

**The administrative home for university sport and active recreation: One approach doesn't fit all**

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# *Journal of Higher Education Management*

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# Rethinking Higher Education: Leading Through Integration

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## Introduction

Public higher education in the twenty-first century is at an impasse, entrenched within a tradition that has come under fire as irrelevant and costly (Crow and Dabars, 2015; Ferrall, 2011; Watson and Watson, 2014). This impasse reflects a decline in institutional sustainability (National Academies, 2007). According to the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC), since the Great Recession in 2008 ten previously accredited institutions in New England have either closed or merged with another institution and at the national level, Peter Jacobs (2015) reports that between 2008 and 2014 thirty-four institutions of higher education have closed. Governments no longer offer substantial funding without accountability (Thorp and Goldstein, 2010), and there is a disconnect between what and how students learn in college and their employment in the workforce/marketplace (Crow and Dabars, 2015; Autor, 2010).

The consequences of this disconnection between the marketplace and what/how students learn manifests with incremental/evolutionary discoveries and advancements and weak economic growth compared to earlier in the twentieth century when discoveries were made in leaps and bounds. Discoveries arise from disciplines that come together to solve complex challenges, so the connection between disciplines is more important than ever if we are to produce students who can work with others to solve the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century (Birx, et al., 2013). To be a sustainable institution within these challenges, making a strong connection between higher education and the marketplace is paramount and so, we are in the process of responding to these challenges by focusing on integration. There should be a strong connection between higher education and the marketplace; at the same time, colleges and universities should stay true to the principles embodied in a liberal arts education, particularly through an integrated perspective. Providing students with ample opportunities to explore ideas with depth and breadth is critically important. Without the ability to make connections between ideas and disciplines, our students will not be able to create a world that offers the kind of economic growth we have come to expect.

We believe integration and collaboration in all facets of our work is the best response to these challenges for our own institution, and for higher education in general. We also acknowledge that fully adopting a learner-centric philosophy should be at the center of both academic and organizational structures, processes, and decision-making. We have come to this perspective because our institution, Plymouth State University (PSU), found itself no longer



sustainable as an organization; the ultimatum was clear, without having a sustainable future, we had to change. This essay is our story. We are three years into changing our thinking, our practices, and our culture. Much like redesigning and rebuilding a plane as it is flying, we are sharing our story as we are living it, though we do have some evidence that our changes are making a difference that will have a positive effect toward sustainability. First, this essay discusses the reason for identifying the philosophy and practice of integration as our answer to our challenges and as the cornerstone of re-making higher education. Second, we describe our experiences through a timeline as we implement steps to integrate the academic and administrative parts of our institution. Lastly, we provide outcomes and evidences that indicate we are contributing favorably toward our sustainability. We begin with identifying why integration is necessary for making our institution, and higher education, sustainable in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

## **Integration**

Integration in higher education has advantages that provide a natural connection to the world outside of the academy. An integrated education involves experience that educates the whole student, in mind, body, emotion, and spirit (Fan, 2004). Additionally, the focus is not so much on making a student smart as much as it is about making a student well. This means it is about helping students to translate knowledge into wisdom in all facets of their lives; “there is no division between school and society, study and human life, knowledge and goodness” (Fan, 2004, p. 1). Integration was a pivotal aspect of George Alfred Whitehead’s (1967) philosophy of education because of the emphasis on the relation of the whole to the part. Whitehead indicated that “nothing is in isolation” (1967: 122) and that sets up an interdependence between the whole and part and the part and the whole. Modeling integrative experiences for students through both academic and student affairs can better prepare students for the kind of integration they will experience in the marketplace after graduation.

A study conducted by Hart Research Associates for the Association of American Colleges & Universities (2013) suggests that most employers seek students who can innovate and work across disciplines. They found that employers care less about the actual major and care more about finding employees with the capacity to work across disciplines. By creating an academic structure that naturally enables disciplines to work together, students experience the integration of disciplines which teaches them the basic mindset for working across disciplines.

In an interview with Laszlo Bock, hiring manager at Google, Bock stated that they are looking to hire individuals who can learn new things and to solve problems (Friedman, 2014). Additionally, they want employees to have a knowledge set that includes the ability to understand and apply information. Bock stated that these skills are not acquired from one discipline but instead are acquired through working across disciplines. When asked if Bock thinks the liberal arts are relevant today, Bock responded they are necessary especially when they are combined with other disciplines. Bock stated people need to be holistic thinkers, have a liberal arts background, and should be functional experts in their fields. Bock admits the way education is organized, finding this balance is difficult but once you have people with this balance, great societies can be built as well as great organizations.

The ability to be a holistic thinker with a liberal arts background and expertise in a particular area is what some scholars argue are meta-competencies necessary for the modern worker to be effective and successful as we move into the future (Sopegina, et al., 2016).

Integrative learning plays a significant role in student success (Ferren and Anderson, 2016). Key features of integrative learning include providing students with holistic experiences and project-based learning (Ferren and Anderson, 2016). Another feature involves helping students make connections between their education and the outside world through experiential education and real-world applications, all of which makes education integrated with the liberal arts purposeful, personal, and practical. (Ferren and Anderson, 2016). Integration is not only beneficial for students; the integration of faculty creates an infrastructure that naturally allows pathways for disciplines to come together in collaboration and problem solving. This kind of collaboration is challenging to do in a traditional silo-centric organizational structure where disciplines are situated within their own disciplinary departments and boundaries. Integration of faculty can lead to institutional transformation and higher student successes (Whittaker and Montgomery, 2013).

Our communities and experiences are changing fast due to a global economy. Integration is a tool that provides a pathway to keep up with the pace of these changes (Porter, 1990, 1998, 2008). Attention to complex or “wicked” problems requires thinking that runs across disciplines, working in teams, and is connected to real world experiences; simply put, addressing problems today require an integral approach (Rittel and Webber, 1973: 160).

Absent of this critical integral approach to higher education, students may not be prepared for the changing marketplace demands (Crow, 2007). Some critics argue we must shift our stride and find a better path that requires a revolution grounded in innovative thinking and an entrepreneurial action plan (DeMillo, 2015; Ford, et al., 2014). We argue that higher education needs to be fully *integrated* with the developmental tools for it to adequately prepare students for the dynamic work environments they will face after graduation. The next section describes how we are implementing integration across our institution—it is our framework for change and hope for our student’s future and for our organizational sustainability.

### **Integration at Plymouth State University**

At our institution, we began to take steps to integrate academic affairs and student affairs. Two years into the process during academic year (AY) 2017, we were at the beginning of our journey. Now, as we end our third year of our journey, we have made great strides and we are in the middle of our journey feeling more confident that we can accomplish much more. To our knowledge, no other public institution has reinvented itself to such a magnitude as we are undertaking. The reorganization moves us from twenty-four individual departments and three colleges to seven integrated clusters, which are organizational units comprised of Plymouth State University faculty, staff and students who come together with the intention to engage in collaborative, interdisciplinary work. We have identified the seven integrated clusters as Arts & Technologies; Education, Democracy, & Social Change; Exploration & Discovery; Health & Human Enrichment; Innovation & Entrepreneurship; Justice & Security; and Tourism, Environment, & Sustainable Development.

These integrated clusters are the main academic structure. We still have majors and we emphasize expertise in a major area; the difference is that we are creating an infrastructure that promotes and supports collaborating with other disciplines. The complete integration of our organizational practices and processes in academic affairs and student affairs create a horizontal/flattened organizational structure designed to enable streamlined collaboration while keeping learner-centric needs in the forefront of our work. By organizing in this collaborative

and integrative fashion, the ability to model integrative thinking, learning, and working enables an interface between education and the marketplace, between ideas that span disciplines, and ideas that bring together basic and applied methodologies to solve challenges, and transform our surrounding communities.

Integration ignites holistic changes. There are four developmental tools we are pursuing to encourage and promote integrative engagement within our seven clusters, they are: 1) first-year seminar, 2) themed general education sequences with micro-credentials, 3) open laboratories, and 4) having an integrated capstone experience that students engage in their junior or senior year. Together these tools provide a pathway for students to experience a cluster-based educational environment. When combined with or built around a major field of study this approach provides integrated breadth as well as depth.

Theming general education courses around skills and experiences provides a pathway of concentrated experience that interfaces general education and specialized disciplinary knowledge. While individual general education courses may have many elements that relate to a student's major area of concentration, students often do not see the connections, context or relatedness. By theming pathways in our general education program, we enable students to see connections to their major and the value of a well-rounded education that has both depth and breadth.

Open laboratory environments, with collaborative and project-based learning experiences, are tools that facilitate engaged scholarship and bring together disciplines and individuals who want to create a multidimensional learning experience. The open lab as a tool is an opportunity for students, faculty, staff, alumni, retirees, community members, and business partners to work together on an integrated learning project/challenge. This is also the environment for skill and methodology development for solving complex challenges.

Finally, an integrative capstone course within the general education curriculum is the last part of a student's undergraduate education occurring in either the last part of the student's junior or senior year. The integrated experience begins with the first-year seminar in the first-year of a student's experience and the integrative capstone course is the bookend where it integrates the depth and breadth of learning over their last four years.

These four tools build on a curriculum with connected breadth, context, and relatedness as well as depth in a discipline. From an organizational perspective, clusters are as much an administrative construct as an academic structure. The goal is to build an integrative administrative support structure for the students, faculty, and staff that empowers creativity and decision making without the traditional bureaucracy. The core features of integration at the organizational level involve academic affairs, student affairs, and administrative practices that sustain the functionality of the institution.

To integrate people and processes in our daily organizational practices, we had to change how we do our everyday business starting with enhancing communication and transparency across all organizational areas. Becoming an integrated university requires our internal culture to match the broad systemic organizational changes we are making. Belgian author, Frederic Laloux (2014), studies organizations and in his ground breaking book, *Reinventing Organizations*, he identifies three primary operating principles that cutting-edge organizations exhibit in their day-to-day operations. These principles are self-management, wholeness, and having a deeper purpose. Reorganizing through integration allows us to adapt these core principals into our organizational identity. We follow here with the timeline of our organizational change.

## Timeline

### **The First Six Months (August 2015-January 2016)**

Three years ago, we defined and advertised ourselves as a regional comprehensive university. We were attracting students who liked the campus, the region, and the small classes. Some students were attracted because of programs we offered, particularly those that had some unique aspects to them. But a reduction in student enrollment, largely due to demographics affecting higher education in many states including New Hampshire, (that was only partially remedied by significantly discounting tuition) called into question our strategy of being all things to all people. We asked ourselves, could we sustain this discount or could we do something different? We decided we could do better by focusing on our unique strengths in areas that resonated with our community and we recognized by holistically integrating programs that fit together synergistically, our strengths could be enhanced. This realization emerged from our then new university president; this was the start of our new direction.

Now, our institutional vision has changed to being a “visionary institution at the hub of an ever-growing creative community where students, faculty, staff, and alumni are actively transforming themselves and the region. We develop ideas and solutions for a connected world and produce society’s global leaders within interdisciplinary integrated clusters, open labs, partnerships and through entrepreneurial, innovative, and experiential learning” (PSU’s Vision Statement). While our mission to serve has not changed (our motto is *Ut Prosim*, That I May Serve by restructuring in an integrative fashion, we have set ourselves and our students up to make a meaningful difference and to serve our communities with action and a purpose. This is our holistic purpose which embodies two of the core principles Laloux (2014) identified in cutting edge organizations. Thinking holistically and having a larger purpose outside of the individual employee became part of our cultural mindset.

As we think back at the beginning of our organizational change we faced many challenges such as identifying redundant and broken processes across the organization, the lack of a long-term plan for financial stability, a heavy top-down organizational structure, and a lack of financial transparency across all constituents. We knew the next six months would be important as we began to implement our action plan because not all faculty and staff shared the same sentiments.

### **Six to Twelve Months (January 2016-June 2016)**

After faculty, staff, administration, engaged in the vetting of the themes for the integrated clusters, administration coordinated a series of communication events designed to be transparent, informative, and invitational (inviting input from all constituents). There was a series of town hall meetings, blogs (president and faculty), articles, and interviews of administration and faculty that was intended to provide information, a rationale, and elicit feedback as we continued planning how integration would look at the organizational level. The new vision and mission statement was approved after feedback from all constituencies, and a marketing plan was established to inform the public and prospective students about our new focus and to distinguish ourselves from other institutions. All of this positive activity could not

avoid the more challenging changes that our institution had to surmount. Part of our growing pains involved a reorganization of administration which included retirement incentives, strategic reductions in force, and strategic hires post attrition. For many, this was the darkest moment of the restructuring. After this, the culture started to change and across the constituencies, support for this new vision grew significantly.

### **Twelve to Eighteen Months (June 2016-December 2016)**

During this next six months, our entire campus, as well as the local community, was involved with our new way of engaging because this is the period we kicked off the engagement of cluster projects that involved students, faculty, staff, administration, the community, and businesses. With initial seed money approved by the University System of New Hampshire (USNH) Board of Trustees, by the end of the fall 2017 semester we had approximately 3000 students, either through class/curriculum or independent participation, involved in cluster projects. These cluster projects involved integrative experiences across multiple disciplines, various partnerships with the community and businesses, and collaboration in open lab spaces—both on and off campus.

Curricular changes also began to happen through dialogue within the General Education Committee and the Curriculum Committee. One significant measure was the development of a First-Year Seminar Fellows program that was used to evolve the first-year seminar toward a project-based learning course that focuses on wicked problems and introduces students to the integrated clusters and integrative/collaborative learning. With the onset of this curricular change, the curriculum committee began its movement toward developing infrastructure support for integrated cluster learning experiences.

While academic changes were emerging, student affairs, in collaboration with academic affairs, developed recruitment, enrollment, and retention strategies grounded within the integrated cluster vision. From an institutional perspective, there are three parts to student success: (1) recruiting of students who resonate with what we are teaching, (2) retaining those students because they are integrated into the community, (3) graduating students who are prepared for a career of passion with the skills and experience to succeed.

In the past, student retention was difficult (NCHEMS, 20217). The reality was that we lost more than 25% of our students after the first-year and as we have increased discounting, that number has only grown. Overall, our graduation rate is slightly better than 50%. But our student exit interviews revealed that the major reasons they were leaving were financial, curricular, and the fact that they felt disconnected, disengaged, and lonely here.

Student Affairs is now actively collaborating with faculty, staff, and students to cultivate the student experience from residential life to academic life in a holistic and synergistic manner that will support student successes across all disciplines. This is an area where, in time, we will be able to measure the effectiveness of these recruitment, enrollment, and retention initiatives. Some initiatives in the infancy stages include theming of residential spaces, integrating open lab spaces in residential environments, developing a holistic program on life skills that will be delivered to students in a variety of ways from in the residential halls, to public social spaces, to open lab spaces, and in the classroom. At the publication of this essay, we are implementing these initiatives and we have received positive feedback from students, parents, alums, and the community.

Having students who come to Plymouth State because of what we offer is not only key for recruiting, but it is also the starting point for greatly improved retention. These students come with an idea of how they fit in. They engage immediately with faculty and other students through first-year seminars, thematic general education courses and open laboratories that create a sense of community that spans the disciplines and reintegrates the university.

While integrated clusters enhance academic value, they are also a more streamlined organizational structure that empowers and reorganizes what has become a somewhat siloed bureaucracy into a structure that allows us to provide an exceptional education. This structure deals with the reality of limited state funding, where New Hampshire is one of the states that receives the least amount of funding for public higher education, amidst financial competition in the new landscape of higher education. As students go through their years here, they build the relationships, skills and experience that will position them well to be global leaders in their fields of study. Ultimately, transition to an impactful career will then be just part of the overall process, not something separate and apart. Conversations about these initiatives began in the fall 2016. In the following six months, they began to take form.

### **18 Months to Two Years (January 2017-June 2017) and Beyond**

At the end of the spring 2017 semester, we implemented a variety of initiatives and we are still developing many other initiatives. Our First-Year Seminar Fellows Initiative has concrete plans for implementing the new first-year seminar in fall 2017. Twenty full-time faculty committed to teach two sections of the first-year seminar during the AY2018. As a part of the Fellows program, they committed to professional development during summer 2017 in which they trained with a national expert on wicked problems and used design thinking to develop the first-year seminar course which will introduce incoming students to integrated clusters, integrative learning, wicked problems, and collaborating with other disciplines and partners. At the publication of this essay, we anticipate continued commitment by faculty to the First Year Fellows program and look forward to the fall 2018 incoming class to experience a second, stronger iteration of the seminar.

The General Education Committee is working toward revising the general education program to align with the integrated cluster initiative by theming pathways through the entire program. They are also developing the Integrated Capstone course for the general education program that will be implemented in AY 2019. The Curriculum Committee is developing shell courses that can be used for a variety of project-based learning experiences and tool kit courses that students will be doing in both their general education courses and their major disciplinary area. Per faculty request and supported by the administration, we have hired a director of general education to lead the vision of interfacing general education with the disciplines and aligning with an integrative cluster-based learning model. By the end of May 2017, there were a total of seventy cluster projects, both funded and nonfunded. There is a buzz across campus about redesigning courses, integrating open lab experiences, developing partnerships, and cultivating project-based learning into courses and curricula. Conversations are evolving our infrastructure as we consider changing how courses are scheduled, when they are offered, and how we incorporate open lab spaces across campus to accommodate integrative and project-based learning in all disciplines. As of the end of the spring 2018 semester, we observed many disciplines revised their curriculum from a three-credit model to a four-credit model to account for high impact learning experiences including open lab experiences and community

engagement/partnerships. We anticipate all curricula will be revised to a four-credit model by the end of AY2019. We have seen already the resistance to change mitigated, people are becoming involved from all corners of the campus, and students are excited about the possibilities.

