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INTRODUCTION

The Journal of Higher Education Management is published under the auspices and sponsorship of the American Association of University Administrators. The association's purpose in doing so is to provide opportunities (a) for the discussion of the current issues, problems and challenges facing higher education; (b) for the exchange of practical wisdom and techniques in the areas of higher education leadership, policy analysis and development, and institutional management; and (c) for the identification and explication of the principles and standards of college and university administration.

Taken as a whole, the articles contained in this issue certainly cover all three of these purposes. Each of the eight articles in this issue sustained a rigorous consideration process and were accepted for publication only after a blind review by three independent reviewers and upon their favorable recommendation for acceptance.

The Journal of Higher Education Management invites you to read, enjoy, analyze, digest, and react. We encourage you consider contributing a thought-provoking piece for a future issue.

The Incidence and Types of Occupational Role Stress Among University Research Administrators

Christine C. A. Katsapis
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INTRODUCTION

University research administrators (URAs) are crucial employees for universities (Mishler, 1989). They are responsible for the administration of federally sponsored grants and contracts for colleges and universities. In this capacity they administer high risk and high accountability, grants and contracts which represent large sums of federal dollars. They assume this administration on behalf of their institutions while simultaneously facilitating their institution's research and extramural funding agenda (Anonymous, 1997; Atkinson, 2002; Erickson et al., 2007; Gabriele, 1998; Hansen & Moreland, 2004; Lowry & Hansen, 2001). Their jobs are characterized by constant deadlines, intense competition with other institutions for federal funds, and ongoing accountability for service to faculty, university administration, auditors, federal sponsors, and ultimately, the American public who provide the funds given out as federal competitive grants (Erickson et al., 2007). It has been established, that like other higher education occupations, URAs experience stress balancing work, home, and a healthy lifestyle (Shambrook, 2007). However, unlike other higher education occupations, there has been no study about whether or not that stress is perceived as a function of their specific occupation. There is no baseline data examining which stressors are reported by this occupation. The Occupational Stress Inventory-Revised (OSI-R) Occupational Roles Questionnaire (ORQ) has often been utilized for "executive, technical, administrative support personnel", and types of employees to obtain role stress data (Osipow, 1998). In order to eliminate the lack of data on URA occupational stressors and fill the gap in literature for this population of educational leaders, this study aimed to administer the ORQ to URAs and obtain baseline data for analysis and further inquiry.

URAs are associated organizationally within their institutions with organizational structures commonly named Offices of: Research Administration, Sponsored Programs, Sponsored Research, and/or University Research Services. These offices are the central location for expertise related to the application for and management of grants. The URAs within those offices are sent demands from multiple entities – the federal government, their own higher education institutions’ administrations, their colleagues, and the faculty and professional staff they serve. All of these demands arrive at varying points along the life cycle of a federal grant or contract (Coverman, 1989; Mishler, 1989). Meeting those demands can be stressful and the way in which URAs perceive the stress associated with their role is associated with higher education administration (Blankinship, 1994). Blankinship sums up the multiple roles and possibly stressful in combination roles of URAs, “. . . research administration is a dynamic, challenging, and stressful profession. Research administrators play many different roles: compliance officer, cheerleader, consoler, advocate, and - perhaps the least appreciated role - crisis counselor.”

Other individuals and organizations have further elaborated upon the role of the URA to examine their organizational context and the focus of their work. Oliver Hensley (1986) assessed URAs as a subset of higher education administrators and is quoted as defining research administrators as those who “render assistance directly or indirectly to principal and co-investigators,” and included in this group what he called a “heterogeneous work group” including university staff from both the pre-award and post award grant or contract life cycle and all those support personnel in between other than the investigators themselves. (Beasley, 1992; Merritt, 1995; Mishler, 1989). After surveying 400 URAs, Eveslage and Shisler (1984) found that they tended to characterize themselves as falling primarily into one of two groups: pre-award, focusing primarily on the activities which are part of proposal preparation prior to the receipt of a grant and/or post-award, focusing primarily on grant and contract management after an award has been received. More recently, Kenneth Beasley (1992) (also one of the authors of the original micrograph on the role of research administration) evaluated the voluntary professional associations that URAs tend to affiliate with and highlighted the importance of the multiple roles of the URA within higher education. Beasley’s assessment added to the pre-award only and post-award only group to include the more current trend of a third category of URAs – those that are associated with a combined pre- and post-award organizational unit (Atkinson, 2005; Beasley, 1992; Eveslage & Shisler, 1984; Shisler et al., 1987). As URAs are studied, one must consider

their roles and the context (both institutional and federal environment) within which they perform their roles (Hansen & Moreland, 2004). The “structural response” to the changing environment in research administration has resulted in various organizational configurations of the pre-award, post-award, or combined research administration office as well as variation in the main unit to which each type of research administration office may substantially report such as academic affairs or a non-academic affairs office (e.g. Finance) (Hansen & Moreland, 2004).

This study explored the following questions:

1. What types of occupational stressors are prevalent in the self-reports of university research administrators?
2. Is the degree or type of role stress influenced by:
 - a. affiliation of their office unit within their institution, or
 - b. type of research administrator?

The Occupational Stress Inventory Revised (OSI-R) which utilizes McLean’s six types of occupational stress was utilized because of its link to occupational role as well as high validity and reliability, and the wide range of employees with which it has been validated. McLean’s types of occupational stress are defined as:

1. Role Overload – The extent to which job demands exceed resources (personal and workplace) and the extent to which the individual is able to accomplish workloads.
2. Role Insufficiency – The extent to which the individual’s training, education, skills, and experience are appropriate to job requirements.
3. Role Ambiguity - The extent to which priorities, expectations, and evaluation criteria are not clear to the individual.
4. Role Boundary – The extent to which the individual is experiencing conflicting role demands and loyalties in the work setting.
5. Responsibility – The extent to which the individual has, or feels, a great deal of responsibility for the performance and welfare of others on the job.

6. Physical Environment – The extent to which the individual is exposed to high levels of environmental toxins or extreme physical conditions (Osipow, 1998).

The study was exploratory and analytical in nature. The emphasis was predominantly on quantitative methodology and a randomly selected population. The limitations of the proposed study were related primarily to population and methodology. One factor that limited the study was the ability to generalize to the total population. The intended sample of URAs was a convenience group and members of NCURA. Not all URAs belong to NCURA. Some affiliate with the Society for Research Administrators (which includes more than university-affiliated research administrators), or other practice related groups like: the Council on Government Relations, the Council on Undergraduate Research, or the National Association of College and University Business Officers. Some affiliate with no membership association at all. The randomly selected NCURA members was a convenient means of ensuring that URAs who were engaged in their field were invited to participate, but the sample was not representative of the total population of university research administrators. Rather it was only able to be generalized to groups similar to the NCURA members.

There were two limitations related to methodology. First, because the Occupational Stress Inventory Revised (OSI-R) measured the extent to which role stress might be experienced by URAs and not the source of that stress, no causal relationships could be proved or inferred from the data collected. Second, there was a risk of social desirability bias because: 1) role stress can only be recorded by self-report, 2) the experience of role stress is individualized, perceptual, and 3) it might have been interpreted by the individual as positive or negative. However, occupational role stress psychologists who have published articles on the validity and reliability of self-report assessments maintain that self-report is currently the best means of obtaining role stress data from a subject due to its very nature. Although there are varying opinions related to which assessments were best for differing types of roles stress, all agree that perception of role stress is an individualized psychological process that can only be tapped into via a self-report based mechanism (Barr, 2005; Biron, Ivers, Brun, & Cooper, 2006; Fiesel, 2006; O'Driscoll & Cooper, 1994; Osipow, 1998).

The electronic admission of the OSI-R to the study subjects utilizing an e-mail invitation, followed up by a web-based OSI-R survey. Although seemingly limited to only those individuals comfortable with e-mail and web-based surveys, URAs engage in extensive use of electronic research administration methods by the federal government which allowed the researcher to determine they would be well versed in the use of e-mail, listservs, electronic databases, as well as web-based interfaces in order to perform their duties. Additionally, NCURA and SRA which many if not all the targeted respondents affiliate with, use electronic means extensively to interact with their memberships. Care was taken to ensure that the web-based survey service used was generally user friendly and no more complicated than those services already in use by URAs.

Lastly, one aspect of self report methodology for measurement of occupational stressors that was unavoidable is that individuals do not necessarily attribute the stress they feel to their occupations. One criticism of the basis for most inventories of occupational stress in terms of person-environment fit theory is that individuals self perceptions are not always accurate. For example, in a study looking at the occupational role stressor of environment, employees self-reported stressors associated with a “sick” building, which after investigation was determined not to be “sick” at all but the self reports of the employees identified the wrong source regardless (Lees-Haley, 1993). Also, according to Barling, some individuals are simply more prone to stress and therefore alternately, are more likely to report feeling stressors in general (Barling, Kelloway, & Frone, 2006).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN

Sampling

NCURA has over 6,000 members who are employed at institutions of higher education and teaching hospitals. The inclusion criteria consisted of self-identification as a URA and NCURA member combined with confirmation that they concurrently identified themselves as working for an office of sponsored programs or other similarly purposed university or teaching hospital unit. The survey administration method was via a direct e-mail to participate in an on-line web survey service that enabled the survey to be completed anonymously.

In his analysis of occupational stress data, Barr found that the presence of occupational stress was a factor in non-response to organizationally-based surveys and found that occupational role stressors like role overload, high role ambiguity, and low locus of control were correlated with non-response (Barr, 2005). In an attempt to control for this effect, potential respondents were provided with a URL that could be accessed from any setting so that they had the option of completing the survey in a non-occupational setting by forwarding the invitation to their home e-mail addresses.

Measures

The assessment administered was the Occupational Roles Questionnaire (ORQ) portion of the Occupational Stress Inventory-Revised (OSI-R). The current version of the OSI-R is appropriate for ages 18 years and older, provides normative data for both gender and specific occupational categories (i.e., executive, professional, technical, administrative support, etc.) which is comparable to the sample population. The ORQ consists of six scales, with ten items per scale: including: role overload (RO), role insufficiency (RI), role ambiguity (RA), role boundary (RB), responsibility (R), and physical environment (PE). According to Osipow (1998) these six scales are based upon McLean's (1975) set of six occupational stressors. Because URAs are unlikely employed in extreme physical environments in their university setting or teaching hospital, the sixth scale was not utilized. The generic profile form was used and compared with the *t* scores of the total normative sample since the internal consistency analysis was conducted with the normative sample. Utilizing a Likert scale, items provided respondents with the ability to rank statements as follows from: 1) rarely or never true, 2) occasionally true, 3) often true, 4) usually true, to 5) true most of the time (Osipow, 1998).

Procedures

Utilizing direct e-mail, the researcher extended an invitation to the URAs who comprised the random sample to participate in a survey on occupational role stressors related to university research administration. The researcher made reference to the previous stress survey (Shambrook, 2007) which indicated that the URAs surveyed reported experiencing stress both at home and at work and where those two intersect with each other. The sample was invited to further explore this issue to determine what (if any) stress they might experience as a URA by examining only their occupational experience. Although this was not

directly addressed in their invitation, the sample was asked for additional information as to the type of URA they were (pre-award, post-award, combined pre- & post-award, or other), and to what type of unit to which they were organizationally affiliated (academic, administrative, or other) to determine if there are any differences among the commonly recognizable groups internal to the occupation. Because the scope of sponsored programs at institutions of higher education and teaching hospitals widely varies, data was collected to determine what type of university research administrator they consider themselves in order to further clarify their responses. Below is the data matrix that was utilized to organize the anticipated data.

Table 1
Data Matrix

Stressor	Academic Affairs				Administrative Affairs			
	Pre	Post	Comb.	Other	Pre	Post	Comb.	Other
Role Ambiguity (RA)								
Role Overload (RO)								
Role Insufficiency (RI)								
Responsibility (R)								
Role Boundary (RB)								

Additional items added to questionnaire included:

1. Do you consider yourself a pre-award, post-award, combined pre-and post-award or other type of research administrator?
2. What is the title of the university employee that you report to?
3. What is your job title?
4. What is the title of your organizational unit or office?

5. Does your organizational unit report to academic affairs, administrative affairs, or another unit within your institution?

6. How many years have you been a university research administrator?

Via three similarly named e-mail addresses the researcher invited 499 random individuals per e-mail address to invite to participate in the survey. This was done a second time one week later to allow for the researcher to get a sense of the percentage of bounce back to expect. The target number of invitees was 3,000 in total. Because some e-mails bounced back or were likely to have been filtered by institutional fire walls, 3,000 invitee e-mails is not equal to 3,000 who actually received e-mail invitations. Therefore, an accurate response rate cannot be calculated, rather an approximate response rate of (assuming 15 percent attrition due to lost e-mails) 17.88 percent was yielded. The survey was available via the on-line web survey service from March 17, 2008 through May 31, 2008. At the end of the four weeks the survey was closed so that the results could be analyzed.

Once the data was collected and downloaded from the web service, utilizing SPSS, the researcher utilized descriptive statistics to analyze the data. The data was scored, grouped according to the data matrix, and measures of central tendency were derived. Correlations were used to assess the relationships between and among the stressors and to inform the researcher's view of patterns as the reports of the types of URAs and the role stressors they experienced in relationship to their characteristics emerged (Schloss & Smith, 1999). The overall group was finally compared to the normative sample provided by the OSI-R instrument.

As a researcher who is also a university research administrator, the first study which assessed potential occupational role stressors of URAs had to be quantitative so the data could not be directly influenced by researcher bias. However, having a URA as the researcher conducting the study is consistent with the other literature of research administration and its self reflective tradition. Collecting additional information about the groups of research administrators and their unit's university affiliation provided data that had the potential to make the incidence of stressors meaningful to not only the total group but also to the specialized groups within the occupation.

The survey instrument was entered into the on-line survey website SurveyMonkey.com and the required PAR licensing agreement language “Items 7-77 are adapted and reproduced by special permission of the Publisher, Psychological Assessment Resources, Inc., 16204 North Florida Avenue, Lutz, Florida 33549, from the Occupational Stress Inventory -Revised by Samuel H. Osipow, Ph.D., Copyright, 1981, 1983, 1987, 1998 by Psychological Assessment Resources, Inc. Further reproduction is prohibited without permission from PAR, Inc., which specified that no copies were allowed to be made of the instrument. Based upon the licensing agreement, a copy of the instrument will not be provided with this article. The six additional questions preceded the scales provided by the ORQ.

The results were analyzed using a combination of Microsoft Excel spreadsheet software and SPSS statistical software. The six additional questions pertaining specifically to the type of URA and institutional configuration within which they worked were considered nominal variables. The items from the individual scales of the OSI-R ORQ were considered ordinal variables. Each scale within the ORQ is scored individually and the scales are not totaled because each measures a different occupational stressor, therefore an aggregate or sum total score would not provide any useful information. Only the respondents who completed all ten questions of a scale were included in that scale’s data set.

RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

Sample Characteristics

Although 482 respondents began the survey, 456 surveys were fully completed by the day the survey was to be closed and were utilized for the scale data analysis. All respondents who completed the first six questions were utilized to form a picture of the population of URAs because even if they did not complete the survey they did reflect a subset of the main population that had been randomly selected. Table 2 details the frequency of the responses to the six additional questions and the categories with which the respondents self identified.

The types reported and the number of years experience is consistent with the literature. However in response to the question, “Does your organizational unit report to academic affairs, administrative affairs, or another unit within your institution?” the majority picked “other” which was not expected. The

literature suggests that most URAs are affiliated with either academic affairs or administrative affairs (Davis, 1991; Eveslage & Shisler, 1984; Shisler et al., 1987). The researcher considered the possible explanations for this to be: 1) the respondent wanted to utilize the text response option of “other” to provide greater detail, 2) the academic or administrative classification did not apply, or 3) the respondent did not feel that their affiliation was a clear fit for either academic affairs or administrative affairs. The data revealed that 43.7 percent of the “other” URA respondents were executive level academic leadership

Table 2: Characteristics of the Respondents of the Study

Characteristic	<i>f</i>	%
Type of URA (N= 482)		
Pre-Award	85	17.6
Post-Award	80	16.6
Combined Pre & Post Award	258	53.5
Other	59	12.2
Office Affiliation (N= 456)		
Academic Affairs	126	27.6
Administrative Affairs	118	26.1
Other* 211	46.3	
Number of Years Experience (N= 482)		
1-5	165	34.2
5-10	123	25.5
10-15	70	14.5
15-20	67	13.9
20+	57	11.8

Key= **bold** indicates most frequently occurring result

*Of the other category for office affiliation: 169 were academic affairs, 29 were administrative affairs, and 14 were unclassified.

employees who did not identify themselves as either administrative affairs or academic affairs but a separate category within their institution. The second largest category was the combined category where 18.6 percent of the sample considered themselves a combination of the two areas. After further examining the text based answers, the researcher reclassified the respondents with the following types of text based answers to either academic affairs or administrative affairs as follows.

Administrative Affairs

- ❖ Advancement – The office unit to which the URA reports was affiliated with a university foundation, development office, or institutional advancement.
- ❖ Finance and Business – The office unit to which the URA reports was affiliated with a higher education business, accounting, or financial office.
- ❖ Medical School Administration – The office unit to which the URA reports was affiliated with a medical school’s finance, accounting or business administration office.

Academic Affairs

- ❖ Academic Leadership – The office unit to which the URA reports was affiliated with an academically oriented administrative office, dean’s office, college administration, or academic department administration.
- ❖ Chief Academic Officers – The office unit to which the URA reports was affiliated with a president’s office, provost’s office, chancellor’s office, or a vice presidential level academic or research office.
- ❖ Research – The office unit to which the URA reports was affiliated with a sponsored programs office, research unit, or a research center.

All other respondents who did not fit into the above description remained unclassified as working for an office which affiliated with either academic or administrative affairs. Table 3 represents the breakout of participants in the study after reclassification. The resulting break-out is consistent with the literature of university research administration.

Table 3: Types of Other Respondents

Characteristic	<i>f</i>	%
Office Affiliation (N= 456)		
Academic Affairs	295	65
Administrative Affairs	147	32

Key= **bold** indicates most frequently occurring result

Respondents were also asked their job title and their supervisor's job title. This data was text based and for the purpose of this study collected to allow for future, more detailed study into the organizational trends in university research administration titles and functions as well as to provide potential reference points against which to compare other responses.

Occupational Roles Questionnaire (ORQ)

The six scales to the ORQ correspond to the six types of occupational role stressors. The first five scales are pertinent to this study of university research administrators. Although administered as part of the ORQ, the last scale of the ORQ, Physical Environment (PE) is not directly germane to this study because university settings are typically not extreme environments. By definition, research administrators who are at a university are likely in a typical university office setting with a controlled environment. The majority of respondents also skipped the items in this scale.

For all scales, the T scores of the population of respondents were compared to the normative sample T scores for the sake of comparison and to interpret the respondent's scores. The normative sample's scores have a mean of 50 and a standard deviation of 10 and the normative sample was based upon a diverse pool of applicants in various occupations, ages, and educational levels (Osipow, 1998). See Appendix A for more details about the normative sample. The interpretive guidelines are based upon the linear scale scores of the normative sample as shown in Table 4.

The means of the T scores of the whole population of 456 URAs when compared to the normative sample reveal two means which fell into a range which suggested mild levels of maladaptive stress and strain. Role ambiguity (RA) had a mean of 70 and role overload (RO) had a mean of 65. The results for role insufficiency (RI), role boundary (RB) and responsibility (R) were unremarkable and fell within one standard deviation of the normative sample's median and therefore fell within the normal range.

The group mean score of 70 indicates "a strong probability of maladaptive stress, debilitating strain, or both." The researcher compared the T-score

Table 4: ORQ Interpretive Guidelines

T Scores for Normative Sample

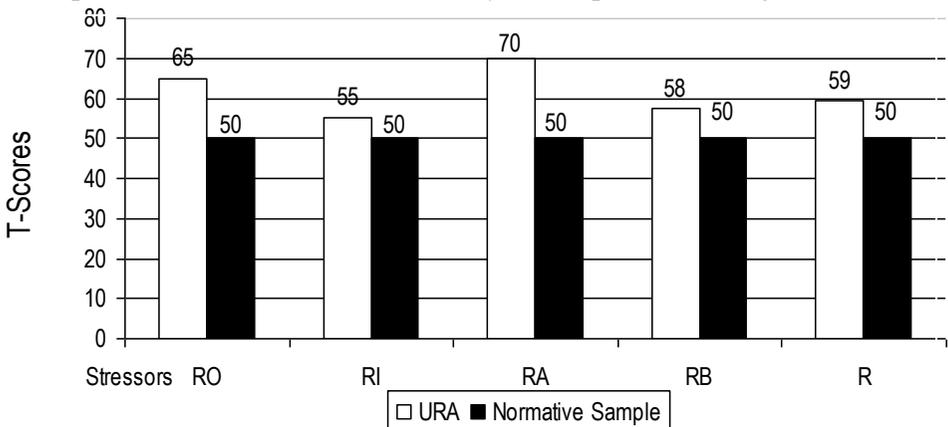
70T+	indicate a strong probability of maladaptive stress, debilitating strain, or both
60-69T	suggests mild levels of maladaptive stress and strain
40-59T	are within one standard deviation of the mean and should be interpreted as being within the normal range
40T -	indicate a relative absence of occupational stress or strain

(Osipow, 1998)

(hereafter referred to as score) means of various groupings from the study sample to determine what degree of variation might be present in the population and if there were factors which increased the score to over 70. The results indicate that the types of occupational stressors in the URA sample which were prevalent are RA and RO and at higher levels than the normative sample. The stressors of RI, RB, and R were within the normal range but still at higher levels than the average employee in the normative sample.

