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PREDATORY PUBLISHING AND THE RESPONSES OF THE ACADEMIC COMMUNITY

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Introduction

Along with teaching and service, scholarly research is an integral component of the work conducted at institutions of higher education. By creating new knowledge, research forms the basis for what is taught and what is practiced. Faculty members at many institutions compete vigorously for internal and external grants to fund research projects, and research productivity is frequently crucial to successful applications for promotion and tenure, as well as institutional accreditation. The quality of published research is one of the most important markers of overall institutional reputation in higher education, largely because it can be externally validated more easily than teaching (Volkwein and Grunig, 2005). A traditional hallmark of research quality has been the prestige of the professional journals in which it appears (West and Rich, 2012).

In recent years, there has been a growing shift away from conventional, subscription-based publication venues and toward open-access publishing. In the open-access arena, authors, rather than readers, pay publishers for their services, and articles are made available on the internet free of charge. Open-access has been widely touted as a democratizing force in academe, by making research results available to scholars in poorly resourced institutions who otherwise could not afford to obtain them (Jaschik, 2006). Many open-access journals are of good quality, and do indeed disseminate valuable research. At the same time, however, this new business model has given rise to a class of unscrupulous publishers who prey on authors by charging exorbitant fees without providing transparency or quality service. It is therefore increasingly important—if increasingly difficult—for both faculty and administrators to distinguish legitimate from illegitimate publishers,

both when submitting research for publication and when evaluating it for purposes such as promotion, tenure, merit pay, and accreditation.

To that end, the present paper examines the nature of predatory publishing and the responses being developed by the academic community to guard itself and its profession against fraud. The following section offers a description of the distinguishing characteristics and the prevalence of predatory publishers, and the third section examines the reasons for concern and the responses arising within the profession. The conclusion offers suggestions for further work.

Business Models of Publishing

Subscription-Based Versus Open-Access Publishing

Traditional scholarly publication in subscription-based journals involves several stages. Typically, an author submits a research paper to a journal, and the editor makes an initial evaluation to either reject the paper outright (as when the topic is not appropriate for the journal), ask the author for some initial revisions, or have the paper refereed. If the paper is refereed, the editor sends it to a panel of experts on the subject, asking them to evaluate the manuscript and provide written feedback. After some time—often 8 to 20 weeks (Nguyen, *et al.*, 2015)—the editor receives the referees' reports and decides to accept, reject, or return the paper to the author for revisions, conveying this decision to the author along with the referee reports, while keeping the identities of the reviewers confidential. If revisions are needed, the author revises the work and resubmits it to the journal. Ideally, the manuscript is then accepted and subsequently published. Interested readers (usually other scholars working in the same or closely related fields) and academic libraries purchase the article from the publisher, either as a stand-alone entity or as part of a subscription to the journal. Over time, those scholars who deem the study to be an important contribution to the literature cite the article in their own subsequent research.

Simon Linacre (2016), Executive Editor of Emerald Publishing, reports that in a sample of 86 submissions to an Emerald journal, 29 percent of the manuscripts were ultimately published, 16 percent were withdrawn by the authors, and 55 percent were rejected. Across all disciplines, Linacre (2016) reports a 63 percent rejection rate.

Importantly, three of the stages in the traditional process provide quality control. First, peer review requires several experts in the field to approve the research as being correct, original, and likely to advance knowledge in the discipline, and Linacre's (2016) data imply that fewer than half of all papers pass this test. Second, the purchasing of the article by readers and libraries demonstrates

that the marketplace views the research as being valuable; subscription-based journals that lack quality will lose sales, so there is a strong financial incentive to ensure quality. And third, citations by other scholars reflect the impact that the research ultimately has on the literature.

In contrast, open-access publishing operates with a different business model. An author submits a paper to a journal, the manuscript is duly refereed by experts, often returned to the author for revisions, and, when done well, ultimately accepted by the journal. Up to that stage, the process, including the time required for referees to review manuscripts, should not differ much between open-access and subscription-based journals (Nguyen, *et al.*, 2015). Upon acceptance, the author is charged a publication fee, or article processing charge (APC). Once the fee is paid, the publisher uploads the article to the internet, where it can be readily accessed throughout the world. Ideally, as in subscription-based publishing, this process also selects only the best papers, resulting in high-quality articles that are widely cited and make a positive impact on the discipline.

What is being bought and sold in the open-access model, however, is not scholarly research; rather, it is publication space, and the author of the article is the consumer. As a consequence, an important quality indicator is missing from open-access publishing: by definition, no one buys the research that is published through open-access, so there is no marketplace test of quality. In its absence, peer-review and citation counts take on added significance as the only remaining quality control mechanisms. If these are also absent from a journal, there is no signal of quality.

This situation is not entirely new. There have always been vanity presses: publishers (usually of books) who would publish an author's work in exchange for a fee. But computer technology has facilitated inexpensive online publication, so that virtually anyone with a website can now establish him- or herself as a publisher, by soliciting manuscripts and fees from authors, and uploading the papers to the worldwide web. As with any technological innovation, this can have both positive and detrimental effects on the profession. When scholarly manuscripts are peer-reviewed by credible experts and published in legitimate open-access journals, they can have a beneficial impact on the scholarly literature by expanding the availability of research findings. Unfortunately, open-access has also prompted a number of nefarious individuals and groups to masquerade as legitimate publishers while providing little or no quality control in publishing; following Beall (2012, 2016), these have become widely known as predatory publishers.

Predatory Publishers

Berger and Cirasella (2015, p. 132) offer the following definition. "Predatory journals are primarily fee-collecting operations—they exist for that purpose and only incidentally publish articles,

generally without rigorous peer review, despite claims to the contrary.” Similarly, Ray (2016, p. 311) notes, “Predatory OAP [open-access publishing] refers to an exploitative OAP business model that charges publication fees to authors without providing the editorial and publishing services associated with legitimate journals.” Intense competition for employment and pressure to demonstrate professional currency by publishing research have left many faculty members, especially those seeking tenure and/or promotion, susceptible to such predators.

A number of observers, including Beall (2012), Beaubein and Eckard (2014), and Berryman (2016), have attempted to identify the primary, or at least typical, characteristics of predatory publishers. Some of the principal characteristics are summarized below.

Unrealistic timetables. Predatory publishers often aggressively solicit submissions via spam email, for deadlines that are close at hand. Faculty frequently receive emails from publishers inviting submission within the next three or four days, for upcoming issues of journals. The same emails typically promise an absurdly short review process—often, just a few days—clearly not a sufficient length of time for a thoughtful reviewer to provide carefully constructed, written feedback on any serious scholarship. Indeed, many predatory journals explicitly promise “acceptance” or “publication” within a few days of submission, rather than the mere rendering of a decision (Berryman, 2016). The difference in wording reflects the fact that a publisher who exercises quality control might reject the submission, whereas a predator will reject almost nothing. Luring authors into submission by effectively promising publication is a typical ploy of predators.

Overlapping editorial boards and excessively broad scopes. Legitimate journals are edited by scholars with expertise in the journals’ respective field(s). By contrast, some predatory publishers operate multiple journals in a variety of different academic disciplines, yet have the same editor, or largely overlapping editorial boards, for all journals in the fleet (Berryman, 2016). Others lack any semblance of a disciplinary focus, intermingling vastly divergent subjects in a single journal, and making them multidisciplinary in a way that far exceeds legitimate interdisciplinary work. Indeed, some have titles that are deliberately vague and inclusive, presumably so as not to discourage any revenue-generating submissions. For example, the *International Journal of Innovative Ideas*, which ceased publication after just three issues, was willing to accept papers “from nearly all areas of Science and Engineering, Natural Sciences, Medical, and Social Sciences, whether based on experimental analysis, such as tested prototypes and methods, or merely conceptual designs, initial concepts, and even sketch drawings reflecting novel and inspiring ideas. ...Types of manuscript [sic] include: full-length article, book review, review paper, technical note or report, short

communication, news and highlights, research problems, conceptual design or drawing, and Sci-Fi ideas.”¹

Costly article processing charges. Open-access journals typically charge authors steep publication fees. As Hammond (2012) points out, “Some of these new journals are actually ‘predatory’ in nature: their central purpose is to generate revenue rather than disseminate knowledge.... One lucrative example is the Clute Institute, founded by an accounting professor in Colorado in 1985, which now includes 15 journals, encompassing business, health, and education fields. Clute charges authors \$60 to submit a paper for a standard six-week review and \$150 for an expedited two-week review. Upon acceptance, the charge for publishing (online) ranges from \$250 for a 1 to 5-page paper, to \$850 for a 16 to 20-page paper. In 2011, Clute published over 700 articles.” Shen and Björk (2015) estimate the average APC to be \$178, with large publishers averaging \$796. Some, however, will occasionally offer discounts or opportunities to pre-pay article processing charges for future submissions. In one recent case, for example, an open access publisher of more than 40 journals with a regular article processing charge of \$500, offered discounts for the month of August 2016 of between 79 and 96 percent, so authors with manuscripts ready for submission could purchase publication space on sale.

Lack of transparency. It is not only the magnitude of the APC that is worrisome; often, fees are not even apparent to authors until after a manuscript has been accepted for publication (Beaubein and Eckard, 2014). Kolata (2013) relates the story of a Mexican physician who submitted two articles to a journal, had them accepted, and then received an unexpected bill for \$2,900. Many predatory journals lack transparency in other ways as well. Stratford (2012) notes, “numerous authors, faculty members, and open-access advocates have raised concerns about the practices of OMICS and the quality of its journals. In some cases, faculty members say they were named to editorial boards without their consent and cannot get OMICS to remove their names. Some authors allege that despite the company's claims, their articles were not peer reviewed.... Others say the company's fees, which can be as high as several thousand dollars, are excessive and are not transparent.”

Little or no serious peer-review from referees. Central to the problem of predation is the lack of quality control in the form of peer-review. To test whether suspect journals actually referee submissions, Ray (2016) submitted papers written by 13- and 15-year old children to 10 journals selected on the basis of spam email solicitations, poorly managed websites, publication fees, excessively broad scopes, and similar author guidelines. Ray (2016, p. 320) concluded, “For each of

the ten article submissions, there is evidence that the journal did not provide a rigorous or useful review process. ...The timing and content of the author's correspondence with these journals provided conclusive evidence that they are not legitimate peer-reviewed journals as claimed on their websites." Indeed, due to the lack of peer-review, plagiarized or re-published articles are sometimes accepted (Beall, 2012). For example, an article entitled, "The Antecedents of Taxpayers Compliance Behavior and the Effectiveness of Thai Local Government Levied Tax" was first published by the *IBT Journal of Business Studies* (formerly the *Journal of Management & Social Sciences*) in 2014. The same article, by the same three authors, subsequently appeared in *International Business Management* in 2015.

Prevalence. As shown in Table 1, Beall (2016) estimates that between 2011 and 2016, the number of "potential, possible, or probable" predatory publishing houses increased by a factor of 50, from 18 to more than 900. And since 2013, the number of independent journals he tracks has expanded seven-fold, from 126 to 882. In addition, there is an even more recent phenomenon of hijacked websites. As Butler (2013a, p.421) first reported, "Two reputable European science journals have fallen prey to identity theft by criminals who have created counterfeit journal websites. These online doppelgängers have duped hundreds of researchers into paying author fees" to what they thought were well-established, reputable journals. Beall (2016) estimates that more than 100 such websites now exist. Shen and Björk (2015) estimate that roughly 8,000 open-access journals are predatory, and that between 2010 and 2014, the total number of articles published by predators increased from 53,000 to 420,000 per year, generating approximately \$74 million in publication fees during 2014 alone.

Responses by Academics and Institutions

Reasons for Concern

There are a number of reasons why college administrators should be concerned about predatory publishing. When legitimate scholars get duped into publishing their work in predatory journals, they are likely to lose credibility within the profession. Others who are less naïve but desperate to publish may knowingly submit papers to poor quality journals in the false hope of building a resume, achieving tenure and/or promotion, or obtaining grants or professional accolades. Either way, the authors (or their universities) use scarce resources to pay hefty fees to publishers who fail to execute their responsibilities as gatekeepers of the body of knowledge. The overall reputation of the institution, and potentially its accreditation, is also threatened if research is

| Table 1. | | | |
|--|-----------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Prevalence of Possible Predators* | | | |
| Year | Predatory Publishers | Stand-Alone Predatory Journals | Hijacked Journals |
| 2011 | 18 | NA | NA |
| 2012 | 23 | NA | NA |
| 2013 | 225 | 126 | NA |
| 2014 | 477 | 303 | NA |
| 2015 | 693 | 507 | 30 |
| 2016 | 923 | 882 | 101 |
| *Source: Beall (2016) | | | |

perceived to be of low quality. Moreover, if faculty members publish in such outlets, it is hypocritical to caution students against citing articles from such journals when writing term papers or dissertations; yet we fail as educators if we do not teach students to distinguish quality work from substandard research. And even practitioners may be misled into adopting ideas from such sources, in the mistaken belief that all academic studies have passed the test of rigorous peer-review (Byard, 2016). The growing concern with these issues throughout the profession has led to a number of recent responses.

Blacklists and Whitelists

By blacklisting publishers and journals as possible predators, Beall (2016) has initiated an important dialogue within the academic community. Of course, given their growth rates, it is difficult for any individual or group to keep up with the proliferation of online journals, and to know with certainty which ones are fraudulent. As a test of the accuracy of Beall's List, Bohannon (2013) submitted a bogus study to 255 open-access journals, to determine whether they would accept a blatantly flawed paper for publication. Bohannon (2013, p. 64) concluded, "The results show that Beall is good at spotting publishers with poor quality control. For publishers on his list that completed the review process, 82% accepted the paper."

In contrast, the Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ) serves as a whitelist by screening open-access publishers for quality. In December of 2013, the DOAJ joined with the Open Access Scholarly Publishers Association (OASPA), the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE), and the World Association of Medical Editors to promulgate the Principles of Transparency and Best Practice in Scholarly Publishing.² And beginning in 2014, the DOAJ tightened its selection criteria, requiring publishers to complete a 50-question profile in order to gain inclusion in the directory (Van Noorden, 2014).

At the same time, *Cabell's Directory of Publishing Opportunities*, which covers both subscription-based and open-access journals, also responded to the problem by re-evaluating journals for inclusion in its whitelist. Noting that, "Unfortunately, academic publishing has been rife with fraudulent procedures over the past several years. Instances of deceptive practices and outright fraud have skyrocketed. Understandably, this has led to a significant erosion of trust in the scholarly publication process," Cabell's now screens journals on the basis of Beall's List, exclusion from the DOAJ and/or the OASPA, and the firm's own selection policy.³

Naturally, the editors of quality journals oppose the practices of predators, and many endorse the use of whitelists and blacklists. The International Academy of Nursing Editors (INANE, 2014, p. 1) recently published an editorial stating, "We encourage nursing authors to use Beall's list of predatory publishers at Scholarly Open Access as a reliable resource. His approaches and methods, including dynamic monitoring of the publishing world for this purpose and a willingness to reconsider and revise any listing found to be in error or misleading, make Beall's site extremely helpful for nurses who now need to ensure the credibility of the journals to which they entrust their manuscripts or become otherwise involved. ...Another potentially useful resource may be the Directory of Open Access Journals, which is working to strengthen its approvals process based on more strict criteria."

Other organizations are creating similar directories to help distinguish legitimate publishers from predators. For example, in December of 2013, the ISSN International Centre (which issues international standard serial numbers to publishers) and UNESCO (the United Nations' Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization) jointly established ROAD, a Directory of Open Access scholarly Resources.⁴

Checklists for Authors

In addition to directories of specific journals or publishers, a number of observers have offered guidelines to help authors avoid inadvertently submitting papers to predators. Clark (2015), for

example, recommends that authors investigate five issues: whether the publisher is on Beall's List; whether the publisher is a member of a recognized professional organization such as COPE or OASPA; whether the journal is in the DOAJ; whether it is indexed in major databases; and whether it operates with transparency and consistency with best practices. Butler's (2013b) checklist includes being wary of email solicitations from journals, verifying the journal's contact information, editorial board, fees, peer review policy, and impact factor, and perhaps most wisely, reading the journal's previously published articles to assess their quality. A similar checklist is provided by the library system at Tufts University.⁵

Policies and Practices

An increasing number of individual academics and administrative bodies are stating openly that they will not consider publications in predatory journals when evaluating portfolios for tenure and promotion or institutional accreditation. For example, several faculty members and deans described their—and their institutions'—positions on predatory journals in the Member Forum Digest, a discussion board sponsored by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB), on June 16, 2016. Among them, Yehuda Klein of the City University of New York remarked, "As a department chair, and thus a member of the College-wide Promotion and Tenure Committee, I can state that I would not consider publications in predatory journals as evidence of scholarship by faculty being considered for promotion and tenure. In particular, I advise junior faculty not to submit papers to journals on Beall's List of predatory scholarly open-access publishers." Arthur Goldsmith wrote that, at the University of Massachusetts – Boston, predatory journals are not regarded as quality peer-reviewed journals "on the grounds that there is no quality control (although some of the journals in question will claim low acceptance rates) and virtually no readership (that's why they don't turn up on the standard citation count reports)." Sonja Premeaux noted that the University of Arkansas at Little Rock disallows the counting of articles in predatory journals, and Martin Roth reported that faculty at the University of Hartford recently adopted the following statement: "To be considered a quality journal publication, the journal in which the article is published must not appear in the Scholarly Open Access Beall's list of potential, possible, or probable predatory scholarly open-access publishers." He added, "We consulted with our university head librarian who validated the credibility of Scholarly Open Access as a predatory journal information resource." And regarding accreditation visits, Norman Wright of Utah Valley University stated, "As a member of several PRTs [peer-review teams], I do look very seriously at predatory journals. ...Faculty members need to know that they must avoid predatory journals. The deans with whom I have worked do not

count predatory journal articles as real publications. Should your team be unlucky enough to have me or any of the deans with whom I have worked visit your school, this would certainly be an issue.”

California State University at Northridge now warns graduate students to avoid submitting theses or dissertations to predatory publishers.⁶ Other institutions are currently in the process of developing policies in response to predatory publishing. The Faculty Senate in the College of Arts and Sciences at Mary Washington University, for example, recently approved a motion recommending that the University develop a consistent and clear policy on predatory journal articles (Ray, 2016).

There has also been some collective action among university administrators to discourage submissions to predatory journals. In 2015, the business deans of the Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities (AJCU) adopted a resolution stating, “We...encourage all scholars to avoid publishing their research in, and citing articles that appear in, predatory journals. To that end, we recommend that authors carefully scrutinize target journals before citing or submitting papers to them, utilizing all available information on publication standards, including the provision of referee reports to authors and the data annually offered by *Beall’s List of Predatory Publishers* as a guide. While no single evaluative source can be regarded as infallible or keep up with the proliferation of these journals, we note that other industry leaders, such as *Cabell’s Directory of Publishing Opportunities*, have adopted *Beall’s List* as a credible database for identifying suspect journals and publishers, at least within the open-access realm.”^{7,8}

And in what may be a harbinger of future federal prosecutions and lawsuits, the U.S. Federal Trade Commission recently filed a civil complaint against OMICS, an organization that it believes to be a predatory publisher (Basken, 2016). Given that research funds at academic institutions—many of them public—are at stake, it would not be surprising to see state governments eventually taking legal action as well.

Conclusion

As awareness of predatory publishing spreads across colleges and universities, faculty and administrators are increasingly recognizing the dangers to educational quality, institutional reputation, accreditation goals, and individual careers that are posed by submissions to purely mercenary journals. Yet, the rapidly escalating volume of articles appearing in such outlets suggests that some members of the academic community remain unaware, unconvinced, or unconcerned about these issues.

While respecting academic freedom, institutions of higher education need to implement policies and procedures that safeguard the integrity of scholarly research. Devising reimbursement practices for research expenses that exclude fees to predatory journals, implementing policies for tenure and promotion that exclude articles in predatory journals from consideration, and enforcing accreditation guidelines that similarly discount such publications would provide strong disincentives to submit work to predatory outlets, countering the lure of easy, rapid publication. This review suggests that many institutions of higher education have initiated discussions of such policies, but much more needs to be done. Indeed, determining the effectiveness of such practices in discouraging submissions to predatory journals would be a valuable subject for future research.

Endnotes

1. See "Focus and Scope" at <http://scholarlyexchange.org/ojs/index.php/IJII/about>.
2. See Redhead (2013) "Principles of Transparency and Best Practice in Scholarly Publishing" at <http://oaspa.org/principles-of-transparency-and-best-practice-in-scholarly-publishing/>.
3. See <https://www.cabells.com/about-us>.
4. See "ROAD" at <http://road.issn.org/en/contenu/purposes-road-project>.
5. See "Field Guide to Predatory Publishers" at <http://researchguides.library.tufts.edu/PredPubs>.
6. See "Cautionary Note about Predatory Publishers" at <http://www.csun.edu/research-graduate-studies/cautionary-note-about-predatory-publishers>.
7. See "Resolution Regarding Predatory Journals" at the AJCU Business Deans website, <http://static1.squarespace.com/static/55d1dd88e4b0dee65a6594f0/t/564b5e8c841abae9c84f1226/1447779980530/AJCU+Business+Deans+Resolution+on+Predatory+Publishing.pdf>.
8. As this article went to press in January of 2017, the *Scholarly Open Access* website was discontinued. The final issue of Beall's List has been archived on the internet at <https://web.archive.org/web/20170112125427/https://scholarlyoa.com/publishers/>.

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REFLECTIONS FROM WOMEN UNIVERSITY PRESIDENTS ON THE JOYS OF LEADERSHIP AND THE CHALLENGES OF THE ACADEMIC PIPELINE

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Introduction

Why are there still so few women in the roles of presidents and chancellors in higher education? What holds women back? Professional advancement in the academic world for women leaders has been considered slower than expected given all the number of qualified women academics now engaged and successfully graduating from colleges and universities (Gamez-Vargas, 2011). Research has typically described the progression to higher leadership positions as a mythical academic pipeline where there is a narrowing of options as a person moves through the maze of opportunities.

In developing the academic leadership pipeline, targeted development programs have been a traditional mainstay of academic association offerings that provide a variety of programing options from intensive year-long fellowships to short-term specific tactical workshops. Mentorship and coaching have been used to augment these training programs using a highly interpersonal and intensive approach generally reserved for top leadership positions.

Viewed from the perspective of a talent management framework, there are definite stages that aspiring leaders generally move through as they proceed up the administrative career ladder. These stages focus on strategies such as recruitment, retention, development, and performance. In the traditional corporate organizational model, the most gifted and highest quality high achievers/high potential talent are identified, selected, and provided opportunities to learn about both the internal operations of the organization and the industry and customers it serves. These superstars are also provided training in managerial tools, skills, knowledge, tactics, and strategies that develop competencies as future leaders and administrators (Knapp, 2010).

Higher education as an industry sector has traditionally not been as intentional or as organized in this aspect of strategic human resource planning as those in the corporate and business sectors. Some of the myths about advancing to higher levels of leadership that currently exist within the higher education sector include a belief that if a person already received a terminal degree, that they are smart enough to figure out how to manage and therefore do not need leadership or professional development. There is another belief that one must move out of their current institution to move up in higher level positions such as dean, provost, or president. And just like the notion that an institution should not hire one of its own graduates, these traditions whether expressed or assumed permeate the discussions in most selection or search committees in academic institutions.

The intent of this article is to identify, from the research literature and in-depth discussions from interviews of sitting women presidents and chancellors, perceptions and personal stories as they relate to their views of leadership from the leader's chair. The presidents and chancellors interviewed discussed both the challenges and the joys of academic leadership and focused on what they perceive as the unfinished agenda item within the academy as it relates to the traditional academic talent pipeline.

Literature Review

Research on leadership development, especially regarding women leaders, focuses on broad themes that include demographics, barriers, and success strategies (American Association of University Women (AAUW, 2016). Among these topics, one major challenge continues to resonate as a primary unfinished agenda item—the limitations of and leaks in the traditional academic pipeline. Additional challenges reported by AAUW (2016) for women aspiring to leadership positions in higher education include persistent sex discrimination, caregiving and family demands, lack of effective networking and mentors, gender stereotypes, and bias. To assure that future generations of women have greater access to leadership positions in higher education these issues must be confronted.

There continues to be a gap in the number of women leaders in higher education administration despite the fact there are more women than men graduating and entering the academy (American Council on Education, 2012; AAUW, 2016). Specifically, in the higher education workforce, women earn more degrees than men, but women remain under-represented as tenured faculty, professors, and administrators (AAUW, 2016). These trends are singled out as issues that

create pipeline and access difficulties for women who aspire to leadership positions in higher education. The demographics from the *American College President 2012* report by the American Council on Education (ACE, 2012) showed that in 2011, only 26% of college presidents were women. There has been a slow, upward improvement since 1986 when the number was just under 10%. The largest gains for women serving as presidents generally are at two-year institutions where 33% of presidents are women whereas women held only 22% of the presidential positions at four-year institutions, both public and private collectively (ACE, 2012). *The Chronicle of Higher Education* noted in their 2015 *Almanac* that men still outnumber women among the newly appointed deans, provosts, and presidents (Hammond, 2015).

Other challenges identified in the literature reflect that women college presidents face different and harsher standards than their male counterparts. For example, their physical appearances and their abilities to cultivate a managerial yet sufficiently feminine persona were highlighted and advised to make sure not to “overdo” one or the other (Hertneky, 2010, Jablonski, 1996). Some sources described how being a manager had been traditionally seen as a “masculine” trait and inappropriate for women (Moran, 1992). Many sources alluded to the slower-than-desirable progress in women attaining leadership roles in higher education. The common attitude seems to be that promotions were happening but not very quickly. Some sources acknowledged that many universities still hold a “patriarchal role expectation” (Gamez-Vargas, 2011).

Nan Keohane (2012), former President of Wellesley College and Duke University, in her book *Thinking about Leadership*, identified traits that she believed make a good leader. These included sound judgment, decisiveness, integrity, social skill, and intelligence. She offered some personal perspective on the demands of leadership in the ability to deal with power, ethics, the complexity of relationships between leaders and followers, and the challenges of democratic leadership. As she expressed, “The ends we seek through governance encompass the coherence, aspirations, stability, moral character, and creative vision of our communities, and the protection of the rights and liberties of individuals. My claim is that for societies to achieve these valuable ends, people (including leaders) need a deeper understanding of what leaders actually do, how they define their goals, and go about their work, the pitfalls and challenges they face” (p. 7-8).

Organizations and campuses are addressing these challenges by focusing on the importance of cultivating women’s leadership by putting institutional values into meaningful efforts such as inclusion, diversity, and equity initiatives, as well as leadership development programs. Programs that address these leadership development opportunities include the National Center for

Institutional Diversity (NCID) at the University of Michigan, the American Council of Education Fellows Program, the HERS Institute (Bryn Mawr, Denver, and Wellesley), and AASCU's Millennial Leadership Initiative. These are examples of leadership development programs that focus on preparing, enhancing, and advancing those who want to move into leadership positions in higher education, especially those from historically underrepresented groups. These programs provide opportunities for women to envision themselves as leaders (Arredondo, 2011; Ballenger, 2010; Hertneky, 2010; Song & Hartley, 2012). When a woman is reluctant to take on the college president leadership role, some attribute this to a path that is not obvious or welcoming as well as not actively promoting themselves (Perry & DeLeonardo, 2012). Some women college presidents report that they had a personal calling to the presidency and were inspired by initial encouragement from others (Tunheim & Goldschmidt, 2013). As described in numerous articles, women can more easily envision themselves as the leader when they have powerful female mentor and role models guiding the way.

While the focus of most current research literature tends to identify the difficulties and shortcomings of the academic pipeline, there is a growing unease among women presidents that the discussion does not reflect in any depth the positive aspects or the joys of leadership (Oikelome, 2016, Sandeen, Cavanaugh, & Ford, 2017).

Questions to be Investigated

The purpose of our study was to listen, reflect, and dig deeper into the experiences of women presidents and chancellors to understand how they impact their campuses. Most important, the opportunity to glean their discernment process, personal meanings, and how they view their impact, joy, and legacy provide much deeper insights into the leadership characteristics and behaviors than do traditional trait assessment approaches. As will be seen, despite significant differences in background, many common themes emerged that will inform both an opportunity to revise and rethink leadership development programs, as well as how best to ensure that an adequate talent pipeline is created and nurtured. Three primary questions guided this study:

1. How do these women define their impact on higher education?
2. What do women presidents perceive are the challenges and unfinished agenda items for women leaders?
3. How do women presidents talk about the joys of leadership?

The research started with the Legacy Conference that convened in November, 2014, at the Johnson Foundation at Wingspread Retreat location in Racine, Wisconsin (Women's Voices, 2014).

Thirty women leaders across the landscape of higher education met to reengage in a conversation started in the late 1980s. The 1991 seminal text *Women of Vision, Women of Influence* by Helen S. Astin and Carole Leland was the synthesis of those initial discussions from the first Wingspread meeting and the basis for the continuation of the conversation. With permission from Astin and Leland, the inheritors, as identified by these authors (1991), convened the 2014 meeting to reflect on and articulate the impact of women presidents and chancellors since the late 1980s to the present.

Over the course of two years (2014-2016), a series of in-depth interviews and surveys were conducted by the authors to further inquire and reflect on the question of the impact of women's leadership in higher education from experienced women presidents and chancellors. For this paper, the focus will be on the reflections and insights from the fifteen women interviewed. They represented diverse backgrounds and institutions; each having served in the capacity as the president of an American college or university during the last 25 years. At the time of their interview, these successful leaders were either a sitting president or retired; some had served in their second presidency already; some had become system heads or association leaders; and were from a range of both public and private or religiously affiliated institutions.

How Women Presidents Impact Higher Education

The women interviewed for this study collectively possessed over 150 years of service as a college and university president. These women have certainly paved the way for more women to serve in leadership roles in higher education. The women were asked to comment on the impacts they saw as more and more women were selected to lead colleges and universities. One area of impact on which each of the women agreed was that women bring a more collaborative leadership style and value win-win strategies when making decisions. Women presidents advocate for the needs of their campus, lead with a focus on developing people, and take pride in being more inclusive. One respondent commented "women show greater sensitivity and awareness to marginalized groups of employees and students." She believed that this served her well as she led her diverse campus community and improved success for students of color. Another woman commented on the importance of women leaders bringing voice to social issues. She believed this was an important part of her success as a president and that by leveraging the resources of the campus community she could give back and address broader societal issues. These women presidents commented that they saw themselves as servant leaders which Robert Greenleaf

remarked that “great leaders are seen as servants first, and that simple fact is the key to the leader’s greatness” (Greenleaf, 1977 p. 7)

Several respondents valued the growing network of women presidents and felt as if women were creating a critical mass at professional meetings. This growing network provides more resources for women leaders and more opportunities to share perspectives. One woman shared, “women are respected more for their contributions as leaders and there is more recognition that women can be among today’s leaders.” Even though respondents have more women as colleagues today than when they started their first presidencies, they believed strongly that they needed to promote and mentor more women who aspire to leadership roles in higher education, especially the presidency.

The respondents shared their secrets to success as women, as leaders, and as women serving as presidents. The respondents all commented on the value of being authentic leaders and “lead as you are and do not try to be someone you are not.” Authentic leaders are honest and lead through self-awareness, openness, and show a willingness to consider opposing viewpoints (AAUW, 2016). As described in the AAUW report, *Barriers and Bias: The Status of Women in Leadership* two contributing authors found, “women who were exposed to counter stereotypical images of women in the media reported more positive self-perceptions and increased leadership aspirations than women who were exposed to stereotypical images of women” (p.33).

One respondent commented on the importance of getting things done and offered this formula: *vision + thought leadership + direction + support = intended outcomes on deadline*. The women expressed the importance of having a “clear sense of knowing yourself” and “not taking self too seriously.” The women leaders in this study identified as resilient, making gutsy moves, staying focused on the vision, addressing distractions, building relationships with diverse stakeholders, and understanding budgets.

Another secret to success for these women leaders focused on women leaders as continuous and life-long learners. Several of the women presidents noted the importance of taking time to know what you don’t know and closing gaps. Since the job of the president is filled with opportunities, challenges, uncertainty, and risks, one woman made it a point to ask the board who hired her, “What is untouchable and where are the minefields that will get me or the University in trouble.” One woman president acknowledged she took an inventory of her limitations and committed to making her limitations her strengths through professional and personal development.

The women in this study believed they were successful as a result of being collaborative and building relationships. They valued developing relationships with a broad range of people and noted the importance of listening to and accepting others. One believed, “the single most important job as president is human development, meaning supporting growth in talent and moving at a rate that promotes the talent around you.” Building relationships helps to broaden a base of support for the leaders and one leader noted, “Work continuously to build and maintain your base while being deliberate and intentional.” One respondent talked about the importance of having good interpersonal skills and honing the ability to deal with the “sane and the crazy.” Another woman attributed her success in building relationships because she enjoys what she does and the people on her team. Another commented, “You need to be a part of the entire campus community, even when things may not be of interest. You realize that you cannot stand in a corner and just observe when you are the president.” Being present and being engaged are keys to success for women leaders (Benefiel, 2008).

Challenges Faced by Women Presidents in Higher Education

Leading a campus community is filled with opportunities, joys, challenges, and a few wrong turns in decision making. The researchers asked the respondents to talk about the challenges and surprises they faced in their presidencies. The results clustered on four themes: (1) general higher education issues; (2) discrimination and stereotyping; (3) work/life balance; and (4) lack of pipeline. These women presidents all commented on the rapid pace of change and current issues in higher education as challenges. On their campuses, their focus remained on fiscal stability, maintenance of academic quality, affordability, access, changing demographics, meeting needs of today’s students, board relations, campus governance, and building and sustaining a quality leadership team. Each of these current issues required time and attention on a regular basis and often created tensions among competing priorities. When women college presidents encounter barriers, they often reported having an attitude of “enjoying the challenge” and/or simply moving on with their responsibilities.

Some challenges women faced in their roles as college and university presidents revolved around their ability to make difficult decisions and have a balanced life. Several of the women in this study noted that they were sometimes underestimated by their colleagues and constituencies about making hard decisions, which they attributed to stereotyping and bias. One woman shared that she was labeled as “pushy” when she was decisive and articulate in her decision making. This was not about being reticent or not speaking out when injustices were presented. These women

tended not to “dwell” on them and even some women college presidents didn’t seem to be concerned or acknowledge gender issues. Another shared a quote from Eleanor Roosevelt, “People are like tea bags. You never know how strong they’ll be until you put them into hot water.”

Peterson, *In Leading a Small College or University: A Conversation that Never Ends*, believes “Being a successful president demands intellectual skills and accumulated technical knowledge. But it also requires, in equal measure, intuitive skills and an emotional understanding of your college or university and the people who inhabit it with you. Integrating the intellect and the emotions leads to effective leadership. While this seems to be a daunting assignment, it is one we take on every day, starting at home, as parents and spouses” (Peterson, 2008 p. 9). Most of the women interviewed very frankly described the personal vs professional challenge of work-life balance and believed the presidency to be “an-all-in” role. The women presidents shared that while serving as a president they were in the role 24x7 and that overwhelmingly the joys outweighed the challenges.

The women presidents shared the biggest surprises or unexpected issues encountered during their presidencies. A few of the women talked about how lonely leadership can be as a president. One shared the discovery that she could not brainstorm out loud and how careful she needed to be in social conversations as some of the discussions may be misinterpreted or taken out of context. Another learned, “You are now a public person – your life is not your own and you live in a glass house and you are always being watched.” All the women noted the importance of being present and visible on campus and in the community-at-large. They noted as presidents you are “on” all the time. Some wrestled with being seen just for their role and title and not as a real person. Related to this is the powerful influence of the statement, “the president said...” and how this is used with and without their knowledge. One respondent who rose through the ranks at the same institution came to understand in a different way that the “president sets the tone for the entire campus.”

Each of the women presidents talked about the unfinished agenda items for women as leaders in higher education. The most common response stemmed around the clogged and/or leaky pipeline for women aspiring to leadership roles. In addition to subtle and overt discrimination, women are not represented across the disciplines or in academic leadership. Today, women earn more degrees than men but the pipeline to leadership roles in higher education is leaking where women step out or stop out due to a variety of issues including stress, discouragement, being overcommitted, and personal health reasons. One respondent believed the traditional track in academic leadership negatively impacts women, especially women who want to have a family. She noted that it was important for her during her presidency to continuously support women who

aspire to leadership roles by promoting professional development and creating administrative fellowships for faculty. Each respondent strived to develop mentor programs for women faculty and staff, and were intentional in nominating women for leadership roles. As women leaders, they believed it is an expectation and responsibility to prepare, mentor, and support the next generation of women leaders.

Several of the women spoke about institutional discrimination and how it exists on governing boards and in campus communities. Some women shared that they were passed over during presidential searches because the board or campus perceived them as under-prepared to serve as presidents. Some noted that their experiences demonstrated that boards had different criteria and expectations for women serving as presidents and that a subtle bias existed about women in leadership. One president talked about the search process during her second presidency and noted that the campus was concerned about her lack of experience with Intercollegiate Athletics. Despite this initial rejection, she was ultimately hired as president and went on to serve in a leadership role with the NCAA. In addition, she became a champion for student-athletes on and off campus and shared that the perceptions of her lack of experience dissipated quickly.

The Joys of Leadership

While each interview focused on the barriers and difficulties, there was a point in each interview that the conversation shifted towards what they believed were some of the positive advances and what they wanted for the future. Therefore, to help frame their response, the final question asked of the women was to describe their legacy. A clear perspective is seen in *A Leader's Legacy* by Kouzes and Posner (2008): "Legacy thinking means dedicating ourselves to making a difference, not just working to achieve fame and fortune. It also means appreciating that others will inherit what we leave behind" (p. 5) and "A leader's legacy is really the legacy of many. Leaders make unique contributions, but others play significant parts" (p. 45).

The question about legacy created more silence and reflective thought than any other question. For women who are still serving in their presidential roles, they were reluctant to define their legacy and they believed it was still in progress. However, for the seven women who are now retired, all of them said, "I hope I made a difference." Most shared a story and examples of how they mentored a women leader, improved campus culture, supported specific students, or funded an innovative program idea. The women were very humble and serious about how they were part of something much bigger than themselves. The women presidents talked about the importance of exuding confidence. The women shared the importance of working to balance the demands of the

position with family and community life, and being intentional about sharing the joys of the work as a leader. Every woman president confidently talked about the joys of their presidential positions and were grateful for the opportunities to lead, to learn, and to make a difference.

As Kouzes and Posner (2008) remind us, “our challenge is to stay focused on the difference we want to make, why we think it’s essential to be moving in that direction, and on the people who will come after us to inherit what we leave. If we stay focused on the difference and the people, the legacy will take care of itself” (p. 175). The women in this study reflected on how they mentored younger, academic and administrative women and men to lead with their full potential and to excel as leaders and were proud that they opened doors to opportunity for the next generation. They also talked about their influence on their respective institutions and hoped that they made a difference in measurable ways by being part of a broader movement to change the culture and transform the institution. One woman remarked, “I am proud that I spent my life serving for the success and welfare of students.” Another woman noted, “I hope that I have inspired, supported, and nurtured women and people of color.” While another stated her legacy as “Living life with respect and consequence.” The women presidents interviewed for this study showed remarkable courage and humility in describing their contributions to their campuses and communities. Just like for these women their legacy reverberates throughout higher education through the many lives they have touched as teachers, educators, mentors, sponsors, and leaders.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The question posed in this paper as to why there are still so few women in leadership positions continues to perplex and discourage many who look to achieve more equitable and inclusive academic leadership. As described by many interviewed for this study that have already achieved the position of president, they overwhelmingly see the availability and trajectory through the proverbial pipeline as a major structural barrier. Others contend that more time, encouragement, and opportunities are still needed to allow a new generation to seek and achieve the highest rank within the academy that overcome the other challenges of bias, stereotyping, work-life balance, and the changing nature of higher educational leadership.

As to the changing nature of higher education and the increasingly demanding role and responsibilities of a University president, the challenges for many who aspire to higher levels in

administration are even more complex than they were 20 to 30 years ago. For many, there is a reluctance to risk both the professional and personal lives to lead in a more complex, less tolerant community that requires responding to numerous and diverse constituencies, being burdened with restrictions, budgetary and financial constraints and demands from internal and external to the institution.

Those who managed to navigate successfully through the gauntlet of the traditional pathway and have been successful in academic leadership do deeply understand the need to not only identify the barriers and challenges but also to highlight the positive aspects that include impact, legacy, and joys of leadership. Articulating the possibilities; finding the joy in the challenging work; being intentional about appreciating, supporting, and mentoring others; deep self-reflection; and creating an attitude of joy were resounding insights and advice from these women leaders.

Many practical recommendations were offered for faculty and administrators as potential success strategies to be taken advantage of. These included (1) exploring leadership opportunities on campus; (2) request meetings with senior women leaders on your campus and region to learn their stories and seek advice; (3) participate in leadership development programs supported by associations such as ACE, CIC, AASCU, NLA, and AAUA; (4) get actively engaged in the American Council of Education (ACE) Moving the Needle Initiative (<https://www.acenet.edu/leadership/programs/Pages/Moving-the-Needle.aspx>); (5) attend the Biennial International Leadership Association (ILA) Women and Leadership Conference (<http://www.ila-net.org/WLC/index.html>); (6) learn more about the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC's) Women in Higher Education focus (<http://www.aacc21stcenturycenter.org/article/women-leaders-in-higher-education/>); (7) seek information about new and ongoing initiatives that organize collaborative efforts and networks to create success strategies with the intent to increase the number of women in senior leadership positions in higher education through programs, research and resources; (8) identify mentors and executive coaches that focus on your personal and professional ambitions and career trajectory; (9) develop your own personal/professional development plan; and (10) above all, don't wait to be tapped—let your mentor know of your interests, aspirations, and desire for leadership development programs.

In conclusion, an emerging model based on the research from these interviews and additional ongoing survey research conducted by the authors offers a more comprehensive framework to guide women leaders. The proposed overarching model includes five major elements or themes: (1)

awareness of the barriers and challenges and best practices, (2) setting a vision that includes both short-term focus and longer-term transformation, (3) being intentional, (4) focusing on impact and results, and (5) celebrating the joy of leadership. At a workshop conducted in June, 2016 at the University of Michigan for the National Leadership Academy, this approach served as a framework to show how women in leadership can truly make a difference. The wisdom from the women leaders who participated in this study reminds us that it is everyone's responsibility to address not only the structural and pipeline challenges but to individually become more self-reflective, identify what success looks like, determine what holds us back, create strategies that will have impact and bring joy to our profession.

In honor of the memory of the wise Dr. Helen "Lena" Astin who challenged the women at Wingspread to continue to ignite the fire, we share this quote from a 13th Century Buddhist sage; "If one lights a fire for another, it will also brighten one's own way."

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CULTURE CLASH: AN ANALYSIS OF DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER'S ENGAGEMENT WITH ACADEMIC CULTURE AS PRESIDENT OF COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

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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). However, despite their growing numbers, little is known about the issues that they face in adjusting to academic culture. This study explored the adjustment experiences of one of the highest profile non-traditional presidents to date, Dwight D. Eisenhower, who served as president of Columbia University from 1948 to 1953. To many scholars, Eisenhower was a prime example of a non-traditional college president who did not adjust well to academic culture (Ambrose, 1990; Childs, 1958; Clark, 2013; Jacobs, 2001; Neal, 1978). The purpose of this study was to determine the reasons why he failed – as concluded in this study - to adjust to academe. Ultimately, his tenure as president was a rocky one, leaving behind a legacy of bitterness within Columbia's campus community that remained years after his tenure (Clark, 2013; Jacobs, 1985).

Noted historian Stephen Ambrose (1990) once described Eisenhower as one of the greatest leaders from the Western world in the 20th century. This was a man who led armies of millions during World War II and helped to mastermind the greatest amphibious invasion ever attempted in world history (Smith, 2012). Moreover, Eisenhower managed to hold together against incredible odds the largest multinational alliance ever assembled, forging a path to victory over Adolf Hitler's Third Reich (Ambrose, 1990; Clark, 2013; Neal, 1978; Smith, 2012). However, when it came to leading a complex, urban university like Columbia, Eisenhower was unable to make it work (Clark,

2013; Smith, 2012). To make matters worse, he never adapted well to academic culture and had an uncomfortable relationship at best with Columbia's faculty (Ambrose, 1990; Clark, 2013; Jacobs, 2001; Neal, 1978). Using data derived from examining over 2,200 pieces of Eisenhower's personal and official correspondence from 1948 to 1953 (of which only 220 documents made any mention of Columbia and were therefore the only ones coded), this study found that his failure to adjust to academic culture stemmed from a combination of factors. These included intense frustration over mounting political, military, and academic obligations; being overextended professionally; lacking the necessary academic experience for the position; and advocating a presidential vision that did not coincide with Columbia's institutional needs.

Institutional Background

Following World War II, Columbia was inundated with military veterans, who comprised nearly 80% of the institution's new students (Jacobs, 1985). By fall 1946, there were nearly 14,000 veterans enrolled on campus; a number that nearly matched Columbia's entire 16,161 member student body in late 1941 (Jacobs, 2001; Kahn, 1941). By 1947, roughly half of Columbia's students were enrolled under the G.I. Bill (McCaughey, 2003). Further, possessing a world-class faculty, Columbia was uniquely positioned to take advantage of the federal government's emerging research partnerships with higher education institutions. However, several years of weak presidential leadership, along with an outdated administrative structure and mounting financial problems left the university woefully unprepared to meet the demands of this emerging era. By the late 1940s, Columbia was in dire straits and in search of a bold and compelling leader who could advance the university back to prosperity (Clark, 2013; Jacobs, 1985; Jacobs, 2001).

Selecting Eisenhower as President

It was against this contextual backdrop that Dwight D. Eisenhower was first considered for Columbia's presidency. The Eisenhower name had popped up regularly in board deliberations. A popular Columbia myth is that at one presidential search meeting, a trustee asked, "what about Eisenhower?" as a possible option, allegedly referring to General Eisenhower's brother, Milton, who was an experienced university president (Jacobs, 2001, p. 33; Neal, 1978, pp. 237-238). However, as the legend goes, the other trustees assumed he meant General Eisenhower and subsequently initiated contact with the World War II hero (Jacobs, 2001; McCaughey, 2003; Neal, 1978). In reality, many of the trustees were legitimately interested in General Eisenhower, even though he

possessed minimal qualifications at best for the position (Childs, 1958; McCaughey, 2003; Neal, 1978). Thirty years later, a veteran Columbia faculty member observed that the university would have been better off with Milton (Neal, 1978). However, he pointed out that ultimately, “the trustees wanted General Eisenhower” (Neal, 1978, p. 238).

Despite some initial reservations, the trustees wanted the general to be Columbia’s president for a variety of reasons. For one, Eisenhower was widely considered to be a future U.S. president, and many trustees yearned for Columbia to have a close association with such an important historical figure (Childs, 1958; McCaughey, 2003). Moreover, the university desperately needed money, and a celebrity president looked like a viable option to help alleviate the pressing financial problems (Clark, 2013; Parmet, 1972). Eisenhower’s close friendship with a wide array of wealthy businessmen and financiers proved very attractive to the board, and they believed that Eisenhower could encourage many of those executives to support Columbia (Parmet, 1972). Lastly, in the midst of the Red Scare and the challenges it created for American higher education, Columbia needed the international stature and prestige that Eisenhower would bring to help protect it in that challenging political environment (Clark, 2013; Galambos, 1984a; Smith, 2012). Overall, it was “as a massive public figure that Eisenhower attracted the Columbia Trustees.... the Columbia tradition demanded such a public figure” (Neal, 1978, p. 239).

However, while Columbia was very interested in Dwight D. Eisenhower, he was not nearly as interested in Columbia (McCaughey, 2003). As early as spring 1946, Eisenhower had politely declined offers to assume the office of president (Ambrose, 1990; McCaughey, 2003). While the general was certainly interested in a college presidency, he had dreamt instead of presiding over a much smaller school in a country setting (Ambrose, 1990; Clark, 2013; Galambos, 1984a; McCaughey, 2003; Neal, 1978; Smith, 2012). Conversely, the thought of leading a complex, urban university like Columbia intimidated him (Neal, 1978; Parmet, 1972). While military leaders had certainly served as college presidents in the past, none had ever led an institution as prestigious as Columbia (Neal, 1978). Nevertheless, certain Columbia trustees were so eager to recruit Eisenhower that they persisted in their lobbying efforts despite his initial reservations (McCaughey, 2003).

Further, the trustees made unrealistic promises to the general about the nature of his potential duties at Morningside Heights (McCaughey, 2003). In attempting to fit Columbia into Eisenhower’s vision for a desired semi-retirement, they insisted that his responsibilities would include no involvement in purely academic affairs and no responsibility for fundraising (Ambrose,

1990; McCaughey, 2003). Instead, those functions were to be handled by the provost and various deans (Jacobs, 2001). The trustees also insisted that Eisenhower would not have to engage in excessive entertaining nor involve himself with burdensome administrative details (Ambrose, 1990; McCaughey, 2003). Alternately, Eisenhower could be the master of his own time and use Columbia as a national platform to advance his interests in civic engagement and democratic citizenship (Clark, 2013; Jacobs, 1985).

Knowing the full extent of Columbia's financial and administrative problems, it is striking that these trustees made such absurd promises to Eisenhower. However, they were desperate to recruit him and were prepared to say nearly anything to help seal the deal (McCaughey, 2003). Eisenhower eventually gave in and accepted the offer reluctantly in June 1947 (Ambrose, 1990; McCaughey, 2003). In assuming this new role, he believed that it would possibly afford him certain advantages and opportunities. For one, he could focus on his efforts to promote "basic concepts of education in a democracy with particular emphasis upon the *American* system of democracy" (Jacobs, 1985, p. 556). Columbia's presidency also provided him a national platform to speak on significant issues, while avoiding either business ties or major political controversy (Parmet, 1972; Smith, 2012). Further, the position potentially provided Eisenhower a respite from mounting public pressure to run for president of the United States (Clark, 2013; Parmet, 1972). At the time, Eisenhower and the trustees came to believe that it would be a mutually beneficial arrangement (McCaughey, 2003; Smith, 2012).

However, in a troubling sign of things to come, then-West Point superintendent and Eisenhower confidante, Gen. Maxwell Taylor, felt that the general was perplexingly naïve about the demands on the president of a large university (Jacobs, 1985). Believing that Eisenhower had allowed himself to be persuaded by false promises, Taylor remarked that his friend was "largely unaware of the nature of the primary duties of a university president with the emphasis on money raising and administration" (Jacobs, 1985, p. 556). As subsequent events proved, this observation was quite accurate and illustrated some of the key challenges that Eisenhower would face during his presidential tenure at Columbia. Moreover, Taylor's sentiments foreshadowed Eisenhower's difficult adjustment process to academic culture; one that he never really mastered.

Summary of Emerging Themes

Open and axial coding of the data ultimately revealed four central themes that helped explain Eisenhower's inability to adapt to academic culture. These themes included his frustration over the

intricacies of academic culture as well as the demands of mounting political and military obligations. They also included the challenges that Eisenhower faced by being too overextended professionally. While he was president of Columbia, he also had other important military and political commitments, which limited the time he could devote to Morningside Heights. The other two central themes were his lack of academic experience and the disconnect that existed between Eisenhower's presidential vision and Columbia's institutional needs. As the data ultimately demonstrated, all of these issues conspired to compromise his ability to adjust to academic culture.

Frustration. Frustration was a theme that showed up repeatedly in Eisenhower's writing, being expressed roughly 53 times in various letters and diary entries (Galambos, 1984a; Galambos, 1984b; Galambos, 1989a; Galambos, 1989b). This frustration was expressed in two distinct forms. First, as a career soldier Eisenhower was clearly annoyed by the unique dynamics of academic culture, which he referred to as a "bewildering world" (Galambos, 1984a, p. 107). He mentioned it in no less than 10 times in letters to friends and relatives, with an overall frequency of roughly one reference in every five letters. A particular area of contention for Eisenhower was what he considered the glacial pace of academic decision-making (Ambrose, 1990; Galambos, 1984a). This perspective made sense considering that as a general he was used to having his orders quickly executed. Conversely, in the academic world he was appalled at the amount of time and deliberation it took to get anything done. In one April 5, 1950 diary entry, he expressed these sentiments when reflecting on a search process for a new dean:

There is probably no more complicated business in the world than that of picking a new dean within a university. Faculties, including the retiring dean, feel an almost religious fervor in insisting upon acceptance of their views. These are as varied as there are individuals involved, and every man's opinion is voiced in terms of urgency. The result is complete confusion and I cannot see why universities have followed such a custom! But I'll be d--- glad when we have a new dean of engineering and the fuss, fury, and hysteria die down (Galambos, 1984b, p. 1067).

Academic governance holds faculty views as central and germane to operations. With a great deal of power vested in the professional roles of faculty, the decision-making process outlined by Eisenhower is typical.

Eisenhower expressed similar frustration over the amount of paperwork he noticed in the higher education environment. Following a long career in the U.S. Army, he thought that no other organization could produce so many documents (Ambrose, 1990). However, following a few

months at Columbia, he wrote, “one of the major surprises... is the paperwork... I thought I was leaving those mountainous white piles forever” (Ambrose, 1990, p. 241). When Eisenhower tried to insist that every project should be presented on one typewritten page, the very idea “reduced the professors to helpless rage or laughter” (Ambrose, 1990, p. 241). The bureaucratic nature of academics is long documented and a common cultural artifact for those working in higher education (Mintzberg, 1980; Birnbaum, 1988).

Eisenhower’s frustration with the dynamics of academic culture has also been well documented by both historians and his former Columbia associates (Ambrose, 1990; Clark, 2013; Jacobs, 2001; McCaughey, 2003; Parmet, 1972; Smith, 2012). Smith (2012) argued that while universities are governed by consensus, Eisenhower was accustomed to a chain of command. Thus, Eisenhower viewed the various deans and department chairs as his corps and division commanders, faculty members as officers and students as enlisted personnel (Smith, 2012). Much of Eisenhower’s frustration therefore stemmed from the decentralized nature of the academy (Mintzberg, 1980), and the reality that academic decision-making did not follow a strict hierarchy (Smith, 2012). Moreover, he came to find academic affairs increasingly trivial over the course of his presidential tenure, which further fueled his discomfort and frustration (Ambrose, 1990; Smith, 2012). For Eisenhower, faculty meetings were his “special hell” (Ambrose, 1990, p. 241). According to John Krout, dean of the graduate faculty in 1949, Eisenhower constantly complained that instead of actually accomplishing anything, all faculty members did was talk (Ambrose, 1990). Consequently, total boredom combined with discussion over what Eisenhower considered trivial topics soon drove him away (Ambrose, 1990).