In April 2017, the USNH Board of Trustees came to campus to see the kind of activities they were reading about in the president's monthly reports. Cluster project leaders made posters, students met with the Board and spoke movingly about their life-changing experiences with cluster-based learning. The Board responded enthusiastically and agreed to continue supporting this initiative. This is good news but our work is not finished. While these changes have been led by the cluster guides, our vision is to have a completely different leadership model. Beginning summer 2017, a Transition Leadership Team (TLT) will work to develop a team-based leadership structure that flattens the traditional top down hierarchical leadership model. At the end of AY2018, each cluster is at different places in the designing of their leadership structure. Some clusters are piloting their leadership structure, some clusters will pilot their structures in the fall 2019, and others are still in the design phase and not yet ready to pilot a full leadership structure. We know that departments must be completely phased out by the end of AY2019. We expect that by the end of AY 2019, we will have new team-based leadership models that differ from cluster to cluster depending upon particular cluster needs but what will be common across all cluster leadership structures is that they will be driven by integration and student/learner experience. We recognize that we are in the process of our organizational change and institutional vision transformation. Telling our story as we are making these changes provides valuable narrative insight to onlookers seeking their own possible pathway toward institutional viability and sustainability as many institutions continue to face some of these challenges in higher education. It is our hope that in the very near future we will provide valuable assessment, insight, and evidences of what these changes contributed to the sustainability of our organization and offer lessons learned from the processes we followed during this endeavor.

### **Outcomes and Evidences**

Prior to implementing and operationalizing our integration strategies, our institution had seen a significant decline in enrollment tempered by increases in the discount rate which was substantial. This discounting was mirrored by other institutions causing an increase in competition. Neither of these two conditions helped our deficit and only increased our challenges. As we begin to implement and operationalize some of our integrative strategies we mentioned earlier, we also launched a new marketing campaign in November, 2016 which was based on the new vision and highlighted our cluster-based learning model. This new marketing campaign included a new tag line, "see further up here" and website with consistent branding, logo, and radio and television commercials. This attracted out of state students producing an increase in our yield from 642 out of state students in fall 2016 to 704 out of state students in fall 2017. We attribute this increase in out of state students to our messaging about integrated cluster experiences. As a result, we were able to lower our discount rate while maintaining the same entering enrollment. At the writing of this essay, our enrollment numbers for fall 2017 are not yet confirmed but our accepted student numbers for the fall 2017 enrollment are at 1230 while in 2016, the numbers of students entering in the fall was 1144. Leading up to the cluster initiative, our retention rate was approximately 68%, which is lower than the national average

at 79.8% (NCHEMS, 2017). The retention rate for colleges and universities in our state was actually much higher than our rate at 75.2%. During the academic year 2016-2017, retention incrementally raised to 70% and as far as we can tell, in fall 2017 our retention rate will break through that 70% level into the low to mid 70s.

With students at the center of the decision-making processes, we achieved efficiencies in the administrative areas including consolidations with new financial service centers and soon to be completed 'one-stop shopping' areas for student success, registration and account services. There has been a savings of \$2.6M which is expected to grow to \$5M per year while increasing faculty and the quality of education. Tremendous support came from the university system Board of Trustees (\$10.6M in one-time funding for initiatives) and the state legislature vote for \$3M capital funding earmarked for PSU in the next biennium.

In addition, there has been an increase in interest from the community and from donors. We have completed three new open laboratories, including the Ray Burton '62 Open Laboratory named after the longest serving executive councilor in the state's history. In our Center for Business and Community partnerships alone, almost 300 students have been prepared and placed with over 100 industry partners in high impact learning experiences (internships, service learning, co-op, community service).

Donors and alumni have expressed delight in and financial support for the integrated clusters in the launch year (fiscal year 2017) of the new learning model at Plymouth State University. New gifts that support the integrated clusters total more than \$950,000 in current use gifts and pledges. In addition, new bequest intentions in support of the clusters total more than \$1.5 million, including a seven-figure gift that will fund a cluster initiative into perpetuity in the North Country and a six-figure gift that is designated to support an Open Laboratory on campus. Lastly, University Advancement achieved a record fundraising year of more than \$5.1 million in FY17, an accomplishment that we attribute to the integrated cluster vision.

University Advancement, with support from marketing and communications consultants, announced the cluster model in June 2016. The new integrated clusters model achieved a significant earned media reach (how widely was the news seen as a function of news releases written and pitched by our institution) of over 13 million individuals with an advertising value (what we would have paid had the institution purchased advertising space instead of earning the free news coverage) of nearly \$92,000. Now, University Advancement positions all media relations and marketing communications with integrated clusters in mind. Social media traffic has increased significantly, too. The most telling elements are the huge increases in organic reach on Facebook from 55,647 to 410,534 (637% increase) and Click through from 5,760 to 32,048 (456% increase). We have also earned a 100% increase in Likes on Twitter. In fiscal year 2018, we have a plan to write and pitch more news releases with specific cluster projects and initiatives, and we expect the coming year to garner increased results regionally and in national media. We have also had successful ongoing cluster projects that include partnerships with area businesses to revitalize rural communities in our state as well as addressing some of the most significant problems in the state, including addiction and environmental concerns.

### **Looking Toward the Future**

Integrated Clusters provides us with a rich opportunity and vehicle to harvest something we did not realize we had. Integrated clusters allow us to demonstrate what is unique about our institution. They provide focus and identity by organizing all our academic programs into seven



integrated clusters. We are creating learning communities that facilitate exploration and discovery across disciplines (Birx, 2016). They allow us to create families of programs that are uniquely defined, interrelated and that resonate with the region and the students who find that distinctiveness important. In the same spirit of distinctiveness, clusters are also structures that enable students to work in an interdisciplinary capacity that mirrors what it is like to collaboratively work in a connected global environment, identifying and working with others to solve real world challenges.

We are developing world changers and giving our students lifelong learning skills to make their dreams become reality—turning passion into high impact careers. Our goal is for our students to be the most in demand graduates on the planet because of their grand understanding of integration with applied skills. We believe it is now time to stop arguing about our economy and the relevance of our universities. Let us look together toward a bright future, joining hands with others, and moving forward together.

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## Lessons Not Yet Learned: Culture, Governance, and the Jerry Sandusky Case

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From 1995 until 2011 the Pennsylvania State University (PSU) had on its staff, and then as an emeritus professor, an individual who abused children. In June 2012 a Pennsylvania jury found Jerry Sandusky guilty of 45 counts of criminal charges. The president of PSU and two of his lieutenants were also charged with perjury, obstruction of justice, and failure to report child abuse. The most famous and celebrated football coach in the United States, Joe Paterno, was fired, and passed away soon thereafter.

Given the failure of university leadership to ensure the safety of children, the Board of Trustees (Board) commissioned a report by Freeh Sporkin & Sullivan, LLP (FSS), led by Louis Freeh, former head of the Federal Bureau of Investigation. The 267-page report detailed the crimes that had been committed, the conditions that permitted them to occur, and suggested steps for reform. The Pennsylvania Department of the Auditor General also issued a 120-page report focused on governance reform. At the heart of the investigation were children who had been criminally abused. The Freeh Report's opening statement underscored the tragedy: "The most saddening finding...is the total and consistent disregard by the most senior leaders...for the safety and welfare of Sandusky's child victims..." (p. 14).

Our purpose here is neither to investigate nor to re-litigate yet again the events that transpired. The facts and evidence are well known due to extensive reporting. However, by using the Board as our unit of analysis, we consider how such "exceptional deviance in big-time college sports" (Nixon, 2014) might have occurred, and more importantly, what might be done to ensure that such actions not happen again. We focus on the Board because regardless of "...the delegation of authority to the administration and faculty...the board still retains the ultimate responsibility" for what happens on campus (AGB, 1998, p. 3). Further, "If the Penn State administration was imperial, including athletic administration, and if it was insular and secretive about the athletic program, it was in part due to the policy and actions of the Board that allowed it to be so" (Smith, 2016, p. 150).

The Board has been viewed particularly as negligent (FSS, 2012; Wagner, 2012). The Freeh and Auditor General's Reports focused on personal and structural remedies that the Board needed to enact. Yet, structural changes without the concomitant changes to the culture of an institution are unlikely to succeed (Cameron & Quinn, 2011), or as we shall point out here, even be implemented. Without an analysis of the larger environment in which these organizations function, the onus falls on individual action rather than systemic change. In an age of increasing accountability, we are uncomfortable with a conclusion that the protection of children can only be left up to leaders who are forced to juggle a multitude of issues. We also are left wondering why agencies that ostensibly are self-appointed monitors of what constitutes good governance were unable, or unwilling, to point out what now seems to be very bad governance.

We suggest that calls for individuals to come together and discuss the culture of an organization works from what we shall define as an integrationist perspective, whereas what actually is needed is a focus on a culture that is fragmented. Indeed, until the events became known, many would suggest that PSU's culture was cohesive and mutually shared (DeSantis, 2009). We put forward a schema for thinking about culture and the larger environment that enables a more protective landscape than the one that existed throughout the time that Sandusky was abusing children.

The structure of the text differs from typical research articles insofar as it is first necessary to understand the structural and cultural conditions present at PSU in order to advance a different theoretical framework rather than vice versa. Over the last quarter century arguably no issue has garnered more widespread interest and concern than the Sandusky case (*Dell'Aquila*, 2012), but very little has been done to ensure that it will not happen again. We consider why that is so, and encourage a different way to think about an organization's culture. In doing so, we argue that a less prescriptive and more reflective approach to understanding organizational culture is what one needs to understand the events that transpired at PSU.

Accordingly, in what follows we first consider the proposed governance remedies that have been suggested. We then analyze the progress PSU has made in remedying what has been seen as structural shortcomings. As we shall see, most of the recommendations either have not been implemented or have been only partially executed.

### **Analyzing the Structural Recommendations for Reform**

Many observers suggest that the most glaring examples of incompetence and mismanagement pertained to the manner in which the Board functioned. The Freeh Report stated that Board "...did not perform its oversight duties" and that the Board's "complacent attitude" created an environment that enabled Sandusky's criminal behavior (p. 15). The report by the state auditor's office identified that the structure of the Board was primarily at fault (Wagner, 2012). Hence, the report focused squarely on the inadequacy of the Board's structure and processes and offered recommendations to overhaul the Board. The assumption was that an improved structure would make it less likely to allow the events to reoccur.

An additional point about the stated failure of the Board turns on its relationship with the Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges (AGB) and PSU's accrediting agency, the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE), and to a certain extent the American Council of Trustees and Alumni (ACTA). These groups ostensibly oversee and/or define what constitutes 'good governance.' AGB, ACTA, and MSCHE; all have weighed in on the events that transpired at PSU. And yet, none of them offered warning signs before, or as, the events occurred.

AGB is "the premier organization centered on governance in higher education" (AGB, n.d.). PSU has long been a member of AGB. Most importantly, Cynthia Baldwin, Chair of PSU's Board during a critical time of the Sandusky scandal was chair of AGB's Board. Baldwin was Chair of the AGB Board in 2009, when AGB released a Statement on Board Responsibilities for Intercollegiate Athletics:

Boards and chief executives cannot wait until a scandal unfolds to motivate their interest in these complex matters...That intercollegiate athletics...is the institution's most visible component compels institutional leaders to pay close attention.

Consequently, boards should exercise appropriate oversight...Central to board oversight is to call for the athletics department to embody the proper tone, direction, and values consistent with the academic mission of the institution...(p. 3).

Only after the Freeh Report was published did AGB make any public acknowledgement about the problems of PSU's Board (e.g. Legon, 2012). And yet, the structural "problems" detailed in the reports existed for almost twenty years. One wonders how it is possible that an association which claims to "continuously advance the practice of governance by designing and instilling best practices..." (AGB, n.d.) never made one public comment pointing out the warning signs that in hindsight seemed so clear.

Similarly, PSU is accredited by MSCHE which "defines, maintains, and promotes educational excellence" (MSCHE, n.d.). During the time of the scandal, PSU submitted two reports—one in 2005 and another in 2010. Neither report mentions any significant shortcomings with regard to Board oversight and governance. Only after the scandal came to light did MSCHE see fit to issue a warning. In the site visit to campus in 2005 the observation team made no mention of the structural weaknesses of the Board. The report failed to mention anything specific regarding Standard 4, *Leadership and Governance*, and put forth that "Penn State has excellent policies and practices that govern...endeavors to ensure quality and coherence with mission" (p. 12). No comment for this standard stands in contrast to the key documents released after the scandal which emphasized the lack of Board knowledge, control, and initiative.

ACTA is largely a conservative think tank that desires more involved, activist boards. It is focused on "the primacy of trustee authority" and is committed to institutional accountability (Stripling, 2016). In some respects it is the bete noire of AGB. Where AGB tends to counsel caution, ACTA wants more board action. It too, however, made no prediction about the problems at PSU, though ACTA claims to have been "at the heart of the discussion related to Penn State governance" (ACTA, 2011-2012, p. 2).

How is it possible that national associations and accrediting agencies had no idea that an institution's governance structure was ripe for abuse when these associations claimed to know what good governance was? In what follows we highlight the structural recommendations that have been made to ensure similar abuses will not occur again. We focus on the six primary recommendations aimed at the Board rather than suggestions focused on reforms about individual offices or the more managerial ideas which permeated the Freeh Report.

▪ **The president should be removed from the Board and the governor should be a nonvoting trustee.** One assumption was that President Spanier held too much power. He was not only on the Board, but was secretary to the Board. The configuration was illogical: on the one hand the president was supposed to be supervised by the Board, and yet on the other hand, as a member of the Board, he was the Board's equal or even more importantly as secretary, an executive board member (Wagner, 2012).

The report raised a similar concern with regard to the governor. As a member of the Board the governor has the potential to recommend state expenditures for annual funding as well as capital funding essentially to himself. The conflict turns on the assumption that the same individual cannot speak as a trustee and as governor. The presence of the governor on the Board prevents the separation of the state and the governing board (AGB, 2010; Novak, 2012). Moreover, the governor also appoints 6 members to the Board, a power that may lead to a certain allegiance.

Since the recommendation to remove the president and reduce the governor to a nonvoting role has been made, both the president and the governor remain on the board in a non-voting capacity. This move aligns with ACTA's recommendations, but not the suggestion of top AGB advisors. Looking at similar institutions within Pennsylvania, University of Pittsburgh and Lincoln University have the governor and the COO on their boards as full voting members.

▪ **The Board should be no larger than 21 voting members.** PSU's Board had more voting members than any other Big Ten institution. The Board was even larger than the 20-member Board of Governors responsible for the entire Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education (Pennsylvania Association of Councils of Trustees, 2015). The other state-related universities in Pennsylvania – Lincoln, Temple, and Pittsburgh – had boards that were larger.

The recommendation for a smaller board relied largely on the advice of AGB and ACTA. In 2010, AGB reported that the average size of the Board was 11.8 members. ACTA put forth that manageable board size is one of 7-15 trustees. Nowhere prior to this recommendation is there a public recommendation that PSU should reduce its board size to ensure good governance. Further, the University of California has 26 voting members and the University of Tennessee has 32. Two elite private universities – Stanford University and the University of Southern California – have 38 and 55 voting members on their boards. There is no literature that points out the ineffectiveness of these boards because of their size. Instead of reducing the size of the Board by 11 members, the size of the PSU Board has *increased* to 38 members.

▪ **The Board should have a majority of voting members present for quorum.** The Board had defined a quorum as 13 of its 32 members. Thus, official business could occur with a minority of the Board present. PSU's Board was an outlier with regard to this issue. The norm is that quorum suggests some number over 50%. Bylaws of the PSU were changed in 2014 to require the majority of voting members be present to establish quorum at meetings.

▪ **The Board should minimize staff-to-board and board-to-staff crossovers.** One of the more controversial issues elucidated was that trustees had previously worked for the university in administrative roles, or they had been on the Board and then went to work as senior administrators. The report pointed out that such movement breeds insularity that can result in precisely the sort of mismanagement that occurred. Following the scandal, ACTA warned that trustees should not be able to rotate in and out of positions at universities. At PSU there were numerous cases of reshuffling of campus positions that created awkward employer-employee relations. As an example, a former vice president, who at one point answered to President Spanier, became a board member who then had authority over Spanier. In another transposal of roles, a former board member became University Counsel and went from having the president report to her to then having to report to the president.

Since the scandal, the trustee to staff crossover continues. One notable example is David Joyner, former PSU football player, who joined the PSU Board in July of 2000 and was permanently named Director of Athletics in 2013.

▪ **The Board should be transparent and accountable.** Boards in general, but PSU in particular, prefer that discussions occur in private and as little information as possible is made public. The assumption is that trustees will reach a better decision behind closed doors, rather than under the glare of a spotlight. Of consequence, PSU has opposed Pennsylvania's "Right to

Know” law; the trustees are not subject to Pennsylvania’s Ethics Act, and financial disclosure of costs is not mandatory. Public participation in board meetings, or public comments about a particular agenda item, are not allowed except in the most minimal manner. Agendas were generally not made public, and the PSU website defined them as “confidential” documents available for review only on meetings days. Minutes were minimal and provided very little background on what actually occurred. Who voted for or against motions was impossible to discern. Student and faculty input were almost nonexistent.

Once again, when asked, AGB pointed out what good practice was, and underscored what PSU had was not good practice. Ironically, AGB interviewed Cynthia Baldwin about good governance in 2010. Baldwin talked about how the PSU Board spent a lot of time on board governance “...making sure that...policies and programs are transparent...[and] continu[ing] to look at ways to ensure that the board remains strong (Legon, 2010). Although the interview consistently states what good governance is, none of the issues discussed as being instrumental in creating a criminal environment at PSU were discussed. Presumably, the inclusion of Baldwin in a prominent article by AGB was to highlight her, and by inference, PSU’s Board’s excellence.

The president resisted the Board’s efforts to have more transparency and was unwilling to provide the Board with vital information (FSS, 2012). In the end, the Board ceded too much of its oversight authority to the president, often merely serving to “rubber stamp” his ideas (Belcher, 1960; de Russy, 1996; FSS, 2012; Smith, 2016). The result is that both the Freeh and the Auditor General’s analysis called for greater transparency and suggested that lack of transparency was a root cause of the systemic problems on campus. While there have been changes with respect to greater accountability and transparency (e.g. availability of board meetings online in real time and via video archive), there is no evidence of the evaluation process said to be in place for the president, Board, and other senior officers.