Figure 1

Comparison of URAs Scores to Normative Sample (Created by Researcher)



The stressors of RI, RB, and R were within the normal range but still at higher levels than the average employee in the normative sample. Having data which addressed research question number one, the researcher looked to the types of URAs in the sample population and their organizational affiliation to determine

if there was any variance by group or if there were any relationships between different groups and URA characteristics which influenced the level of RA or RO present. The researcher further examined that portion of the sample that reported 70+ levels of occupational stress.

Type of Research Administrator

As shown in Table 5, respondents who identified themselves as “post-award” research administrators or “other” research administrators had the highest scores for RA with a means of 71 and 71 respectively. The second highest set of means for the sample were for RO with means ranging from 62 for post-award URAS to 66 for those who identified themselves as other URAs. URAs in all types reported mild levels of RO. Pre-award and combination URAs reported mild levels of RA. RE was a mild stressor for URAs who labeled themselves as other.

Table 5: ORQ Scales Means of Scores by Type of URA
Occupational Role Stressors

Type of URA	(RO) Overload	(RI) Insufficiency	(RA) Ambiguity	(RB) Boundary	(RE) Responsibility
Pre-Award N=84	64	56	69	58	55
Post-Award N=70	62	56	71	57	56
Combination N=250	65	57	70	59	59
Other N=52	66	58	71	59	61
Total N=456	65	57	70	58	58

University Affiliation of URA Office Unit

As shown in Table 6, all respondents, no matter where their office was affiliated within their institutions, reported a maladaptive level of stress with each category having a mean score of 70. The second highest set of mean scores fell within the mild level of maladaptive stress range for RO.

Years of Experience as a URA

As shown below in Table 7, respondents who identified themselves as being in the 5-10, 15-20, or the 20+ years experience group had the highest scores which suggested a high level of maladaptive RA stress. All other years of experience indicated mild levels of RA as well. Mild levels of RO were also indicated in all categories of years of experience with 20+ being the highest score at 68. The data shift from mildly maladaptive in years 1-5 to within the

high, maladaptive range in the year 10-15 group back down again for the 15-20 group, and finally up again for 20+.

Table 6: ORQ Scales Means of Scores by Affiliation
Occupational Role Stressors

URA Office Unit Reports to:	(RO) Overload	(RI) Insufficiency	(RA) Ambiguity	(RB) Boundary	(R) Responsibility
Academic N=123	64	57	70	58	57
Administrative N=113	65	57	70	58	58
Other N=197	65	57	70	59	58
Total N=433	65	57	70	59	58

Correlations Among the Five ORQ Stressors for URAs

Among the five types of occupational stress that were included in the analysis, there were the correlations that could be expected as stress correlates with stress in general. There were positive correlations among them with Role Ambiguity (RA) having the strongest correlation [.445 significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)] with Role Overload (RO) meaning that the higher the incidence of one, the higher the incidence of the other will be. RA was also positively (.131) correlated RB and positively (.185) correlated with R. Both were also significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 7
ORQ Scales Means of Scores by Years of Experience
Occupational Role Stressors

Years Experience	(RO) Overload	(RI) Insufficiency	(RA) Ambiguity	(RB) Boundary	(R) Responsibility
1-5 N=153	62	56	69	58	54
5-10 N=116	65	58	71	59	58
10-15 N=68	67	57	60	60	62
15-20 N=66	67	59	72	58	60
20+ N=53	68	58	70	58	62
Total N=456	65	57	70	58	50

The data provided answers to the research questions. As shown in Figure 1, the types of occupational stressors most prevalent in the self reports of URAs were RA and RO. RA was in the range which would indicate high levels of maladaptive stress as might lead to psychological strain. RO was in the range as might indicate mild levels of maladaptive stress. All other stressors (RI, RB,

Table 8: Correlations Among ORQ Scales of Occupational Stressors for URAs

Stressor	N =456	RO	RI	RA	RB	R
RO	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2 Tailed)	1.000	0.250 0.000	-0.036 0.445	0.350 0.000	0.578 0.000
RI	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2 Tailed)	0.250 0.000	1.000	0.462 0.000	0.226 0.000	0.285 0.000
RA	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2 Tailed)	-0.036 0.445	0.462 0.000	1.000	0.071 0.131	0.062 0.185
RB	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2 Tailed)	0.350 0.000	0.226 0.000	0.071 0.131	1.000	0.398 0.000
R	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2 Tailed)	0.578 0.000	0.285 0.000	0.062 0.185	0.398 0.000	1.000
Data in bold indicates a correlation that is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).						

and R) fell within the average to normal range. The degree or type of role stress reported was not notably influenced by affiliation of their office unit within their institution, their type of URA or even their years experience as a research administrator as those scores were consistent across groups.

Overall, the URA sample of 456 respondents, reported higher scores on all scales of the ORQ than the normative sample provided by the instrument. The mean scores for all scales of the ORQ for the URA sample ranged from between 5 to 20 points higher than the normative sample. Approximately 68 percent of the normative sample reported occupational stress levels within the 40-59 “average to normal range” occupational stress for all stressors or were within one standard deviation of their mean of 50. Comparatively, the URA sample had mean scores for all scales of the ORQ which ranged from 55 to 70 indicating that 68 percent of the URA sample reported from mild to maladaptive levels of occupational stress or psychological strain as compared to 2 percent of normative sample. Based upon the results of the study, URAs experience higher than normal occupational stress and that stress is not linked to the individual characteristics of type of URA, the affiliation of the office they work for, or their years of experience in the field.

Summary of Findings

There were 3 main findings of this study as related to the incidence and types of occupational stressors among URAs set within the context of their organizational structure, their type and years experience.

1. The respondents revealed that the types of occupational stressors which were most prevalent were RA and RO and those were reported at higher levels than the normative sample. RA was at a level which indicated a high probability of maladaptive stress and/or debilitating strain and RO was at the level which indicated mild levels of stress and strain.
2. The respondents revealed that the occupational stressors of RI, RB, and R were in evidence within the average range for stress but at a higher level than the normative sample even though they were the three least prevalent of the URA sample.
3. The results showed that the types of URAs in the sample population, their organizational affiliation, and years experience did not influence the type or incidence of the occupational stressors reported. In fact, the URA sample had consistent responses regardless of affiliation, type, or years of experience.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Hansen and Moreland (2004) provide a means of understanding the focus of URAs and their concept of the Janus-faced URA begs the question as to whether or not having a Janus-faced role is occupationally stressful. The Janus-face concept embodies the nature of the changes in the field of research administration as a result of multiple responsibilities and increasing levels of compliance that make it challenging to be a facilitator of the research process at the same time. Citing Hanson and Moreland's "structural responses" to these challenges the researcher included survey questions related to office unit affiliation in order to gain a perspective on the types of structures to which the different types of URAs report (2004). The findings conclusively indicated two high levels of occupational stressors RA and RO and three lower levels of the occupational stressors RI, RB, and R.

Because the scores are for a group of anonymous URAs for the purpose of generalizing to the larger NCURA population of URAs, as opposed to individuals the researcher could follow up with directly, the literature is the source of interpretation of the results. The literature was reviewed in relationship to the characteristics of the occupational stressors found to be prevalent in the URA population and formed the basis for the conclusions drawn.

Finding 1

Role Ambiguity – According to Osipow (1998), respondents who have high scores on RA may report an unclear sense of: a) “what they are expected to do,” b) “how they should be spending their time,” c) “how they will be evaluated,” d) “where to begin on new projects.” Additionally, they may: e) “experience conflicting demands from supervisors” and d) “have no clear sense of what they should do to get ahead.” The extremely high scores for URAs indicate the seriousness of the level of RA within the URA sample and signify the need for attention to the problem.

Atkinson’s (2005) primer on scientific self regulation for institutions of higher education and teaching hospitals indicated that the traditional role of the URA as a partner with the faculty was being blurred by the addition of compliance requirements and greater university policy accountability. Collinson’s study of URAs in England (whose occupation mirrors that of American URAs) found that URAs there found themselves in roles which were simultaneous administrative and academic. They reported experiencing a lack of a consistent perception of their role by the faculty, or their academic counterparts than the perception they had of themselves. She described this type of role ambiguity as being ameliorated by a coping mechanism she called “occupational identity work” (Collinson, 2007). Job stress authors cite the need for interventions to improve coping mechanisms to reduce occupational stress as a necessary step (Bowden, 2000; O’Driscoll & Cooper, 1994). The phenomena of varied perceptions of the research administrator can be seen in the reflective literature from 1998 to the present in the articles are written to define or characterize the specific role of the current field and of the profession of research administration. These articles are offered as education for URAs as well as the institutions they are employed by (Atkinson, 2002, 2005; Collinson, 2004, 2007; Erickson et al., 2007; Gabriele, 1998; Hansen & Moreland, 2004; Lowry & Hansen, 2001). This is consistent with a high degree of uncertainty with

regard to what their institutions expect of them, how they will be evaluated as a result of their work, and by what means they should be promoted. If there was a common understanding of the profession then the articles would be unnecessary and not resonate with their audience or peer reviewers. The above researchers went on to point out the extreme difficulty of meeting all the demands of the current climate of federal accountability while facilitating research and this is consistent with a characteristic of multiple demands upon an occupational role leading to RA (Fried, Ben-David, Tiegs, Avital, & Yeverechyahu, 1998).

Role Overload – According to Osipow (1998) respondents who have high scores for RO on the ORQ may “describe their work load is increasing, unreasonable, and unsupported by needed resources.” Also, “they may describe themselves as not feeling well trained or competent for the job at hand,” or “needing more help” and/or “working under tight deadlines.” Descriptions of the profession of URAs include recognition of increasing workload to the regulatory environment and tight deadlines are an intrinsic part of the nature of the job (Kirby, 1992; McKenzie, 1988; Miner et al., 2003; Stockton & Krebs, 1976). There is not evidence in the literature that URAs describe their workload as unreasonable or lacking in funding to provide their services but there is constant training emphasized as a result of the increase in electronic research administration, regulatory compliance, and increased fiscal liability of federal grants ("About us," 2007; Erickson et al., 2007; NCURA, 2007). Reports of mild levels of maladaptive stress or psychological strain from URAs may signify a shift towards URAs feeling that they cannot keep up with the pace of professional development needed to succeed in the profession. If so, this is a key indicator for burnout which leads to a reduction in institutional commitment of employees according to some occupational stress literature (Northwestern National Life Insurance Company, 1992; Siefert et al., 1991).

Finding 2

Occupational Stressors Higher than Normative Sample – Although the respondents to the URA survey reported the occupational stressors of RI (55), RB (58), and R (59) within the normal to average range (40-59) their scores were still higher than the normative sample mean of 50. Because RA, the highest reported stressor, is positively correlated with RB (0.131) and R (0.185) significant at the 0.01 level for our population, the researcher concludes that

these results are consistent with a higher score for RB and R than the normative sample. The higher URA sample mean of RI (55) as compared to the normative sample (50) cannot be linked to the higher RA or RO scores which may be related to the fact that it is the lowest occurring stressor of the group.

Finding 3

Consistency of Report Regardless of Affiliation, Type, or Years – URAs are employed at a wide variety of institutions ranging from primarily undergraduate institutions (PUIs) to large-scale research universities and even teaching hospitals but the results indicate that they share a common experience of their profession no matter at which point they enter the grants process. This evidence is found in the consistency of scores and the absence of major shifts in the data as a result of characteristic factors. Despite Hansen and Moreland's (2004) noted "structural response" to the increasing role of URAs, the affiliation of URAs office units did not change the consistency of their responses to the ORQ. Furthermore, individual characteristics such as type of university research administrator or years experience influence those results as shown in Tables 6-8. Due to the consistency of level of occupational stress, these results signify that there would also be common coping mechanisms that would manage the potential negative effects of the various occupational stressors.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Two major conclusions emerge from the findings of this study.

1. URAs as a whole are under high levels of occupational stress indicating a need for intervention. According to Osipow's (1998) stress, strain and coping model as well as Fogarty et al.'s model which incorporates organizational variables (those an institution of higher education or teaching hospital may influence) intervention is necessary and the degree of strain should be the determinant of the degree of intervention.
2. Occupational stress has negative impacts on employers as well as employees (Reidar et al., 2005; Walter & Gordon, 1998) and this study has shown that URAs share a common experience of their profession's stressors as evidenced by the consistency of their results. Also, the nature of RA is such that is evidence of potential misperceptions between employer and

employees or employees and coworkers, therefore both URAs themselves as the common denominators as well as their institutions need to be involved in the selection of interventions.

Overall, the high levels of RO and RA and the generally higher than the normative group levels for other stressors indicate the importance of occupational stress as an important factor in university research administration. Research is integral to the nature of university and teaching hospital life, and this study has shown that the employees who facilitate that process are experiencing maladaptive levels of stressors and/or psychological strain. Therefore, the negative impacts of occupational stress are already impacting those universities and teaching hospitals.

This study was conducted to both fill a gap in the literature of occupational stress for URAs as well as to provide insight into the nature of what is essentially a problem universal to all employees as it relates to this specific profession. Knowing the incidence and types of stressors that a particular group of employees experience allows for interventions to be considered to increase coping and to reduce psychological strain (Fogarty et al., 1999). The two recommendations which emerge as a result of this study include self evaluation and peer review.

1. URAs know the challenges that they face as a profession with emerging demands and shifting perceptions of what they need to meet those demands. They need to recognize the common experience they share and engage in self-evaluation as well as profession-wide evaluation of those occupational stressors which are most prevalent: role ambiguity and role overload. Armed with this information, they will be better able to meet the demands of their occupations while accruing coping skills matched to the stressors they most experience.
2. Institutions of higher education and teaching hospitals are academically oriented and based upon traditional academic values. The research administrators within their employ operate in an environment which is a hybrid of both the academic and business or regulatory arenas. The URAs in their offices of sponsored research are essentially unique employees and the interventions that might work for traditional higher education administrators may or may not work to alleviate the occupational stress as found in this study among URAs. Institutions should provide resources to

allow for URAs to engage in peer review processes to alleviate continuing role ambiguity. This could occur informally for example, within a consortium of their colleagues at other similar institutions, or formally availing themselves of peer review provided by recognized professional organizations within the profession. Being more open to learning from URAs about the occupation itself and the expectations an institution may have of its URA employees should be an ongoing dialogue in concert with changes in the needs of the institution itself and the regulatory environment within which its research process takes place.

In conclusion, by sharing the responsibility for limiting occupational role stressors and their impacts, higher education and its research administration employees will be able to take steps to improve the outcomes for both employer and employee.

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What Fuels These Fossils Be: Saving American Higher Education from Itself

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For over 200 years American faith in education, particularly higher education, was unabated. Americans believed education was critical to our success as a nation and the key to success in our nation. Education would provide talented owners, managers, and workers each powering our economic engine. The GI Bill's provision of a paid education would repay our veterans and would mold our military into a superpower. Education would establish our civilization as a superpower in the arts. Institutions of higher education would help solve the problems faced by farmers and mechanics, it would help overcome the problems of city life, it would increase everyone's life expectancy, it would power our voyages into space.

In the midst of the Civil War Congress passed the Morrill Act, providing funding for land-grant institutions. In the aftermath of WWII Congress passed the GI Bill in recognition that educating those who had served was the best way to repay them for their service and reintegrate them into the economic life of the nation. After the launch of Sputnik, federal investment in university research propelled America into the forefront of scientific and technical achievement. Providing federal grants and underwriting loans enabled millions of people who otherwise could not afford to attend college to learn, thrive, and contribute.

Each of these investments, these commitments of money to faith in the power of higher education, paid off. American higher education has long been the envy of other nations. From all over the globe, young men and women come to study in our nation's schools and undertake research in our laboratories; many are subsidized by their governments. Our facilities are second to none, our technology efficient and effective, our teachers first-rate, and our research top-drawer. Other nations compete to attract American institution to establish

campuses in their cities. We have the fuel to remain an intellectual, cultural, economic, and military superpower.

But Americans have lost some of their faith in schools in general and in higher education in particular. No longer certain they're getting value for their money, skeptical that the student uprisings of the late sixties and early seventies have turned post-secondary institutions into timid panderers to student wishes, leery that athletics have overwhelmed academics, dubious about the benefits of luxurious residence halls and student activity centers, angry at the excesses of some institutions (and the size of their endowments) and some of their leaders (who aggrandized themselves at the expense of their students), the public has lost its faith that the extraordinarily high price of higher education yields value for the money. People are becoming less and less able, much less willing, to beggar themselves to send their offspring to pricey institutions – even the land-grant institutions are beyond the means of many. State support remains fragile and wavering in part because of an uncertain economic future. Land-Grant institutions and other government supported colleges suffer from legislatively imposed unfunded mandates. Every institution is burdened by governmental reporting requirements many of which are of dubious value and rarely used for legislative purposes.

Demographics rule. Each year, fewer people turn 18 – the traditional age of college attendance. More and more people drop out of secondary school, and too many attrite from community colleges. Family size has decreased, and as was the case in the early part of the twentieth century, more and more people arrive in this country from elsewhere – often not well prepared for higher education. Today, as has been true for four decades, roughly 39% of Americans hold a two or four year degree. We no longer lead other nations; in some countries more than half of young adults (25-34 years old) hold degrees with Canada, Japan, and Korea leading the way.

The nation's chronic problems of funding health care, taking care of our elderly, funding social security and Medicare and Medicaid, maintaining a robust military, and repairing and replenishing our decaying infrastructure loom larger in people's minds than supporting higher education. As the value of assets like home ownership decline, fewer people can afford to send their children to expensive schools – many have tapped out their borrowing power.

Congress and State Legislatures, unconsciously or not, have demonized higher education by tarring all with the brush deserved by few by threatening to undercut quality by mandating caps on tuition, by suggesting substituting federal endorsement for voluntary accreditation thereby undermining confidence in self-governance, by removing a sensible retirement age that was mitigated by tenure and a model retirement scheme. As we write this, we are mindful of the government's record budget deficit and its actions during the recent economic turmoil. Doubtless middle-class American will benefit from the government's actions – in particular its generosity toward post-secondary education.

Institutions of higher education have brought many of these troubles upon themselves by being insufficiently transparent, woefully unimaginative, by deifying research at the expense of teaching, by becoming less and less productive and thus more and more expensive, and by being unwilling to demonstrate in any reasonably universally understood way that the outcome of four years of an undergraduate degree is proportional to its cost thus ceding the field to newsmagazines and other ranking organizations that attempt without success to fix reputations using surrogate measures. Colleges and Universities have lost both vision and focus.

With nearly Darwinian certainty the fittest in both the State supported and independent sectors will survive – even the fit dinosaurs. For one thing, their degrees have a luster that few competitors can match. Whether that luster is deserved few care to challenge, though one reads more and more frequently in financial advice to parents of college age children that almost all baccalaureate and masters degrees have in fact become commodities. So schools at the top of the unreliable rankings are likely to survive any crisis in confidence because they will attract students from wealthy families and thus have sufficient endowments to subsidize other students.

But those universities are at the top of a very large and diverse group of institutions. There may be forty or fifty of them. For the future is less certain. As prices escalate and the nation's economic prowess shrinks, fewer families will be able to afford the cost; our four year independent liberal arts institutions may be in the most jeopardy. Most have slender endowments and are tuition dependent, working to bring forth the semi-annual miracle of students showing up with checks in their hands. And except for flagship institutions in the States (many of which are only dependent on the State's treasury for a quarter or less

of their revenue), rising costs and diminishing State support are a threat to university excellence and survival.

Smart families have known for years that a good education can be purchased relatively inexpensively. Community colleges have articulation programs or liberal arts programs that replicate the first two years of the curriculum at four year institutions and are often considerably less expensive. So students attend a community college then transfer to a more expensive state supported or independent institution, garnering their education in the major field of their choice from faculties with appropriate credentials and receiving a sheepskin that has currency in the marketplace.