On this issue of frustration, the data from Eisenhower’s correspondence were supported by other Columbia officials as well. According to several faculty sources, much of his frustration stemmed from regret over accepting the Columbia presidency in the first place (Ambrose, 1990; Clark, 2013; McCaughey, 2003; Parmet, 1972; Smith, 2012). According to McCaughey (2003), Eisenhower believed that he had been tricked into taking the job. In later years, Dean Harry Carman recounted a conversation with Eisenhower that touched on this difficult subject (Jacobs, 2001; Smith, 2012). With a tinge of regret, Carman remembered Eisenhower reflecting, “in a moment of weakness I listened to the blandishments of a couple of your trustees and here I find myself with a gigantic organization on my hands, and I don’t know a goddamn thing about it” (as cited in Jacobs, 2001, p. 87). In a similar vein, a close Eisenhower associate once remarked, “I don’t think that he had any idea what a complicated thing Columbia University was or is. No idea of it whatever.” (as

cited in Jacobs, 2001, p. 87). By both personal accounts and those with whom Eisenhower was in contact, academics represented a foreign territory for this non-traditional college president, and ultimately Eisenhower never embraced the academic culture.

Eisenhower's deep frustration also stemmed from the mounting expectations for him to engage in national military and government service, even while serving as Columbia's president. He discussed this aspect of his frustration in 43 different letters and diary entries (Galambos, 1984a, Galambos, 1984b, Galambos, 1989a, Galambos, 1989b). Originally, Eisenhower envisioned his post-World War II life to be a semi-retirement of sorts, in which he could be the master of his own schedule (Ambrose, 1990). However, pressing national security issues prompted a military leader of his stature to be utilized extensively as a trouble shooter and informal advisor at the Pentagon throughout the late 1940s (Ambrose, 1990; Clark, 2013; Smith, 2012).

Eisenhower's services were needed in particular to work out Department of Defense budget problems and to smooth over disputes between the armed services (Ambrose, 1990; Smith, 2012). He therefore spent at least a couple of days a week in Washington D.C. during the early stages of his Columbia tenure (Jacobs, 2001). The problem grew only worse when President Harry S. Truman asked Eisenhower to head the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in October 1950, which required him to take an unpopular leave of absence from Columbia (Ambrose, 1990; Childs, 1958; Jacobs, 2001). Throughout this period, he also had to fend off increasing calls to run for president of the United States, which further fueled his stress and annoyance (Ambrose, 1990; Clark, 2013; Jacobs, 2001; Smith, 2012). Clearly, this did not put Eisenhower in the ideal frame of mind to learn the ways of academic life, as it was doubtful he would have a long tenure in a university setting.

In letters and diary entries, Eisenhower frequently expressed sentiments about having too much to do, discussing at length about how "the pressures on me are of several kinds" (Galambos, 1989a, p. 367). Along with his military duties, he was very frustrated with mounting political expectations, which continued to grow as his tenure at Columbia progressed. To Eisenhower's chagrin, pressure for him to run for president of the United States mounted no matter how much he denied interest in the position (Galambos, 1984b; 1989a). He referred to the endless calls for him to enter the presidential ring as "burdensome" and "monotonous" (Galambos, 1989a, p. 667). Ultimately, no matter what he did or said, Eisenhower could not escape the consensus from leaders in both political parties that the United States "demanded" him in politics (Galambos, 1989a, p. 698).

The data from Eisenhower's writings reflecting these frustrations are supported by multiple historians and contemporaries (Ambrose, 1990; Childs, 1958; Clark, 2013; Neal, 1978; Parmet, 1972). According to Ambrose (1990), any hopes for Eisenhower of a future free from politics were shattered on election night in 1948, when Democrat Harry S. Truman was re-elected president unexpectedly. Following their bitter defeat, Republicans began lobbying Eisenhower for a 1952 presidential run relentlessly (Ambrose, 1990). Anti-Truman Democrats were also eager for Eisenhower to run as their nominee in the 1948 and 1952 elections (Childs, 1958; Parmet, 1972). According to Childs (1958) Eisenhower was not even fully settled in his Columbia office before a seemingly endless stream of governors and congressmen descended upon Morningside Heights to demand a presidential run. This pressure only increased during Eisenhower's tenure as Columbia's president (Ambrose, 1990; Clark, 2013; Jacobs, 2001; Smith, 2012). A few years later, Eisenhower was furious when U.S. Senator Henry Cabot Lodge entered his name on the Republican ballot for the New Hampshire primary in January 1952 (Ambrose, 1990). However, Eisenhower later gave in to this pressure and entered the presidential campaign reluctantly a few weeks later (Ambrose, 1990; Smith, 2012). Overall, the frustration resulting from these constant demands, as well as possible regrets about coming to Columbia in the first place, did not put Eisenhower in the best mental frame to undertake the rigors of learning academic culture. Moreover, Eisenhower had experienced a culture-shock of sorts engaging with academic culture and was forced to try and do a job that was much different than the one he was promised. Consequently, these factors also contributed to his frustration and severely limited his ability to acclimate to academe.

Overextended. Along with the frustration resulting from these non-academic professional demands, a related theme in Eisenhower's writing was how overextended he was trying to take on all of these tasks. In a June 26, 1951 letter to a friend, he commented, "here I am working as hard as I ever have in my life" (Galambos, 1989a, p. 387). Despite his interest in seeking semi-retirement, Eisenhower's workload had increased. To complicate matters, beyond his academic, military, and political duties, Eisenhower was also in high demand as a keynote speaker or patron for various organizations (Galambos, 1984a; 1984b; 1989a; 1989b). He was forced to decline the vast majority of these invitations and consequently worried whether this "problem of saying no and sticking to it" would cause resentment toward Columbia (Galambos, 1984a, p. 328). Eisenhower discussed this problem of overextension in 30 different letters and diary entries during his tenure as Columbia's president (Galambos, 1984a; Galambos, 1984b; Galambos, 1989a; Galambos, 1989b). An underlying theme in these writings was Eisenhower's regret that he could not devote enough time to his duties

at Columbia, even though he had reservations about serving as its president. In a September 23, 1948 letter, he wrote:

I have never had more difficulty than I have now in attempting to fulfill even a tiny percentage of the requests that are made upon me for various kinds of activities ranging from participation in “peace societies” to taking part in conventions for conservation of natural resources. The work here at the University would in itself occupy a man if he could give to it his entire attention. I am so driven that I sometimes feel guilty in the lack of time that I can devote to the affairs of this great institution (as cited in Galambos, 1984a, p. 221).

This problem only grew worse when Eisenhower took the extended leave of absence from Columbia to serve as head of NATO, lasting from January 1951 to May 1952 (Ambrose, 1990). He offered to resign upon hearing of this important assignment, but the trustees insisted that he remain in office on indefinite leave, asserting that an acting president could run the university while Eisenhower was in Europe (Galambos, 1989a; Jacobs, 2001). The enthusiasm of the board to retain Eisenhower as president likely stemmed from their fear of undergoing another grueling presidential search (Jacobs, 2001). Moreover, several of the trustees clearly relished having a close association with the World War II hero (Jacobs, 1985). However, despite the trustees’ best intentions, this arrangement was highly unpopular with the Columbia faculty, who already considered Eisenhower aloof and uncommitted as president (Galambos, 1984b, p. 1097). Faculty members also began to think that Eisenhower was only using Columbia as a perch to advance his political career (Smith, 2012). Further, his prolonged absence due to this military commitment also meant that Columbia suffered from weak leadership and diminished fundraising during the absence (Jacobs, 1985).

No one was more aware of this problem than Eisenhower, himself. By his 27th month as president, he realized that he had actually been on campus for less than 10 months’ time (Smith, 2012). During this period, Eisenhower began to label himself an “absentee president,” indicating a deep sense of guilt that he was not fulfilling his presidential responsibilities (as cited in Smith, 2012, p. 496). In 10 letters throughout the summer and fall of 1951, he discussed how this arrangement was unsustainable and openly considered resignation (Galambos, 1989a). In a May 16, 1951 letter, Eisenhower discussed how his “retention as the nominal president is working against Columbia” (as cited in Galambos, 1989a, p. 292). Further, in a September 15, 1951 letter, he discussed his fear that “the trustees out of their friendship for me would permit a situation to develop that would be inimical to the best interests of the university” (as cited in Galambos, 1989a, p. 543). Attempting to

find a suitable solution, Eisenhower proposed his reassignment as Columbia's honorary chancellor, arguing that there must be a real president based at Morningside Heights (Galambos, 1989a). However, the board was determined to retain Eisenhower as president, and did not end up accepting his resignation until shortly before the U.S. presidential inauguration in January 1953 (Jacobs, 2001). In the months prior to that event, Eisenhower was even more distracted from his Columbia duties by the rigors of his presidential campaign (Jacobs, 2001). Ultimately, he was spread too thin professionally to provide solid and consistent leadership at Columbia, despite his best intentions. Further, since Columbia was not Eisenhower's top professional priority during this period, this eliminated any meaningful chance for him to adjust effectively to academic culture.

These data illustrating Eisenhower's over extendedness are supported by several historians as well as by information from his Columbia colleagues. A central theme in many of Eisenhower's biographical treatments is that he was spread in far too many professional directions during this period (Ambrose, 1990; Childs, 1958; Clark, 2013; Jacobs, 2001; Neal, 1978; Parmet, 1972; Smith, 2012). However, instead of Eisenhower creating this situation, historians maintain that many of these external pressures were thrust upon him against his will or better judgment (Ambrose, 1990; Jacobs, 2001; Neal, 1978; Smith, 2012). Consequently, Eisenhower pursued those military and political commitments out of a sense of duty, regretting the impact it had on Columbia (Ambrose, 1990; Clark, 2013; Jacobs, 2001; Neal, 1978; Smith, 2012). To his credit, Eisenhower attempted to remedy the situation by resigning as Columbia's president. However, he was thwarted repeatedly by Columbia's board members, who were eager to keep him at the helm and avoid another long and costly presidential search (Jacobs, 2001).

Eisenhower's Columbia colleagues expressed similar sentiments concerning this problem of overextension. Regarding Eisenhower's NATO assignment, Economics Prof. Eli Ginzberg reflected that President Truman "was really putting a burden on him that he didn't want" (as cited in Jacobs, 2001, p. 252). Further, Ginzberg asserted that President Truman leaned heavily on Eisenhower for support in national security matters, and that Eisenhower "was not happy about it... that is fact" (Jacobs, 2001, p. 252). Former Columbia president Grayson Kirk also reflected on the impact that these external pressures had on Eisenhower, explaining his prediction that following his departure for the NATO assignment, Eisenhower would not return to Columbia (Jacobs, 2001). Kirk explained that:

I had felt that he had not been particularly comfortable in his position, and also he had been under a great deal of pressure from outside interests to get into national

politics. A combination of some discomfort at Morningside on his part and the various external pressures made it unlikely in my judgment that he would return and settle down (Jacobs, 2001, pp. 252-253).

Kirk's prediction eventually turned out to be an accurate one. While Eisenhower continued as Columbia's nominal president following his retirement from the Army, he never really reconnected with the institution following his NATO service, even though he continued to profess a fondness for Columbia in several letters (Ambrose, 1990; Galambos, 1989a). Several historians assert that his interest in being an academic leader had subsided following his return from Europe (Ambrose, 1990; Clark, 2013; Jacobs, 1985; Jacobs, 2001; Smith, 2012). Smith (2012) concluded that by this point, Columbia had become a "secondary interest" to Eisenhower (p. 488). He occupied himself primarily with his U.S. presidential campaign until his final departure from Columbia in January 1953, when he was designated as president *emeritus* (Ambrose, 1990; Galambos, 1989b). According to Jacobs (1985) and Smith (2012), Eisenhower could have potentially been a great leader for Columbia had he possessed the time to do it. However, constant external pressures conspired to keep him away from Morningside Heights for much of his presidency, eliminating any meaningful chance of engaging with the academy and learning its culture.

Lack of academic experience. Another central theme that appeared consistently in Eisenhower's writings was his general lack of academic experience. Although he was a West Point graduate and military historian with an extensive organizational leadership background, Eisenhower had little to no connection with the scholarly world. In a letter to a friend, he once wrote, "I know nothing about the workings of a great university and am certainly far from being an 'educator'..." (as cited in Neal, 1978, p. 240). This inexperience was highly apparent during his Columbia tenure, which limited his ability and willingness to learn the ways of academic culture. Eisenhower mentioned this lack of knowledge in 14 different letters over the course of his Columbia presidency (Galambos, 1984a). In one such June 2, 1949 letter, he wrote to another friend that he was "under no illusion as to any qualifications involving scholarship" (as cited in Galambos, 1984a, p. 601). Accustomed to abject followership in the military, Eisenhower often felt inferior to Columbia's faculty members and worried that they questioned his authority as their president.

In other letters, Eisenhower sounded almost apologetic, referring at times to his "woeful ignorance" of certain academic fields (as cited in Galambos, 1984a, p. 688). Moreover, in his first appearance at Columbia's Low Memorial Library, Eisenhower commented to a gathering of university deans and administrators that, "nobody is more keenly aware of my academic

shortcomings than I am” (as cited in Neal, 1978, p. 239). Such sentiments did not instill much confidence in those campus academic leaders, who gave Eisenhower a chilly reception (Neal, 1978). Even after nearly two years in office, he commented to a friend in a February 10, 1950 letter that, “I have never yet understood some of the methods that we use for the performance of some of our most important work” (as cited in Galambos, 1984b, p. 963). Specifically, Eisenhower was at a loss to understand many organizational processes unique to academia, ranging from faculty hiring to the tenure review system.

In many cases, this lack of academic experience prompted Eisenhower to take a hands-off approach to many issues of university governance. This aloof behavior was reflected in 13 different letters during his Columbia tenure (Galambos, 1984a; 1984b; 1989a). When Columbia constituents would ask him to help with certain administrative matters, ranging from admissions to athletics, Eisenhower would often respond that the request was not within his purview, or he did not know enough about the matter to offer constructive assistance (Galambos, 1984a; 1984b; 1989a). For instance, in a November 4, 1949 letter, Eisenhower wrote that he “should not be identified too closely with those individuals who interest themselves directly in the admission into the college of students with known football records” (Galambos, 1984a, p. 816). Despite Eisenhower’s fondness for football, he did not want to involve himself in recruiting. Further, in an October 9, 1950 letter to a prospective student, Eisenhower wrote that the “president of a great confederated university, such as Columbia, does not interfere in the slightest degree in the selection of students” (as cited in Galambos, 1984b, p. 1363). In many cases, Eisenhower was certainly justified in not over-involving himself in such matters. However, the persistence of this sentiment in Eisenhower’s correspondence, coupled with his lack of knowledge about academic affairs, suggests the possibility that intimidation over getting involved in matters unfamiliar to him sometimes prompted Eisenhower to avoid such situations entirely.

These data concerning Eisenhower’s challenges with academic culture are echoed in historical analysis as well as the reflection of contemporaries. Dean of Columbia College Harry J. Carman often told a story about his first encounter with a “solemn and uncomfortable” Eisenhower, who had just been installed as president (Neal, 1978, p. 244). Summoning Carman to his office, Eisenhower exclaimed:

I need your help. I’m awfully green at this job. Damn it, I don’t even know what to call people around here. I find there are sixteen different schools here at the

university and each one has a dean or director. What do I call these men? Dean?

Director? Doctor (Neal, 1978, p. 244)?

Other faculty members and administrators had similar experiences that convinced them that Eisenhower was out of his depth in regards to dealing with the minutia of academics. In later years, Prof. Lionel Trilling reflected that although he had an “auspicious start... it gradually and quickly disintegrated” (as cited in Smith, 2012, p. 488). Thus, as Eisenhower’s tenure progressed, Trilling “began to sense that he was nowhere in relation to the university and this gradually began to affect people” (as cited in Smith, 2012, p. 488). Douglas Black, a close Eisenhower friend and Columbia trustee concurred, reflecting that Eisenhower “never had the feeling or understanding of Columbia” (Jacobs, 2001, p. 260). Prof. Eli Ginzberg concurred with this sentiment, concluding that Eisenhower “never found a way of responding to anything substantive on campus. Nothing gave him a real kick.... a central focus (as cited in Smith, 2012, pp. 488-489). Campus members attributed Eisenhower’s aloofness to a lack of understanding of all things academic – university operations, curriculum management, and academic governance.

Multiple historians have concurred with this sentiment, arguing that there was considerable tension between Eisenhower and Columbia’s scholarly community (Ambrose, 1990; Clark, 2013; Jacobs, 1985; Jacobs, 2001; McCaughey, 2003; Neal, 1978; Smith, 2012). According to Clark (2013), Neal (1978), and Smith (2012), Eisenhower was intimidated by Columbia’s learned faculty, and never felt comfortable around them. Even though Eisenhower was a decorated veteran, he felt out of place and inferior in the academic setting of Columbia, and made no effort to understand what made faculty members tick (McCaughey, 2003). Smith (2012) also argued that Eisenhower lacked an intuitive feel to tell him what was important to the faculty. According to Jacobs (2001), in one widely circulated story at Morningside Heights:

Eisenhower once stated at a faculty meeting, ‘the university is going to do so and so.’ A senior faculty member, supposedly, stood up and replied, ‘you don’t understand, General Eisenhower, the faculty *is* the university’ (p. 317).

Further, this divide was not helped by Eisenhower’s military assistants, who were stationed at Morningside Heights to assist the general with his military correspondence. Completely unfamiliar with academic culture, these assistants treated administrators and faculty like junior army officers and restricted their access to Eisenhower (Jacobs, 2001; McCaughey, 2003; Neal, 1978). Thus, according to Jacobs (2001) and Neal (1978), such behavior completely alienated Columbia’s scholarly community from their president.

Overall, this lack of academic experience presented multiple problems for Eisenhower during his presidential tenure (Clark, 2013). While he did the best he could under the circumstances, Eisenhower was often at a loss when it came to addressing Columbia's most pressing needs. According to Smith (2012), while some observers held great promise initially in Eisenhower's leadership approach, the "complexity of Columbia confounded him" (p. 484). Consequently, his inability to govern the university fueled discontent and animosity among the institutional community. According to Smith (2012), there was intense hostility toward Eisenhower on the part of the faculty and student body by summer 1950. Ultimately, this tension created a rift that could not be healed between Eisenhower and Columbia's scholarly community, precluding any chance for him to learn the ways of academic culture.

Lack of institutional vision. Another issue that hindered Eisenhower's ability to adjust to academic culture was the complete disconnect between his personal plans for Columbia and its pressing institutional needs. As noted earlier, Eisenhower only accepted the presidency after he was assured by a couple of overeager Columbia trustees that he would not have to engage himself too deeply in university affairs and could instead focus on his platform of renewing American civic engagement (Ambrose, 1990; Clark, 2013; Jacobs, 1985; Jacobs, 2001; McCaughey, 2003). Unfortunately for Columbia, Eisenhower took this to heart and failed to develop a vision that advanced the institution (Clark, 2013; Jacobs, 2001). Instead, he occupied himself with developing a national program for civic engagement that addressed the goals he desired, and while based at Columbia, this work did little to support the university itself (Clark, 2013; Jacobs, 1985; 2001).

For Eisenhower, the crowning achievement of his Columbia presidency was the creation of the *American Assembly*, an annual conference where the nation's top leaders from government, business, labor, the military, and the professions could meet to deal with "basic political and social questions" affecting America (Jacobs, 1985, p. 557). In going to Columbia, Eisenhower believed that he could do more there "than anywhere else to further the cause to which I am devoted, the reawakening of intense interest in the basis of the American system" (as cited in Jacobs, 1985, p. 556). He therefore discussed the American Assembly in over 37 letters during his Columbia presidency. Eisenhower described it as able to "respond to the concern with which American citizens contemplate the possible future of our democracy and individual freedom based on a philosophy of competitive enterprise" (as cited in Galambos, 1984b, p. 1379). Moreover, in an April 16, 1951 letter, he described the Assembly as his "primary Columbia concern" (as cited in Galambos,

1989a, p. 214). This focus was highly apparent during his 1951 leave of absence, when his interest in the Assembly was the main Columbia-related topic in his correspondence (Galambos, 1989a).

However, Eisenhower's work with the Assembly illustrated the enormous gulf between his own personal interests and Columbia's pressing institutional needs. While his intense interest in the Assembly prompted him to go to extensive lengths to facilitate its creation, Eisenhower was not nearly as interested in advancing Columbia itself (Clark, 2013; Jacobs, 2001; Neal, 1978). Even before accepting the Columbia presidency, he made clear that he was no fundraiser, a fact that should have triggered alarm with the trustees (Jacobs, 2001; Neal, 1978). Moreover, in four separate letters during his Columbia presidency, Eisenhower discussed at length his refusal to raise money for the institution (Galambos, 1984a; Galambos, 1984b). In a May 19, 1949 letter to a close friend, Eisenhower asserted that:

Much as I believe that an educational institution like Columbia is essential to the future of the American system, I am never going to use my personal friendships as an avenue for approaching anyone for current or future support of this university (Galambos, 1984a, p. 587).

Eisenhower reiterated this point in a September 22, 1950 letter, when he declared that "I do not personally solicit funds from anyone" (as cited in Galambos, 1984b, p. 1333). He explained this mindset as the result of "a lifetime spent in an atmosphere that promoted respect for ideas and quality of character and which refused to recognize accumulation of money as a true index for success" (as cited in Galambos, 1984a, p. 696). Ultimately, Eisenhower directed most of what fundraising prowess he could muster toward generating funds for the Assembly, and not Columbia itself (Jacobs, 2001; Neal, 1978). This fact was not lost on the Columbia community, which prompted Eisenhower speechwriter Kevin McCann to label his boss as "the poorest excuse for a fund-raising college president in the country" (Neal, 1978, p. 250).

These data from Eisenhower's correspondence were also supported by writings of his Columbia associates as well as by leading historians. Many of Eisenhower's contemporaries were distressed at his lack of understanding for Columbia and its institutional needs (Clark, 2013; Jacobs, 2001). Former Columbia president Grayson Kirk noted that Eisenhower "had alienated many on the faculty by making speeches about the purpose of education being to develop citizens rather than develop people intellectually" (Smith, 2012, p. 490). Another veteran professor recalled a heated exchange between Eisenhower and faculty leaders, where they debated the societal role that Columbia's faculty should play (Neal, 1978). At the meeting, one professor noted that Columbia had

“some of America’s most exceptional physicists, mathematicians, chemists, and engineers” (Neal, 1978, p. 249). Eisenhower then asked if these faculty members were also “exceptional Americans,” and was told in response that he did not understand (Neal, 1978, p. 249). Eisenhower then:

Burst into a rage, a large vein on his forehead throbbing as he said, ‘dammit, what good are exceptional physicists... exceptional anything, they are exceptional Americans.’ He went on to say that every student who came to Columbia must leave it first a better citizen and secondarily a more learned scholar (Neal, 1978, pp. 249-250).

The preferencing of his own agenda to build a more democratic society was often at odds with faculty scholars who were focused specifically on advancing knowledge and understanding in their disciplinary areas.

Historians have also noted this considerable gulf between Eisenhower’s vision and Columbia’s institutional needs (Ambrose, 1990; Clark, 2013; Jacobs, 2001; McCaughey, 2003; Neal, 1978; Smith, 2012). According to Neal (1978), Eisenhower “saw the purpose of American education much as a high school civics teacher might, to teach the values for ‘effective citizenship’” (p. 249). However, according to Ambrose (1990) and Neal (1978), Columbia faculty found Eisenhower’s perspective embarrassing, considering it to be fatuous zeal. Further, they believed that Eisenhower’s diligent work on behalf of the American Assembly did nothing to support Columbia or address its pressing problems (Clark, 2013; Jacobs, 2001; McCaughey, 2003; Neal, 1978). Ultimately, as Smith (2012) argued, Columbia’s disappointment in Eisenhower stemmed not so much from administrative ineptitude, but from his inattentiveness to the problems of administration. Consequently, this immense divide between Eisenhower’s vision and Columbia’s needs precluded any meaningful chance for him to learn the ways of academic culture (Clark, 2013). His vision for American higher education was simply too different from that of Columbia’s faculty for there to develop any kind of meaningful relationship or mutual understanding (Clark, 2013).

Discussion

Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower concluded his World War II service as one of America’s greatest military heroes. During that conflict, he had led organizations the size and scope of which few could only imagine. Eisenhower also interacted with many of modern history’s larger-than-life figures, including Winston Churchill, Charles de Gaulle, Gen. George S. Patton, and Field Marshall Bernard Law Montgomery, and found ways for them to all work together for a common purpose. For all

practical purposes, his presidency of Columbia should have therefore been a success as well. However, despite his celebrated military leadership, he was unable to make the transition to civilian educator or learn the ways of academic culture. As the findings from this study concluded, this failure stemmed from four central issues: frustration over engaging with academic culture as well as the demands of mounting political and military obligations; being too overextended professionally; lacking academic experience; and possessing a presidential vision that did not align with Columbia's institutional needs. Thus, Eisenhower's experience at Columbia present a cautionary tale, showing how despite the best of intentions, even a non-traditional college president with a celebrated leadership record may fail to adjust effectively to the ways of academic culture.

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WHO'S THE BOSS? UNDERSTANDING AND ENHANCING PRESIDENT-BOARD RELATIONS

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Recent controversies and conflicts involving university trustees raise the issue of the proper role of trustees in institutional governance. At the University of Virginia in 2012, board leaders forced the ouster of president Teresa Sullivan over frustrations she was not pursuing the strategic direction some trustees favored, specifically related to online education (Stripling, 2015). For the past couple years, the University of Texas System Board garnered attention related to one trustee's vigilant pursuit of records related to presidential travel and admissions processes at the university (Stripling, 2015). While it was trustees' deep involvement that drew attention in these instances, on the opposite side examples exist of criticism for a lack of board involvement. Penn State's Board of Trustees was criticized in the wake of the Jerry Sandusky (assistant football coach) scandal for not asking tough enough questions of the institution's president and ceding too much oversight authority on important athletic matters (Kiley, 2012). When trustees announced the closing of Sweet Briar College (a decision that was eventually reversed), some alumni and faculty argued the decision was made with too much haste and a lack of forethought on the part of the trustees (Marcus, 2015).

Despite rising tensions over the appropriate role of trustees in institutional governance, trusteeship does not receive the same attention in higher education literature as other governance and organizational topics (Kezar & Eckel, 2004). Specifically, little empirical work exists that takes into account the perspectives of trustees themselves and how they view and execute their duties. This study examined those issues through the lens of new gubernatorial appointed public university trustees, tracking their expectations and experiences during a two-year longitudinal study.

Specifically, this study utilized agency and stewardship theories to explore how trustees view their roles in relation to their institutions' presidents. Recommendations for enhancing president-board relations are provided at the end.

Background Literature

College and university board roles and responsibilities differ depending upon whether an institution is a public or private board and based upon the governance structure for higher education within each state (Bracco, Richardson, Callan, & Finney, 1999; McGuinness, 1997). Although differences exist across boards, the American Association of University Professors (AAUP), in 1966, developed a comprehensive statement about the roles of the board, the president, and the faculty in university governance. This statement often serves as a starting point in considering board roles and responsibilities. The AAUP (1966) statement asserted "the variety and complexity of the tasks performed by institutions of higher education produce an inescapable interdependence among governing board, administration, faculty, students, and others" (para. 2). The statement explained that boards should maintain general oversight and fiduciary responsibilities for the institution along with serving as the final authority on most policy matters such as personnel and finance issues (AAUP, 1966).

While the 1966 AAUP statement has stood the test of time, in recent years the Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges (AGB) issued several statements building off and providing their own take on the original AAUP statement. In providing these statements, the AGB argued the AAUP statement remained sound, but changes in higher education necessitated a new statement on institutional governance (AGB, 2010b). Beyond outlining formal board responsibilities such as being accountable for the institution's mission and serving as an institution's fiduciary agent, the AGB (2010b) "Statement on Board Responsibility for Institutional Governance" also prescribed principles by which boards should operate. These principles included: respecting the culture of shared governance in the academy, openly communicating with campus constituencies, and remaining transparent in actions (AGB, 2010b).

While statements from groups like the AAUP (1966) and AGB (2010b) prescribed ideals of board governance, these statements were only written within the past 50 years and do not bind boards to operate in a particular manner. In fact, at different points in time there has been a seesaw back and forth as to how involved trustees were in institutional governance. Historically, boards were nonintrusive and largely left administrators and faculty to run institutions on their own,

but that changed at many institutions as boards became more politically active and engaged in their governance roles (Gayle, Tewarie, & White, 2003; Kerr & Gade, 1989). Boards' increased activity, however, did not change trustee-president dynamics for long. In many cases, boards' power remained limited due to the growing power of the president and other administrators on campus as institutions became more complex and more challenging to manage (Duryea, 2000; Zusman, 2005). However, some scholars have argued the role of the board may again be gaining heightened importance. Johnston, Summerville, and Roberts (2010) argued external pressures and changing demographics require boards to become more engaged in the governing process. Additionally, Miller (2011) indicated that an increase in external pressures caused by financial strains resulted in boards becoming more engaged in institutional governance. The fluctuation of board involvement levels over time can cause confusion about the current role of boards and provides fodder for individuals that fall on either end of the spectrum.

Beyond examining historical accounts of what trustees' roles were or should be, it is also important to consider how they actually understand and execute their duties. Mortimer and Sathre (2007) argued boards often fall into two extremes, "the out-to-lunch board follows recommendations of the president in an automatic way, whereas at the other extreme the managerial board deals with detailed issues on a regular basis" (p. 52). Recent examples point to both approaches. A 2014 report from the National Commission on College and University Board Governance chides boards for spending too much time on "perfunctory review and routine report-outs, at the expense of a strategic focus on cross-cutting issues" (p. 15). On the other end of the spectrum, activist trustees at the University of Virginia and University of Texas System provide examples of what some might label as micromanagement and the pursuit of personal agendas (Novak, 2012; Stripling, 2015). MacTaggart (2015) argued that ideally trustees should be active, but not activist. However, it is often difficult to find an appropriate sweet spot of sound oversight without micromanaging (National Commission on College and University Board Governance, 2014). Differing opinions and examples of board roles throughout the higher education literature highlight the need to better understand trustees' perceptions of their roles and responsibilities and how those perceptions are formed.

Theoretical Framework

This study is framed by the competing organizational management perspectives of agency theory (Jensen & Meckling, 1976; Ross, 1973) and stewardship theory (Barney, 1990; Donaldson,

1990a; 1990b). Agency theory originated in economics as a means of understanding shareholder/management relationships, but has also been utilized to understand other relationships where one party (i.e., the principal) delegates work to another party (i.e., the agent) (Eisenhardt, 1989; Fama & Jensen, 1983a; 1983b; Toma, 1986). Agency theory contends that conflicts arise between principals and agents when they maintain different interests and/or have access to different amounts of information, with agents as the day-to-day actors almost exclusively controlling the flow of organizational information (Jensen & Meckling, 1976; Ross, 1973). Agency theory is largely concerned with understanding how these conflicts are resolved and how principals ensure agents carry out their interests, particularly how rigorously principals dictate and then monitor agents' actions (Eisenhardt, 1989).

Agency theory helps explain why conflicts may arise between trustees and their presidents over the role of boards in institutional governance. First, when principals and agents maintain different goals, conflicts often arise (Jensen & Meckling, 1976; Ross, 1973). This was evident at the University of Virginia in 2012 when conflicts between the board chair and the president over the university's strategic direction led to the president's forced resignation and eventual reinstatement (Stripling, 2015). Second, conflicts can arise when principals and agents have access to different levels of information (Jensen & Meckling, 1976; Ross, 1973). An Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges (2010a) survey found that only 15.5% of trustees have professional experience in the education sector. Many trustees come to their positions with minimal formal training in how colleges and universities operate and are therefore reliant upon institutional leaders in providing that information (Miller, 2011). The increasing complexity of modern higher education institutions often results in presidents maintaining significant influence over their boards (Duryea, 2000), which can create situations ripe for conflict if boards feel they are not provided sufficient and timely information.

While agency theory focuses on conflict, stewardship theory offers an alternative perspective that agents, left on their own, act in the best interests of the organization (Barney, 1990; Donaldson, 1990a; 1990b). Stewardship theory assumes a less adversarial relationship between principals and agents, with principals managing and monitoring agents' behavior less stringently (Donaldson, 1985). Drezner and Huehls (2014) argued that stewardship theory is typically utilized to understand university governance because board members generally entrust presidents to lead and manage their institutions free from major interference. They stated:

Stewardship theory applies when a board elects weak controls because it believes that the manager's goals are in line with the mission. Agency theory prevails when the board cannot control because the manager exerts overruling influence. Within higher education, stewardship theory can be observed in the fact that the typical trustees often have no experience in higher education beyond attending their alma mater and perhaps sending their children as students. Therefore, as lay leaders, their understanding of how to run the institution day to day is low. However, since presidents and other administrators ideally align with the mission of higher education and their institution more specifically, the lack of trustee understanding of the day-to-day work is mitigated. (Drezner & Huehls, 2014, pp. 41-42)

Although stewardship theory may typically describe the nature of higher education governance, recent examples at places such as the University of Virginia and the University of Texas System demonstrate greater distrust and conflict between presidents and boards (Novak, 2012; Stripling, 2015). Therefore, both agency and stewardship theories are utilized to frame this study and to examine how and why trustees engage to varying degrees in executing their duties. Specifically, three main research questions guided this study: (1) How do new public university trustees view their roles? (2) How do disagreements on issues influence how trustees execute their duties? (3) How does trustees' level of access to information influence their actions?

Methods

This study was a longitudinal, qualitative study (Merriam, 2009). Twelve new gubernatorial appointed public university trustees from eight institutions were each interviewed three times, for a total of 36 interviews. Participants were selected from institutions within the same state to ensure consistency in the governance environment in which they serve since roles can vary across institutions in different states (Bracco, Richardson, Callan, & Finney, 1999; McGuinness, 1997). The state selected maintains a fairly autonomous statewide higher education structure where trustees serve on boards of individual institutions and are the main fiduciary agents of those institutions. There is not a statewide governing or coordinating board with authority over or responsibility for the individual institutions.

Newly appointed trustees were chosen as the subjects of this study since they presumably entered their positions with a less defined understanding of their roles than more seasoned board members. Rather than studying long-serving trustees who may have already formed biases around

board roles and responsibilities, the research team felt it would be beneficial to examine trustees at the beginning of their terms and follow them for a two year period (full terms are eight years in length). Each participant was interviewed immediately following their appointment, one year later, and two years later. This provided an opportunity to track trustees' views and opinions as they were forming. The study concluded after two years since Shaw (2002) argued many trustees feel fully acclimated to their roles after two years of service.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted to allow for a generally consistent interview format while still allowing individual stories to come through free of format constraints (Merriam, 2009). Interviews were mainly focused on participants' viewpoints regarding the role of trustees, the role of the president, relationships between the president and trustees, and how and why participants chose to engage at different levels in executing their duties. Across the 36 total interviews, most ranged in length between 45 and 60 minutes. All interviews with the exception of one person's set of three interviews were recorded and fully transcribed. For the participant asking not to be recorded, the interviewer took detailed notes during the interviews and filled in gaps immediately afterward to create a thorough summary of that individual's accounts.

Data were analyzed at the end of each set of interviews in a given year. The research team initially discussed findings with each other to develop a mutual understanding of emergent themes. Then one researcher coded all the interviews to ensure consistency in the coding scheme and reviewed final codes and larger themes with the entire research team to ensure appropriate rigor and an accurate reflection of each researcher's understanding of the most salient issues that arose (Merriam, 2009).

Trustees' Perceptions of their Roles

Most of the trustees in this study articulated similar beliefs that boards should primarily engage at a macro level on major policy issues. These issues were most commonly identified as hiring and evaluating the president, serving as a fiduciary agent of the university's finances, establishing tuition and fee rates, and approving contracts. "It's strategic, top-level questions I think I should ask as a trustee, but not focus on the implementation or the exact pieces," said one participant. Another person referenced the common governance adage, "noses in, fingers out" to describe the role of trustees. Ultimately, one individual argued, "Our job is not to manage; our job is to empower the president." Another added, "I don't believe a board should tell the president

necessarily what to do. I believe the president needs to say, 'This is what direction we think to go on, or go in, and [ask] do you have issues, board, if we were to pursue this or that?'"

Although participants saw distinct differences in their role compared to the president's role, they also indicated a strong desire to work together with the president as a team. One trustee stated, "The board has an oversight job, but also a support job to help the president and the university be successful, achieve goals." "Protecting him and communicating with him, I think is the role. . . . We're supporting him and his success means our success," added another participant. In supporting the president, trustees mentioned it is important to constantly evaluate how they balance being engaged without micromanaging. One trustee provided a strong summation of this issue. She stated, "Sharpening where the line is between strategic and operational things . . . is a discussion that has to constantly go on. Figuring out the right level of engagement is a constant struggle. . . . We need as a board to ask the president, 'Are we valuable? Are we helpful? Are we at the right side of the line?'"

Despite the study participants' universal acknowledgement that their roles should remain at a macro oversight level and that boards should work in partnership with the president, some trustees were clear on who was ultimately in charge. One individual simply stated, "The president works for the board." Another trustee added, "It doesn't happen often but it happened where I basically said, 'You work for me. You work for the board, not the other way around.'" Others argued that there needs to be a natural tension between the president and board for the university to work effectively and that its trustees' responsibility to ask hard questions of the president. "I'm a trustee of the university. I feel like, quite frankly, not to sound like an ego maniac, but I think I can ask anything I want," added another participant.

Still, most trustees we interviewed preferred their relationship with their presidents to be mutually respectful and beneficial. One person described the need to ask tough questions but always in a manner built upon openness and trust. Someone else added, "I think the president comes to the board with exceptional openness and so it's my intention to not destroy that trust by over managing or by being flippant on issues."

Degree of Goal Conflict

Many trustees described the relationship between their boards and presidents as "good" or "strong" and several mentioned being impressed with the work and expertise of their president and other university administrators. Most indicated their boards and presidents agree on a majority of

issues without much tension. However, several highlighted frustrations with their boards' lack of involvement on substantive strategic matters.

Several trustees expressed considerable frustration with the highly structured and routine nature of board meetings. Participants described this as "too cut and dried" and "kind of [like] boiler plating." Upon a moment of reflection one trustee said, "Now that we talk about it, the board actually doesn't, as a full board, do much but rubber stamp the agenda." Instead, trustees expressed an interest in "helping drive strategy" and focusing more deeply on substantive strategic matters impacting the university such as the rising cost of college and student debt loads, external concerns about post-graduation student success, and the future of online education. One individual argued, "These boards are a great collection of very strong backgrounds, minds, etc., and they're not utilized. Why not tap into it?"

Perhaps the greatest issue on which trustees expressed disagreement with their presidents was a lack of long-term strategic planning. To different trustees this included some or all of the following: a lack of academic program planning, financial planning, and risk assessment. On academic program planning, several trustees indicated they wanted their university to focus more on the demand for certain programs, whether new programs duplicated existing programs across the state, and how successful students were upon graduating. A couple individuals tied program planning to the university's overall mission and position within the larger higher education sector. One trustee said, "I would like more focus on university positioning in the marketplace, branding. Who the university is, who they want to be, how they want to be perceived. . . . What's our niche area? What's our enrollment plan? What's our long-term strategy?"

Financial planning was another area of frustration for several trustees. One trustee felt "there was not enough scrutiny" of the university's finances when she joined the board. Trustees mentioned advocating for their universities to engage in greater strategic thought on issues such as pension and retirement contributions, health care contributions, and institutional debt. The issue of tuition particularly hit a chord with two different trustees. Both expressed disappointment that tuition is raised without more meaningful analysis of the university's long-term business model. One trustee described this frustration in depth.

I am very disappointed at the manner at which we address tuition. And finances. I think it is a rubber stamp model of whatever the bookkeeper, and I use bookkeeper purposely, because I wouldn't call what we have a CFO. Whatever the bookkeeper

says we charged last year plus whatever we think we can get away with this year.

There's no profound thinking and discussion of what the business model is there.

Some trustees' perception of a lack of long-range financial planning also extended to a lack of institutional risk assessment/management. Several trustees expressed disbelief that their institutions did not maintain a running list of the top ten or so items of greatest risk to the university. Areas of risk and concern some trustees felt were not appropriately monitored and addressed included enrollment declines and the impact on university finances, IT security, and the university's audit function. One trustee provided a particularly scathing assessment of their university's audit function.

Our audit function was woefully inadequate . . . two years behind schedule . . . and we [the board] started bringing attention to some of the big concerns we have . . . the president realized that somebody was paying attention to that and he needed to do something . . . and so now there's a plan . . . but the administration is not, they're not aggressive in their management of these types of things and until somebody points things out and urges these types of things it's like they would rather not be aware.

Resolution of Goal Conflicts

In instances when conflicts or disagreements arose, most trustees viewed their main responsibility as raising issues and working together with the president rather than micromanaging specific outcomes. One trustee summed up this approach well: "I think the board has kind of tried to encourage, cajole the administration into being more strategic and aggressive without ever putting either a carrot or a stick out to do it, but rather talk around some of the things that we think are important." This trustee explained that the board tries not to micromanage solutions but offer suggestions. Another trustee added that he focuses on asking questions, but not in a "pompous way." Additionally, one participant said, "It's kind of common logic to build rapport with them [the administration] first rather than [say] 'Oh my god, you idiots, what the heck are you doing?'"

Although trustees' first response was typically to raise issues gently and offer suggestions without pushing too forcefully, several trustees were clear that sometimes the board needs to stay persistent to ensure issues are resolved. One trustee who pushed his university to develop a stronger branding plan indicated he thought it finally happened "because I was probably a pain in the butt" and raised it at every board meeting. Another trustee said, "We know the president. We

know his personality . . . that he's really set in his ways and he's, in some cases, he's hard to change his opinion on. When there's an issue that intersects directly with that personality, we all seem to instinctively know that this is going to take a little while."

Furthermore, if an issue lingers too long or the board feels strongly about a particular point, some trustees indicated they might need to be more explicit in advocating for a particular solution. One example of this was explained by a trustee.

A great example of the board leading as opposed to just following and supporting the president is we got tired of some of the agendas that the administration was putting together and so we took over our own board retreat this summer and determined what we were going to talk about and how we were going to do it and what kind of things we wanted to address, which was really quite novel for our board.

Another individual shared an example of repeatedly raising concerns about the university's debt. She felt like she had to yell (metaphorically speaking) to get the administration's attention on that issue. When advocating for specific outcomes, some trustees acknowledged it might appear to be micromanagement, but they also defended the necessity of such actions on occasion. One trustee said, "One of the things that I think everybody has to realize is that in every institution nothing is done exactly right and so even if some of the things that I say sound critical, it's only because of positive intent of wanting to improve them as opposed to being horribly critical."

Another argued:

When they say that I might be micromanaging because I said we need to address, you know, schools and degrees and that, we need to address athletics . . . and they're like 'Well, you're micromanaging.' Well, I'm not micromanaging. I'm just asking, give me a business case why we're doing these things and if the business case makes sense, ok.

Additionally, one participant said that when he pushed for greater reporting to the board on the university's charter schools performance, "they hated it, they felt like we were pushing them around . . . but it ended in one of the best collaborations [between the board and administration]."

Access to Information

Trustees in this study relayed the importance of transparency and communication to build trust between presidents and boards. For the most part, individuals thought these attributes were prevalent at their institutions. One trustee said she was “impressed with the president and his openness to partnering with the board. He’s very transparent. . . . He’s welcoming of input and seeks out opinions from board members, calls them for advice and guidance.” Others said, “I think one of the president’s strengths is communication,” and “Personally, I have not one complaint about my interaction with the president. I think he does a great job communicating with the board.”

Many trustees indicated they always felt well informed on key university matters. This included trustees who were satisfied with their initial orientation to their institution and board duties, describing this process as “helpful,” “terrific,” and “remarkable.” Additionally, some trustees pointed to phone calls with the president between meetings and weekly or sometimes even daily briefings from the administration that kept them informed of campus happenings and key issues. Trustees also mentioned their overall satisfaction with their universities’ presidents and administrative teams’ expertise on higher education issues. “They know their business pretty darn well. . . . I’m impressed with how good they are,” said one participant.

It appeared that one key to strong communication was presidents and boards developing mutual trust between one another. One participant shared that in prior years the president and board maintained a strained relationship but that lines of communication were recently re-opened and now “trust is 100%. He trusts us, we trust him.” Part of building trust involves the president being open to board member input, as one participant explained, “So our president is open to that [addressing issues of concern to trustees]. . . . He appreciates the board’s governance role.” Individuals also indicated that in return trustees should communicate in good faith with their president. One participant mentioned that their president knows he can freely raise sensitive issues with the board because the board will not rush to judgement and/or immediately assume that any bad news is the president’s fault. To one trustee, the end goal of university success drives the need for strong communication between presidents and boards. She said, “The more information you give us, the more we can help you and the university achieve success.”

Although many felt information was shared with trustees in an appropriate manner, some thought they were not always provided sufficient information from the university administration. In terms of an initial orientation, some trustees described it as “very light,” “kind of weak,” and “very lackadaisical.” Others pointed to their frustration that orientations focused more on “transactional,

tactical” matters and less on the major strategic thrusts of the university or greatest challenges. Several members thought the orientation process was good but should only be the starting point in a trustee’s education. “I’m submerged in the water now and I’m expected to get going” and “it [orientation] created a starting point, it just wasn’t complete” were illuminating comments on this topic. As one trustee pointed out, re-visiting key university topics a year or two after orientation would have been beneficial because, “I would ask different questions if I knew then what I know now.”

Beyond the orientation process, some trustees also expressed mild frustration with how information was shared prior to and during meetings. Several participants shared concerns about wanting to receive information at least one, preferably two weeks prior to a meeting to have sufficient time to properly review materials, with these timelines not always met. Once at meetings, a few trustees described the discussion of agenda items as a “fire hose approach,” “data dump,” and “death by PowerPoint.” A couple individuals shared that they thought too much time was spent reviewing facts and re-hashing reports that could have been sent and read ahead of time with too little time spent interpreting and making sense of what is important and what solutions and alternatives could be explored.

A common theme that emerged among trustees frustrated with how information was shared with them was that presidents wanted to tightly control board actions. In describing board meetings, one participant said, “It’s all pretty well orchestrated and managed.” Another trustee felt the administration did not trust the board enough to ask them for solutions. “They’d rather ask us to approve something they’ve already brainstormed,” he said. A couple individuals offered an explanation for why this occurs. One person said the administrative mindset at their institution was, “We’ll just give them [the board] what they need for this meeting [in May]. Then we’re [the board] not back until August. They’ll forget by August so let’s just throw them a bone.” Someone else felt the president sometimes treats the board “like a kidney stone. Like this too will pass. We’ll get through it and then there will be new trustees and we’ll teach them. We’ll manage them and we’ll do what we want.”

During the study participants’ two years of service thus far, a few already pointed to times when a lack of communication boiled over into conflict. One trustee shared that following a negative report from one of the state’s major newspapers on the performance of charter schools, some of which were chartered by that university, the board sought more information on the university’s charter schools operation. A trustee from this institution indicated that when he asked

for more information he “basically got stonewalled” until he indicated he would refuse to authorize another charter school until more information was shared on the current schools’ performance. This eventually led to a new dashboard shared with the board on a regular basis on charter school performance metrics.

A similar example of trustees not feeling sufficiently informed was relayed by one trustee who indicated financial reporting at their institution was lacking. He explained, “We’ve got this fiduciary responsibility that this place stay sound and the money reports we’re getting do not allow you to do that.” He indicated that the current reporting structure offered no analysis or comparisons on key financial metrics and trustees were expected to take the administration at their word when they indicated financial measures were sound. Ultimately this trustee and fellow board members demanded and began receiving more robust financial reports from the administration.

Some trustees acknowledged that it can be frustrating not to receive certain information from the president and administration but understood why that occurs. “The staff at the university has expertise and ‘schools’ the trustees on the issues. It can be frustrating, but is typical of any board,” said one person. Another person added that he understands why presidents can be paranoid about sharing information sometimes, but both presidents and trustees have a responsibility to resolve those differences.

I do think there’s paranoia. It is incumbent though on trustees not to ask for information that makes it look like they’re running the university. . . . I guess what I’m saying is there are two sides to that paranoia story and when trustees behave in that manner, I get why some of the presidents are nervous. I also think if people are comfortable in their skin, they shouldn’t be nervous though.

Furthermore, some trustees put the onus on themselves if they want more information. One trustee mentioned that board members need to be engaged enough to know what to ask for and so long as information is provided when requested he has no problem with the administration. Another individual added, “I have to take a more active role because nobody else is going to say, ‘Hey, why don’t you get more involved in this? Or why don’t you connect with me on this?’ Nobody’s going to do that.”

Discussion

Although many trustees in this study attempted to exercise oversight while staying out of the day-to-day operations of their universities, there were still instances when trustees became more

directly engaged on specific issues, even explicitly dictating particular actions in some cases. In these instances it was clear there were two main drivers of greater trustee involvement: differences in goals between the president and trustees and/or trustees' frustrations with a lack of information provided to them.

It is not surprising that some trustees came into conflict with their presidents on their level of involvement on major strategic decisions since such frustrations are noted throughout the literature on trusteeship (Carver, 1997; De Russy, 1996). Significant challenges facing institutions in areas such as long-range financial sustainability, the range of academic program offerings, and enrollment trends caused trustees to feel an obligation to become more deeply engaged and help steer their institutions toward a sustainable and prosperous future. That is why several trustees mentioned wanting to make a positive impact on their institutions and wanting to go beyond being a "rubber stamp" board.

As colleges and universities continue to grapple with significant challenges, it is possible that power may increasingly shift to presidents and senior administrators who have the professional expertise and day-to-day responsibility to deal with these issues (Zusman, 2005). However, given many trustees' interests in playing a role in addressing the most significant issues facing their institutions, presidents will need to be increasingly cognizant of how to engage trustees effectively on these issues. If presidents fail to engage trustees satisfactorily, they risk propagating rogue trustees who pursue key issues on their own, potentially in direct conflict with a president's interests.

Although several trustees commented on their satisfaction with the level of communication and transparency at their institutions, others were mildly frustrated and in some instances highly dissatisfied in these areas. Certainly some of the trustees in this study would relate to the anecdote about a consultant turned trustee who opined: "When I was your consultant, you told me everything I needed to know about the college, and paid me, to boot. Now that I am a trustee, you tell me as little as possible, and expect me to pay you" (Zemsky, Shannon, & Shapiro, 2001, p. 25).

Trustees' access to timely and sufficient information appeared to influence trustees' level of oversight of their presidents. For the trustees most frustrated by a lack of information, there was some distrust and tension between the board and the president. In some instances, trustees made explicit demands for greater information in the short-term and the development of more robust reporting systems in the long-term. This aligns with agency theory's explanation that when conflicts rise over the asymmetry of information between principals and agents, the principals (i.e., trustees)

exert greater oversight and control of the agents (i.e., presidents) (Eisenhardt, 1989; Jensen & Meckling, 1976; Ross, 1973). From the opposite perspective, those trustees who thought their presidents were open and transparent and freely shared information appeared more likely to exert less direct control of their presidents on specific issues (Donaldson, 1985). Instead, they followed more of a stewardship model of governance, entrusting presidents with the day-to-day management of their institutions free from significant interference (Drezner and Huehls, 2014).

Ultimately each individual trustee holds the potential to maintain vastly different opinions about their roles. Some trustees may view their roles more from a stewardship model and others from a principal-agent model. Presidents are also likely to have varying opinions about the role trustees should play at their institutions. This divergence helps explain potential conflicts between presidents and boards, and such differences are unlikely to ever completely subside.

In the traditional model of higher education governance, the majority of trustees may have been comfortable empowering their presidents and senior administrators to determine the major strategic direction of their institution and empower them with the day-to-day management of campus operations (Gayle, Tewarie, & White, 2003; Kerr & Gade, 1989). However, in an era of heightened scrutiny for higher education institutions and the increasingly politicized nature of university trusteeship, more trustees may seek to be more actively engaged in institutional governance (Bastedo, 2005; Johnston, Summerville, & Roberts, 2010; Miller, 2011). Yet, what some critics may label as “activist,” certain trustees may simply view as executing the very oversight responsibilities with which they were entrusted when accepting their positions. Regardless of one’s personal viewpoint of the appropriateness of various trustee involvement levels, this study and recent examples of trustee activism across the country (Novak, 2012; Stripling, 2015) raise the possibility that more active and engaged trusteeship may become the new normal within higher education. Rather than focusing on what trustees’ roles should be in theory vis-à-vis their presidents, it will be increasingly important to consider how presidents and boards can work together effectively to accommodate trustees’ interests in being more engaged while remaining true to the long-standing principles of shared governance within higher education.

Based upon the results of this study, we offer the following recommendations on how presidents and trustees can develop mutually respectful and productive working partnerships.

- **Comprehensive and continuing orientation and education opportunities.** Well-informed trustees are vital not only to ensure sound oversight of institutions, but in developing strong partnerships between presidents and boards. Orientations should go

beyond dumping binders of information onto trustees. Instead, orientations should be an opportunity for trustees to learn the basics of how the board operates, review key information about the university including its strengths and challenges, be introduced to various stakeholders across campus, and have an opportunity to raise initial questions. However, it is important to recognize that an orientation is only the first step in what should be an ongoing effort to provide educational opportunities to all (new and veteran) trustees to learn more about the institutions they serve and stay abreast of important issues and trends. Yearly board retreats provide a strong venue for taking a deep dive into key strategic matters and challenges facing an institution. Even if topics have been discussed previously, trustees may develop additional questions and bring new insights to discussions as they become more settled and comfortable in their roles.

- **Open dialogue about president and board roles and responsibilities.** Many of the trustees in our study indicated there was minimal discussion between their boards and the president about the appropriate role each should play in institutional governance. It often seems to take a controversy or conflict to spark such discussions, but by that point it is often too late to salvage a positive working relationship. Instead, presidents and trustees should take the time to regularly (perhaps once per year) engage in an open dialogue about general expectations of each other's roles and responsibilities, and specifically how they can work together in a manner that is most conducive to promoting institutional success.
- **Spend more time discussing substantive strategic issues.** A common complaint among study participants was the lack of time discussing the most challenging issues facing the institutions they serve, with more time devoted to routine, "rubber stamp" agenda items. Board meetings should be focused around the most pressing issues and challenges facing the institution. In order to effectively exercise their fiduciary responsibilities, trustees should be engaged in discussions of long-term strategic and financial planning instead of having meetings consumed with presentations on the same reports they already read prior to a meeting, leaving little or no time for substantive discussion. Additionally, many trustees have professional experience and connections that may benefit an institution if they are engaged on matters within their area of expertise. However, engaging in more substantive discussions should not be viewed as a license for trustees to micromanage decisions. Still, fear of micromanagement should

not prevent presidents and boards from openly and consistently discussing the most pressing challenges facing their institution.