▪ **The Board should have a nine-year term limit for all members with limited privileges.** Board members have been able to serve 15 years or longer. The result is that a number of trustees have served over a quarter of a century. The recommendation was to reduce terms to nine years, and reduce the automatic privileges that are afforded to retired trustees. As of this writing, term limits are set at 12 years. When board members retire they retain the privileges afforded to a current member. They are able to serve for 6 years; after those 6 years they retain the title and ability to attend meetings. Emeritus trustees are reimbursed for “reasonable expenses related to service” from time to time (PSU Board Bylaws, 2014). Yet what those monetary expenses are is unknown because of a lack of transparency.

Thus, approximately four years after the reports have been written, most changes have not been enacted despite only needing a vote of the Board at any regular or special meeting (see Table 1). Of the 6 recommendations listed here, only 1 has been fully enacted—the majority quorum. PSU is not alone; despite the gravity of change affecting higher education, most institutions approach governance in nearly identical ways from 50 years ago (AGB, 2014a).

AGB President Rick Legon went as far as to say that, “...we do board governance pretty much the way we've done it for well over 300 years...And that's not an exaggeration" (McMinn, 2013). Further, the reports try to point out that the lax governance structures at PSU were aberrations, but several other institutions have at least one of the conditions that the reports suggested must change. AGB and MSCHE, although able to place blame on PSU for flawed

governance structures, still have not put forward any ramifications for if one or another governance reform is not in place.

Table 1

<b>Recommended Reform</b>	<b>Changes at PSU</b>	<b>Change Process</b>
The president should be removed from the Board and the governor should be a nonvoting trustee	President remains on the board as a nonvoting trustee; governor is a nonvoting trustee	The Bylaws may be amended, altered or repealed, and new bylaws may be adopted, by the Board of Trustees at any regular or special meeting.
The Board should be no larger than 21 voting members	Board increased to 38 members	The Bylaws may be amended, altered or repealed, and new bylaws may be adopted, by the Board of Trustees at any regular or special meeting.
The Board should have a majority of voting members present for a quorum	Quorum is set at the majority of voting members	The Bylaws may be amended, altered or repealed, and new bylaws may be adopted, by the Board of Trustees at any regular or special meeting.
The Board should minimize staff-to-board and board-to-staff crossovers	Board member selected as athletics director	The Bylaws may be amended, altered or repealed, and new bylaws may be adopted, by the Board of Trustees at any regular or special meeting.
The Board should be transparent and accountable	(1) Addition of a Chief Ethics and Compliance Officer with a reporting line to the Board, (2) addition of a student and faculty trustee, and (3) availability of board meetings online in real time and via video archive; no evidence of the evaluation process for the president, Board, and other senior officers	The Bylaws may be amended, altered or repealed, and new bylaws may be adopted, by the Board of Trustees at any regular or special meeting.
The Board should have a nine year term limit for all members with limited privileges	Terms set at 12 years; retired board members keep privileges accorded to current members for an additional 6 years (keep the title, ability to attend meetings, expense reimbursement, etc.)	The Bylaws may be amended, altered or repealed, and new bylaws may be adopted, by the Board of Trustees at any regular or special meeting.



Our point here is that structural remedies, however plausible, ought not to be looked on as ‘rules’ that have causal implications, as if a university which has a 50-member board will inevitably have bad governance. Many of the suggestions that were made seem viable, but there is no scholarly evidence that such recommendations are valid. And if such rules exist, then groups like AGB and MSCHE need to be more proactive and forthcoming in pointing out what are mandatory structures for good governance.

Our own interpretation differs from the recommendations discussed here. Rather than structural analyses in search of rules, we think of postsecondary organizations as cultures that exist through on-going interpretative strategies. Our findings demonstrate how inadequacies in governance structures may be reinforced given various on-campus influences that are prioritized over traditional governance aims. In this case, the *de jure* control of the university by the Board was suppressed by the *de facto* control of the ingrained football culture. Without addressing the organization’s culture, any changes are superficial or temporary at best (Quinn, 1996).

In what follows we first offer a framework that has been used to think about organizational culture, and then propose an alternative framework that might better have served PSU and other institutions in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

### **Considering Organizational Culture**

The organizational culture at any given institution is potentially the single most important factor affecting university governance (Gayle, Tewarie, & White, 2003). In the extant literature on organizational culture, (e.g. Becher, 1981; Chaffee & Tierney, 1988; Deal & Kennedy, 1982), rule-like generalizations have been given very little attention. Instead of a search for common underlying structures or meanings that permeate all organizations, the emphasis is on the study of individual organizational cultures as distinctive and independent systems of meaning (Cameron, 2008). Though the concept of ‘organization’ puts forward the idea of an object with boundaries, those who study organizational culture focus on the interactions of individuals within such boundaries and how those boundaries are outlined and (re)defined. Below we take up a discussion of how a critical point to understanding how cultures function is an individual’s definition of the environment.

The various elements of an organization’s culture have been demarcated (Tierney, 1987; 1988; Valimaa, 1998), but the ways in which a board functions within a culture have not received much attention. We move now to briefly summarize present definitions of organizational culture, then discuss governance in general and in particular at PSU, and then reflect on how to think about an organization’s culture in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Our purpose here is to submit that governance is a cultural construct that has a critical role in how boards govern and how boards enable other actors to operate. Rather than assume that recommendations for structural reform or possessing a culture where all persons are in agreement, what is necessary is what we shall define as a more fragmented understanding of culture.

Though organizational culture is an ambiguous term, scholars generally agree that a certain number of concepts might be investigated when trying to understand an organization’s culture in higher education. Students of organizational culture require a basic understanding of six cultural terms: *mission, environment, leadership, strategy, information, and socialization*.

The ways institutional actors define the overarching ideology of the campus is organizational *mission*. The organization’s players interpret the mission to establish meaning,

direction, importance and purpose (Hartmann & Khademian, 2010). Each organization exists in an *environment*. As with the idea of organizational mission, however, individuals within the environment define it within a cultural framework. Said differently, from a cultural perspective, the world is socially constructed; concepts such as environment do not have strict definitions but are regularly considered, redefined, and reinterpreted (Tierney, 1994). Actions are facilitated or constrained by the environment but the environment in which an organization exists is not solely determinative of how an organization acts. However, a cultural perspective of organizational life is contrary to the notion that organizations are able to act out their own realities unrelatedly to the larger socio-cultural environment.

The cultural construct of *leadership* can be explored by focusing on the consistency of a leader's actions and communications across different organizations. Culture not only dictates who the leaders are but also specifies whether the organization only allows formal leaders (e.g. the Board or president) or also permits informal leaders (e.g. football coach) to offer guidance.

Definitions of *strategy* and *information* rely upon cultural interpretations that actors have come to expect about "how things are done here." Individuals come to learn about and believe in their institution based on the interaction and communication they have with others in the institution (Tierney, 1989, 2008). The cultural norms surrounding pivotal issues such as how decisions get made, who makes the decisions, who is privy to information, and how information gets transferred play an important role in helping or hindering organizational change. Earlier in the paper we discussed how the president had virtual free reign to make decisions. Spanier was strategic with what he did with the information regarding Sandusky. In an email to Curley and Schultz he wrote, "The only downside for us is if the message isn't 'heard' and acted upon, and we then become vulnerable for not having reported it..." (FSS, 2012).

Lastly, *socialization* aids individuals in determining what matters to the organization (Van Maanen & Schein, 1979). Newcomers to the organization follow cues which they learn from others. Trustees on the PSU Board were acclimated to not ask any tough questions of the president and relied entirely on Spanier as their source of information.

In some respects the preceding points are simply an instrumental list of what one might look at when studying an organization's culture. If one were to do an ethnography of an institution, for example, it might be thought of as incomplete if ideas such as leadership were not examined. However, for the better part of a quarter century, studies about organizational culture have been closely wedded to the idea of practice: how might understanding an organization's culture improve the performance of the institution (e.g. Schein, 1992; Weick, 1995)? The answer is often predicated on the assumption that a good culture is one where ideologies are integrated rather than disparate.

From a governance-related perspective the utility of thinking about organizational culture can be maddeningly obscure. Insofar as a cultural framework assumes that organizational life is interpretive, no one key model fits all organizations. Nevertheless, the presumed worth of such a framework is that it enables an analysis of the interconnections that exist in organizational life and encourages participants and scholars alike to investigate ways to strengthen culture and highlights how the ignorance of culture can create the sorts of issues that arose at PSU.

We are suggesting something that is related, and yet significantly different from the Freeh report. Freeh and his team interviewed over 430 individuals and concluded that the university must "vigorously examine and understand the Penn State culture" (p. 129) in order to reach consensus about what that culture is. To the report's credit, the authors concluded that "the

entire University community ... [must] undertake a thorough and honest review of its culture” (p. 18). Where we disagree is that however useful it is for a community to come together to think about the culture it has and what it wants, it is fallacious to assume that everyone should agree on what that culture is.

First, individuals approach organizational life from multiple perspectives; “shared” meaning ought not to suggest that everyone should interpret life from the same vantage point. Further, the socio-cultural environment in which individuals exist helps frame and shape that culture. What the Freeh report seems to overlook is that no one pointed to warning signs at PSU. If anything, the Board was held up as a model for good governance. Only after the entire tragedy was brought to life was anyone able to point to problems that got defined as structural shortcomings. Why, then, would members of a culture have reason to believe that their culture was somehow flawed? Why would a board think that they were in need of reform when every external agent was either applauding them or making no mention of any flaws? If no warning signs were evident what might that suggest about how to diagnose a culture that nonetheless allowed crimes to be committed for almost a generation?

Four challenges exist when analyzing issues from the cultural perspective. First, the sorts of recommendations put forward by the Auditor General’s office are not possible if they are meant as rules for good governance. The over-reliance on structural solutions assumes that structure is a synonym for culture. As noted, such an interpretation overlooks the environments in which organizations are embedded. Second, one might focus on the importance of leadership and simply define the problems that existed as managerial flaws. Again, the interpretation of culture as how the organization’s leaders act and define reality gives far too much credence to the ability of an individual to determine organizational life. A third possibility is what the Freeh report proffered: culture matters, but the solution relies on everyone arriving at the same solution. Such an assertion even denies the idea of equifinality, (Doty, Glick, & Huber, 1993; Gresov & Drazin, 1997) whereby individuals may reach the same solution but their reasons for doing so varies. And fourth, a concern can be that culture is so overarching a term that everything matters. When everything matters, nothing matters. In opposition to the instructional manual that focuses on structural reform, this solution is really no solution at all.

How, then, might one proceed? Although changes in the culture of an organization such as PSU need to occur, we are suggesting that a cultural approach to the problems that beset the institution ought not to be thought of as a management solution that will cure all organizational maladies. The cultural framework that the Freeh report has suggested might be thought of as an integrationist perspective and we suggest an alternative.

### **An integration framework**

Integration attempts to understand the underlying elements of an organization that unites participants together (Tierney, 2012). Rituals, ceremonies, and stories are artifacts used to understand organizational values and beliefs. Critical stages in the life of an organization—such as its creation, a merger, the admittance of a new member, provide valuable clues for understanding the underlying ethos of the organization. The manner by which individuals communicate is also important. Researchers use written and verbal bases in addition to formal and informal communicative frameworks.

Integrationists push the question, “what holds this place together” (Chaffee & Tierney, 1988), and therein exists the problem for looking at institutions such as PSU. Presumably if one

had done an ethnography of PSU prior to, or during, the events that transpired, a great deal of inter-rater reliability might have been found on many issues. PSU had a unified culture. As opposed to some institutions where a leadership style, for example, may be at odds with the cultural traditions of an organization, PSU's culture was more cohesive than divisive.

What, then, are we to make of the integrationist perspective? It may be that the main problem with such a framework is the underlying pursuit of simple generalizations that might come from other organizations. Again, many professionals who work in domains such as business or education face the challenge of wanting their work to be useful. Anyone who has studied organizational life, though, knows that there are no simple generalizations. While it might be desirable to encourage leaders to act in a certain manner, it is mistaken to suggest that all of the institution's leaders act similar to one another. At the same time, we have found that individuals tend to have minimal understanding of the cultures in which they exist. Is it not feasible to put forth that understanding culture is useful? If understanding culture is useful, then perhaps we focus not on what to understand or how to act, but rather on how to understand.

Some have been critical of integrationists' downplay of organizational ambiguity and need for organizational consensus. When no consensus exists, or when uncertainty pervades the organization, the deduction is that the culture is weak and clarity is needed. As Martin summarized: "What makes a study congruent with the integration perspective is a prevalence of descriptive material consistent with the integration view (consistency, organization-wide consensus, and clarity), plus a normative position: Deviations from integration are portrayed as regrettable shortfalls" (2002, p. 99). Though we agree, we caution that an opposite perspective is equally improbable. Of course some people agree on certain outcomes and tasks. Without such agreement, is it not possible to conclude that the organization is potentially troubled? Our point here is that if the "ideal type" for an integrationist is one false image of organizational life, then assuredly, the opposite end of the continuity-discontinuity continuum is just as mistaken.

### **A fragmentation framework**

Ambiguity is the focus of fragmentation (Martin, 1992). The assumption that each individual knows his/her role within the organization is an illusion. Researchers who seek one-size-fits-all understandings or unity on any level are mistaken. As Martin, Frost, and O'Neill summarize, "Lack of consistency, lack of consensus, and ambiguity are the hallmarks of a Fragmentation view of culture" (2004, p. 16). Organizational ambiguity requires more than assuming that certain actions or events are unclear to a small number of people, because if they were uncertain, the possibility exists that the confusion could be addressed. Unanimity is intangible and transitory; some individuals come together on one issue at one point in time and disagree on the same issue or a distinct issue at a later date. If integration's goal is to establish consensus, and differentiation's goal is to comprehend the differences, then fragmentation's goal is simply to be present in a chaotic environment.

The integration framework has been used in the majority of research on colleges and universities (Smerek, 2010). Burton Clark's work has been at the forefront—particularly the subset of American colleges he labeled as 'distinctive' (Clark, 1970; 1971; 1980). Clark's theme of an institution with an overarching saga falls in line with the assumption that organizations have a prevailing ideology from which participants draw meaning. Clark's work, nonetheless, was not meant as an indicator of efficiency.

Although Clark's work falls within the cultural tradition, authors who might align with the fragmentation perspective in reality preexist cultural analyses in organizational theory. The work of March (1981) is potentially the most influential work under the fragmentation framework. A prime example of what fragmentationists consider to be culture is March's concept of a university as an 'organized anarchy'. March and Cohen's discussion of presidential leadership in a university also parallels what those who subscribe to this framework think of with regard to administration (1974). The notion of the leader as a great man or woman is ridiculous, and the assumption that the leader is able to coordinate organizational action is a delusion.

From the fragmentation framework's perspective, the problem was that PSU's culture was cohesive. To be sure, the internal dynamic has roots in the history of the organization and the values and traditions that set in play how the organization functions. At the same time, there is a constant give and take between the organization and the environment. The organization's culture exists in part through the actors' interpretation of historical and symbolic forms, but obviously those forms change based on an individual's interpretation and the temporal framework that is employed. Most obviously, the naming of a building after a Confederate general in the 19<sup>th</sup> century may be viewed one way by a white person whose relatives fought in the Civil War and another by an African American whose ancestors were slaves. How one views that building in 1900 may be very different from how one looks on it in 2016. The iconic statue of Joe Paterno surely generated different interpretations in 2010 and 2015. We are suggesting that a cultural view is less to assume that everyone should interpret a building or statue in a particular manner and instead to acknowledge those different viewpoints and then figure out what to do. When cohesion exists one ought not automatically celebrate it as a successful culture but instead reflect on what might be overlooked.

Masland once noted, "The difficulty in studying culture arises because culture is implicit and we are all embedded in our cultures (1985, p. 160). Organizational reality is not a simple set of objective facts; if it were, then every university would have the same size Board, and the involvement of students and faculty in academic governance would be the same from institution to institution. Thus, rather than a simple cookbook of recipes for good governance as recommended by the Auditor General's office, cultural interpretations from a fragmentation perspective assume that most endeavors occur along a broad continuum. Cultural interpretations affect instrumental decisions.

The structure, values, and enacted environment of the organization are in dynamic equilibrium with one another. As we see it, the problems at PSU occurred in large part because of this equilibrium. The values of the organization, on the one hand, held a reverence for football; on the other, a long-term president had accumulated power and authority to a point where the Board was largely sidelined as secondary. The size of the Board and the term limits for the Board members could have been precisely what they were and the problems would not have arisen if the values of the organization were less focused on college athletics and ceding voice to presidential prerogative.

The environmental dimension in part pertains to the objective context of an organization, but it is more than a set of facts and figures. We use the term 'enacted environment' insofar as researchers are trying to come to terms with how an organization's members understand the culture by way of an environmental lens. Given the importance of football in the United States, and in higher education in particular, why would anyone assume that how PSU functioned was inappropriate? Given the plaudits that the Board had received from AGB, and MSCHE, why

would the members of PSU assume anything was awry? The problem was that individuals were looking at the culture of PSU from an integrationist perspective and saw lots of “glue” that held the place together. But what held the place together is also, in part, what enabled Sandusky’s crimes to be committed.

These dimensions interact simultaneously with one another and simply because they are in equilibrium, as demonstrated at PSU, is not necessarily positive. The dimensions might be viewed by three themes: time, space, and communication. *Time* is relevant in large part because the temporal aspects of an organization not only change because of new trends such as social media, but also because how one views an event, a person, or situation inevitably varies based on temporality. *Spatial relationships* amongst individuals not only speak to instrumental contexts but also symbolic ones as well. What constitutes public space and private space and who is welcome in which spaces helps define the organization’s culture. *Communication* is the primary vehicle that enables an organization’s member to interpret the world.