Indeed, a pattern like that might light the way to a more imaginative structure for higher education. Although the economics of the case need to be studied, there is an argument for proposing that what are now four-year institutions become three-year institutions, offering programs that lead from the associates degree to the masters or to entry into professional education in business, law, engineering, medicine and the like. Students could opt for the bachelor's degree, but they wouldn't have to; they'd have a choice.

We could become more productive, i.e. less expensive, if we were to operate our schools on a year-around basis, getting better utilization of the physical plant, reducing costs for construction of new facilities, granting access to more students and graduating them more quickly into the world of work or to graduate and professional schools. Senator Lamar Alexander, a former university president, told educators this year "Today's economic crisis and tight budgets are the best time to innovate and change." If colleges and universities offered a full range of courses all year rather than simply two semesters which utilize classrooms 30 out of 52 weeks a year we would find a 15% increase in productivity without new construction. Students would need to agree to study one summer and spend one semester elsewhere – on internships, studying abroad, conducting research, or working. Several schools have trumpeted that their degrees can be completed in three years – that's true for almost every school. But few students avail themselves of the opportunity. To gain productivity, a summer semester would have to be obligatory.

We could ask ourselves what we might learn from European schools that are able to grant baccalaureate degrees after three years of study, and take note of the many countries where professional education requires less schooling with

no obvious diminution in professional capability. In European higher education three year bachelor's degrees have become the standard through the "Bologna Process," which has set common standards for participating countries. Cliff Adelman, who has been studying the results, maintains that the key to understanding the European degrees is that they are accompanied by specific learning outcomes and by statements of what the degree qualifies a holder to do. Indiana, Minnesota, and Utah have begun such efforts with the assistance of the Lumina foundation.

We could create more professional doctoral degrees for those who do not aspire to a career in academe but in equally interesting settings in industry, banking, associations, think tanks, and the like. Such doctorates would not require a research dissertation but might well embody applied research into issues of practice. Medical and law faculties at many institutions are debating whether the traditional four-year and three-year curricula are necessary to producing successful practitioners.¹ That doesn't mean simply accelerating entry into medical school by skipping the last year of college; it means taking a hard look at the curriculum to determine whether the third year in the case of law or the fourth year in medicine are justified on educational grounds.

We could seek new ways to integrate service and learning. While it is important that programs like Americorps and Teach for America provide worthwhile service to the nation, we should be able to reward participants not just monetarily but by providing appropriate credit and credentials for thoughtful explorations of their experiences through an academically appropriate lens. Federal service often subsidizes undergraduate and graduate education, especially for courses that are germane to the individual's job

¹ Northwestern Law is the first top tier law school to offer an accelerated JD program. The school will enroll a limited number of highly-motivated students to this two-year JD program. Students in the Accelerated JD program complete the same number of credit hours as traditional three-year JD students in five semesters over the course of two calendar years. While this faster pace means students have a more set schedule of classes, they also have the opportunity to select from the full-range of electives offered by the Law School. Students also have the opportunity to participate in all extracurricular and co-curricular activities, including journals. Accelerated JD students begin classes in May. They join traditional JD students during the fall and spring semesters, and work during their second summer. They then return to the Law School for two more semesters and graduate in May, two calendar years after they begin. Students participate in the Fall On-Campus Interviewing process (OCI) upon completion of their first term with one semester of grades. (This description is taken verbatim from the Northwestern Law website.)

responsibilities. The government could learn from industry how to create the next generation of program leaders by bringing together cohorts of individuals from a variety of departments within agencies or people from several agencies to study with appropriate academic supervision how best to implement a particular program and then assign them to do just that. Or universities could learn from each other, as Emory University has created an Excellence in Leadership program the highlight of which is a group project where people who would not normally work together make recommendations to the administration on major problems facing the university.

These and other ideas aren't novel but they are novelties in higher education practice. Faculty debates about change remind us of the comment attributed to a perhaps apocryphal Frenchman: "That will work in practice, but will it work in theory?" Yet, as stated before, we have the institutional capacity – both in brick and mortar as well as in teaching and research prowess -- to fuel ourselves to new levels of accomplishment at lower cost. We can overcome our rigidities and fears and better serve the nation at less cost thus rekindling American faith in our endeavors.

Too many institutions are dinosaurs, insufficiently nimble and terrified of not looking as much as possible like all the other dinosaurs. But from the decaying bodies of dinosaurs comes fossil fuel of enormous kinetic energy. We must change higher education's potential energy into kinetic energy or lower our own standard of living and surrender our place among nations. Each vital segment of the universe of post-secondary institutions will have to find its own way to prevail, not just endure, and together they will have to become parts of a system that is hospitable to all who have talent and desire.

What's stopping us from being nimble? In part, the sociology and psychology of higher education.

At the departmental level, the curriculum and the administrative structures which define it are based on disciplinary boundaries that are fast becoming irrelevant. Survival seems to them on based on retaining their prerogatives and shares of the budget. At the institutional level, the practice of "shared governance." while it surely plays a valuable "conservative" role in preventing hasty change, just as surely inhibits change.

That's the sociology. The psychology is that in far too many institutions faculty long ago lost their sense of identification with the university or college at large – partly because we run out of institutional rewards for excellence while professors are young – and turned their energies to seeking recognition within their disciplines. They want to become what they beheld, their professorial predecessors.

As institutions, we encourage those behaviors in at least two ways. We reward people for recognition within their disciplines and we do not socialize them into the institution by ensuring that the important role they play in “shared governance” means shared responsibility for ensuring future institutional vitality. We thought we were doing themselves and, as administrators, ourselves a favor by not burdening them with the mechanics of running an institution. We did not educate faculties in the construction of budgets or other financial matters partly because we thought they were better off using their brain cells to advance their disciplines and attend to their teaching, and partly because it extended our administrative power. We left governance to those who had some prejudice about it, faculty governing bodies, or passion for it, administrators.

Faculty involved in shared governance rarely shared the pain of making hard decisions about what to do in times of economic strain. There is a variation on the old political saw that runs “Don't cut him, don't cut me; cut that fellow behind the tree.” Because we have failed to socialize them into a new understanding of shared governance, faculty governing bodies, understandably, protect their members and membership. They have little knowledge of and no responsibility for those who labor for the university in ways that allow faculty to pursue their research and teaching. At our institution, as an example, the faculty senate was offered a plan for operating all year that without changing class size or increasing teaching load, and after paying all the bills for additional faculty and support staff, would net the institution around \$12 million a year. The faculty senate voted not to consider the plan.

The sorts of changes we proposed earlier in this paper cannot be achieved without the wisdom and consent of the faculty. They are in charge of constructing the curricula, the academic calendar, and the academic requirements for majors, minors, and degrees. Faculty are largely responsible for selecting, promoting and tenuring their colleagues. Interdisciplinary appointments are rare between departments, especially for junior faculty,

primarily for reasons of budget share. Young faculty are well advised not to split their time because departmental loyalties may mean that they will be last among equals when it comes to raises, and consideration for tenure and promotion. Thus institutions create centers and institutes, often on soft money, in order to attract faculty who do not fit traditional molds. Innovation occurs at the bleeding edge.

As institutional leaders, we must begin to recognize our obligation to educate our faculties about the realities of institutional life and the necessity of change for the sake of survival. For too long, “financial exigency” has been the only instrument for changes of the sort we discussed earlier. Financial understanding must supplant financial exigency. We must bring our faculty colleagues into the discussions about institutional resources and resourcing, we must educate them, we must encourage and reward their participation. We do not propose sharing the ultimate responsibility for decision-making which resides with our boards and senior administrators; we propose enlarging the boundaries of understanding and participation so that we can transform our enormous potential energy into directed motion, so that we can prevail as well as endure.²

The current economic woes of the nation have led presidents and chancellors to tackle tough issues – they have imposed pay cuts, hiring freezes, and laid off faculty and staff while increasing the amount of student financial aid. But that has left institutions without the funds necessary to invest in structural changes that once implemented will pay for themselves.

In a letter to Secretary Duncan, and in conversations with him, the President of the American Council on Education and one of the authors of this piece proposed setting aside funds to invest in institutional plans that would accomplish the programmatic changes we need and want to make. Government investment that assists institutions not in planning but making

² George P. Pernsteiner, chancellor of the Oregon University system, put it this way in a talk to the Society of College and University Planning: “If we are to be successful in meeting the needs of society, we will be sustained as institutions. We will not get there through cutting costs. Pernsteiner stated that the reconstruction of higher education lies with faculty members – its greatest asset. “Unless and until the faculty engage, we will not succeed in meeting this challenge. According to press reports, when Pernsteiner asked the audience “How do you get the faculty to engage these challenges?” the response was dead silence.

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change is the fuel we need as leaders in education and as a nation. We need a peer-review system that includes experts from both government and academe to evaluate concrete proposals for the sorts of changes we have described – not to fund studies but to fund action plans that have measurable outcomes including increased access, lower costs, increased retention, shorter times to degrees, the creation of new academic programs and degrees. We should anticipate and encourage the formation of consortia within a region or state, and we should provide incentives for working with local school systems and community colleges.

Working with government, and working within our institutions to create incentives for change will we believe energize informed and involved faculties, and retain the pre-eminence of American post-secondary education. Absent those incentives, American higher education may not be able to reform itself from within, risking reform by legislative bodies, deteriorating quality, and an accelerating loss of citizen faith and admiration. We shall have wasted a crisis.

Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning at Winston-Salem State University: Towards an Effective and Viable Organization

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Between the 2000-2005 academic terms, Winston-Salem State University (WSSU) experienced rapid enrollment growth. Student enrollment, at its peak, increased 400 percent. Three major events contributed to this increase: 1) leadership of a new chancellor, 2) branding initiatives of the university, coupled with a favorable ranking by *US World News Report*, and 3) additional support from general administration from the University of North Carolina System which provided focus growth funds that deployed additional student and academic services for students. At the same time, a significant number of new faculty members, over 150, were hired. During these events, the Provost and Provost Council believed this was an opportune time to conceive a student success model. The student success model was a prevalent theme that dominated weekly discussions among the group of middle management administrators, all of whom were members of the Provost Council. These administrators were from multiple units responsible for providing students with direct and indirect services, such as advisement, academic support, financial aid assistance, and other co-curricular student activities. The main foci of strategies that supported this student success model were directly associated with engaging students, assisting students in the transition from completing a general education curriculum that culminated in the selection of a major, and completing the baccalaureate degree program in a timely manner.

While creating a student success model, the Provost Council members reviewed literature that supported the notion that improving student engagement would result in higher retention and graduation rates (Garner, Barefoot, Schwartz, Siegel, & Swing, 2005). Also, the establishment of a

rigorous and integrative curriculum contributed to “academic excellence” (Daggett, 2005). Based on this framework, Provost Council members formulated a student success model that targeted three specific areas: improvement in the quality of student advisement, more engagement between faculty and students, and an integrated curriculum that would ensure students acquire skills that would allow them to be successful in the workforce and adapt in a new economic environment (Partnership for 21st Century Skills, 2008).

Creation of University College and CETL

Research literature posits the first year of college as the most critical factor in achieving better retention and graduation rates of students (Kuh, Cruce, Shoup, Kinzie, & Gonyea, 2008). Consequently, through the direction of a University College model, a new unit was conceived with the purpose of realigning student support services, improving academic advising, and delivering “*intentional*” teaching and learning experiences. The chosen model resulted in the creation of WSSU’s University College which was led by a dean and two associate deans whose main responsibilities focused on strong academic advisement components. These components would aim to guide students, especially freshmen and transfers, from the very moment they set foot on campus. Also, their responsibilities consisted of tracking and advising undeclared majors and providing recommendation to the Academic Affairs unit regarding policies and practices that could contribute to measurable student outcomes.

During the weekly discussions held by the Provost Council in addressing issues related to improving retention and graduation rates, a solution emerged in the form of an administrative center that could be named the Center for Teaching and Learning. The council members envisioned a center whose central role was to provide workshops and engage faculty in activities to assist in the scholarship of learning (Boyer, 1990) and, through this knowledge, achieve the alignment of standards, curricula, instruction, and assessment as the focal point for improving learning. While reviewing and discussing this center utilizing an input and output model (Harvey & Green, 1993), a “center for excellence” was determined to be the preferable term used in higher education. After consideration of faculty development approaches that were conceived as models (POD Professional and Organizational Development Network in

Higher Education , 2007), it was agreed that the Center for Excellence for Teaching and Learning (CETL) was the preferable name for this unit. A strong philosophical opinion held by council members, especially from administrators and deans with a strong pedagogical background, determined that this center should not only address issues about **pedagogy**, but also about **technology**. At the time of these discussions, pursuing academic **excellence** for the Provost Council members became synonymous with pedagogy and technology. It was their opinion that both of these areas played an important role in the improvement of teaching and learning, thus entrusting CETL with delivery of services in the form of faculty development that focused on the two aforementioned areas. CETL was considered the main conduit to recommend academic policies that have an influence in directing long-term faculty development programs that also include strong technological approaches.

Literature Review

In order for CETL to be effective and viable, the center required a clear conceptual framework, as well as appropriate implementation. The following paragraphs explain what Professional and Organizational Development Network in Higher Education (POD) has established concerning different approaches for faculty development organizations and also what the Viable System Model states concerning organizations that want to be viable.

What is faculty development? Traditional view vs. expanded definition

Traditionally, institutions of higher learning have used the term **faculty development** to encompass activities that are meant to assist faculty in the delivery and management of their courses, either synchronous or asynchronous, addressing the charge of documenting outcomes and/or addressing other issues related to teaching as the primary activity of college/university instructors. However, aside from this traditional paradigm, faculty activities and opportunities are also subsumed under this term; these may include attending conferences, workshops, and seminars and/or sabbaticals. Also, opportunities may include getting assistance in obtaining research grants and/or federal and philanthropic dollars which may enhance the university's financial capacity to provide and address all the aforementioned demands. In an era of institutional accountability, these programs may also seek to address the challenges faced by universities in addressing the expectations of preparing students for the 21st Century, such as equipping students to meet globalization and helping students better understand the relevance of their course curriculum. These programs may ensure engaged learning, experiential learning, service learning, and

learning associated with internships; all of these and a plethora of other demands have become the focus of “meaningful learning” in higher education institutions. While responding to these demands, many institutions address these challenges by establishing programs that intend to equip their faculty with “teaching skills” that are consistent with good pedagogy. Faculty development is nothing new, but as questions are asked and new answers are found, a “culture of change” emerges. In general, this approach has continuously emerged as many institutions move forward into a new paradigm of cultural change. This culture of change is exemplified by the incorporation of “quality measures”; these quality measures support finding new answers to old questions, while requiring not only faculty, but also units within the university, to collaborate by changing the paradigm of how work is achieved at the university. Aside from faculty, other members of the university community are asked to collaborate and reallocate existing resources to support quality measures as the *modus operandi*. These initiatives consist of implementing quality principles through the creation of new structures and/or management of internal resources that support faculty development efforts. Ironically, as recently witnessed in the University of California System (Asimov, 2009), accomplishing these initiatives comes at a crucial time for higher education when the financial base of delivering a college education has declined and “financial exigency” has, to a certain extent, interrupted the supportive structures that make faculty development successful. While higher education administrators, legislators, and other organizations continue to support the goal of providing an affordable public education, they claim that the quality of instruction will not be affected despite the curtailment of financial resources. In supporting this opinion, institutions of higher education continue to do “more with less” by conceptualizing new faculty development models and aligning existing organizational structures within the university (Hurley 2009)

The authors of this article feel strongly that this plethora of challenges faced by institutions of higher learning, in the pursuit of excellence, cannot be solely accomplished through faculty development efforts. Instead, universities should also focus on other areas such as how the “general education” curriculum is delivered and to what extent these structures can ensure an “integrative learning” product. This approach requires institutions of higher learning to reorganize present structures or align other units within the university that are entrusted with the improvement of learning. A case in point, *assessment which is often used to measure student outcomes* should not be driven by any single unit, such as Institutional Research or any other ad-hoc committee for that matter. Independently of what these supporting units do, faculty members

should drive these efforts not driven by a top down approach. This example exemplifies the position of developing a faculty development model that incorporates both **instructional** and **organizational** structures.

Instructional Development

Instructional Development focuses on the improvement of instruction delivered by faculty. Instructional Development programs are predicated on the principle that the curriculum they offer cultivates an integration of courses that will strengthen student learning and eventually result in higher retention and graduation rates. However, in the past this responsibility depended on the delivery of instruction by faculty. The emerging new paradigm empowers others to work with faculty members by creating work-teams that consist of administrators from academic and student affairs, as well as consultants. The purpose of these teams is to improve the curriculum by redesigning their format, content, and delivery based on the institutional mission or through a strategic plan. This improvement makes instructional development the domain of the entire university. It is achieved by creating a *culture* that utilizes outcome measurements, incorporates systematic management techniques, and maximizes collaboration to achieve the common goal. An Instructional Development model may also seek to examine how a sequence of courses fits into the overall university curriculum; the scope and sequence of these courses are examined for coherence and their ability to provide and reinforce skills that students are required to possess. Instructional Development programs may also focus on establishing large institutional goals and quality assurance measures; these goals seek to ensure that, after graduation, students will be marketable in the labor force. These programs incorporate co-curricular activities that support the pre-selected overarching goals for learning. Often, Centers for Teaching and Learning may also focus on training faculty members and empowering them to develop positive changes in student learning which can be emulated by other members of the academy. Overall, the philosophy behind these programs aims to incorporate “best practices” in teaching. This approach may be validated by student satisfaction surveys in which many learning institutions use to build upon their reputation.

Organizational Development

A second approach in meeting the challenges of providing quality instruction may be defined by organizational development. In this approach, the focus of

attention is to build **organizational structures and substructures** that will support and facilitate learning among faculty and students. The end result is excellence, which is a byproduct of these support structures. This approach may be referred to as a top-down initiative which posits administrators, such as deans and chairs, to be the first line of defense in ensuring excellence in teaching. The assurance of excellence can be achieved by communication and rewarding faculty members who adhere to the standards set by the institution. The driving force behind this model is the establishment of policies. Eventually, policies account for the selection of faculty who strictly adhere to a set curriculum and pre-determined delivery mode(s) of instruction. Students who participate in this model have been already preselected through the admission process and possess a set of attributes that are consistent with the university's mission and well aligned with instructional methods used by the faculty.

An Eclectic Model

According to POD (2007), an authentic model that strictly adheres to either one of the described models cannot be found. On the contrary, hybrid models are found which are considered the result of an interplay of multiple factors; these factors are the product of the many differences in the composition and structure that exist among institutions of higher learning. There is certainly no magic formula for the creation of these programs, and one size will not fit all. The creation of instructional and developmental programs will continue to depend on the dynamic forces that interplay within the university, faculty, administration, and is based on the historical, cultural, and social contexts in which these programs emerge.

The Viable System Model

Research interested in the way living systems function led Stafford Beer to propose the *Viable System Model* (1981). This model is a precise description of systems that are capable of living and being viable. The following excerpts synthesize Beer's ideas in this regard (Cwavel Isaf Institute, 2002), and the next Figure 1 visualizes what followers of Beer (Espejo & Gil, 2003) consider to be the five essential functions for Viability.

The law of viability. To be considered viable, a system has to be capable of adapting to its constantly changing environment. It has to be capable of

preserving its identity and assimilating and making use of its experiences; it has to be capable of learning and of continuing to develop.

The natural law of viability. "Viable systems" are those that;

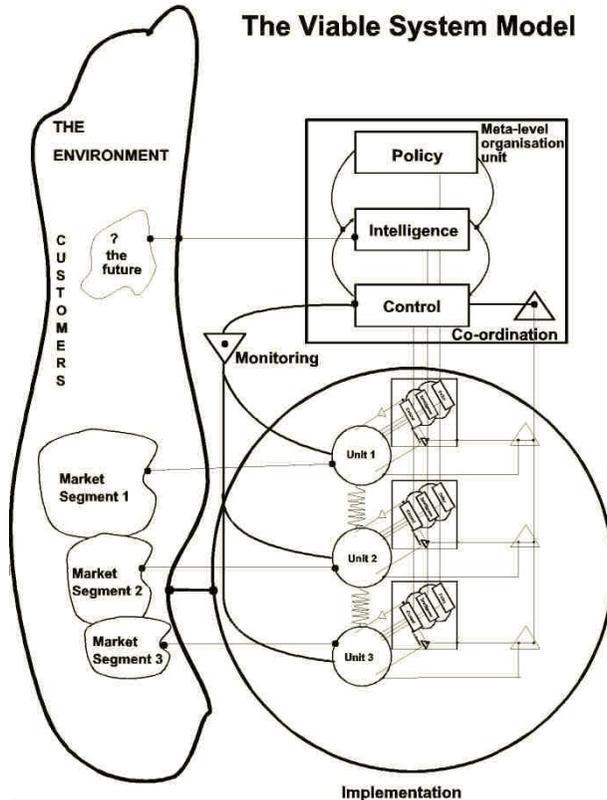
- absorb and make use of information from their environment
- adapt to their environment
- maintain

The *natural law of viability* described by Stafford Beer applies both to biological and social systems. It also illustrates the fundamental difference between Beer's view of organizations and management and conventional views.

