might even compete for jobs when they graduate that did not exist when they entered college.

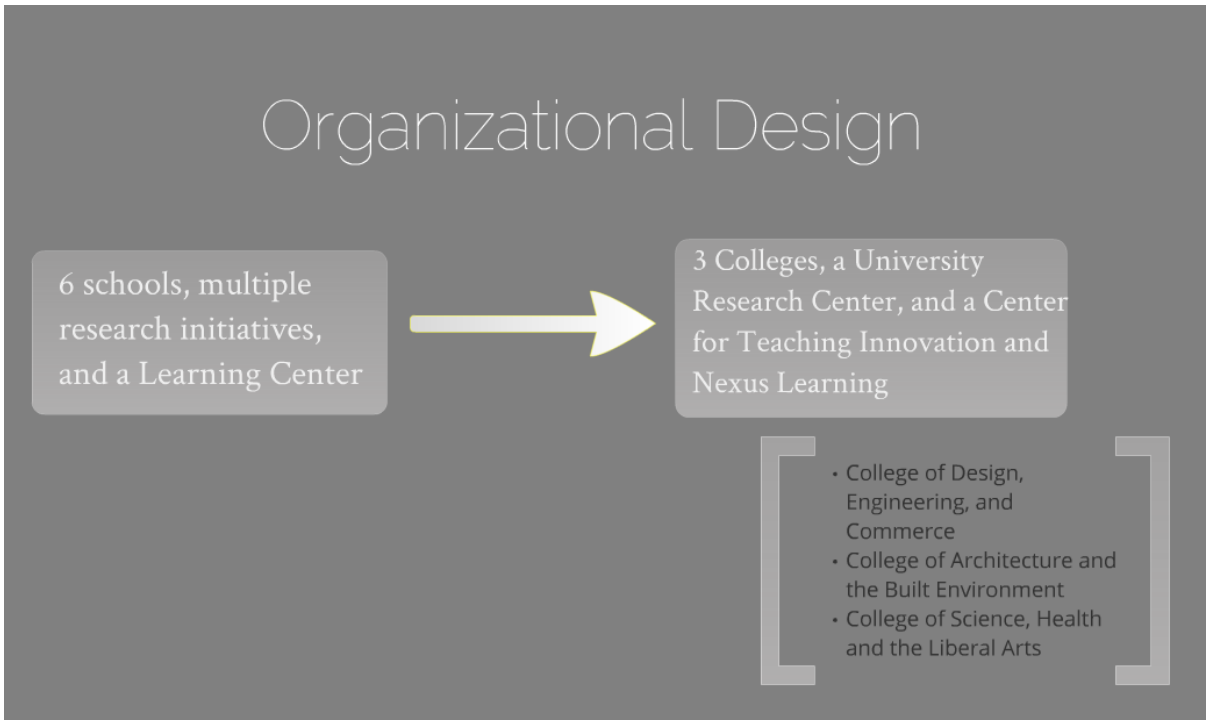
Figure 7. Old/new messaging grid.




Our plan required a new organizational design (see figure 8). We decided that the initial execution of the curriculum had to be formal. After a series of discussions during the planning process, we developed three questions we wanted all students and graduates to ask and act on as professionals: *Is what I'm doing desirable, is it feasible, and is it valuable?* Then, *If not, can I shape it to embody those outcomes?*

Our exceptional organizational competencies, among others, were in design, engineering, and commerce. Each competency answered one of the three questions we wanted students to ask. Design answered *Is what I'm doing desirable?* Engineering answered *Is what I'm doing feasible?* Commerce answered *Is what I'm doing valuable?* We crafted a new transdisciplinary design, engineering, and commerce curriculum, teaching students how to use the decision-making

Figure 8. New organizational design.




frameworks they use in their disciplines and gain enough understanding of other disciplines and approaches to help synthesize all of the information to create better outcomes (see figure 9).

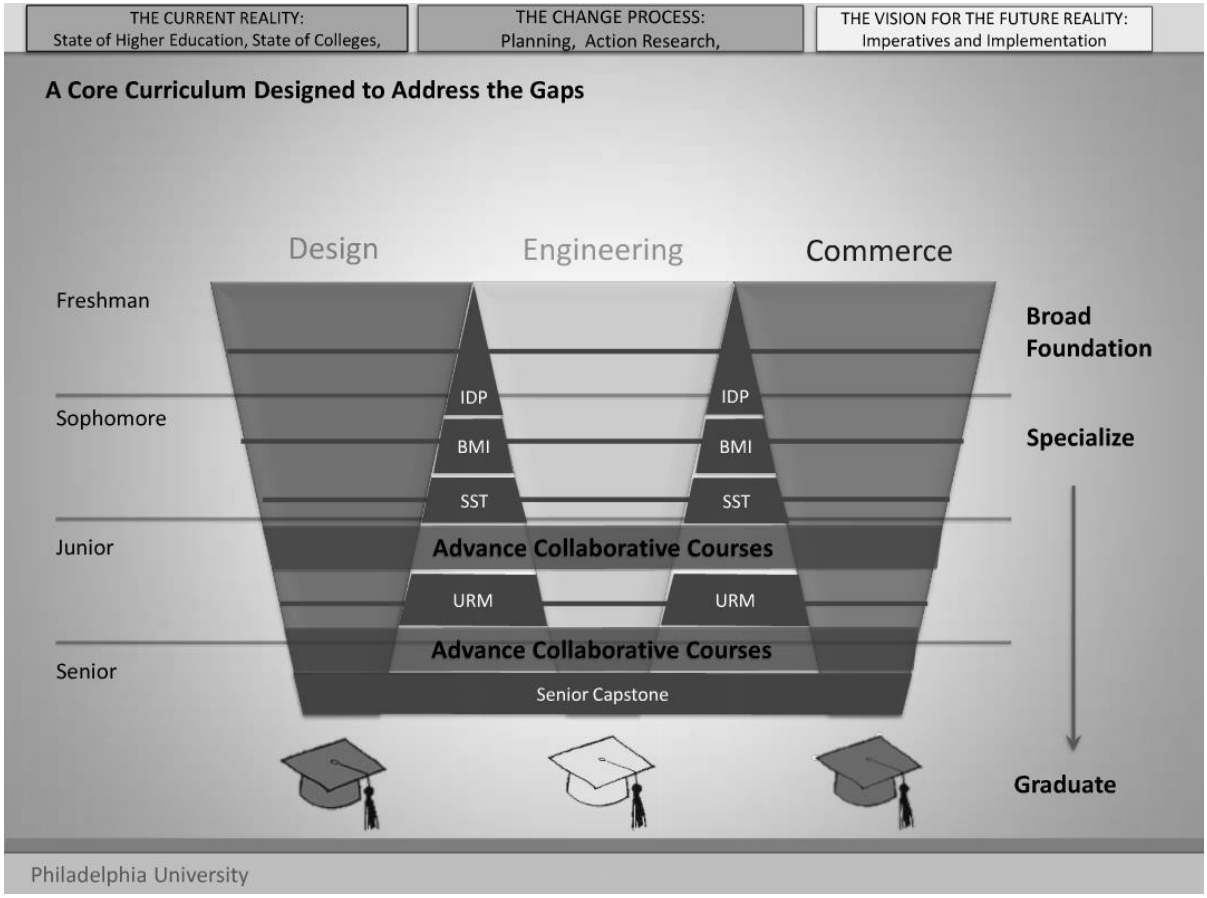
We also turned our attention to the built environment and constructed a new teaching facility to house and leverage the curriculum. The Lawrence N. Field DEC Center has earned LEED Gold Sustainability, supporting the DEC curriculum with state-of-the-art design studios, Nexus Learning spaces, and technology like 3D printing and prototyping equipment.

## CONCLUSION

Philadelphia University graduates have a 95% job or graduate school success rate. Despite the trying economic times, undergraduate enrollment is stable, and enrollment in graduate and continuing and professional studies programs has increased dramatically over the past five years. Our students consistently take competitive internships and win prestigious awards.

Philadelphia University's innovative educational philosophy has earned external acclaim. Ten of the university's programs have been nationally and internationally ranked since 2009. Most recently, the Business of Fashion Global Fashion School Rankings ranked our undergraduate and graduate programs among the top 20 fashion programs worldwide. The Kanbar College of Design,

Figure 9. Transdisciplinary curriculum design.




Engineering, and Commerce won the Core77 2012 Design Award in the category of educational initiatives. In October 2014, the Nexus Innovation program of industry partnerships won the University Economic Development association award for excellence in innovation and entrepreneurship.

Philadelphia University's commitment to institutional change has put the university in an excellent position to continue to thrive in the higher education marketplace as the model for professional education in the 21st century. However, the greatest advantage we gained from this process was to socialize institutional change as a manageable strategic advantage.

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# A RELUCTANT ADMINISTRATOR SHARES HIS RULES FOR TURBULENT TIMES

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Who among us plans to become a college administrator? I doubt that most of us go through a grueling doctoral program, work years to get tenure, and then immediately say, "OK, now I'm signing up for administration."

But that's what happened to me. I found myself elected chairman of our department just months after becoming a tenured Associate Professor. For the next six years, I served as department chair.

Late in my sixth year, and thinking "That's enough for anybody," I announced that I would return to a faculty position when the academic year ended. Our dean came to me shortly after my announcement and asked if instead I would become our first Associate Dean for Business Graduate Programs. Because I respected him and wanted to help out, I agreed. Four deans and eleven years later, I'm finally engineering the ultimate career move: I'm going to step back up to the business school faculty. Once again I have scheduled the transition for the end of the school year and with any luck, I'll succeed this time.

I am very much the reluctant administrator. I've always had (and still have) no designs on upper university administrative positions. Maybe that frees me to reflect a bit on the quirky world of universities and to share some of my "Rules to Live By." Perhaps my experiences can save someone from having to learn absolutely everything the hard way.

## A THREE-PART MODEL

I've organized this piece around the framework presented in Daniel Goleman's recent book, *Focus* (2013). He argues that successful leaders exhibit three main qualities:

1. They know who they are and have a good understanding of self.
2. They empathize with others.
3. They are able to look ahead and see what's coming (Goleman, 2013).

You might ask if this framework has any validity in the university environment. After all, Goleman studies businesses and—as has been pointed out to me on numerous occasions—our university is not a business. To that I can only offer one of the lessons I've learned along the way. Don't stop possible progress because we don't have 100% certainty that something will work. Listen to the intuitive side of your brain sometimes and if it feels right, it probably is right. And that's the case here. I think Goleman has got something that can help us, so I'm going to use it.

### Goleman's Leadership Quality #1: Know Who You Are

Seventeen years ago when I was trying to convince my wife that I wasn't crazy, I justified my move to administration with the words, "I think I can help." That was my own personal mantra for both the chairman and associate dean jobs. For me, that anchor point was useful when I felt I was losing my way or getting caught up in the crisis of the moment.

Speaking of crises, in the midst of one I once told a senior administrator, "We're a university. We move with glacial speed. The only crises we have are the ones we create for ourselves."

I cannot recommend that particular collection of words to others. They were not well-received.

It's irrelevant whether there was truth in what I said. I had opened my big mouth before engaging my brain and I made things worse. However, my inner compass somehow returned in the midst of that rapidly deteriorating situation when I remembered that I signed up to help, not to judge those above me. The hostility level lowered when I focused my subsequent comments on solving the crisis du jour instead of blaming him for it. Having your own mantra—something you can cling to—can really do a lot for you. "I think I can help" sure worked for me.

**Rule #1.1: Try to grow.** My first degree is in engineering. I added an MBA and then spent almost ten years diagnosing and reviving ailing companies before going back to school for a PhD in

marketing. That collection of experiences meant that I was about as analytical and left–brained as anyone could be. I had a planner. I had a schedule. I liked statistics. I made sure the work fit into the time allotted and never vice versa.

Ultra-analytical thinking worked reasonably well while I was department chair. The job was more reactive than creative back then since the environment was pretty stable. However, stability is no longer the case in higher education. Good administrators are going to need both the left and right sides of their brains.

I guess I'm lucky. Circumstances drove my brain remediation before a lot of the current instability in higher education showed up. For example, early in my associate deanship, our strategic plan said we wanted to "expand and enhance business graduate programs." That was pretty much my job description. Unfortunately, "how" was not mentioned at all. That meant I needed to get creative and try a lot of stuff.

Some of it was pretty well-thought out, and some of it not so much. I learned to prioritize by feel and tried to sense early in the process if the stars were aligning or if the university anti-bodies were too strong. I resisted the temptation to "study" something for an extremely long time before pursuing it. Instead, we investigated many things simultaneously and those that had promise survived and those that didn't fell by the wayside.

Multiple projects meant multiple work groups, aka committees, which can be a wonderful thing and a terrible thing. A committee that is seeing progress will enthusiastically meet very frequently and create fantastic outcomes. On the other hand, committees can be used to kill enthusiasm for almost any idea, if for some reason you don't want to kill it yourself. Send it to a committee for "study." When their recommendation is "more study," you'll know it's dead.

**Rule #1.2: Choose your battles.** When I was a kid, my mom used to tell me, "Choose your battles." Neither of us imagined that this advice would be words to live by 40 years later at a university. Unfortunately, it took me a few years and several bloodbaths to remember that I can't do it all or take everything on.

Over time, I've learned not to rise to all of the bait thrown my way. I now hit "save" on those fiery email retorts instead of "send." After a 24-hour incubation period, I reread my email and often conclude that my response would only throw gasoline on the smoldering embers. At that point I usually hit "delete," and I send no response. This gives the other party "the last word."

Budding new administrators might want to know that baiting is a well-developed art form…and it's not limited to just in-your-face personal attacks on your integrity or heritage. Faculty can get pretty creative. For example, I once had a faculty member come into my office and propose a "friendly wager." It seemed that he didn't believe we could actually accomplish what I had proposed in a general faculty meeting.

Instead of airing his views in the meeting, he showed up in my office the next day with a proposal that we wager $2500. I was to pay him $2500 if we didn't accomplish what I had proposed and he would pay me $2500 if we did. "It's a very simple wager" he said, and a chance for me to put my money where my mouth is.

Two opposing parties immediately showed up in my head. The emotional macho guy wanted to take him on. We'll show him who wears the pants around here. The little logical guy was signaling "danger" at a frantic rate, but he couldn't quite articulate the trap. Confused and full of conflict, I fortunately asked for a day to think about it. As it turns out, postponement was a great choice back then and something I do to this day: If a little voice is signaling danger, then try to buy a little time to think about it. Avoid the snap emotional decisions.

The next day I walked down to his office and told him I wasn't taking his bet. He insisted that I was chicken, untrustworthy, and not committed to what I said. I assured him I was completely committed to the project and that bravery had nothing to do with it (as demonstrated by the reappearance of the little macho guy in my head).

My logical self had convinced me there could be no winners here, and that's what I shared with him. If I "won" and he had to pay me $2500, he would be angry for a very long time. If he "won" and I had to pay him, then our whole college just lost, including him, because my proposal was a huge step forward for us.

For at least a year, he avoided me and was extremely uncomfortable when we were near each other. I didn't seek him out, but always made it a point to say "hi" to him when I saw him in the hall. That seemed to make him even more uncomfortable which, thanks to my internal macho guy, usually made me feel better.

Eventually he did something really good for the college and I was able to publicly thank him. That was the turning point in our relationship and is something I do to this day. I try to let go of the past, see the good in the person, and make sure to publicly acknowledge somebody when they deserve it.

**Rule #1.3: Don't force the "aha" moments.** The majority of us academics are logical, left-brained beings. We look for empirical evidence. We think in confidence intervals and T-statistics. We look for solid research on which to build our contribution to the discipline. However, those skills are of almost no use when you're thrust into a situation that requires creativity instead of incremental improvement. You can't deduce your way to an "aha" moment.

However, you can create an environment where you're more likely to have a creative moment yourself or help a group come up with something good. Asking a lot of questions that start with "What if…" or "Could we..." helps build a group dynamic of inventiveness. Those questions, combined with not being defensive if something gets shot down, sends a signal that someone else can also ask "What if," and pretty soon the whole group is coming up with ideas.