Consider, for example, the PSU environment in terms of these three themes. The actions of Sandusky were not considered out of the norm; he came and went to campus without any hesitation. He was comfortable moving in public and private spaces and no one viewed his actions in these spaces as inappropriate. Time and space coincided in the sense that he had been a long-term member of the university which enabled him to utilize all of its space. A different individual at that university, or Sandusky at a different institution may have been seen in a very different fashion. The communication of the university was singularly coherent. How the president and his senior administrators communicated with the Board on the Sandusky issue was not at odds with how they communicated on all other issues—he always only reported the positive, never the negative (Smith, 2016). How the University made decisions about Sandusky, whether it was how to determine his culpability for the crimes, or whether he should receive emeritus status, was in keeping with normal communicative operations.

The challenge, then, in analyzing the events at PSU is to keep all of these dimensions and themes in mind. Each changes according to its own internal logic but not independently of one another. Until the case exploded onto the national psyche the university might have been held up as a paragon of an excellent university with good leadership and governance. The culture was more cohesive than fragmented.

Our point, then, takes issue with the assumptions of the Freeh and Auditor General’s reports. The Freeh report assumed that the organization’s participants needed a more clear and coherent culture. The Auditor General’s report assumed that the Board needed to change the manner in which it functioned. AGB asserted that the greatest board missteps in the last decade have stemmed from weak or dysfunctional board culture (AGB, 2014a). However, a strong, coherent culture arguably enabled the events at PSU to occur.

## Conclusion

Rather than assume that good governance is where everyone is in agreement or that a culture is optimal when there is widespread harmony, we are suggesting that cultures need to be in dynamic tension. If members of the Board had been more engaged, or if the decision-making processes had focused on supporting internal disagreement rather than stifling it, perhaps the situation would not have evolved in the manner in which it did. One of the striking particulars of the Freeh report’s findings was how little internal disagreement existed across decision-making lines. We pointed out above how the report’s most shocking conclusion was

how little care anyone exhibited for the victims. Throughout the institution there was a higher priority placed on procedural agreement than moral disagreement.

For cultures to function successfully in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, perhaps more so than in previous eras because of the speed with which the temporal dimension now occurs, rather than agreement, an organization's participants need to be expected and encouraged to disagree with one another. External organizations need to be on the lookout not for the lack of cohesion but too much cohesion. Associations need to be more proactive and public in voicing their concerns rather than acting with hindsight and in private. Associations and boards in particular must not stop at asking uncomfortable questions, they must also seek, demand, and obtain answers to such questions regardless of cultural norms that might relegate them to receiving knowledge only when others deem it necessary. The calcification of the organization's culture, and the governance structure embedded within it, was looked on as a strength of PSU when actually it was the weakness that enabled Sandusky to commit his crimes. Changing one or another instrumental policy or procedure might improve the effectiveness of an organization's performance. The analysis of an organization's culture, however, is most useful in order to think about the sort of organization that exists and whether it reflects the kind of organization that the actors want.

In 2001, AGB put forth that:

Inappropriate external influences on a governing board have great potential to skew an institution's priorities and compromise its capacity to serve the public interest. They also may weaken a board's governing integrity by creating imbalances that favor certain interests over others... (p.1).

Threats to trustee independence are at the core of organizational problems and they necessitate organizational solutions (Bastedo, 2009). There remains a compelling interest to conduct research that helps further illuminate critical aspects of Boards that are central to risk management. To this end, we encourage further research along the lines we have attempted here that pays explicit attention to organizational culture and the board's role in protecting the rights, image, and safety of students, administrators, faculty, and the institution.

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## The Doctoral Quest: Managing Variables that Impact Degree Completion

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Within the last year, statistics suggest that there are more than 20 million students expected to enroll in college programs across the United States (NCES, 2017). Of this number, 3 million graduate students expected to enroll, with doctoral students making up one-fifth of this number. These numbers appear to be mind-boggling, however research suggests that an estimated 40%-60% of doctoral students do not persist to graduate (Allum & Okahana, 2015; Ampaw & Jaeger, 2011; Blair & Haworth, 2005; Cochran, Campbell, Baker, & Leeds, 2014; Tinto, 1993). Moreover, statistics also show that the majority of students who drop out of doctoral programs do so during the dissertation stage (Bowen & Rudenstine, 1992; Jones, 2013). The inability to complete doctoral studies comes at a financial and emotional loss to the student, discourages faculty members, as well as tarnishes an institution's reputation. Fully understanding the factors that affect doctoral student persistence may help academic institutions better improve the quality of program experience for doctoral students, boost the institutions' credentials by an increase in future doctoral applicants, as well as encourage faculty members to devote vested interest in the training of future academicians. Tinto's (1993) model of doctoral persistence provides a critical insight into the journey of a doctoral student, and thus this paper seeks to employ this model to review the key areas that impact doctoral students' ability to complete their programs. Specifically, this paper will focus on socialization, entry orientation, institutional experiences and research experience, and will provide recommendations to universities and colleges to help improve the rate of persistence among doctoral students. As an important aside, students pursuing doctoral degrees in medicine, law, dentistry, and pharmacy were eliminated from consideration in this paper. These students do not have the same degree completion requirements as doctoral students including, but not limited to, the completion of the dissertation, which serves as the capstone of doctoral study in American graduate education.

Research on doctoral attrition/persistence has highlighted many areas of concern into the causes of failure and solutions to success why doctoral students succeed and fail. Cusworth (2001) noted that the graduate experience is a great, unaddressed academic issue within higher education. Tinto's (1975) model of undergraduate persistence provided a foundation/foundational framework for graduate student persistence. Tinto's undergraduate model sought to explain that various characteristics influence undergraduate student persistence. These concepts included background characteristics, initial commitments to the goal of college graduation, social and academic integration of student within the college, and subsequent commitments to the goal of college graduation. Tinto offered the beginnings of a theory on doctoral student attrition in his 1993 influential book on undergraduate attrition. Tinto (1993) suggested that, "Graduate persistence is shaped by the personal and intellectual

interactions that occur within and between students and faculty and the various communities that make up the academic and social systems of the institution” (p. 231). Tinto explained doctoral persistence, stating:

The process of doctoral persistence should be visualized as reflecting an interactive series of nested and intersecting communities not only within the university, but beyond it to the broader intellectual and social communities of students and faculty that define the norms of the field of study at a national level. The process of doctoral persistence seems to be marked by at least three distinct stages, namely that of transition and adjustment, that of attaining candidacy or what might be referred to as the development of competence, and that of completing the research project leading to the awarding of the doctoral degree. (pp. 234-235).

Tinto (1993) further attempted to develop a longitudinal model of graduate persistence (See Figure 1), but quickly cautioned that the process of graduate persistence cannot be easily described by one simple model. Tinto postulated that factors of importance to attrition included: student attributes, socialization, entry goals and orientation, institutional and program experiences, academic and social integration into a program, and research experiences (Kluever, Green, & Katz, 1997). The model and theory of doctoral persistence posited by Tinto is in no way offered as a rigid formula that serves as the only method in which to study doctoral student attrition. Rather, it offers the opportunity to guide research with tools that help provide a frame of reference and allow for evaluation of the factors that impede the path to doctoral degree completion. This paper will focus on exploring five of the factors of attrition that Tinto put forth. Each of the proceeding sections contains studies of note exploring these factors.

### **Student Attributes**

Attributes play an important role in whether or not a student completes their degree. By and large there is research that supports the assertion that student attributes have a role to play in graduate degree completion (Cooke, Sims, & Peyrefitte, 1995; Hodgson & Simoni, 1995; Pauley, 1998). Several types of attributes such as gender have been used in various studies in an effort to identify those that appear to have the most impact on doctoral degree completion.

In general, studies that have used gender as a focal point show that men are more likely than women to complete the requirements for doctoral degree attainment (Seagram, Gould, & Pyke, 1998). However, there is emergent evidence that suggests that this phenomenon only occurs in certain disciplines such as the social, natural, applied, and life sciences (Bowen & Rudenstine, 1992; Seagram et al., 1998). Additionally, studies have indicated that gender-based differences noted in doctoral study research stem from long standing factors such as financial support that have historically accounted for differences between men and women (Berg & Ferber, 1983). More recently, some scholars have attempted to explain why it takes women longer than men to complete doctoral studies. For example, there is the opinion that graduate education experience is not equivalent across gender (Hall and Sandler, 1982, Pyke, 1996). Specifically, some researchers believe that the university environment is unfriendly towards female doctoral students. This environment, also known as the “chilly climate”, is characterized by lack of female role models, exclusion from the curriculum, prevalence of sexist language and impedes the progress of female doctoral students. Results from a study by Ulkfi-Steiner,

Kurtz-Costes, and Kinlaw (2000) appear to support the chilly climate narrative that exists in the extant literature. Ulkfi-Steiner et al. found that women in male dominated programs reported lower academic self-concepts than other students. Critically, they suggested that doctoral programs consider increasing the presence of female faculty that could serve as role models for female doctoral students (Ulkfi-Steiner et al., 2000).

### **Entry (Orientation)**

Tinto's doctoral student attrition theory postulated that one of the stages of persistence included a time of initial transition and adjustment. Orientation programs serve to address perception, transition, and role acquisition that graduate students' experience. Additionally, orientation programs serve as the initial organized experience that graduate students encounter as an incoming member at the institution. To this end, orientation serves as a key avenue that colleges can target to improve persistence rates among doctoral students. Research suggests that doctoral students, like any other graduate students, are often anxious about their new program and perceive orientation as a key avenue to gather more information about their impending graduate journey in order to allay their anxieties (Rosenblatt & Christensen, 1993).

New graduate students tend to appreciate more the portions of their orientation that give them the opportunity to meet and interact with faculty as well as current students of their programs as it gives them further insight about what to expect during their graduate studies (Rosenblatt & Christensen 1993; Taub & Komives, 1998). Various studies have shown that meeting faculty, meeting advisers, meeting classmates, and assistantship information is a critical component of orientation programs (Taub & Komives, 1998).

It should be noted, however, that despite the importance of orientation to new graduate students, a blanket-type approach or one-size-fits all approach to delivering orientation may not be effective at addressing student needs and thus could impact graduate student persistence. For example, research has shown that age plays a factor in the perceived importance of orientation topics (Barker, Felstehausen, Couch, & Henry, 1997). The need to tailor orientation programs based on the demographic composition of the incoming graduate student population has been touted by many researchers. Osam, Bergman, and Cumberland (2016) for example have suggested that students over the age of 24 often stress over their return to school, and colleges can help mitigate this by tailoring programs including orientation specifically designed to help them navigate the challenges associated with returning to further their education, and increase their sense of belonging.

Orientation also serves as an effective means to improve doctoral student persistence when the right information is presented through the right channels (Pooch, 2002). Pooch conducted a study to determine if orientation needs of graduate students were best met through departmental or campus-wide efforts. His findings indicated that Orientation is most effective when general information such as health services is presented at the university level, and when academic information is presented at the department level. Moreover, Pooch (2002) noted that: (a) respondents viewed both campus-wide and departmental orientations as important; (b) many of the highest rated orientation activities addressed academic information; (c) respondents felt that orientation activities related to personal considerations (health care services, public transportation) and university services (health center, career services, parking services) were best met by the campus-wide orientation; (d) respondents felt that social activities (meeting new and current students) and academic information were best delivered through departmental

orientations; and (e) respondents indicated a clear willingness to arrive on campus several days prior to the beginning of classes to participate in orientation activities.

Significant general findings discovered by studies focused on graduate and doctoral orientations included: (a) graduate students indicated a need for services and orientation activities to help understand university resources and meet academic and educational objectives (Rosenblatt & Christensen, 1993); (b) time to meet faculty and other students when transitioning were positive opportunities to orientation programs (Poock, 2002; Rosenblatt & Christensen, 1993; Taub & Komives, 1998); and (c) graduate students perceived orientations were needed for the improvement of the graduate experience (Coulter et al., 2004). Research explained that a majority of graduate students perceived an orientation program would be helpful and that they would attend (Barker et al., 1997; Rosenblatt & Christensen, 1993). Orientations allowed students time to meet faculty and classmates and provided needed information (Taub & Komives, 1998). Graduate students viewed orientations as important and were willing to arrive early to campus prior to the semester to attend an orientation (Barker et al., 1997; Poock, 2002). Investigators explained the most common components of orientation included awareness of institutional policies, student services, and academic facilities and resources available to students (Poock, 2002). Orientation programs generally produced an effect on issues of graduate student adjustment to a new role and institution (Barker et al., 1997). The results from these various studies highlighted importance that Tinto explained of building the nested levels of community that serve to maintain persistence throughout a doctoral program. The orientation event functioned as a mechanism for programs and institutions to introduce the students to the people, structures, values, and career roles that serve to support the students' adjustment and development of layers of community that Tinto attributed to persistence.

### **Socialization**

The studies addressed in this section explain the issues of the student experience when beginning a new college career. The encounters occur when graduate students become socialized and integrated into the culture of the institution. The socialization of the student involves a transition into a new career and a new set of values based on the chosen field of study. As Tinto explained in his theory, doctoral students are shaped by the various types of interactions between various individuals at multiple social layers within the institution. Doctoral students are socialized while shifting into a new responsibility and will develop new academic, social, and institutional needs based on adjustment to the student's new institutional and departmental culture. The socialization of the graduate student includes the understanding of institutional and departmental culture held by the student and faculty when considering student role, expectations, and support. Both students and faculty can harbor perceptions, sometimes negative, about the socialization experience of becoming a new graduate student.

Confirming concepts postulated by Tinto's doctoral student attrition theory, researchers found the key components needed to foster graduate student socialization were interaction with faculty, interaction with peers, and opportunities for observation and participation (Austin, 2002; Brown-Wright et al., 1997; Poock, 2001). Students reported an emphasis on the development of personal/quality life goals when entering graduate education (Kuh & Thomas, 1983). Nyquist et al. (1999) found that graduate students indicated a need for help in managing stress and anxiety of the new role. The understanding of departmental and career norms strongly

associated with greater likelihood of doctoral student persistence (Weidman & Stein, 2003). Furthering Tinto's thoughts on students developing career norms and belonging to nested communities, researchers indicated that graduate assistantships and teaching assistantships contributed to departmental and career socialization (Corcoran & Clark, 1984).

### **Institutional Experiences/Support**

The forms of support measured included spouse/family, adviser, financial, cohort, employer support while pursuing the degree, faculty support, and departmental support. Varying levels of support types tend to have positive and negative effects on the level of commitment and progress. Tinto's theory on doctoral attrition explained that in a second stage of persistence the student is adjusting and developing competency. It is at this point that the nested layers of community (academic, social, family, career, etc.) assist in furthering the students' development in order to integrate the academic and social experiences, which can propel the doctoral student forward into candidacy and along the way to completion. Doctoral student support within the department, with the adviser/committee, and with other peers could provide a connection to the pulse of the university and the department and serve as a strong tool to motivate student persistence. The transition into graduate school and eventually into doctoral candidacy manifested as the unknown situations in which students most often indicated the need for support.

The transition into graduate school can cause some amount of stress for new graduate students, and research suggests that social support can act as a buffer to reduce the amount of stress faced and improve satisfaction with graduate school (Lawson & Fuehrer, 1989). These researchers also found that highly stressed individuals gained more from social support and that students that reported the most satisfaction also reported the most stress and subsequently reported the highest usage and need of social support. Another stress buffer that has been identified in the literature is peer and faculty interaction (Goplerud, 1980; Ulkfi-Steiner et al., 2000). As mentioned previously, new graduate students often show willingness to participate in orientation activities in part to interact with faculty and students to learn more about their new program and environment. This interaction, particularly when continued outside of the classroom during the first few weeks of school, has been shown to reduce reports of intense or prolonged life disruptions that cause stress among graduate students (Goplerud, 1980). Goplerud's study aimed at investigating how peer interaction during the beginning of graduate school affected perceived stressfulness of the first semester of graduate school. Goplerud found that socially isolated students reported more events, more intense incidents, greater cumulative stress, and more pronounced number of emotional and health problems compared to socially supported students. Additionally, it was found that stronger emotional and intellectual faculty/student relationships reduced the likelihood of health and emotional problems in the first semester of graduate school. In relation to this, Kelly and Schweitzer (1999) found that graduate students need structured opportunities to meet with peers and faculty along with regular mentoring and advising. Thus in order to improve persistence at the doctoral level, colleges should consider putting measures in place to facilitate and sustain frequent interaction between doctoral students and faculty, as well among doctoral students themselves. This could include social mixers, including doctoral students in faculty searches, encouraging doctoral students to participate in workshops and seminars, and encouraging increased faculty-student research collaboration (Hahs, 1998)

The discussion above indicates that stress needs to be managed effectively in order to improve degree completion among doctoral students. Research suggests that there are mixed findings as far as gender and degree completion go among graduate students (Seagram et al., 1998). Seagram et al. found that women reported significantly more obstacles, delays, and conflict with dissertation supervisors that in turn led to delayed progress on dissertation completion. Thus, there appears to be a case for ensuring that female completion obstacles are being managed. One way this could be achieved is by again making targeted efforts towards female graduate students to ensure that they have the necessary tools and resources to succeed.

### **Dissertation Preparation/Structure**

The studies highlighted in this section discuss the concepts centered on structured programming to service needs of doctoral students. The following studies continually demonstrate the strong need of doctoral students to have structured support and clearly established procedures throughout the dissertation process. Doctoral students in multiple studies indicate a need for stronger departmental communication concerning requirements, procedures, and resources connected to completing the doctoral degree. Tinto's theory on doctoral attrition explained that a final phase of persistence was completing the research project or dissertation. This final phase, as Tinto described, included faculty/advisor relationships and research opportunities as being central to the students' experience within the department/program. At the beginning of doctoral study and in the dissertation phase, defined structure serves as the single most effective tool in persistence and degree completion. Courses, seminars, support groups, and departmental resources can provide doctoral students with much needed structure, experience, and guidance in eliminating the sometimes-mystifying process of completing the doctoral degree.