The five essential functions of viability as derived from Beer determine that an autonomous unit (or viable system) needs to have five key systems in place if it is to operate effectively in its environment. According to Espejo and Gil (2003) these systems are: Implementation, Co-ordination, Control, Intelligence, and Policy.

1. Implementation. Primary activities, those responsible for producing the products or services implied by the organization's identity, are at the core of the recursive model. The organization's products and services are produced at different levels of aggregation by its embedded primary activities and the value chain of the organization as a whole implements its overall purpose.
2. Coordination. A viable system has systems in place to co-ordinate the interfaces of its value-adding functions and the operations of its primary sub-units. The more teams can share common standards, approaches and values, the greater the chances that spontaneous lateral communication will occur.
3. Control. This is the channel through which resources are negotiated, direct line management instructions are issued (on an exception-only basis) and accountability reports flow upwards to keep the meta-level management in touch with events. Another important channel is used as an adjunct to direct control: The monitoring channel. It must be sporadic, infrequent and openly declared.

Figure 1
The Viable System Model (Espejo and Gil, 2003)



Espejo and Gil (2003) describe the nature and purpose of each of the five systemic functions in The Viable System Model (VSM). Their description helps in understanding the necessary roles and interactions necessary for the VSM to be implemented.

4. Intelligence. The Intelligence function is the two-way link between the primary activity (i.e., Viable System) and its external environment. The intelligence function is strongly future focused. It is concerned with planning the way ahead in the light of external environmental changes and internal organizational capabilities so that the organization can invent its own future.
5. Policy. The main roles of Policy are to provide clarity about the overall direction, values and purpose of the organizational unit; and to design, at the highest level, the conditions for organizational effectiveness. One of the key conditions for organizational effectiveness relates to how Intelligence and Control functions are organized and interconnected; they offer complementary perspectives on the definition, adjustment and implementation of the organizational unit's identity.
6. Implementation. Primary activities, those responsible for producing the products or services implied by the organization's identity, are at the core of the recursive model. The organization's products and services are produced at different levels of aggregation by its embedded primary activities and the value chain of the organization as a whole implements its overall purpose.
7. Coordination. A viable system has systems in place to co-ordinate the interfaces of its value-adding functions and the operations of its primary sub-units. The more teams can share common standards, approaches and values, the greater the chances that spontaneous lateral communication will occur.
8. Control. This is the channel through which resources are negotiated, direct line management instructions are issued (on an exception-only basis) and accountability reports flow upwards to keep the meta-level management in touch with events. Another important channel is used as an adjunct to direct control: The monitoring channel. It must be sporadic, infrequent and openly declared.
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10. Policy. The main roles of Policy are to provide clarity about the overall direction, values and purpose of the organizational unit; and to design, at the highest level, the conditions for organizational effectiveness. One of the key conditions for organizational effectiveness relates to how Intelligence and Control functions are organized and interconnected; they offer complementary perspectives on the definition, adjustment and implementation of the organizational unit's identity.

CETL at WSSU – A Case Study

The creation of CETL at WSSU was a response to an institutional strategy aimed to foster academic excellence while incorporating a variety of complementary initiatives, one of which is to empower faculty to be more effective teachers. These initiatives include discipline, pedagogy, and technological related efforts. This section shares key concepts behind CETL's creation and how these concepts were implemented in order to make CETL an effective and viable organization.

WSSU's Planning Office and the Provost endorsed CETL's strategic plan to be compatible with the university's strategic plan. The following mission and vision statements reflect what university leaders believed to be the primary focus for a center that delivers teaching and learning expertise (WSSU - CETL, 2007).

The Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning provides expertise, opportunity, instruction, and scholarship to empower WSSU faculty to be effective teachers. To that end, CETL seeks to improve student learning outcomes by means of enhancing teaching competence and resources, through the integration of education, information, and communication technologies. The following definitions/descriptions were applied to the organization's functions:

Academic Excellence is a central goal to be pursued in WSSU; it requires continuous improvement of teaching quality with impact on students' learning.

Expertise: CETL builds on expert knowledge and experience, internal and external to the Center. Faculty developers with different but complementary background in education and technology, as well as instructional designers, give support to faculty members in their teaching improvement and in their scholarship of teaching. Collaboration with experts from WSSU and other higher education organization helps expanding CETL expertise.

Opportunity: CETL actions respond to needs expressed by academic unit directors and to normative needs. These are derived from data analysis concerning important variables dealing with academic performance of students at WSSU programs.

Instruction: Full time and adjunct faculty are invited to participate in a variety of opportunities that help them add value to their teaching knowledge and expertise. These opportunities include pedagogy and/or technology short sessions, day-long teaching and learning institutes or conferences, extended online courses, and/or the use of multimedia resources. CETL also helps improving instruction with creation or improvement of course curriculum materials for online, face-to-face or blended teaching.

Scholarship: CETL supports action research and pilot studies designed and conducted by faculty members. CETL also supports preparation and publication of papers, video papers, panels and/or posters dealing with research on teaching.

Effective teaching: CETL initiatives build on commitment and good disposition to teach from the part of faculty members, as well as on their subject matter and professional/political knowledge; it adds pedagogy/andragogy knowledge, and/or technology competence to faculty preparation. This combination of elements seeks to impact student learning outcomes, the ultimate reason of teaching action (California State University, 2006).

Student learning outcomes: According to YCCD Academic Senate (2005) student learning outcomes are defined in terms of the knowledge, skills, and abilities that students have attained as a result of their involvement in a particular set of educational experiences. CETL action seeks to impact student learning outcomes, by means of helping faculty improve their teaching.

CETL's Vision Statement: CETL will be a strategic partner for faculty professional development for each of WSSU's academic units. It will be recognized as an academic organization able to empower faculty in the scholarship of teaching, and will lead, coach, or support educational innovation initiatives that help overcome existing educational weaknesses and realize educational technology opportunities.

Strategic partner for each of WSSU academic units: Leverage what each of the academic units intends to do in favor of the students they serve with faculty support.

Faculty professional development: Provide opportunities for professional growth and other organizations.

Scholarship of teaching: Improve teaching practice via reflection and research through intentional, formal inquiry by faculty members about their own teaching.

Educational innovations: Improve educational practice both in the classroom, virtual classroom, or informal education through creative, though not necessarily new means.

Educational weaknesses: Improve faculty members' or programs' personal or organizational deficiencies that affect educational performance of students.

Educational technology: Solve educational problems through principles with scientific foundation and related tools.

Organizational issues concerning CETL creation

Several elements were considered for the creation of CETL: name, place, functional integration with academic and support units, personnel, and resources. Each of the components was carefully planned, and some of them are still in development.

The following paragraphs explain how the CETL organization was conceived and how it has evolved over its two and a half years of operation.

Organizational decisions regarding the creation of CETL were coherent with findings about faculty development centers (Gillespie, Hilsen, & Wadsworth, 2002) that often grow out of some combination of the immediate needs and strategic plan of a specific institution and the particular talents of the director (Kuhlenschmidt, Weaver, & Morgan, 2009, p. 25).

Several names were considered to forename a new organization that could serve all faculty members in support of their professional growth. The desire was to add value to faculty's prior experience and preparation as teachers, to help them increase their effectiveness as educators with and without technology, and to improve their competence as researchers teaching in their discipline. The first decision was to eliminate both the existing center and its name, Center for Integrated Technologies for Teaching and Learning (CITTLE). This center was a unit of the Information Resources Office. CITTLE was technology oriented and was unable to develop strong connections with academic units regarding technology integration for teaching.

Another consideration was to create a faculty development center, but the scope of the desired center was beyond this dimension; it also included "instructional development." In addition, the "faculty development" name was already associated with a shared-governance structure that empowers WSSU faculty to seek their professional growth through diverse university-sponsored activities, most of which are discipline-related (e.g., attendance at conferences, participation in study groups, and project-related collaborations). As previously mentioned, there was also consideration for naming the unit "Center for Teaching and Learning" to emphasize the ultimate goal of this academic unit. The decision about naming the center, Center for Excellence in Teaching and

Learning (CETL) was decided with consideration of the first goal of WSSU's strategic plan-academic excellence. In this framework professional growth of faculty in multiple dimensions (e.g., as teachers and scholars, in their discipline, technologically) is a key issue, and continuous improvement of instruction (aligning standards, curricula, instruction, instructional technology, and assessment) is a key institutional initiative.

Where to place CETL

Because of the comprehensive nature of services to be provided by CETL, it was decided that the CETL office should not be attached to a discipline-related college or school, but instead, should serve all of the university. CETL should serve full-time and adjunct faculty across colleges and schools, in support of face-to-face, blended, and online programs.

During the first two years, CETL administratively reported directly to University College, an academic unit in charge of empowering freshmen students. During that period, the CETL director was a member of the Provost Leadership Council and coordinated academic initiatives with Deans from all schools and colleges and their leadership teams. During the third year of operation, CETL became part of Academic Affairs, the director reports to the Vice Provost for Academic Affairs and became a member of the Provost Coordination Council.

How to articulate efforts

Functional integration with academic programs and academic support units is essential when a large number of faculty members need support in their personal and professional growth to ultimately help them to better serve students.

Every academic department at WSSU has a CETL-liaison faculty member. This person is in charge of identifying needs that could be satisfied with faculty development or educational innovation, and to disseminate ongoing and future faculty development or course improvement opportunities provided by CETL. The CETL-Liaison collective meets monthly and helps manage the demands for professional development initiatives. Every semester, CETL offers faculty several research and educational opportunities which have been established through planning meetings with leaders from each college.

In addition to CETL, the following academic support units serve faculty members to improve their teaching at WSSU: (1) O’Kelly Library, with programs to support both students and faculty in their inquiry for relevant information and good use of local and global resources, (2) Office of Information Resources, with programs to support both students and faculty with effective access to information and communication technologies for education, in particular in the use of Blackboard and Banner in support of teaching, and multimedia resource development in support of teaching; (3) University College, with centers to support freshmen students with deficiencies in critical thinking skills, mathematics, and science knowledge; (4) Office of Distance Learning, with programs to create and offer online and at-a-distance courses for adult learners.

At first glance CETL activities had few intersections with the above four units, but reality has shown that the O’Kelly Library is a powerful ally to help faculty implement inquiry-based teaching; that Information Resources is a key partner to help faculty effectively integrate technologies into teaching; that learning centers from University College are valuable allies to help faculty implement remedial or supplemental strategies in areas where freshmen students show deficiencies; that the Office of Distance Learning is a key partner to prepare and offer technology-mediated courses and programs.

How to maximize human capital at CETL

When CETL was created, WSSU assigned six full-time staff positions at the center. A director was hired after a national search for someone experienced with faculty development in higher education and with experience in educational innovations supported both in sound pedagogies and technologies. The assistant director was the only staff member who worked in the previous center (CITTLE). She is an experienced faculty developer with good knowledge both of pedagogy and technology, as well as excellent knowledge of WSSU as an organization. Two Faculty Development (FD) positions were created, as well as an Instructional Technologist (IT) position. Following a national search during the first year, these positions were filled with experienced people. One FD person had an emphasis on pedagogy, and the other on technology. The IT person had experience in technology integration in educational processes. An Office Assistant position was also created and filled from the beginning.

With the above human capital, the strategy was to devote the first year of operation in building a community with faculty members, which focused on key issues for WSSU as a whole, such as the creation of online courses according to standards and the corresponding training and coaching to course authors. Individual needs from faculty who required support to enhance their teaching or to move forward in their scholarship of teaching were also taken into consideration. CETL leaders assumed these functions. Having filled all staff positions at the beginning of the second year of operation, CETL expanded its scope with a variety of support activities to fill the educational gaps that were identified in collaboration with academic unit leaders and CETL-Liaisons. Research on teaching became a key issue.

How to motivate and support faculty in their professional growth

Time is the most limited resource when dealing with faculty development. Faculty members are devoted to their professional activities as experts in a discipline and are committed to teaching, researching, and serving. Their participation in activities that foster professional growth cannot be taken for granted. To this end, CETL leaders spent quality effort defining and securing funds to implement a four-year plan that could motivate faculty to participate in activities. These activities aimed to add value to teaching and to research on teaching. Title III monies were obtained, making it possible to sponsor faculty attendance at national or regional Teaching and Learning Conferences (TLC), summer institutes around topics relevant to faculty and their academic units, and year-round pilot projects and action research.

Participation in TLC expands knowledge and contacts relevant to teaching in the discipline, as well as in the scholarship of teaching. Summer institutes help to develop criteria and appropriate teaching methods and tools; they are also seed planters for educational innovation proposals that can be submitted for funding to CETL. Awarded proposals are implemented through the school year in collaboration with CETL members. External motivation generated through sponsored educational innovations has opened the doors to problem-based faculty development. Faculty are focused on solving educational problems in their teaching or in their discipline, and through the process, they search for good practices, valuable methods, and technologies. More importantly, perhaps, they invest time in something that is the core of their work and help their students learn what they teach. Research on teaching emerges as a natural corollary of this strategy.

Adding value to academic initiatives

In order to promote excellence in teaching and learning, CETL has to add value to academic initiatives promoted by the university or its academic units. This is not an easy task. In a complex organization where it is not required to participate in professional development activities organized by CETL, participation is to be won by means of merits and strategic alignment. This section shares what CETL has done in a variety of dimensions to be accepted as a strategic partner by academic units and to increasingly be able to articulate its dynamic operation.

Attendance at TLC

Reflection about teaching, in general or in a given discipline, is a powerful practice that improves teaching effectiveness. When reflection is done with peers and with the intention of sharing good teaching practices, it is even better, as long as faculty become part of an extended community of practice. With this in mind, CETL decided to devote some of its Title III resources to sponsor faculty members willing to participate in Teaching and Learning Conferences. A committee was created to define rules of engagement; these rules were disseminated across campus with support of CETL Liaisons. The following basic considerations focused the initiative: (1) Full-time faculty, both tenure track and adjunct, can apply for funds to participate in TLC which have to be held in the USA, (2) Priority should be given to new faculty, first-time attendants to TLC, and faculty whose papers have been accepted to the TLC, (3) Sponsored faculty should share their findings at TLC with peers, both at their departmental meetings and through a TLC collaborative blog³. The following is a contribution published at *TLC: Lessons Learned* by Dr. Russ Smith on March 26, 2009:

Last week I had the opportunity to attend the 2009 American Association of Geographers (AAG) Annual Conference in Las Vegas, NV. The conference included more than 6,000 geographers from around the world and is a mix of presentations on cutting edge academic research and sessions on best practices for teaching and learning.

I was able to participate in both aspects of the conference by organizing a session/presenting some of my research on local government boundary change and attending several sessions dedicated to teaching and learning. My session on boundary change was well received and included an opportunity for questions and answers that generate a lot of interesting discussion. Additionally, I was approached by a representative from the Planners Press to discuss publishing my work. This unique opportunity would not have presented itself if I didn't attend the conference. The funding that I received through CETL made this possibility a reality.

The teaching and learning sessions that I attended focused on a variety of topics. The one session that I took the most away from was focused on making geography come alive for students. The session highlighted many new technologies that are available for use in the classroom and also discussed the use of relevant DVD's. Today's students are so interactive we cannot just lecture and expect them to learn all they need to know. Students want to see, hear and feel the topics. So incorporating DVD's, the internet, and assignments that take the student outside the classroom are all important. Geography is all around us and part of our everyday life (whether we realize it or not) so it is important to provide real-world examples that students can connect with.

New faculty development

New faculty members at WSSU have traditionally been introduced to university life through a one- or two-day induction seminar; half-a-day is devoted to academic issues. In this very short period of time, it is impossible to go beyond giving key information, such as the academic calendar and faculty handbook; key tools, such as course shells, Blackboard account, and key academic authorities and resources.

CETL put in place a monthly *New Faculty Luncheon* program that complements the initial orientation seminar to help new faculty meet experienced members while sharing a good meal. This is a self-sustained initiative in which CETL has agreed with local restaurants to bring small or medium sized groups to lunch. The restaurant provides a relatively private space with efficient food service, plus a 25% discount; each person pays for his

or her own meal. Each month an invited faculty member talks about a topic of interest. The monthly schedule rotates to give new faculty the option of participating in a reasonable number of luncheons. At the end of the year, a participation certificate is given to new faculty members who have participated in at least six of the nine monthly luncheons.

Experience has shown that logistics are a key success factor. Two hours is a short period of time to move a group to a local restaurant, have lunch, and return on time for afternoon classes or appointments. Feedback from participants indicates that the effort is worth doing because new faculty members have the opportunity to expand their contacts and share some of their concerns, problems, and solutions with an increasing group of colleagues. A perfect combination of a variety of restaurant venues, networking, and sharing discussions on pre-selected topics seems to be a good combination for sustaining faculty participation.

Technology integration for active learning

WSSU provides a functional technology infrastructure for students and faculty. WSSU is a fully wired and wireless networked campus, with computer labs available to students in each of the buildings, and all faculty members have access to networked computers in their offices and in their classrooms. Computing and Internet support is provided by the Office of Information Technology via help-desk systems that sustain different services and applications. The challenge is to realize academic growth that emanates from these resources and to optimize the technology skills that students bring with them.

With the above framework in mind, CETL put in place a set of initiatives that share a few clear principles: (1) Information and communication technologies should foster active learning (student- or group-centered activities) and (2) Information and communication technologies should help to disseminate information delivered by course instructors (course syllabi and curriculum materials, as well as material collected from students information in digital form, including homework, reports, tests, and surveys). The following are faculty opinions in a survey about the impact of technology integration on their teaching (Chesley, 2009):

- Bb [Bb stands for Blackboard] training workshop has helped me a lot because it gave me the courage to use Bb much more extensively and more often.
- I have been able to correspond electronically with my students at least 30% more than previously because I don't have that feeling of being inadequate to do so.
- I can stay in touch with my students and keep them more engaged in the classroom discussions & assignments.
- I learned that students stay involved in the content of the class during non face to face meeting times when I give them something concrete to do during the non meeting days, such as post a comment on DB [DB stands for Discussion Board] or reflect on some action in a brief blog or look up a website and find one fact.
- Using Bb blogging is extremely useful in that it makes room for:
 - (a) going deep into discussions of things that, given the restraints of time, could not possibly be tackled in face-to-face interactions;
 - (b) students to ponder, which tends to make them come up with a lot more "thought-out" ideas/issues.
- 1. My 21st century learners are more receptive to instruction with technology integration, as tools such as PowerPoint and YouTube provide a visual supplement to instruction.
 2. The environmentally friendly Blackboard tool eliminates stacks of ungraded assignments. As an instructor, this streamlines and expedites the grading process.
- Better use of the web for searching and critiquing
Use of videoconferencing to facilitate off-campus distance learning in practical/laboratory sessions

Technology workshops

Two different sets of technology workshops have been offered to faculty members: scheduled workshops on selected technology topics, and on-demand consultation about any topic. These offerings respond to the fact that time availability to participate in continuing education is an issue for faculty, and that the level of comfort with technology is not necessarily high. Prensky (2001) describes novice adults dealing with technology as “digital immigrants” who need to be coached to integrate technology into their teaching.

Scheduled technology workshops cover a variety of topics that are intimately related with the mandate that WSSU faculty use Blackboard (BB) to support their teaching. Depending on their needs, faculty can participate in one-hour or two-hour hands-on sessions about different features of Blackboard (e.g., course shell management; backing up and import data; assignments, learning units, items; test creation and grade management; discussion boards, blogs, and wikis; embedding video in BB; performance dashboard). Other workshops about technologies available campus-wide include Panopto’s video lecture capture system, Elluminate’s video conference system, Turnitin’s anti-plagiarism system, and Wimba’s voice-based interaction system. These workshops are offered twice on different days and at different hours; they can also be repeated on demand for small faculty groups at the departmental level. Feedback from faculty is very positive.

On-demand consultation can be pre-programmed, in groups, or individualized. “One problem workshop” is a scheduled time zone where faculty bring technical questions to a computer lab where facilitators provide digital handholding at a scheduled time; solutions emerge via shared expertise among participants or via networking with people who know more about a given technology. Appointments can be requested for individualized consultation with technology facilitators.

Technology summer institutes

Summer is a period of the year when faculty can participate in intensive technology trainings. Faculty respond according to felt needs; for instance, during summer 2009, three one-week institutes were offered to help non-expert Blackboard faculty learn how to use the system and early-adopters-of-innovations faculty explore Web 2.0 technologies for teaching. Other

workshops included integrating technology to face-to-face courses redesigned for technology-enhanced active learning.