Of course you still have to be ready for the person whose first reaction to anything is "That'll never work" or "We tried that 30 years ago and it flopped."

The concept of "suspend judgment" from the Design Thinking methodology that's currently sweeping its way into many universities can be useful in that instance (Kelley & Kelley, 2013). I try to emphasize early in the creative process that we are just generating ideas, not evaluating them. That's because the quickest way to kill creativity is to immediately evaluate and then publicly state that an idea is stupid. It's much better to just collect the ideas on the board as they show up. The natural selection process will work for you.

Sometimes you're on your own and you need to find a creative solution. I've learned that some of Daniel Kahneman's recent research seems to hold true for me (Kahneman, 2013). I can actively work on a problem and maybe get there, but the really sticky ones need some incubation time in my subconscious. I stop actively trying to solve the problem and trust in my subconscious. Solutions come at unexpected times like in the shower, standing in the river trying to catch a fish, or in that twilight time between sleeping and waking. That's when I've found answers to some of my trickiest problems. So I've learned to let go and let it happen in its own time.

**Goleman's Leadership Quality #2: Empathize**

I try to resist the temptation to immediately fight back and argue only my side of an issue. It's easy to say but hard to do when someone shows up at your office in attack mode. Ideally though, I verbally acknowledge the other's position—I empathize—by restating what I heard them say before presenting my side of the issue. If you don't publicly state that you heard them, but disagree, then the whole conversation can escalate into a shouting match or a petty passive-

aggressive situation where the faculty member gives up in the moment but then does his or her best to subvert you at every turn. That's one of the worst outcomes.

**Rule #2.1: There's truth in what the students are telling you.** Some administrators and faculty heavily discount student feedback. I base this observation on the fact that I've been the recipient of eloquent and detailed explanations about the poor reliability of instruments designed to capture student feedback…from those scoring poorly, of course. I've heard that non-response bias is probably at work here, current students have no basis from which to judge, and it's likely I've only heard from the "whiners." While that might all be true, in my experience there's always a fair amount of truth in student feedback and successful administrators pay attention.

Thus, I often use student feedback as the conversation starter with a faculty member, saying something like, "I have a sample size of one, but here's what I heard…" These conversations can often be quite positive, and I've had a lot of good luck with them over the years. Some of them have even turned into long term mentoring situations.

It's important to prepare carefully before engaging in a conversation about teaching effectiveness with a faculty member. I learned that the hard way when I initiated a conversation about teaching with one of our more egotistical professors without first organizing what I wanted to accomplish.

This particular individual would get into sparring matches with students over nuances of facts and had to always show he was the smartest one in the room. I tried to handle him with kid gloves from the beginning since other faculty and our staff couldn't—or wouldn't—deal with him. I worked the edges with him for a couple of years, never directly stating specific things to change. Instead, I would try to gently suggest that he didn't have to "win" all of the classroom discussions or somehow prove he was smarter than everyone else. I also tried to get him to integrate with what the other professors in the program were doing, but he insisted that his material was the most important and it could not be changed. Further, he—and he alone—could teach it properly.

Wrongly, I thought we needed him more than we actually did, so I made accommodations and I defended him for years. Other professors complained about his behavior. Our staff complained. The students complained too, but I stayed with him. I knew better.

You'd think I would have caught on, considering I was hearing the same thing from three sources. However, I remained in denial until I personally witnessed a particularly ugly classroom

incident. Shortly thereafter I showed up at his office. I plopped down in his chair secure in the knowledge that I could talk to him, even if nobody else could.

I started with something I thought old friends could say to each other. It was along the lines of "What the heck happened in there?" and he exploded with a torrent of negativity I did not realize was in him. He was angry about so much and started pulling up things that had happened years ago that I couldn't even remember. Some of his examples of mistreatment were due to decisions I had made and some had their genesis in decisions made by others in the university.

The source of the anger didn't matter though. I was the one sitting there so I got the full fury. Instead of resolving or addressing these issues along the way, he had apparently nurtured them over time into little piles of resentment that were just waiting to pop out. I was (and still am a few years later) the focus of his hostility since I was the one who walked in and lit the fuse.

I realize now that I made two mistakes here. First, I failed to empathize with his situation. I grossly underestimated how resentful he was that circumstances he thought were beyond his control forced him to stay at our university when he didn't want to remain here. Second, I didn't plan my meeting with him before I showed up. I figured we were old friends and we would just work it out. The combination of those two errors was deadly and I've tried never to do that again. I always try to have a plan and to think, even briefly, about what the other person's situation might be before I start a conversation.

**Rule #2.2: Try to understand faculty motivations.** Over the years, I've been lucky enough to work with some of the most altruistic faculty in the world. They have huge hearts and want their students to succeed. They want their university to be the best it can be and they consistently volunteer for whatever needs to be done.

I erroneously thought all of us were like that. In the rosy world of a neophyte administrator, I believed we were all at the university because we were willing to trade personal financial gain for quality of life and the chance to help build the future.

Well, I was wrong. Some faculty members are extremely self-centered. They evaluate everything through their lens of personal pain or gain. Although my sample size is small, I'm convinced it's not possible to make the really self-centered ones happy, regardless of what you give them.

For example, I faced a situation where we needed one of our professors to teach a course for the first time and that course needed to enroll twice the normal amount of students. Some of

our more intrinsically motivated faculty would have risen to the challenge. I've seen it happen over and over. However (and I knew this before the fact), Scheduled Professor had a habit of asking "What's in it for me?"

I knew his view of the world and had also recently taught Equity Theory in one of my own courses, so I projected his outcomes to inputs ratio before going to see him (Adams, 1965). I was certain Scheduled Professor would think his ratio was unbalanced in the university's favor. Secure in my understanding of theory, I told him that he would have an abnormally large class and he immediately agreed that he was not feeling the love. I asked what our college could do to help.

We gave him an assistant—to grade papers—even though nobody else had one. Scheduled Professor also got to pick one of his friends as the assistant and convinced us to pay his choice more than double the adjunct rate. We got (an)Other Professor to guest instruct the equivalent of almost two weeks of classes so Scheduled Professor wouldn't have to come up to speed in an unfamiliar area. We even got Other Professor to grade the papers related to that portion of the course so Scheduled Professor wouldn't have to power up and grade them.

Still, it wasn't enough. To this day Scheduled Professor will tell you he got "screwed on that course."

What's the lesson? Identify your (hopefully few) self-centered faculty and act accordingly. They will not respond like the others and their view of what creates equity is tilted far more in their direction than you expect. What we thought was "way more" was clearly not even close to enough for Scheduled Professor. So if you don't think you can provide "way, way more" to make them happy, then consider providing nothing. I think the final state of unhappiness would probably be the same even if we had made no concessions at all and had just told Scheduled Professor it was his turn to take one for the team.

**Rule #2.3: Hire the best staff and treat them right.** I have been lucky enough to work with some of the most altruistic and intrinsically motivated staff you've ever seen. I've watched them provide a shoulder for a discouraged student to cry on, and then a needed kick in the pants for another student ten minutes later. It's remarkable what they do in their quest to help students develop.

I sometimes think about the old business tale about the janitor at NASA in the 1960s being asked what he does. He responded with something like, "I'm helping to put a man on the moon," even though he was pushing a broom. He knew what they were doing and that's what you want

everyone at the university to understand. Administrators and staff aren't there to just process paperwork, do grades, sign waivers, or help us all conform to university policy. We are there to educate future community leaders, and we can really create a fantastic environment if everyone working at the university believes that. Unfortunately, that's not always the case.

A good friend of mine used to have a very senior position at a large multi-national corporation. One day at lunch he was lamenting their bureaucracy, but I had him beat. Earlier that day I received a call from one of our university accountants who "had questions about *your* expense report." This was in regards to a dinner I had purchased for the associate dean of a different state university when she was in town. We splurged and went to a brewpub for a hamburger and, big drinkers that we were, each had one beer. It was "happy hour" so beers were $2.50. Before putting in for reimbursement, I circled the $5.00 charge, wrote "beer" on the receipt, and subtracted five dollars from the total, fully aware that I was just going to pay for the beer myself since our university does not allow one to be reimbursed for alcohol.

This earned a call from one of our accountants who pointed out that although I had indeed subtracted five bucks, I did not take off the accompanying 7.5% sales tax which amounted to 37 cents. My form proposed to over-charge the university by 37 cents and that simply would not do. The purpose of his call was to notify me that he was going to reject my claim for reimbursement and send it back to me for correction, at which time it could re-enter the multi-stage approval process that ended at his desk.

To this day I am surprised that I was able to think quickly enough to beg that he just take his pencil and subtract 37 cents from the total instead of sending it back. Even more surprisingly, he agreed. Together we saved our university the money it would have spent re-approving my $25 expense report.

That story won the bureaucracy contest with my friend. He paid up the next day. I received a backpack bearing their company logo and in it I found all of the logo-bearing swag he could get his hands on. I got a pen, a clock, a calendar, a T-shirt, and more. And at the very bottom of the backpack, I found a ziplock baggie with 37 pennies in it. He made me whole.

I've learned that if you hire the best staff you can, they won't become the disillusioned bureaucrat we've all witnessed at various times in our lives. That's because your staff will see the bigger picture: we are creating the next generation of citizens and community leaders. When that happens, the university moves forward.

**Rule #2.4: Empathizing Doesn't Always Mean Agreeing.** While I've always tried to understand where the other guy is coming from, I have at times stood up and said "no" when I thought something was wrong. Telling people that you heard their position is not the same as agreement with their position. That is a key tenant of negotiating strategies and it is important to be clear on the difference (Rackham, 1988).

A few years ago we redesigned our professional MBA around the backbone of "commercializing ideas." Our students would learn how to generate good business ideas, figure out which ones were worth pursuing, and how to put together a business to do that. Course sequencing would aid that process. As part of our genius, we thought it would be great to have our MBA students work on commercializing some university intellectual property.

Shortly thereafter, I went over to our Office of Technology Transfer to see if I could make this happen. After a couple of meetings I had approval for our students to work on commercializing two patented technologies. The technologies were pure science, like a new type of plastic or a molecule. Our university had patented these inventions but no actual products had been developed or licenses sold. Our student goal was clear: each team should figure out a good commercial application and then design a start-up business that would bring their product idea to market.

Our MBA students began the process during the fall semester and everything was humming along until a university lawyer showed up at class one evening in February, looking for student signatures on two freshly-drafted documents. The Non Disclosure Agreement wasn't a problem, but the "Assignment of Rights" raised some student eyebrows to the point where nobody signed it on the spot. Over the course of the next few days, several students asked me if it really meant that everything they did on their commercialization project belonged to the university. I promised to find out.

Shortly thereafter I was sitting in our University General Counsel's office and discussing the Assignment of Rights document. To be completely sure I understood, I asked the hypothetical but precise question I had earlier prepared, "Imagine one MBA student estimates market potential for a particular commercial application of this technology. If I understand correctly, then the University would own his or her market study. Is that right?"

I was assured that my reading of the document was correct. If the students signed the Assignment form, then the university would own their market studies and anything else they did relating to the university's invention. I argued that estimating market potential for one commercial application has nothing to do with their patent of pure science, but it made no difference. The

university would own everything. My subsequent plea to then change the words in the document was met with a firm "no."

I went back to our students and told them they had a choice. They could sign the paper, continue working on the university IP, and give the university rights to all they did. Or, they could shift gears and work on commercializing an idea in which the university holds no intellectual property.

All of the student teams, except one, dropped the university IP within two weeks. Shortly thereafter I sent a very carefully-worded email to those involved from our university. It said I *understand* they are trying to protect the university's interest, but I *disagree* with the position. Thus, the one team sticking with university IP will sign their form, but we will not solicit any university IP for future projects. In my opinion, the deal had become so one-sided in the university's favor that I could not recommend it for future students.

In hindsight, I still think it was the right call to pull us out of university IP. It was an intractable situation. Our students thought they were being unfairly taken advantage of. That was clear in about five minutes with them. On the other side, our university was hoping that they might license their IP for big bucks someday and they didn't want to be constrained by MBA student teams having any kind of rights. The end result was, I'm sad to report, complete failure of our attempt to help commercialize university IP.

The idea may have flopped, but I think I did the best I could. I followed a lot of my own rules like 1) buy time to think about it, 2) have a plan before the meeting, 3) wait for days before sending a potentially inflammatory email, and 4) empathize with the parties. Hopefully those rules can help someone else who is in the middle of a similarly sticky situation.

**Goleman's Leadership Quality #3: See What's Coming**

The emerging right-brained part of me now realizes that there's a "feel" part to understanding your environment that will help you figure out what is headed your way. SWOT-like analysis is important, but it won't get you aha-like insight. To be really successful, you also need to feel the inertia and heed that old advice to "go with the flow."

**Rule #3.1: Go with the flow.** After plenty of battles with the bureaucracy and lots of student and faculty issues, I now try to feel which way the river is flowing. My goal is to ride downstream as often as I can. When that happens, things just seem to fall into place.

For example, we decided to start an Online MBA program a few years ago and, by university standards, we did it at light speed. In twelve months we went from only an idea to an operating program with qualified students enrolled. We rapidly completed the curriculum design process, obtained multiple on-campus approvals, passed a State Board of Education vote, made a change to our university's academic calendar, initiated a new learning management system, and we partnered with a private for-profit company to help recruit students and train our faculty. Certainly the river was flowing that direction and everything just sort of unfolded.

On the other side, I've also gotten clear direction that some initiative is contrary to the way things are going. Early in my administrative career I would push and push on things only to find out in the end that they just didn't have life. For example, years ago I helped start the first college-specific alumni chapter our university ever had. It limped along for a couple of years with steadily declining participation in its events. To compensate, we propped it up with college resources.

The founders slowly drifted away and there was nobody excited to take the helm, so our college alumni chapter finally just went dormant, and it remains so today. All of the events disappeared except…an Alumni Golf Tournament. A handful of interested guys (who weren't part of the original alumni chapter) adopted it and made it an incredible fundraising event. They lifted it to a level we could only dream of.

In hindsight I can see the golf tournament had legs and the rest did not. I would have saved a lot of time and trouble if I'd figured that out earlier than I did. Quite possibly I was blinded by the attraction of creating the *first* alumni chapter and that clouded my vision of what was really happening—declining interest.

**Rule #3.2: If you do what you've always done, then you'll get what you've always gotten.** That was a favorite saying of our first Executive MBA Director, and I think she was right. Her mantra applies to many circumstances, but in homage to her, I'll use the early design days of our now decade-old Executive MBA program as an example.

Our college had tried to start an EMBA program about fifteen years ago and failed pretty spectacularly. A faculty committee designed the program, we printed up some brochures, and exactly zero people applied for admission. It wasn't a fabulous first at-bat.

Only four years after that painful experience, we were back. Our dean and I thought it was a critical next step in our evolution and should be one of the first things I work on as a new associate

dean. We needed an Executive MBA program for both revenue generation and to build our local brand.

I examined the previous effort and realized it was a classic attempt at higher ed innovation. We had done what we always do: The program was designed by a faculty committee that included a representative of every discipline. After many meetings, they compromised with a non-distinct program that looked pretty much like everyone else's EMBA program (and our existing professional MBA) and it was a complete failure.

Our experience convinced me to try some different things. First, I hand-picked the five members of the EMBA design team. We didn't have an open cattle call that all turf-protectors could respond to. I also purposely didn't ask any of our extremely negative faculty to be a part of the EMBA design team. I didn't want group think, but I also knew we couldn't prosper with anybody I now think of as "No-No The Penguin."

In case you haven't read it, "No-No" has a starring role in Kotter and Rathbone's great little book on change management (Kotter, Rathgeber, & Johnson, 2006). No-No didn't want to leave the flock's longstanding iceberg home even when the ice under their feet was literally melting away. None of the other penguins could promise with 100% certainty that jumping off the iceberg and swimming to a new one would work. Thus, No-No was unwilling to change bergs.