Campbell (1992) reported the single most important variable for both the completers and non-completers was the relationship with their adviser. Students that completed the degree reported a positive relationship with their adviser and indicated that to be the most important factor contributing to their completion. Students that did not complete the degree reported that their relationship with their adviser to be the biggest contributor to non-completion. Overall the relationship between the student and adviser seemed most critical during the dissertation stage. Other factors reported by non-completers included problems with one's committee and fatigue.

Research experience is a critical factor that impacts a doctoral student's ability to successfully complete a dissertation. Doctoral students who are exposed to research process early in their doctoral program gain many invaluable skills such as time management, improved communication with co-authors/committee members and enhanced clarity in research design (Hatley & Fiene, 1995). Research has demonstrated that doctoral students who actively engage in research before their dissertation, are less likely to remain as All But Dissertation (ABD) (Kluever, 1997). Kluever (1997) explained adviser contact and access to university resources contributed to dissertation completion. The researcher determined doctoral graduates had a greater sense of independence and personal responsibility compared to ABD doctoral students. Additionally, Cuetara and LeCapitaine (1991) found respondents indicated strongly that research courses helped prepare students to select a researchable problem for the dissertation and write the dissertation. The researchers indicated a higher level of student research exposure correlated with lower negative effects such as depression, anxiety, and hostility toward the dissertation. The investigators explained higher student research preparation helped stimulate



research interest and lower student research preparation strongly reduced research interest. Students found that a lack of structure and direction from the adviser became a serious problem and led to delayed or failed completion of the dissertation.

### **Future Research**

This information could be significant to institutions of higher education, specific academic departments within the institutions, graduate faculty, doctoral degree program designers, and doctoral students. If specific individual characteristics or departmental programmatic interventions/coursework contribute to, or detract from doctoral student degree completion, the previously mentioned groups would benefit from the knowledge in order to implement structure or behaviors that would contribute to doctoral student degree completion. Doctoral degree completion will likely never get to 100%, but characteristics, structures, and programming that contribute to higher degree attainment could assist in raising the overall percentage of doctoral degree completion. Future research may include a measurement of how individual student academic attributes (GRE, GPA) that occur prior to the start of the program, affect the variable of doctoral degree completion. Future studies could add research questions and analysis to determine the effect certain types of academic disciplines have on doctoral degree completion. Based on a stream of research called survival analysis, a fruitful stream of future research could attempt to ascertain when and how long it took for doctoral students to pass through certain components of a doctoral degree (residency, completion of coursework, passing of comprehensive exams, admission into candidacy, and finally dissertation defense/doctoral degree completion). This research could assist in developing a way to assess stop out data of students at various points within the program and allow departments to actually collect this data to inform practice & policy. In order to try and understand student and faculty perceptions, future research may include a student ranking of the common reasons for attrition along with a faculty ranking of the common reasons for attrition and then a correlation of the two rankings. An important concern within doctoral programs that does not seem to be measured deeply in research, but could have a strong impact on students would be for future research to include a variable that measures the impact on students when faculty leave the program. Faculty leaving could affect many components of a student's progress and satisfaction and would be an interesting variable to better understand.

Future research could focus in on the variable of employment status in order to determine the effects and issues surrounding employment status and degree completion. Finally, some of the intricacies of individual motivations, barriers, relationships, and overall personal stories are not found within the statistical nature of quantitative research. Therefore, future research with this population, using a qualitative nature of inquiry, could discover the detail and insight on the personal nature of attrition /persistence. Bringing to light the qualitative reasons behind attrition/persistence could add to the depth and understanding of the quantitative data found in this study.

### **Conclusion**

The guiding purpose behind this paper was to critically examine the factors that affect doctoral student persistence using aspects of Tinto's (1993) model of doctoral persistence. Tinto (1993) suggested that student attributes, entry/orientation, social integration, institutional

support and research experience influence graduate student persistence. Since the postulation of this model, several studies have produced data that shed further light on Tinto's model. For example, it has been established that Orientation also serves as an effective means to improve doctoral student persistence when the right information is presented through the right channels (Poock, 2002). Also, it has been noted that graduate student socialization improves doctoral persistence when doctoral students have frequent interaction with faculty, and opportunities for observation and participation in events and programs (Austin, 2002). With regards to institutional support, Kelly and Schweitzer (1999) found that structured measures put in place by an institution to facilitate student-faculty interaction goes a long way to improve degree completion. Finally, it has been demonstrated that by actively engaging in research before the dissertation stage, doctoral students improve their chances of degree completion (Kluever, 1997).

Thus, we believe that fully understanding the factors that affect doctoral student persistence explored in this paper may help academic institutions better improve the quality of program experience for doctoral students, boost the institutions' credentials by an increase in future doctoral applicants, as well as encourage faculty members to devote vested interest in the training of future academicians.

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# **A Higher Education Response to Rampage Violence**

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Early on the morning of April 16, 2007, an individual shot 32 students and faculty then took his own life making the Virginia Tech incident the most deadly rampage violence incident on a school campus in modern American history. Leadership response in the face of events like this require us to make sense of the event, make decisions, make meaning, account for the event, and learn lessons that minimize future risk (Boin, t'Hart, Stern, & Sundelius, 2008). What follows is a discussion of how these crisis response principles align with the events of that day, as well as with perspectives of the University of Maine at Augusta administration (Appendix A).

## **Making Sense: What is going on?**

To call an event a crisis implies a great deal of confusion in the midst of a catastrophe. Whether on the heels of human misdeed, acts of nature, or the proverbial boiling over of a years-long culmination, the calamitous event is by its very nature disorienting. During the upheaval of crisis, the first principle of crisis management is sense making (Boin, et. al., 2008). To make sense of the issue is to begin trying to figure out exactly what is going on. The ease of this task varies greatly depending on the nature of the situation and it can sometimes lead to second-guessing once the proverbial dust has settled. This sense making frequently happens with a paucity of accurate information making it all the more important for leaders—and would be crisis managers—to have the skills and dispositions for forming advisers, separating information into relevant and irrelevant, and creating cogent thoughts about what the crisis actually is and asking whose crisis is it?

## **Making Sense of a Mass Casualty Incident**

On the morning of the incident at Virginia Tech, Cho Seung Hui shot two students on the fourth floor of West Ambler Johnston Hall dormitory then left the building detected by nobody. This occurred at 7:15 AM and believing the incident to be isolated and finished, the responders locked down only that building and went about searching for the boyfriend of one of the victims. Based on the limited knowledge and experience of school shootings, those responding had no reason to believe the threat was still imminent. At 9:26 AM, the school community received their first email communication stating that a shooting has occurred and all should say something if they see something. In the early stages of this event, the campus officials believed they were dealing with a domestic violence situation and it felt natural to begin questioning the romantic partner of the female. Virginia Tech officials did not know Cho tended to some ministrations for about one hour and 45 minutes and was about to return to campus at 9:40 AM and shoot 30 more victims. Ten minutes later, at 9:50 AM the entire school community received an email with shelter in place instructions.

## Higher Education and the Era of Rampage Violence

The frequency of rampage gun violence on campuses creates two situations around sense making. First, there is the sense we have to make while the situation is acute and we need to know what is going on *right now*. Second, the field of higher education needs to make sense of what is happening to all of us in this game-changing era. We learn from the post mortems of many violent rampages that shooters are not receptive to negotiation or de-escalation like in the case of robbery or the taking of hostage. Disarming or redirecting a violent person does not work when their objective is to take as many lives as possible. Because of this new behavior, the sense we make in the moment is simply this: This person wants to hurt as many people as possible and we cannot know if they are alone. With regard to the *right now* we have to assume that everybody is in danger, and everybody should employ run/hide/fight<sup>1</sup> principles. Because this is our reality, the field of higher education has a responsibility to recognize the larger crisis and be sure that their own campus is prepared to resort to training and situational awareness.

### Decision-making: What are we going to do right now?

Once leadership makes sense of the event(s), decision-making is the second principal for managing a crisis (Boin, et. al., 2008). As seen during many crises, it can become a matter of debate about whose crisis the event actually is. A large part of the sense-making phase deals with establishing what the event is, but decision-making begins when leadership must ask, “Is this ours to which we must respond?” Again, a case-by-case determination, the subsequent decisions are a) What is our immediate responsibility? b) What must we do to reduce harm immediately? c) When do we need to respond and how? d) What danger does our initial response pose as we choose our tactic and language? As in the case of crisis that occurs among one member of a larger constituency, decision-making also occurs remotely if the threat of harm has a telegraphing potential. Is that organization a proverbial canary in the coalmine in the midst of a larger problem?

### Decisions Based on What Little We Know

While gun-related mass casualty incidents on campuses was not new phenomena, Virginia Tech responders made their initial decisions based on their observations and experiences to that point. Believing their assumptions, the decisions made in the early moments of the event seem out of place by today’s standards. Two hours and 11 minutes ticked by before leaders notified anybody not directly involved. Because—in their opinion—there was no imminent threat, schedules resumed and students filled the classrooms of Norris Hall. At 9:40 AM, Cho entered Norris Hall, chain the crash bars of the exits, entered the second floor and shot 30 staff and students, and wounded several more. Many students jumped from second story windows in their attempt to escape causing many more injuries. Shortly after the 9:45 AM call to Virginia Tech police, an email reached the campus community telling them of the events and instructing them to lock down. When police arrived on campus, the shooter had already taken his own life. At this point, leaders stood by their lockdown and shelter in place orders, and they cancelled all courses and campus activities until further notice.

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<sup>1</sup> The Run/Hide/Fight training is used widely at businesses, schools, and hospitals  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5VcSwejU2D0>

## Communication is the First Decision

Unlike a sunken cargo ship or sex abuse allegation, a crisis of rampage violence requires immediate communication even when there are so few details available. Perhaps it is even more important to communication *because* so many details are not available. Mass communication systems are imperative to survival in school shootings and a full understanding of how staff, students, and community members use different modes means the difference between survival and victimization. Virginia Tech had an email notification system, but took more than two hours to activate this. In a school setting, it is not common that students are on computers when attending a course and the lag time—in this particular incident—was not reasonable and ultimately found to be actionable. As a preparation, campus leaders need to establish mass notification systems, manage and bolster its use by staff and students, and activate the alert as soon as possible in order to minimize harm to people. The University of Maine at Augusta uses a text messaging system that relies on opt-in sign ups. Rob Marden, UMA’s Associate Director of Administrative Services, says leaders use the promise of snow day cancellations to rally excitement for signups (personal communication, December 12, 2017). However, some faculty members order mobile phones turned off or out of the classroom negating the purpose of an emergency text notification system. On this, Rob says it is the one thing he will “go to the mat on.” He says that he is happy to speak with any faculty member about alternative classroom policies to prevent distracting mobile phone use while also protecting students in the event of a run/hide/fight order.

### Ascribing Meaning: Why did this happen?

Decision-making throughout crisis is pivotal in responding, but the subsequent decisions after the initial response requires the third principal of ascribing meaning to the events (Boin, et. al., 2008). In meaning making, leaders must decide why the crisis happened and what antecedents caused the upheaval to their systems. After acts of nature, there really is no *why* (emphasis added). There are frequently elements, however, that caused the event to rise to the level of crisis for humans. Floods, earthquakes, and hurricanes have occurred on the planet before humans, but crisis management occurs when we ascribe meaning to the failures of constructs such as evacuation protocols, building specifications, or local statutes. After human-made catastrophe, leadership must ascribe meaning to the political climates, human treatment, or mechanical infrastructure causing people to face crises. After making meaning of what has happened, further decision-making occurs as organizations move to the next principal of managing a crisis.

### The Hindsight of Violence

At 9:01 AM on the morning of the incident, Cho mailed a package to NBC News from a post office near campus. In this package was a manifesto, photos of himself menacingly brandishing weapons, and several videos of himself making aggressive and sinister statements. Two days after reporting on the incident, NBC announced that it had received the package and the deconstruction of Cho’s behavior deepened. Many people who knew Cho agreed that he was a strange character and did not speak or crack a smile. He had had trouble with female students and even had action against him for harassing behaviors. Cho was supposed to undergo counseling and this order went unheeded. The media dubbed the event the “deadliest” of campus shootings, and conversation around Cho’s history and personality was rampant. It was difficult to understand how a student with so many troubling features simply flew under

everybody's radar for so long. Indeed, it seems easy to say that everybody should have known and somebody should have said something.

### **Creating Situational Awareness**

The lesson from Virginia Tech—and from others such as Columbine and Sandy Hook—is that we cannot underestimate or ignore any troubling behaviors. In Cho's case, the institutions viewed his history of harassment and orders to attend counseling as private and even potentially HIPAA-protected data. This discomfort with violating a student's rights creates a conundrum of whether it is appropriate to violate the privacy rights of one student if the intention is to protect others. The ability to create an information parking lot of concerns in a confidential way is how the puzzle pieces connect to show when a person is escalating and whether they have the ability to do harm. An evaluation of past shooters reveals that shooters' peers have typically bullied, harassed, "queered<sup>2</sup>," and otherwise made them feel inadequate, disempowered, and emasculated. Authors Jessie Klein and Kathryn Linder in separate texts theorize that rampage gun violence seems to come from a desire to take back power through violent means after having their masculinity questioned or taken. There is debate about whether this amounts to a mental health crisis alone or if a crisis of bullying is enough to bring out violence in otherwise healthy individuals. Just as bystander awareness has become important to the anti-bullying initiative, the situational awareness<sup>3</sup> of escalating behaviors is important to the anti-violence initiative. This is the awareness of bullying happening in the school community, but it is also awareness of withdrawal, aggression, fixation on guns and violence, and glorification of ideals like heroism, vengeance, and power.

### **Terminating: How do we get back to normal?**

It is rare that people and organizations simply go back to normal once a threat of crisis has ended. De-escalation from crisis is essential but often does not happen seamlessly and without careful evaluation of what the "new normal" is for those involved. The third principle for crisis management is deciding and acting in order to terminate the crisis and account for what needs retooling (Boin, et. al., 2008). Assuming that events qualifying as crisis tend to be larger in scale, this is not an instantaneous step. The process of getting back to normal, however, has huge implications for how society tells the story of the crisis. Organizations and their leadership have a responsibility to manage the crisis and consider the long-term effects of the event, decisions, meaning, and accounting. Remaining in a state of crisis through panic, fear, reticence, litigation, or distrust can become the death of an organization or structure. Depending upon the nature of the incident, this terminating and accounting can happen organically among people such as in the case of neighbors after a flood, or can happen intentionally when leaders and lawmakers enact change recognizing the failures of the prior structure.

### **A New Normal in the Wake**

Five days after the shooting, Virginia Tech students resumed their classes. The institution closed Norris Hall and disbursed those classes among other buildings. Norris Hall did not reopen until April 10, 2009—two years after the incident—as the Center for Peace Studies and

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<sup>2</sup> Kathryn Linder uses "to queer" as a verb to describe the taunting in which a student's sexual identity and orientation is the basis for their aggressors' abuse.

<sup>3</sup> Post Sandy Hook, CBS News circulated this video for fostering situational awareness <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ECfB14mLKAQ>



Violence Prevention. Many students were reticent about coming back and media reported that many students “went home early” after the April shooting. Tensions were high and conversation on campus turned to, “Why did it take two hours to tell us about the first shooting?” Students and their families assembled to draft complaints against Virginia Tech stating that had mass notifications reached the campus community sooner, leaders could have saved lives. The institution had to decide how they would account for the decision to wait two hours, but also to—reportedly—lift the lockdown on West Ambler Johnson Hall only minutes before the shooting began in Norris Hall. State officials eventually found Virginia Tech guilty of violating the Clery Act<sup>4</sup> and fined them several millions of dollars. The funds went to survivors and victims’ families. To say that Virginia Tech was able to terminate the crisis fully and return to normal would be inaccurate.

### **Defining the Post-rampage Identity**

When a juice company recovers from an E. coli outbreak, their goal is to get back to normal as soon as possible. Anything to return to the prior production, confidence, and sales figures is desirable and a public amnesia for the event would be most beneficial. A school simply cannot go back to who they were prior to rampage violence. Part of the post-rampage identity includes the situational awareness that violence can happen in places that feel safe. Every unsafe place was safe before it was not safe anymore. The tricky leadership task, however, is not to “sell fear” (R. Marden, personal communication, December 1, 2017) as this only feeds the trauma of these events. It does not serve a learning community well to feel that villains are perpetually around every corner. The regrettable statistic is that sometimes there is a villain. The best approach for campus leaders is to respond as soon and as sincerely as possible. For campuses learning from national events, it is not sufficient to say, “We’re safe here” or “That could never happen here.” Building confidence in our campus leadership needs to include planning, educating, organizing, being honest, and reconciling that a safe place is only as safe as the community who keeps it that way.

### **Learning: What are we going to do from now on?**

There is no education quite like a crisis. Pivotal to the success of organizations rising from the ashes of crisis is the principle of learning (Boin, et. al., 2008). This learning and the overt effort to implement new skills and dispositions is also important to the principle of terminating and accounting. Establishing the “new normal,” de-escalating the crisis emotion, and creating the new set of behaviors and attitudes demonstrates that an organization wants to exist, wants to rise above former failings, and wants to address what we now know about our environments. This is the phase in which companies create new positions for managing specific aspects, municipalities change or create statutes for improvements, or perhaps society as a whole decides that we will no longer abide certain cultural norms harmful to people. The ability to learn from the past and make a good showing of change and innovation can be a company’s greatest opportunity to be a phoenix rather than to sing its swan song.