- **Presidents should openly and transparently share information with their boards.** This study found that when presidents control the flow of information to trustees too tightly, it can stimulate distrust as trustees are left wondering what is not being shared and why it is not being shared. Although individual trustees might differ on the amount of information that should be provided or the format in which to present it, the larger issue is ensuring there is sufficient transparency and openness so that board members maintain a trust that presidents are sharing all the vital information trustees expect.
- **Trustees should seek and use information in good faith.** Although trustees have the right to reasonable access to key university information, they should also be careful not to abuse that power. Trustees should limit their information requests to key, top-level policy matters and not question every minor detail of a university's operations. Additionally, once trustees receive information they should first seek to work with presidents in addressing questions and concerns instead of immediately assuming a president is wrong on a matter. Additionally, when conflicts do arise, it is important for trustees to communicate with one another and especially the board chair to ensure conflicts are dealt with at a full board level and do not become personal struggles between the president and a single trustee.
- **Openness, transparency, and communication lead to trust.** It should be clear from each of the previous recommendations that president-board relationships are built upon mutual trust and understanding. While some conflicts may be unavoidable, open and transparent communication goes a long way in ensuring a productive partnership between presidents and boards. Instead of viewing each other as adversaries, the emphasis should always be on working together for the benefit of the institutions they both serve.

Conclusion

Ultimately, the study of board governance is the study of individuals and a study of personalities. There will likely never be universal acceptance of what the proper role of a trustee is or what defines an engaged and helpful trustee versus an activist or rogue trustee. One can debate the appropriate role of trustees in institutional governance and one can bemoan a seeming rise in

trustee activism. However, it is also vital to be aware of the underlying factors influencing these trends in order to understand how best to approach conflicts if and when they arise and enable presidents and boards to work together most effectively.

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EFFECT OF GRADUATE STUDENTS' INTERNATIONALIZATION EXPERIENCES ON CULTURAL COMPETENCE

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With the release of the US 2000 Census Special Report, Demographic Trends in the 20th Century, it became quite evident that the demographics of the United States were changing (US Census Bureau, 2002). Seventeen states had grown to a minority population percentage of 30% or higher, as compared to only eight states in 1980 (US Census Bureau, 2002). Some states experienced a minority population percentage that equaled or surpassed the “majority” population percentage (e.g. California, New Mexico, and Hawaii). When US 2000 census data were compared to that of a decade earlier, the population percent increase was 58% for Hispanics, 45% for Asians, 16% for Blacks, and 3% for Whites (Census Scope, 2002). The demographic changes of the US were further supported by data from the Bureau of Labor and Statistics. The civilian labor force, in the age range of 16 years plus, exhibited percent increases of 13% for Hispanics, 10% for Asians, 4% for Blacks, and 3% for Whites (US Department of Labor, 2009).

Practitioners in education, healthcare, and human services began to notice that they were not effectively serving clients and students whose cultures differed from their own, subsequently they began to pursue a protocol that would enlighten their practice and help improve services (e.g. Campinha-Bacote, 2002; Pedersen, 2002; Richards, Brown, & Forde, 2006). More than ten years prior to the release of the 2000 Census Special Report, Cross, Bazron, Dennis, & Isaacs (1989) brought to the forefront a philosophical framework for improving the appropriateness of mental health care services to minorities, by examining the cultural competence progression of institutions, systems, agencies, and professionals. Attaining a higher cultural competence level was seen as a solution for addressing the inadequacies of institutions, systems, agencies, and professionals in serving diverse clients and students. This research study examines to what extent a graduation

requirement, at a private Catholic university in California, increases cultural competency levels of graduate students in a school of education.

The School of Leadership and Education Sciences (SOLES), at the University of San Diego, prepares professionals to lead and serve in many different sectors of society as administrators, executives, therapists, professors, counselors, teachers, and educators. The mission of SOLES speaks to the responsibility of preparing students with the professional knowledge, skills, and ethical perspectives needed for effective leadership and practice in a diverse society. To support students in preparing to work with culturally diverse populations locally, nationally, and globally, SOLES promotes progression along the cultural competence continuum by requiring all graduate degree-seeking students to participate in an international experience as part of their graduation requirement (SOLES, 2013a). Graduate students select from a variety of opportunities to learn about and interact with people from various cultures via research abroad, conferences/workshops abroad, an internationalization project/paper, internships abroad, courses abroad, or an instructor approved alternative experience. Aspects of cultural competence are measured using the SOLES International Experience (SIE) Surveys. This study investigates the impact of the SOLES' internationalization requirement on graduate students' cultural competence levels, as measured with the pre and post SIE surveys.

Definitions

Cultural competence is the extent to which individuals have attained a level of awareness of the general norms of a culture, applied context-appropriate cultural knowledge, and utilized intercultural communication skills to effectively interact with people from another culture (e.g. Bennett, 2004; Campinha-Bacotes, 2002; Cross et al., 1989; Geissler, 1998; Novinger, 2001; Pedersen, 2002; Pratt-Johnson, 2006).

An international experience is defined as an opportunity for students to interact with a culture other than their own in a manner that fosters their personal and professional growth, promotes cultural understanding, and prepares them for working more effectively with diverse communities (SOLES, 2013b).

Awareness of general norms of a culture is a constructed variable of this research study and refers to the cognizance of the similarities and differences that exist between one's own culture and another's culture in areas such as: communication; socioeconomic status; family; cosmopolitan attitude; socialization patterns; economic, legal, and political systems; religious beliefs; dietary

choices; and healthcare and educational practices (e.g. Brannigan, 2012; Eichler, 2007; Geissler, 1998; Lassiter, 1995; National Education Association, 2015; Seeleman, Suurmond, & Stronks, 2009).

Application of context-appropriate cultural knowledge is a constructed variable of this research study and refers to one's ability to navigate in a cross-cultural situation using cultural information pertinent to the circumstances (e.g. Galanti, 2008; Leung & Chiu, 2011; Seeleman et al., 2009; St.Onge, Applegate, Asakura, Moss, Veragara-Lobo, & Rouson, 2009).

Utilization of intercultural communication skills is a constructed variable of this research study and refers to the ability to set aside the language barrier that may exist between two cultures and participate in a positive intercultural interaction (e.g. Lassiter, 1995; Leung & Chiu, 2011; Novinger, 2001; Pratt-Johnson, 2006).

Theoretical Framework

A basis for making a connection between a students' International Experience and a change in their Cultural Competence level has already been established by several researchers who have posited that cultural immersion provides an opportunity to view the world from a variety of cultural lenses, allows for the acquisition of cultural knowledge, and shapes the cultural lens for which experiences are viewed (Chiu, Leung, & Hong, 2011; Longview Foundation, 2008; St.Onge et al., 2009). Multicultural experiences provide opportunities for practicing one's cross-cultural knowledge, for understanding cultural differences, and for practicing cross-cultural interaction skills (Bennett, 2004; Eichler, 2007; Leung & Chiu, 2011). These researchers lay a foundation for the connection between an international experience and a change in cultural competency, but what aspects of cultural competence should be measured to show one's cultural competence progression? There are various cultural competence models, frameworks, and theories to draw from. We categorize these theoretical frameworks into two groups, the CSS Group or the CCS Group. The CSS Group consists of theoretical frameworks or models based upon a Continuum, Sequence, or Stages (CSS), whereas the CCS Group consists of theoretical frameworks or models based upon Constructs, Competencies, or Standards (CCS).

CSS Theoretical Frameworks

Four theoretical frameworks are presented here that use a Continuum, Sequence, or Stages (CSS) to describe progression toward cultural competence. These frameworks range from the work of Cross in 1989 to the work of Martin and Vaughn in 2015.

The six-point cultural competence continuum of Cross, Bazron, Dennis, and Isaacs (1989)

was developed with the intent to set a standard for servicing clients in a culturally appropriate way, by having an accurate perception of behavior, impartial policies, and unbiased attitudes. An agency, professional, system, or organization would be considered culturally competent if: diversity was valued, self-assessment of culture was practiced, dynamics of cultural interaction was acknowledged, cultural knowledge was learned, and changes occurred in response to cultural differences. The six points in their continuum are cultural destructiveness, cultural incapacity, cultural blindness, cultural pre-competence, cultural competence, and cultural proficiency.

The three stage developmental framework of multicultural competence of Pedersen (2002)

was established for counselors to enhance their abilities in servicing diverse clients, by becoming aware of their own cultural influences on everyday decisions (stage one), increasing knowledge about another culture (stage two), and then developing and utilizing appropriate skills to promote positive interactions with people from other cultures (stage three).

The six-stage developmental model of intercultural sensitivity of Bennett (2004) resulted from a grounded theory research study he conducted to explain a person's intercultural worldview. He hoped to inform educators and trainers about how to prepare people to be culturally competent. Bennett's Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS) is based upon a continuum with six stages. The first three stages are associated with ethnocentrism - *denial* of cultural difference, *defense* against cultural difference, and *minimization* of cultural differences - and the next three stages are associated with ethno relativism - *acceptance* of cultural difference, *adaptation* to cultural difference, and *integration* of cultural differences. The continuum progresses from a person's own cultural experiences being viewed in the context of one's own culture to a person's own cultural experiences being viewed in the context of a worldview.

The five-stage cultural competence development model of Martin and Vaughn (2015) builds upon the work of previous cultural competence models, but with a focus on organizations being culturally competent. They purport that cultural competence for an organization means the organization has figured out a way to have an inclusive workplace culture. Their cultural competence developmental stages are conventional, defensive, ambivalent, egalitarian, and integrative. An organization progresses from cultural bias (conventional stage) to cultural immersion (integrative stage).

CCS Theoretical Frameworks

Four theoretical frameworks are presented here that use Constructs, Competencies, or Standards (CCS) to describe aspects of cultural competence. These frameworks range from the work of Campinha-Bacote in 2002 to the work of Javidan, Hough, and Bullough in 2013.

The process of cultural competence in the delivery of healthcare services model of Campinha-Bacote's (2002) was developed to assist healthcare workers with providing culturally relevant services. The model integrates five constructs that can be looked at as attributes of a culturally competent individual: *cultural awareness* addresses one's own cultural bias, *cultural knowledge* includes the client's worldview, *cultural skills* involve the use of cultural context clues, *cultural encounters* require actual cross-cultural interactions, and *cultural desire* conveys the element of caring about the client. Campinha-Bacote reasons that as one's region of intersection enlarges for these five constructs then one's cultural competence level increases.

The conceptual framework of cultural competencies offered by Seeleman, Suurmond, and Stronks (2009) was developed with the intent to aid medical school educators in preparing the portion of the curriculum that addresses cultural competence. They present seven competencies categorized into three areas: *knowledge, attitudes/awareness, and skills*. These competencies are further explicated with medical care specificity.

The essential elements for culturally proficient practices by Quezada, Lindsey, and Lindsey (2012) were developed to improve the professional practice of educators who serve diverse student populations. Five standards are paired with the cultural competence continuum of Cross et al. (1989) to create a cultural proficiency rubric for the desired cultural competence elements: *assessing cultural knowledge, valuing diversity, managing the dynamics of difference, adapting to diversity, and institutionalizing cultural knowledge*. Educators are directed to use these standards when evaluating institutional policies and practices regarding educating diverse student populations, especially English learning students.

The global mindset theoretical model of Javidan, Hough, and Bullough (2013) was developed to identify the desirable traits of an effective global leader in a business environment. The model consists of three major categories: *psychological capital* was conceptualized with positive attitudes towards diverse cultures, *social capital* was conceptualized with communication skills that invite new relationships, and *intellectual capital* was conceptualized with knowledge, understanding, and possessing cultural acumen.

Summary of Theoretical Frameworks

The CSS theoretical frameworks are based upon a Continuum, Sequence, or Stages (CSS) and support the premise that there are progressive levels of cultural competence. The CCS theoretical frameworks are based upon Constructs, Competencies, or Standards (CCS) and support the premise that there are identifiable characteristics of cultural competence. The CSS and CCS theoretical frameworks jointly lay a foundation for this research study by suggesting that progressive levels of cultural competence exist and that there are identifiable characteristics of cultural competence, such as knowledge, awareness, and communication skills.

Critical Findings from Research Studies and Literature

Literature on cultural competence typically falls into three categories: research studies, practitioner guides, or explications of aspects of cultural competence in books and journals. Research studies range from literature reviews on cultural competence frameworks (e.g. Kelly, 2011) to case studies of undergraduate global programs (e.g. Green, 2013). Practitioner guides are generated by educators and healthcare providers in an effort to inform professionals in their field about the importance of improving cultural competence to better serve diverse populations (e.g. Cross, 1989; Geissler, 1998; Longview Foundation, 2008; National Education Association, 2015). Explications of aspects of cultural competence in books and journals elucidate the importance of cultural awareness (e.g. Brannigan, 2012; Eichler, 2007), cultural knowledge (e.g. Martin & Vaughn 2015; Seeleman et al., 2009), and cross-cultural communication (e.g. Novinger, 2001; Pedersen, 2002). Critical findings for these three areas of literature are shared in this section.

Research Studies

Cultural competence research conducted in the last ten years ranges from the grounded theory research of Bennett (2004) that provided us with a six-stage continuum for becoming interculturally competent to the case study interviews of Green (2013) that revealed the challenges higher education institutions faced when assessing program efficacy of undergraduate global learning programs. The critical findings from cultural competence research studies are that researchers have moved past establishing cultural competence theoretical frameworks and have moved toward examining how to improve cultural competence levels and determining what role multicultural experiences play in increasing cultural competence levels. Kelly's (2011) research has connected these two endpoints quite well with her literature review summarizing the various theoretical frameworks for cultural competence through the lens of a medical professor. She

concludes that cultural competence training must go beyond the usual curricular norms of knowledge and awareness and include actual interactions with diverse populations. Conclusions made by researchers after conducting a literature review of culture were that cultural immersion promotes the acquisition of cultural knowledge (Chiu, Leung, & Hong, 2011). A group of researchers (Javidan et al., 2013) capitalized on the idea that cultural immersion leads to increased cultural competence and interviewed over 200 global executives to determine desirable global leadership traits, which were then used to develop the Global Mindset Inventory that measures the psychological capital, social capital, and intellectual capital of individuals or groups. These are but a few of the cultural competence research studies conducted over the last decade, but they serve as examples of the change in research direction from theoretical frameworks to improving cultural competence by incorporating multicultural experiences.

Practitioner Guides

The critical findings from cultural competence practitioner guides are that two professions dominate this area: the medical profession (e.g. Cross et al., 1989; Galanti, 2008; Geissler, 1998) and the teaching profession (e.g. Pratt-Johnson, 2006; Quezada et al., 2012; Richard et al., 2006). Practitioners in these two fields share concerns about effectively serving diverse learners and clients. Many readers interested in cultural competence are directed to the early study of Cross et al. (1989) that was funded by the National Institute of Mental Health, Child and Adolescent Service System Program. The Cross et al. (1989) study resulted in a cultural competence model for servicing clients in a culturally appropriate way. Concerned medical professionals recognize that a person's culture informs all aspects of one's living, including ideas about health, illness, and care, therefore medical professionals strive to become culturally competent through increased cultural awareness, knowledge, and interaction skills (e.g. Geissler, 1998; Koehn & Swick, 2006; Lassiter, 1995).

Educators faced with a similar set of circumstances, began to examine best practices for how to educate diverse learners. The National Education Association (2015) posits that cultural competence of educators contributes to closing the achievement gap, by arming teachers with the skills, knowledge, and attitudes needed to teach diverse learners. Cultural competence is seen as understanding differences among various cultures and within a specific culture to appreciate the uniqueness of each student. The NEA position was preceded by other organizations such as the National Center for Culturally Responsive Educational Systems (Richards, et al., 2006) with a practitioner brief defining culturally responsive pedagogy and its use with diverse student populations. The brief describes the actions needed at institutional and instructional levels, with

very specific pedagogical practices described to support student learning. These practitioner guides serve as examples of the concerns and actions taken by educators and healthcare providers to increase cultural competence in their fields.

Explications of Aspects of Cultural Competence

Numerous books and journal articles are dedicated to the explication of aspects of cultural competence (e.g. Brannigan, 2012; Eichler, 2007; Novinger, 2001). The critical findings from these authors is that cultural competence must include awareness of general norms of a culture, application of context-appropriate cultural knowledge, and utilization of intercultural communication skills (e.g. Campinha-Bacote, 2002; Novinger, 2001; Pedersen, 2002). Awareness must include the examination of similarities and differences with one's own culture, while valuing multiple perspectives (e.g. Martin & Vaughn, 2015; Seeleman et al., 2009; St. Onge et al., 2009). Cultural knowledge should include values, beliefs, and norms, and be applied appropriately in context (e.g. Galanti, 2008; Leung & Chiu, 2001; Pedersen, 2002). Communication should occur through interactive experiences, while utilizing cultural awareness and knowledge (e.g. Brannigan, 2012; Leung & Chiu, 2001; Novinger, 2001). These authors highlight three important aspects of cultural competence: awareness, knowledge, and communication.

Summary of Research Studies and Literature

The research studies, practitioner guides, and explications of aspects of cultural competence presented here support the use of examining progressive levels of cultural competence using identifiable characteristics of cultural competence. The literature reviews, case studies, and interviews conducted thus far have not examined changes in cultural competence levels of graduate students participating in an internationalization program. This gap in the literature will be addressed through this study as we determine the extent to which an internationalization graduation requirement impacts cultural competency levels of graduate students in a school of education. We identify three aspects of cultural competence that can be used to determine one's progress toward being more culturally competent: 1) Awareness of General Norms of a Culture, 2) Application of Context-Appropriate Cultural Knowledge, and 3) Utilization of Intercultural Communication Skills.

Research Questions

This study investigates the impact of the SOLES' internationalization requirement on graduate students' cultural competence levels, as measured with the pre and post SIE surveys.

- 1) To what extent is the internationalization requirement impacting the cultural competence level of degree-seeking graduate students in a four year private university?
- 2) To what extent is the internationalization requirement impacting the difference in ex post facto cultural competence levels, as perceived by degree-seeking graduate students in a four year private university?
- 3) What themes emerge from graduate students' comments substantiating perceived differences in their level of cultural competence?

Method

Research Design

For this study, random assignment and manipulation of treatment could not be used because international experiences differ by program and by student. When random assignment is not feasible, a quasi-experiment is conducted (Cohen, Manion & Morrison; 2000; Fraenkel & Wallen, 2000; Marczyk, DeMatteo & Festinger, 2005; Mertens, 2010). The research design for this study was a quasi-experimental pre/post design, with the exception of no control group. In a typical pre/post non-equivalent group quasi-experimental design study, there would be a control group. The international experience is a graduation requirement, so no control group could be used; therefore multiple measures were used to improve validity (Bush, 2007).

Population and Sampling

Population. Starting with the 2009 fall semester, all graduate degree-seeking students in the School of Leadership and Education Sciences (SOLES) at the University of San Diego have been required to partake in an international experience as part of their graduation requirement. After implementing the internationalization requirement, a collective decision was made to capture pre and post data measuring the impact of the requirement on students' cultural competence levels. Data began to be collected in the 2010 fall semester for students entering a SOLES degree program and has continued to be collected each year thereafter. Similarly, data began to be collected in the 2012 spring semester for students completing a SOLES degree program and has continued to be collected each year thereafter. The pilot study phase of this research ended in June of 2013 and resulted in us making modifications to the data collection process and the survey instruments. The target population for this study are the 234 students who matriculated into a SOLES masters degree program at USD for the fall 2013 semester with an expected graduation date on or before August 31, 2015.

Sampling Process. Comprehensive selection was used for the sampling process for this study. Comprehensive selection in sampling is when all members of a population are included in the sample (Fogelman, & Comber, 2007; Hutchinson, 2004). All newly admitted SOLES graduate students were invited to an orientation session on campus and taken to a computer lab to complete the online Pre-SIE survey. Students not in attendance for the on campus orientation sessions were sent a web link to complete the Pre-SIE survey. For the Post-SIE survey, all SOLES students graduating from a masters degree program were sent a web-link via email to complete the Post-SIE survey. There were 234 students who matriculated into a SOLES masters degree program at the University of San Diego for the fall 2013 semester with an expected graduation date on or before August 31, 2015. Of these 234 students, 205 of them completed the Pre-SIE survey, yielding an 88% response rate. In the spring and summer of 2015, students graduating from a SOLES two-year masters degree program were surveyed with the Post-SIE survey, yielding a 73% response rate (146 out of 201). The list of respondents for the pre and post SIE surveys were examined and yielded 52 matched pairs (26% response rate).

Instruments and Measures

The SOLES International Experiences (SIE) Pre/Post surveys were developed jointly by the SOLES Global Committee and the SOLES Office of Accreditation and Assessment. Several of the Likert scaled survey items are variations of or direct items from the Cultural Intelligence Scale that measures four factors of Cultural Intelligence (Van Dyne, Ang, & Koh, 2008). The Cultural Intelligence Center grants use of its scale to academic researchers for research purposes only (Van Dyne, 2016). We found it necessary to add qualifiers to many of the items, adopt a different Likert scale, and include additional items that stemmed from current research literature on Cultural Competence (see Table 1).

The crucial components of the SIE survey instruments are the 16 pre/post items pertaining to aspects of cultural competence (see Table 1). These items were identified in the literature as characteristics of cultural competence and used to form the three constructs measured in this study: 1) Awareness of General Norms of a Culture, 2) Application of Context-Appropriate Cultural Knowledge, and 3) Utilization of Intercultural Communication Skills. Also of interest are the following two post-items: ex post facto student-perceived differences in cultural competency levels and students' justification for their differences.

Table 1

Pre/Post Cultural Competence Questionnaire Items by Construct

| Survey Item | Construct |
|--|---|
| Application of Context-Appropriate Cultural Knowledge | |
| Item 1 | I am conscious of the cultural knowledge I use when interacting with people with different cultural backgrounds (e.g. greetings, goodbye rituals, gender relations, relationship differences, etc.) ~ |
| Item 2 | I check the accuracy of my cultural knowledge as I interact with people from different cultures (e.g. by asking questions, through observation, etc.) ~ |
| Item 6 | I am aware of the tenets of at least one religion (e.g. holidays, behaviors, practices, dietary, beliefs, etc.) ~ |
| Item 7 | I am aware of the performance and visual arts of at least one other culture (e.g. music, dance, dress, jewelry, crafts, artifacts, architecture, etc.) ~ |
| Item 9 | I know the norms and customs for expressing non-verbal behaviors in at least one non-US culture (e.g. hand gestures, facial expressions, posture, physical proximity, etc.) ~ |
| Item 13 | I find a way to communicate in a cross-cultural situation when the other person(s) and I do not share a common language (e.g. gestures, rate of speech, tone, pictures, etc.) ~ |
| Awareness of The General Norms of a Culture | |
| Item 3 | I know the legal system of at least one other culture (e.g. rules, laws, politics, customs, and interpretations related to property, driving, marriage, contracts, etc.) ~ |
| Item 4 | I know the economic system of at least one other culture (e.g. currencies, exchange rates, taxes, credit system, banking, etc.) ~ |
| Item 5 | I understand other systems such as transportation, education, political, health care, etc. of at least one other culture (e.g. public transit, types of education, governments, policies, etc.) |
| Item 8 | I understand the various forms of relations of at least one other culture (e.g. kinship, family, community, social associations, professional associations, etc.) |
| Item 14 | I am comfortable traveling to and operating in another country other than my own (e.g. shopping, ordering food, taking public transportation, asking for directions, paying taxes and tip, etc.) |
| Item 15 | I can identify 5 or more similarities between my culture and at least one other culture. |
| Item 16 | I can identify 5 or more differences between my culture and at least one other culture. |
| Utilization of Intercultural Communication Skills | |
| Item 10 | I enjoy interacting with people from different cultures. * |
| Item 11 | I am confident that I can socialize with locals in a culture that is unfamiliar to me. * |
| Item 12 | I have developed my own ways of coping with the stresses of adjusting to a culture that is new to me. ~ |

Rating scale: Completely Like Me (5), Very Much Like Me (4), Somewhat Like Me (3), A Little Like Me (2), or Not At All Like Me (1).

Note: Some of these survey items are variations of (~) or direct items (*) from the Cultural Intelligence Scale and used by permission of the © Cultural Intelligence Center 2005. Use of the Cultural Intelligence Scale is granted to academic researchers for research purposes only. For information on using their scale for purposes other than academic research (e.g., consultants and non-academic organizations), please send an email to cquery@culturalq.com (Van Dyne, 2016).

Data Collection

Data for this study were collected from students who matriculated into a SOLES masters degree program at the University of San Diego for the fall 2013 semester with an expected graduation date on or before August 31, 2015. All newly admitted graduate degree-seeking SOLES students were invited to an orientation session on campus and taken to a computer lab to complete the online Pre-SIE survey. Students provided oral consent to have their survey data used for program improvement and research purposes. Students not in attendance for the on campus orientation sessions were sent a web link to complete the pre-survey. For the Post-SIE survey, all SOLES students graduating from a two-year masters degree program in the period between May and August of 2015 were sent a web-link via email to complete the post-survey and sent a reminder email two weeks later. A statement in the email invitation to take the survey served as written consent for students: "*Participation in the survey indicates your agreement that the data can be used for program improvement and research purposes.*" Students who completed both the pre and post survey were used to create the matched pairs group of respondents.

Results

Analyses and Results for Research Question One - *To what extent is the internationalization requirement impacting the cultural competence level of degree-seeking graduate students in a four-year private university?*

To answer research question one, we first calculated the pre/post difference for responses to each of the 16 items describing characteristics of cultural competence and then performed an exploratory factor analysis on the differences. Four components were extracted using the Principal Component Analysis - Varimax Rotation Method with Kaiser Normalization. We define the constructed variables for this study as: *Application of Context-Appropriate Cultural Knowledge* using component one items (1, 2, 6, 7, 9, 13), *Awareness of General Norms of a Culture* using component two items (3, 4, 5, 8, 14, 15, 16), and *Utilization of Intercultural Communication Skills* using component three (10, 11) and component four items (12). We ran paired t-tests on each constructed variable, resulting in statistically significant differences in the mean pre and post ratings, with positive effect sizes between one-third and three-fourths of a standard deviation (see Table 2). These increases in mean levels of aspects of cultural competence serve as indicators of the positive impact the international experiences have on SOLES graduate students' cultural competence levels.

Analyses and Results for Research Question Two - *To what extent is the internationalization requirement impacting the difference in ex post facto cultural competence levels, as perceived by degree-seeking graduate students in a four-year private university?*

To answer research question two, we used the results of the post survey item that displayed two parallel sliding bar scales from 0 to 10 (one labeled “When I Started” and the other labeled “Now”) and asked students to compare the overall level of cultural competence of when they started the program at SOLES with their present level, i.e. the end of the program. They were also given the following parenthetical statement: “Cultural competence includes awareness, attitude, knowledge, and communication.” For statistical analysis purposes, we have renamed the categories as initial and final. We ran a matched pairs t-test, resulting in a statistically significant difference in mean ratings by students of their initial and final cultural competence levels, $t(47) = 8.071$, $p < .001$. The initial mean (SD) rating of students’ ex post facto cultural competence levels was 6.63 (2.10) and the final mean rating of students’ ex post facto cultural competence levels was 8.52 (1.29), resulting in a mean difference of 1.90 (1.63), using a 95% confidence interval [1.423, 2.368]. This increase in the mean ex post facto cultural competence level, as perceived by students, serves as an indicator of the positive impact the international experiences have on SOLES graduate students’ cultural competence levels.

Analyses and Results for Research Question Three - *What themes emerge from graduate students’ comments substantiating perceived differences in their level of cultural competence?*

To answer research question three, we examined students’ responses substantiating their *difference in ex post facto cultural competence level ratings*. We used a combination of Ryan and Bernard’s (2003) techniques to identify themes in qualitative data, such as ocular scanning, key words in context, and unmarked texts. We used a spreadsheet to manage the survey data, while performing an initial ocular scan of the comments of respondents. The initial ocular scan revealed numerous comments about students’ international and study abroad experiences, as well as cultural competence skills learned. We share two examples here:

“Through the coursework in the MFT program, I have learned much about the importance of being sensitive to cultural differences in clinical work. Traveling to New Zealand was a great way to demonstrate what I had learned in the classroom about diversity and culture.”

“Cultural competence was a key strength for me when I came to this program. I've learned so much in my time here at USD and through the study abroad trip. I left my "now" rating at 9, instead of 10, because there is always room for improvement. I will continue engaging in my cross-cultural learning as a lifelong practice.”

Table 2

Mean Differences in Aspects of Cultural Competence Using Pre/ Post Paired Samples

| Constructed Variables | Pre | | Post | | Difference | | | | 95% CI | | Cohen's d |
|---|------|------|------|------|------------|------|-------|----------------|--------|------|-----------|
| | M | SD | M | SD | M | SD | t(51) | p ^a | LL | UL | |
| Application of Context Appropriate Cultural Knowledge | 3.96 | 0.68 | 4.19 | .063 | 0.23 | 0.68 | 2.40 | 0.020 | 0.04 | 0.42 | 0.35 |
| Awareness of General Norms of a Culture | 3.80 | 0.91 | 4.21 | 0.66 | 0.40 | 0.90 | 3.23 | 0.002 | 0.15 | 0.65 | 0.52 |
| Utilization of Intercultural Communication Skills | 4.05 | 0.77 | 4.51 | 0.47 | 0.46 | .066 | 5.06 | <.001 | 0.28 | .064 | 0.72 |

Notes. Rating Scale: Completely like me (5); Very much like me (4), Somewhat like me (3); A little like me (2); and Not at all like me (1). CI = Confidence interval. LL = Lower limit. UL = Upper limit. ^aP is two-tailed.

Using the “find” feature in Excel, we then found and color coded all comments containing the words *international, travel, study, course, or abroad* with the same color. We repeated this process with a different color for the word *learned*. This left us with about 43% of the comments coded for the *international travel* theme, 26% coded for the *learned* theme and 31% un-marked data. Comments coded for the *international travel* theme were then re-examined for the key words in context to determine the emergent subthemes: *SOLES International Experience, External Multicultural Experiences, or No Change*. Similarly, the *learned* theme was re-examined for the key word in context to sort into the recently identified subthemes, or to determine the additional emergent subtheme: *SOLES Program/Coursework*. The un-marked comments were then reviewed to sort into the identified subthemes or to determine if there were any additional themes. All forty-two comments fell into one of the following subtheme categories: SOLES International Experience (64%), No Change (14%), External Multicultural Experiences (12%), or SOLES Program/Coursework (10%). Seventy-four percent of the forty-two students who provided rationales for their increased difference in ex post facto cultural competence level ratings attributed their positive difference to experiences as a SOLES student.

Discussion

US Census and Labor Statistics confirmed what education, healthcare, and human services practitioners noticed early on, that the demographics of the US were changing. Practitioner concerns about how to effectively serve clients and students whose cultures differed from their own prompted the establishment of new protocol that has since been termed “*Cultural Competence*.” The School of Leadership and Education Sciences at the University of San Diego, prepares professionals to lead and serve in many different sectors of society as administrators, executives, therapists, professors, counselors, teachers, and educators. The mission of SOLES speaks to the responsibility of preparing students with the professional knowledge, skills, and ethical perspectives needed for effective leadership and practice in a diverse society. To support students in preparing to work with culturally diverse populations locally, nationally, and globally, SOLES promotes progression along the cultural competence continuum by requiring all degree-seeking students to participate in an international experience as part of their graduation requirement. Cultural immersion provides an opportunity to view the world from a variety of cultural lenses, allows for the acquisition of cultural knowledge, and shapes the cultural lens for which experiences are viewed (Bennett, 2004; Chiu, Leung, & Hong, 2011; Longview Foundation, 2008; St. Onge et al., 2009).

For the matched pairs examined in this study, degree-seeking students selected from a variety of opportunities to learn about and interact with people from various cultures: courses abroad (51%), an internationalization project/paper (28%), an instructor approved alternative experience (17%), research abroad (2%), internship abroad (2%), or conference/workshop abroad (0%). This study investigated the impact of the SOLES’ internationalization requirement on graduate students’ cultural competence levels, as measured using the SOLES International Experience Pre and Post surveys. Three aspects of cultural competence were identified in the literature and measured using constructed variables from survey items: *Application of Context-Appropriate Cultural Knowledge* (e.g. Galanti, 2008; Leung & Chiu, 2011; Seeleman et al., 2009; St. Onge et al., 2009), *Awareness of General Norms of a Culture* (e.g. Brannigan, 2012; Eichler, 2007; Geissler, 1998; Lassiter, 1995; National Education Association, 2015; Seeleman et al., 2009), and *Utilization of Intercultural Communication Skills* (e.g. Lassiter, 1995; Leung & Chiu, 2011; Novinger, 2001; Pratt-Johnson, 2006). Paired t-tests of pre and post means revealed statistically significant positive gains in all three aspects of cultural competence. We also ran a paired t-test on initial and final students’ perceived ex post facto cultural competence mean ratings, resulting in a statistically significant improved rating at the end of the program. When students were asked to explain the change in their ratings, 74% of

the students attributed their increase in cultural competence rating to the SOLES International Experience or SOLES Program/Coursework. Multicultural experiences provide opportunities for practicing one's cross-cultural knowledge, for understanding cultural differences, and for practicing cross-cultural interaction skills (Bennett, 2004; Eichler, 2007; Leung & Chiu, 2011). The results of this study are consistent with the literature and serve as evidence to support the claim that the internationalization graduation requirement at USD SOLES has a positive effect on graduate students' cultural competence levels.

The results of this study not only support the continuance of the internationalization graduation requirement for graduate students in USD's School of Leadership and Education Sciences, but also identify a way to quantitatively capture changes in students' cultural competence levels through student reported variations in aspects of cultural competence. Other graduate schools of education across the country may want to consider including an internationalization component in their program to increase students' *application of context-appropriate cultural knowledge, awareness of general norms of a culture, and utilization of intercultural communication skills*, using an instrument such as the one used for this study to evaluate cultural competence. Future research should focus specifically on which elements of an internationalization program contribute the most to changing cultural competence, such as the pre/post-study abroad course assignments or the relevancy of the international experience to one's desired profession.

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ENTROPY CREEP AND CREDIT HOUR INFLATION

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Introduction

Thermodynamics dictates what happens in nature. Gases expand. Heat flows from hot to cold. Boulders roll down a hill (not up). Ask your favorite physicist for an explanation and you may learn that these processes happen *naturally* because they lead to an increase in entropy of the universe. The Second Law of Thermodynamics decrees that there is a natural tendency for matter and energy to become more dispersed throughout the universe. The Second Law is really an outcome of statistics – whenever a large collection of entities are allowed to jostle about in an independent fashion, they are statistically more likely to become more dissipated. Even when it appears that the law is being violated (for example, whenever non-dissipative self-assembly is observed to occur in a biological cell), a closer investigation will reveal that a compensating dispersal of matter and/or energy is occurring elsewhere, driving the net process. The law doesn't pick favorites – in principle, the *entities* can be anything. Entropy can be quantified even for a collection of nonphysical, abstract symbols that make up a system of communication. The resultant *information entropy* present within a digital communication stream represents a theoretical maximum limit on the amount of meaningful data that can be transmitted within that stream.

Does the Second Law also apply and have an impact within higher education? In this case we are talking about a collection of competing universities, each consisting of students, faculty, staff, and administrative stakeholders who are interacting within a hierarchical framework of classes and university degree offerings. Will entropy-driven dissipation unavoidably take place within such a system, leading to some undesirable dilution of the educational product? If so, what are the relevant dispersing entities and what measures might be instituted to curtail this tendency?

Before treading forward, we should pay heed to the thermodynamic purists who are likely to look upon the application of the Second Law to higher education as utter sacrilege. To the purist,

the Second Law should not be applied to a social model. Entropy maximization arguments should only be invoked when dealing with physical systems of matter and energy that exist and evolve according to well-established equations of motion. A further stipulation exists that the Second Law only applies to systems that are *ergodic*, where the classification ergodic means that the entities in the system are jostling about vigorously enough so that they each have sufficient opportunity to sample all possible outcomes.

To date, scholars have yet to formulate a convincing argument that the laws of thermodynamics, or some comparable analogues, dictate the evolution of social systems. Yet there are those who have attempted to bridge the gap and draw parallels between physical systems - where thermodynamics clearly applies - and the social realm. Economics provides an informative example (Annala and Salthe 2009), especially if one equates quantities of wealth with units of energy that can be purchased for dispersal. Free-market economic decision making that is normally rationalized as being motivated by profit can instead be looked upon as a preference for moving along a path of maximum energy dispersal. Wise investing of a limited amount of wealth boils down to choosing the path that dissipates maximal energy not just for the benefit of the individual, but in a manner that benefits the whole economic system.

The implication that collective economic activity and benefit is synonymous with energy dispersal is ultimately rooted in the basic needs of the individuals that make up society. Abraham Maslow (1908-1970) was an American psychologist famous for presenting a five stage hierarchy of human needs (Maslow 1943). The bottom of the hierarchy includes the most basic physiological and security needs, such as food, warmth, clean water, rest, and shelter. Individuals must attain these basic needs before moving up the hierarchy, and none of them can be attained without some form of wealth that is used to purchase energy that is dispersed. Arguably, even higher-order items listed in Maslow's hierarchy - individual efforts to achieve intimacy, attract a mate, as well as self-esteem and other self-actualization activities (advancing in a career and creative pursuits) - require investments of wealth that invariably lead to energy dispersal.

Thermoeconomists, an identifier coined by American engineer and organizational theorist Myron T. Tribus (b. 1921), recognize the existence of first and second law analogues that can be used to model an economy as a thermodynamic system (Sieniutycz and Salamon 1990; Valero, Serra, and Uche 2006). Thermoeconomists (also known as biophysical economists) maintain that these laws dictate the evolution of not only economic systems, but biological systems. On the surface, biological organisms would seem to operate in defiance of the usual prescriptions of the

Second Law, where dissipation of molecular entities toward equilibrium is normally associated with death. Instead, biological organisms make use of solar derived energies to power structured molecular machinery that in turn allows the organisms to function along pathways away from equilibrium, avoiding immediate entropy death. Biological evolution leading to more sophisticated organisms is only possible through the formation of increasingly complex, self-assembled structures and bio-machinery. Equivalently, economic systems are also reliant on complex structures. The development of industrial machinery and hierarchical structures/organizations that allow individuals and societies to channel investments with greater efficiency promotes economic evolution (Raine, Foster, and Potts 2006). The ability to successfully compete in the marketplace requires access to increased levels of complexity that in turn makes possible increased total energy throughput.

If economic success is only possible through increasing levels of complexity, how exactly does one quantify the complexity present in a venture and gauge whether that scenario represents a smart investment? Information entropy has been postulated as a useful concept/metric that can be employed to quantify the degree of complexity present in an economic system (Raine, Foster, and Potts 2006). Higher entropy configurations of wealth and assets that are achieved during an economic exchange are advantageous because they allow stakeholders to use residual/future wealth and assets to disperse energy with greater efficiency.

Do these thermoeconomic tenets apply within a higher education marketplace where students are exchanging tuition and fees for some level of educational training? What will be demonstrated here is that configurations of tuition dollars/fees, courses, and supporting costs that possess higher information entropy are mutually beneficial (financially) for the students, the institution they attend, and the rest of the economic system involved. Curricula that consist of higher-credit hour courses offer a particularly attractive mutual entropic advantage for the stakeholders involved. This advantage is great enough that it is likely promoting credit inflation in higher education.

Higher Education as an Economic System for Energy Dispersal

From the perspective of a postsecondary student in the United States who is looking to invest in an education, the goal is simple. Each student has a finite pool of dollars, borrowed or not, from which to purchase a scholastic outcome. That outcome can be an associates or baccalaureate degree that will require completion of a large collection of courses across several disciplines, or perhaps a more modest level of training or certification that will entail a subset of one or more

courses and disciplines. While secondary factors - institutional reputation, proximity to home, the accolades of a favorite athletic program - often impact the decision about where to attend college, one must not lose sight of the simple overriding economic driving force that applies to all students in the marketplace. On average, students will gravitate toward programs that allow them to purchase the desired educational outcome for a lower price. Entropy maximization from the perspective of the student involves the dispersal of a limited number of dollars subject to the constraint of achieving the educational outcome. The student cannot spend all of them on the educational outcome, but is motivated to maximally disperse them in a way that gives them the freedom to purchase other life necessities, such as food, shelter, transportation, and perhaps a little entertainment. Students who spend a smaller portion of their wealth on the educational outcome inherit more *degrees of freedom* (and possess more information entropy) to conduct their life and spend their remaining wealth on energy dispersal.

Institutions of higher education have their own entropy game to play. They offer academic courses, degrees, and certifications in exchange for tuition dollars. Institutions that accumulate large amounts of tuition, fees, and other forms of revenue relative to costs inherit more degrees of freedom about how to disperse energy for the purposes of administering and paying the costs of running programs. While fund raising and grant seeking can significantly contribute to those degrees of freedom, those factors will be ignored here for the sake of simplicity. The elements that are being dispersed from the perspective of the institution are the collection of courses that it offers across all academic programs. To maximize revenue, institutions are compelled to (1) charge the highest tuition and fees per course that are reasonably practicable and (2) distribute each course offering across as many students as possible. These two tactics for revenue maximization will hereafter be referred to as options 1 and 2, respectively.

Maximizing Energy Dispersal

Clearly, not many institutions in today's marketplace are able to do the opposite of option 1 and lower tuition, or to be more accurate, lower the average *net price* to attend. Net price should be referenced here rather than raw tuition since it accounts for any financial aid costs that have been contributed by the institution. Yes – lowering the net price to attend would encourage more students to enroll. But even the bulk of the healthiest institutions cannot afford to do this in light of the rising costs of doing business (especially the rising costs of employee benefits). The National Center for Education Statistics (2016) recently reported a 34 percent increase over the last decade in

undergraduate tuition, fees, room, and board at public institutions after accounting for inflation, and a corresponding 25 percent increase for private institutions. At the same time the U.S. Bureau of the Census (2015) reports that real median household income levels have been on the decline since 2000. With a growing percentage of students coming from backgrounds of limited financial means, institutions that are too aggressive with tuition hikes run the risk of pricing themselves out of the marketplace. For this reason, most institutions are being increasingly driven to option 2, distributing each course offering across as many students as possible to maximize revenue.

Enrollments at many large state supported public universities are currently burgeoning. At these schools, maximizing the distribution of students across courses is easy. Enrollment in a class is no longer limited to the few hundred seats found in the largest lecture hall on campus, but can be greatly expanded by offering courses online (Haynie 2014). Online courses offer a triple revenue maximization benefit to the institution: (1) there is no longer a residential requirement to participate in the course (an expanded enrollment base), (2) there is no longer a facilities cost associated with maintaining a physical classroom, and (3) the course can be taught by any qualified individual who has an internet connection (an expanded employment base). What about the majority of U.S. higher education institutions – the ones that do not have a seemingly endless supply of students to fill courses? Like any institution, they can certainly improve their bottom line by offering courses online. But whether courses are offered online or not, how does an institution ultimately exercise option 2 and convince more students to enroll and register for courses?

Credit Hour Inflation

One highly effective method that many institutions have stumbled upon involves increasing how many credit hours are offered for a class. Instead of offering three credits in exchange for completing a course, offer four (or maybe even five or six). Many students, particularly those from non-traditional backgrounds, have a strong preference for high credit hour courses because they allow them to save money in the long run by offering a faster route to degree completion. The need to maximize enrollments might lead some institutions to accept a greater number of transfer credits for incoming students, or to assign credit more readily for advanced placement or international baccalaureate course work.

But if credits are increased for a course, are institutions also committing to a proportionate increase in pedagogical content? In all fairness, most institutions that have boosted credit hours for courses have not done so arbitrarily. They have elected to do so with at least some good intentions

and for what seemed to be sound pedagogical reasoning at the time. Various rationales that have been expounded to inflate the number of credits for a course or courses include the following:

1. Courses will be 'enriched' or 'enhanced' by requiring students to do more out-of-class reading and/or group work.
2. Advances in pedagogy, particularly in online education, make accelerated courses more feasible.
3. The number of tests taken or assignments completed by students in the course will be increased.
4. An increased number of credit hours for these courses will "bring more parity" between the lower-division and upper-division courses.
5. Working adults who take higher-credit courses (many which are offered online) gain convenience.
6. Working adults deserve credit for the life experience that they bring into the course.
7. Accelerated curricula allow students to maximize their use of loans and federal/state grants.
8. Accrediting agencies are pressuring colleges to add requirements for degree completion.
9. Faculty will be required to teach fewer courses overall, leaving more freedom for scholarly pursuits and allowing faculty to be better teacher-scholars.

Are more credits better? Of course, what we really need to be asking is whether or not course learning outcomes are being met or exceeded. On average, do students possess the requisite competencies after completing the course? Unfortunately, arguments about entropy maximization are probably not going to assist us much in answering that question. From a mathematical modeling perspective, tracking the degree of learning that takes place when a broad demographic of students move through a selection of courses is an intractable problem involving too many interrelated variables. While meaningful measures of effective learning may often evade us, perhaps we are equipped to focus on a simpler problem - do more credits per course lead to higher entropy configurations of tuition dollars/courses that are in turn mutually beneficial to the student, the institution, and the marketplace?

Case Scenario

To help us address this question in more detail, let's consider the simplified circumstance of a cohort of students who wish to earn a college certification in bagpiping. The students in question can elect to attend one of two nearby universities (A and B) that offer the desired training and that are of comparable reputation. Both institutions have struggled in recent years to meet enrollment targets, are equally aggressive in trying to recruit prospective students, and consequently offer the same average financial aid packages to incentivize attendance. To further simplify matters, let's assume that each university charges the exact same tuition and fees to enroll and complete a twelve credit hour curriculum in bagpiping certification.

Upon close inspection, students discover one key difference between the bagpiping curricula associated with these institutions. University A is on the credit hour system and requires students to complete four 3-credit bagpiping courses. Four semesters of enrollment will be required to complete the sequence. However, University B has recently shifted from a credit hour system to a unit system where each course is worth 4 credits. Under the University B system, the certification in bagpiping can be accomplished within three sequential semesters by taking three 4-credit courses.

To make our modeling more realistic, we should also account for the fact that the exchange for tuition and fees for a college certification is not taking place in a vacuum. The university will need to hire faculty to teach each course, and students will have cost of living expenses to pay on top of tuition and fees. To adequately account for these additional factors, we will assume that a third party is involved which we will call the *surroundings*. The surroundings can be thought of as a nearby marketplace from which the university can hire faculty in exchange for salary-benefits and from which students can purchase room and board.

The resultant exchanges that will take place when a cohort of twenty students completes the bagpiping curricula at University A versus University B are depicted in Figure 1. Within this diagram, '\$' represents a unit of wealth, 'C' represents 3-credits of course curriculum, 'G' represents one semester of room and board (goods) for the entire cohort of students, and 'F' represents the cost of hiring a faculty member and other programming and infrastructure costs in support of a one-semester course.

A careful examination of the initial and final configurations in Figure 1 will reveal that the total amount of \$, C, G, and F is conserved (i.e., nothing was created or destroyed during the exchanges). Importantly, the interpretation of the outcome of the resultant exchanges will take on added meaning if we model the system in such a way that the monetary values of each unit of \$, C, G, and

F are equal. Using a cohort size of about twenty students conveniently makes this feasible. Twenty students can be adequately instructed by offering one section of the course taught by one faculty member. The *tuition and fees per credit hour* charged by universities is currently running about \$500 when averaged across a representative number of public and private institutions. Multiplying this amount by 3-credits and further by twenty students gives us a benchmark monetary value of \$40,000 for each unit of \$, C, G, and F. The value \$40,000 offers a reasonable estimate that can simultaneously represent the value of tuition and fees paid to the university by twenty students (\$) for 3-credits of coursework (C), a modest cost of living to support our twenty students for one semester (G), and the salary-benefits for a faculty member to teach a one-semester course, plus any other programming and infrastructure costs associated with offering the semester long course (F).

Which exchange is more advantageous? Since we have set the monetary values of \$, C, G, and F equal, there is no immediate increase in wealth for any member of the system. Consequently, quick monetary gain can be ruled out as a motivator for either scenario. To see how entropy maximization might help us decide which exchange is better, we need a way to calculate the amount of entropy associated with the students, the university, and the surroundings, before and after the cohort completes each course sequence. A number of mathematical formulas have been offered for calculating the entropy of systems consisting of entities of various types that have been arranged to achieve a particular configuration. These formulas are all statistical in origin and require as input one or more parameters that describe the probability that an entity can be found within a particular configuration. Perhaps the most convenient formula to use here comes from the field of information theory and is defined by the equation

$$Entropy = - \sum_i p_i \log_2 p_i, \quad (1)$$

where the notation \sum_i indicates summation over all types of entities that are found in a configuration, p_i represents the probability that a particular entity will be selected if one is randomly selected from the configuration, and \log_2 represents the mathematical base-2 logarithm. The logarithmic dependence on probability is mathematically convenient when defining a statistical entropy because it is additive over independent sources (i.e., taking advantage of the mathematical property $\log[a \cdot b] = \log[a] + \log[b]$). The formula shown in equation 1 defines what is now commonly referred to as *Shannon entropy*; originally introduced by the key founder of the field of information theory, C. E. Shannon (1948). When applied to communication streams, Shannon entropies can be interpreted as the maximum number of meaningful *bits* of information that can be encoded in a stream of characters.

| | Cohort (20 Students) | University | Surroundings | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|------------|--------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|--|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|---|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| Initial Configuration | <table><tr><td>\$</td><td>\$</td></tr><tr><td>\$</td><td>\$</td></tr><tr><td>\$</td><td>\$</td></tr><tr><td>\$</td><td>\$</td></tr></table> | \$ | \$ | \$ | \$ | \$ | \$ | \$ | \$ | <table><tr><td>C</td><td>\$</td></tr><tr><td>C</td><td>\$</td></tr><tr><td>C</td><td>\$</td></tr><tr><td>C</td><td>\$</td></tr></table> | C | \$ | C | \$ | C | \$ | C | \$ | <table><tr><td>G</td><td>F</td></tr><tr><td>G</td><td>F</td></tr><tr><td>G</td><td>F</td></tr><tr><td>G</td><td>F</td></tr></table> | G | F | G | F | G | F | G | F |
| \$ | \$ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| \$ | \$ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| \$ | \$ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| \$ | \$ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| C | \$ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| C | \$ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| C | \$ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| C | \$ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| G | F | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| G | F | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| G | F | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| G | F | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Note: \$ = C = G = F monetarily | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Final Configuration - University A: Completed in 4 Semesters | <table><tr><td>C</td><td>G</td></tr><tr><td>C</td><td>G</td></tr><tr><td>C</td><td>G</td></tr><tr><td>C</td><td>G</td></tr></table> | C | G | C | G | C | G | C | G | <table><tr><td>\$</td><td>F</td></tr><tr><td>\$</td><td>F</td></tr><tr><td>\$</td><td>F</td></tr><tr><td>\$</td><td>F</td></tr></table> | \$ | F | \$ | F | \$ | F | \$ | F | <table><tr><td>\$</td><td>\$</td></tr><tr><td>\$</td><td>\$</td></tr><tr><td>\$</td><td>\$</td></tr><tr><td>\$</td><td>\$</td></tr></table> | \$ | \$ | \$ | \$ | \$ | \$ | \$ | \$ |
| C | G | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| C | G | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| C | G | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| C | G | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| \$ | F | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| \$ | F | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| \$ | F | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| \$ | F | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| \$ | \$ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| \$ | \$ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| \$ | \$ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| \$ | \$ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Final Configuration- University B: Completed in 3 Semesters | <table><tr><td>C</td><td>\$</td></tr><tr><td>C</td><td>G</td></tr><tr><td>C</td><td>G</td></tr><tr><td>C</td><td>G</td></tr></table> | C | \$ | C | G | C | G | C | G | <table><tr><td>\$</td><td>\$</td></tr><tr><td>\$</td><td>F</td></tr><tr><td>\$</td><td>F</td></tr><tr><td>\$</td><td>F</td></tr></table> | \$ | \$ | \$ | F | \$ | F | \$ | F | <table><tr><td>G</td><td>F</td></tr><tr><td>\$</td><td>\$</td></tr><tr><td>\$</td><td>\$</td></tr><tr><td>\$</td><td>\$</td></tr></table> | G | F | \$ | \$ | \$ | \$ | \$ | \$ |
| C | \$ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| C | G | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| C | G | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| C | G | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| \$ | \$ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| \$ | F | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| \$ | F | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| \$ | F | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| G | F | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| \$ | \$ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| \$ | \$ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| \$ | \$ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

Figure 1: An exchange of wealth (\$), courses (C), goods in support of student cost of living (G), and faculty workforce/programming costs (F) between a cohort of 20 students, a university, and a surroundings, depicted for two hypothetical case scenarios, one involving a 12-credit curriculum that is completed in four semesters (University A) and another that is completed in three semesters (University B).

Table 1 shows how to apply equation 1 when calculating the total Shannon entropy associated with the hypothetical exchanges described above (and depicted in Figure 1), with individual entropy contributions from the student cohort, university, and surroundings worked out explicitly for the three configurations in each case. A comparison of the initial configuration to one final configuration – scenario A - reveals that the total entropy did not change at all during this exchange. While the entropy of the student cohort increased by one, the entropy of the university was unchanged and the entropy of the surroundings decreased by one. While the student was able to purchase the desired educational outcome, there is no *net* advantage for the participants from an entropy maximization perspective when the students complete the four semester sequence in

bagpiping, and therefore there is comparatively lower motivation for participants to take part in this exchange.

| | |
|--|--|
| Initial Configuration | Cohort (20 Students): 8·\$. Entropy = $-\left[\left(\frac{8}{8}\right) \log_2 \left(\frac{8}{8}\right)\right] = 0$ |
| | University: 4·C and 4·\$. Entropy = $-\left[\left(\frac{4}{8}\right) \log_2 \left(\frac{4}{8}\right)\right] - \left[\left(\frac{4}{8}\right) \log_2 \left(\frac{4}{8}\right)\right] = 1$ |
| | Surroundings: 4·G and 4·F. Entropy = $-\left[\left(\frac{4}{8}\right) \log_2 \left(\frac{4}{8}\right)\right] - \left[\left(\frac{4}{8}\right) \log_2 \left(\frac{4}{8}\right)\right] = 1$ |
| | Total Entropy = 0 + 1 + 1 = 2 |
| Final Configuration – Scenario A: 4 Semesters | Cohort (20 Students): 4·C and 4·G. Entropy = $-\left[\left(\frac{4}{8}\right) \log_2 \left(\frac{4}{8}\right)\right] - \left[\left(\frac{4}{8}\right) \log_2 \left(\frac{4}{8}\right)\right] = 1$ |
| | University: 4·\$ and 4·F. Entropy = $-\left[\left(\frac{4}{8}\right) \log_2 \left(\frac{4}{8}\right)\right] - \left[\left(\frac{4}{8}\right) \log_2 \left(\frac{4}{8}\right)\right] = 1$ |
| | Surroundings: 8·\$. Entropy = $-\left[\left(\frac{8}{8}\right) \log_2 \left(\frac{8}{8}\right)\right] = 0$ |
| | Total Entropy = 1 + 1 + 0 = 2 |
| Final Configuration- Scenario B: 3 Semesters | Cohort (20 Students): 4·C, 3·G, and 1·\$. Entropy = $-\left[\left(\frac{4}{8}\right) \log_2 \left(\frac{4}{8}\right)\right] - \left[\left(\frac{3}{8}\right) \log_2 \left(\frac{3}{8}\right)\right] - \left[\left(\frac{1}{8}\right) \log_2 \left(\frac{1}{8}\right)\right] = 1.41$ |
| | University: 5·\$ and 3·F. Entropy = $-\left[\left(\frac{5}{8}\right) \log_2 \left(\frac{5}{8}\right)\right] - \left[\left(\frac{3}{8}\right) \log_2 \left(\frac{3}{8}\right)\right] = 0.95$ |
| | Surroundings: 6·\$, 1·G, and 1·F. Entropy = $-\left[\left(\frac{6}{8}\right) \log_2 \left(\frac{6}{8}\right)\right] - \left[\left(\frac{1}{8}\right) \log_2 \left(\frac{1}{8}\right)\right] - \left[\left(\frac{1}{8}\right) \log_2 \left(\frac{1}{8}\right)\right] = 1.06$ |
| | Total Entropy = 1.41 + 0.95 + 1.06 = 3.42 |

Table 1: Calculation of total Shannon entropies using equation 1 for the initial and final configurations depicted in Figure 1, with individual entropy contributions due to the student cohort, university, and surroundings illustrated in each case.