I couldn't see any chance of success with a No-No on the EMBA design team, so I made the completely unprecedented and controversial move of handpicking the team. That instantly made me a target in the hall from those whose discipline "wasn't represented." I was fodder for plenty of gossip. However, the detractors were mistaken. Those five faculty members—although each was from a different discipline—were able to look beyond their own focus area and realize that we were trying to create a program to develop flexible, innovative leaders. Tomorrow's business leaders needed to know something about all of the disciplines, and they needed to be generalists, not specialists. We were creating an MBA for company leaders, not an MS in something.

In a stunning departure from tradition, we left our building many, many times to collect opinions from the business community. We made multiple visits to more than twenty-five different organizations and asked their current leaders what skills the next generation of leaders needed in order to be successful. Outside input was a novel idea back then, and I'm pretty sure it's still rare as I watch various university committees trying to design new programs by having representatives of each college or discipline meet repeatedly. I am not convinced *we* unilaterally "know best" what *they* need.

I've found that outside opinions are the administrator's friend, provided you don't have a specific agenda to validate and can act on the information you gather. When a faculty member hears first hand from a respected business leader that his or her discipline isn't everything, it's just one of several important things—it's enlightening. Turf arguments evaporate along with the need for you as the lead person to "make the call here."

If you are willing to break tradition and leave campus, then you should be prepared for some conflicting information and some surprises. The path to completion becomes murky, and as our Design Thinking friends teach, you'll "diverge" before you can "converge." This can be a bit unsettling, but trust the process and you'll find some great insights. Those insights will be grounded in customer opinions and for that reason they have a greater chance of success.

**Rule #3.3: No faculty champion, no party.** I'm convinced a faculty champion is absolutely critical to the success of any on-campus innovation. The administrator can encourage and do a lot of the actual work, but in the end you have to have a faculty member leading the charge. The faculty member can be you, the administrator, if the innovation is in your area of expertise. That's why I, for example, was able to lead a lot of the changes we made to our MBA programs.

However, I am convinced at least some of the failures I had were because we didn't have a tenure-track faculty member really buy into the vision and carry the flag for us. Instead, we would get agreement and encouragement at meetings, but when crunch time really came, a strong faculty leader didn't emerge.

For example, I went to one of our faculty at launch time for a program in her specialty, and asked that she help us recruit students for the program in which she would teach and (theoretically) make a lot of extra money. In an almost direct paraphrase of No-No the penguin, I was asked if I could guarantee with 100% certainty that at least 30 students would sign up for the first class. In her opinion she had already spent way too much unpaid time designing this program, so she would expend no more effort unless pay was guaranteed.

Of course I couldn't guarantee anything with 100% certainty and that fact meant we were dead. With no faculty expert championing the cause, pushing us, and out there with us meeting potential students, we had no chance. It took me a few months to actually give up on this dream, but I should have given up when I left her office.

The lesson for future administrators is that at least one dedicated faculty member—someone who will do whatever it takes—is required for any significant innovation.

**Rule #3.4: Lessons from industry apply to us too.** I'm convinced that good administrators must scan the periphery. This is easy to say, but hard to do since the internal problem-of-the-day is always in your face. However, I think you'll be better off if you can put the current crises aside every once in a while and look outside for a few ideas. Here are a couple of my favorites.

*Focus on what your college does well.* Don't try to be everything to everybody. That simple message of "focus" has permeated academic and popular literature for the last few decades (Porter, 1998). I think somebody in our business college teaches that concept every day.

And it is true. I don't know of a single company that makes every component of what it sells. HP didn't make all of those parts in my printer. The janitorial staff didn't make the cleaning chemicals they use and my architect didn't feel obligated to write the software she used to design our house. Each of them buys what they can and makes the elements of their offering that add unique value. However, at the university we tend to have each instructor "make" every bit of every course he or she teaches. Other than textbooks, we don't "buy" much of anything. We make it all, over and over again until we have created a whole degree for a student.

What if we took a lesson from industry and only "made" the parts of our courses where we really add value? One of our online MBA faculty members did just that. She realized that video clips are readily available of famous professors describing some of their key concepts. She could bring Harvard's Michael Porter or Clayton Christensen or whoever into her online MBA virtual classroom through the magic of YouTube (e.g,, *The Five Competitive Forces That Shape Strategy, 2008*). Her students can have the best of both worlds. The global expert describes the concepts and she makes it come alive through discussion and application.

Some might say she isn't doing her job if she shows a video of Michael Porter instead of explaining his five forces model in her own video. I disagree. I think it's just smart. She is on the leading edge of universities realizing that they don't have to "make" everything.

We discussed the pros and cons of doing this for a while before she went for it—and to her credit it worked. Her students are really engaged, and learning outcomes are high. Her course evaluations are excellent as well. The lesson here, I think, is that specialization could work in higher education, and I bet future administrators can come up with more and better applications.

*Markets change.* For years, industries have wrestled with the fact that market preferences continue to evolve. What's "hot" today may not be tomorrow and companies have a hard time changing what they do when market preferences change or new technologies threaten. Pick your

industry and you'll find examples: typewriter manufacturers, whale oil companies, main frame computer manufacturers, and of course the buggy-whip makers have all fallen by the wayside.

Many have noted that the market for higher education is changing. The generation exiting high school right now is questioning the value of a four-year degree to an extent never before seen. That's causing enrollment declines at many universities and it seems like every other issue of the *Chronicle* has an article about the need for us to change or we will die (Kolowich, 2015).

Clayton Christensen has documented just how hard it is for companies to change and that he expects universities to have the same challenges (Christensen & Eyring, 2011). It's very difficult to blow up your own thing before someone else does. However, my university is trying to change. Lately we've begun breaking down college silos to make our degrees trans-disciplinary. We are also trying to introduce badges…indications of small, but valuable bits of learning in a non-credit environment. I hope these are just the first steps in our effort to adapt to a changing environment.

*Watch the competition.* Good administrators look at their competition, and I don't mean just the other universities in your athletic conference. I mean the "for-profits."

Consider recent history. For-profit universities pioneered online degrees over the past twenty years or so. Until recently, many of us at big state or private institutions dismissed online degrees as "inferior" and pretty much changed nothing that we were doing. After all, we had the "lecture" methodology that's worked since the middle ages and we were enrolling plenty of students.

Now times have changed. Practically every university is scrambling to offer online degrees and our recent efforts in that space are displacing the for-profits from that market. The bigger brands of state and private universities give market power even though we are nowhere close to being first-movers.

For-profit universities typically have no big endowment, they have no overhead payments from grants, and they have no state funding. For them, it is all about tuition-generated revenue. As an economist friend of mine told me the other day, "They feel the pressure first, so we should expect the next big innovation in higher education to come from them. They will rise again." I believe he is right: the for-profit survivors will respond more quickly to the changing marketplace than the traditional state or private institutions can.

I think the for-profit universities will probably try to credential students after they complete "chunks" of education, without forcing them to complete the four-year "degree plans" that we do. We will probably dismiss their innovation as inferior (just like we did with "online") and then the cycle will repeat, except we won't have twenty years' grace period this time. The for-profits are an

early warning system of the future of higher education, and I suggest everyone watch what those guys do.

## CONCLUSION

Did you ever see *Zombieland*, a cult-movie favorite? Jesse Eisenberg's character, "Columbus," creates and follows his own set of rules in an attempt to survive in a world populated by human-flesh eating crazies. While I'm not suggesting that university zombies will attack and eat new administrators, I have seen my share of new administrators become disenchanted pretty quickly. This makes me think that perhaps Columbus was onto something. A few simple rules might save the next reluctant administrator a pound of flesh or two.

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# CRITICAL ETHICAL ISSUES FACING AMERICAN HIGHER EDUCATION TEN YEARS LATER: PRACTITIONER PERSPECTIVES

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Some ten years ago, we conducted a study with academic leaders in higher education focused on their views of the most critical ethical issues facing American higher education. In that study, the survey responses were categorized into the following general areas: Leadership, Social Values, and Globalization (23 percent); the Impact of Technology on Academic Integrity (20 percent); the Cost/Benefit Value Proposition (18 percent); the Impact of Competition on Academic Quality (15%); Grade Inflation in Higher Education (14 percent); and other responses (11 percent) (Cherif, Stefurak, Murkar, Somervill, and Hanna, 2006). Ten years later, we re-conducted the study, asking academic leaders the same questions as in the original study. In this paper we describe the study we conducted with over 400 academic leaders in higher education asking them to provide their own perspectives on *the most critical ethical issues facing American higher education today*. Analysis of the responses to the same questions reveals a shift in academic leaders' perspectives and some surprising outcomes. We share the results and discuss the implications of the findings for higher education, including students, instructors, and curriculum and academic leaders, because we believe that such awareness is a necessary first step in finding workable solutions that could lead to sustainable institutions and effective mission achievement, including greater student satisfaction, retention, success, and graduation rates.

The rationale for re-conducting the study is that higher education has been experiencing affordability issues, lack of adequate public funding, global competition, legislative pressures, heightened federal regulation, and challenges in institutional integrity and academic quality. As faculty, administrators, and academic leaders, we are in positions where we have to make decisions that affect our institutions. The results of our decisions and actions, individually and collectively, contribute to how our institutions function and remain viable over time and, in turn, how our students perform and succeed in their educational pursuits. Therefore, we want to see whether or not there is a shift in the perspectives of department chairs, administrators, and academic leaders in their perceptions of the most critical ethical issues facing higher education.

## THE RESEARCH STUDY

### Methodology

Through questionnaires and focused interviews, we solicited responses from faculty, department chairs, administrators, and academic leaders in higher education. Additional questions regarding personal and demographic information were also included as optional. Both the main questions and the additional demographic questions were the same as we asked in 2006.

Five hundred questionnaires were distributed through the Internet (Survey Monkey and regular e-mail), as well as distributed in conference meetings, accompanied by a short explanation of the purposes of the study, emphasizing the fact that we were revisiting the same issues ten years later. As shown in Table 1, completed questionnaires were obtained from 432 participants (a response rate of 86.4 percent). In addition, 12 participants were selected for follow-up by means of in-depth interviews.

Table 1

Completed questionnaires obtained from 432 participants
(A response rate of 86.4 percent)

| Means of delivery | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Survey Monkey | 108 | 25 |
| Direct e-mail | 79 | 18 |
| Conference meetings | 245 | 67 |
| Total | 432 | 100 |

To prepare the completed questionnaires for data analysis we (a) summarized all the survey responses; (b) identified, with different colors, key words and phrases in every answer; and (c) categorized the answers into the following related groups:

- Academic integrity/plagiarism
- Cost/funding issues
- Inadequate preparation
- Administrative leadership
- Faculty support
- Academic quality
- Curriculum Issues
- Other categories

We also, highlighted major areas of ethical concern by subcategorizing the above.

In order to best analyze the categories for study, each person involved in the study was assigned one or two categories. He or she reviewed the responses for the assigned categories and developed a summary statement that highlighted the major issues, identified an exemplary statement from the responses, and stated his/her personal opinion reflecting on the participants' responses. Subsequent to this step, all the gathered information was distributed to the authors of the study for discussion through a number of conference calls.

## Results

*Participant Characteristics and Demographics*. The response rate of 86.4 percent was more than twice the rate in the 2006 study (32.5 percent). This might be because in the recent study, we directly distributed and collected surveys in conference meetings which we did not do in the previous study. As shown in Table 2, while 37 percent of the participants were deans, associate deans and directors, and 26 percent were department chairs, only 2 percent of the participants were presidents and 7 percent were VPs/Provosts. Furthermore, while in both the 2006 and 2015 studies the majority of respondents were deans, more presidents and VPs/Provosts participated in 2006 than in 2015.

Table 2. Participant Characteristics

| | Category | # Responses | Percentage |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Faculty | 83 | 19 |
| 2 | Chairs | 112 | 26 |
| 3 | Deans/Associate Deans/Directors | 158 | 37 |
| 4 | VPs/Provosts | 29 | 7 |
| 5 | Associate VPs/Provosts | 41 | 9 |
| 6 | Presidents | 9 | 2 |
| | Total | 432 | 100 |

*Average Respondent Tenure.* The number of years respondents had been in their current position in higher education ranged between 3 and 15 years, while their number of years of service in higher education spanned 7 to 26 years. The number of institutions the respondents had worked in ranged between 1 and 4 (Table 3). All the participants have been in higher education for more than five years.

Table 3. Average Respondent Tenures

| | Range | |
|---|---|---|
| | Lowest | Highest |
| Years in Current Position | 3 | 15 |
| Years in Higher Education | 7 | 26 |
| Number of Institutions Served | 1 | 4 |

*Responses to the Research Question.* Based on analysis of the answers provided, the responses were grouped into 8 main categories: Academic Integrity/Plagiarism, Cost/Funding Issues, Inadequate Preparation for Higher Education, Administrative Leadership, Faculty Support, Academic Quality, Curriculum Issues, and Other Categories (Table 4).

Table 4. Main Categories of Participants' Responses

| | Category | No. Responses | Percentage |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Academic Integrity/Plagiarism | 147 | 34 |
| 2 | Cost/Funding Issues | 96 | 22 |
| 3 | Inadequate Preparation for HE | 19 | 4 |
| 4 | Administrative Leadership | 46 | 11 |
| 5 | Faculty Support | 20 | 5 |
| 6 | Academic Quality | 53 | 12 |
| 7 | Curriculum Issues | 48 | 11 |
| 8 | Others | 3 | 1 |
| | Total | 432 | 100 |

As shown in Table 4, issues related to academic integrity or plagiarism were mentioned most frequently (34 percent). The second most frequent category was cost or funding issues (22 percent). Academic quality was a distant third (12 percent), while administrative leadership and curriculum issues were the fourth most frequently mentioned categories (11 percent each).

Each of the eight identified categories was further grouped into subcategories as shown in Table 5.

Table 5. Subcategories of Responses

**The Identified Categories and their Sub-Categories**

| Academic Integrity/Plagiarism | Curriculum Issues |
|---|---|
| The value of higher education | Establishing norms for the ethical use of technology |
| Cost, quality, and rigor of curriculum delivery | Preparing students to face and solve the challenges of the world in which they live |
| Delivery-Learning environment – online, onsite, blended, mix and match. | Education to empower learners, not just give them a marketable skill set |
| Intellectual property and misconceptions that digital/Internet data are free | Offering college degrees in areas where the job outlook is bleak |
| Technology-integrity, Internet search engines, cheating | Educational equality across geographic location, socioeconomic status, racial/ethnic identity |
| Worthless college degrees and programs | Quality instruction with hands on learning and the "human" touch. |
| Integrity, authenticity in assessment and evaluation | Giving students the education they need, while respecting their desire for the kind they want |
| Pushing college (and for higher enrollments) when college isn't for everyone | |
| **Inadequate Preparation for Higher Education** | **Faculty Support** |
| Little communication or collaboration between high schools and colleges on preparing students for college work | Trend to drastic reduction in full-time faculty, rapid increase in adjunct faculty |
| Focusing on content knowledge gaps instead of also on foundational skills of reasoning and critical thinking | Fair assessment of teacher performance |
| Cultural norms and expectation that support students' false sense of reality of what is involved in higher education work load | Commodification of faculty in a model of universities as ordinary commercial businesses |
| | Lack of productive communication between faculty and administration |
| | Focusing on educational credentials only in hiring process, and not also on ability to teach |
| **Academic Quality** | **Cost, Funding, Accessibility and Affordability of Education** |
| Grade inflation and pressure on passing students for fear of losing jobs. | Affordability and accessibility to higher education |
| Faculty self-accountability in face of job-loss fears | Remediation courses and cost of education |
| Meeting students expectations | Influence of big-money donors on higher education |
| The influence of technology on quality of education | Lack of public funding for higher education |
| Lowering the educational value of curriculum | Rising cost of tuition, textbooks, and course materials |
| Students buying credits and the consumer-driven philosophy | Cost/benefit of higher education; fair return on students' investment on their education |

**Administrative Leadership**

Personal ideologies in the educational process

A culture of blame

Caving into pressures for retention and higher graduation rates by modifying curriculum and assessment measures

Administration's growing resistance to allowing faculty and students to be real stakeholders in the college's mission
Democratic, shared governance among faculty and staff versus a state government and interest-group-driven system.
Administrators with no classroom experience
Little action on gender and ethnic equity in upper administration
Lack of support for faculty academic freedom
Tenured faculty issues
Attention to campus safety

## Analysis and Discussion

Findings — 2015 vs. 2006. Table 6 shows a comparative analysis of the findings of the 2015 and 2006 studies. The most significant change is the rise of academic integrity issues to the number one position. This is probably due in large part to the growth of online programs and Web-accessible materials. The second most important change has been in the Leadership category, which moved from number one in 2006 to number four in 2015. However, based on our discussion with those who we interviewed, *"Leadership, Social Values, and Globalization" was resorted into "Administrative Leadership."* in the 2015 study.