### **The New World for Campus Safety**

The updates to security on the Virginia Tech campus and across the country have been noticeable. Physical plant updates, creation of intervention and threat assessment teams, and

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<sup>4</sup> The Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act 20 U.S.C. 1092(f)

each student's personal responsibility for vigilance is common today. The Cleary Act expects campuses to make timely notifications when a threat is imminent but the events of April 16, 2007 have moved the needle on the definition of "timely." The Virginia Tech shooting taught us that today's shooters do not want hostages. They want body counts (B. Chase, personal communication, October 2, 2017). We have learned that violent incidents should never be underestimated, but we have also learned never to ignore troubled people. Cho's behaviors leading to the incident feel like a clear map in retrospect. Teams such as the Crisis Awareness Response Evaluation (CARE) model now appear on many campuses across higher education. In these regular meetings, staff participants share concerns about students in order to create a repository of data. This is not to investigate or vilify, but to reach out and demonstrate concern for the health and wellness of students. Similarly, but at a higher level, Threat Assessment Teams handle concerns with more escalated details. Virginia Tech has assembled both of these teams and the detail of their work is on the institutional website.

### **Design and Reporting for Safety**

Borne from these experiences, a number of developments have become commonplace for many institutions. The learning from poor design, loose structure, and weak connections among campus communities gave rise to the behavior intervention teams referred to as Threat Assessment Teams (TAT), Behavior Intervention Teams (BIT), or Crisis Awareness Response Evaluation teams (CARE). Lessons—and new policies—from Virginia Tech's events taught us that there is a way to treat reports confidentially, respect student's rights to privacy and expression, but also to remain vigilant. Software like Maxient™ offers a student conduct platform that communicates with student data management platforms like MaineStreet™. While not the only product on the market, this is the one used by the University of Maine System and features a sharing section for new institutions to get inspiration for their own reporting protocols (Appendix B). Additionally, a new arm of the architecture and physical plant planning industry sprung from events that taught us the error of our ways. Crash bars on exterior doors are now a large, flat, depressible pad instead of "bicycle" crash bars that allowed assailants to loop chains through them and trap their victims. Many classroom doors now have a button or toggle that allows students to lock and shelter in place even if a key-carrying teacher is not present. Further, for schools fortunate enough to build from scratch, many recommendations for window placement, entrance doors and parking control, and the technologies that support all safety functions come from the post mortems of Columbine, Sandy Hook, Virginia Tech, and other tragedies.

### **Conclusion**

The crisis response to one campus incident is a response that must come from all campuses across the nation. As violence breaks out in one's own bailiwick, the response is immediate, more relevant, and has impact even when the threat is still potentially acute. Across the nation, however, other campuses have to grapple with how to speak to their own community ensuring their safety even when a threat is not imminent. Making sense of the events, making decisions on course of actions, attempting to explain the antecedents, accounting for the breakdowns in the system, then learning from those breakdowns is a process for which the timelines differs. On a campus in the throes of crisis, this happens in moments, hours, days. For campuses looking on, we have the luxury of time, but the steps in responding to crisis and managing risk are no less important.

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## **Appendix A**

### **Questions for Higher Education Administrators**

1. Subject matter experts have discussed a great deal about why they think school shootings happen in the first place. In your own experience as the [Administrator's Position], what sense can you make of why there have been so many violent mass casualty incidents (MCI) involving guns on school campuses?
2. In the wake of recent events, what are some important decisions that schools, colleges, and universities should make based on lessons from the tragedies on other campuses?
3. Do you have any thoughts or hindsight about the decisions made in the midst of crisis during shootings on other campuses?
4. What do you believe is the primary cause of recent spikes in MCI gun violence on college/university campuses?
5. After an MCI on campus, what do you believe would be the best actions to help the campus community normalize and heal?
6. How can a campus community learn from others' violent incidents that feel removed from their own tamer experiences?

## Appendix B

### Behavior Team (BIT, TAT, CARE, etc.) Reporting Form Samples

- University of Maine at Augusta  
[https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?UnivofMaineSystem&layout\\_id=3](https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?UnivofMaineSystem&layout_id=3)
- University of Maine Orono  
[https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?UnivofMaineSystem&layout\\_id=11](https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?UnivofMaineSystem&layout_id=11)
- University of Maine Presque Isle  
[https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?UnivofMaineSystem&layout\\_id=20](https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?UnivofMaineSystem&layout_id=20)
- College of Charleston  
[https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?CollegeofCharleston&layout\\_id=10](https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?CollegeofCharleston&layout_id=10)
- Minnesota State University - Mankato  
[https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?MNStateUniv&layout\\_id=2](https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?MNStateUniv&layout_id=2)
- North Carolina State University  
[https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?NCStateUniv&layout\\_id=2](https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?NCStateUniv&layout_id=2)
- University of Akron  
[https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?UnivofAkron&layout\\_id=10](https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?UnivofAkron&layout_id=10)
- University of Denver  
[https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?UnivofDenver&layout\\_id=99](https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?UnivofDenver&layout_id=99)
- University of San Francisco  
[https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?UnivofSF&layout\\_id=75](https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?UnivofSF&layout_id=75)
- University of South Carolina  
[https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?UnivofSouthCarolina&layout\\_id=3](https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?UnivofSouthCarolina&layout_id=3)
- University of Oklahoma  
[https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?UnivofOklahoma&layout\\_id=3](https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?UnivofOklahoma&layout_id=3)
- University of North Georgia  
[https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?UnivofNorthGeorgia&layout\\_id=4](https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?UnivofNorthGeorgia&layout_id=4)

## **The Administrative Home for University Sport and Active Recreation: One Approach Doesn't Fit All**

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The most prevailing future of university sport and active recreation appears to be caused by the need to promote the student experience. The pressure created by increased student fees and a greater focus on value for money has made it important that adjustments to the management of student sport and active recreation (referred to as university sport for ease), follow a similar pace. Researchers are tasked with predicting the future of university sport, but the changing economic landscape for universities and associated consequences, make it a challenging task. It is clear however, that university sport has gained notable importance in recent years, which is now becoming more intertwined with universities' core business strategies (Brunton & Mackintosh, 2017; Daprano, Pastore, & Costa, 2008; Field & Kidd, 2016; Roemmich, Balantekin, & Beeler, 2015; Weese, 2010). Indeed, universities around the globe continually strive to align university sport programs with their core mission of education, better student experience and health, as well as preparing students for their future endeavors.

There has been a significant restructuring of university sports administration across the globe (Hayes, 2015). While some universities still maintain these activities under partial control by student bodies, some have transferred the administration to either dedicated business services departments, or sit within the area of university facility management, also referred to as Estates. A recent report that investigated North American campuses suggests that the administration of campus recreation is becoming more structured like an independent business (Milton, Roth, & Fisher, 2011). Though there is a lack of literature on this trend across the globe, it seems administration of university sport continues to follow a flexible approach. Currently, it is not clear how such a shift towards either a students or business based direction can be utilised to maximize the contribution of sport to core university strategy. The move by North American universities towards housing sport in business service departments is related to the increased popularity of recreational programs (Milton et al., 2011), which is thought to benefit universities by providing more funding options.

There appears to be a variance in practice internationally with questions being posed around the best administrative home for university sport that need answering (Milton et al., 2011). This paper looks at a comparative analysis between the United Kingdom (UK) and Australia, given that both countries followed a similar economic move towards raising tuition fees and lifting of the student number cap (Hackett, 2014). As Hackett (2014) also describes, both countries have similar funding structures, quality assurance processes and participation rates, and the case for comparing England and Australia has been previously established (Barr, 1998). With this, a shift in how students perceive value for money has developed along with associated strategic moves by governments and universities to place a greater value on the student experience (Great Britain. Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, 2011; Shah, 2015). This provides an increased potential value of sport to better support the student

experience and alignment to university strategy, with sport being a key part of campus life and campus life included within the broader definition of student experience (Shah, 2015). However, the implications and feasibility of this on university sports leaders and managers is under researched. Specifically, here, considerations about where best the administrative home should be for sport to better support such a strategic move within universities both in the UK and Australia, remains elusive. This paper aims to address this need.

### **Definition of University Sport**

University sport is being used here to refer to all forms of active recreation including social sport, intramural, and club sport that allows both formal and informal opportunities for competition. In North America and Canada, this would include the terms Campus Recreation and Inter-Collegiate Athletics that are commonly used.

### **Literature review**

University sport is like other sport and recreational businesses, in that it is necessary to maximize investments made towards improving campus life for students. This can be achieved whether having administration through student or business based structures or another approach. Why though, implement business structured administration in universities where adequate and functioning student based administration already exists? One answer to this, as highlighted by Milton (2011), is that business based administration is in principle holistic, recognizing the interconnectedness between university's core objectives, social and business parameters; being important to maximize university investment. Conversely, because student centered management can promote usage and flexibility, it might offer opportunities for integration into existing departments, whether that be academic sports departments or under facilities management. Therefore, the challenge in maximizing the contribution of university sport to universities may be to work towards creating hybrid administrative homes rather than moving from one to another.

Vos et al. (2012) highlighted that human resource parameters are the most significant factor in the performance of sports organizations, a view shared by several authors (Hoye, Smith, Nicholson, & Stewart, 2015; Nowy, Wicker, Feiler, & Breuer, 2015; Vos et al., 2012). Thus, research efforts have been focused on clarifying the most critical aspect of this construct and distinguishing the unique differences between campus recreation and other recreational settings (Hoye et al., 2015). Though independent sport organizations might function in a manner that is linked to a business structure, the case for university sport is somewhat complex as the university's learning objectives, size and cultural factors come in to play. Despite the progress in establishing effective human resource systems, relatively low levels of human relation management theories have been applied in university sport. Milton (2011) reported that managers of campus recreation remain divided on the best human relations system for campus recreation.

The administrative structure of universities has also to be considered when trying to maximize performance from sport. In fact, changing the organizational structure of collegiate institutions is very common, especially for new leaders (Dungy, 2003). This perhaps is even more likely to occur with the current economic climate, where increased accountability, better use of resource and efficiency are on the agenda. Looking at organizational structure theory,

the basic theory is to divide the work of the organization, differentiate and coordinate the work, and then integrate the work to best meet the organizations mission and goals. However, the importance of organizational structure is more than simply about the physical placing within the organization, it is also key to enable effective decision making and in aligning people more overtly to strategy. Organizations now, are said to use more open and organic systems, to allow for change (Schuh, Jones, & Harper, 2010). Where higher education institutions fit in relation to organizational theory, that generally describes structures to be mechanistic or organic, is not clear and likely to vary per organization. Four main factors have been found to influence decisions about how organizations are structured: size, technology, environment, and strategy (Bowditch, Buono, & Stewart, 2008). Given universities vary in all of these four factors, it could be expected that the administrative home for university sport may also vary.

One view regarding the best place for sport within universities is that hybrid administrative homes that operate within a student services department with oversight from business services (or commercial services), are likely to be more successful and beneficial to the university than either student services or business services based management (Nuss, 2003). Interestingly, this also provides an important context for integration with other departments such as estates, academic sport and sports facility departments. Administrative homes of university sport are historically placed to promote the use and benefits to the university, and are informed by institutional values and objectives (Ellis, Compton, Tyson, & Bohlig, 2002; Leslie, Sparling, & Owen, 2001). For instance, student unions across UK universities play a key role in improving campus life, access to recreational centers and the organization of recreation programs (Fink, McShay, & Hernandez, 2016; Lau, 2003). It is important to note however, that a business based approach emerged as a method to manage and maximize the return on the capital intensive investments made in developing campus recreational programs through various administrative techniques (Rosso, McGrath, Immink, & May, 2016). In addition, while student centered administration includes business oriented aspects, some argue that it has been unsuccessful in the management of campus recreation to benefit universities. This can be linked to investment pressure, arising from issues relating to profitability and investment returns that are often beyond the scope of student services.

This complexity in campus recreation makes it challenging to closely align university sport with the wider university goals. Optimizing the benefits of university sport requires both effective human resource management and effective placing within university structures to allow staff to feel valued whilst also enable ease and clarity of working practices to be strategically aligned. For example, optimal performance can be achieved by integrating university sport with human relations management theory (Armstrong & Taylor, 2014; Shafritz, Ott, & Jang, 2015). Such methods can provide insight into key organizational and individual differences to explain how specific administrative structures lead to greater performance and corresponding improved engagement by staff. Furthermore, this framework supports the idea that if people are valued they are more likely to work better (Bratton & Gold, 2012).

Mounting evidence is showing that business structured campus recreation programs, albeit context dependent, can facilitate increased benefits to universities (Milton et al., 2011). A business structured approach to recreation administration is a widely practiced framework. It is widely accepted that human relations can affect perception of an organizations' role (Kanfer & Chen, 2016). Perception of the role of university sport can influence the level and utilization of resources, and sports engagement by staff and students, which in turn can improve motivation and performance (Ross, Young, Sturts, Kim, & Ross, 2014). Performance can equally influence



the extent to which managers and junior staff perceive the role of university sport in the wider university objectives. Thus, strategic organization of university sport can influence the extent to which administrators better engage with university strategy.

Though there is evidence supporting the links between human relations, motivation, performance and engagement, how such associations unfold in the context of university sport internationally remains unclear (Barrick, Thurgood, Smith, & Courtright, 2015; Mäkikangas, Aunola, Seppälä, & Hakanen, 2016). The uncertainty also remains about how best to administrate university sport to maximize the benefits. Thus, the perception of directors and managers of such departments need to be investigated. The current research is aimed at mapping the perception of managers, characterizing and comparing the administrative home of university sport in the UK and Australia. The study aimed to provide answers to two distinct but related research questions:

1. Where is the administrative home best placed within universities to achieve the full extent of their role, and why?
2. How does the administrative home of university sport compare internationally?

### **Theoretical Framework and Methodology**

This study took an interpretivistic social constructivist ontology considered best for the nature of research that sought to understand the views and opinions of the sport leaders and managers within each university researched. Such meanings and understandings about the topic consider the social and experiential levels of the participants using an inductive approach. The aim was not to enforce concepts on participants, rather to be led by their ideas and perceptions, when probed further, to reveal the context and explanations about this area of university sport, letting the findings emerge from the data (Blaikie, 2010) whilst also to be actively identified through patterns or themes by the researcher (Bruan & Clarke, 2006). This approach acknowledges that meanings are socially constructed (Smith & Sparkes, 2013; Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). The researcher recognized however, that it may not seem feasible to compare the expressions from one person to another, as Burnard (1991) highlighted, in that one person's world view may not link to another's, however, the method and analysis here assumes this is a rational thing to do, whilst also ensuring the process of thematic analysis used helped to reflect the reality of the participants and across different cultures within each country.

### **Method**

#### **Sample and recruitment of participants**

This study used a purposive sampling technique to ensure that a wide range (size and type) of universities' vision and values were covered. The sampling also took an international perspective based on the reported differences across different countries (Milton et al., 2011). Fourteen universities made up the sample, eight from the UK and six from Australia; the number of universities related to a sample size that allowed a range in both size, from under 5,000 to 55,000 students, and type of universities across both countries. For the UK sample, the type of participants included representatives from the MillionPlus (being the association for

modern universities in the UK with a vocational orientation), Catholic universities, and the Russell Group (research intensive universities). In the case of Australia, participants were from the Australian Technology Network (Innovative and Enterprising universities, with vocational orientation), Innovative Research Universities, Catholic Universities (although not a recognised Group) and the Group of Eight (research intensive universities). This range allowed the inclusion of a range of universities with similar missions and visions.

The participants held a range of posts including university Director of Sport or Commercial Services Manager (for UK universities), Manager/General/Senior Sport Manager, or Manager of Student Services in six of the Australian universities. This purposive sampling allowed the study to gain insight from known experts in the governance, leadership and management of university sport. The use of the term sport has been previously defined.

Ethical approval was obtained from the lead research University's ethical committee before email invitation for voluntary participation was sent to identified participants. Additionally, all participants requested and obtained individual ethical permission from their respective universities.

### **Interview Procedures**

Fourteen semi-structured interviews were administered to the volunteers, which lasted for approximately one hour. This paper reports on the particular research questions identified earlier, and were part of a wider data set. Initial questions on the purpose of university sport and its link to corporate strategy for each university were asked, to provide the context. Then, participants were asked "Where do you think the administrative home is best placed for sport within your university to achieve the full extent of its role, and why?" This question was expanded upon with several follow-up questions to understand the reason for the different responses received.

### **Data Analysis**

Interviews were recorded using a Dictaphone and were later transcribed verbatim, coded and analyzed by a thematic approach as the core methodological tool of analysis, considered to be a particularly useful method for such qualitative research (Smith & Sparkes, 2013). An inductive approach was taken (Patton, 1990) following Braun & Clarke's (2006) five stages of thematic analysis, thus, a process of coding the data occurred without trying to fit the data to any pre-existing coding frame or any preconceptions of the researcher (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Subsequently, a process of intra-method triangulation was used to compare findings from the interviews of the leaders and managers within and between England and Australia. This structured approach to thematic analysis was taken (Braun & Clarke, 2006), to help avoid any prior knowledge, experiences, and theoretical stance to influence discussions.

## **Findings**

### **Administrative home for university sport: student services, commercial services or other?**

In this analysis, university sport included everything involving sport and active recreation at the universities, as defined earlier. Of the eight researched universities in the UK, six out of eight placed the administration of university sport under the commercial area of the

university, one under an academic area and one university sport department reported directly to one of the senior management team. Within Australia, four out of the six universities were based within the student services departments, and two were housed under the commercial services area. One of the sport manager's where sport was under commercial services would have preferred it to be under student services to better relate to the student experience and said where they were placed, happen in an unplanned way:

Well actually, to be honest, I know at the time, no one wanted the responsibility so it was bandied around until one of the directors put their hand up and said oh it can go here. So I don't think it was a deliberate plan, it just panned out that way... The ideal situation for me would be for Sport to be a Student Service. [Australia, University 2]

From this sample, therefore, more universities within the UK were housed in commercial services with more Australian universities housing sport within student services, many changing in Australia due to a greater institutional focus on student experience and seeing sport as a support service as explained below:

I think it actually fits quite nicely with support services, so I don't think it should be a separate entity. I think that sitting within the umbrella of the university allows you to get more support, greater long term strategic support from the university other than sitting outside of that and I think that in terms of either student services or support services I think that's the correct place for it to be. [Australia: University 4]

Whilst UK universities also have had a similar shift in focus towards the student experience, this has not been followed by a subsequent shift in the administration for university sport at the time of writing. In addition, most of the UK universities researched also had the student sports clubs run by the Students Union, creating a hybrid situation between the student union and a university department. One of the UK universities were in the process of the Student Union and university merging to form one entity for university sport, moving all sport into university control, housing all within the commercial services department where part of sport was already placed. Some of the hybrid situations developed a Sports Board or Committee to help overcome the often overlapping services and to enable the university sports managers to meet the broader strategic aims. These Sports Boards involved representatives from student services, academic departments, and business services as well as other departments to help unite their services whilst also allowing the provision of sport to meet both the student experience agenda as well as commercial needs. One Australian university also had a hybrid situation where the sport centre ran additional sport services as a separate entity alongside the rest of university sport provision. It is clear therefore, that one approach does not fit all; universities adapt approaches that mirror their specific needs and long term strategic plans as detailed later in this paper.