However, a similar comparison of the initial configuration to the other final configuration – scenario B – reveals a comparatively large net increase in total entropy for the participants when the exchange of courses is completed in three semesters (a net entropy increase of 1.42 units is realized). Consequently, this exchange is mutually beneficial to the participants. Scenario B is particularly attractive from the standpoint of the students, who experience an entropy increase of 1.41 units (0.41 units larger than what the students experienced in scenario A). An especially important added bonus associated with scenario B is the shorter time investment for all parties involved. Economic advantage is associated with processes that yield the highest *rate* of entropy increase (i.e., maximal entropy generated over the shortest amount of time). Consequently, scenario B not only translates into more net entropy increase, but the net gain is realized over a shorter time frame.

Other practical benefits follow from the shorter time investment that will likely work to the advantage of the participants. Since the students completed the training a semester early, they are in a position to gain a higher paying job sooner, thereby acquiring greater wealth overall. That wealth can subsequently be spent or invested, generating even greater entropy maximization in the marketplace. Furthermore, the university only had to invest in three faculty rather than four, and saved one semester's worth of program support costs. What might the university do with that savings? It could be immediately reinvested in a new student cohort, further maximizing revenue generation, and thereby further magnifying the entropy maximization for all parties involved. The saved costs could also be invested in new academic programming, which attracts new students who seek alternative forms of training, which in turn opens new avenues for entropy maximization.

At this stage, it is essential to recognize that information entropy arguments *alone* do not fully inform us about what constitutes the better investment. Léon Brillouin, who introduced the concept of *negentropy* as a way to demonstrate the correspondence between traditional entropy and information (Brillouin 1953), noted that while the concept of entropy allows one to quantify the amount of information present in a configuration, it tells us nothing about the *value* of the information present in that communication (Brillouin 1956). The concept of value carries with it considerable subjectivity that depends on the interests of sellers and buyers (Feistel and Ebeling 2016). Value may be defined in terms of the usefulness of an asset to the owner. Alternatively, value may be expressed as monetary value received during a market exchange. Information entropy considered alone informs us about neither of these perspectives on value.

However, economists have embraced Shannon entropy as a measure of healthy diversification (Attaran and Zwick 1989). The exchanges illustrated in Figure 1 and resultant information entropies summarized in Table 1 should be interpreted in this same manner - a student electing to undertake scenario B rather than scenario A will realize a more diverse portfolio of wealth and assets. But the wise investor should not stop here. When comparing scenarios, students and institutions alike need to consider non-entropy related arguments in order to assess whether the final outlays of wealth and assets are attractive from a value perspective. For example, the cost of living units (G) purchased by the students in exchange for wealth (\$) in both exchanges are consumable (nondurable) goods. Once consumed, these goods no longer offer any value to the owner. From the perspective of the institution, faculty salaries and benefits (F) represent a consumable that no longer holds value to the institution once it has been spent, although in this case the faculty member may bank some portion of the salary and benefits, which in turn enhances their portfolio.

The Potential Dark Side of Credit Hour Inflation

Economists argue that a little bit of inflation is a good thing. Inflation is a natural characteristic of systems that are growing. Growth must occur in an economy. Otherwise participants will not invest, further perpetuating stagnation throughout the whole system. Everyone suffers as a consequence. A little inflation in an economy is seen as a sign of an overall healthy marketplace where businesses are innovating, money is exchanging hands, and near-term investments are likely to grow in value.

Can analogous arguments be made about credit hour inflation? If the reasoning presented herein is accepted as true, then a little credit hour inflation certainly carries with it an economic advantage for the participants involved. But does this economic advantage come at a price? The real question that needs to be addressed: when curricula are restructured around a system in which courses carry more credits, does an equivalent amount of additional learning taking place? When comparing the two hypothetical scenarios presented here for bagpiping certification, is a 12-credit curriculum offered under a credit hour system equivalent to a 12-credit curriculum offered under a unit system?

No doubt, many institutions will answer this question affirmatively. But one has to ask whether the economic benefits that accompany credit hour inflation cloud judgments on this question and promote a culture where the temptation to turn a blind eye is too powerful. This would not be a problem if all institutions acknowledged and rigidly followed the same standard for

what constitutes a credit hour. The most widely recognized standard, the Carnegie Unit (Silva, White, and Toch 2015, 10), has been increasingly criticized as placing too much emphasis on the amount of 'seat time' and not enough emphasis on 'learning outcomes.' In the interest of promoting deeper learning across a more diverse student population, national and regional accreditors are embracing more competency-based definitions for the credit hour and encouraging greater transparency in how student performance is assessed (Silva, White, and Toch 2015, 11-12). New definitions allow institutions to offer more flexible educational pathways that appeal to a wider range of learners. Ultimately, these new standards permit greater institutional flexibility in defining how many credits are assigned for various types of student work (Southern Association of Colleges and School 2012; Blumenstyk 2010).

Switching from a credit hour system to a unit curriculum has been promoted at many institutions as a healthy transition that will lower overall teaching workloads for faculty and allow more time for scholarship pursuits. But before faculty begin celebrating, they should acknowledge a harsh reality. In an increasingly competitive higher education marketplace with fewer real tuition dollars to share, an institution is likely to conclude that its short term economic picture is significantly improved by increasing the number of credits assigned to a course (for example, by switching to a unit curriculum) and decreasing the overall number of faculty employed. An institution no longer needs the same number of faculty if it is suddenly requiring students to complete fewer courses. To make matters worse, and assuming the institution has preserved the pedagogical content after transitioning to the unit curriculum, the faculty who remain do not end up teaching less. They will have to teach more, and it is doubtful that those faculty will receive a proportionate compensation adjustment.

What becomes of any operating costs that an institution saves when it offers higher credit hour courses? There are many possibilities. Some would be deemed healthy in terms of enhancing academic quality and student learning, such as reinvesting the savings in existing programs that have a demonstrated strength and that are clearly preparing students for fulfilling and in-demand jobs. And obviously there are some unhealthy choices for reinvestment, such as the creation of new academic programs that, while attractive to new students, do not line up with a real market need. Many point toward the proliferation of administrative staff and university support services as another questionable investment that does not necessarily translate into better learning (Ginsberg 2011a; Ginsberg 2011b; Friedman, Hampton-Sosa, and Friedman 2014). Others contend that 'administrative bloat' in higher education is largely a myth - the number of administrative and

support staff has increased moderately, but only in response to rising student enrollments (Hiltonsmith 2015). Advocates of this latter opinion instead point toward decreases in state funding and escalating health care costs as the major causes of rising tuitions (Hiltonsmith 2015, 11).

In light of the disadvantages that are likely to accompany credit hour inflation, including the questionable impact that it ultimately has on student learning, perhaps it would be better if institutions just avoided the practice. Sadly, it is too late to make that decision. All other factors equal, institutions that elect to take the high road on this issue will find it difficult to attract students and remain competitive against institutions that have already embraced the practice.

Conclusion

One certainly does not have to resort to arguments about entropy and invoke the Second Law to reach many of the conclusions argued herein. While the jury has yet to decide whether the Second Law plays a decisive role in the evolution of economic and other social systems, the concept of entropy and the computation of entropy changes provide alternate ways of contemplating higher education as an economic exchange. Definitions of entropy borrowed from information theory can be employed to carry out cost-benefit analyses, equipping us to identify scenarios that are mutually beneficial and that extend beyond the realization of immediate (short-term) investment growth for any party involved. Exchanges that allow one or more stakeholders to achieve the desired outcome while retaining alternate forms of wealth/assets lead to higher net information entropy that in turn afford stakeholders more options about how future wealth and assets will be spent and invested to fulfill needs. In the world of investments, diversification within a portfolio is considered a healthy choice. Equivalently, one can acknowledge that configurations of wealth and assets that possess relatively high information entropy are considered healthy.

Entropy analyses as presented here do not inform us about what constitutes effective learning. To state the obvious, student, faculty, and administrative stakeholders clearly have longer-term needs that can only be met if institutions offer a high quality education. Education empowers the individual to climb toward the top of Maslow's hierarchy and reach for those needs that give life true meaning. Reaching higher-level needs will require smart investments of wealth. From an economic diversification perspective, the most promising long term investments will be identifiable as those possessed of the highest information entropy. However, configurations of wealth and assets will need to be modeled far beyond degree completion if the results are to hold any real

meaning. The challenge that all stakeholders face is how to balance short term economic need with long term self-actualization.

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POTENTIAL PREDICTORS OF SUCCESS IN A SPEECH-LANGUAGE PATHOLOGY GRADUATE PROGRAM

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Speech-language pathology (SLP) is a profession involving diagnosis and treatment of a variety of communication and swallowing disorders. A master's degree is required for national certification through the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA, 2014) and for state professional licensure (United States Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2015). During the early 1990s the number of applicants to SLP graduate programs increased due to heightened interest and a widening of the scope of practice (Forrest & Naremore, 1999). The scope of practice has expanded to include diagnostic and treatment services in seven major areas of communication, swallowing and related disorders (ASHA, 2014), necessitating additional curriculum requirements.

Communication processes and disorders involve complex behaviors, typically requiring consideration of multiple factors when planning treatment. Meanwhile, new treatment procedures are continuously being developed and included in the scope of practice, some of which are controversial or invasive, such as neuromuscular electrical stimulation and endoscopy. In order to function effectively in the profession, speech-language pathologists must have sound oral and written communication skills and be able to analyze information, evaluate risks and benefits, and solve complex clinical problems. In the SLP graduate program at Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center-Shreveport (LSUHSCS), anecdotal evidence and an increase in the number of students placed on academic probation during their first year of study suggest that increasing numbers of entering students have difficulty demonstrating or developing these requisite skills.

The SLP graduate program at LSUHSCS is one of six allied health disciplines in the School of Allied Health Professions (SAHP), which is one of the three major academic divisions at LSUHSCS. A

medical school and a graduate school offering research doctoral programs in basic and health sciences comprise the other two major academic divisions. The SLP program admits up to 17 students per academic year, for a typical total maximum enrollment of 34 first and second year students. The program gives equal admission consideration to “background” students, which refers to those with an undergraduate major in communication disorders, and “non-background” students, those with an undergraduate degree in a field of study other than communication disorders. Non-background students are not required to complete any additional undergraduate courses in communication disorders in order to be admitted to the program.

The two primary criteria used for admission are cumulative undergraduate grade point average (UGPA), defined as the cumulative GPA based on all work attempted prior to the date of graduate application, and the total (verbal plus quantitative) score on the Graduate Record Examination (GRE) (Educational Testing Service). Other criteria are personal narrative or essay, letters of recommendation, GRE analytical writing score, and resume. In order to earn the degree, students must achieve a graduate GPA (GGPA), defined as the cumulative GPA on all work completed at LSUHSCS, of at least 3.0, and must successfully pass written comprehensive exams. Comprehensive exams consist of ten questions designed to assess students’ knowledge of content across courses and SLP practice areas. In addition, students must eventually achieve a passing score on the Praxis Examination in Speech-Language Pathology (“Praxis”) (Educational Testing Service). Students are not required to pass the Praxis in order to graduate from the program, but must earn the minimum required score in order to be granted the ASHA Certificate of Clinical Competence (ASHA, 2014).

The criteria used to select students for admission to graduate programs, including speech-language pathology master’s programs, depend on the requirements of the university, but GRE scores and UGPA are typically weighted heavily (Halberstam & Redstone, 2005). However, students entering allied health professions and related fields may need a more diverse set of skills than those measured by the GRE (Forrest & Naremore, 1998; Halberstam & Redstone, 2005; Sternberg & Williams, 1997). For students preparing to enter professions in which complex problem solving will be required, as with SLP, assessment of skills related to problem-solving can aid faculty in making decisions about admissions, curriculum, and provision of extra support (Jones & Davidson, 2007). For the speech-language pathology curriculum in particular, the use of linguistic measures to aid in these decisions is promising because of the importance of linguistic skills in the graduate curriculum and professional practice. In addition to the writing skills needed for report writing and academic work, students must achieve competency in clinical linguistics and phonetics, evaluation of pediatric

and adult language skills, and treatment planning for clients with language disorders. This study will contribute to the LSUHSCS program and the profession by enhancing student preparation in two ways: (a) providing an additional mechanism to identify, prior to admission, which students are most likely to successfully complete the program; and (b) providing a mechanism for identifying students who are already enrolled or have already been offered enrollment, who may need extra support in order to successfully complete the program.

Literature Review

In order to ensure effective use of resources in higher education, decisions about admissions are ideally based on factors most likely to predict successful program completion. This is particularly true for graduate level programs, which are likely to involve a relatively high cost per student. Concerns regarding grade inflation (Rosovsky & Hartley, 2002) call into question, at least to some degree, the value of undergraduate grade point average (UGPA) as an indicator of potential for success in graduate school. In the area of speech-language pathology (SLP) there is little research concerning predictors of success; however, because SLP is an example of a profession in which problem solving skills are required for successful practice, literature regarding success in other fields requiring these skills is relevant to the present study. Therefore, the literature review will include studies related to general predictors of graduate school success, studies specific to SLP graduate programs, and studies from other disciplines that address certain indicators of problem solving skills.

The question of which variables most effectively predict success in graduate school has been studied in multiple disciplines, using a variety of independent and dependent variables. Two measures that have been addressed in several studies are GRE scores and UGPA. For example, Sternberg and Williams (1997) investigated whether Verbal, Quantitative, Analytical, and Psychology Subject Area scores predicted performance of psychology graduate students. Performance was measured by faculty ratings of students' analytical, creative, practical, and research abilities; first- and second-year graduate GGPA; and ratings by dissertation readers. Results indicated that GRE component scores were fair predictors of GGPA, particularly in the first year of graduate study. However, in general, GRE scores did not correlate significantly with analytical, creative, practical, or research ability or dissertation ratings.

Johnson-Motoyama, Petr, and Mitchell (2014) studied predictors of success in a social work doctoral program by analyzing the correlations between multiple factors, including GRE scores, UGPA, race, age and international student status, with program completion, length of time needed

to complete the degree, and first-year doctoral GPA. Results showed that the Quantitative GRE score, first-year doctoral GPA, and age of the student at the time of admission were associated with successful completion of the program, while Verbal GRE and UGPA were significantly correlated with first-year doctoral GPA. In the discussion of potential study limitations and directions for future research, Johnson-Motoyama, Petr, and Mitchell (2014) noted that other important information, such as personal statement and references, were not included, and suggested that these variables be included in future studies concerning prediction of graduate school success.

On a broader scale, Kuncel, Hezlett, and Ones (2001) completed a meta-analysis of 1,521 studies that examined the predictive utility of the GRE and GGPA relative to performance in graduate school. Eight different criteria were analyzed across a variety of academic disciplines. Findings indicated that GRE scores and UGPA were consistently predictive of success as measured by overall cumulative GGPA, first-year GGPA (GPA based only on the first year of graduate study), comprehensive examination scores, number of publications, and faculty ratings. Graduate Record Examination (GRE) Subject Tests were found to have a higher degree of predictive accuracy than Verbal, Quantitative and Analytical tests. In a later study, Kuncel and Hezlett (2005) addressed the question of which variables predict success in graduate school in a qualitative analysis and synthesis of findings from prior studies, spanning multiple disciplines, focusing on the predictive value of standardized tests. Four types of findings occurred consistently: (a) standardized tests predicted graduate school success effectively; (b) both test scores and grades predicted other graduate school outcomes besides grades; (c) admissions tests predicted most indicators of success more effectively than grades; and (d) the combined record of tests and grades was the most accurate predictor of success.

Despite the strong support in the literature for the predictive value of GRE scores, stronger support for other variables is found in some studies, including two that focused on predictors of success specific to speech-language pathology programs. Forrest and Naremore (1998) analyzed several objective and subjective measures to determine which variables predicted graduate school success in a single speech-language pathology program. Indicators of success were GGPA, Praxis scores, and relative standing in the class, based on faculty ratings that assigned students to “top” or “bottom” of the class. Results showed that UGPA predicted relative class standing with 93% accuracy. The predictive value of the UGPA was found to be 10 times greater than the undergraduate major, which was the second-strongest predictor variable. Students with an undergraduate major other than communication disorders were actually more likely to be successful

in the speech-language pathology graduate program. The variable with the least predictive value for success was GRE scores, particularly verbal and quantitative scores, which were found to have 500 and 3000 times less weight, respectively, in terms of predicting success, compared to undergraduate GPA.

Halberstam and Redstone (2007) also studied predictors of graduate school success specific to speech-language pathology. This study did not include GRE score as a predictor variable; in fact, the authors noted that the university from which the sample was obtained did not include GRE scores in its admissions criteria. The predictor variables were UGPA in the major; overall UGPA; rating of the personal essay using a four-point scale devised by the researchers; rating of work experience; and letters of recommendation. Criteria selected as indicators of academic success were a subjective, binary designation as weaker or stronger clinically and academically by faculty members, and graduate GPA. The researchers found that the undergraduate GPA in the major and quality of letters of recommendation predicted the subjective designation of students as weak or strong. The overall undergraduate GPA, major GPA, quality of personal statement, and recommendation letters predicted the more objective criterion, which was GGPA.

Two studies applied Astin's (1991, cited in Moore, 2013) input-environment-output model to research involving success in speech-language pathology graduate programs. Moore (2013) applied the model in seeking to determine relationships among input variables, environment during graduate school, and performance on the PRAXIS exam. Input variables were age, gender, ACT (American College Testing Program) scores, four-year undergraduate GPA, and two-year undergraduate GPA. The graduate GPA was designated as the "environment" variable, based on the rationale that the GPA reflected the student's understanding of instruction provided via the graduate curriculum. The Praxis score was designated as the output variable. Moderately strong to strong correlations were found between multiple input variables and the dependent variable. Stepwise regression analysis revealed that the total GRE score, GRE quantitative score, four-year UGPA, and GRE writing score were strongly predictive of the Praxis score.

Kjelgaard and Guarino (2012) also designated GGPA as the environment variable and Praxis score as the output variable in Astin's (1991) model in an analysis of 12 student records. However, Kjelgaard and Guarino (2012) studied a different set of inputs: undergraduate major, dichotomized as communication disorders versus other major; overall UGPA, Verbal, and Quantitative GRE. Results supported the combination of UGPA, Verbal GRE, and Quantitative GRE as predictive of GGPA, and also supported GGPA as a strong predictor of Praxis score.

Another category of relevant research studies is those that examined language measures, such as grammatical complexity and idea density, as indicators of certain cognitive skills. Snowdon et al. (1996) analyzed the idea density and grammatical complexity of autobiographies that had been written by young women upon entering a convent. These two measures were included in the study by Snowdon et al. (1996) because of results from prior studies (e.g., Lazar, Darlington, Murray, & Snipper, 1982; Sternberg & Powell, 1987) that supported the association between these measures and factors such as educational level, vocabulary, and general knowledge, working memory, performance on timed tasks, and writing ability. Low scores for idea density and grammatical complexity were associated with lower scores on cognitive measures later in life. Additionally, Snowdon et al. found that low idea density was a particularly strong predictor of lower cognitive performance and Alzheimer's disease in late adulthood.

Linguistic ability as an indicator of intellectual ability, including problem-solving ability, has also been examined in the context of achievement in higher education. Jones and Davidson (2007) completed a study of problem-solving skills among undergraduate business and accounting students based on the proposition that individuals with superior problem-solving skills would likely be successful in determining solutions to complex, unstructured problems such as those often found in accounting practice. The study compared grammatical complexity, idea density, and a third measure, the Paragraph Completion Test (Schroder, Driver, & Streufer, 1967, as cited in Jones & Davidson, 2007) in terms of how effectively the measures predicted performance of undergraduate business and accounting students on structured and unstructured tasks. Results indicated that the paragraph completion test and idea density measures discriminated between higher-performing and lower-performing students on open-ended, unstructured questions, although neither discriminated between the two groups for structured questions.

Davidson, Slotnick, and Waldman (2000) also investigated linguistic complexity and idea density, among other variables, as indicators of problem solving skills for structured and unstructured problems in a higher education setting. Linguistic measures were completed for 90 junior and senior accounting students using written responses to structured and unstructured hypothetical case scenarios. Results indicated that idea density, but not grammatical complexity, was significantly related to ability to solve unstructured problems, while none of the independent variables were significantly related to the ability to solve structured problems. The researchers suggested that findings regarding problem-solving skills in one discipline may have implications for

other fields. This point is relevant to the current study, because the solving of complex problems is a skill which is also important in Allied Health Professions, including speech-language pathology.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

The present study was designed to evaluate the value of selected admissions criteria and other data as possible predictors of outcomes in a speech-language pathology program. Dependent variables (outcomes) were overall GGPA, PRAXIS score, and comprehensive exam results. The primary independent (predictor) variable of interest was idea density. Idea density was defined as the average number of novel linguistic units, or ideas, per 10 sentences, as described in Snowdon et al. (1996). Total GRE score, UGPA, and probation status were used as independent variables in the analysis. Probation status referred to whether the student was placed on academic probation (GGPA less than 3.0) at any point during graduate school enrollment.

The Research questions were: 1. Does idea density predict success in graduate school, as measured by the selected outcomes of GGPA, PRAXIS, and comprehensive exam results? 2. How does idea density compare with other variables as a predictor of the selected outcomes? The hypothesis was that the idea density score as calculated from student admissions essays can predict student success in a speech-language pathology master's program, as measured by final GPA, comprehensive exam results, and PRAXIS exam scores, more accurately than UGPA, GRE scores or academic probation. The null hypothesis was that idea density is not a better predictor of outcomes than UGPA, GRE scores, or academic probation in predicting GGPA, comprehensive exam results, and/or Praxis scores.

Method

Fifty records of students who completed the master's program in SLP at Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center-Shreveport (LSUHSCS) between the academic years 2002 and 2013 were randomly selected from departmental records. The sample size of 50 was approximately one third of the total records for that time frame. Although this sample may be considered a convenience sample, all individuals seeking certification in speech -language pathology must meet the curriculum standards set by the Council for Academic Accreditation in Speech-Language Pathology (ASHA, 2014). Therefore, some degree of generalizability can be expected from these results to accredited programs at other educational institutions.

The following numerical data were taken from each record: cumulative undergraduate GPA, total (verbal + quantitative) GRE score, final graduate GPA, and Praxis score. The admissions essay, information about academic probation and program completion, and comprehensive exam results for each record were also collected. The admissions essays were submitted as part of the application materials in response to a request for a “personal statement.” Regarding comprehensive exam scores, students in the speech-language pathology program may earn three possible grades on their initial attempt at comprehensive exams. A score of “pass” on nine or ten questions constitutes an overall grade of unconditional pass. Achieving passing scores on eight questions results in a grade of conditional pass, in which case the student may re-write answers for the two failed questions. Passing scores on seven or fewer questions constitutes an overall fail. These three types of results were represented using a 3-point scale: 3 (pass), 2 (conditional pass) and 1 (fail). Probation status, which refers to whether the student was placed on academic probation at any time during the program, was converted to a binary nominal scale for data analysis: 2 (yes), 1 (no). Copies were also made of each student’s personal narrative for future analysis. Each copy was reviewed for the presence of any identifying information within the text; all names or other potentially identifying information, such as place of employment, were removed or marked through. In order to protect the confidentiality of the records, a code was assigned to each record, after which the original records were returned to the file storage area within the department.

For each personal narrative, idea density was measured using the Computerized Propositional Idea Density Rater, fourth major version (CPIDR 4). This software, which may be downloaded free of charge for non-commercial use, provides a relatively easy to use, highly reliable means of measuring idea density (Brown, Snodgrass, Kemper, Herman & Covington, 2008). The first 10 sentences of each personal narrative were entered into the CPIDR 4. This procedure differed from that used by Halberstam and Redstone (2005) in that the numerical data for the personal essay in the Halberstam and Redstone study were generated by evaluating the essays using a four-point scale, while the present study used ordinal data based on idea density scores.

Data Analysis

Correlations between dependent and independent variables were calculated using Microsoft Office Excel, 2010, with data analysis package add-on, with alpha level of .05. Significance and degree of correlations were interpreted using accepted guidelines, as provided by Salkind (2013), with correlations of .6 to .8 representing a strong relationship between two variables, .4 to .6 a

moderate relationship, .2 to .4 a weak relationship, and .0 to .2 representing a weak or no relationship.

Results

Correlations were examined for 12 pairs of variables. Results of the correlational analysis are shown in Table 1. No significant correlation was found between the predictor variables idea density (ID) or UGPA and any dependent variable or outcome (GGPA, comprehensives, Praxis). A moderate correlation was found between total GRE and Praxis score, but total GRE did not correlate to GGPA

Table 1
Correlation of potential predictors of graduate school success

| Predictors: | ID | GRE (V+Q) | UGPA | Probation |
|--------------------|---------|---------------|-------|---------------|
| Outcomes: | | | | |
| Graduate GPA | 0.054 | 0.400 | 0.416 | 0.0390 |
| Comprehensives | -0.0172 | 0.190 | 0.009 | 0.632* |
| SLP Praxis | -0.017 | 0.622* | 0.158 | 0.306 |

or comprehensives. Student probation moderately correlated to written comprehensive outcome, but not to Praxis score or GGPA.

Discussion

The discussion will relate the results to the previously stated research questions:

1. *Does idea density predict success in graduate school, as measured by the selected outcomes of GGPA, comprehensive exam, and PRAXIS results?*
2. *How does idea density compare with other independent variables as a predictor of the selected outcomes?*

The hypothesis was that the idea density score as calculated from student admissions essays could predict student success in a speech-language pathology master's program, as measured by GGPA, comprehensive exam results, and Praxis scores, more accurately than UGPA, total GRE scores, and probation status. The null hypothesis was that idea density is not a better predictor of outcomes than UGPA, total GRE scores, or student probation in predicting final GGPA, comprehensive exam

results, and/or Praxis exam scores.

Results showed that idea density did not correlate with any of the three outcomes and in fact, it was shown to be less of a predictor than student probation and total GRE. However, this may be influenced by the writing sample used, which was a sample prepared in advance by the students. It is suggested that using idea density from a writing sample collected in a live situation might result in greater observed correlations between idea density and the outcome measures. Therefore, the relationship between idea density and outcomes should be further explored, particularly relative to written comprehensive exams results. The types of questions used for these exams require students to apply problem solving skills, together with writing skills, to address clinical scenarios and/or provide in-depth analysis of topics, similar to the “unstructured problems” referenced by Jones and Davidson (2007). Further exploration of idea density as a predictor variable is supported by findings and discussion by Jones and Davidson (2007) and Davidson, Solanki, and Waldman (2000). These researchers proposed a relationship between idea density and problem solving skills, with higher performing students demonstrating higher idea density scores.

Results from the present study also showed that UGPA failed to correlate with any outcome. Although not anecdotally surprising, this is contrary to findings in other studies (Forrest & Naremore, 1998; Halberstam & Redstone, 2007; Johnson-Motoyama, Petr, & Mitchell, 2014; Kuncel, Hezlett & Ones, 2001). One possible explanation for this result is grade inflation at the undergraduate level, which is a familiar topic and subject of debate in higher education (Rosovsky & Hartley, 2002). However, the actual influence of grade inflation on this result would depend on whether the presence and degree of grade inflation were equivalent for all of the different institutions and programs of study from which the students earned undergraduate degrees; therefore, an accurate determination is highly improbable.

The moderate correlation found between total GRE and Praxis scores has also been shown in other studies as cited by Moore (2013). While these two test instruments differ in content and length, both utilize multiple choice format; therefore, some degree of similarity in performance on the two measures may reasonably be expected. Total GRE score did not correlate with either GGPA or comprehensive exam results. This is similar to the finding by (Forrest & Naremore, 1998) that GRE scores did not predict graduate school success, defined in the Forrest and Naremore study as relative class standing.

Academic probation, which was not addressed in the studies described in this literature review, moderately correlated to the written comprehensive outcome. LSUHSCS program faculty

members have noted that students who are placed on probation show a pattern of academic weaknesses, which include (a) extremes in testing behavior related to time spent on written application-based exams, either taking very little time to complete an examination or struggling to finish within the allotted time (e.g., 3 hours); (b) providing incomplete answers and/or responses which lack integration of knowledge and/or evidence of problem-solving; (c) exhibiting semantic and/or syntactical errors within the responses; and (d) performing at a minimally acceptable level on other course requirements (e.g., labs, projects). These patterns appear to be related to a student being “at risk” for successful performance on comprehensive examinations. Probation status did not correlate with GGPA or with Praxis scores. The lack of correlation between probation and GGPA was likely related to the fact that a student cannot graduate while on probation; therefore, the GGPA must be at least 3.0 at the time of graduation. Lack of either positive or negative correlation between probation status and Praxis score may be related to both the nature of academic weaknesses associated with academic probation and the nature of the Praxis test: the pattern of weaknesses described above may impact students’ performance on open-ended, constructed-response items, such as comprehensive exam questions, to a greater degree than performance on closed-ended tasks such as the multiple choice items on the Praxis exam.

In summary, idea density, as measured and utilized in this study, did not predict success in graduate school, as measured by the selected outcomes of GGPA, comprehensive exam results, and Praxis results. In fact, idea density compared unfavorably with other independent variables as a predictor of the selected outcomes. Results supported the null hypothesis; that is, idea density, in this context, was not a better predictor of outcomes than UGPA, GRE scores, or academic probation in predicting GGPA, comprehensive exam results, and/or Praxis scores.

Limitations

Several potential limitations of this study may be identified. The first involves limitations on the numerical range of the data. For those variables used for admissions criteria, only students with a relatively high score on that variable would be admitted; therefore, the range of data available for analysis is limited, as was the case in similar studies (e.g., Forrest & Naremore, 1998; Halberstam & Redstone, 2005). The range is also limited specifically for GGPA, because students must achieve a minimum of 3.0 GGPA in order to graduate. A second limitation is the choice of writing sample. Students prepared these essays in advance; therefore, the faculty had no way of verifying that the essays were original work. Students could also have access to assistance from word processing

features, such as spelling and grammar correction, when writing an admissions essay, which could affect idea density measures. Another factor that may have influenced measures of idea density was the topic of the essays. Instructions were to complete a “personal narrative.” Although students were free to choose any manner of addressing the requirement, the typical responses were for students to describe factors leading to the choice of speech-language pathology as a career and/or discuss strengths that would lead to success in graduate school. This frequently led to somewhat generic responses, with similarities in multiple elements, e.g., ideas, word choice, and phrasing. The homogeneity of the essays could have influenced idea density measures by causing idea density scores to be more similar among applicants than would have been the case with more original, varied responses. In more recent admission cycles for the program, the procedure has been changed to require students to provide an essay response to a specific question regarding popular media and communication disorders, which may address this limitation by fostering greater diversity in expression of ideas in future applications. Another way to address this limitation would be to base the measures on writing samples obtained in a live situation, as in the Davidson, Slotnick, and Waldman (2000) study, which used excerpts from exams. Finally, a third limitation is that the generalizability of the findings to other graduate programs in the United States may be limited by the relatively small sample size of 50 records.

Conclusion

Despite the lack of correlation found in this study between idea density and selected indicators of graduate school success, results did provide indirect support for further investigation of idea density relative to performance in speech-language pathology master’s programs, provided that future investigations address identified limitations, particularly the choice of writing sample. Results showed a significant relationship between academic probation status and comprehensive exam results. Analysis of spontaneous writing samples using measures such as idea density may help identify students who have weaknesses in language and/or problem solving skills, which would impact overall academic performance. Continued study of predictors of graduate school success will benefit programs in terms of maximizing completion, retention, and attainment of educational outcomes. In the context of rising higher education costs, competitive graduate school admissions, and the demands of the speech-language pathology curriculum, such studies have the potential to assist program faculty and administration in using resources as effectively as possible.

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MEETING THE CHALLENGES POSED BY THE SHORTAGE OF ACCOUNTING FACULTY: CUSTOMIZED RECRUITING STRATEGIES

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Introduction

U.S. Business programs at colleges and universities face a major hurdle in obtaining or maintaining AACSB accreditation status: an acute shortage of Ph.D. accounting faculty. This problem has been studied by individual researchers as well as governing bodies such as the American Accounting Association (AAA) and the American Institute of CPAs (AICPA) since at least 2002 (AACSB 2002; Plumlee et al., 2006). The problem has many facets; there are both supply problems (such as a reduction in the number of Ph.D.s in accounting that are granted) and demand problems (such as the growing number of retiring faculty who must be replaced).

In 2010, the AAA and the AICPA jointly formed the Pathways Commission to address a myriad of issues related to higher education in accounting, including the shortage of Ph.D.-qualified faculty. The Commission's 2012 report made the recommendation that emphasis is needed on alternative pathways for individuals to earn doctoral degrees in accounting (Pathways Commission 2012) which may alleviate the problem to some degree. In January 2015, the AAA and AICPA jointly announced their integration of ongoing projects into their respective organizations' to continue their efforts to tackle this problem (Tysiac 2015). In the meantime, AACSB-accredited colleges of business with both teaching-centric and research-teaching balanced missions have struggled to attract and retain qualified accounting faculty due to the reduced number of Ph.D.-qualified candidates.

The AACSB has always emphasized mission-linked accreditation and academic processes that help ensure business programs deliver quality academic programs that create value for students (Black 2012). Despite the faculty shortage, the 2013 AACSB accreditation standards continue to

emphasize the importance of Ph.D. faculty as a substantial percentage of accounting faculty. The challenge to fulfill this accreditation requirement may be more difficult for accounting programs whose mission is either research-teaching balanced or whose mission is teaching-centric because these colleges have fewer resources than large research-centered institutions to compete for the limited supply of qualified accounting candidates. Therefore, colleges with a research-teaching balanced mission or teaching-centric mission have been forced to develop creative ways to attract accounting faculty in order to preserve their AACSB accreditation.

The emphasis of this paper is on customized recruiting strategies three AACSB-accredited colleges with research-teaching balanced missions have adopted to attract Ph.D.-qualified accounting faculty. We believe this paper is the first study to explore how colleges with research-teaching balanced missions have abandoned old systems of recruiting accounting faculty, such as attending national meetings in hopes that candidates will seek out their program, in exchange for new creative recruiting techniques. This topic is timely and relevant because the shortage of Ph.D.-qualified accounting candidates is expected to continue into the foreseeable future (Plumlee and Reckers 2014) and the number of AACSB-accredited colleges continues to increase every year. Therefore, colleges with fewer financial resources and colleges that have teaching-centric or research-teaching balanced missions will be forced to follow aggressive, forward-thinking paths to accounting faculty recruitment.

Customized recruiting strategies are necessary not only because of the accounting faculty shortage but also because initiatives to increase the supply of Ph.D. qualified accounting faculty have failed (Trapnell et al. 2009). The following section provides a brief review of literature on initiatives that have been developed to counteract the shortage.

Prior Literature – Some Solutions to the Supply Issue

The accounting profession is well aware of the impact the faculty shortage could have on its ability to recruit competent accounting graduates (Eaton 2007). Therefore, the accounting profession has helped champion several initiatives aimed at increasing the supply of accounting faculty. A complicating factor in any solution colleges implement arises from the fact that the standards on faculty qualifications limit the colleges' ability to creatively address faculty hiring if AACSB accreditation is to be maintained (Schneider and Sheikh 2012). Keeping AACSB accreditation in mind, the profession has sponsored some initiatives aimed at alleviating the shortage of accounting faculty. Four of the initiatives are the Accounting Doctoral Scholars Program, the Partner

Teaches Program, the Post-Doctoral Bridge to Business Program, and the Pathways Commission report to develop multiple pathways to terminal degrees in accounting.

Accounting Doctoral Scholars Program

The AICPA Accounting Doctoral Scholars (ADS) Program was developed when a 2006 ad hoc AICPA advisory committee formed to discuss the threat the accounting faculty shortage posed to the public accounting profession. Under this non-renewal program, more than 66 accounting firms and 48 state Certified Public Accountant (CPA) societies provided more than \$17 million to fund the educational costs of 120 doctoral students over an 8-year period (Ruff et al. 2009). By 2012, 114 individuals were enrolled under the initiative and were scheduled to complete their degrees (Williams and Matzke 2012). Although the ADS program is commendable and provided funding for many potential accounting Ph.D. candidates, its impact is short term. Colleges that are teaching-centric or research-teaching balanced must compete with research-centered universities for the ADS candidates.

Partner Teaches Program

The AICPA Partner Teaches (PT) Program was designed to increase the number of practicing accountants who teach accounting classes. The accounting professionals do not become faculty under this program; they contribute their expertise one class at a time. Geary et al. (2010) found that students taught by an accounting professional from the PT program believed the practical experience the accounting professional brought to the classroom was beneficial to their learning. This initiative helps colleges teach accounting classes which they may not be able to cover because of the shortage of accounting faculty. However, the accounting professionals promoted through this initiative typically do not hold terminal accounting degrees. The 2013 AACSB standards state that an accredited college, depending on its mission, should employ not less than 40% faculty designated as Scholarly Academics (SA). This designation is achieved, in part, by obtaining a research doctoral degree (AACSB 2013). Therefore, the effectiveness of the PT program is limited because of the 2013 AACSB standards.

Post-Doctoral Bridge to Business Program

The AACSB Post-Doctoral Bridge to Business Program was created in coordination with three post-doctoral programs to increase the number of Ph.D. accounting faculty (Brink et al. 2012; Mauldin et al. 2011; Trapnell et al. 2009). The three programs are housed at The University of Toledo, the University of Florida, and Genoble Ecole De Management. However, only the University of Florida and Genoble Ecole De Management offer a degree with an emphasis in accounting. The

programs allow non-business doctorate degree holders who received their degree from an institution whose business program is AACSB accredited and non-business doctorate degree holders who currently teach at an AACSB-accredited business program an opportunity to complete a five month program aimed at bridging the doctorate degree to fill any gaps the candidate may need to research and teach within the field of accounting. So far, the impact of this program has been negligible because the number of graduates from these programs is in the single digits annually and because the program is not widely accepted by Deans at AACSB-accredited colleges. Only 47.5% of Deans at AACSB-accredited colleges of business believed graduates from this program would be prepared for accounting academic research and teaching responsibilities (Mauldin et. al. 2011).

Pathways Commission

The Pathways Commission provided additional commentary on alleviating the accounting faculty shortage. The Pathways Commission final report recommended that going forward, flexibility, attention to quality, and exploration of new pathways to a doctoral education will be essential to maintaining the relevance and delivery of high-quality accounting education and sustaining vital accounting research (Pathways Commission, 2012).

Some AACSB-accredited alternative doctoral programs have emerged under two primary paradigms: the executive doctorate and the Doctor of Business Administration. (Bishop et al. 2012). HassabElnaby et al. (2012) propose a post-doctoral program to address the supply problem by increasing the pool of doctorate-holding faculty to include international doctoral faculty. The promotion of non-alternative accounting doctoral programs by the Pathways Commission is promising. However it is too early to know the degree of relief the initiative provides colleges searching for Ph.D. qualified accounting faculty.

Method

Colleges must continue to hire faculty despite the accounting faculty shortage or risk losing accreditation. Following old faculty recruiting methods and expecting different outcomes has become unrealistic for most colleges (Plumlee and Reckers 2014). We know that different paths toward staffing are being followed because there has not been a dramatic drop in accredited programs; colleges are doing something to attract faculty. The purpose of this study is to understand how some AACSB-accredited colleges of business with a research-teaching balanced mission are coping with the shortage of Ph.D. accounting faculty under the 2013 AACSB standards. We studied three mid-western AACSB-accredited universities. Following the general method of Cresswell (2013),

we conducted interviews with accounting faculty and administrators at each university to gather multiple views of each college's status.

Choosing the Universities

We chose the universities for this study based on several factors: mission, AACSB accreditation status, location, size, and types of degrees awarded. Prior research implies that each of these factors may be important in how a college addresses the faculty shortage.

Universities with different missions experience the shortage in different ways and with different levels of severity (e.g., Plumlee et al. 2006). Colleges with a research mission typically have the resources to attract new faculty at a high rate. Colleges with a teaching-centric or research-teaching balanced mission have a more difficult time competing for a reduced pool of candidates.

We chose schools that have self-reported their mission to the AACSB as being teaching centered or balanced between research and teaching. Two of the three universities in our study are categorized by the AACSB as having a high emphasis on teaching, a medium emphasis on research and a low emphasis on service (see Table I). The third university has equal emphasis on teaching and research activities and a low emphasis on service activities. These three colleges may employ recruiting strategies that are unique to colleges whose primary emphasis is not research.

According to the AACSB website, as of the writing of this paper there are 513 colleges in the United States that hold AACSB business accreditation. Because AACSB-accredited colleges are required to employ a certain number of faculty with terminal degrees, and accounting faculty with terminal degrees are in short supply, we limited our study to colleges that have earned AACSB business accreditation.

AACSB accreditation status plays a key role in faculty recruiting. Colleges with separate accounting accreditation place their faculty qualifications under higher scrutiny; these colleges are less likely to experiment with alternative faculty qualifications. Colleges with the more broad college accreditation alone may have the ability to use different recruiting strategies. Because our main interest is identifying these recruiting strategies, each university in our study holds only business AACSB accreditation and not separate accounting AACSB accreditation.

Faculty recruiting also differs between geographic locations; some locations are easier to draw faculty to than others for various reasons including climate, population, and cultural diversity. We felt it necessary to study colleges in the same geographic region of the country. Each university we studied is geographically located in the Midwest part of the United States.

AACSB-accredited colleges are encouraged to self-report college enrollment figures to the AACSB. However, of the 513 colleges that hold AACSB business accreditation only 281 colleges or approximately 55% reported full-time undergraduate enrollment (AACSB n.d.). The three universities in our study had undergraduate college of business enrollment of between 2,000 and 3,500 full-time undergraduate students (AACSB n.d.). More than 91% of the colleges of business that reported enrollment statistics to the AACSB had fewer than 2,000 full-time enrolled undergraduate students. This indicates the colleges we studied are large in comparison to most other AACSB accredited colleges of business.

Each university in our study offers an undergraduate degree in accounting, and two of the three universities offer a Master's degree in accounting. None of the three universities offer a doctorate degree in accounting. Table I provides a summary of the characteristics that define the colleges we studied.

Table I: Demographic Overview of Colleges in this Study

| College | AACSB Status | AACSB General Orientation | Regional Location | Accounting Degree Offered | Approx. College Undergrad Enrollment | Approx. University Undergrad Enrollment |
|---------|------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|
| 1 | Business Accreditation | BPA-1 ^a | Midwest | Undergrad/ Graduate | 2,300 | 6,300 |
| 2 | Business Accreditation | BPA-1 | Midwest | Undergrad/ Graduate | 3,500 | 11,000 |
| 3 | Business Accreditation | BPA-5 ^b | Midwest | Undergrad | 2,000 | 11,000 |

^aHigh emphasis on teaching, medium emphasis on intellectual contributions, and low emphasis on service. See AACSB.org for further information on these orientations.

^bEqual emphasis on teaching and intellectual contributions and low emphasis on service. See AACSB.org for further information on these orientations.

Each university was assigned a number (see Table I) and will be referenced accordingly throughout the rest of this paper. The identity of the universities is masked to maintain confidentiality of their responses.

Choosing the Interviewees

We interviewed six people at each college who could provide a variety of perspectives on how the accounting faculty shortage is being addressed at their colleges (see Table II). Our participants

included both faculty and administrators. People in different roles may have alternative or conflicting perspectives and interpretations about how the university is coping with the shortage.

We interviewed the dean of each college of business because the dean is likely to be the individual most familiar with how the college has handled AACSB maintenance visits and is responsible for managing the impact the accounting faculty shortage has on the college's performance relative to the AACSB. The dean of the college has a strategic outlook for the college that must address how the college will recruit new accounting faculty and offers valuable insights into how willing the university is to try alternative recruiting strategies.

Additionally, we interviewed the chair of each accounting department. The chair is often tasked with administrative work delegated by the dean such as recruiting and retaining accounting faculty. The chair of an accounting program often has a better appreciation and understanding of the labor market for accounting faculty than the dean because they attend academic conferences, form hiring committees, and correspond with colleagues throughout the nation.

Lastly, we interviewed four tenured accounting faculty with Ph.D.s in accounting from each university. Faculty are often asked to serve on college and program committees that suggest strategic initiatives to college administration. Faculty recruiting committee members have first-hand knowledge of the college's challenges with and responses to the faculty shortage. Table II shows the titles of the interview participants.

Of the 18 interviews, 10 were conducted face-to-face while the remaining eight were conducted over the phone. Each interview lasted between 45 and 75 minutes. All but one individual agreed to allow us to digitally record the interview. Interviews were then manually transcribed, analyzed, and categorized into themes using Dedoose, a software program designed for qualitative research.

The Interview Questions

Semi-structured interview questions were used to guide each interview. The questions are provided in Figure I. Qualitative traditions promote the use of open-ended questions (Glaser and Strauss 1967) so that data emerges organically and interviewees are not constrained to a structured set of rigid questions that lead the response of the interviewee. As such, each interview yielded similar, yet different data that was relevant to the study.

Follow-up questions were asked as each interview progressed; these questions were unique to each interview and, therefore, are not provided in the list of questions presented in Figure I. In

addition, the interviews were broad in scope and included questions that are unrelated to this study; those questions are excluded from Figure I.

Table II: Interviewee Details

| Interviewee | Employing University | Position within University |
|--------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 101 | 1 | Dean of College of Business |
| 102 | 1 | Chair of Accounting Program |
| 103 | 1 | Professor of Accounting |
| 104 | 1 | Professor of Accounting |
| 105 | 1 | Professor of Accounting |
| 106 | 1 | Associate Professor of Accounting |
| 201 | 2 | Dean of College of Business |
| 202 | 2 | Chair of Accounting Program |
| 203 | 2 | Professor of Accounting |
| 204 | 2 | Associate Professor of Accounting |
| 205 | 2 | Associate Professor of Accounting |
| 206 | 2 | Associate Professor of Accounting |
| 301 | 3 | Dean of College of Business |
| 302 | 3 | Chair of Accounting Program |
| 303 | 3 | Professor of Accounting |
| 304 | 3 | Professor of Accounting |
| 305 | 3 | Associate Professor of Accounting |
| 306 | 3 | Associate Professor of Accounting |

Results

The results of our study are split into three sections based on the themes that emerged from the data. The first section describes the difficulties each college has had in hiring accounting faculty. The second section describes challenges the shortage of accounting faculty poses for each college as it tries to maintain its AACSB accreditation. The third section describes the strategies each university has developed and used to fill its vacant accounting tenure-track positions.

Impact of the Shortage: Difficulty Hiring Accounting Faculty

We found that all three universities have had trouble filling vacant tenure-track accounting positions. Additionally, each college has experienced multiple vacancies concurrently and has been unable to fill some positions as they have become open. This finding is consistent with literature

Figure I: Semi-structured Interview Questions

1. Describe your most recent experiences recruiting tenure-track accounting faculty.
2. How does your institution plan to meet future accounting staffing needs given the severity of the shortage of Ph.D.-qualified accounting faculty?
3. Describe your most recent AACSB maintenance visit. Were there any concerns, issues, comments made regarding your accounting faculty? Was there any discussion about the accounting faculty shortage with the AACSB review team and its impact on your college?
4. How is your college funded? Has funding increased or declined over the past five years? Describe how financial resources have aided or hindered your ability to recruit accounting faculty. Do you believe your compensation package for accounting faculty is competitive with similar institutions?
5. What competitive advantages does your college hold in recruiting tenure-track accounting faculty?
6. What are the biggest institutional challenges you face in recruiting tenure-track accounting faculty?

suggesting the shortage continues to challenge colleges (Plumlee and Reckers 2014; Trapnell et al. 2009).

University 1 hired tenure-track accounting faculty with impressive success until about 2011. Recently, University 1 has struggled to fill vacant accounting positions, as shown by these comments from the accounting department chairperson:

We have historically had good success filling vacant accounting tenure-track positions with Ph.D.-qualified candidates. However, two years ago our offers were turned down by two candidates, which hadn't happened to us in the past. We were left wondering how to fill these vacant slots. We currently have two vacant accounting tenure-track positions. (Interviewee 102)

University 2 has had similar experiences to those noted above, having recent experiences with candidates turning down offers and taking jobs at more research-oriented colleges. Here are comments from their dean:

We have had a lot of very senior faculty in accounting retire in the last three years. We've been trying to hire Ph.D.-qualified accounting faculty and we've had at least two failed searches every year. Our failed searches have not been because of a lack of applicants. We have made three offers to candidates within the last three years that were turned down, and we offer a lot of money for rookie accounting faculty. Each candidate turned us down because they were offered better positions at more prestigious universities which required them to teach less while being paid more. (Interviewee 201)

University 3 has had similar frustration and challenges in hiring, especially over the past three years. The department chairperson commented on these problems.

Management, marketing, finance, information systems searches for tenure-track faculty are much different than accounting searches. We hired two finance faculty last year and we had 187 Ph.D. qualified applicants apply for the positions. The most applicants we have received for open accounting tenure-track positions in the last 10 years was 23. Most of the candidates were unqualified, and we would get down to fewer than 10 viable candidates. Then, we would have to fight over those few viable candidates with other institutions within our market. Of the offers we have made, virtually all have been declined due to candidates accepting positions at competitor colleges. (Interviewee 302)

Each university has had employment offers declined by candidates who accepted offers from research-centered universities that were able to make better offers. This experience is consistent with prior literature showing that the faculty shortage has a disproportionate impact on colleges that are not large research-centered institutions (e.g. Plumlee et, al. 2006; Plumlee and Reckers 2014).

Impact of the Shortage: Maintaining AACSB Accreditation

Each of the colleges in our study has successfully maintained AACSB accreditation and were granted reaccreditation within the past two years. However, interviewees at each college expressed concern about their inability to fill vacant accounting tenure-track positions with academically qualified faculty. They realize their colleges run the risk of falling below the AACSB-prescribed level of academically qualified accounting faculty.

University 1 has received praise from AACSB review teams for its ability to recruit and retain Ph.D. qualified accounting faculty, and incorporate both professionally qualified and academically qualified faculty to meet accreditation standards. However, University 1 faculty realize that their most recent AACSB review preceded their current hiring struggles. The success University 1 has had

over the last ten years recruiting accounting faculty masked the fact it is currently having trouble recruiting accounting faculty. The quote below shows the faculty at University 1 understand the link between faculty qualifications and AACSB accreditation.

There was significant risk with keeping our accounting faculty heavily weighted toward professional qualifications in the early 2000s. The result of now having more research-focused faculty is that you satisfy AACSB requirements. (Interviewee 104)

University 2 has hired more professionally qualified accounting faculty to cover its teaching needs and has concerns over accreditation implications. The college has been under continuing pressure to increase its Ph.D. qualified accounting faculty. University 2 was reprimanded by the AACSB peer review team during its most recent AACSB maintenance visit because of an increased reliance on professionally qualified faculty (although it maintained its AACSB accreditation).

The chairperson of accounting discussed the interaction between its hiring practices and AACSB accreditation:

We have run understaffed for years because of this shortage. We knew as a matter of filling classes we needed to hire more professionally qualified accounting faculty. However, we also knew there were possible AACSB ramifications as a result. We will continue to look for Ph.D. qualified accounting faculty but they are becoming harder to find by the year. (Interviewee 202)

The dean at University 2 explained those ramifications:

We have pushed up our levels of professionally qualified faculty in accounting because of the challenge in finding Ph.D. qualified accounting faculty. When the AACSB review team came to campus, the one thing they noted was the overall quality and intellectual portfolio of the Accounting Department was below that of the rest of the college. We met the standards, but barely. We need some really solid Ph.D. accounting faculty for the future. (Interviewee 201)

University 3 has received continued scrutiny from AACSB review teams because of a deficient number of Ph.D. accounting faculty. An accounting faculty member from University 3 commented on their most recent AACSB visit:

The AACSB peer review team rightly noted the number of Ph.D. qualified accounting faculty within our college was below the thresholds established by AACSB standards. They suggested we increase the number of qualified accounting faculty, as though we did not know we needed to do this. We know we have a problem attracting Ph.D. qualified

accounting faculty and as a result have a faculty composition that is not ideal according to AACSB prescribed ratios. (Interviewee 304)

University 3 feels threatened by the shortage and questions how long it can continue to be reprimanded by AACSB review teams before accreditation status is revoked:

We really are challenged by the shortage into the foreseeable future. I do not see how we can compete with all the other universities looking for accounting faculty when it comes to teaching load, compensation, and geographic location. As I look down the pipeline I foresee retirements within our accounting program within the next five to seven years and I have no idea how we will replace these faculty with the type of faculty required by AACSB standards. (Interviewee 302)

To date, all three universities have been successful in hiring enough academically qualified accounting faculty to maintain AACSB accreditation. The colleges have pursued three different hiring strategies; the next several sections discuss those strategies.

Strategies in Hiring – University 1

University 1 has concentrated on three interrelated elements in its hiring strategy: (1) selling the culture of their college, (2) engaging in constant program promotion, and (3) recruiting faculty who are leaving local research-centered universities and wish to stay in the area. These tactics have been fairly successful; the college has been able to fill open positions, although they continue to have some offers declined.