The idea behind these technology summer institutes is to favor course re-engineering while faculty develop competence in the use of relevant technologies. Experience has shown that faculty are highly motivated to learn about new technologies, but not all of them want to take the risk, or the effort, to rethink the way they teach with technology. The minimum level of benefit obtained from summer technology institutes is technology appropriation at a personal level when faculty start using appropriate technologies for their personal or professional growth. The maximum level of benefit obtained is technology integration in teaching when faculty and students use information and communication technologies to support inquiry-based, problem-based, collaborative-based, experiential, or other active learning with technology. Experience has shown that instructors who integrate technologies for active learning usually require support from CETL when their students begin interacting with technology since faculty do not necessarily possess the expertise to handhold student technology use. CETL has considered preparing groups of students to support their peers in the use of selected technologies as a way of increasing the level of comfort of faculty who take the risk of rethinking their teaching for active learning with technology.

Online courses for technology integration

In addition to in-depth summer courses to foster technology integration into teaching, CETL has offered five-week asynchronous blended courses to promote exploration and appropriation of Information and Communication Technologies for Education (ICTE). The idea is to develop competence exploring and sharing about ICTE rather than teaching about specific communication technologies since the number and variety of applications grows continually. From a wide portfolio of ICTE documented by Galvis (2009), participants identify technologies they are familiar with and which technologies they are interested in learning more about. This assessment allows faculty members to establish who knows what, who wants to learn what, and to organize themselves into small-group, or individualized, technology quests. Faculty then explore video tutorials or multimedia demos, play with the technology with a real problem in mind, document findings, and share results and lessons learned.

The following final reflection from a faculty member participating in the Fall 2009 ICTE net course gives the tone of perceived benefit from this initiative:

As we all wind down this last week and reflect on the tools CETL has taught us, it seems clear that one thing we now have in common is the willingness to each “put ourselves out there,” try new things, and step outside of our comfort zones. Although I’ve always been interested in new technologies and related law, my own schedule has been a major deterrent to learning additional technologies to incorporate into my teaching.

While working my way through the last course tools, a family member introduced me to a new teaching/learning tool <http://www.spaceded.com/info/howitworks> — Unlike I would have normally reacted in the past, I decided to jump right in and check it out. I’m not yet sure how I could incorporate this into my business law courses (perhaps to help students grasp new vocabulary) but I believe this may be extremely useful for some other majors that have to grasp more technical information (perhaps science courses?).

This new attitude and approach to teaching is a definite bonus of the ICTE course. Thank you CETL!

Pedagogy circles and teaching communities of practice

Learning about teaching in each of the disciplines is a significant need since few faculty members have had formal preparation for teaching, with the exemption of those in the School of Education. In many cases, teachers instruct the same way in which they were taught, or the way in which they feel most comfortable. Faculty develop a preferred teaching style that responds to their own experience and to their interaction with colleagues in TLC or in their academic departments. To foster these learning communities around teaching practice, CETL started *Pedagogy Circles*, a set of initiatives that seek to collaboratively build pedagogic knowledge in context by means of dialogue among people who care about a given teaching dimension. Communities of practice principles (Wenger, McDermott, & Snyder, 2002) and situated learning ideas (Lave & Wenger, 1991) illuminate this initiative.

Scheduled and on-demand pedagogy circles

Similarly to technology workshops, pedagogy circles include a variety of bi-weekly opportunities to share and reflect about topics that may be useful to improve faculty teaching. These dialogues are scheduled on different days of the week at different times to promote participation. A calendar of topics is prepared and an invited faculty member shares relevant experiences and moves the discussion forward during each session. The following are some of the topics included in the 2009-2010 Pedagogy Circle calendar:

- Indicators of ineffective teaching: What is visible to the observer and the student
- Teaching self efficacy: A method for increasing student success
- Better lesson design and planning
- Developing and using effective questions
- Recognizing learning disabilities
- Giving students credit for what they know versus what they have memorized

Experience has shown that a centralized agenda for pedagogy circles engages few faculty per session in these learning communities, but it serves to open reflection spaces with subgroups of teachers who feel attracted to the discussion topic. With this in mind, the idea is to replicate some of Pedagogy Circle sessions with sponsorship of department heads, fine tuning topics with departmental needs or interests.

Teaching communities of practice

A variety of instructors have started participating in local Communities of Practice (CoP), that is, in small groups that reflect about their own teaching practice with the purpose of improving it (Wenger, McDermott, & Snyder, 2002). There is more than one origin for these initiatives.

- In some cases it is the same faculty who have decided to improve their teaching, based on feedback received from students via WSSU classroom surveys. “Take five indicators” was a week-long summer institute offered by CETL that motivated nearly fifteen faculty to reflect on their own teaching and to propose action lines to overcome some of their weaknesses. During the fall semester, most of them implemented their improvement initiatives, coached by a CETL staff member. In this process they kept a digital journal with biweekly reflections on selected indicators and shared it digitally with their coach and colleagues.
- In other cases, it is the department head who invites faculty to participate in a teaching CoP; such is the case of “class observation on demand,” a CETL initiative offered to faculty who want to get feedback on their classroom sessions as part of a teaching improvement initiative. After an initial classroom observation with video documentation and written private feedback to the faculty, a plan is agreed between the observer and the teacher with improvement goals and orientation. Proposed classroom interaction improvements are practiced by the teacher and, after two or three weeks, a new observation is done with corresponding feedback. When the CoP is derived from, or deals with, yearly evaluations, the department head also participates in this small CoP, with the aim of unifying criteria with CETL observer and the observed teacher.
- Socialization of findings in CoP with other faculty, preserving privacy when needed, becomes the occasion to discuss pedagogic issues with faculty who belong to the same academic unit. This was the case with findings from *Life Science* classroom observations during spring 2009 which motivated other faculty members to participate in CoP during fall 2009.

The feeling of trust among participants in teaching CoP has been a critical success factor in this process. Participating faculty feel that sharing and reflecting about their teaching adds value to their teaching. Evidences collected by the faculty (as in “Take Five” journals) or by the observer (as in “Classroom observation” notes and videos) contribute to genuine dialogue among participants.

Teaching adult students accordingly

WSSU not only serves young adults in face-to-face on-campus programs, but also adults who work and study in graduate programs, in weekend or night programs, in blended—on-the-work and technology enhanced—programs, or via online programs. Feedback collected from participants by program managers indicates that these adult students have expressed discomfort when they are not treated as adults. In some cases there is little flexibility to overcome situational barriers (time, space) for learning; in other cases, participants' expertise in the learning area is not taken into consideration; and in yet other cases, instructors just teach adults the same way they do with young adults.

In association with North Carolina Adult Education Association (NCAEA), CETL organized an Adult Nurturing and Teaching Colloquium which raised consciousness among faculty who deal with adults about key factors that should be taken into consideration. The challenge now is to support both course re-designs for active learning using andragogic principles and teaching communities of practice to implement andragogic ideas.

Course improvement

Improving course effectiveness is a top priority at WSSU; it is part of the institutional strategy in search of academic excellence. Particular attention is given to courses with high levels of D, F, and W grades. Improving retention in the first two years is a challenge at the university. The reasons for low performance are many, including students not studying sufficiently, not participating in class adequately, and not engaging in the proposed learning process. However, blaming the students does not help solve the problem and the university is committed to solving the problems. WSSU has raised the admission bar and is recruiting better prepared students. In addition, University College is a transition system for freshmen students to provide counseling services and tutoring in math, science and reading and writing skills for freshmen and sophomore students. WSSU is also committed to a Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) initiative intended to improve writing across the curriculum, as well as with course re-design of “gate keeping” general education courses. In support of these initiatives, CETL has launched the following support programs:

Writing to learn

This program seeks to develop critical thinking skills in students, by means of including short, diverse, and frequent writing activities in courses of all kinds. A group of faculty pilot tested this strategy during spring 2009, with positive results in greater student engagement in reading, reflecting, and writing. The strategy was scaled up during fall 2009 and evidences of impact on students' learning are being collected. According to one faculty member, "I am using various tried and true techniques to help students become better learners."

Course redesign with technology

This program seeks to help faculty rethink the way they teach, fostering technology-enhanced active learning. During summer 2009, a large group of faculty participated in a summer institute where they studied pedagogy principles and methods and explored technologies available for their courses, both from book publishers and on the Internet. During fall 2009, evidence was collected to help establish the impact of course redesign both on course management and on students' learning. Initial feedback from faculty included comments such as these: "Course redesign with technology enabled me to streamline my course presentation to students and cut down on my prep time," "[it was] extremely useful in helping me understand how to use technology to assist student learning," "the course redesign helps me to co-ordinate my course much better," and "[my] redesigned online Blackboard course is ongoing this semester. Huge impact."

Video lecture capture

The video lecture capture (VLC) initiative seeks to improve students' learning by giving them access to video recorded lectures. Initial tests during summer 2009 showed that Panopto, the technology selected to support video lecture capture was intuitive and robust, as well as dependable in capturing, uploading, and distributing streamed video and audio recordings. The summer pilot confirmed that it was necessary to create an interesting framework for students to use this resource since simply uploading and giving access to recorded lectures was not enough to motivate students to review lectures. During fall 2009, CETL conducted a pilot study which included eight courses with the goal of finding what motivated students to access video lecture recordings and to measure the impact of VLC on students' learning and attitudes. Initial

anecdotal results show that the way faculty use VLC (e.g., pre-recorded lessons, live recording, and post-recorded lessons) makes a difference in engaging students in video viewing and in their attitudes towards the use of VLC. Data is being collected from students and faculty in response to the research questions.

Online course production

WSSU produces and offers online programs and courses that become part of the UNC virtual campus. Educational resources to be used online must accomplish Quality Matters⁴ (QM) standards. With this purpose CETL collaborates with the Distance Learning Office and with the Information Resources Office in helping faculty design and implement online courses. Course syllabi are re-designed for active learning and technology integration, and online curriculum materials are selected, or produced, as needed. CETL trains faculty who do not have prior experience teaching online both in appropriation of relevant information and communication technologies through the five-week ICTE course and in online facilitation through the five-week Facilitating Online Learning (FOL) course. CETL also coaches course authors who are re-designing courses for online teaching, helping them to revise their online course syllabi to promote active learning and technology integration, to select appropriate means to support different learning activities, as well as to verify accomplishment of Quality Matters criteria.

Experience has shown that online course production is a worthy, and not simple, process. Some faculty, in particular those who have not taught or studied online before, are open to assistance in the course creation process; they actively explore technologies while they learn how to teach online. These two ingredients serve as reference for course design and implementation. Other faculty, in particular those who have taught online before and feel comfortable with online pedagogy and technologies, require little support and are able to self-assess the quality of their production by applying QM standards. In between these extremes, a variety of cases require coaching in course syllabus redesign, in active pedagogies, and/or in use of digital technologies to implement the design.

Once a course has been produced, CETL transfers control to the Distance Learning (DL) Office. This office finds content, methodology, and technology specialists who review and approve (or not) course materials, before the course can be offered. This process closes the production loop that began when DL hired the author to fulfill a course production need. As course materials are finished and approved, control goes to the academic unit that offers the online program. It is the responsibility of the program coordinator to oversee fidelity of implementation.

Research on teaching

A key element in faculty development is research. Most research at WSSU is discipline-related, but it is also valid for tenure track faculty to do research on teaching, with the caveat that many faculty have had little formal training in this area. With this framework, CETL has launched the following two initiatives that foster the scholarship of teaching and learning:

Action research training – Starting in 2008, CETL has offered yearly two-day summer institutes on action research (AR). An expert in the AR field leads the effort in collaboration with faculty who share their AR experiences. Participants receive guidelines and a rubric to self-assess their AR proposals to prepare an application dealing with research on teaching that will be submitted to CETL by the end of the summer. Faculty who have not gone through Institutional Review Board (IRB) training and certification are invited to do complete this process online by using Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) digital resources before submitting their AR proposal.

Action research awards – Proposals that satisfy AR rubric criteria are accepted for implementation during one academic period, usually Fall semester. Faculty with proposals accepted are requested to keep a digital journal of their AR experience, to collect data for research questions, to analyze and interpret results, and to prepare a paper that could be submitted to a peer reviewed publication. Faculty who complete this process are awarded with a stipend and recognition by peers in an open exhibition on University Day.

Experience has shown that many faculty become interested in learning how to conduct AR, but that only a selected group stay involved through the process to

complete a research project. Conversations with participants in AR training and research indicate that knowing about AR methods and requirements is a great motivator to participate in AR training. This desire to know is fully satisfied through the AR training. Beyond this, there seem to be varied factors which lead some faculty to implement their research designs while others do not. Insufficient maturation of ideas about how to improve teaching or learning seems to be a roadblock to submitting proposals for faculty who have not searched or reflected sufficiently about the topic. Coaching seems to be a key factor in the AR process, both to improve proposals and to implement them; faculty have expressed their satisfaction for valuable suggestions received. IRB certification does not seem to be a major roadblock to submitting proposals, since it can be obtained through asynchronous individualized study and testing. The great challenge now is to move forward in the scholarship of teaching, building on initial experiences. Poster sessions provide a gallery of best practices that can be shared with the academic community, as well as motivating others to conduct research on teaching. Paper submissions to peer reviewed publications is the next step, as well as participation in larger communities of scholars to nurture the local community and disseminate findings.

Towards an effective and viable organization

After two years of combined faculty and instructional development initiatives at CETL, the portfolio of opportunities to empower faculty to become effective teachers and researchers on teaching has grown significantly. There are promising efforts that could improve student learning when faculty implement course redesign for active learning and technology integration or when instructors conduct action research that helps determine effectiveness of proposed pedagogical interventions. Additionally, there is an increasing number of faculty who have improved their pedagogy and/or technology competencies aligned with CETL initiatives and curricular goals. These evidences seem to indicate that CETL's mission and vision are being achieved and that this organization is increasingly effective.

The case presented needs further discussion concerning CETL's viability. In this regard, Beer's ideas will help analyze the different dimensions of the viability concept. Looking at Figure 1. and reflecting about the components of a VSM in the context of the case presented, it is clear that *implementation* function (faculty and instructional development through different initiatives) is

strategically aligned with the identity of this organization and that each of the systems in place adds value to CETL's operation. CETL is a flat organization with a director and four staff members, each of whom is in charge of leading one or more of the above mentioned faculty development or course improvement initiatives. In order to function as a viable system the following two functions have been essential:

- (1) *Assessing CETL's environment* via periodic dialogue with each one of our market segments. This assessment has been a yearly activity completed at the leadership level through interaction with leaders from each of the colleges and schools, as well as at the operational level through surveys of faculty to discern needs.
- (2) *Co-ordination* at three levels: internal, external, and organizational:
 - (a) Internally, with the establishment of clear standards and methods to accomplish each of the functions shared among staff members. The use of shared criteria and methods (e.g., for course syllabus re-design, online course production, pilot testing innovations, and conducting action research) makes viable the *control function*, but does not eliminate the *monitoring* need in instances where quality of processes and products is assessed, either as an internal function (e.g., at weekly staff meetings) or in relationship with others (e.g., at exhibitions or presentations where faculty and CETL members share knowledge),
 - (b) Externally, doing *intelligence* via periodic examination of best practices in higher education, with exploration of education and information technologies that add value to teaching at WSSU; exploring the future and remaining receptive for ideas or devices that contribute to academic excellence becomes a critical success factor, and
 - (c) Organizationally, in coordination with academic authorities, CETL needs to promote the establishment of clear *policies* that build on expertise concerning systems or processes that foster faculty and/or instructional development. This is the case, for instance, of online production which, to be effective, needs to be functionally aligned with online delivery and assessment, functions that go beyond CETL's scope.

In making CETL's operation viable, the importance of fluid relationships with partners—academic units and faculty members—has become clear, as has the appreciation for building both formal and informal information systems that support CETL's operation. As mentioned by Espejo and Gil (2003), “in viable systems it is becoming increasingly apparent that it matters much less who reports to whom, as to who needs to talk with whom and how all pieces of a complex interrelated jigsaw fit together to form a synergistic whole.”

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Liberal Learning and the Hard Business of Higher Education

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The initial shock of the global financial crisis has evolved into a chronic budgetary condition across the world, including the United States. For colleges and universities, despite partial endowment rebounds and surprisingly good enrollment numbers for fall 2009, the financial meltdown has laid bare the fact that higher education has become more expensive than most people can afford. Fewer and fewer families can pay for the cost of college, and governmental assistance, despite recent increases, is not sufficient to close the widening gap. Most colleges and universities will be able to reduce the growth of operating expenses, but corporate strategies alone will not suffice; we cannot “economize” our way out.

The economic trend lines of the industry point to the need for a new business model. However, the fate of many of our institutions committed to the liberal arts may depend more on our ability to redefine ourselves as cultural rather than as corporate institutions. For present purposes, cultural institutions are those whose fundamental purpose is to provide continuity through generations for the communication, growth and refinement of the intellectual, social, aesthetic and moral knowledge and the traditions that define a people. Our task in our colleges and universities is to cultivate and inform the humanity of those who teach to give them a foundation for all that follows in their studies and in their lives.

Whether our individual schools are public or private, religious or secular, endowment rich (though diminished in number) or tuition driven, they are both cultural and corporate enterprises. Culturally, they are purveyors of knowledge and ideas that illuminate the workings of the world as well as human purpose and meaning. Their faculties define these terms and determine the curricula. On the corporate side, these academic communities cannot function without financial resources and administrative management. Salaries, health care,

operating costs, capital budgets and the like drive the agenda. If anything is now clear in the industry, it is that none of us are immune to economics. Evidence Harvard's \$2.5 billion bond sale a year ago to cover losses and expenses.

By contrast, proprietary colleges are purely corporate entities that sell educational services. Their curricula are designed to meet specific market demands, largely determined by perceived labor opportunities. Their faculties do nothing more and nothing less than deliver the service. They employ faculty at low cost with virtually no long term commitment (read tenure). Nor do they incur the enormous costs of building and maintaining comprehensive physical plants. Focusing on the practical value of their degrees rather than liberal education, they adjust to market demand as fast as it shifts and they withdraw the resources devoted to yesterday's hot program. These institutions are not distracted by concerns for the growth of knowledge, academic freedom, or student development beyond the completion of a given set of courses.

These are our corporate competitors; they challenge the perceived value of a liberal arts education with pragmatically-driven alternatives. Their perceived value is growing, as are their enrollments. Phoenix, Kaplan and Capella are booming not only because they are online, but because they maintain a laser-like focus solely on market demand and deploy their use of resources with equal precision wherever they are needed. As economic enterprises, liberal arts institutions with rare exception will lose to their unabashed, strictly corporate competitors. They have no baggage, no distractions. Ironically, if we are to compete, our best hope lies with heightening our worth as cultural institutions.

We face an uphill battle. The value of a liberal arts education is under intense scrutiny, particularly in light of tuition costs that have galloped far ahead of inflation and per capita income for over three decades. Pragmatic demands for a monetary return on investment outmatch claims of the value of a liberally educated mind. The argument that graduates of our institutions will earn more over the course of a lifetime is a "Catch 22"; it only reaffirms that the value of higher education derives from its pragmatic, employment-oriented results. If our institutions are to provide something of a higher order of learning, what is it and how does it serve those we graduate? Do we offer something of greater scope and significance? If not, what have we to commend ourselves?

What then might be the “higher order” purpose of higher education? How can we achieve our aspirations and meet the economic goals for those we graduate?

A possible answer begins with recognition of the long standing assumptions that once made higher education possible and that now constrain its evolution. Consider the concept of higher education as it was first conceived in Plato’s Athens. The word “academic,” is derived from the Greek *akadēmeikos*, relating to the school where Plato taught philosophy. Plato’s academy was a place set apart from the day to day requirements of the world that might interfere with the contemplation of the most fundamental questions of human existence. The key is that academic studies were originally removed from the practicalities of life, and this idea of removal remains deep in our unspoken assumptions. One of the definitions offered in Webster’s *Third New International Dictionary* of the term “academic” is “very learned but inexperienced in or unable to cope with the world of practical reality.”

Similarly, Aristotle maintained that higher education concerns that which is highest and most distinctive in us as human beings. Observing that humankind is distinguished by its capacity to reason and arguing that logic is the source of objective truth, Aristotle concluded that higher education should focus on the development of disciplined thought. Thus, higher education was a road to the liberation of the mind removed from the base physical concerns shared with animals. His interest was in generating categorical knowledge to structure thought. Those matters relating to the practicalities of daily life were to be left to others of the working class.

We in higher education are the distant intellectual heirs to these two great thinkers and to those who followed them in creating the categorical modes of thought and inquiry known as the disciplines. Their conclusions about the nature and purpose of higher education serve as basic and ingrained assumptions. True, curricula have changed over time: We no longer study the medieval trivium and quadrivium, for example, but the notion of study detached from the events of the world and daily life remains pervasive in many of our institutions.