The thematic analysis identified three key themes to help explain the findings and answer the research questions which are labelled as 'alignment to core university purpose', 'financial needs' and 'size and academic link'. The international comparison provides similarities in experiences that can provide valuable insights for university sports provision in other countries.

**Alignment to core university purpose.** Half of the participants of the UK respondents reported that sport is targeted at helping the university meet its core business strategy. All the universities sport managers were serious about improving the student experience. Though some of the departments were not directly aimed at meeting core objectives, the fact that student experience was at the top of the agenda for all the participants, suggests that university sport is targeted at enhancing student satisfaction. The emerging importance of student satisfaction surveys highlights the indirect association between recreation, student recruitment and retention; where participation in campus recreation has showed an influence on undergraduate and graduate students' decisions to attend and continue to attend university (Henchy, 2013). Correspondingly, some managers specifically referred to improving overall student experience that included enhancing their graduate employability, which is equally important for positive reputation and attraction of students:

Creating that sense of community and really enhancing that experience while they're here. Hopefully while they're here we're really helping their transition through the university. Whether it's keeping them fit, keeping them mentally healthy, or whether it's them meeting their ambitions in terms of their sport ... We also do an Activator program, trying to help their employability when they leave. A wide range of things really, for me. We're supporting the university in achieving their goals, and with that trying to support the students in achieving their goals, if that makes sense? [UK: University 2]

Research participants strongly highlighted enabling a healthy and active university community as one purpose of university sport. Moreover, reasons also included creating a healthy external community, providing opportunities for students to develop employability skills and in providing opportunities for students to engage in more sport to be more engaged in student life as illustrated in the quote above. This analysis highlighted an interconnected pattern of underlying purposes of university sport. Whilst the extracts about these purposes may suggest that they are distinct and serve individual university needs, most often there was considerable overlap between universities. Furthermore, there was little direct link between core strategic aims and the university sport strategy; more often the link was indirect when probed and showed that the value of sport was not always considered to be seen by the senior university leaders: 'No I don't think sports completely seen as being a key element to the university delivery...I think in the end in terms of the wider senior team then I don't think it's key on the agenda.' [UK: University 4].

The connection between sport and university strategy was aimed predominantly to enhance the student experience, which was evident both in the UK and Australian universities. If looking just at the administrative home for university sport, the link to student experience would be more obviously seen with the Australian Universities given most housed sport within student services departments. The review of six Australian universities highlights that the major purpose of university sport is to improve student experience, although with recognition that there are other strategic drivers:

Obviously we've focused on the student experience but there's other key strategic drivers such as student recruitment and student retention, student attainment and graduate employability. [Australia: University 4].

The purpose of university sport in the UK is more broadly about meeting wider strategic objectives that includes a strong focus on student experience:

I think we're here to exist to support the university in its strategy of recruiting students, keeping them here and giving them a good experience when they're here. [UK: University 2].

Whether this justifies the majority of universities in the UK placing their administrative home under the commercial services is debatable and is discussed further under the theme 'Financial needs'. It is equally important to note that, whilst not dominant, some of the Australian universities share similar approaches in using sport to support the breadth of general university objectives: 'we have a framework and it's based essentially on student recruitment, student retention, so the student experience, community engagement, being a part of society in the community in general, international marketing.....' [Australia: University 2].

**Financial needs.** The administrative structure of university sport is often determined by financial needs and cultural factors. Specifically, funding plays an important role in the development and maintenance of sports facilities as described by some of the respondents, for example, universities with aging facilities reported that their attachment with the estates or commercial services helped facilitate availability of funds for new developments, which is interrelated with the purpose of university sport described in the previous theme, as illustrated below:

I think it's a necessary place for it to be, at the moment. Because I feel like I can influence and have more direct contact with the people that are working out how to spend their £305 million worth of capital projects in the next five years. I feel like sport will probably have a bigger priority. Because everybody's in the mix, while I'm sat at the table I can...you can do that, can't you? [UK: University 1]

I think it's preferable to be within Estates because that's where the budgets lie. If I present a good business case, and I say "this is the next step, I've got some ideas on how we can develop." It's more likely that we'll get that funding because we sit under Estates. So we can have a look at that. If we sit under Student Services, they don't control the budgets. [UK: University 4]

This view is shared by some of the Australian universities interviewed: 'We are at the size now where there is opportunity in the next iteration of the Sports Strategy to actually look at the development of an entirely separate entity that may have effect on other streams of commercial income' [Australia: University 2]. This demonstrates that some of the participants' preference for the placing of the administrative home of the university sports department has developed as a result of managing the costs of maintaining adequate sport services. The availability of resources was also found to be one of the key reasons for American functional

structures of student affairs organizations (Kuk and Banning, 2009). It was evident here where sport was managed from the commercial services departments that good investment return drives the choice of administrative structure:

Because the word commercial comes in there is a perception that maybe that's at the expense of students or that you know it's not provided for free or whatever, it's true there is nothing free in this world, and we have alongside being wanting to focus on delivering really great experiences we are conscious that we've got to be as sustainable as we can financially, so that we can continue to deliver the great experience. And both sides of the same coin really, so I'm explaining that because I don't think being in a commercial campus services is a bad thing, culturally it's not a bad thing and also it's given us a sharp focus on trying to give students what they want. And if they're happy they'll come back and they'll continue to pay, so it's a virtuous circle. [UK: University 5]

There is some evidence that a lack of understanding about university sport by student services can encourage the move of the administrative home to a commercial service department. Student services within this university appeared to have both reduced funding and technical knowledge to maximize the benefits to universities: 'When we used to sit under Student Services it was almost like they didn't know what to do with us.' [UK: University 3].

**Size and academic link.** The third theme that provided a rationale for the placing of university sport related to the size of a university community and having an academic link. The smallest university operated university sport under the academic sport area. The interview revealed that the manager of this university recognized that perhaps this model worked because of its small size and whether it would 'scale up' was debatable: 'but I think for a university of this size, there is an opportunity to be more flexible and agile and to blur some boundaries between the academic and the non-academic.' [UK: University 6].

Indeed, a manager within a small university can be present at higher level meetings so can influence strategy and funding. Conversely, in a large institution this would not necessarily be the case. It was felt that having the non-academic sport area within an academic sports department at a small university worked so that they could directly align work to the strategic plan whilst also to allow the academic theory and practice to be brought together, ideally with evidence impacting practice. There was therefore, evidence that some of the managers included in this study had more of an academic outlook on university sport and encouraged an independent academic sport department:

I used to run an academic department with recreation sport and that had benefits too, you know that didn't stop us thinking about customers, but it also meant we were very well joined up with the academic colleagues, we probably had a slightly greater input from them and they were able to contribute more. [UK: University 5]

However, it is interesting to highlight that they were aware that maintaining a clear commercial aspect within the academic department is important in maximizing the benefits of university sport to students and the community as a whole:

...as a department we would become a professional service in the institution. [UK: University 5]

It should be with the academic sport delivery, that's what they do. So that you have a university academic department of sports, let's say a Department of Sport Science. Aligned to that, with its own budget and its own staff, the delivery of the professional side of sport. [UK: University 6]

Like the UK universities, there was evidence to support the important role of community size and the placing of university sports in Australian universities.

If the university grows and doubles, triples the size when our student population has grown as well, then obviously the sports program needs to grow. Like for instance XXX has a dedicated sports center that's run independently because of the size of it. [Australia: University 1]

### **Discussion**

The analysis of the findings highlights important characteristics that explain why administration of university sport is placed under certain control and oversight. It is particularly clear that 'one approach does not fit all', often determined by financial needs and strategic university plans as well as the size of institution. It is clear that financial factors are important in the housing of university sport where such departments have direct access to fund facility developments. However, the association seems to be stronger amongst UK universities compared to their Australian counterparts.

The purpose of university sport in the context of strategic plans plays an important role in how sports departments are structured in the UK. Though the same case can be made for the structure in Australia, the administrative home among the Australian universities seems to be more towards student experience than integration of wider objectives such as around employability or alignment to student retention. What seems particularly important in terms of housing the administrative aspects, is that managers within the UK universities agreed that estates or commercial services might be limiting the reach of university sport given the common strategic foci and priority on the student experience. This was exemplified by the fact that managers, who thought that commercial services were the right place for funding access in their current situation, still highlighted that it was not necessarily the best option given the strong strategic focus on the student experience. To maximize the benefits to universities, it is recommended that universities should adapt administrative structures in a way that best facilitates the developments and operations of university sport to achieve key university strategy. Forming a university Sports Board or Committee was one approach that some universities used to help unite the differing services and academic areas that were key stakeholders for the provision of university sport. Allowing opportunity for greater flexibility in the administrative structure would also help to maximize the benefits to universities by allowing the placing of an individual administrative department such as sport, to adapt and relate to the individual requirements of each university at that particular time.

The data also showed that for most universities there was no explicit direction for sport from their senior management and that the key for any structure was for the sport managers to

be higher up the 'organizational tree' so that they could help influence change, that was most often not the case; instead they felt their views were often reported through their line manager. The lack of explicit direction from senior leaders as well as having a weak link within any strategic plan were two key factors that if improved could help improve the running of university sport. As highlighted earlier within this paper, the human resource is considered to be the most significant factor in optimum performance of sports organizations (Vos et al., 2012) and appears to be a neglected area by senior university leaders regarding university sport.

Internationally, the objective of improving student experience was shared among the UK and Australian universities, and supported by the findings of other studies (Price, Matzdorf, Smith, & Agahi, 2003; Pritchard & Wilson, 2003). However, there were differences in how sport was incorporated into their strategic plans. It is interesting to note that this correlated with the administrative structure favored in each university, where the different financial needs and size changed the housing of the sports department. For example, small universities were able to house university sport within their academic areas, whereas universities with immediate needs to build new facilities, participants were happy (whilst this was key) being located within commercial services, often overseen by an Estates department where responsibility for facility developments sat. In general, a key finding of this study was that in any of the universities the administrative structure was said to best suit their current needs. This also highlights the importance of aligning sport with both the departmental needs of sport and strategic plans (Price et al., 2003), whether sport is used to support recruitment, retention and, or, student experience; such different strategic needs perhaps explain the variability in administrative home.

The emerging trend in university sport in North America, points out that universities are moving campus recreation to a more business-based structure (Milton et al., 2011). However, this present study suggests that the administrative structure benefits universities if placed in accordance with the strategic plans of the university. There might be certain misconceptions regarding the best department to administrate university sport because managers seem to adapt to their universities particular circumstances. The key to these issues seems to be the need for both senior university leaders and sport managers to identify the purpose of university sport and then to adapt the best administrative structure to maximize benefits to the university. This flexibility would allow cooperation between student bodies, academic sport departments and commercial services. Thus, university sports departments could be placed in one area and be moved as strategic aims change or certain aspects of the business are achieved, for example if new sports facilities are built, relating to a more organic system of organizational theory.

Regardless of the location of the administrative body the staff need to know their purpose and how their work clearly aligns to core university business. This purpose needs to be clearly evident within the strategic plan to help direct their work, whilst showing their 'place' and value within core business objectives. In the universities referred to, sport managers felt that senior management were reluctant to take sport seriously as part of the key university agenda. Therefore, placing university sports administration at a location that mirrors the purpose, needs and size of university sport for each university, is likely to be the best approach to maximise the benefits to core university business whilst also helping staff to feel valued within their work and consequently, work better (Bratton & Gold, 2012). Ideally this would include having a clear direction for sport from senior leaders and an explicit placing of sport within strategic plans. Indeed, many sport administrators in the UK feel the strength of any strategic location is to help them 'fight their corner', as a result they favored commercial services given the high need, at the time of research, on investments in new facilities due to the changed emphasis on



the student experience. Universities should however, be able to achieve support for new facilities regardless of the area they are based within however, this was the view of the UK sport managers sampled. Once such facilities are developed of course, the administrative home may well be better placed under student experience, but this is yet to be explored.

The smaller sized universities within this sample used a different model, being based within an academic sport area where they aligned to what they considered to be the relevant strategic areas. Alignment to academic sports departments with academics interested in the study of university sport might enable greater linking of evidence to practice however, it appears still to be an underdeveloped area of research. If developed, it could however, enable sport managers to make a stronger case about the developments and direction of sport to senior leaders.

Findings of the international comparison illustrate that there are areas of similarity and relevance that could be considered across different countries and therefore, provide valuable insights into such cross-cultural experiences. Based on the context of human resource management theories (Kanfer & Chen, 2016), relationships and a supportive environment can positively increase motivation. This also relates here where a more obvious value and support to sport manager could be achieved through appropriate administration within the university setting. In addition, at present university sport is often located in more than one department, sometimes split across university owned and student owned and run entities that further adds to provide potential confusion and inefficiencies of resources and delivery. Discussions around the best administrative home are, therefore, of key importance to enable: greater alignment to university strategy; flexible structures to be developed when need; appropriate management support and direction from senior leaders; the purpose to be clearly illustrated in written documents and through oral communication; potential for evidence-based practice from interested academic staff; and the sharing of practice across countries.

## **Conclusions**

The study concluded that no one administrative structure is applicable for all universities due to: the differences in purpose and value of university sport to university strategy and senior leaders; financial needs; and university size. The findings are particularly important for both university administrators and managers given both are working together to ensure the highest levels of student experience to be achieved. Sport is considered a key part of the student experience (Shah, 2015) and it is proposed here that where, and how, it is administrated, is an essential part of achieving an economic as well as strategically aligned provision. If sport is based in an area of the university that is incongruent with its alignment to the strategic plan then the managers of sport may not be able to take full advantage and thus, value from sport. An organic approach to allow for flexibility may best suit universities changing needs.

It is suggested here that a strong and direct link between sport to university strategy can not only help gain more support from university management but also help to achieve a raised profile for sport across the whole university, by both staff and students. It is recommended from findings that a greater explicit mention of sport within strategic plans as well as in other written and oral forms of communication to all staff across the university may also help to raise the profile of sport, whilst also gaining increased clarity for those responsible for delivering sport. This may not only help to provide more financial support to the area, but also to raise the value of sport by potentially helping to increase both sports participation and sports advocates from academics and other areas of a university. Furthermore, the benefits of having a greater link

between academic sports staff and non-academic sport staff may help in improving the case for sport and its administrative home when need.

This international comparison has shown several similarities of issues across the UK and Australia around for example, the need for greater strategic alignment, direction, and discussions around the placing of the administrative home. An ideal administrative structure for sport appears to be one that allows greater ease of influence by reducing bureaucratic structures, as well as enables recognition of work, for meeting strategic goals, by senior leaders. Given these are global issues, this can further help to strength any case for sport given sport is also internationally relevant to universities. With the prevalence of trans-national partnerships and international students, providing a service that is globally relevant is key. The implications are timely given the current economic environment and political environment of universities and increasing pressures on resources and student numbers, thus, findings enable university leaders to consider how best to capitalize on sport as a vehicle for supporting university strategy.

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# The Goldilocks Phenomenon: Are We Helping Doctoral Students Too Much, Too Little, or Just Right?

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## The Problem

“It makes me sick when I see dissertation work completed by the advisor. I can name several scholars who do it. Faculty get overly involved in students’ writing,” was a comment we heard recently from a colleague. This led us to wonder whether advisors have been generally too involved in their students’ work. If so, this presents a problem because the dissertation is designed to be an independent project created by the student. The whole point of doctoral study is to bring about a transformation from dependent student to independent scholar. Obviously, if advisors have been writing *for* students the goal of the program will not be met.

One the other hand, research indicates some advisors are too busy or unwilling to support doctoral students properly (Lovitts, 2008). Consider this quote from an interview of a doctoral advisor by Aitchison (2012): “[Students are] forced, they’re facilitated and encouraged from Day 1 to write. We’ve no shortage of students and you want to cut your losses early if they’re not going to perform, particularly in the current metrics.” So, the message here was students were on their own to learn scholarly writing; moreover, there was competition among students and those who could perform independently would move forward; those who needed support would be left behind. This approach is also flawed because doctoral work is a dynamic journey that transforms a dependent student into an independent scholar. We believe an effective mentor must be sensitive to individual differences in the developmental progress of students. We also believe effective mentors must be skilled at directing their instruction to the appropriate level based on students’ needs.

Some mentors felt students were too dependent. For example, Woolderink, Putnik, van der Boom, and Klabbers (2015) interviewed 52 doctoral supervisors in the Netherlands and many said they expected students to naturally take more ownership and responsibility over the project as they gained competence as researchers. However, when this did not happen naturally, supervisors found this to be a problem. Susan Gardner (2008) interviewed students about the transformation to independence to try to understand some of the hurdles they encountered. One student summed up the problem succinctly: “If someone holds your hand too much, you’ll never learn to think for yourself, but if someone doesn’t hold your hand enough, you’ll fall flat on your face” (p. 342).