University 1 suggests one key to recruiting lies in emphasizing your culture with candidates who have become disenchanted with the culture at research-centered colleges. This is explained further by their dean:

We happen to be a teaching university where everybody does research in the college of business. We recognize this and try to identify the type of individual that would fit and succeed here. We have had great success in finding those individuals at research-centered institutions. They are usually dejected and frustrated by the over-emphasis on research and have a passion to work with students. We have strategically targeted these individuals during our recruiting process. (Interviewee 101)

The tone at the top of the college of business at University 1 is clear. Value is placed on both research and teaching according to the mission of the college. Furthermore, the dean has made it clear recruiting new faculty is not a one- or two-month process, it is a continual process:

I expect the recruiting process to be a year-round activity. We historically had taken the late spring off and only looked for faculty during the summer and fall months. I don't think you can do that anymore. We need to be out there promoting our college and making connections with those we think would make good faculty in our accounting program. That means we are making connections at conferences and with co-authors. It means we are doing all we can to promote our college and let people know who we are and what kind of an institution we represent. (Interviewee 101)

An accounting professor at University 1 provided substantiation of its success with these tactics. This professor described how she was recruited by University 1:

About twelve years ago the tenure process at a large research-centered university did not go my way. I was aware of University 1 because of several accounting conferences I had attended. I was attracted to their balance between research and teaching and so I ended up taking my current position. (Interviewee 105)

It appears that University 1 has created a fairly effective formula when it comes to hiring academically qualified accounting faculty in the face of an accounting faculty shortage. Their strategy has been successful over a relatively long period (ten years). This strategy may work for a variety of colleges in similar circumstances (those with a more balanced research-teaching mission that are located in cities with research-centered colleges). Colleges without this geographic advantage, and without the devotion of faculty and administrators in pursuing the strategy, may need to turn to other approaches.

Strategies in Hiring – University 2

University 2 has employed its own unique strategy: build informal networks to establish relationships with lower-tiered accounting doctoral granting institutions and find candidates from those programs who will fit in with the culture as well as help further the college's visibility.

University 2 had six open tenure-track accounting positions over the past six years and has been able to successfully fill four of the positions by recruiting from second-tier Ph.D. programs. The department chair explains the strategy:

We don't interview people from big time colleges. We aim at people who are at colleges that don't have big research training. They obviously do their dissertation but they're not aiming at the highest level, they would be aiming at the second level and that's probably where we are. (Interviewee 202)

This strategy is consistent with one initiative suggested by the Pathways Commission, which is to promote non-traditional accounting doctoral programs (Pathways Commission 2012). University 2 recruits at several of the programs that have been highlighted in the Pathways Commission report. Within the last six years they have hired four candidates from lower-tiered accounting doctoral granting colleges such as Southern Illinois University, Kennesaw State University, and Oklahoma State University.

An important part of this recruiting strategy is to ensure that candidates have an appropriate level of potential for research success. In part, University 2 defines research success in terms of the level of visibility publications bring the program. This part of the strategy is explained by a professor from the program:

Research is important to us. We want to be in professional journals. We want to be in journals where our employers and donors will see us. For example, the Journal of Taxation and the Journal of Accountancy are great professional journals our stakeholders would see us in. That would be a moonlight beam kind of a deal to get something in those journals because of the benefits it would bring to our program. That's part of our pitch to recruits. They need to publish and that is important; however, the research we value is not limited to a narrow band of accounting journals. (Interviewee 203)

An associate professor summarized the University 2 approach to recruiting as recognizing where their college fits within the informal tiered system that exists within AACSB accreditation:

I think a large part of our recruiting success is because we recognize where we sit in the hierarchy of colleges of business and we focus our recruiting process on finding the individual that best fits our college mission and accreditation needs. (Interviewee 205)

University 2 has had some success hiring Ph.D.-qualified accounting faculty. However, the resulting faculty mix has attracted some unwanted scrutiny from AACSB review teams. Therefore, this strategy remains a work in progress. The tactic of targeting lower tiered accounting doctoral programs provides other colleges struggling to fill vacant tenure-track accounting positions with a reasonably adaptable strategy.

Strategies in Hiring – University 3

University 3 also has used a unique recruiting strategy. They have found ways to help professionally qualified accounting faculty become academically qualified accounting faculty, a process known as “grow your own.”. The main two drivers of this strategy are a lack of success

recruiting qualified accounting faculty from traditional accounting doctoral programs and the availability of professionally qualified faculty who wanted to transition to the tenure track.

To date, two professional faculty have earned doctorates (3 years apart) and have joined the tenure track at University 3. Both were alumni of the accounting program at University 3 and had substantial family and other personal reasons to want to work at University 3. They both had substantial local and institutional knowledge, which helped them feel secure in their commitment to both their doctoral studies and University 3.

The college provided support for these professional faculty to pursue doctorates through a combination of tuition reimbursement and teaching load/schedule adjustments. The doctoral program that these faculty members completed was an Ed.D. rather than a Ph.D. The program was pre-approved by the college dean, department chair, and Department Personnel Committee (comprised of the tenured accounting faculty).

At the time of their entry into this doctoral program, the dean of the college had no reservations about the degree not being a Ph.D.; the doctorates they pursued were accepted under AACSB standards. The doctoral program was chosen because of its non-traditional style, which caters to students who work. For example, classes are held in the evening and on weekends rather than during the workday, and there is a limited residency requirement.

The department chair explains that the strategy has been successful for University 3:

I think the solution we have implemented is one of the only solutions there is for a college like ours. If I could have thought of other things we would have tried them. I think enticing really good accountants to get a terminal degree is one of the only options we have. Having these individuals teach for us while they pursue a doctoral degree helps with the immediate teaching needs of our program and allows the individual to ease into the requirements and expectations of our college. It feels like we both win with this initiative (Interviewee 302)

One of the faculty members at University 3 who was hired through this initiative commented that the position and opportunity offered him a way into a tenure-track position that he would not have otherwise been able to achieve.

My path into higher education as a tenure-track accounting professor was anything but traditional. I had significant professional experience; however, I lacked the academic credentials to land a tenure-track position within a university. Additionally, I had other commitments such as my family that prohibited me from enrolling in a traditional Ph.D. accounting program that would have required residency until I graduated. The agreement

with University 3 allowed me to achieve professional goals that would have otherwise been unattainable. I now have the best of both worlds because I am a tenure-track professor at a university that I am deeply loyal to. (Interviewee 306)

The “Grow Your Own” strategy used by University 3 is perhaps the most unique recruiting mechanism used by the universities in this study. However, it does not come without its share of risks. One risk comes from hiring faculty with a nontraditional doctorate. As the chair of the accounting program at University 3 notes, there are limits on the percent of nontraditional faculty a department should have if it expects to maintain AACSB accreditation.

We need to be cognizant that the AACSB has placed an emphasis on the type of doctoral degree earned by a faculty member. Standard 15 of the 2013 AACSB standards states that faculty with less foundational discipline-based doctoral degrees must demonstrate higher levels of sustained, substantive academic and or professional activities. For this reason, it is to our benefit to fill future vacant tenure-track positions using our “Grow Your Own” strategy with individuals that will earn a terminal degree considered foundational relative to the discipline. (Interviewee 302)

There is the additional risk that the candidate will not finish the degree. The chair of the accounting program at University 3 addressed this issue:

We knew we were investing in the long term success of this individual and as such did whatever we could to support them. We hedged our risk of losing the \$30,000 tuition assistance by requiring the assistance to be repaid if the employee did not stay for at least 3 years after finishing the doctorate. We also provided substantial course schedule and other workload adjustments to allow them to have the time to work on their doctorates. (Interviewee 302)

This strategy builds an important long-term sense of loyalty with the accounting faculty that has been transitioned into academically qualified. This fact should not be overlooked. As the faculty shortage continues in both duration and severity, there will be more incentive for existing faculty to leave tenured accounting positions for higher pay and lower teaching loads at competing universities. When a college of business can gain loyalty from accounting faculty there may be a smaller likelihood accounting faculty will leave the institution for what appear to be better opportunities.

Validity and Generalizability

Our study was structured in such a way that various perspectives were solicited from people at each university. The multiple perspectives acted as an internal auditing mechanism to confirm reliability of the findings. We have provided illustrative comments that represent the various perspectives on each issue we address in this paper. These are samples of the large set of comments obtained during the interviews; duplicative comments have been left out of this paper.

Each of the three universities involved in our study were similar in geographic location, college mission, accreditation status and size. However, all interviewees had varying opinions, ideas, and personalities. Therefore, each university was unique and yielded unique information.

We believe that our results are generalizable in the sense that accounting programs with similar characteristics to those in our study may be able to implement the faculty recruiting strategies employed by the universities in our study.

Conclusions

The purpose of this study was to investigate recruiting strategies used by AACSB-accredited business colleges to attract Ph.D. qualified accounting faculty. We had specific interest in impacts on colleges with balanced research-teaching or teaching-centric missions because these programs have been found to have more difficulty overcoming the accounting faculty shortage (Plumlee and Reckers 2014). The three universities in our study are managing to hire qualified faculty despite the shortage, although each university has struggled to fill some vacant tenure-track accounting faculty openings. Strategies being employed have grown out of each college's specific challenges and opportunities; those challenges and opportunities are shared by many colleges with teaching-focused missions.

We found three different and distinct strategies used by colleges to recruit Ph.D.-qualified accounting faculty. The first strategy is to recruit faculty from large research-centered universities who no longer find that environment attractive. The second strategy is to recruit candidates from lower tiered doctoral granting institutions. The third strategy is to help professionally qualified accounting faculty attain a doctorate and become Ph.D.-qualified accounting faculty, a process referred to as "Grow Your Own."

Our results suggest that initiatives aimed at reversing the trend of declining Ph.D. accounting faculty have failed to provide enough new faculty. This finding supports the research of Trapnell et al. (2009) and Plumlee and Reckers (2014). Two of the colleges in our study are hiring faculty from

nontraditional programs; many accounting faculty will have to come from those programs in future years. Therefore, our findings suggest that the work the Pathways Commission has done to examine and promote non-traditional doctoral education is important.

We believe that AACSB standards that impose additional requirements on faculty with nontraditional doctorates may come under increasing scrutiny over time. Colleges with hiring challenges may have little choice other than to turn to faculty with these degrees.

We believe the three strategies used by the colleges of business in our study can be adopted by other colleges if conditions align to a sufficient extent. Smaller universities in large cities, or in cities where a research-mission college is located, can be sure that there will always be a consistent stream of faculty who become available. Many accounting doctoral programs, especially newer programs, would love to establish pipelines into AACSB accredited colleges who will hire their accounting graduates. Additionally, nearly every accounting program has outstanding alumni who have an interest in becoming faculty members at their alma mater.

Our study suggests the competition for accounting candidates between teaching-centric and research-teaching balanced AACSB accredited colleges of business is strong. Although each university in this study has struggled to hire accounting faculty, they each have hired enough accounting faculty to maintain AACSB college accreditation.

Limitations and Future Research

While this study found three useful ways universities are managing the shortage in accounting faculty, many more ways probably exist. The study of just three universities geographically located in the Midwest limited our ability to determine what may be a very large list of viable ways universities are coping with the shortage. The creation and use of a survey instrument administered to all AACSB accredited colleges would certainly alleviate this limitation and provide additional insight.

It would be interesting to investigate strategies being employed by similar colleges that appear to have similar opportunities to those reported in this study. For example, are lots of research-teaching centered colleges in large markets actively pursuing relationships with faculty employed by research-centered universities who may decide to change their career path?

It would also be interesting to investigate recruiting strategies from the viewpoint of the doctoral programs that are likely to supply faculty to smaller colleges. Do they have a lot of

relationships with small accounting programs all over the country? Are their students in increasing demand?

In addition, it will be very important to track the success of faculty from nontraditional accounting programs. Do faculty from some types of programs (Ph.D., Ed.D., D.B.A.) fare better than others over time? Does the Ph.D. advocated by AACSB seem to lead to more successful accounting faculty members?

Finally, over time we wonder if the shortage will end up costing some colleges their AACSB accreditation; the flip side of that question is whether smaller colleges will opt out of AACSB accreditation because they need to fill teaching vacancies to cover their courses, but they cannot find faculty who meet AACSB standards.

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DEFINING HAZING: WHY POPULAR DEFINITIONS ARE MISLEADING AND COUNTERPRODUCTIVE

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What is hazing? Merriam-Webster (2016) gives the broadest definition, characterizing it as “the practice of playing unpleasant tricks on someone, or forcing someone to do unpleasant things,” but especially an initiation “involving harassment.” This latter meaning—hazing in the context of an initiation—is what is typically meant by modern uses of the term “hazing,” and it is the subject of this paper. As concern about hazing has grown, researchers, advocates, policy makers, and other stakeholders have created more nuanced definitions of the phenomenon. But nearly all definitions of hazing currently in use are inadequate and are likely to create misunderstandings among student populations and the general public (e.g., Columbia Daily Spectator, 2013). The intent of this paper is to highlight the shortcomings of these popular definitions of hazing, and to provide a universally applicable definition of hazing that will improve education efforts and provide a coherent basis for constructive policy.

What is a Useful Definition of Hazing?

A useful definition of hazing is: a) valid, in that it conceptually carves out the phenomenon and excludes irrelevant phenomena, b) generalizable, in that it is not specific to any one organization, and c) concise and easily understood. With these criteria in mind, I propose that hazing be defined as follows:

Hazing is non-accidental, costly aspects of group induction activities that: a) do not appear to be group-relevant assessments/preparations, or b) appear excessive in their application. Group induction activities are those tasks formally or informally required to obtain membership or participatory legitimacy for new or prospective members.

By this definition, induction activities that involve the demonstrable, straightforward preparation or evaluation of attributes necessary for membership are not hazing. For example, athletic organizations may require extensive physical fitness training or assessment. We do not commonly label such efforts hazing because we understand that effective organizations are created, in part, by careful, relevant recruitment protocols. If prospective firefighters are required to perform intense calisthenics, the induction activity is a direct, group-relevant preparation or assessment. If the same requirement is transplanted to social fraternities, however, it becomes less explicable (and likely hazing) because it lacks comparable relevance to the expected activities of the organization. Similarly, if a reading club requires prospective members to read several books prior to joining, it is not hazing. If the same club requires prospective members to read the same books unceasingly and without sleep for three days, it is hazing: Reading books is relevant to the group's task domain, but the marathon session is excessive relative to the group's actual activities.

The above definition (hereafter the "strict" definition) still requires careful judgment and is not without ambiguity (see *Revisiting the Strict Definition*). To understand its relative merits, we need to examine other definitions currently in use. This paper will focus on alternative definitions that are commonly used by anti-hazing advocates, well-cited in the academic literature, or simply highly visible to students (e.g., present on anti-hazing university web pages). Thus, this is not an exhaustive review of hazing definitions, but a targeted critique of those definitions most likely to have broad impacts on organizational policies and student education. (For more on hazing definitions, see Crow & Macintosh, 2009; Ellsworth, 2004; Hinkle, 2006.)

Common and Problematic Definitions of Hazing

Perhaps the most common definition of hazing in current use is some variation of that given by Hoover (1999) or Hoover and Pollard (2000). Hoover's (1999) original definition was employed as part of a survey of hazing prevalence in the National Collegiate Athletics Association (NCAA): "any activity expected of someone joining a group that humiliates, degrades, abuses or endangers, regardless of the person's willingness to participate. This does not include activities such as rookies carrying the balls, team parties with community games, or going out with your teammates, unless an atmosphere of humiliation, degradation, abuse or danger arises" (p. 8).

Hoover and Pollard (2000) shortened and generalized the original definition to survey hazing in American high schools. Hazing was defined as "any humiliating or dangerous activity expected of you to join a group, regardless of your willingness to participate" (p.4). Hoover and Pollard's

definitions (or ostensible variations thereof) currently dominate research and scholarship on hazing (e.g., Allan & Madden, 2008; Crandall, 2003; Geisert, 2011; Holmes, 1999; Huysamer & Lemmer, 2013; Jeong, 2003; Lipkins, 2006; McGlone, 2005).

Most notably, the largest study of student hazing to date used the following variation of Hoover and Pollard : “Hazing is any activity expected of someone joining or participating in a group that humiliates, degrades, abuses, or endangers them regardless of a person’s willingness to participate.” (Allan & Madden, 2008, p.14). Given its landmark status, it is worth examining the conceptual problems with Allan and Madden’s definition, some of which are present in the entire Hoover and Pollard family of definitions:

1. Scope. Stating or implying that hazing can apply to someone joining *or participating* in a group threatens the coherence of the definition. If hazing applies to all members participating in a group, not just new or prospective members, then the term largely reduces to “mean things people do to each other.” Hazing becomes just a synonym for bullying. But hazing is qualitatively distinct from bullying, in that it typically has a mutually acknowledged end date, and is a process that ends with hazingees increasing their status and esteem within an organization (Cimino, 2011). Hazing also appears to be a distinct cross-cultural phenomenon, with a number of other recurrent characteristics (Cimino, 2013). As such, it should be kept conceptually separate from bullying.

2. Use of Danger. Is a dangerous activity expected of a newcomer “hazing”? Danger is a necessary component of certain student activities. For example, sudden cardiovascular-related deaths regularly occur in organized, competitive student athletics (~66 a year). Other causes of athletic death include blunt trauma and heat stroke (Maron, Doerer, Haas, Tierney, & Mueller, 2009). And this is setting aside the numerous non-fatal injuries that also occur. Ostensibly dangerous organizational activities are even more common outside student environments: Military live-fire exercises, police patrols, bomb disposals, bioterrorism research, on-location war journalism, etc. Newcomers endangered by these and many other activities are not, by default, being hazed. If we take the above definition literally, however, we might conclude otherwise.

3. Use of Humiliation. What about an activity expected of a newcomer that is humiliating? For example, imagine a rhetoric club that requires prospective members to present a speech in front of an audience. The rhetoric club is aware that nearly all applicants fail and experience humiliation. Public speaking, after all, can be difficult and stressful. Are prospective members of the rhetoric club being hazed? What about similar uses of humiliating circumstances? Stage actors, musicians, and

other performers may be required to place themselves in front of occasionally harsh audiences in learning or demonstrating aspects of their craft. Should we consider this hazing?

4. General Extremity. The overall effect of the descriptive terms used in the definition (especially “degrades” and “abuses”) is one of strong moral valence. The use of such terms in formal definitions may have far-reaching negative impacts. For example, advocates and researchers appear puzzled or disappointed that many students do not categorize their hazing experiences as “hazing” (e.g., Allan & Madden, 2008; Campo, Poulos, & Sipple, 2005). However, hazers and hazingees may refuse to adopt definitions that require them to morally incriminate themselves in harsh terms, or to endorse particular feeling states that may be absent (e.g., a feeling of degradation). Given that hazing describes a wide spectrum of behavior, some of which is undeniably mild, such refusals may be justified. More generally, any definition of hazing that tries to simultaneously define *and* apply harsh moral judgment is inherently less useful because it will be met with resistance and misunderstanding. As an example, imagine if one were to define “stealing” as “to abuse another person in a way that may be dangerous, humiliating, or degrading by taking something from them.” The task of convincing people that they are party to an instance of “stealing” will be hampered by the use of words with dramatically negative implications, especially if said instance is trivial and easily resolved.

The surveys that have used the Hoover and Pollard family of definitions have also included lists of induction practices that participants can indicate having experienced (e.g., yelling, sleep deprivation). Many of these activities are undeniably hazing in the context of the groups studied, regardless of how the researchers defined hazing. Thus, my critique is not that the associated research findings are automatically suspect, but that the definitions employed do not serve as useful descriptions of the phenomenon under study and may not always capture the appropriate class of behaviors. This is important, as it appears as though the Hoover and Pollard family of definitions is being embraced in anti-hazing advocacy efforts. For example, HazingPrevention.Org is a prominent anti-hazing organization that is focused on student hazing and runs both National Hazing Prevention Week and the Novak Institute for Hazing Prevention. Here is how they define hazing on their web page:

Hazing is any action taken or any situation created intentionally that causes embarrassment, harassment or ridicule and risks emotional and/or physical harm to members of a group or team, whether new or not, regardless of the person’s willingness to participate (HazingPrevention.Org, 2016).

This definition faces the same problems described above, in particular a broad scope that fails to exclude irrelevant phenomena. HazingPrevention.Org may be accustomed to this objection, as their definition is followed by a set of clarifying questions: (Bracketed numbers have been added for commentary)

If you're not sure whether or not something happening to you or to someone else is hazing, ask yourself these questions:

Would I feel comfortable participating in this activity if my parents were watching? [1]

Would we get in trouble if a school/college administrator walked by and saw us? [2]

Am I being asked to keep these activities a secret? [3]

Am I doing anything illegal? [4]

Does participation in this activity violate my values or those of this organization? [5]

Is this causing emotional or physical distress or stress to myself or to others? [6]

Am I going to be able to get a job if I have to put a criminal arrest on my application? [7]

[1] The universe of activities that people may not want their parents watching is exceptionally large, encompassing any number of private and social events. Further, the idea that people should employ simulated parental viewing as a hazing heuristic is both strange and patronizing.

[2] Getting in trouble with an administrator is possible for non-hazing reasons, and is additionally possible because the administrator may not understand what is occurring, given that he or she simply "walked by." Most importantly, the administrator's reaction is dependent on how hazing is defined, which is exactly what HazingPrevention.Org is supposed to be clarifying.

[3] Numerous non-hazing induction activities are also secret (e.g., McMinn, 1980), and secrecy is valued by all manner of organizations for non-hazing reasons.

[4] The question "Am I doing anything illegal?" besides being too broad, may also be circular in the 44 US states with anti-hazing laws.

[5] Whether participation violates personal or organizational values is irrelevant to determining whether hazing is occurring. Many organizations are, in practice, pro-hazing, making this question a possible contra-indicator of hazing.

[6] Simply causing emotional distress, as described above, is not a good indicator of hazing. Stress or distress is a necessary and unavoidable component of numerous organizational activities, any number of which might be employed in inductions.

[7] Regardless of whether hazing is present or absent, this question serves to create threat, not clarity.

One may object that HazingPrevention.Org is not trying to create a rigorous academic definition of hazing and is addressing a broad audience. But this is precisely the problem: A public-facing organization is communicating a conception of hazing that is overly broad and then following it with clarifications that target peripheral or misleading correlates of hazing.

Other anti-hazing efforts have similar definitional problems. For example, Dr. Susan Lipkins runs InsideHazing.com and is frequently called on by news organizations to comment on hazing phenomena, including student hazing. In her book “Preventing Hazing,” Lipkins (2006) initially cites the definition given by Hoover (1999) and Mothers Against School Hazing, but expands on them and suggests the following:

I believe that hazing is a process based on a tradition that is used by groups to maintain a hierarchy (a "pecking order") within the group. Regardless of consent, the rituals require individuals to engage in activities that are physically and psychologically stressful. These activities can be exhausting, humiliating, degrading, demeaning, and intimidating. They result in significant physical and emotional discomfort. More specifically, hazing

- Involves a repetition of a tradition
- Is a process
- Maintains a hierarchy within a group
- Intends to create closeness in a group
- Involves psychological and physical stress (p. 13).

There are several problems with Lipkins’ expanded definition:

1. Hierarchy. At present, researchers are not sure what on-average impacts hazing has on internal group hierarchy (Cimino, 2011; Keating et al., 2005). Hazing practices include hierarchical displays (e.g., forcing hazingees to act submissive) but whether hazing contributes to internal hierarchy post-hazing is not a settled matter. However, Lipkins has mixed this hypothesis into the definition of hazing itself. To understand why this is problematic, imagine once again modifying the definition of “stealing”. Defining stealing as “taking something from another person to maintain a hierarchy,” complicates an otherwise straightforward definition with a hypothesis about what *might* cause some instances stealing. Our theories about the cause(s) of such phenomena do not belong in the definitions themselves.

2. Closeness. Given the profound cross-cultural breadth of hazing (e.g., Schlegel & Barry, 1979; Webster, 1908), it is not clear that hazers always intend to “create closeness,” and even if they do, it

is not clear why such an intent should be a definitional element of hazing. If a hazer does not intend to create closeness, why should that modify our judgment of whether he or she is hazing?

3. Tradition and Process. Claiming that hazing “involves a repetition of a tradition” is necessarily false each time hazing is first performed within a new group. Further, Lipkins’ characterization of hazing as a “process” (by which she means a planned and lengthy induction) is often true, but hazing may also be brief and unorganized.

Finally, ostensibly because Lipkins’ definition is partially based on Hoover, it shares many of the same problems described above, including poorly qualified stressful activities as indicators of hazing.

The preceding discussion does not exhaust current definitions of hazing—others exist, and many suffer some combination of the problems described above. Here, for example, is how Cornell University (2016) defines hazing:

To haze another person, regardless of the person's consent to participate. Hazing means an act that, as an explicit or implicit condition for initiation to, admission into, affiliation with, or continued membership in a group or organization, (1) could be seen by a reasonable person as endangering the physical health of an individual or as causing mental distress to an individual through, for example, humiliating, intimidating, or demeaning treatment, (2) destroys or removes public or private property, (3) involves the consumption of alcohol or drugs, or the consumption of other substances to excess, or (4) violates any University policy.

Some of the problems with this definition should already be evident. Like other definitions, there are references to distress and humiliation, but they are not properly qualified, leaving open the idea that any induction that creates distress or humiliation is hazing (reasonable people can see non-hazing inductions as endangering physical health, causing distress, etc.). The Cornell definition also stretches hazing to include activities required for “continued membership” which means that hazing can be any number of disparate, unpleasant activities that happen to be expected of members during their tenure (e.g., mandatory cleaning of filthy bathrooms). Finally, Cornell’s definition ends with a surprising clause, stating that hazing can be any required organizational activity that “violates any University policy.” This would seem to stretch the definition of hazing to incoherence. Consider a fraternity that decided to hold mandatory meetings on campus, but failed to obtain permission to use a university meeting room: This lapse would meet Cornell’s definition of hazing.

To be fair, not all definitions of hazing are problematic. Consider Crow and Macintosh's (2009) proposed definition of athletic hazing:

Any potentially humiliating, degrading, abusive, or dangerous activity expected of a junior-ranking athlete by a more senior team-mate, which does not contribute to either athlete's positive development, but is required to be accepted as part of a team, regardless of the junior-ranking athlete's willingness to participate. This includes, but is not limited to, any activity, no matter how traditional or seemingly benign, that sets apart or alienates any team-mate based on class, number of years on the team, or athletic ability (p. 449).

These authors qualify the typical set of hazing adjectives (e.g., humiliating, dangerous) with the stipulation that such activities constitute hazing only if they do not contribute to the "athlete's positive development." Thus, unpleasant activities that *do* contribute to an athlete's positive development are not hazing. As such, Crow and Macintosh are approaching the strict definition within the confines of an athletic organization. While I have few objections to Crow and Macintosh's definition, the purpose of this paper is to propose a *universal* definition of hazing, rather than requiring that every organization create unique and inevitably conflicting definitions.

Do Definitions Actually Matter?

Much of the discussion above may seem like nit-picking. Even if many definitions of hazing technically include activities that most would describe as non-hazing, does it actually matter? After all, people are not slaves to definitions, and stakeholders are capable of making nuanced distinctions. The consequences of poor definitions, however, are already evident among anti-hazing advocates and researchers. Consider Van Raalte, Cornelius, Linder, and Brewer's (2007) study of hazing and group cohesion. Van Raalte et al. surveyed 167 athletes using a standard scale of group cohesion. For each participant, they also tabulated the number of performed or witnessed hazing and non-hazing activities. Across a handful of different analyses, Van Raalte et al. found that the number of non-hazing activities was positively associated with one aspect of group cohesion, while hazing activities were not, and were sometimes negatively associated with aspects of group cohesion. Van Raalte et al.'s findings have been cited by a growing number of researchers and anti-hazing advocates as evidence that hazing reduces group cohesion (e.g., Crow & Macintosh, 2009; Fields, Collins, & Comstock, 2010; Groves, Griggs, & Leflay, 2012; Johnson, 2011; Maxwell, 2011; National Collaborative for Hazing Research and Prevention, 2010; Waldron & Kowalski, 2009;

Zacharda, 2009). The problem is that none of these sources appear to share Van Raalte et al.'s definition of hazing. Here is how Van Raalte et al. defined hazing in their study:

Those activities that were categorized by the majority of respondents as inappropriate were designated as hazing (inappropriate team building behaviors) and those that were categorized by the majority as appropriate were designated as appropriate team building behaviors (p. 498).

Thus, if most participants called an activity appropriate, it was not considered hazing. Van Raalte et al.'s compiled list of "appropriate team building behaviors" contained a subsection called "coerced deviant behaviors," which included tattooing, piercing, head shaving, branding, wearing embarrassing clothing, as well as "engaging in or simulating sex acts." So, by Van Raalte et al.'s definition, an athlete that is coerced into being pierced, branded, shaved, dressed like a clown, and then made to perform oral sex on a team member is engaging in an "appropriate team building behavior" and *is not being hazed*. Researchers and advocates have misunderstood Van Raalte et al.'s results because their definitions of hazing differ. Further, the collective desire to show that hazing does not increase cohesion has now proliferated a finding that, ironically, may indicate otherwise. Indeed, Van Raalte et al.'s results may suggest that some methods of hazing actually do increase cohesion, or simply that any "team building behavior" that is not accepted by a team may reduce cohesion.

Regardless, Van Raalte et al.'s definition of hazing is unstable and thus not useful at a policy level. All it would require for induction activities to be hazing is a majority of participants deciding that they are inappropriate. If the same majority were persuaded otherwise—for any reason—then the activities would instantly cease to be hazing.

Poor definitions of hazing may also lead to enduring distrust among targeted populations (e.g., fraternities, athletic teams). Colleges and universities appear incentivized to have an over-inclusive definition of hazing so as to prevent hazing behavior from escaping notice or punishment. But this goal is directly at odds with convincing students that there is any coherent definition of hazing other than what authorities might find objectionable. If hazing can be any member requirement that happens to violate any policy whatsoever, as in the case of Cornell University, this implies that the word "hazing" is just another way of saying "any behavior that we don't like, for any reason."

Revisiting the Strict Definition of Hazing

It is worth revisiting the strict definition of hazing offered at the beginning of this paper, in light of the critiques given above:

Hazing is non-accidental, costly aspects of group induction activities that a) do not appear to be group-relevant assessments/preparations or b) appear excessive in their application. Group induction activities are those tasks formally or informally required to obtain membership or participatory legitimacy for new or prospective members.

The strict definition has the following merits:

a) It describes the many ways in which hazing can impact hazingees through the idea of “cost.” “Cost” encompasses negative impacts across all manner of currencies, including time, energy, money, reputation, injury, etc.

b) It excludes accidental costs (e.g., tripping during a training exercise) but avoids terms like “intentional.” By this definition, members of an organization can haze while being unaware that their induction activities are excessive or lack relevance.

c) It uses a flexible and ultimately evidence-based stance, appending the word “appear” in two places to describe its scope. If there is a legitimate dispute as to the relevance or extremity of a group induction task, experts can be consulted and studies can be performed.

d) It avoids extreme moral language and encompasses a continuum of severity from trivial to profound.

The task identified at the beginning of this paper was to describe a useful and universal definition of hazing, rather than an ultimate definition that cleared away all problems of judgment and application. One such problem is the nature of hazing itself: What if some of what we currently call “hazing” in a particular organization is actually group-relevant in a non-obvious manner (e.g., Precourt, 1975)? Assuming the impression of hazing is strong and widespread, I suggest we continue to label such activities with some variety of the term “hazing.” After all, the strict definition is already framed in terms of appearance. This could be made more explicit by modifying the language of the definition as follows:

Actual hazing is non-accidental, costly aspects of group induction activities that a) are not group-relevant assessments/preparations or b) are excessive in their application. *Nominal* hazing is costly aspects of group induction activities that falsely give the impression of a) or b).

For example, an enduring argument with respect to hazing rests on whether some forms of hazing are effective at generating group cohesion among hazingees. In the terms described

immediately above, this is an argument about whether certain forms of hazing are nominal or actual. For example, if fraternity hazing were effective in establishing subsequent strong cohesion, then said induction activities would move from the “actual” to the “nominal” category. I anticipate resistance to this dual classification. At present, the label of “hazing” is sometimes used to solidify opposition to certain induction practices and to shame their participants. If some hazing practices were re-labeled “nominal hazing,” this might sound like a statement of approval or harmlessness, neither of which is intended, and this potential misunderstanding would need to be met with education.

To be clear, under the strict definition, any opposition to hazing practices (whether we label them nominal or actual) would be based on the same concerns as are currently voiced: The potential for danger and abuse. Merely discovering that some hazing practices are cryptically relevant to organizations would not necessarily obviate such objections. It would depend on the means, outcomes, and safety associated with the nominal hazing activities.

Regardless, it is time for stakeholders to formally acknowledge that the term “hazing” should be taken as a limited claim. “Hazing” is a word that is best used to capture the observation that an induction activity seems both costly and arbitrary. It cannot simultaneously indicate how harmful an activity is, whether it is morally acceptable, its psychological causes, or similarly nuanced judgments.

The Way Forward

Though one is entitled to one’s own definition of hazing, not all hazing definitions are equally useful. Some definitions may categorize disparate phenomena as being related, punish benign behaviors, motivate hazers and hazingees to redefine their experiences, or simply sow confusion among fellow stakeholders.

Organizations constructing educational materials about hazing should be mindful of the scope of their definitions and the false positives they may generate, focusing not just on describing the ways in which hazing might be implemented, but also the ways in which induction activities can be unpleasant *without* being hazing. Finally, stakeholders that wish to make use of scientific studies on hazing should affirm that the hazing definitions employed are coherent and compatible with their own.

The strict definition of hazing given in this paper is not without ambiguity—it does not solve all problems of clarity or judgment. But it succinctly captures hazing in two to three sentences, is

broadly applicable, and appears to exclude more false positives than other, common definitions. At the very least, it is a good start to a larger conversation.

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THE ROLE OF THE UNIVERSITY PRESIDENT: AN EXAMINATION OF CONTEMPORARY NARRATIVES IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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The role of the president is undergoing an historic transformation as institutions increasingly hire presidents who have not taken the traditional academic career path to the presidency. According to a study released by the American Council on Education in 2012, 20 percent of college presidents hired as of 2011 followed a non-academic path to the presidency (Cook, 2012). With mixed success, politicians, business executives, and other nontraditional professionals are being selected to help institutions navigate the challenges of the contemporary higher education landscape. Often, nontraditional presidents face challenges and controversies in their new roles as they attempt to navigate contemporary higher education challenges.

As a topic of discourse in post-secondary education, presidential leadership has fallen behind in both critical examination and substantive development. This article considers the traditional role of the president to guide an exploration of nontraditional contemporary presidential leaders. Four contemporary narratives will be considered to make meaning of the environments that prompted these new roles and the effective leadership styles of contemporary college presidents. This article seeks to fill the gap of presidential scholarship in higher education to drive discourse as the higher education community in the United States seeks to affirm or redefine the role of president in its post-secondary education institutions.

The Role of the President

As the role of the contemporary college president is considered under new light, it is helpful to understand the history of the presidential role in higher education. Though Boards of Trustees

look increasingly to those with nontraditional backgrounds to meet contemporary challenges, this is not the first era of change for the presidential leader. Indeed, the role and expectations of the president have shifted throughout history along with the culture and mission of higher education.

Beginning with the founding of Harvard in 1636, men hired as university presidents were often also members of the clergy. The top priority of the president was to serve the needs of the church (Rile, 2001). The president also served as the chief teacher of the college. The president was responsible for teaching and student discipline, while boards were responsible for the administrative functions of the institution (Geiger, 2015).

Changes in higher education in the 1800s resulted in the first major change in the role of a president. Between 1815 and 1840, the number of colleges in the United States jumped from 28 to 80 (Geiger, 2015). With improvements in transportation and growth in the U.S. economy, higher education opportunities became more available to the average American. Advancements in science and the Morrill Land Grant Act gave rise to more complex institutions which required additional administration. Presidents began to take on additional administrative duties in addition to their teaching roles (Rile, 2001).

In the 1900s, as the student population and the number of offered programs grew, presidents moved from faculty to full-time administrator. Presidents were still expected to be scholars, but were also expected to have strong financial and organizational leadership skills (Thomas & Fusco, 2011). Capen (1953) described the functions of the new breed of university administrator as “so miscellaneous that no one can perform them all well” (p. 495). As we embark on the 21st century, the higher education community is still grappling with how best to meet contemporary challenges and how best to align the presidential role to meet these challenges. Next, we will examine contemporary presidential profiles to begin to understand the unique challenges and roles of the 21st century higher education president.

The Contemporary Narrative

Perhaps the most symbolic figurehead of the contemporary presidential narrative is Margaret Spellings’ rise to the presidency of the University of North Carolina System in October of 2015. Spellings, self-described as a person who understands public-policy making, previously served as president of the George W. Bush Presidential Center and as the Secretary of Education under George W. Bush. As Secretary of Education, Spellings was best known for her work on the No Child

Left Behind Act which instituted high-stakes testing in K-12 and the formation of The Commission on the Future of Higher Education (Brown, 2015, June 11, para 4 and 12).

The Spellings Commission's report acknowledged higher education as a commodity that should seek to meet the demands of the market. As such, the report holds higher education accountable for producing graduates that meet the needs of the modern workforce (Neem, 2015). States began to consider this new perspective as they revised state funding models to public institutions. It was this environment and personal outlook that brought Spellings to the University of North Carolina.

Spellings arrived at her new post with no shortage of controversy. The central concern was that her longest stint in higher education had been fourteen months of service to the University of Phoenix as an independent director. As the Spellings appointment illustrates, concerns over disinvestment in non-profit higher education by state legislatures has boards focusing on leaders with political clout and influence but perhaps not on the presumed priority, public education (Brown and Supiano, 2015, para. 25).

Arguably a top-down, authoritative administrator, Spellings' presidency was just the beginning of the new narrative of presidential roles in higher education. Rooted in the Spellings era, we will now explore four contemporary presidential narratives to examine the changing paradigm of presidential leadership in higher education. We will explore the environments that drive institutions to appoint nontraditional presidents. We will also explore the reception of the nontraditional leaders, their presidential agenda, and the controversies and issues surround their appointments. It is our hope that this examination will inform the acclimation of future nontraditional presidents, assuming that the nontraditional president is now a fixture in the reality of accountability and financial concern in the contemporary higher education environment.

Purdue University: Mitch E. Daniels

Becoming the seventh president to lead Purdue University in January 2013, Mitch Daniels proclaimed, "The proper scope of a university, in one soundbite, is to prepare citizens for a free society. A successful free society needs technologists, it needs philosophers, it needs people of integrity and public life (Lippman, 2016, para. 1)." Transitioning from his role as the 49th governor of Indiana, Daniels has a long history in politics and business. With a bachelor's degree from Princeton University and a law degree from Georgetown University, Daniels was widely speculated to enter the 2016 race for United States president. Prior to being the two-term Republican governor, Daniels was Director of the Office of Management and Budget for President George W. Bush, President of Eli

Lilly and Co. North American Pharmaceutical Operations, the chief executive officer at think tank Hudson Institute, a senior advisor to President Reagan, and Chief of Staff to Indiana Republican Senator Richard Lugar (Quest, 2014, January 28, para. 4 and 5).

Not surprisingly, Daniels was both hailed and criticized as he began his tenure as Purdue's president. Initial support came in the form of praise as a transformational leader by Jamie Merisotis, CEO and President of the Lumina Foundation. Merisotis (2012) stated that he believed "Governor Daniels understands that Purdue will need to continue to earn its reputation for innovation, opportunity and excellence, and thereby help make our state stronger, our communities more vibrant, and our quality of life higher" (para. 1). Hinting of the sure to follow questions over the non-academic presidency, Merisotis (2012) also shared that "there are many other political leaders doing very well in university settings" (para. 1).

Indeed, Daniels came to the position with no shortage of ideas about how to transform the already well-respected land-grant. Central to the Daniels' administration is the President's *Purdue Moves* initiative and its four pillars (a) affordability and accessibility; (b) transformative education; (c) world-changing research; and (d) STEM leadership (Mitch E. Daniels, Jr. Biography, 2016). Taking quick action on affordability as a pillar initiative, Daniels moved to break a 36-year tradition of tuition increases at Purdue by instituting a tuition freeze projected to last through the 2016-17 academic year. Continuing the affordability theme, Daniels has also moved to cut room and board costs by 5 percent and has initiated a ground-breaking agreement with Amazon.com to help Purdue students save an average of 30 percent on textbooks (Mitch E. Daniels, Jr. Biography, 2016).

Daniels has also been both bold and vocal about initiatives related to academics. Honoring Purdue's historic role in engineering education, Daniels proposed expansion of the engineering faculty population to support a goal of graduating more than 5 percent of the national call for 10,000 additional engineers being graduated each year. Daniels has also praised the College of Technology's pursuit of becoming recognized as the Purdue Polytechnic Institute. Perhaps most notable, however, is the reward system related to specific academic initiatives. Each with a \$500,000 award, Daniels has instituted a call for (a) the design of a three year degree program; (b) the development of a competency-based degree; and (c) the development of a degree built around working adults (Quest, 2014).

Daniels is not without his detractors. Presumably still early in his tenure as president, Daniels learned quickly from perceived missteps on controversial actions. Following community outcry over a paid speech he made to the conservative think tank Center of the American Experiment, Daniels

bowed to criticism and donated the earnings to student scholarships (Stripling, 2013). Among other commentary, Ed Quest (2014) reminded readers that Daniels is a conservative Republican and called into question the possible tension such a leader could have on traditionally liberal-leaning public institutions. As governor, Daniels is widely known for cutting funding for Planned Parenthood in the state of Indiana and the 2013 release of emails during his time as governor. The emails revealed his desire to strike the liberal writings of Howard Zinn from Indiana's high school curricula, actions that concerned Purdue faculty given how his role as president could potentially influence on academic freedom at the university (Schmidt, 2013).

With both successes and stumbles, Daniels looks to be at the helm of Purdue, at minimum, until 2020 following a Board of Trustees' vote to extend his existing contract by two years. Mike Berghoff, Chairman of the Board stated, "We've got a lot to do yet, and so we thought it best, in order to have continuity, that we would retain Mitch for two more years to complete some of the major things we've started" (Paul, 2015). As most anyone who is involved in public higher education can attest, the challenges facing Purdue are not unique to Purdue. Daniels' proposed initiatives are similar to those being tested at most all public institutions struggling with a shifting paradigm of state mandates and funding.

University of Iowa: J. Bruce Harreld

On August 1, 2015, Dr. Sally Mason retired after eight years as president of the University of Iowa (Woodhouse, 2015, September 4). Prior to her retirement, Mason developed a contentious relationship with the Iowa Board of Regents, the state-level governing body of the three public higher education institutions in Iowa. Ignoring the Regent's desire to focus on in-state residents, the University of Iowa continued to admit out-of-state and international students (Vara, 2015). In what may have been a move to force the University of Iowa to change its admission strategy, the Board of Regents proposed a performance-based funding model that tied state appropriation to in-state enrollment. If the funding model had been enacted by the legislature, University of Iowa stood to lose \$46 million that would have been distributed to the other two state schools (Rivard, 2014). The Iowa state legislature ultimately did not include the proposed funding model in that year's state budget.

It was under these circumstances that the Board of Regents searched for a new leader to navigate their funding concerns. Several years of a contentious relationship between Mason and the Board of Regents, the prospect of shrinking funding sources, and the fear of an impending financial crisis resulted in the board's desire to consider a non-traditional candidate to fill Mason's seat

(*Inside Higher Ed*, n.d.). In fact, the Board of Regents reportedly gave the executive search firm instructions to recruit candidates from both inside and outside the academy (Woodhouse, 2015 September 2). Chosen from a finalist pool that included two provosts and a sitting president, J. Bruce Harreld was appointed the 21st president of the University of Iowa on September 3, 2015 with the unanimous support of the university's Board. Harreld's leadership was strictly in the private sector, most notably as a senior vice president for IBM. (Woodhouse, 2015, September 4). With a highest degree of M.B.A., Harreld's only professional experience in higher education was as an adjunct professor at Harvard and Northwestern Universities (Harreld, n.d.).

From the time his selection as finalist was announced, University of Iowa faculty members were uncomfortable with Harreld's lack of higher education leadership experience. As an example of the faculty's concern, an AAUP survey released the day before the presidential selection was announced found that fewer than 3 percent of responding faculty felt Harreld was qualified for the position of president (Woodhouse, 2015, September 3). A primary concern of faculty was Harreld's lack of experience with a shared governance structure. Michael O'Hara, former head of Iowa's faculty senate, equated the possibility of hiring a president who has never worked within a shared governance structure to "jumping off a cliff and hoping that the parachute opens up" (Woodhouse, September 2, para. 6). Following the Board's announcement that they had selected Harreld as the 21st president, the university's Faculty Senate issued a no-confidence vote in the Board of Regents (Charis-Carlson, 2015, September 8).

In addition to concerns about his lack of higher education administrative experience, questions also arose about the accuracy of Harreld's resume shortly after his selection was announced. Three weeks following the announcement, the Faculty Assembly of the College of Liberal Arts & Sciences censured Harreld for what it called "his failure of professional ethics" (Jashick, 2015, September 4, para. 2), citing that the resume contained inaccurate employment information and did not include names of co-authors on his list of publications.

Following the announcement of Harreld's selection as president, another event came to light that made the faculty even more suspicious about the search process. Before he officially was an applicant, Harreld met with several regents and at least two members of the search committee. None of the other finalists met with any personnel associated with the search prior to participating in airport interviews (Kelderman, 2015, September 25).

While the university of Iowa community had concerns about Harreld's qualifications for the job, they were even more upset about the search itself. Media reports describe a departure from

the way previous presidential searches were run. For example, as the job description was being created by the search committee, Regents serving on the committee pushed for a change in the minimum degree requirements. Instead of requiring candidates to have an earned doctorate, the minimum requirement was changed to include a terminal degree in the candidate's field of study – opening the possibility that a successful candidate could come from outside academe (AAUP, 2015). In addition, this search allowed for much less faculty and student participation than in previous searches. Paul Muhley, who has served as a professor at the University of Iowa since 1969, indicated there were very limited opportunities for individual faculty to share their thoughts about the finalists (Woodhouse, 2015, September 2).

Further, citing the lack of transparency and the failure of the Board of Regents to adhere to the principles of shared governance in this search, faculty from the University of Iowa asked for a formal review of the presidential search process by the American Association of University Professors (AAUP). Although AAUP's review did find that the search process was undoubtedly designed "to identify a figure from the business world" (AAUP, 2015, p. 12), the organization recommended that the faculty take Harreld's statements regarding his commitment to shared governance at face value while "remaining vigilant and prepared to act to maintain academic integrity and shared governance" (AAUP, 2015, p. 14).

As of this writing, there are two outstanding court cases that have been brought against the Iowa Board of Regents involving the circumstances of Harreld's selection as president. The first suit claims that the Board of Regents violated Iowa's Open Meetings Act by holding interviews for semi-finalist applicants at O'Hare Airport in Chicago. The second case claims that the Board of Regents violated Iowa's Open Meetings law when multiple regents met with Harreld weeks before the official interviews began, seeking to void the selection of Harreld as president (Foley, 2016, June 1).

Critics of Harreld's selection also criticized the terms of the five-year contract. The compensation package includes a five-year contract during which Harreld will receive an annual salary of \$590,000 and annual deferred compensation contributions of \$200,000 (Charis-Carlson, 2015, September 3). While the university is addressing deferred maintenance on the university-owned president's residence, the university had signed a year lease for alternative housing at a cost of \$2,000 per month (Charis-Carlson, 2015, November 1). Critics have pointed out that, at the time of her retirement, former UI President Sally Mason earned \$525,000 annually. In addition to monetary benefits, Harreld's contract also included the option to become a tenured faculty upon

completion of his contract – a benefit which Harreld has indicated he will not seek (Jaschik, 2015, September 9).

Following his rocky start, Harreld has not shied away from taking stands that get the attention of the media – some on purpose, and some without intention. For example, at a Faculty Senate meeting in December, Harreld drew fire from faculty for what he deemed a joking comment in which he said that “any instructor who goes into a class without having [prepared a lesson] ‘should be shot’” (Woodhouse, 2015, December 16, para. 3). The faculty member indicated she felt Harreld was used to speaking with people in a boardroom in a way that does not go over well in a higher education setting (Woodhouse, 2015, December 16).

Another example of Harreld serving the intended purpose of the Board of Regents can be viewed through capital planning at the university. The university withdrew from a joint public/private deal to build an \$80 million art museum off-campus in downtown Iowa City. Harreld has asked university officials to evaluate the feasibility of utilizing existing space that will be freed up as newly-constructed facilities come on line. Iowa Board of Regents member Katie Mulholland cited the move as an example of the culture change the regents expected from Harreld (Charis-Carlson, 2015, March 25).

Mount St. Mary’s University: Simon Newman

Mount St. Mary’s University, the second oldest Catholic university in the country, was in need of someone who could navigate the university through a changing higher education landscape. In April of 2014, Moody’s had given the institution a negative outlook rating. This negative outlook rating reflected Mount St. Mary’s University’s challenges due to entering class volatility, operation deficits, and limited funding resources (“Moody’s”, 2014). The issues and challenges surrounding Mount St. Mary’s are not dissimilar to what other small traditional liberal arts schools are facing. Knowing the mounting challenges that Mount St. Mary’s was facing, the Board of Trustees decided to look for a president that could not only stabilize the university, but could also push it forward.

The search committee sought a candidate for the presidency who had experience in fund-raising, strategic planning, fiscal leadership, strong communication skills, and a deep Catholic faith (“New”, 2014). The committee ended up with three finalists for the position. Two of the finalists were traditional academics, the third was a corporate CEO named Simon Newman. The board’s chairman, John E. Coyne III saw that the two traditional academics could keep the school where it was, while Newman came across to the board and the search committee as someone who could take the school and reimagine it (Mangan, 2016). In December of 2014, Simon Newman was

announced as the next president of Mount St. Mary's, and began his work in March of the following year.

Prior to accepting the presidency at Mount St. Mary's, Simon Newman was managing director of the Los Angeles private equity fund JP Capital Partners, and the CEO of a merger and acquisition, private equity and strategic firm named Cornerstone Management Group (Seltzer, 2015). Newman also has started four businesses in his career and has raised more than \$3 billion in equity funding (Prudente, 2016). He also led several business turnarounds, delivering more than \$200 million in profit improvements ("New", 2014).

Newman came to Mount St. Mary's because he wanted to find something with a larger social impact. Newman recognized that he had a good run in private equity, but realized that the focus of his work was on the wealth creation for a relatively small number of people (Seltzer, 2015). A devout Roman Catholic, he saw Mount St. Mary's as an institution where he could make that larger social impact. Coming to Mount St. Mary's, though, did not mean he would abandon his business principles. His major roles as the university president would be to raise money, develop a strategic plan, manage the organization's fiscal situation, and focus on enrollment, skills he personally to his corporate experience CEO (Seltzer, 2015).

Not long after taking office, Newman cut benefits and brought in outside business consultants, moves that started to fracture his support. Newman would further become a divisive figure on campus largely due to the vision he had for the university that would drastically change it. Within his first year in office, Newman released his vision for Mount St. Mary's future. His strategic plan, titled Mount 2.0, included modernizing the curriculum to include adding engineering and cybersecurity programs, requiring fewer humanities based core courses, doubling the enrollment to 3,000 in 10 years, and making sure students graduated with marketable degrees (Svrluga, 2016; Dishneau, 2016). Some campus community members saw the strategic plan as upending the identity of the small, nurturing, Catholic, liberal arts college (Svrluga, 2016). Newman's vision to alter Mount St. Mary's liberal arts orientation reflects the popularity of incorporating business models into higher education. Modeling small liberal arts universities after corporations risk destroying their singular identity and value (Patterson, 2016).

Newman, aware of metrics that influence college rankings, introduced a controversial retention plan in the fall of 2015. The idea involved administering a survey to new students, telling them there no right or wrong answers, and then using results to identify students who should be encouraged to drop out early before they incur debt and before the university would have to record

them as dropouts. Many faculty and administrators criticized Newman's retention plan on the grounds that it is unethical for a college to admit students and not do everything possible to encourage student success (Jaschik, 2016). Newman responded to a few of these critics in an email with the now infamous quote, "This is hard for you because you think of the students as cuddly bunnies, but you can't. You have to drown the bunnies...put a Glock to their heads" (Jaschik, 2016, para. 3).

Weeks after the student newspaper broke the story on the controversial retention plan, the paper's faculty advisor, Ed Egan, was fired for disloyalty. An associate professor of philosophy, Thane Naberhaus, a vocal critic of President Newman's policies was also dismissed. David Rhems, a provost who raised concerns over the retention plan, was also stripped of his role (Joseph & McPhate, 2016). These decisions by President Newman's administration were seen by many as retaliatory and drew condemnations from academics all across the country. Professors across the country saw these moves as emblematic of an erosion of faculty rights and the consequences of putting a non-academic like Newman in a university presidency (Jaschik, 2016). Newman reversed the firings of Egan and Dr. Naberhaus at a faculty meeting in February of 2016, but by this point the damage had already been done. Faculty members voted 87-3 to demand Newman resign his position for the good of Mount St. Mary's. Less than a year after his first day in office, the board asked Newman to resign his position, and he complied.

Carey (2016) states that yardsticks devised in the business world are bound to fail in higher education. Higher education exists to educate human beings, not reduce individuals to statistics and metrics. Joseph Baldachhino, a 1970 graduate of Mount St. Mary's may have summed it up best in his email to The Washington Post:

"The Mount is not a business, let alone a hedge fund. It is a sacred institution consecrated to one purpose: the furtherance of the good, the true, and the beautiful. It is the loving work of many generations...Mount St. Mary's is, in other words, a sacred trust." (Svrluga, 2016, n.p.)

Newman's authoritative leadership style and Wall Street take-over tactics would eventually lead to his resignation, leaving Mount St. Mary's with the task of returning to its historic mission of providing students with a learning environment that is warm, welcoming, and steeped in Catholic values (Rascover, 2016).

Youngstown State University: Jim Tressel

The appointment of Jim Tressel as the ninth president of Youngstown State University on July 1, 2014 steered the trend of non-academic university presidents in a new direction. The Board of Trustees of Youngstown State University unanimously selected Tressel after a national search (“Installation”, 2014; “YSU”, 2014). Tressel was appointed president despite admitting to NCAA ethics violations and resigning as head football coach at the Ohio State University several years prior (Dohrmann & Epstein, 2011; NCAA, 2011; Starting Blocks, 2012). Returning to the institution where he coached early in his career, Tressel signed a contract for a \$300,000 base salary, \$75,000 less than his predecessor. Tressel claimed he was offered more money, but declined. This decision may have to do with Tressel’s established reputation as an altruistic leader (Miller & Carpenter, 2009).