My point is not to challenge the educational primacy of the disciplines in higher education; they are *the* essential modalities for modern intellectual inquiry and discourse. Key here is that they also constitute a limited epistemological and

pedagogical paradigm that needs to be expanded to generate the intellectual acuity and social purposes of higher education in this new century.

One response to hard edged corporatism in higher education is to reconsider the educational function of the disciplines in the context of higher education for engagement in, rather than detachment from, the realities that shape our world. Certainly, each of the disciplines offers enormous intellectual power but often does so at the expense of context. The educational result is described aptly by Frank H.T. Rhodes, the former President of Cornell University. Addressing a graduating class, he said, “there is a sense in which today’s graduation may be hazardous to your health, and it will make the setting of meaningful life goals even harder. It has to do with the academic style... marked by reductionist thinking, and its results are abstraction, detachment, abstention, and ultimately—in extreme cases—depersonalization.”

With too few exceptions, students acquire inert disciplinary knowledge and skills that do little to help them engage the issues of the day or questions that they must ponder who they are or what they ought to do with their lives. Such education does not realize the highest in our students, as Aristotle envisioned, but largely denies students substantive connection between who they are and what they learn. By default, the value of higher education is increasingly defined more by what is awarded than what is acquired.

I am not suggesting we diminish our demands for rigor or confound hard facts with concerns about student interest. Rather, I suggest that our institutions, as centers of knowledge are too constrained by our own hegemonic orthodoxy to meet the demands for the growth of knowledge and the education of individuals who can apply their minds to the intellectual, social and scientific problems of our time.

As an alternative, we might guide students into explorations of the critical issues of our times, challenge them not only to think about but to encounter them in their full import and possibilities. Let us teach as if there are things to care about, and where learning makes a difference. Let us not only analyze ideas in the abstract but synthesize them in grappling with the actual. Whether we consider the situation in Afghanistan or the interplay of the environment and the genetics in determining the probability of the onset of disease, or the economic choices that feed poverty, the depth of our understanding of the

complex of factors that generate the world we see will be a function of our capacity to synthesize ideas within a context of meaning.

Michael Polanyi and Gregory Bateson, among others, develop this concept in exacting detail. They present a foundation for an epistemology grounded in a passion for and synthesis of ideas, the capacity to see patterns and relationships in phenomena and a focus on the operational principles at work that shape and transcend the objects we observe. It is these qualities of mind that led Darwin to the discovery of evolution, Einstein to relativity theory, Gates to MS-DOS, Bezos to Amazon.com. These are the liberating qualities that can engage ideas in open debate, data in the lab, the spate of problems that threaten our well being, if not our survival.

Even as some may fault my suggested alternative concept of liberal education, one thing is certain: Colleges and universities committed to the liberal arts will thrive to the extent they offer something of value beyond pre-employment skills or dated traditions. Ours are first and foremost cultural institutions and must accept the charge to provide society engaged, meaningful intellectual leadership. New business models alone cannot substitute for the work we have to do; new strategies to trim labor costs, deliver services or market products simply will not suffice to attract serious students or to prove our worth. Some of our institutions will ride on their reputation and a relative abundance of resources. For the rest of us, we will either develop new, engaged epistemological and pedagogical paradigms or be buried with the old.

Traits and Development Needed by Leaders for Success in the Complex World of Higher Education

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Introduction

“It is time for a new approach to leadership in higher education in America. The world is changing rapidly around us, calling desperately for us to change with it and ease some of the burden of its own transformation.” (Farnsworth, 2007, p.1)

The world is becoming more complex with each passing day. Social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter and YouTube are transforming the way people communicate and get their information in a much more powerful way than 24-hour cable news channels did just two decades ago. On the economic side, the current world financial crisis has affected far too many people, whether costing them their home or their job, or dramatically reducing their retirement savings. In these ever-changing times, organizations must adapt or risk shuttering their doors forever. In order to adapt, organizations need strong leaders who are capable of navigating through crises and setting a successful course for the future. Academic institutions are no different.

Many scholars on leadership indicate that successful leaders are in fact change agents (e.g., Mavrinac, 2005; Knight & Trowler, 2001). According to Valverde (2003), “universities and colleges are among the most conservative institutions, due to their emphasis on maintaining traditions of the past (p. 37).” If that is the case, then how do universities adapt and what leadership traits are necessary to be successful? Since most college presidents tend to have ascended to their positions via the academic route, can they truly be the change agent needed to transform their institutions?

Many might argue that in these uncertain times, university leaders must first and foremost be both superior fundraisers and expert accountants. It can be

argued, however, that there is more to being a successful leader of a higher education institution than raising money and balancing the budget. According to Drew and Bensley (2001), “Now, as never before, the successful management of the functional imperatives of research, teaching, and service, and their underpinning technological and administrative support structures, necessitate a management approach that is palpably capable of evolving, adapting, and aligning itself to national and global influences (p. 62).” So how is this accomplished? This paper will explore the traits and development needed by chief executives to be successful in the complex world of higher education.

The University Environment: A Complex System?

“A system is an entity that maintains its existence and functions as a whole through the interaction of its parts.” (O’Connor & McDermott, 1997, p. 2)

W. Edwards Deming described a system as “a network of interdependent components that work together to try to accomplish the aim of the system (2000, p. 50).” According to Pascale (1999), “All complex adaptive systems exhibit a capacity for pattern recognition and employ this to anticipate the future and learn to recognize the anticipation of seasonal change (p. 84).” Stanley (2007) further suggests that the emerging field of complexity science supports the idea that “healthy learning organizations resemble other healthy life forms and, as such, must function through distributed processes and forms of leadership (p.138).”

It is clear from the definitions above that organizations can be classified as complex systems. What about universities? Foster (2006) suggested that it is the combination of the academic organization and the administrative organization, which operate on very different principles, that makes universities complex structures. They clearly are a “network of interdependent components” (colleges, schools, departments and administrative units) that “work together to try to accomplish the aim of the system” (university). Issues such as diminishing state support, rising tuition, tuition discounting, not to mention faculty governance, curricular reform, and accreditation standards surely qualifies universities as “complex adaptive systems.”

Padró (2009) explored ways in which Deming’s System of Profound Knowledge could be applied to higher education. He wrote that this system

“allows campus administrators and faculty . . . to look at the college or university from a systems perspective (p. 11).” The reason, according to Padró, is that “Accountability in higher education is creating different expectations of institutional quality and success (p. 10).” He went on to state that Deming’s system “provides a means of understanding what is happening and focus on results, rather than on the inherent competition that is forced on higher education in these times of fiscal stringency (p. 11).”

In today’s economic climate, colleges and universities are indeed under much more scrutiny from their trustees and state legislators than anytime in the past. Just the same, as tuition rates continue to soar, parents and students are demanding much more accountability from these institutions to insure that they are receiving the maximum value for their investment.

Universities can indeed be considered complex systems and therefore systems theory should govern how they operate and how they are managed. Leaders of higher education institutions must therefore take this into account in order to be successful in leading their organizations and to be successful in recruiting candidates who can lead in such an environment. So what leadership traits are required to be successful in this environment?

Leadership Traits Required

“Leadership is not learned; it *is* learning.” (Farnsworth, 2007, p. 116)

According to Siegrist (1999), leadership “is an elusive subject in which questions come easier than answers (p. 299).” There have been scores of articles and books written on leadership, and more specifically on leadership in higher education. As Yelder and Codling (2004) wrote, “the concepts of “leadership” and “management” are complex and open to numerous definitions and interpretations (p. 319).” Some of the traits and characteristics necessary for success as the leader of a higher education institution are discussed below.

Some of the more obvious characteristics of effective academic leaders include: honesty, integrity, credibility, fairness, high energy level, perseverance, a strong goal orientation, a willingness to take risks, good communication skills, objective decision making, the ability to adapt, a desire to serve, humility, creativity, openness, dedication and a commitment to what they are doing (e.g.,

Hoppe, 2003). But is someone who possesses all (or even most) of these characteristics a good leader?

Wharton (2005) suggested that just possessing these important leadership characteristics or skills is not enough. While they are important, what will ultimately produce success is how these basic skills are used. Similarly, Goleman (2004) wrote “IQ and technical skills are important, but emotional intelligence is the sine qua non of leadership (p. 82).”

Some authors focus more on the interpersonal skills of successful academic leaders. Ramsden (1998) argued that there are two fundamental elements for an effective academic leader: “Can he or she enable average people to do excellent things? Can he or she help these people address change enthusiastically and energetically (p. 254)?” Godsey (2005) also identifies skillfully developing relationships as one of the traits found in successful leaders.

According to Foster (2006), good university administrators are able to bridge the academic and administrative organizations rather than moving from one to the other and as a result, “institutional citizenship” is “necessary for an administrator to be an effective participant in the university’s external relations (p. 50).”

Farnsworth (2007) wrote that today’s leaders cannot be successful just based on their position and power but must instead generate their success through service to others. Yelder and Codling (2004) echo that thought in suggesting that leaders must have an “inspirational, galvanizing effect” on others while “creating a vision of what might be, and fostering a culture that supports and can achieve that vision (p. 319).” Years earlier McCorkle & Archibald (1982) suggested that successful leaders are able to blend rational management processes with political skill and acumen to effect change.

Some authors, such as Keohane (2006) suggest that it is how leaders look at problems that make them successful. Goldstein and Sanaghan (2003) introduced “horizon thinking”, which is to focus on the challenges that are likely to be encountered in the future, thus allowing leaders to formulate responses and solutions before problems develop. Martin (2007), on the other hand, wrote of “integrative thinking”, a process by which leaders examine two

opposing ideas and then use those to creatively generate a new one that best solves the problem, as a defining characteristic of successful leaders.

Moving away from personal attributes, Ramsden (1998) wrote “Contemporary management theory stresses the ‘situational’ nature of leadership. Rather than considering leadership as a set of attributes of an individual, modern theories conceptualize it as an active process that contains elements of followers’ desires, leaders’ hopes, and the context in which they each operate (p. 13).” This would seem to indicate that a person’s environment, or the context in which they operate, defines them more as a leader than their own personal characteristics.

It’s not just how leaders react in their own environment that defines their success. They are also measured by the impact they leave on their environment. According to Amey (2006), “Academic leaders create learning environments that include cultural awareness, acceptance of multiple intelligences and ways of knowing, strategic thinking, engagement, and a sense of collective identity as collaborators in developing knowledge and active investigators into practice. They are skilled facilitators who encourage interdisciplinary collaboration, collective responsibility, cultural change, and an interest in the public good. They lead via partnerships and teams in systems that are web-like and non-hierarchical (p. 56).”

Defining what makes a leader successful, especially a leader of a higher education institution is complex. Personal characteristics such as honesty, integrity, credibility, fairness and creativity are viewed as inherent skills possessed by successful leaders. Successful leaders are also viewed as individuals with superior interpersonal skills, seamlessly working across organizational boundaries and engaging others to follow. Likewise, problem solving skills are also viewed as an important weapon in the successful leader’s arsenal. Finally, in addition to these personal attributes, how a leader operates within their own environment, and the impact they leave on their environment, helps to define their success as leaders. Developing these skills and attributes is essential to the success of leaders in the complex world of higher education.

Leadership Development for University Leaders

“It is impossible to lead others towards increased understanding without being open to your own learning and development.” (Parsell & Blich, 2000, p. 199)

“To be a successful leader you must be willing to listen and learn from your experiences along the way.” (Wharton, 2005, p. 271)

As was highlighted in the previous section, successful leaders of higher education institutions are required to possess various traits and skills. But how are these traits and skills developed? The development of successful leaders takes place via two primary methods: through self development, or on-the-job-training, and through formal training and development programs. This section will explore each of these methods.

Green (1988) suggested that for the most part, leadership development in higher education has been an informal process. Oftentimes, people are promoted into leadership positions because they have done a good job in their previous position, regardless of whether that previous position had any leadership responsibilities associated with it. In higher education, this generally means going from a faculty position to a department chair or dean position. These individuals are therefore forced to learn as they go. While this might appear to be suboptimal, the benefits of such learning could outweigh the risks. Academic institutions, for the most part, tend to have a significant amount institutional knowledge that resides in staff members and faculty committees that can support these new leaders in their development.

Some might suggest that this form of on-the-job learning is more valuable to leaders than formal development programs because it is more contextual and allows the individuals to understand what is important in their own environment. Amey (2006) even suggested that “leaders in higher education are best served by learning to think critically about their roles rather than relying on “how-to” writings (p. 55).” She would go on to say that successful leaders in higher education “see their own development as paramount to their ability to create environments that serve the learning needs of others, and they seek opportunities to learn and reflect on their own experiences through professional development activities, collaborating, and reading (p. 58).”

Many would advocate for formal, structured development programs for university leaders. Some, such as Siegrist (1999), suggest that this training must take place as part of a formal education in graduate schools. Connaughton *et al* (2003) wrote “To meet the leadership development challenge, colleges and universities must be considerably more proactive and

systematic in their leadership education efforts (p. 47).” Wright (2007) advanced that notion a step further and suggested that these leaders’ training must not just be focused on higher education issues in the U.S. but must also include a global perspective. While contextual learning is important, formal leadership development programs can provide academic leaders with a broad set of core leadership skills that are applicable across a multitude of situations.

According to Green and McDade (1991), “Leadership development encompasses many activities and experiences that enhance the ability of individuals to make a difference, to shape the direction of their institution or unit, and to bring others along in sharing and implementing goals. It is identifying new leaders, providing people with opportunities to grow and learn, to affirm their beliefs and values, to expand their understanding of issues and people, and to improve their management skills (p. 5).” These authors wrote an entire handbook on leadership development in higher education. In it they said of leadership development: it is a shared responsibility of the institution and the individual; it is ongoing and often not deliberate; and it strengthens institutional leadership.

Perhaps Hoppe (2003) said it best when she wrote “Identifying, nurturing, and supporting potential leaders are critical components in maintaining a pipeline for continuity and infusion of new pools in academic administration. Higher education institutions that prepare for the future will have an identification strategy and developmental plan that not only provides for the next generation of leaders but also ensures that they have the experiences and skills necessary for success (p. 10).” As this section suggests, leadership development opportunities for leaders in higher education institutions are imperative for their success. It is in the institution’s own best interest to create these opportunities for their leaders. As Bisbee (2007) would write, “Leadership development is a process, not a single event (p. 86).”

Regardless of the method of learning, formal, informal, or some combination of the two, self assessment is a key to success for leaders. Ramsden (1998) stated “Outstanding leaders base their hopes for the future on what they have learned through assessing their past experiences (p. 12)” while Farnsworth (2007) captured the essence of this in stating “A leader who is not constantly learning—constantly receiving new exposures—is forever falling behind (p. 115).”

Concluding Remarks

“In the end, they do the best they can, proceeding with some combination of good judgment and skill, counsel, and luck to make the decisions they believe best serve their institutions.” (McLaughlin, 2004, p.13)

Universities are indeed complex systems, networks of interdependent units working together for the good of the overall institution subjected to increasing scrutiny from their governing bodies. Pascale (1999) wrote “An important and distinct property of living systems is the tenuous connection between cause and effect. As most seasoned managers know, the best-laid plans are often perverted through self-interest, misinterpretation, or lack of necessary skills to reach the intended goal (p. 92).” It truly takes leaders who have developed their skills through appropriate training and experiences to be able to successfully operate in such an environment.

Leadership, especially leadership in higher education, is a complex issue, one with no absolute rules or definitions. Basic traits such as integrity, credibility and fairness might be taken for granted as characteristics required by all successful leaders. Interpersonal skills and the ability to work across organizational boundaries are equally important, as is the environment in which they operate. Birnbaum (1992) stated “Leadership involves behavior that is meant to influence others, but not all attempts at influence can be thought of as resulting in leadership” therefore “The legitimacy of leadership behavior is always at the bottom a matter of interpretation, and depends as much on the perceptions of the intended targets of influence as on the source (p. 14).”

In order to be successful in the complex world of higher education, leaders of higher education institutions must have the training and development, formal or informal, to develop the requisite skills and characteristics to support them in these roles. Ultimately, they must continue to learn, continue to evaluate, and continue to adapt to their ever changing environment.

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East Carolina University's Global Understanding Project

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In May, 2009, the ECU Global Understanding Project received the American Association of University Administrators' Nikolai N. Khaladjan International Award for Higher Education. This article is a description of the project, how and why it was started, its history, and its current status. We consider this a cost effective and self sustainable project to bring international experience into our classrooms. In this financially strained age, budget is primary concern and this project is certainly a good alternative and complement to study abroad.

In the USA less than 4 percent of our students participate in Study Abroad programs. There are many reasons for this, financial difficulties is the major factor, but there are other factors like fear of foreign settings including lack of knowledge in the language, not accustomed to the foods, etc; fear of the risk of terrorism, and diseases like SARS, etc. However, while 4 percent can go abroad, 100 percent live in this same global world. All of us need to know about other cultures and understand the people from other cultures. It is not possible to learn about all cultures, but it is possible to acquire some basic knowledge that all people do not think alike, do not have the same perspective, do not share the same values, nor hold the same priorities is cherish.

In 2002 a cross cultural psychologist met a computer assisted learning expert at ECU. They talked about the importance of having global knowledge and the lack of opportunities to get that kind of knowledge. Students do not read newspapers anymore, nor do then watch the evening news or surf the web for news. When asked, students frequently cite Jon Stewart or Steven Colbert as sources of their information about news. Thus the two professors talked about designing a course that would use different technologies that most countries can afford to bring real time synchronous virtual global experience into each country's own classrooms. If that can be done, then such a course can be accessible to all students, regardless of the stages of development of the country, regardless of the differences in socioeconomic background of students. Consequently, most students can become more globally competent after taking such a course.

In designing this course we agreed on a simple threefold definition of global competence and we wanted the course to provide all three aspects of global competence. The three aspects are: cognitively acquire basic cognitive knowledge about another culture; affectively become more open-minded and enhance a more positive attitude of differences in other cultures and enhance stronger interest in global affairs; behaviorally acquire real interactive and collaborative experience via working with students from other cultures.

With this goal in mind, we designed and conducted our first pilot course title Global Understanding in 2003. First we decided to use synchronous real time video conference via regular internet. It is always important to read body language in any social interaction, but especially important for cross-cultural social interaction. We decided on using regular internet because that is the only means we can reach some of our partners in underdeveloped countries like the Gambia. At East Carolina University we have a 16 week semester, in the Global Understanding course we divided the semester roughly into three 5-week sessions. For each five weeks we bring students and their faculty from one other country to join our students via DVC to learn about each other's culture. The faculty from each country offers a lecture on their own culture, but the emphasis is on student interacting and learning from each other.

All the basic information on the partner countries are posted on a website managed by ECU. This website also includes the English version of the headlines of partner countries. The first class period is a "local" day where each faculty administers the 10 minute pre-course survey designed by ECU and sent to partners electronically. When the survey is completed, the local faculty gives a brief description of the partner country, including some cultural sensitivities for that country. The class second period is our first "link" day, where the two partner countries are video-linked on DVC. The first half of this class period is used for faculty and students to introduce themselves. Students' faces always lit up when they literally see their counterparts from China, Morocco, USA, etc. The second half of this class period is for ECU tech expert to teach students from both countries how to use MIRC chat. This is a chat that ECU manages the server so no one would enter the chat except for our students. The third class period the faculty from each country gives a 20 minute lecture on their own culture, and for students to ask questions.

In the fourth class period students begin their interaction and learning from each other. We limit class size to 16 on each side to foster a personal feeling in class. All students are numbered from 1-16. For each linked class students on each side is divided into two halves. Half of students (1-8) from each country engage in groups discussion, and the other half (9-16) are in individual chats with their partners. Half way through the course, the group discussion and the individual discussion students change place. The topics for each discussion day are: College life on your campus; Family; Cultural Traditions; Meaning of Life; Stereotypes and Prejudices. If there are more than five links, the two teachers can decide what topic to add. For each discussion day we start with a discussion of the newspaper headlines of the other country, 5-7 minutes to acquaint out students with what is going on in the other country. The newspaper headlines, as well as all other readings are posted on the web under our Resource section. Students are also required to keep a daily journal at the end of each class. In the journal they record the topic for the day, which country they link with, what they learned that was a surprise to them and other thoughts they have concerning that day. We do not check their journal entries so they can be truthful. This is a record of their own attitudinal changes as they proceed through the course. However, we can give quizzes to ask things like “on XX day, whom did we link with? What topic? What did you learn that day?” to make sure they do write in their journals.

Before the first link, the teacher will prepare BIG name tags for all students with each student’s number and the name they want to go by, as well as some signs like cards like “SLOW” “REPEAT”, etc. when needed without having to interrupt the class. At the end of the link session with each country, there is a local day where the teacher helps the students to synthesize what has been learned about that country. The two students who are partners in this 5 week session have to write a joint paper, due the week after the link is over. Some time in the last two weeks the ECU prepared post-course survey will be sent and students from all sites are asked to complete the post course survey. The last day of classes is always a local day where the local faculty help students to integrate and synthesize what they have learned from their partners. In addition we also ask students whether after seeing their own culture from the eyes of three foreign countries has changed their own view about their own culture.