Table 6. Categories of Responses and Frequency: 2015 vs. 2006 Study

| | 2015 Study Category | 2015 Study Frequency | 2006 Study Frequency | 2006 Study Category |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Academic Integrity/plagiarism | 34% | 23% | Leadership, Social Values and Globalization |
| 2 | Cost/funding Issues | 22% | 20% | The Impact of technology on Academic Integrity |
| 3 | Academic Quality | 12% | 18% | The Cost/benefit Value Proposition |
| 4 | Administrative Leadership | 11% | 15% | The Impact of Competition on Academic Quality |
| 5 | Curriculum Issues | 11% | 14% | Grade Inflation |
| 6 | Faculty Support | 5% | | |
| 7 | Inadequate Preparation for Higher Education | 4% | | |
| 8 | Other Categories | 1% | 11% | All Other Responses |

The issue of academic integrity is two-sided: it's about student integrity, but also about perceived failure by faculty and administrators to confront the problem and to ensure that it is minimized. Examples of addressing the latter half of the responsibility might be new and different

means of assessing students' understanding and mastering the learned topics including, for example, structuring exams so that they don't just ask for information that can be looked up, etc.

2015 Study — Results, Analysis, and Discussion. All responses from the survey participants fell under one of the specific subcategories. To get a sense of the results and what they meant to faculty members, the authors compiled the results and discussed the findings with 12 of the participants. Feedback from these face-to-face, in-depth discussions helped in the analysis of the results.

*Academic Integrity and Plagiarism* is the category mentioned most frequently (34%). Ensuring academic integrity of student and faculty work, as well as administrative behavior and conduct in relation to policy and operations is critical for the sustainability of the institution.

Table 7. Three Aspects of Academic Integrity

| | |
|---|---|
| Admission and college entrance exams: | More and more national and international students have been caught cheating on the college admission tests. Admissions fraud has been reported among both domestic and international students. For example, on May 28, 2015, "a U.S. attorney in Pittsburgh announced indictment against 15 Chinese nationals on charges that they cheated on college-entrance exams by hiring impostors to take the tests for them. Several of the students ended up at schools across the U.S." (Belkin and Korn, 2015, p.A5). Similar concerns among national students have been raised many times. |
| Pedagogical Integrity: | The pressure to increase enrollments and retention has created an atmosphere on some college campuses in which enrollment pressures take precedence over effective course delivery, pedagogical integrity, and ensuring high quality outcomes. Technology is seen as a panacea especially by upper administration with no teaching or faculty background. Furthermore, mass standardization is considered the cost-effective solution, but may involve sacrificing certain types of pedagogical quality that is needed for successful pedagogical differentiation. |
| Institutional Integrity: | In searching for efficiencies, colleges and universities are revising their policies and trying to meet and adapt to the changes and challenges they face. Sometimes, however, they are confronted with resource scarcity as well as lack of knowhow to proceed with appropriate modifications. In this case, the way they respond to challenges depends largely on the behavior of their administrators acting individually and collectively on behalf of the institution. If the cost-benefit analysis is either unavailable or not sufficiently reliable, the administration may set a policy on some factor other than what is best for the students and the institution. Furthermore, a number of participants raised the issue of whether some academic leaders and upper administrators were able to focus on students' best |

> interests rather than on maintaining their jobs and sustaining their egos regardless of the impact.

The participants alluded to three aspects of academic integrity that are summarized in Table 7: admission and college entrance exams integrity, pedagogical integrity, and institutional integrity. The respondents in this category repeatedly mentioned the value of higher education; quality and rigor of curriculum delivery; delivery-Learning environment–online, onsite, blended, mix and match; intellectual property and misconceptions that digital/Internet data are free; technology-integrity, Internet search engines, cheating; and integrity, authenticity in assessment and evaluation

The top concern of this group of respondents centered on the impact of digital technology and the Internet and student misuse of technology, especially as a means to commit plagiarism.. Technology has provided multiple opportunities for those who want to cheat to do so. In the past 10 years, it has become easier to find student papers and answers to exams on the Internet, and plagiarism has exploded. Websites that provide help to students to complete their courses assignments for a fee have also emerged. This has made the maintenance of academic integrity a more difficult task for many institutions; especially when institutions are reluctant to change and or to create cultural environment of academic integrity and seek alternative mechanisms for student's learning assessment and evaluation.

Research also shows that academic integrity is a predicament on both ends of the achievement spectrum -- both high achievers and low achievers cheat. And, though students typically know that what they're doing is wrong, they justify their actions by saying that they just "didn't have a choice – it's cheat or be cheated. They feel enormous pressure to get the grades and test scores they believe they'll need for future success, and they know the high stakes that are tied to their assessments. (Pope, 2014)

There is also a growing sense of a change in values that has allowed many students to believe that "copy and paste" is not a problem. Many of the participants thought that we need to be prepared to defend our belief in the educational values we espouse. Many of today's students have little understanding of the importance and value of academic integrity. The phrase "if you can google it, you can use it" has become normal conversation among many students in campus settings. Furthermore, students have been flooded by Websites that sell promised quality term papers, final projects, answers to midterm and final exams, and conducting and completing research studies. However, as one of the participants stated:

> "While many in higher education would like to ignore the fact that academic integrity violations exist, it makes more sense to confront this issue and work to address it than to allow it to continue unabated. This is an issue both for student work and for those who have made it through the student process and are generating knowledge at the faculty and administrative levels. Plagiarism needs to be something that we can comfortably discuss. The better we understand this issue and perhaps work toward new definitions and policies the easier it will be to ensure academic quality and encourage innovative and original scholarship."

An additional issue with academic integrity relates to inequitable and unjust distribution of educational resources (including instructional technology) among different institutions. Furthermore, some institutions have endless resources, while others, if they are lucky, can use what wealthier schools and or business companies discarded as old. As one participant summarized it:

> *Another problem is the misuse of the Internet. Prior to the Internet, books and magazines were the primary sources of reference material. But now, information is being gathered at very high rates from the Web. Use of information often goes un-cited because of an increasing ignorance (by both faculty and students) of what ought to be cited. Additionally, the Internet has provided a quick and easy way to cheat and the definition of what constitutes plagiarism has become blurred. Sadly, there are many Websites (such as YouTube) offering students articles and instructional videos on how to cheat. With the ever increasing ways in which one can cheat, it becomes difficult for academic institutions to keep up with current problems. Regarding online courses, some students feel isolated and overwhelmed by the lack of face-to-face interactions with their instructor and each other, which may create: lack of responsibility for time management, anxiousness, self-justifying personality and students' unwillingness to take up the proper challenge that is critical for learning.*

The conclusion is that, even among those for whom cheating is not part of their character the temptation posed by technology and Internet Websites makes it hard to resist such temptation when competing with other students. Furthermore, there are concerns that while the majority of institutions are offering online courses, many, if not most, do not have the resources and technology to ensure that online courses have the same high standards and rigor as campus-based classes. Although technological solutions including *Test Guard* and *Turn It In* were mentioned, the

overwhelming sentiment seems to be that the solutions available are not sufficient and institutions of higher learning will have to continue to safeguard the validity and quality of their education. The conclusion is that the ideal solution for online exams, quizzes, topics for term papers, etc., must be "One-Semester-Life Span," and/or an alternative approach and mechanisms to evaluate students' understanding and mastering of the content must be applied. Most colleges and universities are not able to do either of these for now.

When it comes to integrity and academic quality in the digital age, the challenge for higher education is two-fold. First, college faculty and administrators must continue to demonstrate the learning outcomes achieved by their students and graduates by showing and proving, through data, that learning has taken place. Second, they must demonstrate that their curriculum and assessment mechanisms have high levels of academic quality and integrity by showing their own culture of assessment and how they are embedding assessment processes into their organization's normal day-to-day activities. Both steps are not simple matters, but they are the first steps for creating assessment modules for controlling integrity and academic quality and in turn sustaining a culture of assessment that supports improving learning for all students (Thompson, 2015).

*Cost, Accessibility, and Affordability* of education is the second most often mentioned ethical issue facing higher education (22%). The cost of higher education has risen to the point that it is a struggle for most Americans to afford. The Higher Learning Commission reports that college costs have increased 500 percent in the last 25 years, far more than the cost of living. Furthermore, many students are defaulting on loans, and even those who graduate are often challenged in their efforts to repay loans. The current national student loan debt in the U.S. is $1.3 trillion dollars and it continues to rise (Martinkich 2014). Student loan debt remains the largest source of debt next to mortgages (Fortrell 2015). As a result, the cost of education raises a critical ethical issue for educators and students. As one participant stated:

> "*Education is often said to provide students with the ability to think in innovative ways. But the necessity to take on a lot of debt to pursue higher education and the need to have a job or multiple jobs just to provide basic necessities (food, housing) for oneself and one's family discourages employees from taking risks and pursuing innovative ideas.*"

It is understandable that the ever-increasing tuition rate is frequently due to reduced support from local, state, and federal government sources failing to keep up with even larger increases in institutional costs. But not being able to afford tuition costs presents a major barrier to many

students. While more students rely solely on their financial aid packages, reduced state and federal support also affects the financial aid that a school can offer its student population, and many students are forced to take out loans.

Rising tuition rates and high student loan debt after graduation may influence students to choose not to go to college. They may think that a college education is not worth the cost burden it generates, despite the fact that college degree holders earn up to $1 million more over their lifetimes than high school graduates (Fottrell 2015). Cost and debt issues may make recruitment more difficult for colleges and universities. Colleges invest heavily in retention strategies, but they are mainly targeting specific groups of students, such as first-year students (Borysenko 2014). The fault in their retention strategies is that colleges focus almost exclusively on academic factors rather than also on social and financial factors that play a major role in whether students stay in college.

Cost, accessibility, and affordability of education also affect the sustainability of educational systems. As public funding decreases while competitiveness increases, schools and states must find a way to sustain their higher education systems. The respondents in this category also repeatedly mentioned the following issues:

- Remediation courses increasing the cost of education
- Influence of big-money donors on higher education
- Lack of public funding for higher education
- Rising cost of tuition, textbooks, and course materials
- Cost/benefit of higher education; fair return on students' investment in their education.

*What Some Colleges and Universities Are Doing About the Cost of Education.* The following are examples of what some colleges and universities have been doing in this issue area:

1. Adopting the business model of management.
2. Turning to e-books and print- on- demand options for all the needed textbook and course materials.
3. Freezing tuition at current rates.
4. Guaranteeing each student's tuition for four years at the entry tuition rate.
5. Reducing tuition for non-lab courses.
6. Providing more online and blended courses with lower tuition.
7. Providing transitional and remedial courses free with no tuition.
8. Offering one semester's tuition free for every three semesters a student maintains a 4.0 GPA.

9. Co-sitting classes.
10. Eliminating and/ or reducing the number of elective classes available for students.
11. Coordinating with nearby community colleges in establishing a 3-1 system, in which students can stay 3 years in the community college and transfer to a given university for their last year to earn a bachelor degree.
12. Reducing the number of credit hours required for graduation, for example, to 120 for a bachelor's degree, 60 for an associate degree, and 30 for a master's degree, regardless of the nature of a given major or field of study.
13. Using only one or two textbook companies for their instructional materials to receive discounts for students and a percentage of the revenue to be used for student scholarship funds.

*What some parents are doing about the cost of education*. Parents are also aware of the cost of education and many of them have started to take the matter in their own hands. Table 9 summarizes what some parents have been doing to reduce the cost of their kids' education (Donatelle and Ketcham, 2016).

Table 9. Parent-inspired measures to address costs of tuition
(Donatelle, and Ketcham, 2016).

| Categories of Inspired Measures | Percentage |
|---|---|
| Students reducing spending | 60 |
| Parents working more | 20 |
| Students taking accelerated coursework | 27 |
| Students living at home | 57 |
| Students working more | 47 |
| Parents reducing spending | 48 |

An issue related to the cost of education is the inability of the education sector to address the exploitation of adjunct faculty and the increasing differential between executive administrative pay and lower-level administrators, staff, and faculty. As one participant put it, "Driven by bloating schools and colleges with administrative personnel such as assistant to the associate dean, assistant football coach, greenhouse worker, etc., the next will be admission of students who are not capable of college level academic work just to keep the money coming, and upper administration jobs and salary going."

It goes without saying that colleges and universities cannot operate efficiently and successfully without adequate financial resources. Yet, a compelling case is made by many of the

participants that institutions have an ethical responsibility to ensure that students are not burdened by unmanageable debt at the completion of their undergraduate degree. Institutions should be accountable for ensuring that the value proposition is favorable to students and they get a quality return on their investment.

*Academic Quality* was mentioned a distant third (12 percent). Assessment of the quality of higher education is a concern because it is becoming increasingly difficult to find methods for measuring and validating learning and skill acquisition. Regulators and accreditors are questioning the quality of the education being delivered to students and how effective it is since billions of dollars are invested in education institutions (Ebersole, 2014). The respondents in this category repeatedly mentioned:

- Grade inflation and pressure on passing students for fear of losing jobs.
- Faculty self-accountability in face of job-loss fears
- Meeting students' expectations
- The influence of technology on quality of education
- Lowering the educational value of curriculum
- Students buying credits and the consumer-driven philosophy

School rankings as a measure of quality were mentioned by a number of participants as a distracting factor because of the way these rankings have been conducted. There is a great emphasis on school rankings as a measure of the quality of the institution. These measures put pressure on universities to not only attract and retain the best students but also to compete with other schools nationally and globally. Students rely on such rankings for selecting a school to obtain their degrees. However, many voices, including those of parents and students have started to question the value of their programs of study for the tuition they are paying. They argue that, instead of focusing on maintaining high rankings, institutions should focus on the methods they use to instruct students as well as the students' needs. This would enhance the quality of a student's college learning experience.

Furthermore, global ranking has led universities to focus on scientific research and innovation while ignoring investment in fields like the arts, humanities, and social sciences. It is important to maintain focus and investment in all fields of study and not prioritize one over the other because social challenges require collaborative interventions from a multidisciplinary perspective (Hazelkorn 2012).

Assessment of the quality of higher education is also a concern because it is becoming increasingly difficult to find valid methods for determining learning and skill acquisition. Grade inflation is one of the problems of academic integrity in today's environment. As one participant summarizes the issue:

> While grades are not a perfect answer to assessing student performance, they are still a useful tool for evaluating students. In order to evaluate students more accurately, institutions must identify the problems in grading and grading practices. There has been an upward shift in grades without a corresponding upward shift in knowledge gained. Grade inflation is more an accountability for faculty members and administration than it is for students. On the part of instructors some catches are: fear of student evaluations, avoidance of creating a bad reputation among students, below average teaching skills, lack of adequate experience in the subject matter, a lack of clearly stated course objectives and students' learning outcomes, reluctance to discipline students, and job insecurity. On the part of students difficulties are mainly students' evaluations of faculty which are used as a means of domination, and undeserved expectations of poorly prepared students' to gain higher grades. Academic integrity is a dual effort among the students and faculty' if it is to be achieved.