Unlike other nontraditional presidents, Tressel did have some experience in higher education beyond his years as a football coach. In the two years prior to his appointment at Youngstown Tressel served as the Vice President of Strategic Engagement, Vice President for Student Success and the Executive Vice President for Student Success at the University of Akron. In these roles, Tressel worked with student support initiatives including alumni relations and partnerships with community organizations. While employed at the University of Akron, Tressel was quick to echo the altruistic visions of his past stating that upon beginning his new position, “The first thing is to listen and learn and become part of the team. I will do all I possibly can to develop relationships with alumni, friends, future students, schools and businesses. Life is about the relationships you forge” (Farkas, n.p.).

Unlike many other nontraditional university presidents who may have authoritative leadership styles from the world of business, Jim Tressel was known for his altruism in leadership. In a qualitative research study, Miller and Carpenter (2009), explore Tressel’s altruistic leadership style. In the case study Miller and Carpenter (2009) report Tressel often stayed late to work with athletes on personal goals, took the team to tournaments in his free time, or took the time to talk with students on personal issues. The researchers selected Tressel for their case study due to his sterling reputation from his constituents, in which they labeled him an altruistic leader. In an interview with Tressel, he stressed the importance of the core values of excellence, education, leadership, innovation, respect, and integrity. He specifically spoke about aligning choices with these core values to support students. Tressel also stressed interpersonal care, concern, and compassion. He advocated getting to know and appreciate people and “being compassionate about human frailties (p. 11).”

Prior to his appointment at Youngstown, Tressel was also a candidate for president at the University of Akron. Supported by the local political and business community, Tressel did not garner the same support from the academic community, who was not as eager to see a non-academic leader placed in the university's top position (Dick, 2014; Revard, 2014). Tressel only holds a master's degree in education. During the presidential search at the University of Akron, faculty showed overwhelming opposition, with a poll of 217 Akron professors reporting 71% were strongly opposed and an additional 10% somewhat opposed to Tressel being selected for the University of Akron president position. Interestingly, in a statement showing concern about the possibility of a Tressel presidency at University of Akron, one professor referred to the university as a "\$400 million-plus a year corporation" (Farkas, 2014. n.p.). Though some faculty at Youngstown State were leery of a Tressel presidency, Tressel's willingness to leave academic decisions to those knowledgeable about academics eased some concerns. Faculty union leader Annette Burden acknowledged a realistic expectation of Tressel saying, "We expect that he will be an excellent ambassador and an effective fundraiser for the University" (Weinberg, 2014, n.p.).

Indeed, the goal of increasing cash flow to the university may be a higher priority to the financially-strapped university than a president who is heavily involved with academics. When Tressel assumed the presidency at Youngstown State, the university was reeling from two short-term presidencies and a budget deficit of \$11 million, partially due to a 15% enrollment drop in the four years leading up to Tressel taking the helm. The freshman retention rates of 65% and graduation rate of 33% in a state newly-transitioned to performance-based funding was also a concern. Tressel promised to focus on improving retention and fundraising to support student success. Board of Trustees chair Sudershan Garg expects that Tressel will help increase fundraising and will be a strong advocate for increased state support. Garg likens Tressel to (United States) president Ronald Reagan, positing that Tressel may not know the nuts and bolts of running a university, but has the stamina and drive to go the long haul with the institution surrounded by a team of experts. Certainly a university in such dire straits found former Ohio State University president Gordon Gee's recommendation of Tressel and his "substantial Rolodex" and ability to manage university politics appealing (Weinberg, 2014). It is also likely not overlooked that Tressel is a significant donor to Youngstown State. One of Tressel's most recent personal investments included \$1 million endowment to expand student employment opportunities on campus ("Tressels", 2015).

Tressel has shown commitment to improving the success of Youngstown State. To address financial concerns, Tressel reorganized upper administration eliminating six high-ranking positions. The reorganization was targeted to save \$1 million per year in salary savings. Under the new system, Tressel allocated major university reporting between himself and three vice presidents. Tressel directly oversees enrollment, multicultural affairs, student experience, and university relations. The provost oversees Academic Affairs, with an associate vice president helping to oversee student success, under the academic umbrella. This shows a commitment to let those experienced in academics maintain oversight of that aspect of the institution (Farkas, 2015).

In 2016, Tressel led Youngstown State to begin a project to improve campus climate which included staff, students, faculty, and community members. The group will explore ways to support a culture that supports the values of respect, well-being, inclusion, spirit, tradition, and engagement. Tressel supported the initiative by saying, "As an institution, we reach our greatest potential when we know each other, we care about each other, we learn to respect and support each other and we break down the barriers that keep us apart" ("Culture," 2016, para. 4). Tressel went on to say, "Our goal is to engage and include everyone," he said ("Culture," 2016, para. 7). "Until each one of us understands that individually we are insignificant without every other individual in our community, our potential will not be met" ("Culture", 2016, para. 7).

Though the jury is still out on whether Tressel creates meaningful change at Youngstown State, it does appear that he is making an effort to set many initiatives into motion to improve the health of the institution and the success of students. Missing from Tressel's initiatives are strategies for academics, a sign that he truly is leaving the academic decisions up to those with an academic background. It is quite telling that Youngstown State was not concerned enough about Tressel's past ethics violations to dismiss him as a candidate. Perhaps the need to remain viable and competitive in the current accountability-driven business model approach to higher education was great enough that the university needed to consider alternative experience in their president.

Discussion

In the changing higher education landscape, colleges and universities face a number of challenges including sustainable enrollment and financial viability. Concerned with staying viable in the contemporary climate, some institutions have turned to individuals outside of higher education to lead their schools through transforming and challenging times. Bringing in non-academic leaders, especially leaders from a corporate background, steers universities to become business-oriented

with concerns for the bottom line. While the needs to financially stabilize the university and serve as an ambassador for fundraising and innovation may readily lead to a president with a nontraditional background, the potential impact on academic integrity may raise concerns. The cases in this article presented evidence of faculty and community concern for the lack of academic credentials and experience. At risk are the foundations of academic freedom, the tradition of liberal education, and the loss of the educational mission of the university.

In each case above, the institutions were looking for leaders who could help navigate new challenges in higher education. Each of the candidates were touted as leaders who could transform the institutions to success amidst challenge. Daniels, Harreld, and Newman, however, entered the arena with bold plans to transform the institution on both academic and administrative fronts. The leaders generally acted quickly upon appointment and did not engage with the academic community and, at times, were outright disrespectful to the faculty and institution. Tressel, on the other hand, brought to the presidency of Youngstown State University an altruistic leadership style rooted in his work with students as a collegiate football coach (Miller & Carpenter, 2009). This authentic approach to leadership is likely one of the reasons Tressel has been relatively successful to date at Youngstown State University in boosting morale and moving the campus forward.

Conclusion

In examining the environments within which the presidents highlighted in this article were appointed to their presidencies, we can see that higher education in the 21st century faces new challenges that push the role of president to new bounds. The contemporary president is now often considered to be an ambassador for the university with a primary goal of contributing to financial security through relationship building and fundraising. The cases in this article illuminate the interest in and potential need for university presidents with nontraditional backgrounds. These presidents may bring nuanced understandings to a higher education environment that is increasingly steered by enrollment challenges and funding concerns.

However, the cases also show us that nontraditional presidents may best be served by respecting the academic tradition of higher education. A president can revive the morale, reputation, and financial life of an institution while entrusting the integrity of academics to those who are best qualified. As in the case of Tressel, the role of the contemporary university president may be to be twofold: To serve as ambassador to the community, providing financial stability, but

simultaneously be a supporter on the sidelines, entrusting a team of specialized educational coaches to carry on the academic traditions of higher education.

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ALUMNI TRACKING: PROMISING PRACTICES FOR COLLECTING, ANALYZING, AND REPORTING EMPLOYMENT DATA

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Information technology is the fastest growing industry sector in Florida with the largest deficit of skilled workers. To address this persistent gap, in 2014, the Florida Board of Governors' (BOG) supported Florida State University (FSU) and partners to establish the Florida Information Technology Career (FITC) Alliance, a project to strengthen Florida's undergraduate computing and technology school-to-career pathways. FITC increased the number of students pursuing undergraduate degrees in selected technology majors and resulted in a promising model to successfully recruit, retain, and employ students headed to information technology (IT), computer science (CS), and computer engineering (CE) careers.

To meet BOG requirements, the FITC project team was asked to obtain program completer (i.e., alumni) outcomes data one year after students attained a degree in CS, IT, and CE. The BOG's project reporting requirements included performance metrics related to target undergraduate student enrollments, completions, completion rates, and completer outcomes for five years (i.e., cohorts graduating from 2013-14 to 2017-18). Completer outcomes were considered a FITC priority because the BOG allocated funds with two main goals: 1) strengthen pathways in computing and technology fields that extended beyond degree attainment to employment in these fields and 2) increase the number of graduates employed in Florida. Completer outcomes are still reported annually to the BOG and each year, with the new cohort's data aggregated with cohort data from prior years. The FITC Alliance team developed and refined processes and steps to identify, collect, and report alumni performance metrics.

The purpose of this paper is first to document the processes that FITC developed and honed to track two cohorts of alumni and, second, provide techniques and recommendations for collecting, analyzing, and reporting employment data. The paper's goal is to provide these tested practices to institutions that are experiencing challenges in obtaining and using alumni data to support policy-making, goal attainment, as well as program and curricular modifications. We pursued this goal by seeking the answers to three reporting requirements:

1. What percentage of alumni in CS, CE, and IT are employed within a year of obtaining their undergraduate degree?
2. What are the salaries of alumni in these majors after they have graduated from these programs?
3. Where (geographically) are students employed after graduation? To what extent are these students employed in state after graduation?

As we explore these questions within the context of FITC project, we will describe our promising data collection and analysis practices. We conclude with recommendations for program specialists tasked with similar reporting requirements.

Key Concepts and Promising Practices

Tracking alumni is challenged by factors such as the extensive cooperation needed among numerous institutional units; the multi-faceted approaches needed to collect necessary data; internal institutional policy barriers; and even a misguided notion that alumni-tracking is not the job of postsecondary institutions (Chan & Derry, 2013). Additional challenges stem from the difficulties inherent in collecting person-level data such as employability, employment reporting, and other contextual factors.

Alumni Employability

A significant challenge to tracking alumni employment is academia and support services' unfamiliarity with or detachment from measures that concern "placement," "employment," and "employer engagement" (Troutman & Shedd, 2016; Voorhees, 2005). The most common reasons college career counselors cite for not tracking alumni employment are that they are not responsible for hiring and because neither the graduate nor the employer is required to inform the college of whether the graduate was hired (Schaub, 2012).

Nevertheless, institutions strive to document and communicate the speed and extent to which graduate employment follows degree attainment (TGSLC, 2013). One of the markers of an effective

academic program is student employability as demonstrated by high employment rates (especially if immediately upon degree completion) and embedded employer engagement prior to graduation. In fact, programs with high levels of employer engagement and those whose graduates are hired immediately upon graduation are considered to have acquired competitive advantage over higher education institutions that have not focused on these outcomes (ICEF Monitor, 2014). Informed by this research, FITC team reasoned that attaining high completer outcomes would rely on enhancing student employability, which in turn would serve as a measure of program effectiveness and success.

Employment and Contextual Factors

The BOG defined employment as the number of alumni working full-time or part-time in a position related to their field, or alternatively enrolled (or accepted) into a computing or technology graduate program within a year of graduation. The BOG also wanted to know whether the graduate remained in the state of Florida or had accepted a position out-of-state, an important metric for determining the extent which technology and computing graduates are drawn to major U.S. cities that are home to Fortune 500 companies.

As Appendix A shows, the Florida Board of Governors provided the FITC team with questions for alumni cohorts each academic year. Because the BOG was primarily interested in variables related to employment (employment status, job location, relatedness of job to field, and annual salary range) and educational alternatives, such as enrollment in a technology or computing-related graduate program, the FITC Alliance team modified the survey in adding: 1) three additional salary ranges to more accurately represent the higher salaries that were possible for students in technology and computing fields upon graduation; 2) “self-employment” as a response to the first survey question relating to job status. This addition allowed us to determine the number of students who might have started their own business; and 3) a field to capture data on students working out of the country. We also captured student demographics (gender, race, ethnicity) and transcript information such grade point average (GPA) on the modified survey. These changes allowed us to correlate program completer outcomes data with other student information.

Promising Practices:

- Have preliminary discussions and agreement with faculty and administrators to define successful completer outcomes to guide questionnaire creation.
- Identify and define what types of employment or employment alternatives are considered successful outcomes for your program.

- Identify and define which contexts (e.g., geography, industry) are a priority to decision-makers at your institution and state.

Internal Institutional Barriers

The FITC team became aware of a series of institutional policies and procedures that needed to be addressed prior to data collection. Although we knew that academic department staff did not need Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval to track and maintain academic unit productivity data for making policy or programmatic decisions, given the nature of the grant and likelihood of publishing and marketing program results, we obtained IRB approval prior to the collection of any alumni data. The IRB required details on how student records would be kept confidential and posed questions such as: 1) Who would have access to the data? 2) Where would the data be stored? 3) How would the data be encrypted for confidentiality?

Institutional data (e.g., admissions records, transcript information, and demographic data) on individual students were not made readily available to university employees. Personnel were often required to complete specialized software training to obtain the administrative and institutional clearance required to view and retrieve student data. We carefully selected the FITC team members who would obtain these permissions and ultimately be responsible for collecting the information and reporting it to the BOG.

Once IRB approval had been granted and FITC team members had completed necessary training, the university administration informed us of a policy that limited the number of times that alumni could be surveyed in any given year. The institution adopted this policy to minimize phone calls to current or former students and limit reoccurring university-related solicitations. Human subjects protection as well as student and alumni privacy concerns shaped important aspects of our project planning.

Promising Practices:

- Obtain IRB approval if the data might ever be marketed or published.
- Seek clearance from appropriate institutional offices to use institutional research records and determine best ways to keep data confidential.
- Identify institutional policies that govern student surveys and data collection at your institution.

Student Contact Information

Once we received the appropriate clearances, we needed to extract student contact information from our university database in order to contact alumni. The FITC team member responsible for BOG reporting underwent the necessary training to gather and analyze student contact information. Then, the FITC team determined the exact contact information that we would extract from the database. We concluded that we would use a multi-faceted alumni outreach approach, requiring graduates' home of record, their temporary phone numbers, and their local addresses while at the university. We also extracted primary and secondary emails.

In addition to institutional research data, we provided the university's alumni services with a list of graduates and asked them to provide the graduates' latest contact. We cross-referenced the contact information from alumni services with the institutional research data and merged all of the contact data into one spreadsheet. Only authorized FITC team members participated in the data merge. Once the data were encrypted and stored on a designated secure computer, graduate assistants conducted basic analyses.

Promising Practices:

- Identify the personnel to be trained and cleared to use institutional data, preferably someone skilled in working with large datasets, knowledgeable about data cleaning, analysis, and results generation.
- Leverage appropriate institutional data available to ensure that you have the most current student contact information available.

Analyzing Completer Data: FITC Results and Promising Practices

We designed this study's methods to be consistent with alumni tracking system recommendations from the Education Advisory Board of the Student Leadership Affairs Council (2008; 2012). We used multiple methods to generate completer outcomes data: qualitative methods (i.e., surveys, a telethon, and a special social media pilot) for data collection and quantitative methods (i.e., frequencies, cross-tabulations) to generate descriptive statistics. We used data for reporting and promotional visualizations (e.g., charts and infographics).

Program Completer Population

The total population of alumni graduating in Year 1 (2013-2014) was 258 and in Year 2 (2014-2015) was 312, for a total population of 570 completers being tracked in both cohorts.

Data Collection

Surveys. We surveyed all 570 alumni: in the summer of 2015, we surveyed the cohort graduating in 2013-2014 (n=258); in the summer of 2016 we surveyed the cohort graduating in 2014-2015 (n=312). For longitudinal tracking, we re-surveyed the Year 1 cohort in Year 2, along with the Year 2 cohort. Here, we will report the summer 2016 data collection, which includes aggregated data for cohorts 1 and 2 (N=570).

Survey Challenges. After the initial launch of the surveys, 20% of the emails bounced back. Undelivered emails were immediately tagged in our records and an email resent to secondary emails listed in our contacts. However, after resending the surveys to the secondary emails, we found that only 2% of those emails were actually delivered (while the others bounced back yet again). We contemplated mail-outs to reach them, but it was neither financially nor logistically feasible at the time. Ultimately, we decided not to pursue the 18% of students whose email addresses were not working and hoped to reach these alumni through other collection techniques (e.g., the telethon phase). We also focused only on alumni with valid email addresses for subsequent or follow-up survey reminders.

We attempted to improve and incentivize survey participation by entering participants in a raffle to receive several prizes. Although we are unsure of the effect that prize incentives had on increasing alumni responses, we entered all survey completers that met the survey deadline in a drawing for a Raspberry Pi robotics kit and then had a second drawing for subscriptions to both *Wired* and *Popular Science* magazines. At the completion of the survey efforts, we received an overall response rate of 20-30% across the three programs individually, and a 25% response rate collectively. While by most standards, 20-30% response rates are considered acceptable using survey techniques, especially for alumni, we were far from reaching the 50-90% response rates requested by the BOG.

Another factor affecting response rates is survey timing. Many university departments and offices solicit alumni each year. Higher education institutions also launch post-graduate surveys at graduation and six months after graduation. We considered using data from the post graduate survey but response rates on the post graduate survey are often high at the point of graduation, but they dip to 10-15% at the 6-month follow-up, which would not have met either the BOG's one year after graduation requirement or their 50-90% response rate goal.

Survey fatigue is also an issue. Some alumni indicated that they had already completed our survey or that they were extremely annoyed about answering the same questions for different

people—just the situation the university limit on alumni contact was designed to curb. We also had anecdotal evidence that our Year 1 cohort thought it was too cumbersome to answer the same questions each year.

Additional students later reported that they did not respond to the survey by email because they felt that they did not have any substantial employment information to report—they were still looking for, did not have, or were not seeking a job. For the FITC team, this last category of alumni comments raised the issue of underreporting or excluding job seekers. This factor is a notable limitation of alumni tracking and caveat to data interpretation.

Telethon. After the survey phase was complete, we called all survey non-responders, which included the 18% of students whose emails were returned “undelivered.” For two weeks, two graduate students called these alumni. We created phone scripts, obtained IRB approval for them, and trained two students to follow the scripts and have consenting alumni complete surveys over the phone.

The phone efforts resulted in a 5% increase in response rates because we were able to contact 1% (out of the 18%) of the alumni that we were unable to reach via the survey phase, which left us with 17% of our original 570 alumni unreachable.

Telethon Challenges. There are a few considerations to be made concerning phone calls. Approximately 60% of phone numbers were valid, while the remaining 40% of phone numbers were disconnected or non-working numbers. Of those with working or valid phone numbers, 75% were left with direct messages or voicemails with moms, dads, or significant others. In the case of voicemails, the phone team had a dedicated phone number for returning calls, but only a handful of alumni ever returned our phone calls.

Some people were skeptical about answering questions related to their salary or jobs over the phone. Therefore, our internal policy was to kindly and sensitively get as much information as possible from the consenting participant. Often, callers received rebukes and stern responses from potential participants; in these cases, callers were directed to gently thank the alumna or alumnus and end the call.

This data collection technique was probably the research team’s least enjoyable, given the low rate of response and the number of awkward and unpleasant interactions.

Social Media. Although our attempts resulted in a 25-40% response rate from email and telethon, we quickly discovered that the College had social media contacts for many of the non-responders because many of them had participated in course-related social media (e.g., LinkedIn),

had been engaged in other college or university clubs' social media, or belonged to the college Facebook group.

The next step, then, was to form a social media task force to make direct contact with or "ping" each non-responder through social media. The message was personable: *"Hi [student name], how are you? We are trying to get information on our graduates to help improve our programs and we have not heard from you. Please fill out the survey found at this link!"* The social media outreach effort took about 2 weeks. Every other day, the task force downloaded reports from each of the social media sites to determine which of the students had responded to the survey. After a few rounds of social media "pings" to the alumni, the IT program ended with a 68% response rate, an increase of 28% from the telethon round. Although we only used the social media strategy with our IT program alumni, the effort was deemed successful and worth implementing for all programs in Year 3.

Social Media Challenges. We learned a great deal about the logistic preparation and time required to properly conduct alumni outreach via social media. This strategy depends on students' voluntary participating in social media groups related to the university and the college. These efforts needed to be embedded in the courses, clubs, and student life activities throughout a student's time at a university. Because many social media platforms prohibit contacting large numbers of people at once with a link (it is considered spam), students must already be connected with the university and college sponsored social media sites; the contacts should not go through a staff, faculty, or student personal account.

Promising Practices:

- Institutions that seek to analyze longitudinal data should consider collecting alumni data every other year. Establishing a window for data collection is important to allow alumni sufficient downtime between data collection periods.
- Constantly compare the initial survey population list to the survey respondent list by merging spreadsheets or using another simple data merge tool. For example, these comparisons can be used to assess how well participants are responding to the data collection methods as well as to determine response rates. Often, merging spreadsheets can require skill to create formulas in Excel, for example, to merge multiple spreadsheets by last name.
- When data sets are merged, manually verify that the names participants use their surveys match names on the participant record. Alumni often enter nicknames on the

survey and the formulas created in Excel cannot decipher unequal matches; these records will have to be manually merged.

- Make proactive attempts to encourage the use of institutionally sponsored social media before students graduate. This would drastically reduce the complications (in time and money) that later arise in tracking alumni. Programs or institutions that are able to keep students connected through social media while at their institutions are likely to have improved social media outreach after the students have graduated.
- Know that graduation records can change daily. For example, we did not survey three alumni because their data did not appear until after the survey was sent out. For those with live enrollment and graduation systems, ensure that you export a list of students that represent your initial data set and use only that data set once data collection begins.
- Anticipate that there will be double majors in some of the fields, so ensure that surveys are not sent twice. Anticipate as many unique cases as possible to determine how you might handle such situations. Do you count the surveys of double majors twice, when they only returned one survey? How do you determine which program to credit with the response? We counted double majors once when data were being aggregated, but counted twice when the information was being reported by major.
- Ensure that your data formats are compatible other data such as employer outcomes data and student demographics data. One integrated data set allows for more analysis options.
- Decide whether you will collect information on the survey that you already have in other data sets or will use and then merge IR data with survey data to minimize questions to decrease survey length. We chose to obtain only the student's first, middle, last name, and maiden name (if applicable) to link institutional data with survey data in order to aggregate the data for accurate reporting. For small populations, merging datasets one-by-one may not be cumbersome, but for larger datasets and larger number of datasets, data merging skill is essential.
- Address database management up front to include properly coding and defining of the variables (Student Affairs Leadership Council, 2012).

In sum, as Figure 1 illustrates, consolidating and merging data is a massive undertaking for alumni tracking, especially when longitudinal data will be collected and other student demographic and performance variables will be included.

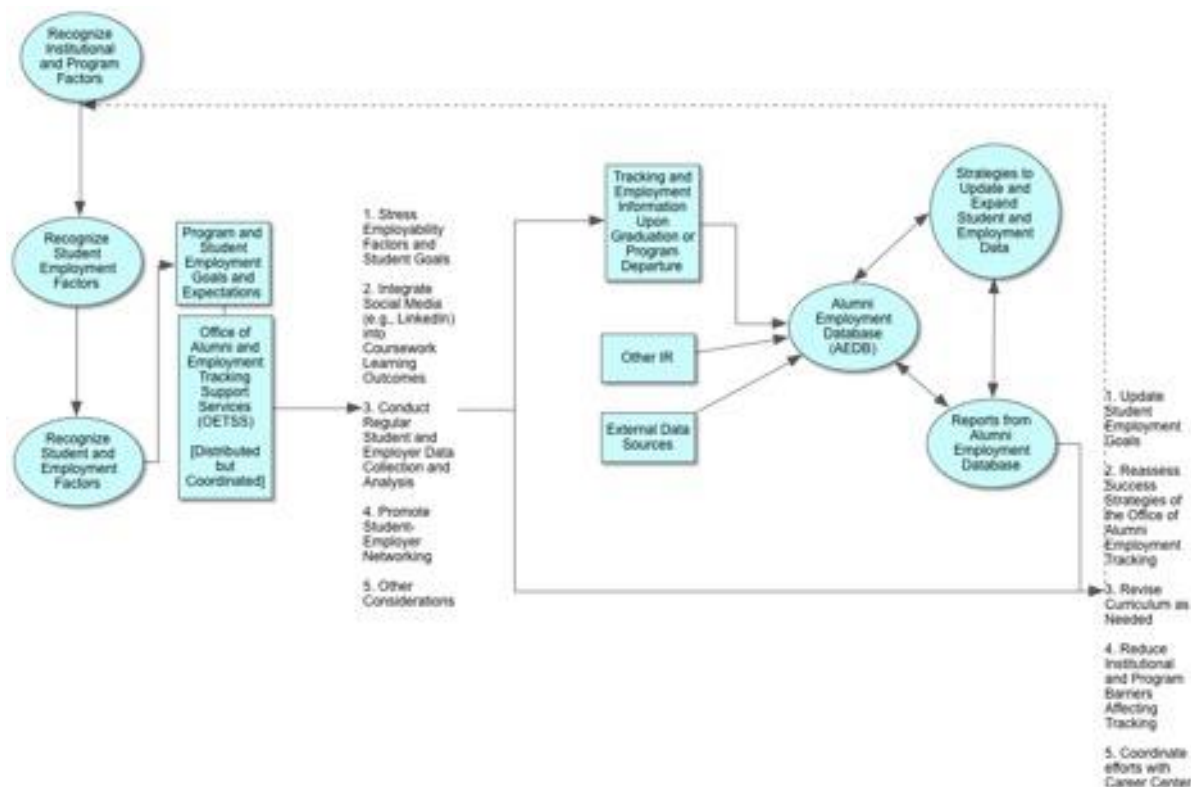


Figure 1. Overview of Alumni Employment Tracking System

Figure 1 features an exploratory effort to better develop strategies for developing and maintaining an alumni employment tracking system. Beginning on the far left of the figure, the system recognizes that there are numerous institutional, program, and student factors at play that may affect student employability and the program's ability to track alumni and employment information. These factors are likely to vary across Institutions, Programs, and students. But recognizing those that are most important is a useful step in development an alumni/employment tracking system.

Next, it is important to clarify student employment goals and expectations as early as possible as it is useful input for the Office of Alumni Employment Tracking Support Services (OAETSS). Having an OAETSS can better organize and integrate the tracking effort—its size, goals, and activities will be largely determined by the resources the institution and/or program has to support it. But it will

have as a key responsibility the development and management of the alumni employment database (AEDB).

While the students are enrolled in the program a number of key activities might be highlighted:

- Stress employability factors and student goals;
- Integrate social media (e.g. LinkedIn) into course work and activities;
- Conduct regular student/employment data collection and analysis; and
- Promote student/employer networking.

Depending on the program's learning outcomes, student expectations, and availability of employment opportunities, other factors may be considered as well.

Upon graduation or otherwise leaving the program the OAETSS will have a considerable amount of data regarding the student and employment. These data (as well as other institutional and/or program data) are organized into an AEDB. The OAETSS staff will develop strategies and techniques to expand and update the database and otherwise maintain contact with students that have been associated with the program. These strategies and the information in the database will result in a range of reports describing alumni and their employment.

The regular updating of the database and its reports can then be used to:

- Update student/employment goals
- Reassess the success and the strategies of the OAETSS;
- Revise curriculum and learning outcomes as needed; and
- Reduce institutional and program barriers affecting the alumni and employment tracking process.

Depending on the individual institution, program, and student needs and activities, the reports from the database may be used to inform and revise other aspects of the educational experience.

The promising approaches outlined in Figure 1 with its corresponding narrative are intended to stimulate additional ideas and strategies for an alumni employment tracking system. We expect to continue work on Figure 1 and to continue refining and testing it in the future.

Reporting Program Complete Data: Exemplar Results and Promising Practices

In this section, we present techniques used for displaying and presenting alumni completer data results. We generated many useful visuals for distribution in reports to alumni, faculty, and the BOG, of course, about our completer outcomes. We also share information about free software employment locations by major (such as Google Maps) that we leveraged to display alumni data.

Q1 – What percentage of CS, CE, and IT undergraduate majors are employed after a year?

Of the 325 students responding to the survey, 308 (or 94%) reported employment information. Of the 308 alumni who indicated that they were employed, 292 or 95% were employed full-time, while 16 or 5% were employed part-time. Of those reporting, 87% stated that they were working in a field related to their major and 2% indicated that they were self-employed. Additionally, 11% of responders indicated that they were enrolled in college.

Q2 – What are alumni salaries?

Figure 2 depicts the percentage of responders (N=306) in each salary category.

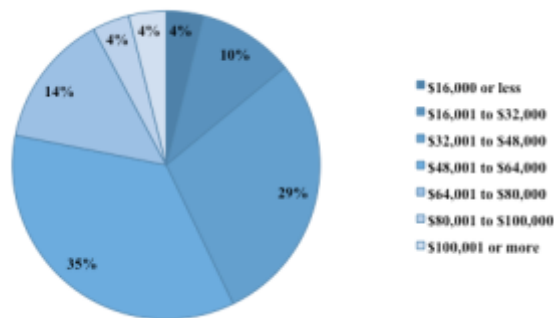


Figure 2. Aggregated employment data

As Figure 2 shows, 35% (n=107) were making between \$48,001 to \$64,000, 29% (n=89) were making \$32,001 to \$48,000, 14% (n=43) were making \$64,001-\$80,000, 10% (n=31) reported \$16,001 to \$32,000, and 4% (n=12) indicated they are making \$16,000 or less. The two highest salary categories, \$80,001-\$100,000 and \$100,001 or more each had 4% of respondents (n=12 each). As Figure 2 shows, graduates of the three programs tend to secure jobs with salaries in excess of \$32,000 per year.

Q3a – Where are our students employed?

This research question resulted from the Board of Governors' interest in where graduates were employed. Figure 3 illustrates U.S. locations of all CE, IT, and CS program graduates who responded to the survey (N=287).

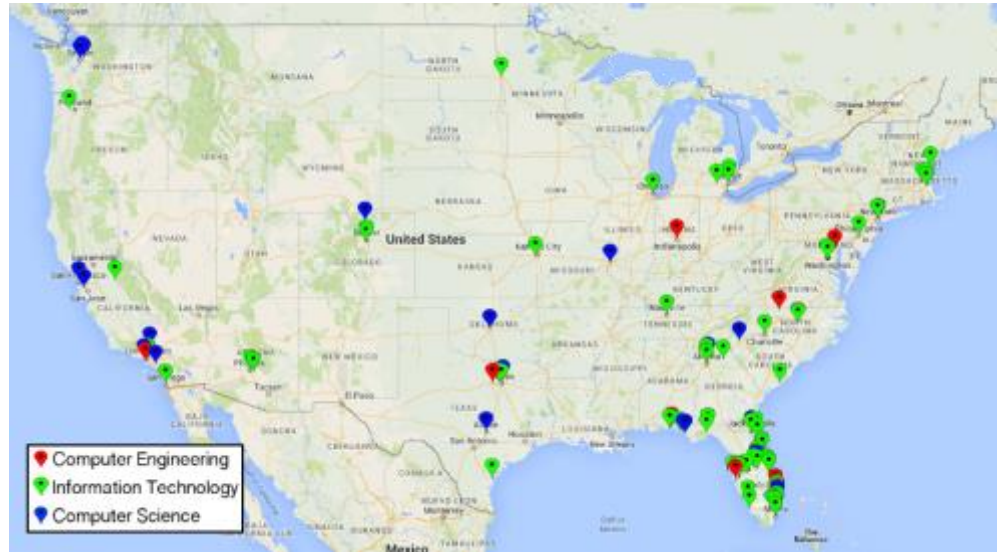


Figure 3. Employment locations for all CE, IT, and CS graduates (N=287)

As Figure 3 shows, over 80% (n=230) of graduates are employed on the east coast, 19% (n=55) employed in mid or western U.S., and 1% (n=2) employed overseas.

Q3b. Are they in Florida?

Figure 4 illustrates aggregate in-state (Florida) CE, IT, and CS job placement data from summer 2013 through summer 2015 graduates (N=158). Figure 4 depicts the employment locations of graduates who stayed in Florida.

As Figure 4 shows, 55% (or 158 out of 287) all FSU CE, IT, and CS alumni were employed in Florida, with the highest concentrations (n=132) employed in central and south Florida. Of those living in North Florida (n=26), we found that 95% (n=24) of them resided in a major city (e.g., Jacksonville, Pensacola, or Tallahassee), or in a tourist city such as Panama City. The remaining 2 graduates live in small towns or rural locations.

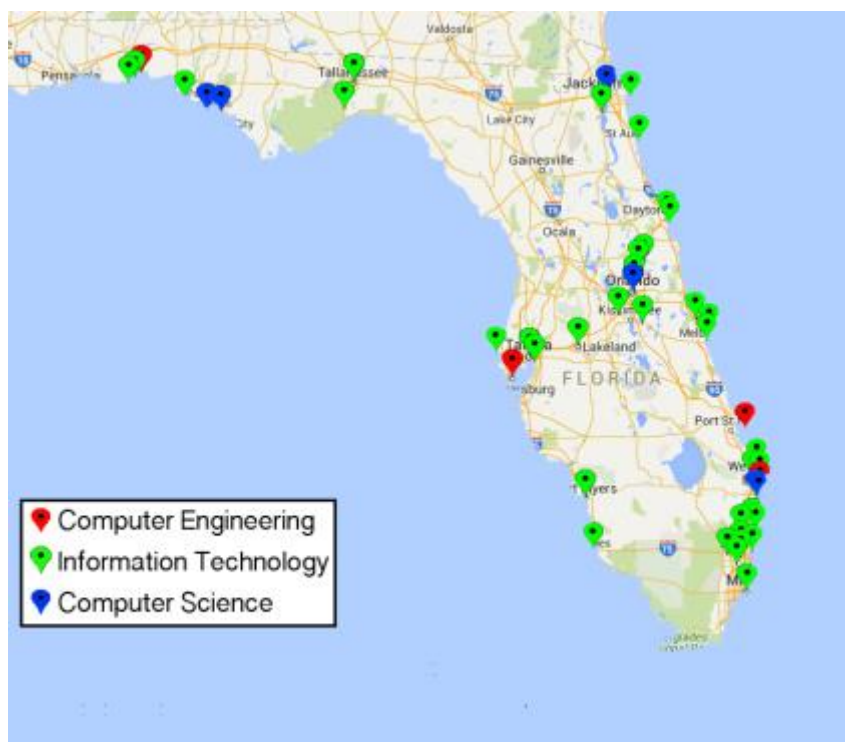


Figure 4. In-State Employment Locations by Major (N=158)

Implications for Institutional Research & Academic Unit Productivity

The *New Vision for Institution Research* (Swing & Ross, 2016) provided a new model for addressing postsecondary education's real world management needs, with a focus on empowering decision-making at the tactical and operational levels. Higher levels of accountability are needed, especially in technology and computing fields, which are projected to be among the fastest growing occupations by 2018 (Castellano, Sundell, & Overman, 2010). The U.S. Department of Labor (2013) has also highlighted the urgency to encourage more college-bound students to pursue computing and technology studies by indicated that computer jobs are expected to increase by 18% by 2024.

Increasing demands for students in STEM fields, and a greater need to account for the progress that institutions are making in STEM workforce goals, suggests that alumni tracking is likely to become even more formalized and efficient at postsecondary institutions, thus requiring targeted measures to obtain greater alumni participation. Based on the experiences detailed in this paper, we recommend that using multiple methods, including social media, to reach alumni in technology and computing fields. Institutional efforts to increase current student participation in social media, such as LinkedIn or Facebook, through assignments in mandatory courses or through university

policy are some examples that are crucial to harness the information contained in social media for alumni tracking. Alumni response rates to post graduate surveys may also be enhanced by using social media outreach, although it can also be argued that regardless of the means, alumni completer outcomes are best gathered best by individual departments.

Our work with alumni suggests that to determine program effectiveness and identify needed curricular modifications, student employability must be a departmental priority. Programs that are able to closely link degree attainment to employment will have a competitive advantage, such as high levels of student enrollment or alumni-to-donor conversion. With the high number of jobs available in STEM and the low number of students to fill them, STEM programs have the additional responsibility to promote, support, and measure employability.

Alumni tracking is costly in time, effort, and tools. Institutions must consider the time and money required to properly implement an effective-alumni tracking program. The FITC project dedicated two faculty and five students to its alumni tracking work. Institutional researchers may be called on to lead efforts in determining whose responsibility it should be to collect, maintain, analyze and report program completer outcomes data. Updating alumni records (e.g., emails, phone numbers, and social media contact information) and then conducting necessary outreach for the purposes of collecting workforce-related data, in particular, may need to become an institutionally accepted and formalized practice. Institutions may want to consider augmenting departmental budgets in STEM fields to provide resources for alumni tracking.

Based on the FITC cost data, members of the study team contacted two community college IT programs and two university IT programs regarding the costs of follow-up. Three of the four programs were unable to mount successful alumni tracking efforts because of “excessive costs.” The fourth program had maintained a successful alumni tracing effort but at “considerable” cost and with significant effort. Programs will need to determine their perceived costs and benefits from alumni tracking and the degree to which costs for such tracking are acceptable.

Finally, the FITC team recognizes that the promising practices reported here are just that – promising practices’ they are promising practices here at our program in light of situational factors at play at FSU. Given that other academic programs may have contexts and situational factors different than those here at FSU, some of these promising practices may have more or less promise in other settings.

Future Directions for Research

In this study, we provided promising practices for improving data collection, analysis, and reporting to consider when collecting program completer outcomes for an alumni-tracking program. Our experiences also suggest that there is much to be learned about alumni tracking as a form of institutional research. In a broad sense, future research on improving alumni tracking should focus on identifying institutional models to engage current students once they become alumni.

Other directions for future research include pursuing additional research questions such as:

- What types of incentives are most likely to appeal to alumni and how should these incentives be promoted throughout the data collection process?
- Which program completer performance metrics supplement feedback on the success of academic programs and, in conjunction with other performance metrics, can be used to make meaningful curricular and co-curricular modifications?
- What types of policies could institutions implement to increase alumni engagement and post-graduation data?
- Which leadership and technical competencies must faculty and staff have to lead outreach activities?
- Which activities student/faculty (or staff) activities motivate students to remain engaged and share employment information once they have graduated?
- How can multiple social media platforms be used to bolster alumni outreach and participation?
- What aspects of social media outreach are most effective for increasing participant response rates?
- What are the actual costs for maintaining a “successful” alumni-tracking system on an annual basis?

Conclusion

In this paper, we detailed the development and implementation of our alumni employment tracking system, as well as its early results. Through operation of the system we created for our CS, IT, and CE program graduates, we developed, refined, and proved practices to tackle the often-intractable challenges of following program completers after graduation. Our aim in this paper was to distill techniques and suggestions that may enhance the ability of institutions to link their

programs to tangible outcomes such as employment and salary level. The need for trained technicians to meet the demands of even today's workforce requires that postsecondary institutions devise measures and collect data on student employment. Effective STEM programs must be proactive to ensure that their graduates have a role and place in contributing to our current and future economy. Such programs can be strengthened with an alumni employment tracking system.

Acknowledgements

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Appendix A. Completer Outcomes Questionnaire

Required Questions

Employment

1. Please check the box(es) that describe(s) your current status.
 - ☐ I have a full-time job.
 - ☐ I have a part-time job.
 - ☐ I am not working because I choose to be unemployed.
 - ☐ I am not working, but not by choice.
 - ☐ I am not working (no reason provided).
2. My job is located in _____ (City) _____, _____ (State) _____.
3. My job is in a field related to my bachelor's degree. Please check ☐ Yes or ☐ No
4. My total annual salary is:
 - ☐ \$16,000 or less
 - ☐ \$16,001 to \$32,000
 - ☐ \$32,001 to \$48,000
 - ☐ \$48,001 or more

Further Education

1. I am enrolled in college ☐ Full-time ☐ Part-time
 - a. What is your major? _____
2. What level is your program?
 - ☐ Just taking classes
 - ☐ Associate's (two-year) degree or less
 - ☐ 2nd bachelor's degree
 - ☐ Master's degree
 - ☐ Doctoral degree
 - ☐ Other graduate degree (J.D., Ed.S., etc.)

UTILIZING AN ASSESSMENT PLANNING MODEL: REVISION THROUGH REFLECTION

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Higher education administrators are constantly challenged with identifying and executing assessment implementation models that provide consistency, utility, and feasibility. The demands to provide diverse student learning data to a variety of audiences often provide additional reporting burdens (Banta, Jones, & Black, 2009). Accreditation is seen by many as a painful experience, an academic rite of passage- the “let’s get it over with” rallying cry. In part because of this view, many institutions focus on assessment efforts only a year or two before an accreditation site visit. Often, these efforts, while perhaps beneficial short term, lack strategic planning, faculty ownership and may feel disingenuous. Senior level academic administrators may struggle with faculty buy-in, resources, or even knowledge of effective assessment. As Walvoord (2010) stated, gathering data that will likely not be used solely to comply with an external accreditation check-list is a waste of resources. Indeed, the use of assessment results to improve future student learning is rarely implemented (see Smith, Good, Sanchez, & Fulcher, 2015 for an overview of assessment communication literature).

To be effective, assessment must be an ongoing process as it requires preparation, planning, and continuous monitoring. Suskie (2009, p.36) aptly notes that “assessment is a perpetual work in practice.” To plan for effective assessment, Banta & Palomba (2015, p.16) advocate “...engaging stakeholders, establishing purpose, designing a thoughtful approach to assessment planning, creating a written plan, and timing assessment.”

This article discusses Villanova University’s College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS) assessment practices, with particular emphasis on its three-year mid-range assessment plan. I provide a practical model to academic program assessment, discussing the experiences of an evolving three-year assessment plan. This article addresses limitations and includes a candid

reflection on our assessment experience to provide higher education administrators with insight into the planning process and with a possible implementation model.

Context

Villanova University is a Catholic, Augustinian university with over 10,000 students enrolled in six colleges and the law school. Its admissions process is selective, particularly at the undergraduate level (Villanova University, 2015). CLAS, with over 400 full-time faculty, enrolls approximately 3100 full-time undergraduate and 1300 graduate students each year. Twenty-four academic departments are currently housed within CLAS. Students choose from approximately 40 majors, 20 master's programs and two PhD programs, with the option of also enrolling in one or more of the numerous minors, certificates, and concentrations. CLAS has approximately 50 outcomes assessment liaisons who regularly collaborate with the college's Director of Academic and Curricular Outcomes.

The university employs a decentralized assessment model, with each of its six colleges, law school and other university divisions (e.g. Student Life, Athletics) responsible for their own assessment with support from the Office of Planning and Institutional Research (OPIR). OPIR administers the university's systematic survey cycle (e.g. NSSE) and consults with departments, colleges, and other university units to develop surveys and reports as commissioned. OPIR convenes the University-Wide Outcomes Assessment Committee, which meets several times a year with representatives from all areas of campus.

In 2010, Villanova University was reaccredited by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE) and was in full compliance with the MSCHE standards. As with any accreditation process, MSCHE provided the university with suggestions and recommendations for continued improvement. One significant deficiency area that MSCHE identified was the lack of assessment within the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. They suggested developing a comprehensive assessment framework for all academic programs, emphasizing direct measure data collection for continuous curricular improvement.

In Fall 2013, CLAS began to address the MSCHE recommendations in a comprehensive fashion. First, the CLAS dean hired a Director of Curriculum and Academic Outcomes (the "Director"), a faculty position, who reports direct to the dean. Prior to 2013, the university relied upon a part-time assessment coordinator to compile the required reports for the reaccreditation process.

After reviewing past assessment efforts, the Director developed a mid-range assessment implementation plan spanning three years. Unlike a one-year plan, a three-year plan would enable

the implementation of an assessment cycle model, providing longer term direction and allowing for planning adjustments. The initial plan encompassed three major areas: undergraduate assessment, graduate assessment, and general education assessment (known as the Core Curriculum). The 2013-2014 plan (revised in May, 2014) is shown below:

| 2013-2014 | 2014-2015 | 2015-16 |
|---|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liaisons • Mission • Learning Goals • Learning Objectives • Assessment Plan • End of Year report | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curriculum map • Full implementation of assessment plan • Evaluate assessment plans and end of year reports (peer review) • Phase 2: Assessment plans for remaining programs. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue ongoing student learning outcomes assessment • Peer review of assessment plans and end of year reports |

Table 1: Undergraduate Department & Programs

| 2013-2014 | 2014-2015 | 2015-16 |
|---|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preliminary planning with departments, liaisons & Office of Graduate Programs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liaisons • Mission • Learning Goals • Learning Objectives • Assessment Plan • End of Year report • Curriculum map | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation of assessment plan • Evaluate assessment plans and end of year reports • Continue ongoing student learning outcomes assessment |

Table 2: Graduate Departments and Programs

| 2013-2014 | 2014-2015 | 2015-16 |
|---|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish Learning Goals and Learning Objectives, phase 1 • Begin to develop assessment plan | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish Learning Goals and Learning Objectives, phase 2 • Curriculum map, phase 1 • Implementation of initial assessment plan | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curriculum map, phase 2 • Review and implement changes as needed • Continue ongoing student learning outcomes assessment • Evaluate assessment plan and end of year reports (peer review) |

Table 3: Core Curriculum

Year 1: Infrastructure

Our assessment planning began with fundamental assessment. We developed a sound assessment infrastructure, starting with the department mission, academic program learning goals, and objectives. We initially focused on the undergraduate programs in which there were fewer assessment processes underway at the time compared to the graduate programs.

To aid our efforts, we initiated a faculty assessment liaison program. While assessment had been previously the responsibility of the already busy department chairs, this student learning outcomes liaison program became an integral initiative which increased faculty involvement in assessment while reducing some of the administrative burden on the department chairs. Over 20 faculty student outcomes assessment liaisons were appointed by their respective academic departments; in some cases, there were multiple liaisons within a department. Utilizing a consultation model, the liaisons met with the Director each semester and received regular assessment updates. The Director also met with each department chair as part of an early listening tour to learn more about the dynamics of each academic program.

An initial analysis revealed that although the majority of departments had a mission statement, it was unclear when the statements had been last reviewed and updated by the faculty. A department's mission statement conveys the purpose of each academic program and its contribution to the college and university. Very few programs had incorporated student learning goals and objectives for their academic majors into their mission statements. The Director met individually with the assessment liaisons from these departments and worked with them to write effective learning goals and objectives. Our approach was to meet each academic department at their own assessment comfort level, which varied from experienced to novice. After its liaisons revised their department's mission statements, each department undertook the task of approving its respective mission statement, learning goals and objectives. Such a process takes time, as each department had its own review process. In a few cases, the formal approvals did not occur until the following academic year.

During Year 1, we also developed an assessment year-end report that required each department to generate an assessment plan, with an emphasis on direct measurements, utilizing a three-year cycle plan. Under this approach, each academic department divided its assessment learning goals into thirds, assessing one-third of its learning goals and associated objectives each year. This "bite-sized pieces" method allayed assessment work-load burdens while providing an opportunity to create a cycle in which every three years, each learning goal is assessed, allowing the

department to determine the effectiveness of the implemented changes when the cycle repeated. This approach also provided data comparison points to determine if the implemented changes had a direct impact, something rarely assessed (Smith et al., 2015).

While often included with foundational assessment development, we decided to defer the curriculum map, which charts learning goals and objectives to the existing curriculum to determine where these are found within the curriculum and to what extent. After consulting the department chairs and liaisons, many suggested waiting a year until their learning goals and objectives were developed and approved.

After the undergraduate programs completed their foundational activities, we determined to create a replicable template at the graduate level. Most graduate programs were already conducting formal direct assessment activities, mainly in the form of comprehensive or qualifying examinations, final projects or master's theses and in one case, doctoral dissertations. Graduate programs were on-boarded during a two-year phase.

We anticipated that our undergraduate Core Curriculum, known at many institutions as a general education curriculum, would likely be a slower and more complex assessment process. Our college implemented a new Core Curriculum in Fall 2013; as a result, we faced the challenge of having many of our students on the older curriculum, which would not be assessed.

A formidable challenge that we faced was that the Core Curriculum was developed without student learning outcomes assessment. While not ideal, this was a common shortcoming of many institutions; creating an assessment retrofitting challenge (Fishman, Hill, & Spitaler, 2015). Most institutions struggle with direct measurement that can be attributed as a direct result of a general education. We determined that the best place for us to acquire direct measurement of student learning would be in the Foundation sequence of courses, which all CLAS students were required to take and which most completed within their first two years at the university.

Year Two: Revision Through Reflection

Assessment plans constantly evolve, often as a result of an emergent planning process which encourages revision during the implementation process. Year Two provided us with an opportunity to reflect on the CLAS three-year plan. To increase each program's accountability, we added a mid-year report requirement. This report mirrored the annual year-end report and provided each program with an opportunity to formally report on their progress and also revise their assessment plans as needed. Some programs realized that such changes were necessary; perhaps they "bit off

more than they could chew” or in other cases, realized they could increase their level of effort or focus on a more pressing area. For example, the undergraduate English program realized that their initial evaluation rubric for senior papers was not as useful as they had intended and used Year Two to revise their rubric while improving their evaluation procedures, adding assignments and additional faculty evaluators to senior student papers.

After conferring with the CLAS College Assessment Committee, we realized that formally evaluating our assessment protocols during Year Two would instead be better suited for the end of Year Three or beyond, at which point all departments and programs would have fully implemented their assessment plans, which would include data analysis and utilization of assessment results for curriculum enhancements.

An often overlooked area of assessment implementation is confronting the leadership realities, particularly at the department level. Assessment planning books often cite the importance of strong leadership from high-level administrators, such as academic deans (Banta et al., 2009; Banta & Palomba, 2015; Smith, 2009; Walvoord, 2010), but most assessment professionals interact with department chairs and program directors on a regular basis, not academic deans. These key leaders are often the catalysts for curricular change and the implementation gate keepers (Berdrow, 2010). Instead of merely adding to the workload of department chairs and program directors, our liaison program helped to diversify these efforts by involving department chairs, program directors and their appointees. A non-supportive or indifferent department chair can be detrimental for effective assessment implementation.

For example, one of our department chairs was indifferent about the value of assessment and reluctant to participate in such “administrivia”. This is a common barrier most assessment professionals encounter. However, the chair was receptive to delegating all assessment matters to a designated faculty liaison through whom the department made average progress despite lacking strong internal support. In contrast, one of our incoming chairs understood the inherent value of assessment and conveyed its importance to her department and its value to the student academic experience. Due in part to the chair’s strong leadership and support the department’s assessment efforts noticeably increased.

During Year Two we realized that our initial plan for our Core Curriculum assessment process would progress at a slower pace than at the academic department level and as such, we revised our plan. A major reason for this was that the majority of the current committee and subcommittee

faculty would be replaced after Year Two, forcing us to start anew, educating these new members about assessment at the core curriculum level.

Another discovery was that our best opportunity for direct assessment would be with our Foundation courses, required courses covering Philosophy, Theology, Ethics and our Augustinian Cultural Seminar (ACS). These courses represent the primary shared intellectual experience for each CLAS student. During Year Two, after several meetings, the Foundation sub-committee established their learning goals and objectives through committee consensus and feedback from the four departments' faculty. In addition, this group held preliminary conversations about assessment methods, expanding upon the ePortfolio model used by ACS. We deferred our assessment data collection to Year Three, with the pilot study wrapping up in summer 2016.

Year 3: Refinement Through Feasibility

An area that MSCHE emphasizes is the efficacy of assessment. How do we know if our assessment efforts are effective? This is an area that we are currently addressing, with only a limited amount of examples where we have reviewed assessment efficacy. Often this introspection period occurs organically as part of the assessment process. For example, after reviewing its senior capstone project evaluations, the Communication department discovered serious inter-rater reliability deficiencies and decided to focus its effort on re-evaluating not only their rubric but also learning goals and objectives related to the research sequence for its program majors. This effort culminated in a half-day workshop during which the department discussed methods to improve faculty expectations of what a senior capstone project should entail and the most effective evaluation methods. As one of the largest departments at the university, the Communication department's effort is a large scale and on-going endeavor involving numerous faculty and numerous academic tracks within the department.

Practicality and Assessment Realism

Reflecting on the first two years of our plan caused us to revise the plan's final year in several ways. First, we postponed the evaluation of our processes until the 2016-2017 academic year. This is also the year when we will develop a new three-year assessment plan which will build upon our efforts under the original three-year plan. Second, we did not accomplish the curriculum mapping exercise intended for our Core Curriculum. The Core Curriculum Committee decided to first review all courses that have a core curriculum attribute (meaning a course that meets a core curriculum

requirement) to confirm that each meet the curriculum standards to warrant a core course attribute. Until these course reviews are completed, the curriculum mapping exercise is deferred to the next three-year assessment plan. As Banta et al., (2009), timing is an important feasibility factor and sometimes timeline revisions are necessary.

The CLAS Assessment Committee members are appointed for three year terms in order to coincide with our three-year plan. However, this structure differs from most of the other college academic committees that implement staggered terms to prevent full turnover. We decided to defer our formal protocol review until college academic committee reappointments had been made¹.

The three-year plan for graduate programs was fully implemented as intended with only minor modifications for a handful of programs. The graduate program directors, most of whom were the assessment liaisons, were familiar with the undergraduate assessment planning process. Almost all the graduate programs were conducting some form of direct assessment through comprehensive, qualifying or licensure examinations or master's theses, dissertations, and other final projects. Our graduate programs spent their assessment efforts creating evaluation rubrics for these measurements and revising their direct measurements. Some programs have implemented an ePortfolio while others revised their comprehensive examination content and delivery. We anticipate several graduate programs moving toward an ePortfolio model, which emphasize the graduate students reflecting on their learning experience.

Future Implications

In the fall of 2016, Villanova University will receive feedback from MSCHE on its periodic performance report (PRR), which will provide CLAS an external opinion about its assessment protocols and progress. Our new three-year plan (2016-2019) will incorporate the PRR feedback and focus on providing more detailed information to MSCHE about the effectiveness of our assessment efforts and emphasize utilizing assessment results in academic decision making.

The initial three-year plan provided us with an opportunity to view our progress, review current opportunities, and prepare for the future in a realistic manner. The plan is easily conveyed to a variety of stakeholders. With significant MSCHE accreditation changes forthcoming and

¹ Our decision to defer turned out to be beneficial as several new academic committee members were appointed.

increased assessment expectations, assessment professionals should find a three-year plan an effective, flexible tool for assessment planning.