This process is repeated for partner country #2 and #3. The same topics are used so students can compare the different countries in these same areas. Students are given quizzes, tests and final examinations like any other regular

course. The local teacher grades the tests and joint papers and assigns grades at the local institution. No money changes hands, administratively this is a totally independent course. Thus the accreditation criteria are met at each institution.

Technology wise, we use H.232 standard for the DVC, since that is an international standard. ECU as well as some partner universities have high quality DVC equipments by Tandberg or Polycom. But for many partners ECU loans them a Polycom camera and a PVX software, total cost is less than USD \$500 and it will serve the function of linking two countries via DVC. We have set up several levels of back up plans when technology fails, or what we call “plans to fail” For example, when regular DVC does not work, we use SKYPE, when SKYPE does not work we use audio, when even audio does not work, we use MIRC chat. Faculty members always prepare additional teaching materials such as a lecture, a video, a DVD, etc when the link totally fails such as in the case of one side’s electricity got knocked out by a storm. Each site needs a very good computer for the video conference for group discussion and 8 other computers (can be quite old, only need 4K bandwidth to do chat), and one computer for the tech helper. Bandwidth is the biggest problem. We need 256k for regular DVC, and the permission from the CEO/CAO to lift the firewall is another challenge that needs to be worked out.

Another requirement for this course is that in addition to the faculty, there is always a tech assistant to help with the class. The tech assistant can be a computer savvy graduate or undergraduate student. The two tech assistant come to class early to set up the video and are in constant communication with each other on chat during class. This is to assure the smooth running of the class. If either side has a problem, the two tech persons can come up with a solution and work it out over chat. Not only does this arrangement assures the class will go on seamlessly, it also means faculty do not need to be afraid of technology or think they have to learn technology to offer a class like this. The tech help to the class is a key component for the success of this class.

This is a rough outline of the course. Due to its popularity, in fall of 2010 we offered nine sections of this class, taught by faculty from Anthropology, Political Science, Psychology and Sociology. It is a three semester hour course. At partner institutions the course is taught under various topics such as English, Communication, etc. This is to enable them to incorporate this course into their own regular curriculum.

This project was started in the summer of 2003, we now have 25 partners in 18 countries across five continents including Algeria, Brazil, China, the Gambia, India, Japan, Macedonia, Malaysia, Mexico, Moldova, Morocco, Namibia, Pakistan, Peru, Russia, Samoa, Taiwan, Turkey, and USA. Not only does ECU have three international partners per section of the course, each of our partners also is also linked to three other partners.

With the success of this Global Understanding project we decided to expand the use of technology in other ways to globalize curriculum at ECU. We realize that the Global Understanding class takes an entire semester and due to different factors, such as the interest of the faculty, the different time zone, etc, a faculty may not be interested in teaching such a class. Thus we developed other Global Academic Initiatives all using similar virtual technologies. These include one hour guest lecture from a foreign country, a hour module, or an entire course jointly taught by ECU and one other country, and joint research. Our newest addition is a Global Climate Change course jointly taught by ECU, Brazil, China, India and Mexico. Two students from each country are placed into a team, and the same team members work with each other for the entire semester. Again there are lectures on the science and other knowledge areas of climate change but the emphasis is still on student interaction to come up with locally implementable project for each team. This course uses many more different technological tools.

Over a period of six years we have witnessed the success of global academic initiatives using virtual technology. We have learned much from our experience and now firmly believe virtual technology is the most cost effective way to rapidly internationalize curriculum, faculty and students across ECU campus as proven through our Global Understanding course, the ILEP, ICEP and IREP projects.

In summary, we believe the global academic initiatives at ECU are truly innovative ways of globalizing education, because it is cost effective and self sustainable and can provide international experiences to large groups of college students regardless of socioeconomic level. Traditional student abroad programs are ideal, but usually only affordable to a few. Using video conference technology and other tools like Centra, Wiki and Mediasite, any country that has 256k bandwidth and a \$400 camera+software can join this global partnership in education. We have learned from our experiences in the last six years and are willing to share them. We now invite all interested

universities to learn more about this technology-based model of global education and consider adapting this model on their own campuses.

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Shared Decisions: Transforming University Governance

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Introduction

During the past fifty years, institutions of higher education have faced significant criticism and challenges related to governance according to (Berdahl, 1991; Birnbaum, 1988; Kezar, 2009, Leslie & Retwel, 1996). Research in the 1990's showed that 70 percent of campus faculty, staff, and administrators believed that decision making processes were working ineffectively and suggested a need for new approaches to be considered (Dimond, 1991). Furthermore, others argue that academic governance limits a university's flexibility and agility, creates obstructions that lead to sluggishness and fosters a predisposition toward the status quo (Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges, 1996). Schuster, Smith, Corack, & Yamada, (1994). Birnbaum, (1989), and Tierney, (2000), suggested that administrators have become overly fixated on satisfying social and political pressures, promoting efficiency and accountability, and stabilizing finances; which indicates these administrators have forgotten about education based decision making, and the real purpose of higher education. Although there were wide spread indicators of the governance problem in higher education, Kezar, (2004) indicated few solutions have been proposed and, of those, few have been successful. The preponderance of the thinking is that campus governance needs major changes of its structure and its formal processes. Benjamin, & Carroll, (1998) argued that campus governance was totally ineffective due to its structure and processes. They further indicated that campus structures and processes did not allow for timely review, or for effective expertise based decision making, nor were they responsive to external concerns. In spite of the calls for governance reform through radical restructuring, another view emerged which suggested that relationships, trust, and leadership, rather than reengineering are important factors for improving governance. Braskamp, & Wergin, (1998); Del Favero, (2000); Weingartner, (1996); and Kezar (2004) all stated that this perspective stems from Birnbaum's Meta- Analysis, Fads in Higher Education (2000) where he shows the failure of restructuring and reengineering to improve governance. Although this

emerging perspective has not yet been articulated in a comprehensive manner, Kezar (2004) indicated scholarly work on leadership, relationships and trust has occurred in isolated pockets within the discipline. The University of Houston-Clear Lake (UHCL) provides an interesting case study in that it undertook a complete transformation of its governance structure early in the twenty-first century. The reorganization of the governance structure utilized all university constituent, groups, faculty, staff, students and administration. The effort sought to improve the perception that academic governance limits an institution's ability and flexibility that creates obstructions, sluggishness and fosters a predisposition toward the status quo. The conclusions from the experience may prove beneficial to other campuses that seek to restructure governance as well as for scholars who study academic governance structures (Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges, 1996; Schuster, Smith, Corack, & Yamada, 1994).

Historical Context for Restructuring Our Governance

Early in the nineties, the University of Houston-Clear (UHCL) Lake was in its infancy stage of establishing many policies designed to address everything from curriculum, budgets, planning etc. to other actions that were supposed to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of the operation of the university. The structure of shared governance at that time included five governance committees: Facilities and Resources Committee (FRC), Educational Policies and Course Committee (EPCC), University Life Committee (ULC), library, Research, and Computing Committee (LRC), and the University Planning Committee (UPC) (University Faculty Hand Book, 1998) In addition to the five shared governance committees, there were administrative committees linked to the governance committees, such as Academic Associates and the Graduate Council, which reported to EPCC as an entry into the shared governance process. There were also permanent standing committees such as the Parking and Traffic Safety Committee, Space Planning and Reuse Committee that reported to FRC, the Planning group which reported to UPC, the Computer Services Advisory Committee for instructional technology reported to LRC, and the Personnel Sub-Committee which reported to the Faculty Senate Executive Committee. Finally there were task forces that were established for specific time periods to address unidentified issues that needed immediate resolution. Worthy of noting is that each of the above administrative, permanent committees or task forces could submit its business/actions via one of the shared governance committees, which in turn

forwarded the submissions to the faculty Senate for deliberation. Faculty Senate action was sent to University Council for approval before the document was sent to the president for final approval and implementation.

From the above description, it is clear that the shared governance process at UHCL was at best cumbersome, inefficient and unable to respond in a timely manner to issues that arose on campus and required immediate attention. A few researchers Schusters, et.al., (1994) suggested that effectiveness or good governance is the value of achieving a quality decision that is based on competence. Birnbaum (1991a) offered a slightly different view of good or effective governance that is connected to the culture of individual campuses. He suggested that each college or university will have a different definition of effectiveness, thus making generalizations difficult. Additionally, he stated that effectiveness is a match between the expectations of constituents and how the governance process evolves. In short, if groups on campus support a political process based on negotiation and compromise, the governance is effective if the process and the outcomes reflect that approach. Although Schuler's and Birnbaum's definitions of effectiveness are helpful, by showing that campus culture matters and at certain colleges and universities, either structures or informal political processes will likely take on greater significance.

Nonetheless, Kezar, (2004) suggested certain conditions that facilitate governance may transcend cultures, the most important ones being leadership, relations, and trust. Campus supporters of this structure would argue the process involved many constituent processes which increased the likelihood that a new policy or change in policy would be successfully institutionalized and have a greater impact on campus (Curry, 1992). Such a structure presents opportunity for dissent and debate (Walker, 1979) and allows for policy and program modifications, as well as assures accountability and faculty involvement (Rosovsky, 1990). Levine (1980) also suggested changes are more likely to be successfully implemented when discussed thoroughly and modified to fit the local situation. Moreover, an inclusive process with broad participation increases the likelihood of valuable input that can improve a policy or decision (Williams, Gore, Broches, & Lostski, 1987). Birnbaum (1992) and Walker, (1979) stated that without faculty support and acceptance, change will probably not last, nor will it have a significant impact on the university.

Typically, the preponderance of literature on shared governance and institutional change consists mainly of opinions by those interested in carving out a stronger role for either senior administrators, trustees, or faculty members (Eckel, 2004). Morphey,(1999) argued the notion that faculty and administrators need to share the institutional organizational responsibilities of their campus, that each should have primary authority for specific areas and actions within the college is an idea tied to the nature of the college. Due to the uniqueness of higher education institutions, there is a need for both administrative and scholarly expertise. Additionally, there are areas in higher education where administrative and scholarly elements are inextricably connected, for example, department chairs. For purposes of this manuscript “Shared Governance” refers to a system composed of structures and process, through which faculty, administrators, staff and students make collective decisions/recommendations. The Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges (AGB) and the American Council of Education (ACE) indicated that issues such as managing the endowment are assigned to trustees and maintaining and creating new resources were assigned to the president, while developing the curriculum, research and the academic preparation of students were expected of the faculty. Clearly, not all decisions fall neatly into the domain of one or the other groups; therefore, much of institutional governance must be conducted jointly in order to be most effective. The AAUP does not argue for exclusive authority of the administration or faculty in any of these areas, rather they express support for shared governance while also pointing to the fact that primary responsibility for specific areas of campus governance exist and should be respected and protected (Morphey, 1999). Eckel, (2004) contended that this statement may, however, causes as much confusion as clarity. For example, how does an institution arrive at a decision to discontinue a program, and who makes the final decision? The answer lies in where one sits and the case each party can make for ownership. As the stakes rise, the probability of conflict over who makes the decision will undoubtedly rise.

Although there are reports on both sides of the argument (Birnbaum, 2000; Kezar,2000, 2004; Dimond,1991; and Tierney, 2000) regarding the effectiveness/ineffectiveness of shared governance, the experience at UHCL pointed more in the direction of ineffectiveness at the end of the nineties decade and the early years of new millennium.

Review of Our Governance Process and Recommendations For Change

The perceived lack of efficiency and effectiveness on campus led to a review of the governance process during the 2004-05 academic years. The review failed miserably due to lack of oversight of the president and the disingenuousness of the faculty senate leadership at that time. Cohen & March (1986) in their study of presidential leadership and governance argued that large complex campuses and the diffusion of authority and decentralization of governance make presidential leadership less influential than commonly thought of in the past. The notion that university authority can be so diffused that it lessens the leader's ability to influence decision making and later implementation applies in my view only when the leader abrogates his/her responsibility to lead. At UHCL the president allowed many of the goals to become problematic, unclear, competing, inconsistent, and participation was, moreover, quite fluid; organized anarchy according to Cohen, & March (1986). For instance, faculty from different schools by and large wanted different outcomes generally based on goals associated with their units and had different expectations of what shared governance should be able to deliver. In addition, the institution did not appear to understand the processes that govern its activities and produce outcomes. Finally, faculty participation was fluid; large numbers of faculty may show up for one senate or committee meeting and the following meeting, too few would attend to have a quorum.

Presidential leadership could have had a positive influence on each of the above factors. The president however, chose not to demonstrate strong leadership in such matters which led to our ineffective governance process (Lee, 1991; Kezar, 2004). Schuster, et.al. (1994) showed that leadership and leadership style were very critical to governance outcomes, in fact of all the factors examined in that study, leadership and leadership style were the most influential on effective governance. Middle level leadership among faculty senate chairs, deans, and faculty were found to be the most important in creating effective governance. Lee, (1991) and Birnbaum, (1991b) demonstrate that quality of senate leadership affected administrators perceptions of whether the group was effective. The same held true for faculty and other constituent groups regarding campus administrative leadership. In spite of the above shortcomings of the campus governance, there was still broad campus support for it and significant belief that the system could be improved by study and modification.

The Committee Review Process

Following advice from the provost, the president appointed a shared governance review committee in the fall semester of 2005. More specifically, “the Provost was to chair the committee and was asked to convene a group that included representatives of the faculty: one from each of the four schools and not currently serving on the Faculty Senate Executive Committee; one member each from the Professional and Administrative Staff Association (PASA) and the Support Staff Association (SSA); two students from the Student Government Association (SGA); one Dean; one Associate Vice President from the Provost office and finally, one member each from the Library, Administration and Finance, and the Office of the President. The specific purpose of the review was to provide recommendations regarding the meaning and purpose of shared governance, its organizational structure, and an effective process for conducting its business (Shared Governance Charge Letter, 2006).

The committee was encouraged to hold public campus meetings/forums with faculty, staff, students and administrators to provide information regarding progress as well as to receive comments and suggestions from the various constituent groups during the formulation process. At the completion of the committee’s work recommendations were to be taken to University Council for discussion and approval. University Council would make the final recommendations to the president. In retrospect, it is evident that the campus environment was charged with mistrust among all the campus groups. Some faculty did not trust the administration, and some staff members did not trust faculty due to disparaging statements regarding staff serving on academic committees with faculty. Students were somewhat in the middle, not knowing whom to trust. Prior to this period, the culture at the university was one of inclusiveness. The faculty had agreed to allow staff members to serve on governance committees, which was unprecedented in higher education at the time. To protect faculty prerogatives, policies were put in place so that any new policy would require 51% of voting faculty members in order to pass (University Faculty Handbook, 1998). This practice and policy was unpopular among staff and some administrators, who served on these committees. The one-person one-vote concept was negated by this policy and the paradox did nothing to alleviate tension as the new committee attempted to revise and improve the shared governance process.

Template for Change of Structure

Additional identified governance issues that required attention but not included in the president's charge to the committee and required attention were to:

- Determine philosophy and purpose of shared governance at UHCL, its membership status/voting rights, and so forth;
- Determine the process of shared governance which will provide an idea of what groups should be involved; how should the process work; where should policy begin, what groups should review them, when should they be reviewed, and where should they wind up after being reviewed?
- Determine the relationship between faculty, staff, students, and administration in shared governance matters;
- Determine the optimum number of governance committees, the purpose, released time/or service for serving;
- Determine location of shared governance documents; do they remain in the Senate Constitution? And finally,
- Determine the process for approving policies;
- Determine length of service time on each committee and eligibility for re-election.
- Determine expectations for all faculties to participate in shared governance every 6 years.
- Determine possibility of electing alternate members to committees (Shared Governance Committee Minutes, 2006).

In addition to the stated charges and the other identified significant issues, the provost was acutely aware of the need to develop a strong cohesive team/group to accomplish the task at hand. Effective communication among the committee members was essential as was providing timely information to the university community as a whole. Committee members had to learn to communicate

openly, honestly and respectfully in order for the committee to accomplish its goals.

The above template of expectations was presented by the provost at the first committee meeting, and all members agreed to work and communicate with one another accordingly. The underlying politics on the committee and a driving force of various faculty members were that the faculty stood to lose “control” over matters they had determined in the past. Being mindful of this fact, the committee had to operate in a manner which projected the importance of maintaining a philosophy that valued inclusiveness; every group wins and no one loses when improvements are made for the betterment of the entire university.

Strategies for Effective Change

During the first two meetings of the committee the first draft of a purpose statement was agreed to: “Shared governance at the University of Houston Clear Lake is a collaborative, efficient system that involves all constituent groups (Faculty, Staff, Administration and Students) to make the best recommendations possible that are in support of the university mission. This includes but is not limited to facilitating the development of policies and procedures, monitoring the implementation of policies, and providing oversight of operations at the University”. Procedurally, the committee was asked to take the “draft purpose statement” back to their constituencies and receive feedback, which would be discussed at the subsequent committee meeting. After several minutes of discussing suggested changes from the feedback from the different groups, the committee at its next meeting accepted and agreed to the following revised statement of purpose:

“The University of Houston-Clear Lake’s Shared Governance System (SGS) is a participatory, advisory system charged with supporting the University Mission (Shared Governance Committee Minutes, 2006). The SGS provides a collaborative avenue through which each of the constituencies (faculty, staff, administration, and students) advises the University President on matters of policy and assists in the development of procedures. The SGS responsibilities include monitoring and oversight of the implementation of policies and procedures”.

To the chagrin of some and the satisfaction of others, the purpose statement was approved at the November/fall semester committee meeting.

Faculty Forum

At the faculty forum meeting, the Shared Governance Group presented a summary or status report regarding progress made to that point. Faculty attendance was low and indicative of the fluidity of faculty participation in decision making opportunities. Such behaviors may suggest simply that attention spans are limited and thus people are able to attend only to a narrow number of tasks at any point in time, (Eckel, & Kezar, 2004). Efficiency of the governance process was a major issue for faculty and administrators as were the issues of power and money. Faculty voiced the notion that no one knew where the power lay and that the stakeholders wanting to impact important issues were at the mercy of a system that was not always clear or working properly. Faculty also indicated that the proposed purpose statement suggested the responsibility of shared governance was to advise and assist the president. Such advice was not viewed necessarily as decision making activities that influence issues such as funding, salaries, program development on curriculum and other activities that impact the quality of education at the University.

Birnbaum (1985-1989) argued campus governance had layers and subsystems which were highly complex. He also asserted that campus governance systems were not efficient but highly effective, suggesting that efficiency and effectiveness may be antithetical when applied to campus governance. The overlap of authority and roles may in fact provide for better decisions to emerge. Berdahl, (1991); and Birnbaum (1991) also suggested that dual systems of authority which accommodate different perspectives of faculty and administrators were the key to effective governance, in that they retain both educational values and responsiveness. A review of the AAUP statement regarding the role of faculty in shared governance was also recommended. Although this suggestion was received positively, the committee accepted research by Mortimer and McConnell (1991) that criticized the AUP/ACE/AGB point statement on college governance for excluding important external groups such as legislators, governors, etc. that had a major impact on university operations.

Furthermore, the committee sought to strengthen its history of collaboration among university groups and not to discard such efforts for the sake of

becoming more efficient at conducting its business. Given that the university's history of success with shared governance was the envy of many other universities in the region, the goal was to build a stronger system that would be beneficial to the entire university community. The importance of a joint effort within the academic institution and the positive force in the various components working collaboratively continued to be an important mandate for the committee.

Staff Forum

The forum meeting with the university staff organizations did not reveal any unexpected issues. The staff members, both professional and nonprofessional, were concerned about not losing their role as participants in university shared governance, while faculty, on the other hand, wanted to exclude staff from all committees that dealt with "faculty" issues. Clearly, this was a major hurdle that had to be addressed and resolved by the committee.

Student Forum

Results of the student forum showed students shared similar concerns with the staff members. Their main fear was being excluded from the shared governance process and they questioned the 51 percent-rule on shared governance committees, which required a 51 percent support from faculty members for approval of any resolution. The one-person, one-vote issue was another hurdle that had to be addressed by the committee before submitting a final report.