Assessment of student learning outcomes is also an extremely important issue in regards to academic quality and grade inflation. Knowledge is often connective and deeply rooted in context. Traditional multiple choice exams take away connective thinking. Students need to know information, but they also need to know how to use that information, and learning is often a creative endeavor. Multiple choice exams do not allow students to be creative, divergent, or innovative. While easy to grade, multiple choice exams encourage rote memorization and guessing. They often fail to provide a conceptual learning experience because they only deal with students' ability to recollect information. In contrast, open-ended exams provoke a different kind of approach in conceptualizing, analyzing, synthesizing, evaluating, and applying information to reach an answer. They do not force an answer but allow students to demonstrate their understanding of concepts and make arguments for their viewpoints. In addition, students' responses help faculty members to learn more about students' abilities to reason analytically. This information can in turn be used to assess institutional methods of instruction and eventually to improve and advance their programs.

Extending classroom knowledge into skill application, and teaching civic responsibility and community awareness, thus promoting confidence, responsibility, and motivation, should also be part of college service learning programs that enhance student learning and improve student success and graduation rates (Cooney, Savino, and Schafer, 2012).

*Administrative leadership:* Today, cost and affordability have forced a number of institutions to adopt the business/financial model and to heavily use technology to deliver high quality content and promote institutional efficiencies. This underscores the changing role and accountability for senior and executive leadership in American higher education. Generally, this type of change has not impressed faculty and sometimes has been resisted by faculty, faculty unions, and administrators. These faculty and administrators believe that we should defend and not surrender our belief in the educational values we espouse.

Justifiably or unjustifiably (as a perception), many faculty and lower level administrators see the following trends in higher education leadership:

- Increasingly, colleges and universities have started to hire people from the business and political sectors with purely business or political backgrounds for upper administration and decision making positions.
- Most of these people come to academe with no classroom experience or academic administrative background.
- This frequently leads to conflict between faculty, lower administration, and upper management. This type of conflict affects the work environment and often widens the experience gap between faculty and upper management.

Furthermore, there is a significant change in today's college student population, an increase in students who are older and hold full-time or part-time jobs. Policies and programs need to include these students because their needs may differ from the traditional body of students enrolling in college (Ebersole (2014). This dramatic shift in student demographics has not been seriously recognized and responded to. It appears that neither the administrators nor the faculty fully recognize the nature of the shift. Today's typical student is no longer an 18-24 year old studying full-time on a campus. It has been shown that fewer than 20 percent of the roughly 20 million students now enrolled fit this traditional description. The rest are "post-traditional" students who are older, working, often commuting, and either attending live classes or increasingly, online courses. But we are still designing our programs and policies based on the needs of a shrinking traditional student population. As one participant stated,

*A significant amount of discussion centers on preparing students for careers and/or jobs. However, much of this is focused on narrow career preparation in certain fields that are equated with stability – engineering, healthcare, and finance. In addition, much of this focus is on immediate employment. The conversation needs to shift to address the broader ethical implications of preparing students for life's challenges in ways that make their skills applicable to a variety of jobs and shifting market needs. Career preparation needs to be extended at the same level to all students, not just those in fields that seem readily employable. Humanities and fine arts students need career services too. They need advocates calling businesses and organizations explaining how their skills are transferable. It is the duty of colleges to help all their students find a path; it should not be acceptable to tell a certain set of majors that they are on their own just because it has been difficult in the past to match them with employment opportunities.*

In short, many administrators feel that with so many policies and funding allocation issues built around retention and graduation, they are under pressure to modify curriculum and assessment measures to ensure that class pass rates increase. This leads us to administration and faculty accountability in the movement to stay focused on finding resolutions to critical issues. Faculty need to be at the center of program development and development of course curriculum and assessment measures. We need to ensure that we all become stakeholders in students' success. On the other hand, faculty members must be able to push students to think and not hand out grades based on either student expectations or departmental "bell curve" profiles. Faculty freedom in this sense seems to have been forgotten. In the process, it breeds low morale when creative individuals cannot pursue their passions. However, because of the economy, many faculty members who might retire or move on to other jobs, decide to hang on to their tenured jobs and not fight the system. This does not allow new ideas or energy to enter academic systems.

<u>*Curriculum issues*</u>: Faculty and Department Chairs would like to see the following as part of the institution's priorities and strategic plans for improved success:

- Establishing norms for the ethical use of technology
- Preparing students to face the challenges of the world in which they live
- Education to empower learners, not just give them a marketable skill set
- Offering college degrees in fields where the job outlook is bleak

- Admitting unprepared students only in conjunction with providing enough resources to help them succeed
- Equality in education across geographic location, socioeconomic status, and racial/ethnic background
- Quality instruction with hands on learning and the "human" touch
- Giving students the kind of education they need, while respecting their desire for the kind they want
- Creating faculty scholarship in academic disciplines, pedagogy, and use of educational technology
- Continuous and convenient professional development for content, technology, and pedagogy
- Creating teaching resource collections that are current and continue to grow
- Creating mentoring programs for new faculty in all disciplines but also for academic administrators and faculty trainers.

  Teaching students the importance of teamwork, sharing, and cooperation, and allowing students to practice the same principles in the classroom.

*Inadequate Preparation for Higher Education:* Today, financial aid and remedial courses have made access to college potentially available to almost everyone with a high school diploma. Under the premise of providing opportunity to higher education, respondents stated that they encounter in their classrooms a number of students who lack academic preparedness and/or organizational skills, such as time management, ability to set priorities, and to think critically. They conclude that many of these students fail simply because they are not ready cognitively or not prepared academically for college work. However, admitting students who may not be academically prepared for higher education raises concerns, especially if an institution doesn't have the means and the resources to provide the needed help for the students to join the educational mainstream.

While lack of preparation for college work among many students comes from their high school system and can be attributed to a number of reasons, many studies report that unpreparedness for college work and habits is one of the root causes of students' failure in higher education (Cherif et al., 2013). Faculty every day enter classes full of students with a wide range of learning needs, levels of preparedness, levels of interest and self-motivation, and social and cultural backgrounds. This broad range of capabilities is not only a frustrating phenomenon that causes

faculty to feel overwhelmed, but also a condition that drives some students to feel lost in the traditional classroom environment. Being aware of these realities but not providing the needed resources to help the unprepared students creates an ethical issue that will affect the institution's reputation and chances of survival.

Basic skills in how to learn, including how to manage time, ask questions, look for help when needed, take notes and organize information, are essential for success at the college level. Instructors should consider whether it is also their responsibility to help students become academically prepared for college while teaching them the prescribed course content. Furthermore, colleges and universities might want to look at their own efforts in dealing with the gap between students' preparedness and the requirements of academic programs, and to examine why the gap is widening rather than narrowing. Are the academic support services colleges provide making a significant impact on students' performance and success? (Cherif et al., 2013) As one participant stated: *"I worry that our product – a college degree– is losing value. When so many students with degrees can't find a job or employers tell us that the students don't have the skills they need, we aren't getting the job done. Colleges are not focusing on quality education – but instead on the residence halls, workout centers, and other "bells and whistles"; we need to get back to basics."*

In short, more and more students are coming to college underprepared, without the skills to be successful. Colleges are forced to do remediation, which should have been done in high school. Students are getting off to such poor starts that they are playing catch up and their confidence is impacted from the outset. Busteed (2012) reported:

> 97 percent of those surveyed feel that post-high school education is important to getting a good job. Despite this, few believe that those who have a post-high school credential are well-prepared for career success, and those that want to obtain a higher degree encounter barriers in accomplishing their goals. New forms of collaboration between higher education and employers are necessary to overcome these obstacles.

Ensuring sustainable education systems will involve better partnerships between the universities and the high schools. The current situation provides little collaboration on skills needed for higher learning. In other words, when we receive students fresh out of high school, college faculty often deal with students that have major gaps in the basic foundational skills of critical thinking. Combining that with the inability to reason logically creates a situation in which the

student relies on memorization. At this level, such methods of learning result in extreme cognitive overload.

## SUMMARY

As we have shown, the most significant ten-year change in perception has been the rise of concerns regarding academic integrity to the number one position. Adherence to the fundamental values of academic integrity: Honesty; Responsibility; Fairness and Respect has been impacted by the rise of the digital age and a new mindset of students. Many of the issues encountered result from a lack of understanding on the part of students of the importance of academic integrity. Studies of student behavior and attitudes show that a majority of students violate standards of academic integrity to some degree, and that high achievers are just as likely to do it as others. Moreover, there is evidence that the problem has worsened over the last few decades. (Pérez-Peña 2012)

This new mindset that cheating is acceptable has evolved as parents and the educational establishment have not taught and reinforced the core values that support academic integrity. As this issue becomes more significant in higher education it is essential that it be dealt with by not only having strong policies but also developing learning opportunities such as pre-enrollment seminars or freshman courses that teach the importance of academic integrity for the individual, institution and society.

The category of Cost/funding issues has increased in importance as well. A possible explanations for this change may be attributed to the fact that academic leaders feel that this issue is difficult to impact as individual leaders and must be addressed in a unified effort of government, community and institutional leadership. Institutions constantly struggle to control cost while maintaining quality. However, external forces often make it difficult for academic leadership to control the cost/funding issue.

Data supports the thesis that higher education should empower learners to continue their development and growth over a lifetime, not just give them a marketable skill set at graduation. Education should create a sense of efficacy and hopefulness in spite of the challenges faced. Higher education leadership must be informed and prepared to create a learning environment that help solve the challenges of higher education without giving in to frustration or despair.

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# PREPARING LEADERS FOR THE USE OF TOMORROW'S TECHNOLOGY: PERSPECTIVES FROM CHIEF INFORMATION OFFICERS

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According to the US Census Bureau, computers have entered an increasing number of US homes (from 8.2% in 1984 to 75.6% in 2011) accompanied by Internet access (from 18% in 1997 to 71.7% in 2011). Not surprisingly, technology is also permeating institutions of higher education. Technology use influences data management and learning on college and university campuses and has the potential to transform the way higher education as it is currently delivered. The current study examined Chief Information Officers' (CIOs) perceptions of how technology may impact higher education by 2050 and how leaders may need to prepare to address any impact.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Use of technology for learning

Technology-mediated learning provides access to higher education for learners managing a myriad of responsibilities, including full-time jobs, parenting, elder care, etc. Institutions use online learning to increase access, resulting in an increased number of students electing to pursue a degree online. According to the 2012 Survey of Online Learning conducted by the Babson Survey Research Group, not only has the number of students taking at least one online course surpassed 6.7 million, but 32 percent of students enrolled in higher education take at least one class online. Chief academic officers intend to capitalize on this anticipated movement – 69.1 percent indicate that online learning is significant to long-term strategic plans. Additionally, educators are leveraging

technology to teach blended or flipped-learning courses and to enhance fully face-to-face courses (Kim & Bonk, 2006).

Despite the expanded use of technology for learning, it is not always used effectively; often, technology is used to automate lectures, a primary form of instruction at institutions, and a strategy perhaps needed least by learners (Privateer, 1999). The success of online learning closely aligns with educators ability to link pedagogy with learner needs (Kim & Bonk, 2006). With learner needs as the focus, educators can move beyond facilitating memorization of information toward creating an outcomes-based and learner-centered environment. Such environments promote deeper learning, critical thinking, peer collaboration and interdisciplinary learning experiences (Kim & Bonk, 2006). In an optimal online environment, students can engage in case- and problem-based learning while individualizing their own educational path. Evidence supports the potential of online learning; students who take online classes can perform the same or even better than in face-to-face courses (Castle & McGuire, 2010; Heterick & Twigg, 2003; Kim & Bonk, 2006).

The use of technology can encourage colleges and universities to move from a one-dimensional to a multi-dimensional (physical and online) physical perspective. Moving to a multi-dimensional perspective can facilitate the infusion of innovative practices into the classroom, including international perspectives, a likely standard initiative for many universities in the years to come (New Media Consortium, 2008). In general, online education and technology in general facilitates innovative potential to pedagogy.

**Use of technology for data management and analysis**

In addition to changing pedagogy, technology enables colleges and universities to collect robust data to support operations and decision-making. Technology is making possible more advanced analysis, where higher education leaders can simulate the results of their decisions before they are made (Goldstein & Katz, 2005). Currently, most data gathering captures transaction data in finance and institutional research for budget and planning processes. There is currently little use of data for informing instruction. However, analytics will mature and become a useful predictor of student achievement and performance in the future (Picciano, 2012). As technology advances and creates the ability to instantaneously access and analyze individual and institutional data, leaders of higher education institutions will need to prepare their organizations for change.

**Leadership challenges for leaders in higher education**

In order to prepare for change, leaders must address a gap that exists between higher education traditions, “how things have always been done,” and innovations in teaching and

learning. Addressing the gap will be no easy undertaking as the context of leadership in higher education can be more complex than in other educational or business domains. Higher education institutions are classic examples of what theorists call "loosely coupled" systems (Orton & Weick, 1990). In "loosely coupled" systems, like a university, individuals and individual entities have a high degree of autonomy relative to the organization as a whole (Gilmore, Hirschhorn & Kelly, 2013). The leadership challenge lies in the fact that the leader must both unite and engage the entire institution in a common strategic direction. To leverage the unique structure of higher education systems and move toward innovation, leaders must empower the use of innovative technology in pedagogy and daily operations (Archer, Anderson & Garrison, 2013).

## RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The purpose of this study was to investigate Chief Information Officers' (CIOs) perceptions of how technology will be used in higher education in the year 2050 and what campus leaders should do to be prepared for this change. Two primary questions guided this study:

- How do CIOs perceive that technology will be used in higher education in 2050?
- According to CIOs, how should higher education leaders prepare to address future technological changes?

## METHOD

Using a grounded theory approach, this study employed qualitative methodology, specifically interviews. The researchers chose qualitative methodology in order to understand how CIOs perceive technology will be used in higher education and how they believe leaders can be prepared to meet these changes. Interviewing allows for follow up questioning and an in depth understanding of participants' perspectives (Merriam, 1988).

Study participants all held the role of CIO at a community college or university. CIOs are typically in vice president roles at the university who are expected to participate in broad decisions impacting the university while overseeing the technological enterprise of the institution. According to Penrod, Dolence and Douglas (1990), CIOs should possess leadership skills, the ability to establish a vision and to leverage technology to satisfy learning and operational needs. Combined involvement in University leadership and knowledge of technology place CIOs in a unique position to comment on the future of technology and its implications on leadership. The CIOs selected for participation in the study were randomly selected from the list of "The Top 50 Most Social CIOs In

Higher Education" created by Vala Afshar in 2012. The CIOs included on this list are engaged in using current technology, which provided some indication of forward thinking; a characteristic necessary for this study.

A total of seven CIOs participated in an individual interview with one of the researchers. Three of the CIOs were employed at community colleges and four at four-year institutions. Six of the participants were male and one was female. The interviews used a semi-structured interview protocol (Merriam, 1988) and were conducted until saturation was achieved (when new themes stopped occurring) thus reducing the likelihood of garnering new data in subsequent interviews. The constant-comparative method was used to analyze data from interviews and ascertain themes.

## RESULTS

When postulating about the future, the CIOs drew upon what technological advancements currently being employed in other fields (e.g. business and medicine) as examples of what might one day be translated into higher education settings. In many cases, the CIOs saw advancements in other fields as inspiration for transforming the potential of the educational experience. Themes and subthemes that address each research question are provided below.

### How do CIOs perceive that technology will be used in higher education in 2050?

The CIOs were asked several questions about how technology has been used in the past and how they believe it would be used in the future. The questions focused on use of technology for data management and learning and by leadership. After analyzing the data, two themes emerged about how technology may be used in the future: for decision-making and for individualized learning.