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EDUCATION DEANS' BELIEFS ABOUT ESSENTIAL WAYS OF THINKING, BEING, AND ACTING: A NATIONAL SURVEY

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The multifaceted role of an academic dean in higher education requires a range of administrative competence that spans academic and scholarly leadership, resource and personnel management, governance, strategic planning and execution, faculty and staff development, climate setting, advocacy, external and public affairs, relationship building, community engagement, alumni relations, assessment, and possibly fundraising. The facility to serve as an effective leader of any school, college, or division is vital for continually responding to multiple internal and external demands.

Deans of education are uniquely challenged by both internal and external demands. Indeed, deans of teacher and leadership preparation programs have been charged with, among many other directives, intensely examining their impact on the whole gamut of PK-16 teaching and learning, especially in the United States. Accordingly, education deans, directors, and the like must articulate their role as leaders of change in the field as they determine ways to provide concrete evidence of how their programs accelerate and deepen the learning and mastery not only of their teacher and leadership candidates, but also the learning that takes place in their classrooms and schools. Adding to the challenge, education deans must work with their constituencies to demonstrate ways in which they are preparing their graduates for success with an increasingly diverse PK-12 student population.

Moreover, unlike most other academic deanships, leaders of teacher and leadership education units must routinely contend with a litany of critical forces. These forces include

misguided legislators, news media intent on sensationalism, ever-changing federal and state regulations, and politically-motivated, well-financed educational reform entities that are intent on devaluing teacher and leadership education.

As a result, education deans must be vigilant about the ever-constant scrutiny, proactive in representing their academic units and institutions to the community, and committed to working with legislators, civic leaders, and potential donors to help move their institutions forward (Montez, Wolverton, & Gmelch, 2003). At the same time, they bear ultimate responsibility for all internal matters, most notably budgets, curriculum and program development, faculty and staff hiring and performance, and teacher and leadership candidate achievement. In serving as academic facilitators and intermediaries between presidential initiatives, administrative operations, faculty governance, and student needs, deans need to be equipped to work successfully with an extensive range of interests, individuals, and groups to promote the missions of their institution and academic unit (Rosser, Johnsrud, & Heck, 2003).

Given all of these challenges, the study of the education deanship and what is perceived as contributing to success in that key role qualifies as both timely and imperative. Such research, both qualitative and quantitative, can help standing deans reflect on their own characteristics and practices and perhaps adapt them to better effect. It can also assist prospective deans in understanding what capabilities figure to be necessary in increasing their leadership effectiveness should they assume these roles.

Purpose and Motivation for the Study

The present study is built upon a series of prior qualitative research efforts by using an empirical instrument, the *Dean's Performance Belief Survey*, to identify the importance of various essential views education deans hold about thinking, being, and acting on the job. Our motivation for conducting this national survey, hosted by the American Association of Colleges of Teacher Education (AACTE), was to contribute to the limited existing literature on how education deans in particular orient themselves toward a range of leadership beliefs, demeanors, and behaviors.

Even though we might acknowledge the important role of deans in directing their schools and colleges, research on their leadership characteristics does not really rise to the level of a "hot topic." Some possible reasons for this complacency or indifference might be the previously identified revolving door syndrome represented by a single appointment of about five years (Gmelch et al.

1999; Robbins & Schmitt 1994), lack of formal preparation needed for serving effectively in a dean's role, and the lack of explicit eligibility criteria for professionals assuming such a position.

Current Literature on Deans

Most research conducted about academic deans in the United States has focused on biographical, structural, and contextual factors (Anderson & King, 1987; Blumberg, 1988; Bowen, 1995; Bright & Richards, 2001; Clifford & Guthrie, 1988; Dejnozka, 1978; Denmark, 1983; Enomoto & Matsuoka, 2007; Gardner, 1992; Geiger, 1989; Gmelch, 1999; Gmelch, Wolverton, M, Wolverton, & Sarros, 1999; Heald, 1982; Howey & Zimpher, 1990; Huffman-Joley, 1992; Jackson, 2000; Judge, 1982; Lessor, 2008; Martin, 2003; Riggs & Huffman, 1989; Thiessen & Howey, 1998; Wisniewski, 1977). One such line of research focuses on deans' positions in the middle of administrative hierarchies in colleges and universities; that is, the mediation they must do between administration and faculty (Dill, 1980; Gmelch, 2002; Gould, 1983; Kerr, 1998; McCarty & Reyes, 1987; McGannon, 1987; Morris, 1981; Salmen, 1971; Zimpher, 1995). They must help faculty move in directions that correspond to the overall mission of the institution, while arranging and organizing their personnel and material resources to accomplish objectives of immediate importance (Morsink, 1987). They must also promote quality teaching and scholarly activity, and participate in strategic planning/goal setting on behalf of both the university, their academic units, and in the case of education deans, PK-12 education. Academic deans across many disciplines might be expected to develop effective partnerships with community agencies, not-for-profit and for-profit organizations, and schools (Boyd, 2008; Bruess, McLean, & Sun, 2003; Hartley & Kecskemethy, 2008; Wimpelberg, 2009); however, that expectation is typically much greater for education deans.

Although it may appear that deans should possess certain ways of thinking, being, and acting in order to succeed within their contexts over time, we are unaware of qualitative or quantitative research by currently practicing education deans that reflect on their own practices or use their own self-reflective practices to examine their leadership tendencies and behaviors. Bowen's (1995) *The Wizard of Odds: Leadership Journeys of Education Deans* provided self-reflective narratives from three different education deans about their experiences in the role, but these deans had already stepped down from their positions. Studies of self-reflective practices across multiple deans are needed from those still employed in these positions to better understand patterns of thinking, being, and acting that are used frequently, as well as those that are critical to effectively addressing particular situations and challenges.

Previous Research and Theoretical Framework

The present research follows seven years of previous work involving six deans (one of us is from the original group) who participated in an introspective-retrospective analysis of their own patterns of behavior. Both the original group of deans and our current group adapted Eisner's connoisseurship model (1998) as a theoretical framework for engaging in this extended study. Eisner's model promotes the use of a wide array of experiences, understandings, and information to name and appreciate the different dimensions of situations and experiences, and the way they relate to each other. His approach is interpretive and includes two major components: connoisseurship and criticism (Willis 2007).

A connoisseur is able to identify the different dimensions of situations and experiences, and their relationships. As a connoisseur appreciates a situation, she or he can also critique the same situation to help others see its subtle and not-so-subtle aspects. Through experience, a connoisseur learns to perceive patterns and make interpretations about specific interests or situations (Eisner 1998). When a connoisseur shares his or her views with others, she or he is serving as a critic by illuminating, interpreting, and appraising the qualities of circumstances, experiences, and phenomena.

To be both a connoisseur and critic, a person needs to engage in a continuing exploration of him or herself and others in an arena of practice, and make public observations through criticism, so that others can learn from experiences and perceptions before engaging in one's own work. In order to make informed and committed judgments, a person needs to reflect on his or her actions and feelings about those actions.

Eisner's qualitative research approach draws from the arts and humanities, and focuses on using the approach in teacher education. His approach can be applied to studying leadership characteristics when experienced deans have a schema for understanding the subtle and not-so-subtle aspects of their situations. His model for studying situations can help deans to become more aware of the characteristics and qualities of their leadership practices. Leaders who use his model engage in a continuing exploration of self and others, use critical disclosure to enable others to learn from past experiences, reflect about actions and make informed and committed judgments, and work collaboratively with others.

Because our current group of three deans has had a variety of different experiences and challenges over time in the deanship, we have developed certain understandings and knowledge about the position that figure to enable us to both appreciate and critique the subtle and not-so-

subtle aspects of situations. Thus, we can presumably serve as aspirational connoisseurs and critics of our leadership experiences. Each of us has served in our respective position a minimum of 12 years. We followed traditional professional routes, first as tenured faculty and then assuming increasingly more administrative and leadership responsibilities before becoming deans. We have been, and continue to be, influenced by presidents, provosts, other deans, and non-academic university administrators. We have attended and continue to participate in institutes and seminars focused on leadership in higher education so that we might learn from others in similar positions and reflect on our own actions. We currently represent one public and two private institutions of different sizes and in different regions and states.

In applying Eisner's (1998) model to our research, we first used our understandings of situations and insights from experiences to identify themes, characteristics, and recommendations derived from self-created vignettes, meetings, and daily practices that describe the nature of our work with others. We discovered during the first six years of this work that deans rely mostly on interpersonal/negotiating skills, specifically working closely with others (Wepner, Hopkins, & Clark Johnson, 2011; Wepner, Hopkins, Clark Johnson, & Damico, 2012; Wepner, Henk, Clark Johnson, & Lovell, 2014).

We applied these findings to our most recent self-analysis (year 7) by documenting our experiences with others during 15 scheduled meetings (5 per dean): six one-on-one, six small group (two to 5 people), and 3 large group (six or more people). For each meeting, we charted the following: purpose/content; people involved in the meeting; reporting relationships of those involved in the meeting; resolved issues/accomplishments; unresolved issues; lessons learned from the meeting; and recommendations.

Our individual reflections of these meetings led us to identify 84 specific recommendations (e.g., "Try not to take disagreements personally; while sometimes self-motivated, other times they are truly good for the organization") and 53 lessons learned (e.g., "Situations thought to be irresolvable in the short term might not be"). Our collective analysis of the combined 137 specific recommendations and lessons learned led us to identify 14 major recommendations that subsumed the full range of specific recommendations and lessons learned. Consistent with Eisner's (1998) model, we used our experiences in the deanship to perceive patterns and make interpretations about these numerous individual recommendations and lessons learned to develop a composite set of major recommendations that reflected superordinate ways of engaging in our work. We subsequently determined that we might use these major recommendations to develop a survey

instrument that engaged a broad sample of education deans in helping to determine a possible continuum of essentiality for thinking, being, and acting in the deanship.

Instrument Development and Administration

Statements were drafted and refined to create items representing each of the 14 major recommendations. Our aim was to develop scales for each recommendation that consisted of four items apiece, the original recommendation plus three parallel statements. The resulting 56 items were then randomly reordered to form the basis of our initial survey instrument. Major recommendations and example items appear in Table 1.

Table 1 – Major Recommendations with Corresponding Sample Survey Items

| Major Recommendation | Example Survey Item |
|--|--|
| Be vigilant | Stay alert to developments that could impact your College or School. |
| Remain calm | Maintain your poise in all instances. |
| Value relationships and others' achievements | Have regard for those in your professional circles. |
| Be strategic | Be planful and stay focused on outcomes. |
| Provide guidance and coaching | Provide guidance to those you encounter in your leadership role. |
| Plan ahead | Organize your thoughts and actions beforehand. |
| Seek help and learn from others | Pursue guidance from individuals within your networks. |
| Solve problems creatively | Use innovation to address challenges. |
| Follow through | Follow through on commitments. |
| Set limits | Draw the line on how much you commit to do. |
| Trust in yourself | Believe in your judgments and talents. |
| Persist | Stay the course. |
| Be prepared to deal with the consequences of difficult decisions | Ready yourself for pushback on your actions. |
| Don't assume | Don't take too much for granted. |

In February of 2015, the survey was piloted with 43 education deans, associate and assistant deans, directors, and department chairs who attended a presentation of our Year 7 work, a self-analysis of our experiences with others in meetings. As with the final survey, the pilot group was asked to rate how essential each of the 56 statements was perceived to be for actual, effective performance in the role of education dean using a Likert scale. Response options for the items included: Non-Essential, Little Value, Some Value, Definite Value, and Essential. For each of the 14 categories of recommendations, Cronbach's Alpha reliability coefficients approached or exceeded .70, and scale means indicated that all recommendations were regarded as having value. Despite the relatively small number of items per scale and limited sample size, reliability coefficients were deemed sufficiently acceptable, and all survey items were retained in what we titled, the *Deans Performance Belief Survey*.

In September, 2015, the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education invited its membership to complete the *Deans Performance Belief Survey*. The organization first included a descriptive blog post about the survey and an embedded link to it in the electronic newsletter for members, *Ed Prep Matters*. The link contained a general request to education deans and directors to complete the survey. Additionally, members of Deans (n=875) and Dean-Alike (n=497) groups within AACTE, a total of 1372 individuals, were directly targeted with a separate e-mail message encouraging survey participation, and reminder messages appeared in follow-up issues of *Ed Prep Matters*.

Analysis and Interpretation

Three types of primary analyses were made on the data derived from the *Dean's Performance Beliefs Survey*. First, simple descriptive statistics were computed for all of the requested demographic information, which amounted to both nominal data and range data expressed in percentages. Second, Cronbach's Alpha reliabilities were computed for each of the 14 scales, and lastly, means and standard deviations were calculated for the scales, whose relative positioning represented the main interest of the study.

A total of 146 subjects responded to the survey, 110 of whom identified as deans representing a return rate of 12.6%. The remaining 36 respondents identified as another type of academic leader in the education unit (e.g., director, associate dean, and department chair). Because the deans were the true intended population, we were less concerned about the dean-alike return rate (7.2%), and limit our reporting here to the Deans-Only group. However, the entire set of respondents was

considered in both the determination of the scale reliability coefficients and in an exploratory follow-up analysis to estimate whether significant differences might exist between the 14 scale means.

For the Deans-Only group, gender turned out to be balanced, with 51% of the respondents identifying as female and 49% identifying as male. The age of the respondents could be considered as advanced with roughly two-thirds over 56 years old, and a full third in the 61 to 65 age range. Only 5% were younger than 45, and roughly one-third ranged from 46 to 55 years of age. Since deanships can be expected to occur later in the career of academics, these findings were not surprising.

However, although the deans presented as senior in age, more than two-thirds of them reported having been in their current position for five years or less, with roughly the same percentage at each of the years one through five (i.e., 18, 16, 14, 9, and 15, respectively). Another 25% or so of the respondents had served in their roles for between 6 and 15 years. We speculate that an appreciable number of retirements by baby boomers in dean's positions the past few years may have created a larger than normal amount of recent vacancies. We also entertain the possibility that a fair number of the present deans had been deans at other institutions or academic administrators of some type previously before moving to newer deans' roles. In tandem with a number of retirements, job advancement may have contributed to the relatively fewer number of years reported in their current positions.

In terms of institutional demographics, 56% of the respondents worked at public institutions, while 44% served at private ones. Enrollments at their institutions tended to be moderate to large, with 24% between 5001 and 10,000, 13% between 10,001 and 15,000, and 27% at more than 15,000. About one-fourth of those completing the survey hailed from institutions whose enrollments were less than 5,000, and although all geographic regions in the United States were represented in the sample, three-fourths were located along the expanse of the East Coast (both north and south) or the Midwest. Lastly, three quarters of the deans responding oversaw academic units consisting of five or fewer departments, and their enrollments tended to be relatively balanced between less than 600 (33%), between 601 and 1400 (31%), and from 1401 to 2600 (24%).

Before computing means and standard deviations, we wanted to determine if the 14 scales possessed ample measurement integrity. To do so, Cronbach's Alpha reliability coefficients were calculated for each scale, and those results appear in Table 2.

Table 2 – *Cronbach Alpha Reliability Coefficients by Scale*

| Scale | Alpha |
|-----------------|-------|
| Problem Solving | .88 |
| Trust Yourself | .83 |
| Set Limits | .83 |
| Consequences | .83 |
| Planning Ahead | .82 |
| Calmness | .81 |
| Seek Help | .81 |
| Assumptions | .80 |
| Guidance | .79 |
| Persistence | .73 |
| Be Strategic | .72 |
| Vigilance | .71 |
| Relationships | .67 |
| Follow Through | .67 |

Typically, Alpha coefficients of .70 and beyond qualify as acceptable, and 12 of the scales on the *Deans Performance Belief Survey* exceeded that criterion. Eight of those reached .80 or higher, with the four others ranging between .71 and .79. Only the scales for Relationships and Follow Through fell slightly below the desirable threshold, both at .67. On balance, the instrument could be thought of as holding up quite well, especially considering that each scale consisted of only four items and that the sample size was modest.

With the scale reliabilities essentially in an acceptable range, greater confidence could be placed in the ensuing means and standard deviations. The results of those calculations are found in Table 3.

Table 3 – Means and Standard Deviations for the 14 Scales

| Scale | Mean | SD |
|-------------------|------|-----|
| Cluster 1: | | |
| Follow Through | 4.62 | .37 |
| Vigilance | 4.58 | .43 |
| Calmness | 4.52 | .48 |
| Relationships | 4.52 | .41 |
| Cluster 2: | | |
| Trust Yourself | 4.38 | .51 |
| Be Strategic | 4.37 | .47 |
| Plan Ahead | 4.33 | .51 |
| Problem Solving | 4.28 | .52 |
| Persistence | 4.28 | .62 |
| Consequences | 4.22 | .59 |
| Assumptions | 4.22 | .57 |
| Seek Help | 4.20 | .50 |
| Cluster 3: | | |
| Provide Guidance | 4.03 | .56 |
| Set Limits | 3.65 | .76 |

Recall that respondents rated the relative importance of each of the 56 items using a Likert scale that consisted of five choices: Non-Essential, Little Value, Some Value, Definite Value and Essential. For the analysis, choices were assigned a value corresponding from 1 to 5, respectively.

An examination of the table reveals that all 14 scales were viewed as having at least Some Value or higher, and nearly all of the scales were regarded as having Definite Value. The means for Follow Through, Vigilance, Calmness, and Relationships were particularly high, representing ratings that fell more than halfway between Definite Value and Essential (from 4.52 to 4.62). The next apparent grouping ranged from 4.20 to 4.38, and included eight scales whose descending order of ratings, as noted in Table 3, ranged from Trusting Yourself to Seeking Help. A final grouping

consisted of the two lowest rated scales, Providing Guidance (which just reached the Definite Value level), and Setting Personal Limits (which fell between the Some Value and Definite Value levels).

Our approach to interpreting these results eventually led to viewing the scale means as falling roughly into clusters. More specifically, we examined the difference between each scale mean and the next lower one, looking for noteworthy gaps. In only two instances did we note differences of .10 or more. That is, we saw separation occurring between the means of Calmness and Relationship near the bottom of the high end (4.52) and that of Trusting Yourself (a difference of .14), which seemed to mark the beginning of a second cluster. We also saw separation between Seeking Help at the seeming bottom of the second cluster and Providing Guidance (a difference of .17), the presumed beginning of a third cluster. Additional justification for our clustering was scale variance; the top group of scales showed the least amount of variance, the middle cluster generally showed a good deal more, and the bottom cluster, especially the Set Limits scale, evidenced a notably larger standard deviation. Moreover, it should be noted the means of the scales within each cluster were all sufficiently close that they should be regarded as being of equal import and that no order of priority should be assumed or assigned. In other words, the scale means in each cluster were similar enough that they might be considered a mixture of highly related elements, even though there were differences of .18 and .38 between the highest and lowest means in the middle cluster and bottom clusters respectively.

The top cluster (i.e., the four highest means) appears to be a mix of pragmatics and affect. This constellation of factors suggests the dean following through on what needs to be done by monitoring progress and acting in a calm manner that is sensitive to the relationships she or he has with others. The middle cluster of eight scales appears, as an assemblage, to be a blend of proactivity and professional qualities. Here the dean must trust her or his capacity to do the job by being strategic, planful, persistent, braced for ramifications, and mindful of the unexpected, while willing to seek help from others when necessary or beneficial.

The bottom cluster consists of two factors that appear to be matters of necessity or discretion. Deans may see providing guidance and coaching others as outstripping available time and regarded as possibly unwelcome by faculty, staff, and direct administrative reports. They may also be so busy with the pragmatics of the job that they do not have time to provide such guidance, especially if doing so could possibly incur negative feelings or resentment. As far as setting limits, being effective in the dean's role requires so much effort that trying to do so in a way that achieves a work-life balance could be both challenging and precarious in the face of stakeholders' significant

expectations of the dean's performance. Still, both factors were viewed as valuable to effective performance as a dean.

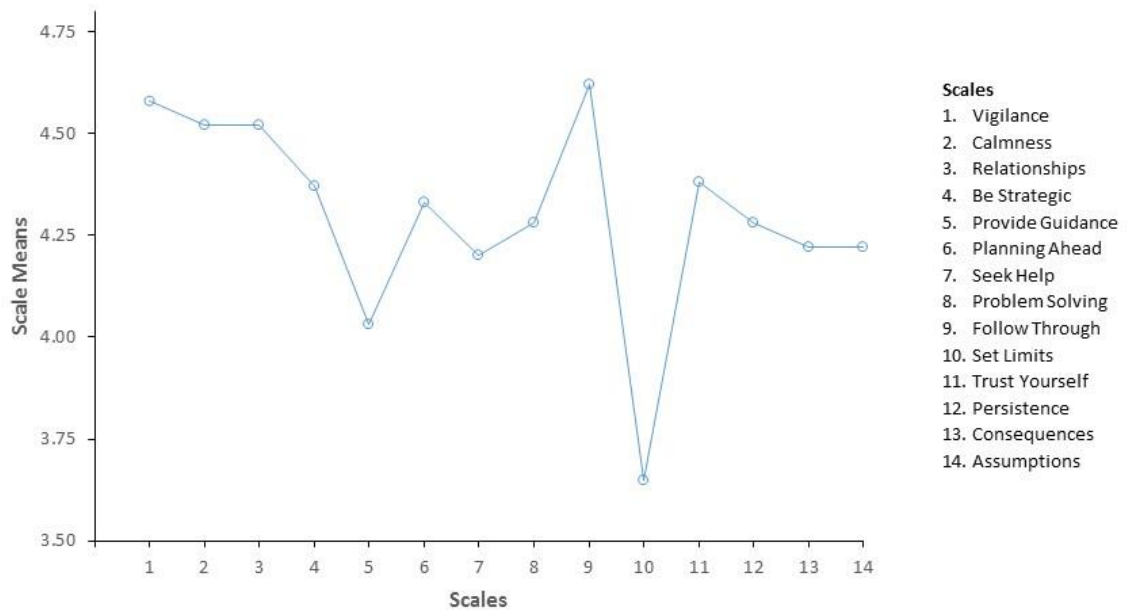
Merely examining the mean scores of the scales and noting the "distances" between them does not really indicate that significant differences exist among them. It is probably fair to say that differences might exist between the very highest and lowest scale mean scores, but even that assertion is technically tenuous. Because we had respondents in administrative positions other than dean ($N=36$), we were able to perform an exploratory analysis of variance to help us with this issue. That analysis was treated as a 2 by 14 repeated measures design, where Group was a between-subjects variable (deans-only and all others) and Scale (the means for individual respondents) represented the within-subjects variable. The analysis revealed no significant main effect for Group ($F=.027, p > .05$), or for the interaction of Group and Scale ($F=2.08, p > .05$). Neither finding surprised us, because the comparison group of administrators could largely be expected to be influenced by the scale categories in a way similar to the deans. It is noteworthy that there was, in fact, a significant difference indicated among the 14 scale means ($F=41.36, p<.001$). These results should be viewed with some caution, however, as not all assumptions of the ANOVA model may have been met, and because the *Deans Performance Belief Survey* is still evolving. It was nonetheless interesting that multiple comparison *post hoc* tests revealed the 14 scales clustered quite closely into the three groupings we had earlier surmised (see Table 3).

Summary and Limitations

This survey study suggests that education deans found all of the factors represented on the instrument to be at least reasonably important to their work. In that sense, the resulting data approach something on the order of a ceiling effect. Accordingly, when the 14 scale means are graphed on a number line that includes all five of the Likert options, they look so tightly compacted that the prospect of differences appears negligible. However, if the number line is narrowed to include only the options for Some Value, Definite Value, and Essential (since there were almost no responses of Non-Essential or Little Value), the differentiation between our proposed clusters becomes more apparent (see Figure 1).

Although rank-ordering the 14 scales would clearly be desirable in providing insights into the dean's relative perceptions of the value of each construct, the current methodology does not permit hard generalizations to that end. Rather, we were essentially limited to examining the data and surmising which means could reasonably be thought to differ from one another. It does not seem to

Figure 1 – Deans Performance Belief Survey Scale Means



be too much of a stretch, however, to suspect that the four scale means in the top cluster (Follow Through, Vigilance, Calmness, and Relationships) differ at least from the lowest mean in the bottom cluster (Setting Limits) and likely the second lowest mean (Providing Guidance) as well. Trying to ferret out possible differences between the eight scales in the middle cluster, though, is difficult to do.

A second limitation is the size of the sample. A larger group of respondents (250 more survey completers) would have bolstered the confidence we might have in the scale mean scores and the Cronbach's Alpha reliability estimates, and allowed for a factor analysis of the scales. Still, we argue that learning what 110 education deans believe about what is important in the role is potentially instructive.

A third limitation relates to the fact that the 14 scale categories were derived from the professional lives of only three education deans, even though their experiences examined through earlier qualitative studies involving three additional deans were extraordinarily similar. Moving forward, we anticipate expanding the number of categories in the survey based upon feedback we received from 133 participants at the inaugural Dean's Summit at the 2016 AACTE annual

conference. Future scales under consideration include: honesty, flexibility, communication, transparency, sense of humor, vision, advocacy, delegation, and listening.

Implications

Notwithstanding these limitations, we found notable value in surveying education deans to discover the extent to which the 14 recommendations that we had personally derived from previous research were valued by others in these roles. The education deans' range of responses (from pragmatics/affect to proactivity/professional qualities to necessity/discretion) revealed how relatively inexperienced, yet older deans from essentially moderately sized institutions interpreted their roles for thinking, being, and acting on the job.

In short, five overarching conclusions might be drawn from the education deans' interpretation of the survey's elements. These conclusions represent an overall approach to effectiveness in the role of dean that incorporates essential aspects of the 14 recommendations forming the basis of this research.

1. *Getting the job done is the first priority.* Education deans seem to believe that they need to focus on getting the job done above all else. They need to focus on the tasks and responsibilities at hand, and complete them, before they can move on to other initiatives. They seem to understand that their credibility with their constituency depends on their ability to prove that they can be depended on to do what they say they are going to do.
2. *Do the job in a way that works for you and others.* At the same time that they believe they must get the job done, education deans seem to trust themselves enough to do the job in a way that is self-satisfying and hopefully pleasing to their colleagues as well. In other words, they do not have to succumb to external pressures, but rather can use their own and others' ideas to accomplish the task.
3. *Be prepared for repercussions.* Education deans seem to understand that, even with their vigilant and strategic efforts to work with their constituencies, they still need to be prepared to deal with the consequences of difficult decisions. They cannot assume that others will not push back, and need to be ready for resistance from unanticipated sources and respond to it.
4. *Acknowledge that there are some things you can't do because of the nature of the job.* Education deans seem to believe that they often do not have the time necessary to seek

help from others or provide guidance and coaching to others. They do not seem to have as a high priority setting personal limits or drawing the line on how much they can commit to do, which probably means that they have too many responsibilities to address on a daily basis. As one respondent shared with us, “I go into work each day with a To-Do list, and leave at the end of the day with the same items on my To-Do list, because of all the other tasks, problems, and challenges that unfold throughout the day.”

5. *Think and act strategically.* Education deans recognize that, while they must attend to tasks that demand immediate attention, they must avoid being distracted from their ultimate goals. Success in the role and success of their school or college require them to maintain a focus on critical outcomes. By extension, then, they must engage in careful planning to achieve those outcomes step by step.

We recognize that the data represent what deans themselves perceived to be important versus either what others think or what truly matters in effective performance (although it is not clear that the latter can be known or agreed upon). It is, though, a hopefully noteworthy step in understanding deans’ beliefs and understandings of ways in which they must approach their jobs as leaders of their schools and colleges.

Whereas previous research focused mostly on the biographical, structural, and contextual characteristics of deans as middle managers in the higher education hierarchy (see, for example, Gmelch, 2002), this study expands the available literature by offering insights into a range of education deans’ self-reflective practices and characteristics. Using our own array of experiences and understandings of the life of a dean, as aspirational connoisseurs and critics in the tradition of Eisner (1998), we developed a set of 14 recommendations and tested their importance with several other practicing deans using a survey format. Even with notable variations in personal characteristics, professional experiences, and institutional situations, the recommendations around thinking, being and doing on the job resonated with the deans who responded. Further study of such self-reflective practices figures to contribute to our understanding of the key capabilities needed to serve as effective leaders.

A next possible step, beyond expanding and refining our survey, would be to tap the perceptions of dean stakeholders at all levels--direct reports, administrative peers, central administrators, alumni, donors, school and community leaders, and even trustees. Doing so will help to determine further the essential characteristics that others believe education deans must

evidence as leaders to both maintain stability and catalyze change in a professional field that is seemingly forever in flux.

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FROM A.B.D. TO ED.D.: A NEW OPTION FOR COMPLETING THE DOCTORAL DEGREE IN EDUCATION

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For doctoral students who are A.B.D. (“all but dissertation”), traditional doctoral programs leave few options for completing a dissertation and earning the doctoral degree. Typically, if a doctoral student has not completed a dissertation within seven years of finishing coursework, “A.B.D.” is no longer a temporary academic distinction. Instead, it may become a permanent testament to failure, a black mark on what may have been a stellar academic record, and an impenetrable barrier to hiring, promotion, and tenure.

The doctoral student who becomes A.B.D. in perpetuity may be seen by colleagues and administrators in higher education as lacking the skills necessary for academic distinction. But research suggests that such pejoratives are not borne out by evidence. Overwhelmingly, A.B.D.’s are capable of doctoral degree completion. Barriers to success are more structural than intellectual. They are more programmatic than dispositional. They are more endemic than academic.

This paper challenges assumptions underlying the process of completing traditional doctoral programs. It questions the arbitrary nature of doctoral program time-frames such as seven-year limitations. It suggests that the preparation for and placement of dissertation research in the traditional doctoral program is not conducive to degree completion. It proposes structured mentoring and the transformation of dissertation research from an end-of-program destination to a program-embedded journey. And it proposes a new path to doctoral degree completion, one that minimizes arbitrary time-frames and emphasizes discipline mastery through Prior Learning Assessment.

How Traditional Programs Fail Doctoral Students

If graduation rate is a fair measure of program success, it cannot be disputed that traditional doctoral programs do not serve their students well. A recent study, including both private and public institutions, found that ten years after beginning the doctoral program, the graduation rate in all academic disciplines taken as a whole was only 56.6% (Sowell, Zhang, & Bell, 2008). Even worse, a study published by the Council of Graduate Schools (2010) found that in the humanities, only 40.9% had completed the dissertation and earned the doctorate in that same ten-year time period.

The number of doctoral degrees conferred since the 1970-1971 academic year has seen a linear growth (U.S. Department of Education, 2015). Over 175,000 doctor's degrees were conferred by postsecondary institutions in 2012-2013. From those reported as graduated, we can infer that 132,046 students who commenced doctoral studies in 2002-2003 are now A.B.D., and that is the result of a single year's calculation!

Considering those in the field of education alone, 48,597 doctoral degrees were conferred in the five year period 2008-2009 to 2012-2013 (U.S. Department of Education, 2015). If non-completers in education were proportional to those in all fields combined, it is surmised that some 36,661 persons became A.B.D. in education during the most recent five year period.

The number of persons becoming terminal A.B.D. is large and growing. This paper suggests that a critical analysis of the structure of the traditional doctoral program may lead to insights regarding the high incidence of non-completion and the adoption of strategies for raising graduation rates by doctoral degree-granting institutions.

The doctoral student who successfully progresses through a traditional program will complete some three years of coursework, pass comprehensive exams, procure the services of a dissertation advisor, assemble a dissertation committee, engage in research, memorialize research in the form of a dissertation, muster an oral defense, and bask in the glory, no matter how fainting, of doctoral degree award. But for the A.B.D., the likelihood of degree attainment diminishes with each passing year after coursework completion beyond a certain point. Sowell, Zhang, & Bell (2008) report that 35 percent of those who complete coursework earn the degree between the fourth and the seventh years, while only 11 percent earn it between the seventh and tenth years.

Why is degree completion inversely proportionate to the passage of time after course completion? It has been widely assumed that students who are most competent and/or most motivated tend to complete the dissertation in a more timely fashion, while those who are less competent and/or less motivated tend to take longer or never complete it at all. That assumption

may prove valid in the case of some doctoral students. But recent research suggests that focusing on the competency or motivation of the student may mask a larger, more pervasive problem with the structure of the traditional doctoral program.

Commencing the dissertation at the end of coursework, typically in the third year, means that the doctoral student is engaging in the most demanding and complex exercise of the program at a time when contact between the doctoral student and others is significantly diminished. Once coursework is completed, the doctoral student may no longer enjoy a regular, frequent connection to the university, fellow students, or department faculty. Key components in a student's support system that nurtured success in coursework, such as a study group that shared notes or a faculty member who assumed the role of a mentor, may no longer be present. Communication between the doctoral student and the dissertation adviser that began as frequent and purposeful may now become irregular or nonexistent.

Barriers to Doctoral Degree Completion

Barriers to doctoral degree completion were noted in *The Ph.D. Completion Project* (Council of Graduate Schools, 2008). This study was commissioned in response to concerns about doctoral degree completion and attrition. In the study, researchers concluded that the vast majority of students entering doctoral programs have the academic ability to complete the program, but more than half do not. Why? Though the answer to that question is complex, researchers found six institutional and program factors that influence doctoral degree completion:

1. Selection of doctoral students;
2. Mentoring;
3. Financial Support;
4. Program Environment;
5. Research Mode of the Field; and
6. Processes and Procedures.

Consider the institutional and program factors cited in this study in the negative. It follows that a high non-completion rate may be related to the following.

1. Selection processes that do not screen out students who, for whatever reason, are not prepared for or do not understand the demands of completing a dissertation with minimal guidance may enroll students who are not likely to complete the degree.

2. Inadequate or inconsistent mentoring, which may include the career change, retirement, or withdrawal from service of the dissertation advisor, may not provide students with substantive, uninterrupted, and consistent guidance. Inadequate mentoring may be a function of an advisor serving an excessive number of advisees. Is it likely that a professor with a dissertation advisement load of twenty or more doctoral students can provide regular, intensive support and guidance?
3. Financial support should not be limited to student loans. The student who already carries student debt in the tens of thousands from undergraduate and/or master's level coursework, may be ill-advised to incur the tuition of a doctoral program which may range from a low of \$30,000 to a high that exceeds \$130,000. The maximum debt load for subsidized student loans, including undergraduate, graduate, and professional studies, is now \$138,000. Questions of sustainability must be raised about the social and academic impact of a higher education funding system that places the full burden of program cost on the student.
4. Program structures should not be bureaucratic, impersonal, or unresponsive to student needs. Do dissertation advisors provide an ongoing and regular connection between the student and the university? Is the climate of the program, from coursework instruction to support services, encouraging and flexible, offering options that fit well with working professionals that are not ascetics? Is there coherence between the goals of the program and the practices of faculty? What happens when the dissertation advisor leaves the university, retires, or for any reason renounces the responsibility? Is there a process for quickly and thoughtfully replacing the advisor so the doctoral student is neither left adrift nor subjected to directions and demands that contradict previous advisement? Are doctoral students treated as customers and professional colleagues, or are they dismissed as commodities? Do vestiges of "the graduate student as laboratory rat" mind-set remain pervasive among some faculty? A perspective that places little value on the doctoral student has no place in the current century.
5. Students may not be guided to research modes that are appropriate or accessible. Are supports in place for statistical analysis, academic writing style, and consultation? Do these supports, to the extent they exist at all, continue to be

accessible to the student who has completed coursework and is no longer directly connected to the university?

6. Weak or bureaucratic processes and procedures for academic advising, financial aid, and support services of all kinds may cause resentment and disillusionment. Is there a single office where a student can get administrative questions answered? Are phone calls and emails returned promptly and substantively?

Of these factors, mentoring may bear the most attention. Nelson and Lovitts (2008) suggest that departments should assign each incoming student an advisor/mentor in the field and inform students that such assignment may be changed at the student's request. While the role of the one-to-one mentor in contributing to success in academic and career pursuits has been long-recognized, organizational structures have changed and careers may require more movement. This may be especially true in the era of declining postsecondary enrollment and increased competition for students. De Janasz, Sullivan, and Whiting (2003) suggest that a diverse and wide network of mentors may be of more value than the traditional one-to-one model. Doctoral programs must reconsider typical and informal mentoring and consider new models for networking and support throughout doctoral coursework and research.

The High Cost of Non-Completion

Factors that may influence degree completion rates must be examined because doctoral program non-completion comes at a high cost for both the individual and for the institution. Doctoral coursework is of necessity expensive because it requires a low student-faculty ratio and because each doctoral student requires extensive one-to-one support. When students graduate with a doctorate, they can justify their investment by assuming productive roles in schools, universities, government, corporations, non-profits, and the growing educational private sector. When they do not graduate, there may be no return on investment. Failure to graduate can leave the A.B.D. with emotional turbulence, massive debt, and limited career opportunity.

The low completion rate in doctoral programs in education has become the subject of considerable attention. Concerns about the traditional program, including but not exclusively about graduation rates, led to creation of the Carnegie Project on the Education Doctorate (CPED). Its purpose is improving the preparation of advanced educational practitioners. CPED defines the Ed.D. thusly: "The professional doctorate in education prepares educators for the application of appropriate and specific practices, the generation of new knowledge, and for the stewardship of the

profession” (CPED, 2009). This definition proclaims that professional preparation in the field of education requires a rich blend of practical and theoretical knowledge. Furthermore, the education doctorate must, as a working principle, be “...framed around questions of equity, ethics, and social justice to bring about solutions to complex problems of practice” (Perry, 2013).

Clearly, programs that experience a non-completion rate ranging from 41% to 59% percent cannot claim a foundation in equity, ethics, and social justice. Analysis of the nature and substance of the doctoral program cannot ignore the problem of non-completion. The failure rates cited are not acceptable under any circumstances, and are especially problematic in a zero-sum enterprise like higher education where decades of reductions in governmental and institutional support for tuition have resulted in higher tuition costs for students. This is the reality of doctoral programs in the U.S. This is why the Council of Graduate Schools launched the Ph.D. Completion Project. This is why the Carnegie Foundation is funding the Carnegie Project on the Education Doctorate. And this is why many universities are offering dissertation completion assistance, often called “dissertation boot camp” to boost graduation rates.

But rescue strategies like boot camps are too often imposed only after recognition by faculty that too few of their students are completing the doctorate. A more effective approach would be an analysis of the structure of the program and support systems offered to doctoral students, with an eye toward restructuring them around what best serves students.

Current Options for the A.B.D.

There are few alternatives for meeting the needs of tens of thousands of A.B.D.’s who may aspire to degree completion, and none of them may be satisfactory. Once coursework exceeds seven years of age, the A.B.D. may find that to complete the degree, additional coursework is required. But if non-completion was to some degree the result of turnover in dissertation advisor or research that lacked expert and timely guidance, the A.B.D. may be unwilling to return to an institution where the process did not bear fruit. Also, some doctoral students find it necessary to relocate after completing coursework, for their own career or that of a significant other. How many universities are willing to honor significant amounts of doctoral coursework completed elsewhere? How common is it for a university to embrace research that began in a different institution? Why it is that doctoral-level courses are no longer considered an adequate foundation for research seven years after their completion? Is assumedly high-level graduate work in education a commodity with a set expiration date, such as we would expect to find on a jar of pickles? What if

the A.B.D. was actively engaged in an education career where learnings from graduate studies were put to practice in professional endeavors, furthered by experience in the field, and expressed in publications, presentations, and other scholarly artifacts?

Should not learning count for something in a doctorate in education? An option for the A.B. D. that honors learnings, from coursework, practice, scholarship, or combinations of all three, is needed.

An Emphasis on Learnings

Latta and Wunder (2012) call for a new direction in the education doctorate, one that places practitioner knowledge at the center of programmatic decision-making. As noted, there is much support for a new direction in the doctorate. It is suggested that this logic also apply to the A.B.D. A greater emphasis on practitioner knowledge may provide the A.B.D. with an opportunity to complete the doctoral degree without having to start over. It is proposed that a doctoral degree-granting institution create a path to degree completion for the A.B.D. that honors coursework completed, professional experience in the field, and scholarship.

Honoring coursework completed, professional experience in the field, and scholarship may be accomplished through adoption of a Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) process. Particularly for undergraduate programs, the assessment of prior learning has been an accepted practice in the United States for nearly forty years. The Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL) has provided clear guidelines and standards for assessing student learning in order to determine college-level equivalencies and the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE, 2015) fully recognizes the legitimacy of the process: “Recognition of college-level experiential learning, which is derived from work, structured internships, or other life experience, may facilitate a student’s progress without compromising an institution’s integrity or the quality of its degrees” (MSCHE, 2006). MSCHE’s policy on prior learning acknowledges that transfer and experiential learning will vary from institution to institution. The policy further notes that effective policies for transfer and experiential learning may be characterized by the following:

Transfer and experiential learning decisions are student-centered, striving for appropriate balance among fairness, consistency, flexibility, good educational practice, and academic program integrity. They address the needs of a student who has changed institutions or objectives, or has learned in non-traditional formats (MSCHE, 2015).

Following the standards set by MSCHE and described as one of the fundamental elements of Standard 13 “Related Educational Activities,” faculty may evaluate the level, quality and quantity of the learnings of the student through the examination of a portfolio. Through a portfolio, a student who wishes to exercise this option must provide incontrovertible evidence of prior learning through transcripts of coursework, letters, certificates, work samples, job descriptions, publications, and other artifacts.

While granting academic credit for prior learning at the undergraduate level has become common practice among U.S. universities (Ryu, 2013), granting credit at the graduate level requires deeper analysis of prior learning experiences. Institutions such as DePaul University’s School for New Learning, University of St. Francis, and Valdosta State University have experience allowing for the PLA process at the graduate level. Bushway (2014) notes that graduate-level PLA requires the adaptation of prior learning assessment methodology to ensure that such learning is articulated as advanced theoretical knowledge and the ability to analyze and synthesize knowledge. In practice, such assessment emphasizes mastery encompassing the higher levels of Bloom’s cognitive domain – application, analysis, evaluation, and innovation (adaptation of Bloom’s Taxonomy in Colvin, 2012).

Must the A.B.D. choose to return to the university where the program was not completed and attempt to negotiate a path to completion? Or must the A.B.D. enroll at another university to repeat coursework, as well as completing a dissertation? Faced with no choice except these two, the A.B.D. almost invariably chooses neither. Alternatives that emphasize learnings through professional practice and scholarship are needed.

An Example of a New Option for the A.B.D.

A Catholic university in the Philadelphia region is launching one such alternative. At Gwynedd Mercy University, offering the A.B.D. a path to the doctorate that honors professional experience was seen as consistent with a mission of social justice and service. It speaks to concerns for accessibility and affordability. Proponents of this option believe that a combination of prior coursework and prior learnings may grant the A.B.D. advanced standing. Thus, advanced standing, combined with dissertation completion and twenty-seven credit hours of coursework, allows the student to demonstrate mastery of all requirements for the doctoral degree. In the coursework, fifteen credit hours are designed to guide students to meet benchmarks of progress in the dissertation.

Admission to the Ed.D. program through the advanced standing option employs Prior Learning Assessment in a two-part screening. First, a portfolio application is assessed to determine if the A.B.D. demonstrates currency in the discipline through prior coursework, work experience, and scholarship sufficient to warrant a more extensive review of prior learning. A rubric is utilized by a team of two faculty members for this currency review.

The Middle States Commission on Higher Education (2006) holds the belief that “Educational courses, programs, and experiences are not static constructs.” Embracing that belief as a foundation of the program, the applicant who emerges as qualified through the currency assessment will next submit a more detailed portfolio demonstrating prior learning and competencies through coursework, work experience in the field, grantsmanship, and scholarship. Portfolios are then subject to a more detailed review by graduate faculty.

To determine recognition of competencies through prior learning, recognized and accepted CAEL standards are followed to ensure that:

1. Competencies shall be recognized only for learning, not just for experience.
2. Assessment shall be based on standards and criteria that reflect in-depth learning.
3. Assessment shall be treated as an integral part of learning, not separate from it, and shall be based upon an understanding of the learning process.
4. The determination of competencies mastered shall be made by subject matter experts (Colvin, 2012).

In the examination of this more detailed portfolio, prior learning experiences are matched to doctoral course learning objectives in a process that meets the standards of the Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL). The A.B.D., who generally has completed sixty to seventy or more credit hours in a doctoral program may not derive great benefit from additional coursework that is repetitious. Instead, course-level learning objectives are considered satisfied where prior learning experience demonstrates that the candidate can demonstrate strong evidence of mastery.

Prior Learning Assessment is learner-centric rather than institution-centric in its evaluation of learning and its credentialing. Through PLA, the emphasis is on learning regardless of where or how learning occurs. It holds as most fundamental the mastery of competencies or learning outcomes, rather than the attainment of credit hours.

PLA is detailed and individualized. Accepting prior learnings and competencies allows the university to honor and build upon the student's prior coursework. It permits the A.B.D. to focus on the component of the program that is most important - research and dissertation. This is more like

the traditional European model of the structured doctoral program, with emphasis on research, not on coursework. Coursework is designed to add value to dissertation research; thus the emphasis is on depth, not breadth.

An individualized practicum experience may be proscribed detailing which competencies remain to be mastered. Where an applicant has demonstrated many, but not all, of the learning objectives in a course, the applicant may be permitted to complete learning objectives through a practicum course tailored to meet any areas of deficiency.

Practicum courses require an internship whereby the student, under the guidance of a mentor, participates in leadership and administrative functions that encompass the full range of responsibilities of education leadership in a given field. For the K12 Schools and School Districts concentration, this means participating in district office functions under the mentorship of a senior district office administrator or a CEO of an independent school. For the Higher Education concentration, mentored field experiences may include contract administration, academic leadership, enrollment management, and budget and finance. For the Special Education concentration, experiences reflect those of the supervisor or director of special services. Each practicum includes selected readings to inform learning experiences and reflection.

Before adopting an approach to degree completion such as described above, an institution is advised to consider whether its doctoral program and the service systems that support students are sufficiently student-centered. Gwynedd Mercy University may be uniquely qualified to offer an option for the student who has not met the dissertation requirements of a doctoral program because the foundation of its current Ed.D. program is a personalized and highly structured approach to dissertation completion that can be fruitfully adapted to the needs of A.B.D. students. In Gwynedd Mercy's full doctoral program, each newly-enrolled doctoral student is assigned to a dissertation advisor in the first course. The dissertation advisor guides the doctoral student through a series of dissertation advisement courses scheduled throughout the course of study to ensure that the student meets benchmarks of progress. Through a student-centered approach that personalizes the program and imparts a sense of connectedness to the university, the program is constructed to result in dissertation completion by the end of the program or shortly after.

This structured, supportive approach to the dissertation is consistent with research findings of the Carnegie Project on the Education Doctorate (CPED). In a study of twenty-one schools of education that were changing their education doctorate programs as a result of participating in the

CPED initiative, “dissertation from day one” approaches were found to contribute to raising the graduation rate. “In most of these programs, dissertation work is embedded in coursework and begins early. Dissertations are the cornerstone of many programs and all coursework is linked to and enhance their development” (CPED, November 2014).

Conclusions

Higher education today is undergoing a transformation, or perhaps several distinct and not necessarily compatible transformations. Postsecondary education has evolved since the Second World War from education for the few to education for the many to education for all. Higher education for all requires both accessibility and affordability, though decades of reductions in state support for education have driven tuition increases to barrier levels. Numerous options that make postsecondary education more accessible and affordable include variations in delivery platform and Prior Learning Assessment. Doctoral programs, too, must adapt to changes in how instruction is managed and delivered, and must include options that recognize and facilitate discipline mastery without compromising their integrity or the quality of their degrees. An option that allows the A.B.D. to earn the doctoral degree without repeating years of coursework, at least some of which is surely duplicative, may be a substantive step in that direction.

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THE IMPACT OF PRE/POSTENROLLMENT INTERVENTIONS ON COLLEGE SUCCESS FOR FIRST-GENERATION BLACK STUDENTS

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Student retention continues to be a significant issue for colleges and universities during the first and second years of a student's academic career (Seidman, 2012). This problem is especially prevalent for first-generation Black students during their first-to-second and second-to-third semesters and through college graduation (Freeman, 2008; Kaba, 2005; Peart-Forbes, 2004). As the population of first-generation Black college students continues to increase, the issue of retention and graduation for these students has become an even more important issue (Harper, 2013; Strayhorn, 2011; Kaba, 2005; Pike & Kuh, 2005; Terenzini, Springer, Yaeger, Pascarella, & Nora, 1996).

The purpose of this study was to examine the impact of the Aspiring Eagles Academy (AEA) pre/postenrollment intervention program on the retention rates and GPAs for first-generation Black college students at a public Historically Black Institution (HBI) in the south. The AEA summer program includes but is not limited to helping incoming freshman with understanding college expectations, time management, connecting to campus resources, developing a social support system, and managing the transition from high school to college. Unfortunately, despite widespread intervention efforts like the AEA program, national data continue to reveal greater attrition rates and lower graduation rates for first-generation minority college students in both North Carolina and throughout the nation (Phinney & Chuateco, 2005). Conversely, first-generation and Black students continue to attend college at increasing rates nationwide (Strayhorn, 2011; Hussar & Bailey, 2007; Williams, 2009). The 2008 Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) reported 38% of students who took the test identified as first-generation, which represented a 10% increase compared to the 2001 data (College

Board, 2001). The nationwide distribution of conferred college degrees for Black students increased 55% from 98,251 to 152,457 overall from 1998-2008. As the population of first-generation students continues to increase, data from longitudinal studies performed by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) revealed that these students were twice as likely to depart from an institution prior to their second year (Choy, 2001; NCES, 2010). Choy (2001) also analyzed variables affecting college student departure including employment, gender, and financial aid. Choy (2001) controlled for these factors, and first-generation status was still a significant predictor of first-year student departure prior to the second year. In a study at four-year universities, Berkner and Choy (2008) found that 23% of students reported that their parents did not have education beyond high school. Gibbons and Schoffner (2004) found similar results in a national longitudinal study as 27% of high school graduates identified as being first-generation. Ishitani (2003) noted in a study of college freshmen that those who identified as first-generation were significantly more likely to depart, especially during the first year, compared to their continuing-generation counterparts.

Self-identification as Black has also shown to be a significantly related factor to first-year college departure. The Consortium for Student Retention Data Exchange (CSDRE, 2003) reported that for the college class entering in 1999, Black student retention after the first year was 74.7% compared to an 80.3% overall rate. On the state level, after the first year, Black students entering the University of North Carolina system in 2004 were retained at a 77.9% rate (UNC, 2010) compared to the national average in 2004 of 74.3% after the first year (American College Testing Program, 2009). Seidman (2005) noted that a lower first-year retention rate for Black students combined with issues posed by their graduation rates presented a significant issue in higher education. Even though the number of Black college graduates has increased, and the enrollment of first-generation students has increased, the overall graduation rates for both populations continue to be low (Harper, 2013). Nationally, NCES (2009) reported a 48.4% four-year graduation rate for Black students nationally compared to 58.2% of all Americans and 64.2% for White students. Further, NCES reported the national four-year graduation rate for Black males was 44.6% compared to 65.4% overall and 65.4% for White students.

Freeman (2008) noted that Black students enrolled in less rigorous high school courses, which were significantly related to college enrollment and persistence. Further, the College Entrance Examination Board (College Board, 2001) data revealed a 185-point gap in Black student performance on the SAT when compared to White students. SAT performance continues to be the most valid predictor of collegiate academic performance (Shivpuri, Schmitt, Oswald, & Kim, 2006).

The National Center for Education Statistics (2005) reported that first-generation students earned a 2.5 GPA during the first year of college compared to a 2.8 GPA for continuing-generation students.

To address the gap in Black student performance, early intervention programs are tailored provide academic and individualized support and development that can have a positive impact on college student retention (Benmayor, 2002; Committee on Science & Technology, 2007; Dappen & Isernhagen, 2005; Koenig, 2009; Toutkoushian & Smart, 2001; Villarejo, Barlow, Veazey, & Sweeney, 2008; Yarbrough, 2002). Intervention programs such as summer bridge programs provide academic support prior to students' enrollment (Gutierrez, 2007). Postenrollment programs such as living-learning communities (LLCs) can also provide needed academic and social support for students especially during the first year (Inkelas et al., 2007). Intervention programs that can identify students' needs early and then provide continuous and intense support can positively impact college success (Seidman, 2005). While there is extensive research on intervention programs and their impact on college student success, there is also a lack of attention given to the impact of intervention programs, which employ Seidman's (2005) college retention formula for student success model. In this model, pre/postenrollment intervention programs begin with early contact with a group of students prior to enrollment and then provide continuous and intensive support to the same group of students postenrollment. Therefore, little is known about the impact of pre/postenrollment programs on student populations such as first-generation Black college students. Further, there have been no studies conducted to evaluate the impact of this type of programming specifically on first-generation Black college students at Historically Black Institutions (HBI). To address this gap in previous literature, this study explores the impact of a pre/postenrollment intervention program at an HBI.

At North Carolina Central University (NCCU), an HBI in the University of North Carolina (UNC) system, the Aspiring Eagles Academy (AEA) provided students with a pre/postenrollment intervention experience focused on college transition. The purpose of this study was to examine whether participation in a summer pre/postenrollment intervention program (i.e. AEA) had a significant impact on the college success of first-generation Black students at NCCU. Specifically, we asked two primary research questions:

1. What is the effect of participation in AEA on the first-to-second semester retention rates, and first semester cumulative grade point averages (GPA)?
2. What is the effect of participation in AEA on the second-to-third semester retention rates of these students?

Conceptual Framework

The impact of participation in pre/postenrollment intervention programs was framed within the retention theories of Tinto (1993) and Seidman (2005) and focused on first-generation Black student participants. Tinto (1993) noted that students enter their first year of college with varied sets of characteristics, attributes, skill sets, and academic levels. These attributes help mold students' expectations of college affecting their views of academic and social experiences. In turn, college students' experiences, such intervention program participation, can affect their commitment to remaining enrolled at their respective institutions. Tinto (1993) further stressed the importance for creating supportive student communities on college campuses. Based on the framework of Tinto, Seidman's (2005) success model can provide guidance for colleges to positively impact their academic communities by increasing student retention and college success. The model encompasses Seidman's retention formula, which centers on the implementation of early, continuous, and intense intervention programs designed around the needs of the respective student population. Seidman's formula is designed to serve as a guide for colleges and universities when new programs and services are designed and implemented to support the academic success of their student populations.

Summer bridge programs are typically implemented as early interventions designed to assist with the academic and social integration for prospective or admitted in postsecondary education institutions (Gutierrez, 2007). Gutierrez recognized hybrid versions of bridge programs that may focus on the needs for transitioning into a collegiate environment combined with improving academic skills. Vargas (2005) noted bridge programs work with students who fall below the academic standards of an institution or those who enter with characteristics such as first-generation status or labeled as at-risk. Participation in a summer bridge program that continues into the academic year as a living-learning community (LLC) can increase participation in developmental courses, lead to more interactions with academic advisors, yield higher levels of course completion for participants, thus leading to greater academic success (Inkelas, et. al, 2007).