Moreover, a review of the planning calendar revealed to the committee that the due date for completion of the shared governance proposal draft for the President's review was rapidly approaching. All indicators showed the work would not be completed by the March due date and the committee's work needed to extend to the end of April. To expedite a remedy, the committee discussed splitting into two subcommittees. Some of the issues to be addressed were the optimum number of shared governance committees, the roll and purpose of each committee, the voting membership, the processing of policy issues, release time, length of service, how to ensure broad constituency participation and electing alternate members to committees. After much discussion, it was determined that the committee would prefer to remain as a whole working unit in order to take advantage of the camaraderie and

interpersonal dynamics, group bonding motivation, interest and trust that developed during the year and a half of working together. The decision to hold a full day retreat proved to be more productive than a series of shorter meetings and agreed with the findings of (Dill,& Helm, 1988;Mortimer & McConnell, 1979; and Baldrige, 1982) In accordance with the agreed upon retreat, the remaining issues that needed to be resolved were:

- Determine the optimum number of shared governance committees their purposes/functions and roles;
- Determine membership, voting, length of service, voting, alternate members;
- Determine the process for tracking issues through the shared governance system.

Summary of Retreat

The full day retreat resulted in agreement on a structure of four shared governance committees: Academic Council (AE), University Life Committee (ULC), Planning and Budgeting Committee (PBC) and Facilities & Support Services Committee (FSSC), as well as the membership of each governance committee. The research on structural changes in campus governance has not been kind and according to Schuster et al. 1994) does not guarantee that the changed process will work to improve either efficiency or participation.

Although faculty wanted more representatives on each SG committee for control purposes, practical strategies for collegial participation of faculty on the one hand, and recognition of the contributions that disciplinary experts can make to management decisions on the other, can be complimentary asserted Harlow & Perry (2004). Faculty arguments were reasonable and logical, but the campus history and philosophy of inclusiveness prevailed. The idea was for faculty to have a plurality but not a majority on governance committees. Moreover, the committee determined that the University Life Committee (ULC) would have the option of electing a staff person as its chair, while the Planning and Budget Committee (PBC), and the Facilities and Support Services Committee (FSSC) would elect only tenured faculty members as chairpersons. All committee chairpersons were required to have one year of

experience as a committee member prior to assuming leadership of the committee. Finally, each shared governance committee would have an administrative liaison with expertise in the committee subject area. This position would also provide continuity as well as act as co-chair. The committee agreed that the liaison for ULC would be the Executive Director of Human Resources for PBC, the VP for Administration and Finance, and for FSSC the AVP for Information Resources would serve as co-chair.

The action of the shared governance committee was consistent with studies on new governance structures designed to organize the increased number of individuals included in governance and to ensure the diffusion of authority. Keller (1983) suggested a more efficient approach that he referred to as the Joint Big Decision Committee. Accordingly, the new committee structure borrowed from collegial structures that drew representatives from across campus, a somewhat bureaucratic model that valued highly structured roles and responsibilities. The intent of the committee was to recentralize decision making and authority with the notion it would be more efficient, while simultaneously maintaining broad cross campus input (Keller, 1983). Additionally, Dill & Helm, (1988); and Lee, (1991) showed that the composition and role of governance bodies also influence efficiency. The structural changes allowed the campus to tinker with the decision making processes but did not in any manner address major challenges, such as developing expertise needed to address complex decisions such as financial exigency, campus diversity, presidential leadership and faculty/staff development, nor did it provide any examination of how efficiency and effectiveness and campus morale would be impacted by implementing the new structure. Efficiency, according to Birnbaum (1988), Schuster et al. (1994) is the value of achieving a quality decision and is based on competence. Furthermore, the majority of researchers suggested that structure has an impact on efficiency but does little to improve effectiveness (Mintzberg, 1979; Lee, 1991; Cohen & March, 1974).

Birnbaum (1988, 1991b), Cohen & March (1974), Lee (1991); and Mintzberg, (1979) have shown that size of the governance structure process and complexity will impact the efficiency of the decision process but may not improve effectiveness. Their findings consistently show the larger the size of both the institution and structures involved in the process, the more time consuming the process will be. Finally, if the governance body includes key

individuals with the necessary expertise, and a clear understanding of their role, then the process becomes more efficient (Dill,& Helm, 1988).

Conclusions

As the committee completed its work, it became clear that a major contribution to the future of shared governance process at the campus had been made. As the final document was submitted to the University Council for consideration for approval to send to the president several important conclusions can be made:

- The work during the 18 months clearly agreed with previous research of Mortimer, K., & McConnell, T. (1979) and Birnbaum (1988), which suggested that efficiency, is not a particularly important principle, because some level of inefficiency seems to enhance decision making effectiveness. Efforts to Improve efficiency may have a negative impact on effectiveness of making decisions.
- The experience also demonstrated that the interpersonal relationships between the president and the senate chair were extremely important to the success or failure of the governance process (Lee, 1991). Additionally, Schuster et al. (1994); Wheatley, (1996) and Del Favero, (2003), clearly showed people significantly impact the process; of the campuses in the study, leadership or leadership style of the campus president and senate chair was pivotal and had the most significant impact on governance effectiveness (Kezar,2004) As a result of these findings, some researchers Kezar, (2000); Lee, (1991) and Birnbaum (1991b) emphasized the need for leadership development for senate chairs and other key positions instead of restructuring the process.
- Although there is conflicting evidence regarding the importance of leadership for effectiveness and efficiency within the shared governance process, Schuster et al. (1994); Lee,(1991); and Cohen & March, (1974) showed what many had suspected for years, that leadership or leadership style significantly shapes governance in terms of both effectiveness and efficiency. It is clear that many of the issues related to efficiency and

effectiveness would not have emerged on our campus had there been stronger leadership in both the senate and university presidential offices.

- The restructuring of the governance process appeared to be successful, an outcome contrary to the many efforts at restructuring governance that have failed, (Morphew, 1999, and Birnbaum , 1991), thus suggesting structure has only marginal impact on effectiveness and only minimally shapes efficiency. Schuster et al. (1994) confirmed the findings of Lee and Birnbaum that a history of mistrust between faculty and administrators had an impact on the success of governance on some campuses.
- Research during the 1960s and 1970s was instrumental in establishing campus senates, models for diffusing authority and to provide efforts for more decentralized and participatory governance systems (Kezar, A. & Eckel, P. J. 2004). This project showed that governance on campus, although participatory, was in reality more advisory. Input from the different campus groups, faculty, staff and students, was just input and depending on the financial health of the campus budget priorities, in the context of declining financial support, had little or no impact on the final decision (Lee, 2004; Rockford, 2001). For whatever reason, people/faculty and staff specifically, have a false sense of importance if they are able to sit on committees with administrators and discuss planning and budget matters. In reality, faculty and staff may fare better if they performed what they are prepared to do best, teach research, provide service and technical support and allow administrators to do the same in the realm of administration. In spite of this conclusion, decisions that are reached by broad based input from campus groups are more acceptable and to a large extent longer lasting. Such decisions may or may not be more effective, since there is usually a distinction between deliberations and recommendations on the one hand and the official responsibility for the decision on the other.

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The Enhancement of Institutional Effectiveness Through Sound Institutional Assessment and Strategic Planning

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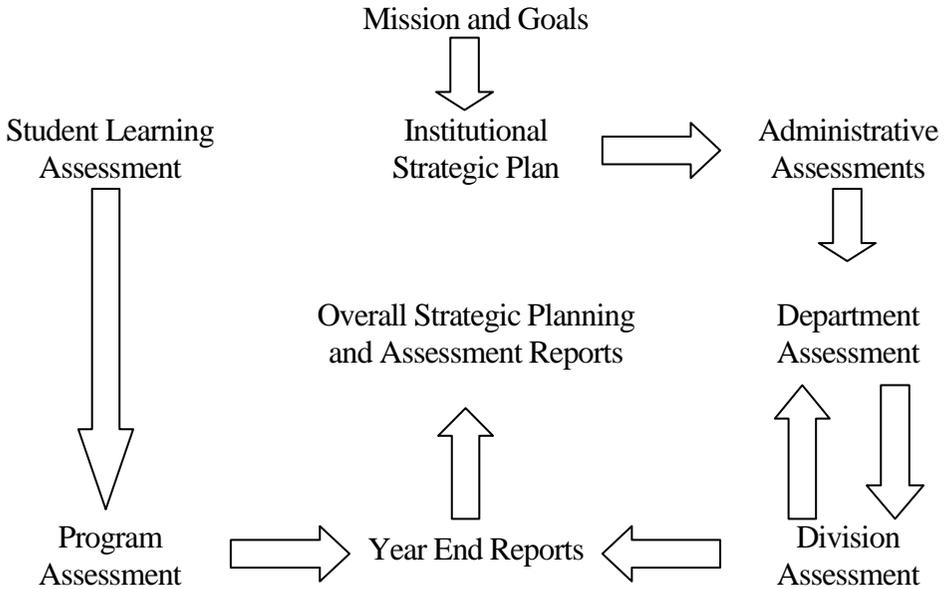
Queensborough Community College

Every University deserves to provide a framework for its institutional effectiveness. The framework includes a periodic review of its strategic plan and academic priorities, the integration of its academic program planning, accreditation, standards and assessment plans, as well as an alignment of the budgets in institutional and academic resources.

The institutional effectiveness process is an ongoing commitment of every academic and administrative support unit of the university to fulfill its institutional Mission and Goals so that quality educational programs and services will be offered to effectively prepare its students for leadership roles in society. Every unit in the institution tries to integrate strategic planning, assessment evaluation and budgetary process into a comprehensive program which helps sustain the university's mission.

In general the mission and vision statements of the university set the strategy for the systematic development of long-term aspirations and expectations as well as the annual college priorities which are further developed within the context of its goals and objectives. Each goal has a specific strategy to help carry them out. Implementation and goals statements are generally measurable and true-based. An assessment progress report is made towards evaluating the degree of achievement of the colleges' mission, goals and objectives. The assessment report becomes an "ongoing process" by which the institution engages in articulating its goals clearly and translating the goal statements into expected outcomes. The expected outcomes are reached by systematically gathering, analyzing and interpreting evidence from the expectation of each outcome (what you would like to happen) and determining how well the outcomes have been achieved. Then by using the evidence gathered from the

A Visual Schematic of Institutional Effectiveness



actual and expected outcomes one can promote continuous improvement and insure greater effectiveness. Institutional effectiveness is then maximized using the assessment of students/learning and the strengthened assessment of the college's support services.

Assessment then involves the consistent review of outcomes, analysis and continuous discussions of these outcomes and plans for actions. There are different levels of assessment simultaneously occurring at a college. The three particular areas of assessment are course assessment, program assessment and institutional assessment.

Course assessment occurs at the department level where course offerings are evaluated to determine whether the course learning objectives are being fulfilled. This is measured through student grades, reports and assignments, surveys and similar assessment tools. Program assessment is an assessment that occurs at the curriculum level and requires the collaboration among the departments that sponsor a particular program to ensure the programmatic goals and objectives are being achieved. The program review process as well

as faculty and administrative committees are generally vehicles for assessing program reviews.

Institutional assessment occurs at the institutional level and is used to determine areas of improvement and accountability. Institutional assessment seeks to determine how well the institution-wide goals and objectives are being achieved in light of the colleges' mission. This assessment takes the form of year-end reports from each division or support services including accredited reports and department planning documents. All these reports are then put together for inclusion in the colleges' strategic plan and considered in light of the college's cost-effective budgetary cycles.

The effectiveness of an institution depends on the contribution that each of the institution's programs and services make toward achieving the organizational, systematized and sustained goals and objectives of the institution as a whole. The pivotal question is "How well are we collectively doing what we say we are doing?" Moreover since student learning is a fundamental component of the mission of most colleges and universities, the assessment of student learning exists in answer to the question "how do we show the support of student learning as a fundamental aspect of institutional effectiveness." As a result of the discussion we need to recommend that a model for assessing the college's comprehensive assessment process be developed. In short this is a process for assessing the assessment protocol at a college. Assessing the assessment activities at a college would provide a framework for the college to further create or critique assessment activities.

The main rule of all the assessment activities taking place at the college is to gather information that indicates the extent to which the institution is accountable for its mission (a) to provide the institution with feedback for improving and developing what they are doing and making informal decisions about resources so that it can strive for academic excellence; (b) to improve the communication of assessment results to the college community; and (c) to provide a basis for the college strategic plan. When assessing the assessment activities at the college one should take into account that the mission and goals of the college are reflected in each assessment activity.

The conceptual framework for each assessment activity is efficient and effective. All institutional personnel are contributing to the general assessment process at different levels of assessment. Data are collected properly and a

systematic review of each assessment is done periodically. In this way identifying needs and problems through the assessment of the assessment process will create a stronger relationship between achieving the college's mission and the college's overall strategy for the achievement of its goals and general plan for institutional effectiveness.

Professional Standards of the AAUA

In 1975, the AAUA developed a set of professional standards, which embody the principles of moral and ethical leadership and which define the rights and responsibilities of administrators in higher education. These professional standards were revised in 1994. This revision process began in October, 1992. The Association's Professional Standards Committee developed a series of draft revisions that were reviewed and amended by the Board of Directors at its regular meetings, and by the AAUA membership at the 22nd National Assembly in June 1993. In November 1993, Draft IV of the revised standards was mailed to all members of the AAUA with a questionnaire, the responses to which were included in Draft V. Draft V of the revised standards was approved, with amendments, by the Board of Directors at the 23rd National Assembly in June 1994.

Standard 1 – Non-discrimination

- (a) An applicant for employment or promotion as an Administrator has the right to consideration without being discriminated against on the grounds of race, gender, sexual orientation, religion (except where exempt by Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, or other statute), national origin, age, or disability.
- (b) An Administrator has the responsibility to perform the duties of his or her office in such a way as to not discriminate on the grounds of race, gender, sexual orientation, religion (except where exempt by Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, or other statute), national origin, age, or disability.

Standard 2 – Written Terms of Employment

- (a) An Administrator has the right to a written statement of the terms of his or her employment, including, but not limited to, statements on salary and fringe benefits, term of office, process of review, and responsibilities of the position.
- (b) An Administrator has the responsibility to perform the duties of his or her office as defined in the written statement of the terms of employment or as defined in an official handbook of the institution.

Standard 3 – Institutional Authority and Support

(a) An Administrator has the right to the authority necessary to fulfill the responsibilities of his or her office and to a supportive institutional environment.

(b) An Administrator has the responsibility to use the authority of his or her office and the support provided by the institution to fulfill the responsibilities of his or her office.

Standard 4 – Availability and Use of Resources

(a) An Administrator has the right to the financial, physical, and human resources necessary to fulfill the responsibilities of his or her office.

(b) An Administrator has the responsibility to use the financial, physical, and human resources of his or her office in a way that is consistent with the policies and priorities set by the institution's governing board; and has the responsibility to develop, allocate, and preserve the resources of the institution that are within the limits of his or her office.

Standard 5 – Policy Development and Implementation

(a) An Administrator has the right to participate in the development and implementation of those institutional policies that relate to the authority and responsibilities of his or her office.

(b) An Administrator has the responsibility to participate in the development and implementation of those institutional policies that relate to the authority and responsibilities of his or her office.

Standard 6 – Speaking for the Institution

(a) An Administrator has the right to act as a spokesperson of the institution within the limits of his or her office and subject to the policies of the institution.

(b) An Administrator has the responsibility to act as a spokesperson for the institution within the limits of his or her office, insofar as that function is a requirement of the office.

Standard 7 – Professional Growth and Development

(a) An Administrator has the right to support for his or her professional growth and development by means such as participation in professional activities and attendance at professional meetings and by sharing in sabbaticals, leaves of absence, and other developmental programs of the institution.

(b) An Administrator has the responsibility to improve his or her professional skills, abilities, and performance by means such as participation in professional activities and attendance at professional meetings and by sharing in sabbaticals, leaves of absence, and other developmental programs of the institution.

Standard 8 – Job Performance Evaluation

(a) An Administrator has the right to regular formal evaluation of his or her job performance, to participate in the evaluation process, and to the timely receipt of the results of those evaluations.

(b) An Administrator has the responsibility for ensuring that his or her subordinates receive regular formal job performance evaluations, that they participate in the evaluation process, and that they receive in a timely manner the results of those evaluations.

Standard 9 – Advancement Within the Institution

(a) An Administrator has the right to be considered for career advancement opportunities within the institution.

(b) An Administrator has the responsibility when positions become available that are within the limits of his or her office to post those positions within the institution and to give consideration to candidates from within the institution.

Standard 10 – Academic Freedom

(a) An Administrator has the right to enjoy the benefits of academic freedom insofar as the concept of academic freedom (as defined by the institution) is applicable to his or her duties.

(b) An Administrator has the responsibility to perform the duties of his or her office in a way that maintains and secures the academic freedom of faculty, students, and administrators, and that maintains and secures the academic freedom of the institution.

Standard 11 – Expression of Personal Opinions

(a) An Administrator has the right to enjoy the benefits of academic freedom insofar as the concept of academic freedom (as defined by the institution) is applicable to his or her duties.

(b) An Administrator has the responsibility when expressing personal opinions on issues that are related to the institution to make clear that he or she is speaking as a private person and not as a representative of the institution.

Standard 12 – Harassment-Free Environment

(a) An Administrator has the right to perform the responsibilities of his or her office without being harassed.

(b) An Administrator has the responsibility to perform the duties of his or her office in a way that creates and maintains an environment in which each person is able to perform his or her responsibilities without being harassed.

Standard 13 – Personal Privacy

(a) An Administrator has the right to privacy in all personal matters, including, but not limited to financial information, religious beliefs, and political views and affiliations, unless this right is specifically limited by statute or the conditions of the particular office.

(b) An Administrator has the responsibility to respect the right of privacy of others, in all personal matters including, but not limited to, financial information, religious beliefs, and political views and affiliations, except where this right of others is specifically limited by statute or the conditions of their office.

Standard 14 – Participation in Associations and Support of Causes

(a) An Administrator has the right to participate in associations and to support causes of his or her choice, subject only to the constraints imposed by institutional responsibilities or conflict of interest considerations.

(b) An Administrator has the responsibility to respect the right of his or her subordinates to participate in associations and to support causes, subject to the constraints imposed by institutional responsibilities or conflict of interest considerations.

Standard 15 – Fair and Equitable Treatment

(a) An Administrator has the right to fair and equitable treatment by his or her superiors and by the institution's administrators and governing board and to receive treatment that is free from arbitrary or capricious action.

(b) An Administrator has the responsibility to treat subordinates fairly and equitably and to avoid arbitrary or capricious actions especially in situations relating to performance evaluations, promotions, demotions and, or, the termination of employment.

Standard 16 – Reappointment and Termination

(a) An Administrator has the right to receive a copy of the institution's policies and procedures relating to the timely notification of reappointment and termination actions, prior to his or her appointment. When these policies and procedures are amended, an administrator has the right to receive the amended policies and procedures.

(b) An Administrator has the responsibility to respect his or her subordinates' rights contained in the institution's policies and procedures relating to the timely notification of reappointment and termination actions.

Standard 17 – Post Employment Support

(a) An Administrator has the right, when his or her termination of employment is for reasons other than for cause, to receive professional and technical support from the institution in seeking new employment.

(b) An Administrator has the responsibility, within the limits of his or her office, to provide professional and technical support to subordinates whose employment is terminated for reasons other than for cause.

Standard 18 – Post Employment References

(a) An Administrator has the right, when ending his or her employment or subsequent to ending his or her employment, to receive a written statement from the institution that reflects clearly and accurately his or her job performance evaluation and the reason for his or her termination of employment.

(b) An Administrator has the responsibility, when requested by a subordinate or former subordinate, for providing a written statement from the institution that reflects clearly and accurately the performance evaluation and the reason for termination of employment of that subordinate or former subordinate.

The Mission of AAUA

The mission of the American Association of University Administrators is to develop and advance superior standards for the profession of higher education administration. Through its policy statements, programs, and services the association emphasizes the responsibility of administrators, at all levels, to demonstrate moral and ethical leadership in the exercise of their duties. To achieve these ends the association provides, through programs and services, opportunities for the professional development of its members, whether they be employed by colleges, universities, specialized institutions, or professional associations.

Guidelines for Contributors

The purpose of the **Journal of Higher Education Management** is to promote and strengthen the profession of college and university administration the **Journal** provides a forum for:

- (a) a discussion of the current issues, problems and challenges facing higher education;
- (b) an exchange of practical wisdom and techniques in the areas of higher education leadership, policy analysis and development, and institutional management; and
- (c) the identification and explication of the principles and standards if college and university administration.

Manuscripts should be written for the college or university administrator who has the general responsibilities of educational leadership, policy analysis, staff development, and/or institutional management. Practical as well as scholarly-oriented submissions are welcome.

All manuscripts should be submitted electronically to the Editor-in-Chief at DKING@AAUA.ORG. They must be submitted as MSWord documents. One page should be headed with the title of the article and should contain only the complete identification and contact information for all authors. The actual manuscript should contain no identifiable information other than the title of the article. Manuscripts are not restricted to a single format, but they must conform to the latest standards of a recognized style manual (e.g., APA, Chicago, MLA).

Manuscripts are blind reviewed and are publishable only upon the favorable recommendation of at least three reviewers. The **Journal** charges no publishing or page-cost fees.