***Data for decision making***. Technology is being used to gather information throughout higher education institutions, but CIOs note that it is not easily accessible or available for decision making by campus leaders. According to the CIO's, institutional research departments collect information and distribute it in reports a few times a year for review by leadership. When speculating about the future, the CIOs envisioned far more robust data collection, management, and reporting that would impact leaders' ability to make instant, evidence-based decisions. The CIOs noted the importance of making data-driven decisions to create efficient and responsive institutions. One participant, Joseph, described possible increased efficiencies as a result of stronger data collection:

> We will definitely be moving to self-service and being able to access data immediately that is no more than a day old, if not up-to-the-minute so that decision makers can get accurate data, advisors can get up-to-date data about students and student affairs professionals can find out information about enrollment, what students are coming in, etc…. The idea that someone would have a question about retention rates and have to wait to get a report back is just not realistic; Walmart always knows how much of any product they are selling down to the minute.

***Individualized learning***. As noted previously, CIOs discussed the future likelihood of more advanced data collection throughout a student's educational journey. Much like other researchers (Kim & Bonk, 2006; Golstein & Katz, 2005), CIOs discussed how data about students' needs, learning approach, and abilities can individualize their learning experience. Knowing the unique needs of a student would mean that it would be possible to "arrive" to class (virtually or face-to-face) with a clearer picture of what specific areas they need to develop in a course, such as their writing skills.

CIOs discussed the fact that immediate access to information could also help students make decisions about their learning. One CIO described teaching and learning as being driven by students as "consumers." In other words, students would not only make decisions about their learning, but determine how curriculum is presented and sequenced. The CIOs all agreed this would also have implications on teaching. Instead of initiating each college/university course with little knowledge of students' competencies, professors could tailor teaching to meet the needs of specific students. Peter stated:

> ...if we had a longitudinal data system, which I think will be more robust in the future, we could track a student from kindergarten to college. This would allow us to understand how she learns; what she did well with and what did she struggle with – this would help inform the next learning level.

In addition to its predictive function, the CIOs discussed how technology will assist in personalizing instruction in real-time, even "on the fly," after a course has begun. Real-time personalization would transform the role of the faculty to one of coach, connector, and facilitator. Sophisticated technology will inform students and professors alike, not only about what the students need to learn, but how they should learn it based on their personal needs and biological state; in the future, individualized learning might even be characterized as "hyper individualized." One CIO, Bill, explained that technology could produce a level of individualization where the learning experience changes and is augmented by biological and brain functions:

> By 2050, the whole focus will be on the brain. I see that as being the next round of research beyond the gene. This will likely introduce the use of augmented cognition, through wearable technology, that will help us personalize the experience of the student. We are starting to understand how to relate to the brain. That is likely to enrich by 2050. This will allow us to very cleverly sequence content based on the needs of the individual.

**According to CIOs, how should higher education leaders prepare to address future technological changes?**

CIOs did not believe that higher education leaders need to be experts in technology to meet the changes of the future; most felt it was only necessary for leaders to understand or experience some of the digital tools used by students. Sarah talked about what leaders actually need to know, "they just have to be aware that things are changing and they have to be somewhat conversed in what technology can facilitate, but they should concentrate on the things they are trying to get done and not on the technology." Through analyzing the data, three themes emerged to illuminate CIOs perceptions of how leaders can be prepared to meet the changes associated with technology: the importance of being nimble and open to change; empowering and using IT personnel as strategic leaders and thought partners; and the re-visioning of higher education.

***Be open and nimble***. CIOs emphasized the importance of being open to technological innovation and a willingness to direct the organization toward change quickly; a task that is particularly difficult given the unique nature of higher education institutions noted by Orton and Weick (1990). Expediting change was noted as being particularly important to respond to emerging technological advancements. One interviewee, Charles, used the metaphor of a speedboat to address the way higher education institutions should approach technological advancements:

> Higher education moves really slow, like an ocean liner. If you want to change from heading southeast and want to go northwest, well… good luck at getting that thing to turn. It's not going to turn on a dime; it's going to take a couple of nautical miles down the ocean before it can turn right back into the other direction. We need to be able to move our institutions like a speedboat where we can say 'I just want to whip this sucker around and go the other direction.' The needs of the future are going to come up quick and institutions of higher education need to be able to have the ability to do that same thing. Leaders need to create and push that vision.

Along with being open and nimble, CIOs talked about how moving toward innovation takes courage; leaders need to be willing to make mistakes. Aaron said, When you're trying to change a culture that has been steep in history for many years, you aren't going to get it right the first two, three or four times we do it. We need to have room for failure and innovation to perfect things.

***Empower and use IT personnel as strategic leaders and thought partners***. As previously noted, the CIOs agreed that it is not necessary for higher education leaders to possess specific technical knowledge in order to effectively lead their institutions into the future. The CIOs emphasized that current leaders need to utilize information technology leaders to fill gaps in decision-making. Steve described his leadership role of one of "partner," helping to make possible the goals of the institution through technology and infrastructure.

The CIOs also spoke about the importance of utilizing their expertise (and others with technological knowledge) to engage in intelligent dialogue about the possibilities of what can be accomplished at the institution; higher education leaders need to have people who can match institutional/individual goals with technological resources. As Sarah described, "We are partners – we're not just the tech people. We are here to hear what the goals of the institution are in teaching, learning and research and then try to suggest what [technology] will facilitate those goals."

CIOs also discussed the role they could play in helping to shape the vision of how technology will be used at the institution, and suggested that higher education leaders seek their expertise as the institution prepares for the future, Steve shared:

> Shared ownership is key, the outcomes affect everyone. It (change) touches every part of the university. Our business relies on technology, we will move forward by building relationships. If there are issues or questions, we address them together, breaking down the traditional concept of IT vs. institution.

Among all CIOs, there was a consistent theme of preparing for the unknown and unpredictable future. The CIOs shared that institutional leadership must be prepared for dramatic change, a change similar to what "occurred recently in the journalism industry." The CIOs emphasized the critical importance of staying in strategic alignment and agreement; a process that also includes discovering new and better ways of sharing information as leaders.

***Re-visioning higher education***. Will higher education exist as we know it in 2050? Will there be a need, or the same need for physical spaces for individuals to gather? All CIOs paused and noted that we should consider these questions before addressing the specific advancements of technology in learning and data management. They indicated that virtual learning environments

could be used more, therefore reducing the need for "face-to-face" interaction. As Aaron noted, "technology will be baked into how we do the classroom. The classroom will be virtual, truly interactive."

CIOs noted that higher education leaders should consider what face-to-face aspects of the college/university need to be protected as pieces are transitioned online. CIO Joseph considered "the campus" experience and what it might look like if curricular learning occurs virtually:

> Assuming with global warming continuing and scarcity of resources the idea that 30 students would get in their cars and drive to one place to sit there every week for a lecture seems unlikely…. To the extent that people want the campus experience, they may have that experience but it won't necessarily be co-located with all of the learning resources. Students may come to Future University, but they will take classes from professors all over the world. At Future University, they may experience certain communal growing up experiences, and have a place to meet and work with people.

All CIOs expressed confidence in the fact that if used well, technologies can contribute positively to the educational experience. Aaron noted, "There is a lot of debate as to whether technology will contribute to the academy and still produce quality. I am convinced that the new technologies, if we leverage them, will increase quality and access."

## IMPLICATIONS FOR LEADERSHIP

As the emerging picture of higher education in the future unfolds, the CIOs were unanimously hopeful about the impact of technology on student learning. Participants noted the critical role the CIO will play in mid-21st century higher education. Additionally, important implications remain for higher education leaders as they work to manage the technology that does not yet exist to do things that are not yet imagined.

### Strategic planning, facilities and infrastructure

Anderson, Boyles, and Rainie (2012) assert that the growing cost of traditional higher education cannot be sustained, particularly in light of the demand for technology-driven teaching and learning models. Therefore, the Internet will be utilized as a more economical way to deliver higher education. Time must be spent determining if (and how) the institution should strengthen the physical campus environment or transform toward a virtual campus (Colis & Van Der Wende, 2002). Leaders must determine their campuses' role in the community, the institution's infrastructure, and the expectations of what will be produced (Privateer, 1999). Responses from a

majority of the participants in this study support the re-imagining of the physical campus; the current and future role of existing physical campus structures should defined before new buildings are built to service antiquated functional models.

Comprehensive strategic plans must be adaptable and responsive to change as leaders prepare for the future. A clearly communicated implementation strategy should include a frequent review process.

**The role of faculty**

The CIOs in the study did not emphasize the need for specific training for faculty. However, the literature recommends technology-based training for faculty (Rogers, 2000). Additionally, leaders need to debunk the misconceptions and myths related to online education and prepare faculty to facilitate optimal online learning experiences (Van Dusen, 2014).

The role of the faculty may be changing, however change will not come without consideration on structural and fiscal implications. Tenure and promotion requirements will need to be revised to incorporate technology and innovation (Van Dusen, 2104). Funding for faculty with pedagogical competence will be necessary to attract and retain the most skilled instructors (Kim & Bonk, 2006). It also appears that leaders will need to connect faculty between institutions, even internationally, to produce a competitive advantage.

**Assessing learning, and confidentiality**

Institutions will be able to easily collect massive amounts of data to predict student performance. Such predictions will produce more precise measures of student readiness and achievement (Kim & Bonk, 2006). As a result, leaders will need to address how data are used, secured, and shared.

**Rethinking student services & student development programs**

As discussions take place about the future of college and university campuses, student affairs leaders need to provide evidence on the (face-to-face) co-curricular experiences integral for student development. Simultaneously, they need to project and plan effective strategies for providing virtual services and student development programs.

**The role of the Chief Information Officer**

CIOs are no longer simply managing IT infrastructure, but instead have become critical confidants and thought partners for the decision-making team of the organization. CIOs will need to have great discernment moving forward, differentiating between passing fads and innovations that

are here to stay, while creating a sense of urgency around what opportunities will be critical to seize in order to remain competitive.

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# APPRECIATIVE ADMINISTRATION: APPLYING THE APPRECIATIVE EDUCATION FRAMEWORK TO LEADERSHIP PRACTICES IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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## INTRODUCTION

Funding shortages, increased accountability, growing competition for students, increased demands on faculty, corporatization of the academy, changes in the student body, increased demands for expensive engagement experiences, and other trends have significantly impacted and destabilized the system of higher education. As these trends are coupled with higher education's traditionally slow to change culture, highly political bureaucracy, and functional silos, the challenges facing higher education become foreboding. As a result, universities count on administrators to figure out creative ways to stay competitive and develop solutions for addressing these challenges. Yet, given the depth of the challenges and the complexity of higher education institutions, including their diverse sizes, missions, and constituencies, no single "silver bullet" exists for higher education administrators to access in order to "solve" all these problems.

Consequently, to be competitive in the long run, higher education administrators need to create work environments that encourage and empower all employees to contribute to devising and implementing creative solutions to the challenges facing higher education today and tomorrow. After all, just as there is no one "silver bullet" there is no one hero that can gallantly arrive on campus and single-handedly solve all the problems. Complex challenges require creative, synergistic solutions. Hence, we would argue that the answers to the complex issues facing higher education institutions lie within the employees that know best the unique challenges, resources, and

opportunities inherent in each individual organization. The job of higher education administrators is, therefore, to create a work environment where each employee has the opportunity and potential to build upon the best of what is already happening in the organization as a platform for unleashing the dreams, ideas, and energy needed to achieve the unique mission and goals of each institution. As a result, the purpose of this paper is to provide higher education administrators a theory-to-practice framework, based on the Appreciative Education model, for leading institutions and fostering creative solutions for addressing the challenges higher education faces and pursuing individual institutional missions, visions, and goals.

## APPRECIATIVE EDUCATION

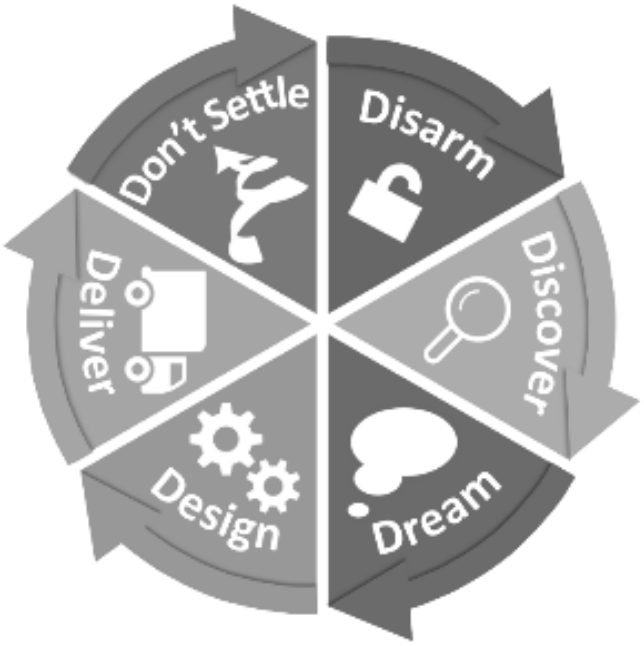
Appreciative Education is a theory-to-practice framework, grounded in the appreciative mindset, that harnesses the combined power of the organizational development theory of Appreciative Inquiry (Cooperrrider & Srivastva, 1987) and the Appreciative Advising (Bloom and Martin, 2002; Bloom, Hutson, & He, 2008) framework for building strong relationships between people.

**Appreciative Inquiry (AI).** Appreciative Inquiry was first introduced by Cooperrider and Srivastva (1987) at Case Western Reserve University. Cooperrider and Srivastva (1987) found that the questions he was asking of people about their organizations were fateful in that when he asked positive questions he received quite different responses than when he asked questions that invited people to complain about their organization. Cooperrider and Srivastva (1987) proposed four phases of Appreciative Inquiry as a means for optimizing the success of organizations: Discover, Dream, Design, and Deliver. Subsequently, numerous for-profit companies, non-profit organizations, religious organizations, and educational institutions have used Appreciative Inquiry to increase their productivity and profits (Lewis, Passmore, & Cantore, 2008; Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2003)

**Appreciative Advising (AA).** The appreciative advising model (see figure 1) evolved from the Appreciative Inquiry Model as a result of the work of Bloom and Martin (2002), who demonstrated how the four phases of Appreciative Inquiry (Discover, Dream, Design, and Deliver) could be adapted by academic advisors to enhance the effectiveness of their interactions with students. Later, Bloom, Hutson, and He (2008), recognizing the need to adapt the model to the ongoing relational process of academic advising, proposed the addition of two phases (Disarm and Don't Settle) to Cooperrider's initial four Phases. Disarm suggests the need for the establishment of trust

in the relationship and Don't Settle, focuses on the need to support students persistence in achieving their dreams. The Appreciative Advising Model is depicted in Figure 1.

Figure 1. The Appreciative Advising Model




Subsequently the Appreciative Advising framework has been adapted to enhance interactions with students in a number of different higher education settings including: first-year seminars, admissions, orientation, learning communities, tutoring, etc. (Hutson, 2010; Bloom, Hutson, He, & Robinson, 2011; Bloom, Fleming, & Edington, 2014; Buyarski, Bloom, Murray, & Hutson, 2011; Walters, 2015; and Grogan, 2011). In addition, the nature of the framework allows it to be utilized with a wide variety of student populations: first generation, at-risk, undergraduate, graduate, students with disabilities, student-athletes, international, etc. (Beer, Livingston, &Tobacyk, 2011; Dial, 2015; Kamphoff, Hutson, Amundsen, and Atwood, 2007; Saunders & Hutson, 2012; Ormsby, 2010; Stanback & McEvoy, 2012; Elliott, 2012; Palmer, 2009; Crisp, 2013; and Lyons, Sandeford-Lyons, & Singleton, 2010) .

**Appreciative Mindset (AM).** Both Appreciative Inquiry and Appreciative Advising are grounded upon and promote the development and use of an appreciative mindset. According to Bloom, Hutson He, and Konkle (2013), the appreciative mindset involves looking for the best in

others and in organizations instead of using our default tendency to look for the worst. Thus, developing an appreciative mindset means that individuals create a cognitive propensity within themselves to look for that which is generative, life giving, and positive in the world around them. Doing so "serves as a powerful cognitive tuning device that appears to trigger in the perceiver an increased capacity to (1) perceive the successes of another . . ., (2) access from memory the positive rather than negative aspects of the other . . ., and (3) perceive ambiguous situations for the positive rather than the negative possibilities" (Cooperrider, 2003, p. 38).