Methodology

Study Setting

This study was conducted at North Carolina Central University (NCCU), a public HBI located in Durham, North Carolina, with an annual enrollment of approximately 8,800 students enrolled in baccalaureate and master's degree programs. The university offers over 100 fields of study for

undergraduates and over 40 graduate degree programs. NCCU has a strong tradition of teaching, research, and service and dedicates itself to prepare students as global leaders and community practitioners. NCCU has a nationally-recognized law school, modern visual and performing arts programs, as well as strong academics in sciences, business, humanities, and education. NCCU is located near North Carolina's acclaimed Research Triangle with a strong focus on research in the biotechnological, biomedical, informational, computational, behavioral, social, and health sciences fields. NCCU was also the first institution in the UNC system to make service learning a graduation requirement.

In 2008, NCCU began a University College with the central focus of student success within the first two years of enrollment. The mission of the University College is to assure a successful transition of first and second year students to the point that they accomplish educational goals during their college matriculation. The population for this study was all full-time, first-generation Black students at NCCU.

Sample

To gather our sample we used a definition by Ishitani (2006), which describes first-generation status as college students whose parents' or guardians' highest level of educational attainment was high school. This population of students was of particular interest as first-generation undergraduate students have a 21% lower graduation rate than continuing-generation students (Rooney, 2006). Further, first-generation minority students graduate from college at a rate 17% lower than continuing-generation students (Rooney, 2006). As Harvey and Anderson (2005) noted, for all ethnic minorities, Black students graduate with baccalaureate degrees at the lowest rate of 36.4% compared to the highest, Asians at 62%, followed by Hispanic students at 42%.

The study included a treatment group of first-generation AEA fall 2008 participants along with two control groups. First-generation status was identified using data from student submissions to the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Control Group 1 (CG1) included non-AEA fall 2008 first-generation students. Control Group 2 (CG2) included continuing-generation fall 2008 AEA participants. The total fall 2008 AEA cohort included 100 participants. Unidentifiable student records were retrieved from NCCU and sorted by participation or non-participation in the AEA. To be chosen for the treatment group, students must have participated in the AEA program and must have been classified as first-generation and Black.

Figure 1. AEA & Non-AEA Participants

| Group | Participants |
|-----------|--------------|
| Treatment | 46 |
| CG1 | 180 |
| CG2 | 46 |
| Total | 272 |

A sample size generator was used to estimate the sample needed for CG1. Using systematic random sampling, CG1 was created from all first-generation students who began enrollment in fall 2008, attempted 12 or more credit hours during the time of the study (full-time status), and did not participate in the AEA program. All continuing-generation students from the fall 2008 AEA cohort were included in CG2, which was to be 54 students. CG2 was then created by identifying all of the continuing-generation who participated in the AEA program in fall 2008.

Intervention

A cross-sectional approach was used in this study comparing one treatment group to two control groups. First-generation Black freshmen who participated in the fall 2008 cohort of the AEA program served as the treatment group. The participants in the AEA program lived in a residence hall for five weeks the summer before their freshman year and throughout their freshman year. They attended summer school in common course sections, attended on-campus activities together, and were intentionally exposed to academic resources earlier than other freshmen. This intervention program was specifically designed to ease participants' academic and social transition into the college environment targeting admitted incoming freshmen who had low SAT scores, low high-school GPA, or who were classified as first-generation. Intervention with the students continued into and throughout the freshman year as students lived in the same residence hall, attended similar freshman year seminar courses, and participated in academic and social activities in groups.

Analysis

Using systematic random sampling, one control group (CG1) of similar size to the treatment group was selected. CG1 consisted of first-generation freshmen that began in fall 2008 but did not participate in the AEA intervention program. A second control group (CG2) consisted of the continuing-generation freshmen from the fall 2008 cohort who also participated in the AEA

program. The approach for this study was to examine the impact of the intervention program on first-generation students' first-to-second and second-to-third year retention rates and GPA.

A spreadsheet was requested from the NCCU enrollment researcher including the first-to-second and second-to-third semester retention rates, credit hours attempted, and cumulative GPAs for the fall 2008 AEA participants. Retention rates and GPAs from the treatment group were compared to the control groups to determine if there were significant differences according to the research questions. The dependent variables were first-to-second semester and second-to-third semester retention rates and GPA. Semester to semester enrollment was considered in defining retention of participants. Retention rates for both groups were measured on a nominal dichotomous scale noting progression or non-progression based enrollment during the second and third semesters. Based on the research questions, the first-to-second and second-to-third semester retention rates and GPAs were compared for the experimental and control groups.

The means and standard deviations were calculated for the retention rates and GPA for both the treatment and control groups. Next, a binary logistic regression was used to test the significance of Siedman's model for statistically significant relationships ($p < .05$) among the variables. The two-way MANCOVA test helped compare the retention rates and GPAs for the experimental and control groups. The research questions were analyzed and statistical significance was measured using a multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA), and the differences for the three groups were evaluated based on the research questions using ($p < .05$). Significant differences in the first-to-second semester retention rates and/or GPAs among the experimental group, CG1, and CG2, present Wilks lambda values below the .05 level.

Results

Beginning in summer 2008, one hundred students enrolled in the five-week AEA summer pre/post-enrollment intervention program at NCCU prior to beginning their freshman year in a living-learning community (LLC) environment. During the summer, students attended common general education courses and were exposed to campus activities and academic resources. Beginning with the fall term, students lived in the same residence hall during their freshman year, attended similar courses and campus activities together. The total sample size of 272 was calculated using a sample size generator based off a .05 significance level and the population of 930 full-time Black freshmen who began at NCCU in fall 2008. The treatment group comprised 46 of the 100 AEA students who met the criteria: first-generation Black students. CG1 was comprised 180 non-AEA

students who met the criteria: first-generation Black students. CG2 comprised 46 out of 100 AEA students who met the following criteria: continuing-generation Black students. The sample included approximately 35% males and 65% females. The descriptive statistics indicated that 16.9% of the sample was in the treatment group, 66.2% in CG1, and 16.9% in CG2.

Research Question 1 sought to examine if there were significant differences regarding first-to-second semester retention rates among the three groups. Research Question 2 sought to examine if there were significant differences regarding second to third semester retention rates among the three groups. The descriptive statistics for retention are presented in Table 1 for the experimental group, CG1, and CG2. The treatment group had a first-to-second semester retention rate of 88.89% and 71.11% for second-to-third semester. CG1 had a retention rate of 81.67% for first-to-second semester and 67.22% for second-to-third semester. CG2 had a first-to-second semester retention rate of 97.78% and 82.98% for second-to-third semester.

Table 1. Semester Retention by Groups

| Group | First-to-Second Retention | | Second-to-Third Retention | |
|-----------------|---------------------------|-------|---------------------------|-------|
| | Frequency | Mean | Frequency | Mean |
| Treatment Group | 40 | 88.89 | 32 | 71.11 |
| CG1 | 147 | 81.67 | 121 | 67.22 |
| CG2 | 46 | 97.78 | 29 | 82.98 |
| Total | 232 | 85.29 | 182 | 70.50 |

To examine Research Question 1, a binary logistics-regression model was used to determine if there was a significant relationship between the treatment group and control groups regarding first-to-second semester retention rates. Using first-to-second semester retention rates and group comparison, these data helped to identify whether students were retained from first-to-second semester or not retained within their groups. There were 272 students in the sample, and 232 students returned for their second semester, while 39 did not return for the second semester. One record was eliminated by SPSS as a missing case. Hence, if SPSS predicted that all students would return for the second semester, it would be correct 232 out of 271 times. Therefore, this model classified first-to-second semester retention rates correctly for approximately 86% of students.

Research Question 2 was examined using a binary logistics-regression model to determine if there was a significant relationship between the experimental and control groups regarding AEA participation and second-to-third semester retention rates. Using second-to-third semester retention rates and group comparison, SPSS is able to help predict whether students were retained from second-to-third semester or not retained within their groups. There were 272 students in the sample with a total of 191 students that returned for their third semester, and 81 students did not return. One record was eliminated by SPSS as a missing case for first-to second semester. Hence, if SPSS predicted that all students would return for the second semester, it would be correct 191 out of 271 times. Therefore, as displayed in Table 2, this model classified second-to-third semester retention rates correctly for approximately 70.2% of students.

Table 2. GPA by Groups

| Group | First-to-Second Retention | | Second-to-Third Retention | |
|-----------------|------------------------------|------|------------------------------|------|
| | Frequency | Mean | Frequency | Mean |
| Treatment Group | 40 | 2.09 | 32 | 1.99 |
| CG1 | 147 | 2.42 | 121 | 2.37 |
| CG2 | 46 | 2.23 | 29 | 2.18 |
| Total | 232 | 2.33 | 182 | 2.27 |

The logistics regression further displayed that the residual chi-square statistic is 5.131 which was not significant at $p < .05$ with a p value of .162. The interpretation of this value is when one or more of the variables were added to the model, its overall ability to predict second-to-third semester retention was not significant. The score statistic for group membership ($p = .092$) was also not significant. But the simple standard contrast for the treatment group and CG2 ($p = .035$) was statistically significant as $p < .05$. According to Field (2009), the next phase for a logistics regression was the stepwise calculation using the variable with “the highest value for the score statistic that has significance below .05” (p. 284). Therefore, the contrast of the treatment group and CG2 was used which had the highest score statistic (4.423) with a p value of .035. The log-likelihood statistic with the constant was 331.425.

When the contrast added, the log-likelihood statistic dropped to 326.33. This value indicated that even though the model does was not overall significant, the addition of the contrast between the experimental group and CG2 added value to the model's ability to predict second-to-third semester retention. Using the model chi-square statistic, the difference between the model with the contrast of the experimental group and CG2 and without the contrast was 5.527 which was not significant ($p = .137$) at the $p < .05$ level. This value indicated the overall model was better at finding significant relationship between the treatment group and CG2. Also, the effect size of the model was represented by the Nagelkerke R^2 measure at .029. Since the model itself did not reveal overall significance, the 2.03 odds ratio did not indicate that the model was a good representation of the significant effects of the intervention on the college success of the population.

Discussion

There is a lack of research on pre/postenrollment intervention programs especially for first-generation Black students at historically Black institutions (HBIs). There is also a lack of research based in Seidman's (2005) model for college student success to examine if early, intense, and continuous intervention can have a positive impact on college success for first-generation Black students in pre/postenrollment intervention programs. Numerous studies have revealed positive impact of first-year intervention programs on college success including factors involving the social transition and academic success for first-generation college students (Gutierrez, 2007; Inkelas et al., 2007; Kelly & Cho, 2009; Suzuki, 2009; Williams, 2009; Yelmarthi & Mawasha, 2008).

This study was conducted to determine if a unique pre/postenrollment intervention program had potential for duplication at HBIs to positively impact the college success of first-generation Black students. Results of the study found that neither first-to-second nor second-to-third semester retention rates for first-generation AEA participants were significantly different compared to first-generation AEA nonparticipants. First-to-second semester and second-to-third semester retention rates were significantly higher for continuing-generation AEA participants compared to first generation AEA participants, but there were no significant differences in GPA. Lastly, there were no significant differences for gender regarding AEA participation and retention or GPA.

Research Question 1 examined the impact of the AEA on first-to-second semester retention rates for the treatment group, CG1, and CG2. The overall logistics model was found to have significance ($p < .05$) mainly due to the added effect of the comparison between first-generation AEA participants and continuing-generation AEA participants regarding first-to-second semester

retention. First-to-second semester retention for continuing-generation students was 97.78% and added significance ($p = .008$) to the model with its comparison to first-generation AEA students at 88.89%. It should be noted that retention for first-generation AEA participants was higher than first-generation AEA nonparticipants at 81.67%; however, the added effect of the difference to the model was not significant ($p = .492$) at the $p < .05$ level.

Descriptive statistics and data analysis indicated that AEA program participation resulted in a significant difference in the first-to-second semester retention rates for first-generation students compared to continuing-generation students. The significant difference ($p = .008$) between first-generation AEA participants and continuing-generation participants showed that continuing-generation students performed well in the AEA model at NCCU. Therefore, Null Hypothesis 1 was partially rejected based on the negative difference in first-to-second semester retention for first-generation AEA students compared to continuing-generation AEA students. As a result, examination of Research Question 1 and 2 did not result in positive impact of the AEA program on college success for first-generation Black students regarding first-to-second semester retention.

Based in Seidman's (2005) model of college success, the findings of this study revealed several key implications regarding the examination of the impact of pre/postenrollment intervention programs. First, Seidman (2005) stated that, "For intervention programs and services to be effective, they must be powerful enough to affect change" (p. 295). At NCCU, the AEA program model may not have provided the early, intense, and continuous intervention necessary to positively impact college success. Retention was not positively impacted by the AEA for first-generation Black students. GPA was also not positively impacted by the AEA for first-generation Black students. Dennis et al. (2005) and Raley (2007) agreed that pre-enrollment characteristics, such as first-generation status or academic performance in high school, could be powerful influences on a college student's experiences with the academic and social factors at the institution. Therefore, these findings indicate that the AEA intervention may not have provided adequate academic and social support for first-generation students during the first-to-second semester as there were no significant differences in retention for first-generation AEA participants compared to first-generation non-AEA participants. Based on findings regarding GPA, the AEA model also needed to provide more intentional and intense methods of academic support for first-generation students.

The findings indicated that retention rates overall were significantly higher for AEA continuing-generation students compared to AEA first-generation students. As noted by Suzuki (2007), effective intervention programs help provide supportive atmospheres and can increase the likelihood for

student commitment to the institution ultimately leading to college graduation. This study revealed that the AEA program did not positively impact college success overall for first-generation students, but it may have provided a supportive atmosphere to positively impact college success for continuing-generation students who were identified as needing early intervention. Therefore, the AEA model in this study may be more adequate to support college success for continuing-generation students.

Limitations

This study presented a number of limitations involving the research site chosen, the research design, and the included variables. First, this study was limited to one university and participants were not randomly assigned to groups, meaning the generalizability to other institutions is limited. Future research of intervention programs may choose to devise experimental designs that would include pre-and post-tests of the impact of the intervention program. The same limitation with generalizability is true for the design of the intervention program because it was specific to the campus under investigation, and program designs vary across campuses.

Conclusion

The findings of this study indicated that the pre/post-enrollment AEA intervention program at NCCU did not positively impact college success for first-generation Black participants. However, based in Seidman's (2005) retention formula, the significant findings present unique opportunities for future action. The AEA yielded significantly higher retention rates for continuing-generation AEA students in this study compared to first-generation AEA students. Seidman's (2005) college success formula states that early, continuous, and intense intervention programs have a positive impact when designed around students' needs. Practitioners implementing intervention programs, especially for first-generation Black college students should be intentional and deliberate during the planning process. Therefore, an enhanced intervention program may indeed positively impact first-generation Black college students' retention, GPA, and satisfaction given proper assessment and early identification of students' needs.

The findings of this research study are congruent with the assertion by Davidson et al. (2009) that "it is becoming increasingly apparent that variables that prominently influence the persistence decision of one student or group of students may be weakly related or unrelated to the persistence of other undergraduates" (p. 373). The solution to college success is situational based on the

characteristics of respective institutions and respective student populations. Although Seidman's (2005) formula was not corroborated in this study with the examination of the impact of the AEA on first-generation students, it did reveal positive results for continuing-generation AEA students. First-generation and Black students enter into college with numerous academic and social barriers that can impact their college success (Freeman, 2008; Ishitani, 2006; Ishiyama, 2007; Nebolisa, 2007), and numerous programs have been successful in impacting college success (Chen, 2005; Naumann et al., 2003; Rooney, 2008; Williams, 2009). The results of this study showed a clear need in the AEA for a stronger focus on academic support for first-generation students in the AEA which could have been realized prior to implementation using an intentional pre-enrollment survey or assessment tool. Therefore, it is suggested that future implementation of pre/postenrollment intervention programs guided by Seidman's formula, especially for first-generation Black students at HBIs, focuses heavily on the early identification of students' needs. This focus should especially be on academic performance indicators, measurements of student expectations, and measurements of students' perceptions.

Administrators at HBIs should continue to utilize Seidman's (2005) retention formula for college student success to plan and assess intervention programs for their respective student populations. During the implementation process, a special emphasis should be placed on intentional support efforts based on strong early identification methods of students' needs. As Harper and Quaye (2009) stated, "college students at colleges and universities are different; the ways they experience and respond to our campuses are varied. Thus, educators and administrators must be strategic and intentional about fostering conditions that compel students," (p. 1).

Seidman (2005) stated that early identification of students' academic and social needs followed by consistent intervention can lead to greater college retention rates. Based on the results of this study, combined with the assertion by Davidson, Beck, and Milligan (2009) that cohorts of college students from different institutions react differently in their respective environments, it is recommended that future pre/postenrollment intervention programs consider using an expanded version of the Seidman formula: Retention = Early Identification + Early, Intense, Continuous, and *Intentional* Intervention.

This expanded formula could guide scholar practitioners to provide more intentional methods of academic and support based on early identification of needs that could positively impact college success. As an example of utilization of the expanded formula, as Seidman (2005) recommended, an institution would engage in methods of early identification of first-year students' needs preferably

beginning at the time of application and acceptance to the institution. The institution would then provide early, intense and continuous intervention to those students with interventions guided by the early identification of students' needs. The addition of Intentional to the Seidman formula would guide institutions to implement intervention programs not based on a one-size-fits-all model. Instead, it would help institutions to recognize the differences in academic and social needs among cohorts of college students. Unlike the implementation of the AEA, in order for the intervention to be intense enough, it may be advantageous for students to sign a contract at the beginning of the program stating that they agree to the mandatory set of activities. It should be presented to the students that the set of activities have been intentionally designed to positively impact their college success.

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EXPLORING THE CULTURE OF RISK-AWARENESS AMONG THE PROFESSORiate: THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ENTERPRISE RISK MANAGEMENT IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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Introduction

Over the past two decades, boards of trustees and senior administrators of colleges and universities have faced the increasing need to develop strategies related to risk management issues. Typically, risk management issues are the challenges and opportunities that are identified and managed through a strategic plan, ranging from the safety and welfare of individuals to reputational damage. Many of the risk management issues facing higher education institutions are regulatory and financial in nature and frequently linked to institution-wide strategic planning efforts (Fraser, Simkins & Narvaez, 2015). One common example of regulatory strategic planning is Title IX (U.S. Department of Education, 2015).

However many higher education institutions struggle with the implementation of risk management efforts (Gallagher, 2013) for a variety of reasons, such as (1) absence of attention or consideration of senior leadership, (2) deficiency of understanding, dearth of training and communication, (3) lack of clarification of roles and responsibilities across the organization, and (4) absence of identifying emerging and relevant higher education and institutional risks (AGB, 2007). As a result, the risk management model of enterprise risk management (ERM) has been deficient at many higher education institutions.

ERM is defined as a risk management model that accepts risk as a basic tenet of operations and decisions, which strives to optimize outcomes by identifying how risks can affect the institution's overall objectives, goals, and strategic plans (Gallagher, 2013). As a model, ERM requires stakeholders to be attuned to the culture in which ERM is implemented, namely that ERM requires the idea of an institutional-wide risk-aware culture. A risk-aware culture is one in which the decisions made regarding risk are based on people, their participation, and their commitment to the organization (Hinton, 2012). An institution can be thought to have a risk-aware culture when leadership rewards risk identification efforts, takes ownership of risk, and aspires to build risk assessment and mitigation strategies within every department and for each campus-wide initiative (Abraham, 2013).

Implementing ERM is linked to an institution's strategic planning efforts, in large part because it requires the use of key resources, such as developing preventive programs. It also calls upon the institution to develop a more risk-aware culture, while also upholding the institution's cultural values (Heil, 2015). An example that is often referenced is the implementation of ERM in the financial industry. The Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002 provided the impetus for a number of organizations to institute a plethora of compliance, governance, and risk controls. The effect on the financial industry was a salutary one. The Sarbanes-Oxley Act, a reactive solution to several corporate and accounting scandals, such as Enron and Worldcom, set new or more stringent requirements for corporate boards and management and mandated that senior management take individual responsibility for the accuracy of financial reports. While Sarbanes-Oxley specifically addressed only the financial industry, it created the awareness across other industries of the need to address management responsibilities and accountability with regard to risk awareness, as well as other key issues.

However, higher education has lagged behind other industries and many institutions have been extremely slow in implementing ERM, in part because ERM is viewed as inconsistent with the cultural objectives and values of higher education (Gallagher, 2009). Historically, ERM's objective was to establish policies and procedures to control and monitor activities and decisions in the business arena. Value in the business industry is typically linked to optimizing shareholder value and/or realizing a profit. Conversely, higher education's objective is to prepare minds to contribute to the greater community, where value is placed on developing the individual. This tension has hindered the advancement of this model at many colleges and universities.

Literature Review

Research on the topic of ERM underscores the importance of organizational culture in understanding the manner in which employees interact and view risk-related concerns (Harner, 2013). Organizational culture refers to an institution's core values and objectives, as expressed through behaviors and attitudes throughout the organization, often emanating from the actions of board and senior management (Harner, 2013). Although ERM is typically a construct found within corporate culture, it is essential to recognize how employees within a higher education environment (faculty, administrators, and staff) understand and engage with ERM.

The heightened expectations, complexity, and execution of risk strategies using corporate terminology have left many higher education leaders unprepared to advocate for change and support organizational risk management efforts, such as ERM (Rivard, 2013). As a result, many institutions may be exposed to financial, educational, safety, and health risks, underscoring the importance of developing a dynamic approach to the mitigation of institutional mission-critical risks. "Every organization is exposed to many types of risk, and organizations should develop a risk management culture" (Ruzic-Dimitrijevic & Dakic, 2014, p. 138). It can be argued that failure to engender a culture that supports risk management strategies as a critical part of higher

education governance could result in financial loss, reputational loss, closure, and endangering the health and safety of students, faculty, and staff.

In the last two decades, the field of risk management began to transform from a sole focus of insurance transfer and loss control to the best practices for reducing exposure (Abraham, 2013). Risk exposure is an industry calculation that gives a numeric value that enables different risks to be compared. The ERM model was introduced to the financial industry as the result of significant business failures in the late 1990s that occurred due to high risk financing strategies (Barnds, 2011; URMIA, 2007). In the context of higher education, risk is defined as, "...the uncertainty of an event's occurrence and its effect on the institution's ability to achieve its objectives" (Mouchayleh, 2007, p. 4). In this setting, risk management involves "the uncertainty that emanates from the institution's inability to precisely determine the severity of impact and the time of occurrence of events that may adversely or beneficially affect its ability to achieve its objectives" (Mouchayleh, 2007, p. 4). Risk management enables colleges and universities to increase goal achievement by identifying potential impacts and coordinating internal norms and requirements with reality.

Failing to assess and constructively address legal liability and risk management issues creates a vulnerability to expensive claims and litigation. Some types of liability and risk issues that higher education faces include, but are not limited to, rising costs, fluctuating endowment values, compliance, and uncertainty about future government funding (Tufano, 2011, p. 57). Additionally, higher education institutions encounter liability risk management issues. In a 2000 report, the National Association of College and Business Officers (NACUBO) identified five types of risks that higher education institutions face, which includes strategic, financial, operational, compliance, and reputational risks (Association of Governing Boards, 2009). Institutions also face crises such as serious outbreaks of illness or disease, fires, explosions, chemical spills, environmental disasters, natural disasters, significant drops in revenues, loss of confidential or sensitive information or records, major lawsuits, terrorist attacks, ethical breaches by senior administrators, faculty or trustees, major crimes, and athletic scandals (Mitroff, Diamond, & Alpaslan, 2015). Lastly, institutions must also consider the loss of trust and mutual understanding in community-campus relationships as a result of the losses associated with claims and lawsuits.

For the leadership and boards of higher education institutions who make risk management one of its priorities, there is an increased importance in taking a comprehensive approach to risk management and moving from a compliance-driven approach to a more strategic approach throughout the institution, positively affecting decision-making (Fraser, Simkins, & Narvaez, 2015). Yet, many higher education institutions still struggle with this process. Sixty percent of higher education institutions do not use comprehensive, strategic risk assessment to identify major risks to their mission's success and only 5 percent indicate they have exemplary practices for management of major risks to mission success (McDonald, 2014).

To better understand the concept of ERM, it's often helpful for institutional leaders to consider the four primary methods for managing risks, which include (1) avoiding the risk altogether, (2) accepting the risk

where the organization experiences a loss, (3) transferring the risk to a third party through insurance, or (4) controlling the risk by detecting the risk before it occurs (Dorian, 2011). It's important to understand these four methods merely assist institutions with meeting their basic legal obligations. Furthermore, as the nature of risks continues to evolve with societal changes, so do the types of risks that higher education encounters. Most institutions of higher education only rely on insurance to address their risks (PMA, 2010). Insurance alone is no longer a sufficient remedy for managing emerging risks, thereby highlighting a concern that higher education institutions are not implementing more comprehensive plans beyond insurance.

To this end, an effective ERM model links risk management, governance, and strategic goals of the institution. ERM analyzes critical risks and promotes understanding and oversight of various other risks by providing a strong focus on *policy* rather than on the implementation of actual *remedies*. ERM allows for potential risks to be analyzed by using extreme levels of objectivity, while simultaneously enabling the collection of data from a theoretical evaluation (Young, 2010). If ERM is properly implemented, it can extract and synthesize relevant information to assist leaders in fully understanding issues and potential roadblocks to the implementation of the organization's strategic plan (Harner, 2013). The overall goal of ERM is to create a risk-aware culture throughout the organization's community. "It is grounded in strong channels of communication across the enterprise; a cross-functional initiative intended to manage more than financial risks" (Harner, 2013, p. 1).

ERM identifies risks before they can result in losses, assists with improving the organization's financial condition, and improves the institution's performance and the morale of employees by reducing their concerns about possible personal liability. ERM within higher education was born out of the experience of the financial industry. Toward the end of the 1990s, industry faced an aggressive consumerism movement, which led to a proliferation of new laws and regulations. Higher education also saw an increased risk of private legal claims against their administrators, as well as a proliferation of regulatory compliance requirements (Fraser et al., 2015). Additionally, many higher education trustees and campus leaders became knowledgeable about ERM from their respective business settings, including their experiences with the Sarbanes-Oxley Act (Gallagher, 2009). Boards of trustees felt that this model would be effective for higher education because policy, as well as institutional culture and priorities, frequently lead institutions to do more than merely follow legal requirements (Hustoles, 2012). ERM analyzes critical risks and promotes the understanding and oversight of various other risks by providing a strong focus on policy rather than on the implementation of actual remedies.

ERM allows for potential risks to be analyzed by using extreme levels of objectivity, while simultaneously enabling the collection of data for a theoretical evaluation (Young, 2010). ERM allows for any individual at any level of the institution to assess and plan responses to risk and opportunities in their department. For example, an individual is encouraged to identify internal and external events that affect the achievement of their objectives in their respective departments. They, along with institutional leaders, assess

methods for selecting appropriate actions. Then, the results of all risk assessments and response plans are collected by ERM staff and are used to examine the institution's risk assessment and plans as a whole. The goal of ERM is to create a risk-aware culture throughout the institution's community. ERM takes a comprehensive approach to risk identification and management, recognizes the institutional risks associated with activities and decisions, and proactively and continuously pursues institutional objectives in an informed and thoughtful manner (University of Maryland, 2013). ERM allows for the increased priority of taking a more institution-wide approach to risk management and moves from a concentration on compliance to institution-wide goals and objectives.

ERM focuses on an institution's achievement of its objectives in four areas. Strategic is the first area of focus for the ERM model. The strategic focus is concerned primarily with ensuring that goals are aligned with and in support of an institution's mission. The second area of focus for the ERM model is operational. The operational area focuses on instilling an ongoing management process. The third area of focus for the ERM model is financial. The financial area involves the protection of an institution's assets. The fourth area of the ERM model is compliance. The compliance area addresses the institution's adherence to applicable laws and regulations (AGB, 2007; Boyer, 2014).

Several authors have discussed the transferability of ERM to higher education. Despite cultural and organizational differences between the for-profit financial industry and higher education, experts argue that the ERM process is directly applicable to institutions just as it is to any other enterprise (Fraser et al., 2015). "There is nothing so unique to the college or university setting as to make ERM irrelevant or impossible to implement" (URMIA, 2007, p. 17). While many institutions have formed committees to examine methods for effective ERM implementation, many institutions of higher education have encountered several significant problems.

One problem that predominates is that of trying to superimpose corporate practice onto academic organizations, and the fact that this does not take into consideration the existence of a unique faculty culture which is the antithesis of corporate culture (Hinton, 2012). "Top-down, administrative planning simply won't work anymore" (Sanaghan & Hinton, 2013, p.1). The risk-aware culture needs to permeate throughout the institution and be used in day-to-day decision-making (Kluwer, 2010). This means that establishing risk management programs such as ERM requires the involvement of all employees. When the culture has not been permeated with inspirational risk management, there may be objections: "We've done this the same way every day; why change?" (Gallagher, 2013, p. 20). The lack of buy-in experienced at some institutions may stem from faculty not believing that they are responsible for their institution's risk management efforts (Gallagher, 2013). This resistance may dissipate when people begin to understand how risk management can assist them with maintaining and improving their jobs, while simultaneously helping the institution to thrive.

Another significant problem that has been identified is that once a board member or senior administrators have identified key risks, there is a level of difficulty in the actual management of the risks. This

problem has been identified as the 80/20 problem. “80% of scarce ERM time is spent on identification and assessment (frequency, severity and the like), and only 20% is applied to strategic thinking” (Gallagher, 2013, p.11). This ratio indicates that administrators may be reluctant to implement ERM. They may be concerned that it will become an unsupportable drain on time and resources.

Higher education has found that the manual collection and collation of risk data exacerbates the problem because the process is time-consuming and error-prone. Some institutions still distribute multiple spreadsheets or check-box questionnaires to gather information. By the time the data is returned to the responsible department the information is at least one quarter behind, precluding real-time or proactive risk control (Kluwer, 2010; O’Brien, 2011). Situations such as this leave little time for the actual mitigation of risks.

Another obstacle for implementation is that the for-profit model outlined specific regulations, such as those imposed by the SEC, and it did not apply to higher education. Gurevitz (2009) articulated that the early ERM models were not written with higher education in mind and were often presented in a complicated format, which made it difficult to translate the concepts. Some of the concepts that have been lost in translation from the financial industry to higher education are proper risk identification and prioritization, monitoring of emerging risks, and effective communication and training (Gallagher, 2013). In response to these challenges, it becomes essential to consider whether the respective institutions are ready for full ERM implementation or whether more limited initiatives may be more suitable.

Theoretical framework

ERM is best implemented in a risk-aware culture that supports stakeholder buy-in among other cultural structures. To this end, distributed leadership theory can serve as a valuable approach to planning and implementation ERM with a university environment. Distributed leadership is defined as an analytical frame for understanding leadership practice. The distributed leadership perspective recognizes there are multiple informal and formal leaders within an organization and decision-making is widely shared within an organization (Spillane, Halverson, & Diamond, 2004). It is often described as the collective social process emerging through interactions of multiple factors (Uhl-Bien, 2006). This framework allows for the assessment and articulation of the manner in which leadership is and is not distributed throughout the organization (Bolden, 2011). This framework offers a systematic perspective for the concepts of shared, collaborative, democratic, and participative leadership.

The premise of distributed leadership is not grounded in the traditional vertical leadership approach, but rather the system of shared leadership that asks the following questions: When is leadership more appropriately shared? How does one develop shared leadership? How does one utilize both vertical and shared leadership to leverage the capabilities and knowledge of others?

While various scholars of distributed leadership ascribe to different concepts of this theory, there are three concepts that are shared by most authors. The first concept is that leadership is an emergent property

of a group or network in interacting individuals. The second concept is that there is openness to the boundaries of leadership. The third concept is that varieties of expertise are distributed across the many and not just the few (Bolden, 2011). These concepts suggest that leadership responsibility is dissociated from formal organizational roles, and people at all levels and in different departments influence the direction and functioning of the organization (Gronn, 2002). This framework is descriptive rather than prescriptive, making a strong case that the quality of leadership is conceived as a set of functions that is carried out by the group, instead of leader and subordinate.

The model of distributed leadership offered by James P. Spillane (2006) describes this phenomenon in an educational setting. For example, within higher education there are multiple leaders, such as administrators and faculty, whose interactions in a given situation merge to create institutional leadership practices. For Spillane, distributed leadership goes beyond the actions of individuals. First, distributed leadership contends that leadership involves two or more individuals. Leaders can be those who hold both formal and informal roles. "From a distributed perspective, leadership is more than what individuals in formal leadership positions do. People in formal and informal roles take responsibility for leadership activities" (Spillane, 2006, p. 13). Secondly, distributed leadership is concerned with how followers play an active and purposive role in leadership practices. "Thus, leadership is not simply something that is done to followers; followers in interaction with leaders and the situation contribute to defining leadership practice" (Spillane, 2006, p. 17). Lastly, distributed leadership focuses on the idea that situational context directly affects all that leadership practice entails. "A distributed perspective necessitates understanding how aspects of the situation enable and constrain leadership practice and thereby contribute to defining it" (Spillane, 2006, p. 19). In this context, distributed leadership is framework that serves as a tool for better understanding institutional leadership.

Using distributed leadership as a theoretical framework offers unique ways of looking at the implementation of ERM into higher education. ERM's implementation method of leadership, which is not only from the top down, but across departments and includes various institutional stakeholders, fits the distributed leadership framework in that the board of trustees' role is not autocratic in nature. Rather, this method is an example of strategic leadership, which is the ability to anticipate, envision, and work with others to create change. "It is a process of providing the direction and inspiration necessary to create and implement a vision, mission and strategies to achieve organizational objectives" (Bolden, Hawkins, Gosling, & Taylor, 2011, p. 84). Strategic leadership is reflected by ERM in the manner in which ERM has been initiated within the organization, demonstrating the manner in which people across the institution have unified to implement the plan.

Just as importantly, distributed leadership allows stakeholders of an institution to learn together and construct meaning in the types of risks the institution faces and the best methods for mitigation. "Considering leadership practice as both thinking and activity that "emerges" in the execution of leadership tasks in and

through the interaction of leaders, follower and situation” (Spillane, Halverson & Diamond, 2004, p. 3). Through the democratic process, different perceptions and assumptions that are representative of the entire enterprise are able to effectively guide institutions in accomplishing their goals and objectives.

Culturally, distributed leadership theory suggests that by the time a plan such as ERM is ready to be implemented into an institution, the structure of leadership has been designed so comprehensively that institutional buy-in has already taken place through the act of collaboration. ERM’s continuous and necessary flow of information from top-down and between department silos can sustain, because relationships, ideas, and social environmental contexts have already been accounted for and no one person is responsible for its implementation.

Simultaneously, faculty should be engaged and have a leadership position in the ERM process. The onus placed on faculty resides in their willingness to participate, their ability to work with others for the betterment of the institution, and their interest in gaining the knowledge that serves as the basis for generating and continuing the conversations that are required to successfully implement ERM. In this capacity, faculty can generate ideas together and should reflect upon their shared beliefs in conjunction with the acquisition of new information. When faculty commit to the goal of ERM, they demonstrate a willingness to learn together and construct meaning and knowledge collaboratively.

A Case Study

Using the conceptual framework of distributed leadership theory and a mixed-method case study design, the manner in which tenured and tenure-track faculty view the implementation of enterprise risk management (ERM) within the institution was explored. The study was conducted at a master’s level, teaching institution, which did not have an active enterprise risk management plan. The two key research questions were as follows:

- What is the understanding of ERM among tenured and tenure-track faculty within a university?
- How do tenured and tenure-track faculty within an organization view the role of a university’s risk management culture in the adoption and implementation of ERM?

The first data collection strategy employed an online, Likert-scaled survey consisting of closed and open-ended questions. The survey consisted of 20 questions regarding the experiences and beliefs of participants’ understanding of ERM and how an institution’s risk-aware culture influences the implementation of ERM. The questions sought to understand how tenured and tenure-track faculty perceive the risk management identification process and to identify the areas they feel need to be addressed in order for successful implementation of ERM to be accomplished (Leedy & Ormrod, 2012).

The second data collect method consisted of 15 personal interviews with tenured and tenure-track faculty, lasting 60 and 90 minutes each. The interview was a semi-structured interview guide consisting of questions that assisted in determining the ‘how’ and ‘why’ of participants’ perceptions (Yin, 2009).

Additionally, the questions were semi-structured because this method provided a process by which to obtain specifics and more deeply explore the interviewees' beliefs through further questioning (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). All interviews were audio-taped, with the participant's permission, and then transcribed. Participants were also given a copy of the transcription for verification through member checking, in which they made changes or requested masking of information. Participants had an opportunity to review and, if necessary, make corrections to the content of the interview after it had been transcribed.

The third data-collection strategy was documentation analysis, which included personal documents, internal documents, and external communications that pertained to ERM implementation efforts at the institution under study (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). The documents used in this study were: *The Academic Plan*, *The Accreditation Body Report to Administration, Faculty, and Students*, *The Annual Security Report and Annual Fire Safety Report*, *Sexual Misconduct Policy*, and the *Strategic Plan*.

Results and Findings

The exploration into this topic revealed three central themes as it relates to faculty perception of ERM and cultural implications within a higher education environment. The first theme that emerged was the manner in which tenure and tenured-track faculty defined ERM within their context. Most commonly, participants viewed ERM as a function of finance and insurance within the institution. At the same time, participants also perceived an institution's risk management plan and practices on a continuum, ranging from good faith attempts to clear institutional policies that articulated a clear risk management policy stance for the institution.

A second key theme that emerged was the importance faculty placed on an institutional culture that embraced clear and open communication, which participants believe is essential for initiating ERM and culture of risk-awareness. This means successful ERM is grounded in a culture that values group decision-making, as well as a milieu that reflects communal policy-making that actively includes all stakeholders of an institution. This is an important perception, as study participants viewed top-down ERM approaches as undesirable and less likely to receive buy-in from key stakeholders, such as faculty. Similarly, the manner of communication is crucial. For example, ERM topics and decisions that were disseminated solely through technology, such as emails or internal network notifications, were viewed as ineffective.

Similarly, an institutional culture built on trust and transparency is an essential component of implementing ERM, as well as creating a risk-aware culture. With trust, synergistic efforts are made possible, as ERM involves activities that encourage that type of shared commitment and practice. For faculty, establishing a culture of trust and transparency creates an environment that is open to active participation. Furthermore, discussing decision-making criteria, giving and receiving feedback, and ensuring organizational policies and procedures are applied fairly and equitably are crucial components and a valuable strategy to increase transparency between faculty and senior leadership.

The concept of trust and transparency is closely related to the third and final theme, which involves the construct of power. In the context of this study, power is the perception that ERM involves top-down governance and is interpreted by faculty as a possible abuse of power. A top-down approach also demonstrates the absence of communal decision making, which was shown to be an essential component for faculty when attempting to create a risk-aware culture. At the same time, study participants recognized that risk management issues were primarily within an administrator's realm, rather than an academic concern. However, faculty were able to relate to the ERM concept as a necessary part of fulfilling the mission of the institution. Their ability to participate and become involved in implementing risk management plans, and to engage in creating a risk-aware culture, is contingent upon their ability to relate their efforts to the mission. In this way, a distributed leadership approach was necessary with ERM decisions and policy-making.

Conclusion

The investigation into this topic revealed key findings that facilitate understanding and demonstrates that tenured-track and tenured faculty believe a risk-aware culture requires leadership and faculty to engage with one another in all areas of the planning process. In order to embed an ERM plan into the existing institution's culture, a clear, developed processes to gain consensus of the personnel within the organization is essential. "Collegial institutions have an emphasis on consensus, shared power, common commitments and aspirations, and leadership that emphasizes consultation and collective responsibilities" (Birnbaum, 1988, p. 86). This is consistent with other collegial institution models, which indicate that all stakeholders of an institution have the right to share in the greater decision-making process.

Similarly, faculty perceptions of risk management planning involve a different way of thinking about a risk management plan. ERM and risk management initiatives are often perceived by higher education employees as being corporate or administrative functions that have to align with formal, structural, and bureaucratic aims (Fraser, Simkins, & Narvaez, 2015). The results of this study indicate this is an antiquated view and it's necessary to view ERM and risk management as a collegial human-resource concern. The failure of governance or leadership to garner participation can perpetuate a culture that is not self-reflective, which will increase the likelihood for a systematic risk management failure (Fraser, Simkins, & Narvaez, 2015). The leadership of an institution reinforces the shared values, systems and procedures that are necessary for effective implementation.

To this end, there are key recommendations for implementing ERM within a higher education context, as well as in the concepts of leadership and culture, as they pertain to the mission. Based on the findings of this study, the results indicate three guidelines for implementing ERM. First, there should be a key position created for an experienced professional who is not only a practitioner of risk management, but who is also keenly familiar with the landscape of higher education. This position would serve as a risk management facilitator, who would be responsible for gathering existing data regarding risk management, creating

measurements as to the value the institution will gain from implementing ERM, actively gather and involve various institutional stakeholders and departments, as well as inventory what the institution is already doing to manage risk. Secondly, the institution should create action-teams that are representative of every department within the institution. The teams should consist of five to-ten institutional stakeholders, ranging from deans to all levels of faculty, administrators and staff. Each team then elects a chairperson who will be responsible for compiling the team's current and potential risks. Then the chairpersons of each department will meet with the risk facilitator on a monthly basis.

Finally, the risk facilitator will research the findings presented by the teams' chairpersons and prioritize the problems and risks that are of greatest significance to the institution. Once the risk management facilitator has completed this step, then they will meet with the chairpersons to obtain feedback regarding suggestions, comments, or concerns regarding the findings. This should be done in an iterative manner and will provide the different departments a means for clear communication before instituting a plan.

Limitations

Although this case study revealed valuable findings on the topic faculty perceptions of risk management and the manner in which an institution's culture influences the adoption of ERM, there are limitations that exist and implications for future study. First, this case study was conducted at one institution and future studies incorporating other colleges and universities institutions that vary in size, location, and participation would allow for expanded results. Secondly, this study was conducted over one academic year. The extension of a study beyond this time period would allow for additional perceptions. Finally, this study's focus was on tenured and tenure-track only. Inviting board of trustees, administrators, staff and all other instructors to share perceptions on this topic would widen our understanding of this topic.

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A UNIVERSITY CENTRALIZED OFFICE OF EXPERIENTIAL EDUCATION: AN EFFICIENT SOLUTION FOR MANAGING AFFILIATION AGREEMENT PROCESSING AND COMPLIANCE AUDITING OF STUDENTS

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Introduction and Purpose

All health professional degree programs include a significant experiential component in the curriculum; rotations can comprise up to half of the total credits for an academic degree. Rotations at sites external to the hospital or clinic associated with the University require affiliation agreements, which stipulate requirements for students and rotation sites. To efficiently meet the needs of its many colleges and to minimize hiring extraneous staff in the colleges who would perform redundant tasks, our University created a Centralized Office of Experiential Education (COEE) as a support service which would review, negotiate revisions to, and execute affiliation agreements, and ensure students' compliance with the terms of the agreements. The major services offered by and steps taken to implement COEE's services are described and the outcomes reported.

The purpose of this report is to share an efficient support service model for universities which are comprised of multiple health professional colleges or programs.

Background on Midwestern University

Midwestern University is a private, not-for-profit institution that provides graduate and postgraduate education in the health sciences. Today, it includes eleven independent colleges: two colleges of osteopathic medicine, two colleges of pharmacy, two college of health sciences, two colleges of dental medicine, two colleges of optometry, and one college of veterinary medicine. It has two campuses, one in Downers Grove, Illinois and one in Glendale, Arizona. Midwestern

University is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission, and all of its health professional academic programs are separately accredited by their respective professional accrediting agencies.

Many of the support services of Midwestern University are administratively centralized, with implementation of the service being decentralized. That is, the administrative leadership for the support service is assigned to one individual who is responsible for developing policies and procedures that are uniform for both campuses, but staff teams on each campus are responsible for carrying out the services of the support unit and for following University-wide policies and procedures. As new services are developed, this promotes consistency across the campuses, speeds up the development process, and also leverages existing University-wide information technology platforms. In addition, staff teams on each campus gain familiarity with the administration and staff in the colleges that they serve. This facilitates communication and efficient problem solving when issues arise. As examples, current University centralized support services include Admissions, Registrar, Student Financial Services, and Human Resources.

Establishing the Need for the COEE

In 2006, Midwestern University began a rapid growth phase. At that time, it included six colleges, but its strategic plan over the next decade included the establishment of five additional colleges. The University's administrative leadership met to discuss the resources needed to ensure successful launches of new colleges. It was evident that many colleges wanted to hire their own staff to process affiliation agreements, audit students' compliance with the terms of the agreement, and provide compliance documentation on students assigned to an external rotation site. In addition, from past experience, the existing colleges had struggled with personnel turnover in their clinical education divisions, as the routine tasks of finding new rotation sites, contracting with rotation sites, training preceptors, and handling rotation-related issues can be exhausting. As a result, the University leadership conceptualized a COEE, which would provide the following support services to all of the colleges: (1) processing affiliation agreements; (2) filing all agreements on a searchable electronic database that is viewable by the college rotation staff; (3) compliance auditing of students of rotation requirements; and (4) maintaining a dashboard that documents students' compliance with rotation requirements. A full description of each of these services follows.

Staffing and Administration of the COEE

The COEE is supervised by a University Vice President and Chief Academic Officer, who is responsible for developing programs and solutions that are uniform across both campuses. This supervisory activity comprises approximately 10% of her time. The Office is staffed by five full time staff: two paralegals, two compliance coordinators, and one senior administrative assistant. One paralegal and one compliance coordinator are assigned to each campus, and the senior administrative assistant supports for all staff.

Since the inception of the COEE, a steering committee meets quarterly to discuss issues and plan new compliance services. The steering committee includes the Deans of Students (one for each campus), the Vice President and Chief Academic Officer, Associate Director of Information Technology Services, and both compliance coordinators.

Processing of Affiliation Agreements

Formal affiliation agreements have replaced memoranda of understanding or handshake agreements. The affiliation agreements include sections on responsibilities of contracting partners, student requirements for rotations, indemnification, financial arrangements, and malpractice insurance coverage for students.¹ College staff with no legal background are uncomfortable with reviewing these sections of the agreement, and formal legal review is essential to minimize risk exposure to the University and its colleges. The COEE paralegals, who have expertise on contract review and negotiation, were trained by University legal counsel. They are responsible for reviewing, negotiating appropriate revisions to, and collecting signatures from authorized individuals on agreements.

The processing time of an affiliation agreement has been shortened because of the following measures:

- (1) Implementation of a University-approved, fill-in-the-blank standard affiliation agreement template. If no revisions are made to the terms of the agreement template, the college dean is authorized to sign the agreement on behalf of the University.
- (2) Addition of auto-renewing verbiage to all agreements. This has reduced the number of expiring agreements and the need to process renewals.
- (3) Addition of all of the University's degree programs to any agreement at the outset of negotiations.

Searchable Electronic Database of Affiliation Agreements

All affiliation agreements in their various phases of processing are cataloged and filed into a searchable electronic database. Once the agreement is executed, it is scanned into the database, and is available to authorized users of the system. Each agreement is cataloged by name of the rotation site; primary contact personnel at the site; dates when the agreement was first presented to COEE and when it completed various stages in the review process by the paralegal; expiration date; and the colleges included in the agreement. College rotation staff are able to search the database by the rotation site name; or by college or academic program; or by city, state, zip code, or proximity within a certain number of miles of a specified zip code of a rotation site. A college, which is considering the placement of a student in a certain city, can check the database for executed affiliation agreements within that zip code, and use this as a starting point for identifying a new potential rotation site. Similarly, the searchable database allows the colleges to run reports to identify agreements that might be expiring within the next six months. Those that need to be renewed because the college plans to continue to use the site, can then be identified to the paralegal, who is responsible for negotiating a contract extension.

Each rotation has a tracking page, which allows college rotation coordinators to view the status of affiliation agreements submitted to the COEE. The paralegal is responsible for entering dates when the agreement has been reviewed, when red-lined revisions to the agreement have been sent to the partnering institution for its review, when the partnering institution has responded to the red-lined revisions, when the agreement is finalized and in the signature phase, and when the agreement is executed. The tracking page has significantly improved communication between COEE and the colleges with regards to the status of their agreements and negated situations related to lost or misplaced agreements.

Routine reports from the searchable database allow the COEE supervisor to assess the level of activity for the support unit, and also to measure the productivity of the paralegals. The average time to process an agreement and the total volume of agreements processed by each paralegal can be tracked.

Compliance Auditing of Rotation Requirements

Based on our review of the requirements of health care systems that accept a large number of students for rotations, the University established a set of standardized requirements for all of its students, independent of academic degree program. Among these requirements are included:

1. A criminal background check for the seven-year period prior to matriculation for all newly admitted students. For international students, an international police check report is required. The University contracts with the vendor used by the majority of centralized application services to conduct the checks and to transfer the results of these checks to our servers daily.
2. Fingerprint cards and clearance checks. These checks are required by the State of Arizona for students who are caring for pediatric patients. This check is performed once at the time of matriculation by an outside vendor, arranged by the Dean of Students.
3. Cardiopulmonary resuscitation training (CPR) or advanced cardiac life support certification (ACLS). This certification generally expires after two years. Depending on the particular academic program, CPR or ACLS training is required. Training is provided by outside vendors.
4. Immunizations against and antibody titers for mumps, measles, varicella, rubella, hepatitis B, tetanus, pertussis, diphtheria.
5. Annual tuberculosis screening.
6. Training on the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act, universal precautions, and prevention of falls. The University contracts with an outside online course vendor and course completion data is electronically transferred daily to the University's server.
7. Non-catastrophic health insurance coverage.

The compliance coordinators are responsible for placing orders with the vendors for criminal background checks or fingerprinting, screening for problematic results and notifying the Dean of Students in these cases. They register students for online courses, audit course completion, and notify the Dean of Students or the college deans when students are not completing courses on time.

Dashboard that Documents Students' Compliance with Rotation Requirements

One goal of the COEE was to provide a "one-stop shopping" experience for college rotation staff to review and obtain all the documentation that must be forwarded to a rotation site as evidence that a student complies with the requirements of the affiliation agreement. With the assistance of the University's Information Technology Service, a dashboard was developed to display results of all compliance checks, and generate student-specific letters or certificates about criminal background check results, immunization or health insurance status, and training requirements.² In

addition, original source documents of antibody titers, CPR or ACLS cards, or immunization records from physician offices are viewable. Authorized college staff can download documents, or forward them as PDF's to rotation sites.

Data for each student is generated from multiple sources. For example, criminal background check reports are automatically transferred nightly from the vendor's server to the Midwestern University server. The reports automatically populate the dashboard and are viewable by authorized users the next day. Similarly, students take online courses on universal precautions, HIPAA regulations, etc. As they earn a passing score on the online tests after each course, course completion documentation is transferred from the vendor's server to the Midwestern University server every night, and those reports also populate the dashboard. Course completion certificates for individual students can then be generated from the dashboard. Immunization documentation, health insurance, respiratory mask measurements, or CPR cards are manually input or scanned to the dashboard by staff in the Office of Student Services or by the compliance coordinators.

Measures of Effectiveness of the COEE

Every two years, the COEE conducts multiple measurements of its services. In 2013, the Office shortened the length of time to execute an affiliation agreement from three to six months to six to eight weeks. In 2015-2016 academic year, the average length of time to execute an agreement is eight weeks.

From 2006 to 2014, with the addition of new colleges, the number of affiliation agreements that were processed increased. In 2006, the total number of executed agreements was 992. In 2008-2009, 2011-2012, 2014-2015 the total numbers were 1692, 3308, and 1020, respectively. Despite the continuous growth of the University's academic programs, the number of new agreements has reached a plateau in the last two years because of the inclusion of auto-renewing verbiage.

A user survey of the affiliation agreement processing service was conducted in Feb-March 2015 and a summary of the results are included in Tables 1 and 2. Both the affiliation agreement processing service and compliance documentation and auditing service are viewed as effective and helpful.

Table 1. User Survey of Affiliation Agreement Processing Service

| | Number of Respondents | Response Options | Percent Response |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| How would you rate the response time of the paralegal in completion of routine tasks? | 62 | Excellent Good Fair Poor | 53.2 27.4 16.1 3.2 |
| How would you rate the response time of the paralegal when corresponding via voice or e-mail? | 57 | Excellent Good Fair Poor | 66.7 24.8 7.0 1.8 |
| How would you rate the time required for problem resolution? | 58 | Excellent Good Fair Poor | 46.6 31.0 19.0 3.4 |
| How would you rate your overall satisfaction with the support that you received? | 63 | Excellent Good Fair Poor | 54.0 34.9 11.1 0.0 |
| How would you rate the usefulness of the searchable database? | 58 | Excellent Good Fair Poor | 32.8 53.4 12.1 1.7 |

Table 2. User Survey of Compliance Coordinators Documentation and Auditing Service

| | Number of Respondents | Response Options | Percent Response |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| How would you rate the response time of the compliance coordinator in completion of routine tasks? | 48 | Excellent Good Fair Poor | 50.0 39.6 10.4 0.0 |
| How would you rate the response time of the compliance coordinator when responding via voice or e-mail? | 49 | Excellent Good Fair Poor | 53.1 36.7 9.2 2.0 |
| How would you rate the time required for problem resolution? | 47 | Excellent Good Fair Poor | 48.9 42.6 8.5 0.0 |
| How would you rate your overall satisfaction with the support that you received? | 56 | Excellent Good Fair Poor | 46.4 42.9 10.7 0.0 |
| How would you rate the usefulness of the COEE dashboard? | 57 | Excellent Good Fair Poor | 40.4 50.9 8.8 0.0 |

Future Enhancements of Services of the COEE

As the University addresses additional requirements for students so that its programs remain compliant with state and federal requirements, and rotation site requirements, we develop additional procedures. For example, in 2015, COEE was assigned responsibility for ensuring that the University was compliant with state licensure requirements. COEE developed a system to track its state license applications and their approval status, and the state-specific annual reporting requirements. In addition, the University must implement annual refresher training on sexual violence, as required by the Department of Education. For this, the Deans of Students and compliance coordinators identified a commercially available on-line course and will implement a procedure to notify all continuing students, have them all complete the course, and then ensure that course completion documentation is viewable on the dashboard in the event of a Department of Education audit.

Summary

Midwestern University's COEE is an efficient support service model for multidisciplinary health professional graduate level institutions. The model allows for expedited processing of affiliation agreements by trained paralegals who are familiar with the legal terms of agreements, and compliance coordinators who assist in collecting documentation of students' compliance with University- and rotation-related requirements, and then making that documentation available on a user-friendly dashboard.

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DIRECTIONS FOR CONTRIBUTORS

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