**AI + AA + AM = Appreciative Education (AE).** This Appreciative Mindset, once combined with the practices of Appreciative Inquiry and Appreciative Advising forms the foundation for Appreciative Education by combining them to create a "framework for delivering high-quality education on both an individual and organizational level. It provides an intentional and positive approach to bettering educational enterprises by focusing on the strengths and potential of individuals and organizations to accomplish co-created goals" (Bloom, Hutson, He, and Konkle, 2013, pp. 5-6). The theoretical infrastructure of AE includes "social constructivism, positive psychology, and appreciative inquiry" (Bloom, Hutson, He, and Konkle, 2013, p. 6).

## APPLYING A.E. TO HIGHER EDUCATION ADMINISTRATION

Bloom, Hutson, He and Konkle (2013, p. 9) proposed six ideas for using the Appreciative Education framework to deliver "innovative practices that develop individuals and organizations and optimize performance." These include: positive interactions, reciprocal learning, holistic engagement, strategic design, appreciative leadership, and intentional change. This paper focuses on how higher education administrators can harness the power of this Appreciative Education framework to create appreciative work environments where employees feel their contributions are valued and where they are empowered and encouraged to contribute their ideas for optimizing their organization's performance and fulfilling the institution's purpose amidst the challenges of the higher education environment. Using the six phases of the Appreciative Education framework as a guide, we will demonstrate how administrators can create such a culture of innovation.

**Disarm.** The disarm phase involves creating a safe and welcoming environment (Bloom, Hutson, and He, 2008). This is especially important in higher education settings where there is a general lack of trust between faculty, staff, and administrators. Evidence of this mistrust includes the common saying that faculty who take on administration positions have gone to the "dark" side or the displeasure that staff often feel with regards to bureaucratic, political processes that impede

change. Tragically, this tension between administrators, faculty, and staff has had a significant impact on the effectiveness of administrators and, consequently, the institutions they lead. For example, Kramer's (2009) research found that:

Individuals who were primed to expect a possible abuse of trust looked more carefully for signs of untrustworthy behavior from prospective partners. In contrast, those primed with more positive social expectations paid more attention to evidence of others' trustworthiness. Most important, individuals' subsequent decisions about how much to trust the prospective partners were swayed by those expectations. (p. 71)

> Given the power of such priming and the bias toward distrust of administrators in higher education, the need for new administrators to make solid first impressions and/or for more seasoned administrators to focus on changing negative perceptions is tremendous. Doing so requires that administrators not only build positive relationships, but that they "disarm" negative perceptual biases through intentional efforts to establish and build trust.

Trust is an essential element of leadership effectiveness and is largely based on the perception followers have of a leader in relation to five important characteristics: integrity, competence, loyalty, openness, and consistency (Butler & Cantrell, 1984; Schindler & Thomas, 1993)

When followers perceive leaders as possessing integrity, they are perceived as "being perfectly honest and truthful" (Butler & Cantrell, 1984, p. 22). This demonstration of character, which, in relational dynamics, requires that leaders not only live according to their own values and keep their word, but also that they behave consistently with the espoused values of those they lead.

Competence refers to the ability of leaders to perform their roles and responsibilities based on possession of the necessary knowledge and skills to do so (Butler & Cantrell, 1984). It is important to note, however, that to build trust it is not actual competence that matters, but also perceived competence. Not only must a leader be competent, they must also effectively communicate their competence (Zenger & Folkman, 2002) so that others consider them competent. Doing so is essential if leaders wish to be trusted and respected.

The third essential component of trust is consistency, which refers to the extent to which a leader "handles situations reliably, predictably, and with good judgment" (Butler & Cantrell, 1984, p. 22). This should be accompanied by the fourth and fifth elements: Loyalty and openness. Loyalty refers to the willingness of a leader to concern him or herself with protecting and serving the other person. Openness references ones willingness to "share ideas and information" (Butler & Cantrell, 1984, p. 22).

While all of these elements are important, the research suggests that "integrity (i.e., honesty and truthfulness) and competence (i.e., technical or interpersonal skill knowledge) are the most critical characteristics that an individual looks for in determining trustworthiness" (Schindler & Thomas, 1993, p. 571). As a result, leaders who wish to "disarm" those they lead by establishing trust should immediately do so by demonstrating integrity, competence, loyalty, openness, and consistency, with a particular emphasis on demonstrating honesty and competence.

Some of the practices that enable administrators to effectively disarm others include: engaging emotional intelligence, seeking others ideas, actively listening, openly sharing information, and actively looking for ways to support and assist others.

Engaging emotional intelligence is another essential component of trust building. Emotional intelligence refers to one's capacity to monitor and manage one's own emotions and to recognize and appropriately respond to and influence the emotions of others (Goleman, 1995; Mayer & Salovey, 1997; Salovey & Mayer, 1990). Consequently, emotional intelligence is an essential element of leadership and has a significant impact on leadership effectiveness (Goleman, 2000; Goleman, Boyatzis, & McKee, 2002). Research suggests that individuals who exhibit positive emotions achieve higher status in groups and spread their emotions more readily via emotional contagion (Kilduff & Galinsky, 2013). In addition, the sharing of positive emotional states via empathic interaction is a contributor to relationship formation and trust building (Cameron, 2008; Johnson & Grayson, 2005). Thus the ability to convey positive emotion to others is an essential skill for administrators in higher education.

Another essential trust building behavior involves actively seeking others input and listening effectively (Bernthal, 2006; Editorial Staff, 2000; Johnson & Grayson, 2005; Nadler & Simerly, 2006; Schultz, 1998; Vasher, 2010). When new administrators take the time to meet with and listen to the perspectives of those they are leading, they demonstrate that they are open to and interested in the needs and perspectives of others. When they follow up on what they have heard by openly sharing information and engaging in behaviors that support and serve others based on what they have shared, trust is further extended (Willemyns, Gallois, & Callan, 2003) . Such an approach, when used in combination with intentional trust formation and emotionally intelligent leadership, helps to disarm and prepare the institutional environment for change.

**Discover.** Once administrators have effectively disarmed the people they are leading, the next step is to build on the trust established by discovering and disclosing the positive capacity within themselves as well as the people and the organizations they lead (Cooperrider & Whitney,

2003, p. 12). Whereas traditional administrators focus on recognizing and responding to problems, appreciative administrators take a different approach. As Cooperrider and Whitney (2003) explained, “Appreciative inquiry is about the co-evolutionary search for the best in people, their organizations, and the relevant world around them” (p. 7). Thus appreciative administrators first focus on increasing their awareness of the positive capacity inherent in themselves before seeking to learn about the positive capacity of the people and organizations they lead.

Appreciative administrators have a number of tools for discovering their own positive capacity to lead. While research-based assessments such as StrenghsQuest, the VIA Signature Strengths assessment, and other similar inventories can be helpful in the self-discovery process, administrators can also engage in self-reflection regarding their own strengths and achievements. In addition, they can ask trusted others to answer questions such as:

1. When have you seen me at my best as an administrator?
2. What do you appreciate most about my approach to administration and leadership?
3. What is the greatest strength I bring to our team as an administrator?

While it may initially feel uncomfortable asking others to answer these questions, generally trusted colleagues are happy to provide answers and feedback. The insights gleaned from doing so can be powerful as administrators learn about the fundamental strengths that give life to their efforts to lead and influence others. Given the value of such feedback, administrators who ask these questions of others should also take advantage of the opportunity to tell their trusted colleagues how they would answer these questions if asked about them.

Regardless of the methods used, however, the objective of the Discover phase is to identify the core individual strengths that the administrator brings to the table in terms of leading and managing people, programs, and resources effectively. This does not mean that such leaders ignore their weaknesses. As Clifton and Harter (2003) explained, “the strength based organization does not ignore weakness, but rather achieves optimization, where talents are focused and built upon and weaknesses are understood and managed” (p. 112). Therefore, administrators, once they become aware of their own strengths, focus on organizing their work to draw upon these strengths to achieve objectives. At the same time, they work to find ways to partner with others to mitigate the impact of their weaknesses (an individual who is very visionary but struggles to develop tactical plans would intentionally involve others who are strong in this area in the planning process) (Clifton & Harter, 2003). By so doing, they ensure that they are giving their best to the organization by constantly engaging their strengths. This does not suggest that they do not ever focus on improving

upon weaknesses, in some cases this is essential (Zenger & Folkman, 2002); nonetheless, they spend most of their time functioning from a place of strength.

After discovering their own strengths and positive capacity, administrators should actively and intentionally seek to understand the unique strengths and positive capacity of their co-workers. A Gallup research study revealed that "Top performing managers (based on composite performance) were more likely to indicate that they spend time with high producers, match talents to tasks, and emphasize strengths versus seniority in making personnel decisions" (p. 116). They also found that when people are able to do what they do best on a daily basis, their organizations "are more productive, have higher customer loyalty, and have lower turnover" (p. 119). Consequently, leaders must develop an understanding of the strengths of those they lead. To do so, once again, leaders may use strength-oriented assessments to identify follower strengths. However, meeting with each report individually to get to know their unique stories and strengths is essential. Examples of Discover questions that administrators can use to learn more about their reports include:

1. Tell me about a time that you positively impacted someone else's life.
2. Tell me about a time when you felt most alive, engaged, and/or fulfilled here at work.
3. What is your proudest accomplishment ever in a work setting?

In addition, administrators can use the following techniques for better understanding the unique strengths that each report brings to the workplace:

1. Observe them in action, paying particular attention to their strengths that help them to achieve success
2. Pay attention to projects and topics that excite employees
3. Facilitate group discussions that increase awareness of individual and group strengths and how to apply these to the work of the team

Finally, in addition to discovering their own strengths and those of followers, administrators must discover the inherent life giving characteristics of and the positive capacity inherent within the environments in which they work. Doing so requires an understanding of organizational contexts, deep listening, and intense dialogue with others.

Organizational contexts are systemic in nature. Each context involves the use of resources that are available within the environment to accomplish specific tasks or outcomes through the actions of people within and beyond the immediate environment. Thus contexts represent systems. A system is a "group of interacting, interrelated or interdependent components that form a complex and unified whole" (Anderson & Johnson, 1997, p. 2). Generally systems are purposeful, self-

stabilizing, feedback dependent, and change oriented. To generate awareness of the systemic situations in which administrators find themselves, they must listen and dialogue with others about these environments so as to gain a better understanding of them.

The kind of listening that is necessary to understand systems requires more than just hearing. Instead it combines input from all of the senses through intentional exploration of one's environment that is focused on discovering the life giving capacities within the system. To facilitate this process of organizational discovery, questions like the following can be used to unearth the strengths of the team:

1. What are the core strengths of all of the key stakeholders in our organization?
2. What are the most valuable resources that we have available to us?
3. What elements of the environment hold the greatest positive capacity for contributing to change?
4. What are the inherent strengths and capacities that we possess when we engage in collaborative work that go beyond our own individual strengths?
5. What has been our greatest success so far as a team? What were the factors that contributed to our success? What were we doing? How were we doing these things?

Such conversations generate an awareness of the situation that, when combined with awareness of self and others, contribute to our capacity to generate a compelling sense of purpose, which is the goal of the Dream phase.

**Dream.** As administrators generate a collective awareness of themselves, those they lead, and the organizations they lead, they create a safe platform to begin developing inspiring dreams about what the future might hold for them, both personally and professionally, and for the institutions and the people they lead. These dreams are not ethereal projections of vague possibilities, but rather probable futures grounded in and built upon the best of what already exists in the organization. As Cooperrider and Whitney (2003) explained, "As people are brought together to listen carefully to the innovations and moments of organizational 'life,' sometimes in story telling modes and sometimes in interpretive and analytical modes, a convergence zone is created where the future begins to be discerned in the form of visible patterns interwoven into the texture of the actual" (p. 13).The key here is that the dream stage must be collective in nature. Appreciative administrators facilitate the co-creation of shared visions of powerful future possibilities, they do not dictate these. In order to do so, they encourage stakeholders to develop images of probable futures based on the use of the strengths within individuals and organizations. Second, they invite

them to share these openly in order to generate a shared dream for the future (Orem, Binkert, & Clancy, 2007). This is achieved through discussion of powerful questions in group contexts.

Given the purposeful nature of systems, the first and perhaps most essential question that administrators need to address is what is the ideal reality that the current environment is capable of bringing forth? Or what is the ideal state that we are trying to achieve? This can typically be discovered through dialogue with individuals within the situation where questions such as these are discussed and explored. Through the use of such provocative propositions, a powerful vision for the future is established that is deeply meaningful and broadly shared.

To better understand how to develop such dreams, it is valuable to understand that an appreciative dream includes three components that represent the outcomes of the dream phase of action: "a vision of a better world, a powerful purpose, and a compelling statement of strategic intent" (Cooperrider & Whitney, 2003, p. 14). A vision for a better world is developed as groups and teams respond to the question of what is possible? A vison is a statement of what the future reality will look like based on a realistic commitment to pursuing the greatness and potential inherent within the organization. This powerful vision both pull people towards it and paints a picture of what it takes to achieve it. People are then drawn to initiate and create it by both plausibility and power. Its detail and descriptiveness provide the information needed to bring the vision to fruition. A question that can be used to unleash these co-created dreams might be:

> Pretend it is five years from now and we have just won an award from our professional society for being the most innovative organization amongst its members – what specific innovations are we being recognized for? How does out workplace look different than it does now?

A powerful purpose refers to a strong overarching answer to the question of why are we doing this? Why does this matter? Why do we want this dream to become a reality? A clear and compelling answer to such questions is a powerful source of motivation and resilience (Frankl, 1984 2000). As a result, leaders need to not only facilitate the creation of a what (the dream), but also a why (the motivation). The final component of a powerful dream is a statement of strategic intent. The purpose of this statement is two-fold. It begins to answer the question of how and compels individuals into action. It also moves the group that is being led into the design stage.

**Design.** In appreciative inquiry, "the design phase involves the creation of the organization's social architecture. This new social architecture is embedded in the organization by generating provocative propositions that embody the organizational dream in the ongoing

activities" (Cooperrider, Whitney, & Stavros, 2003, p. 40). In the appreciative education model, this typically involves the development of "an action plan where individual strengths are aligned to achieve both individual and shared dreams" through a process that is "socially constructed and self-evolving" (Bloom, Hutson, He, & Konkle, 2013, p. 9). Like the earlier phases, this phase involves the leader in the facilitation of dialogical communicative processes that involve the stakeholders of the organization in recreating the organizational architecture, or core processes, to align them more with the dream that has been established. Like traditional action planning, these redesigns are concerned with who will do what, when, and how. However, these "plans" are more likely to take the form of descriptive stories that recreate the day-to-day narrative of the organization. In this sense, they have a lot in common with the scenarios generated in scenario planning (Chermack, 2011; Kahane, 2004). As Cooperider, Whitney, and Stavros (2003) explained, "the design phase defines the basic structure that will allow the dream or vision to become a reality" (p. 143)

The process for doing this begins with identification of the design elements that will be addressed, such as business processes, education or training, management practices, stakeholder relations, etc. (Cooperrider et al., 2003). This is accomplished by engaging the group in discussions about the essential processes and elements that relate to the dream. Then the key relationships related to these elements are identified. This requires the group to examine who is involved or could be involved in these elements or process and examining the relationships between these entities.

Once the elements and relationships are identified, the group then discusses "what they need to put in place to make the dream a reality?" Questions like the following might be used:

1. What will we need to do more of to achieve the dream?
2. What would we need to do differently?
3. What changes to the process, relationships, structures, etc. would really make the dream a reality?
4. What would we be doing more of or differently if the dream were already a reality?

As the administrator facilitates dialogue around these questions, the group develops a shared plan of action for change. Leaders should be sure to capture the information that is being conveyed. This information can then be converted into a more traditional action plan by delineated who will do what, when, and how.

**Deliver.** The narrative action planning processes just described, transition the group into the deliver (aka destiny) stage. In the appreciative education model, this stage is a stage of execution. In this stage, leaders and followers work collaboratively and supportively to make the

dream a reality. Doing so requires administrators to ensure that all those involved regularly connect, cooperate, and co-create the stories developed in the design phase to achieve the dream (Cooperrider & Whitney, 2003).

These three components, connect, cooperate, and co-create are essential because most of us have been involved in change processes where action plans have been developed and implementation begins, but no real change ever occurs. This may be due to employees' assumptions and perceptions that once the plans are developed that the hard work is done. Unfortunately, the real challenge of leadership is keeping people's attention and efforts focused on doing those things that matter most in spite of distractions and competing priorities. In traditional control-oriented processes, this is done by regular reports or meetings and constant monitoring of key indicators of progress. Appreciative administration, however, focuses more on the relational nature of change.

Research suggests that people who want to make changes are most successful in a context of accountability, collaboration, and social support (Darwin & Palmer, 2009; Goleman et al., 2002; Mezirow & Taylor, 2009; Revans, 1977). Consequently, a leader needs to bring people together regularly (connect) to discuss the successes they are having and to identify further changes or actions (cooperate and collaborate) that may need to be taken to achieve the dream. In addition, administrators look for ways to ensure that people are working together to bring the dream into reality. Finally, administrators meet regularly with individuals to provide appreciative coaching (Orem et al., 2007). These interactive sessions focus on using the appreciative process to facilitate individual recognition of successes and strengths, the development of role-based dreams, the design of means for implementing these, and interacting necessary to deliver on these dreams.

**Don't Settle.** The final stage of the appreciative education model is that of don't settle. This phase embraces Kuh et al.s' (2010) notion of "positive restlessness." In a study they conducted of institutions that do a better than expected job of retaining students, Kuh et al. found that these institutions constantly strove to get better and innovate. They called this tendency to seek for continuous improvement "positive restlessness." This principle reminds administrators that while there is a need to celebrate victories and focus on our successes, on the individual, interpersonal, team and organizational levels, we cannot let awards and accomplishments deter us from constantly seeking to improve. Instead, we need to continually strive not for perfection, but for improvement. In Dweck's (2007) book *Mindset*, she asserts that it is important to adopt a growth mindset versus a fixed mindset. A fixed mindset involves thinking that our ability to perform and succeed is limited by our current ability level, while the growth mindset focuses on getting better through practice.

Consequently, the six phases of Appreciative Education represent an iterative as opposed to single use process. Therefore, appreciative administrators actively practice utilizing the six phases as a guiding framework, knowing full well that the end goal is not achieving one goal and then setting the framework aside. It is a lifelong journey that strives to continually get better in order to optimize both individual and organizational potential.

## CONCLUSION

Appreciative administrators actively and intentionally seek to create a work environment that celebrates the strengths and skills of each team member and the organization as a whole as a launching pad for dreaming how to improve and then acting on the plans that are co-created as a unit. Appreciative administrators do not try to hoard power, they instead empower their employees to become the best selves in order to create an innovative organization that can step up and face the challenges facing higher education.

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# GUIDES TO REDUCING SOCIAL LOAFING IN GROUP PROJECTS: FACULTY DEVELOPMENT

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Student team projects in higher education are prevalent today because of the educational value associated with students working in teams. Research has shown the many benefits students acquire by engaging in team projects in higher education (Brooks & Ammons, 2003). For example, Butcher, Stefani, and Tariq (1995) suggested group work helps students cultivate communication, problem solving, and leadership skills. Hayes, Lethbridge, and Port (2003) stated students learn to cooperate with one another and learn from one another when working in groups. The benefits from group work ultimately allow students to successfully transition from school to the work world.

The proliferation of students working in groups will continue due the demands from stakeholders, such as, employers and accreditation agencies (Hansen, 2006). Organizations request that schools incorporate additional team assignments in classes. For example, Aggarwal and O'Brien (2008) indicated businesses expect newly employed individuals to have experience with group work and the essential skills needed to interact successfully with other employees. In addition, accreditation agencies are requiring faculty members to give instruction in team-based skills. For example, The Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business—AACSB (2013) requires faculty members to communicate to students how to work effectively in teams.

The main difficulty with students working in groups is social loafing. This article examines the literature regarding the theoretical construct social loafing and effective ways to reduce this

impediment to learning. Administrators charged with faculty development can use these findings to assist professors having difficulty with social loafers.

## SOCIAL LOAFING

Social loafing is the tendency for individuals working in a group setting to use less effort than when working alone (Karau & Williams, 1993). This expression is synonymous with the term free riding. The term social loafing traces its origins to studies conducted by Maximilien Ringelmann, a French agricultural engineer, between 1882 and 1887 (Kravitz & Martin, 1986). One of Ringelmann's experiments involved male student volunteers pulling on a rope alone or in a group. He discovered that individuals pulled with less effort when they were part of a group than when they were by themselves. Researchers refer to this phenomenon as the "The Ringelmann Effect."

Latane, Williams, and Harkins revisited this subject in 1979. They investigated undergraduates at Ohio State clapping and shouting alone or in groups. This replication of Ringelmann's work using a different task resulted in comparable findings. Individuals made less noise when they were part of a group than when they were alone. In other words, individuals working together expended less effort than individuals working separately did. The authors identified this manifestation social loafing, that is, "a decrease in individual effort due to the social presence of other persons" (p. 823). Aggarwal and O'Brien (2008) defined social loafing as "a behavior pattern wherein an individual working in a group setting fails to contribute his or her fair share to a group effort as perceived by group members" (p. 256).

Complications associated with the theoretical construct of social loafing are wide-ranging. For example, social loafing frequently effects negative results for individuals and institutions (Latane et al., 1979). Bennett and Naumann (2004) suggested that the costs of withholding effort in organizations includes turnover, less productivity, and morale problems. Hallmark and Downs (1987) found individuals contributed more ideas individually than when in groups during brainstorming tasks in an organizational setting. This pertains to behaviors found in organizations and classrooms. The focus for this work is classrooms.

Many professors require students to participate in group projects that are graded and included in the final grade for courses. Graded group projects are problematic for professors and students (Butcher et al., 1995, Cheng & Warren, 2000; Hayes et al., 2003; Yamane, 1996). For

example, do all students receive the same grade or do students receive evaluations reflecting their personal contributions (Butcher et al., 1995).

Szymanski and Harkins (1987) found group members possibly engage in social loafing because they have confidence assessment is not possible by the experimenter, the individual or group members (p. 895). Levi and Cadiz (1998) suggested social loafing occurs because students know, the professors cannot accurately evaluate their contributions only the group's final project.

Hall and Buzwell (2012) found students' perceptions concerning social loafing encompassed the ostensive unfairness regarding other group members' contributions to the assignment. All members of the group receiving the equivalent grade based on the assignment and not individual efforts resulted in students experiencing frustration.

Synnott (2014) surveyed 266 students at a mid-sized public university in new England to determine if students had misperceptions regarding their peers' contributions to graded group projects and if students would take courses that included graded group projects if the courses were not required.

Paired samples *t* tests showed statistically significant differences regarding students' self-reports and their perceptions regarding their peers' contributions. Students have misperceptions regarding their group members' contributions to assignments because the same students responded to the same survey statements. That is, students indicated that students did not share the responsibilities equally and yet the same students indicated that they did their share of the work. Students stated that some students did not contribute anything to the assignment and yet the same students stated that they did their share of the work. Students stated that they did their share of the work, however, the same students indicated that they contributed more than other group members did.

Social loafing by some members of the group may result in other members compensating for unproductive performers due to their desire for a good evaluation (Williams & Karau, 1991). The students who actually do the work ascertain this extra work as unfair (Synnott, 2014). Cheng and Warren (2000) indicated social loafing precipitated resentments and demotivated group members who actually did the work. Synnott (2014) found that a majority of students would not take courses that included graded group projects. This relates to grouphate, that is, students eschew group projects (Burke, 2011).

## METHODS FOR REDUCING SOCIAL LOAFING

### Group Formation and Project Design

The initial formation of small groups is critical for success (Burke, 2011). The correct formation of small groups may result in decreasing social loafing. Instructors need to form groups, not students. Felder and Brent (2001) stated groups perform better when instructors assign members to groups than when students self-select members. Aggarwal and O'Brien (2008) found that social loafing did not decrease when students formed their own groups rather than instructors assigned students to groups.

Students face issues with scheduling when participating in groups because of other responsibilities. Instructors alleviate scheduling problems by assigning members to groups based on their schedules. Felder and Brent (2001) recommended administering a questionnaire during the first class to all students to determine their ability and their schedules (p. 2). Instructors can also determine students' ability by viewing their GPAs (i.e., sophomores, juniors, and seniors). The authors suggested assigning students to small groups based on ability and time schedules during the second class.

Felder and Brent (2001) also suggested providing class time when possible for students to work in their groups. They suggested establishing virtual groups who communicate via email and computer or telephone conferencing if class time is not available. Today students can utilize Twitter, Facebook, video conferencing, and Skype. Perron (2011) suggests that students use chat sites for planning and updates. These suggestions will help students communicate when schedules conflict.

Xiangyu, Huanhuan, Shan, Fei, and Zhongxin (2014) developed the Social Loafing Tendency Questionnaire (SLTQ) to measure individuals' social loafing habits (p. 468). They found that group settings activated social loafing in individuals with a propensity to loaf. This produced a negative effect on performance. Xiangyu et al. (2014) conducted two studies. The participants for the first study were university students. Professors can administer the SLTQ to identify students with social loafing tendencies before assigning them to groups. This will protect against developing groups with a disproportionate number of individuals with social loafing tendencies.

Research does not suggest an optimal team size; however, smaller teams perform better than larger groups (Hoegl, 2005). Ingham, Levinger, Graves, and Peckham (1974) found an inverse relationship between increases in the number of team members and individual

performance. Felder and Brent (2001) suggested assigning students to small groups of three and four students. Aggarwal and O'Brien (2008) found small groups reduced social loafing. Liden, Jaworski, and Bennett (2004) suggested organizations needed to encourage group cohesiveness and keep groups small to reduce social loafing.

Ettington and Camp (2002) suggested that group project situations should be similar to the work teams in the work world to facilitate transfer. Instructors design projects based on what students will experience in the work world. This helps to form realistic expectations of group work and reduce grouphate (Burke, 2011). Students need to understand the benefits and potential problems they can expect from working in teams in class and the real world. Instructors demonstrate some of the benefits and problems of working in groups by engaging students in team building exercises. Team building exercises improve teamwork (Hansen, 2006). These activities also develop cohesive groups. Karau and Williams (1997) found a moderate level of cohesion reduced social loafing.

It is important to note that the difficulty of the tasks performed by individuals may indicate the levels of perceived social loafing better than the perception related to the percentage of work each person should accomplish. However, it may not be feasible to determine either the difficulty of the tasks or the percentages.

**Instructions Regarding How Small Groups Work**

Burke (2011) stated many students do not have the skills required to be effective group members. Some students have no experience working in groups. This demands instruction. Students need to understand the assignment and the skills they will develop. Burbach, Matkin, Gambrell, and Harding (2010) suggested that instructors learn the lessons of teamwork and instruct students how to work together in groups. For example, a minimum would include defining the terms group projects and teams. Ettington and Camp (2002) described a group project as "a graded assignment requiring students to work collaboratively across multiple class periods and involving some time outside the normal class meeting" (p. 357). Levi (2011) defined a team as "a special type of group in which people work interdependently to accomplish a goal" (p. 2). This relates to the idea that all team members share equally the rewards of successfully accomplishing the work and the consequences of failing. On the other hand, group members are often times compensated individually.

Instruction can also include the basics of group development and the roles people play in groups. Tuckman (1965) and Zurcher (as cited in Tuckman & Jensen, 1977) provided two excellent models related to group development. Benne and Sheats (1948) identified the task and social roles people play in groups.

**Clarifying Students' Misperceptions**

Instructors clarify students' misperceptions regarding their perceptions related to their peers' contributions to graded group projects. Instructors make this information class specific. Instructors can do this by administering a short questionnaire consisting to determine students' perceptions regarding their contributions and their perceptions regarding their peers' contributions to graded group projects. This questionnaire might consist of two to four questions. Responses can be measured using Likert scales. Student volunteers can post the results on the board or project them on the screen. Instructors can revisit this topic several times during the semester. This may result in decreasing social loafing and group hate.

**Appraisal Systems**

Cheng and Warren (2000) indicated that instructors are usually not in a position to observe all contributions made by all group members, but students are in such a position. Szymanski and Harkins (1987) found that self-evaluation was a motivator that increased individuals' efforts when the experimenter could not evaluate their contributions. Simms and Nichols (2014) suggested, (a) using self-evaluations, (b) increasing task measurability, (c) increasing task visibility, and (d) using video conferencing and Skype would negatively affect social loafing (p. 65). Peterson (2012) provided an excellent form for self-evaluations (p. 121).

Brooks and Ammons (2003) found that appraisal systems that incorporated feedback on explicit criteria at different points during the project helped reduce social loafing and helped students perceive group projects favorably (p. 270). Dyrud (2001) suggested administering informal peer reviews early in the project would help students work out problems related to social loafing. The author provided a form for peer reviews (p. 109). Cheng and Warren (2000) also provided a form for assessing peers (pp. 254-255). Aggarwal and O'Brien (2008) found social loafing decreased as the number of peer evaluations increased as student projects progressed.

**Rewards and Punishment**

Research has shown that threats of punishment may increase productivity, but do not reduce social loafing (Kunishima & Welte, 2014). Hall and Buzwell (2012) suggested rewarding students that contribute more to the project. Tyagi (2010) suggested a positive approach to increase productivity was to reduce social loafing by offering incentives. Tyagi suggested instructors reduce social loafing and free riding by (a) offering desirable outcomes, (b) repeatedly providing guidance regarding the positive results of greater effort, and (c) insuring that better performance will result in desired rewards (p. 26).

Summarization

The proposed recommendations below based on this research offer practices that may facilitate developing and maintaining effective work groups in the classroom by reducing social loafing. The following actions listed in chronological order are a starting point. Instructors will likely rearrange the order to conform to their needs.

1. Design graded group projects that reflect the real world teams students will encounter.
2. Determine students' schedules and levels of abilities.
3. Identified students with social loafing tendencies by administering the Social Loafing Tendency Questionnaire (SLTQ).
4. Assign four or five students to each work group.
5. Provide students with realistic expectations of what they can expect as the project proceeds.
6. Provide students with definitions regarding teams and group projects.
7. Discuss group dynamics including the stages of group development and the roles people play in groups.
8. Engage students in team building exercises.
9. Clarify students' misperceptions regarding their peers' contributions to group projects.
10. Provide class time for students to work on group projects.
11. Encourage self-evaluations and provide students with self-evaluation forms.
12. Use peer assessments regularly and provide evaluation forms for peer assessments.
13. Encourage students to report social loafers.
14. Counsel social loafers,
15. Provide feedback regularly
16. Do not use threats of punishment.

17. Reward students who contribute more to the project.

## GAPS IN THE LITERATURE AND FUTURE RESEARCH

Two gaps in the literature might be addressed in future studies. First, will clarifying students' misperceptions reduce social loafing in group projects. Second do students with social loafing tendencies seek out courses that require graded group projects.

## CONCLUSION

Graded group projects are more effective if instructors reduce social loafing associated with group activities. . The guidelines provided by this study require additional work by instructors and students. This may possibly prove to be problematic due to time constraints and the type of projects assigned. Administrators developing programs to assist faculty members can encourage them to implement only some of these practices that might lessen social loafing. This will help instructors improve graded group projects. Consequently, students will gain the necessary skills needed to adjust to the work world.

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