## Theoretical Foundation

In the current study, we sought to explore the tension mentors sometimes experience regarding providing the proper level of support for their protégés. Mentors need to avoid

providing too much support and they need to avoid providing too little support. This tension is related to the process of socialization that takes place in graduate school in which students learn about the culture of graduate school and the way to survive and, ideally, thrive, in this environment. Weidman, Twale, and Stein (2001) put forth a theory that socialization takes place in stages: (a) the students observe others and learn the expected values and behaviors; (b) the students move to a formal stage in which they “try on” the normative roles, which may feel ill-fitting in the beginning; (c) they move to the informal stage in which they begin to feel more natural in the role of a scholar; and finally, (d) they move to the personal stage in which the protégé has fully internalized the role of a scholar and his personal and professional identity become fused. According to this theory, the transformation from dependent student (receiver of knowledge) to independent scholar (creator of knowledge) is a gradual process of internalizing a set of specific values and behaviors that define the scholar role.

Research by Roberts, Tinari, & Bandlow (in prep) showed that mentors see their role as providing three general kinds of support: technical support (i.e., support with scholarly writing and research methods), managerial support, and moral support. Regarding managerial and moral support, we believe students require steady support throughout the doctoral journey. However, regarding technical support, we believe, as students become more competent and as their scholarly identity becomes more internalized, their needs for technical support diminish. We believe an effective mentor can facilitate the student’s healthy transformation to independent scholar by providing the appropriate level and type of support at each step along the journey. We hoped this research would be useful in providing some insight and guidance about supporting students.

Susan Gardner (2008) added to this conversation by documenting tension students felt when mentors were inconsistent, sometimes providing too much support and other times not providing enough support. She recorded the confusion and anxiety voiced by students who struggled through this transitional stage. Interestingly, she pointed out an inherent paradox whereby mentors require students to move toward autonomy within a traditionally authoritarian culture. In essence, they give the following message to students: “You are expected to think and act independently, but you must perform to our standards and we will be the sole judges of whether you have done that.” Students found this to be a confusing message. Our study brought a new perspective to this literature in that we focused on the perceptions of mentors; we documented their thought process regarding students’ emerging autonomy. Moreover, we explored their thoughts as to whether they experienced tension regarding the students’ transition to independence and we asked what kinds of strategies they have used to help students move ahead smoothly.

### **Purpose and Research Questions**

Our purpose was to interview effective mentors in the United States to learn whether they experienced tension between providing support and encouraging independence. And, if they did, what strategies they used to strike a balance between supporting their students and requiring independence. The specific conceptual research question for this study was “How do effective doctoral student mentors achieve balance between providing support and encouraging independence?”

Bracketing: Gearing (2004) claimed that it can be helpful for authors to bracket their own opinions about a topic in an attempt to set aside their personal perspectives on a topic. This

allows for full disclosure; it allows the reader to understand the authors' point of view. It can also be helpful for the authors; by bracketing and becoming clearly aware of one's own biases, it is easier to set aside those biases and approach the topic more objectively. While it may be impossible to completely set aside one's perspective and bias on any topic, we hoped our bracketing exercise would go a long way to improving our objective analysis of this phenomenon.

As primary author, my own thoughts and feelings regarding the balance between support and independence are as follows: I struggle with that balance every day . . . my impulse is to do too much, to help too much . . . and it is a daily discipline I am working on to pull back, to hold myself back . . . I always want to jump in and fix things and that has gotten me in trouble . . . now I'm learning to be more patient with students' growth, to set up high expectations, to encourage students and let them know I believe in them, to point them to resources, to give careful and detailed feedback, and then to wait and let them figure out how to move themselves ahead in their professional growth. But, it is hard to wait patiently.

My co-author's perspective is as follows: It's not a balance . . . I'm way on the side of independence. They have to come up with their research ideas. They need to be very independent. I'm willing to support it to the extent that it is sound, but they have to be very independent.

Clearly, my co-author and I have different perspectives on the support–independence balance question. This may provide a useful dynamic that will help us both see the issue from the other side and, thus, analyze the data more objectively.

## **Background Literature**

### **Developmental Trajectory from Dependent Student to Independent Scholar**

The normative development of a doctoral student has been from dependent student, near the beginning of their program, to a fully independent scholar by the end of their program. There are individual differences in how and at what pace this developmental change has taken place. Some students have moved to independence quickly and some have made the journey more slowly. There is not one right way to do it. Mentors should not expect competence on Day 1. There are many and varied scholarly skills students need to master along the way and all of this takes time.

Baker, Pifer, and Flemion (2013) claimed the shift from dependence to independence normatively occurs during the dissertation phase of the doctoral journey. However, Lovitts (2008) found that many students struggle to make the transition. Her work focus was on the characteristics of students that predict success and failure in this transition. Students who were successful in this transition possessed creative and practical intelligence, were good problem-solvers, and were bubbling with ideas; they were hard-workers, self-starters, intellectually curious, and undaunted by failure. They were passionate about their research topic and found the work intrinsically rewarding. In contrast, some of the student characteristics that predicted failure in the transition to independence were fear of failure (ironically), low tolerance for frustration and ambiguity, and difficulty delaying gratification. It is interesting to note that the students who stumbled on the path toward independence had high levels of analytic intelligence, but they often exhibited lower levels of practical and creative intelligence. In addition, a smooth transition was sometimes slower than normal due to inadequate instruction during coursework.

In fact, Golde and Dore (2001) found that about a third of dissertation students claimed their coursework had not prepared them to conduct independent research.

### **Mentor Strategies That Influence Successful Transition**

To address the problem cited, our work focused on understanding strategies that mentors can apply to help students move toward independence and to direct their instruction appropriately so that there is a proper balance between providing support and encouraging independence. On the one hand, Lovitts (2001) reported that high-PhD-productive faculty provide more support than low-PhD-productive faculty. In addition, high-PhD-productive mentors take more personal responsibility for their students' success. However, one of our concerns in the current paper was to provide precise information about how much personal responsibility mentors should take on. We asked how they gauge whether they are taking on the proper level of responsibility and what signs and signals tell them they have taken on too much personal responsibility. We believe there are times when the mentor needs to step back and require the student to take more personal responsibility. It is important that the mentor provides support that empowers the student instead of enabling him.<sup>5</sup> For example Lovitts (2008) documented a mentor who lowered her standards to allow students to make it through. She reported this as an example of an unsuccessful doctoral experience because the students did not make the transition to independent scholarship. According to Woolderink and colleagues (2015), students valued advisors who could remain engaged with students, but at the same time, allow them freedom to find their own way and research style. This is a complicated balance that we explored in our work.

### **Assessing Students' Maturity and Scaffolding**

In proposing the social development theory, Vygotsky (1978, 1986) claimed that children's learning occurred faster and better through social interaction with a skilled teacher who was able to assess the student's maturity level and direct her instruction slightly above the student's independent competence level. This level is the upper end of the zone of proximal development (ZPD) and instruction targeted at this level should theoretically activate and energize the student's development. Furthermore, Vygotsky explained scaffolding as a teaching method whereby the teacher initially directs supportive dialog at the upper end of the student's ZPD as a method to stretch the student's competence. As the student masters new skills and gains independent competence, the teacher gradually pulls back the supports or "scaffolding" and begins to direct her dialog to the next highest level, again stretching the student's competence to a new level. Although Vygotsky studied these principles of instruction for teachers of young children, we believe these principles also hold for mentors of doctoral students. We believe an effective mentor can diagnose the student's understanding of the varied and complex tasks required to write a dissertation and she can deliver instruction that will stretch the student's competence and activate his development.

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<sup>5</sup> To avoid confusing language, we have used the female pronoun to refer to the mentor and the male pronoun to refer to the student.



## **The Role of Trust**

Trust is an important component in mentor–protégé relationships (Roberts, Ferro Almeida, & Bandlow, in press; Baker & Pifer, 2011; Gearity & Mertz, 2012; Kram, 1985; Lovitts, 2005). According to Daloz (1986), “students in educational programs encounter a transformational journey . . . the guidance of a mentor is critical, and the mentor’s [job is to provide] a place where the student can contact [his] need for fundamental trust, the basis of growth” (p. 215). In addition, empirical evidence has shown that students were more likely to accept their mentors’ input when there was a high level of trust (Fleig-Palmer & Schoorman, 2011). According to Kram (1985), when mentors nurtured trust, students were more willing to admit their own weaknesses and mistakes. Consequently, students were better able to address and remedy their mistakes. Trust has been found to be a key factor for knowledge sharing and for dissertation completion.

Mentors can nurture trust by exhibiting competence (Roberts, Ferro Almeida, & Bandlow, in press). Moreover, competent mentoring includes providing students with technical, managerial, and moral support (Roberts, Tinari, & Bandlow, in prep). However, Thoonen (2011) found too much support and trust among teachers seemed to reduce individual teacher’s motivation. Perhaps, this is true in mentor–protégé relationships as well. We wondered whether a mentor can be *too* supportive and may inadvertently foster dependency that reduces students’ motivation to seek out answers on their own, think independently, and conduct independent research. This is a concern we explored with this study.

## **Method**

After receiving ethics approval, we interviewed 21 doctoral student mentors (chairs) who had been nominated by colleagues as “excellent” mentors. Our purpose was to learn their strategies for striking a balance between supporting students and encouraging independence. First, we sent invitations to colleagues who had a reputation for excellence in doctoral student mentoring. Next, we applied a snowball sampling technique; we concluded each interview by asking each respondent to nominate additional mentors they considered to be excellent. We sent an e-mail invitation to each nominee and interviewed those who gave a positive response. We sent 32 invitations and 21 participated in the study (response rate = 65%). We conducted interviews from September 2017 to May 2018. In total, we asked 17 questions. The interview question for the current study was “How do you achieve balance between providing support and encouraging independence?” The results for the other interview questions are published elsewhere. One of the limitations of the study is the subjective nature of the designation “excellent mentors.” I provided general guidelines by asking for names of mentors who had a high graduation rate and who had students who produced quality dissertations. However, each person may have a different interpretation of these qualifications.

## **Background Characteristics**

This section provided a description of the mentors’ background characteristics. At the time of the interview, 18 people were professors at U.S. universities in the United States, two were retired professors from U.S. universities, and one had taught in a U.S. university, but had left for a job in basic education. Seven universities were represented in the sample: three were in

the Mid-Atlantic area (11 mentors); two were in the south (five mentors); and two were in the western region of the United States (five mentors). Sixteen mentors taught in educational leadership programs, two taught in school psychology programs, and one mentor came from each of the following disciplines: educational and psychological studies; literacy and technology; and educational policy and evaluation. The primary investigator conducted three interviews face-to-face, 17 by phone, and one via Skype. Eleven mentors taught PhD students, seven taught EdD students, and three taught both PhD and EdD students.

With regard to years of experience, mentors had served in their role between 3 years and 38 years ( $M = 13.98$ ,  $SD = 9.86$ ). I asked mentors, how many students they had mentored (currently and in the past); responses ranged from 4 to 109 students ( $M = 29.14$ ,  $MDN = 18$ ,  $SD = 31.35$ ); and the mean completion rate was 90.83% ( $SD = 14.92$ ). This rate is much higher than the national average, which is about 50% (Craft, Augustine-Shaw, Fairbanks, & Adams-Wright, 2016; Golde, 2005; Gonzalez, Marin, Figueroa, Moreno, & Navia 2002; Gonzalez et al., 2001, 2002; Grant, Hackney, & Edgar, 2014; Ibarra, 1996; Lovitts, 2001, 2005; Most, 2008; Nettles, 1990; Nettles & Millet, 2006; Solorzano, 1993; Vaquera, 2007). I asked the mentors what percentage of their students were full time and what percentage was part time. On average, 60.29% of the students mentored were part-time students ( $SD = 41.64$ ) and 39.71% were full-time students ( $SD = 41.64$ ). I also asked about selectivity of the various programs represented; the average acceptance rate for doctoral student applicants was 55.85% ( $SD = 31.05$ ). We asked each mentor if any of their students had received dissertation awards. A “yes” response was followed with a question about what level award they had received. Eleven of the mentors had students who had received dissertation awards. Table 1 shows the number of awards for each level. Our purpose for presenting the graduation rate and the number of students who had received awards was to show that the students were generally successful and the respondents had demonstrated a high degree of effectiveness as mentors. A discussion of whether these metrics actually measure excellence in mentoring is a philosophical and subjective issue that goes beyond the scope of this study.

Table 1. Number of Dissertation Awards Won by Students of Respondents

Award level	<i>f</i>
University awards	19
National awards	17
International awards	2
Total	38

## Analysis and Findings

### Research question

How do effective doctoral student mentors achieve balance between providing support and encouraging independence? As part of a longer interview about principles and strategies for doctoral student mentoring, we presented the following information and question to each mentor,

*Some have voiced concerns that when mentors provide too much support, it can lead to dependency that reduces students' motivation to seek out information on their own. Do you have strategies to find the right balance between providing support and encouraging independence?*

We applied conventional and summative content analysis to identify and count the themes revealed in the respondents' words (Trochim, 2006). The primary author served as the first coder and the second author served as the second coder. Table 2 shows the thematic analysis of the responses to this question and the confirmability analysis for the two coders. As shown on the table, the two coders achieved a high level of confirmability after two rounds of analysis and discussion. Our criterion for a valid theme was 95% agreement or higher. If a theme did not reach this criterion, we deleted it.

Table 2. Confirmability Analysis and Presentation of Themes Pertaining to the Strategies Mentors Use to Find a Balance Between Providing Support and Requiring Independence

Theme	Coder 1	Coder 2	Agreement %	Respondents
Provide structure, point to resources, and set boundaries	10	11	95	50
Respond to individual needs and readiness, use scaffolding (support) at first and gradually pull away support as student gains competence	10	10	100	48
Require independence; I've not had tension between providing support and requiring independence.	7	7	100	33
Push a student to be more independent.	5	5	100	24

### **Provide structure, point to resources, and set boundaries.**

As shown on Table 2, the most frequently mentioned strategy was actually three strategies that we combined into a single theme: provide structure, point to resources, and set boundaries. Some respondents (50%) mentioned these strategies. Some examples of these comments are as follows:<sup>6</sup>

***Zeke:** That is the \$64,000 question. It is a feel for each student you're working with, ultimately making it clear, constantly throughout, this is their study, their work. You are a guide, but you should not be writing or rewriting the work.*

***Inge:** Yes! That's a really good question. I do not edit student's work—when I do a thorough read through, I only use the comments function in Word, I do*

<sup>6</sup> All names are pseudonyms.

*not use track changes . . . in the first few pages, I provide detailed feedback about the writing. For example, I tell them not to use passive voice and I give an example of what that is. I point out incoherent paragraphs. I advise them if they need to improve sentence structure. If they need much more support on their writing, I refer them to the writing center. Some professors edit their writing. I refuse to edit. That is the student's job and that's how we all learn to become better writers. I will send articles to students if I see something in their area, but I won't do the lit review for them. When they're just getting started, I make sure they know how to use search engines and I might sit down with them and go through a few search terms with them and see what pops up, but I make sure they learn this skill so they can do it independently.*

**Nathan:** *I never said to students, "Just do as I tell you"; I would say, "Here is the form you need to use." And they do it in a different way. I still say to students, "It's not in this form." I say, "This is the outline of what you have to do. I'm not going to tell you what to put in there, I'll give you sources, and we'll get into a Socratic discussion. I'm not going to write the dissertation for you." I might give them an example of how to write a particular sentence. I had one student who wrote complex sentences. I had one student who needed to change his style from writing as a Spaniard to writing as an American researcher. They think long sentences and using Roget's Thesaurus is good, but it's not. Pick a word for your main ideas and stay consistent; don't use a lot of synonyms. I don't know if that's making them dependent; what I'm trying to do is give them the keys . . . the structure . . . the way to do this. That's how all studies in our discipline are done . . . there is a form they have to adhere to.*

Zeke, Inge, and Nathan focused on the point that their role was to provide the structure required in scholarly writing, but the details of the actual content of the dissertation had to come from the student himself. Nathan also said sometimes he would provide a model of how to write a particular sentence to demonstrate the style of scholarly writing. But his examples were not for the purpose of telling a student what to think and what conclusions to draw.

**Chris:** *I am up front. I provide resources. I said, "I provided you X, Y, and Z," and gave examples. There came a time where I said, "It's time for you to step up to the plate." The student became angry. He was having difficulty in one of his courses, he wanted me to review and provide feedback before he submitted his assignment in Blackboard. I said, "No, it doesn't work that way. You have to read the assignment prompt and I provided you resources." I said, "You are at a doctorate level, you should be able to handle this." And because he wasn't able to do it, our relationship went to ground zero quickly because I didn't give him what he wanted, but I stood my ground in saying, "I'm not helping you by giving you any more than I have already." I give them resources and support and direction, but there is a point where they have to do what is needed, "And, if you can't we need to have a conversation."*

*Mary: I have felt some expect me to give them the answers, for example, one student asked me, if I interview 6 people, is that enough? I say, "What does the literature say?" I ask them to make decisions and give a rationale for their decision. I point them to resources they need to build their own argument. I view my role as not to provide students with answers but to point them to the sources they need to consult to find their own answers.*

Chris and Mary directed students to resources, but they stopped at the point of actually giving the answers. This is how they set boundaries and forced students to learn to use resources and seek out information on their own. It is easier for mentors to simply give students answers, but that is not consistent with doctoral study. The role of the mentor is to push the student in the direction of autonomy.

Chris described the tension that can arise when the mentor sets a clear boundary and the student challenges that boundary (i.e., when the student wants the mentor to provide more than the mentor is willing to give). Tension can be averted in this situation if the mentor takes the time to nurture a trusting relationship with the student beforehand. When a trusting relationship is in place, we believe the student will understand that the mentor is pulling back support, not to be punitive, but because it is in the best interest of the student to do so.

**Respond to individual needs and readiness; use scaffolding (support) at first and gradually pull away support as student gains competence.**

The second most common theme was to assess the student's level of competence, provide support at that level, and gradually remove the scaffolding as he gained competence. Almost half of the mentors (48%) gave responses of this type. Some examples of the first part of this theme, assessing students' competence, are as follows:

*Zeke: A good chair is a good reader of the people they're working with.*

*Alan: It depends on the person you're working with. Some people with minimal support can go forward and their independence kicks in and they can complete the task. Some need more help. There are individual differences. A lot of this is individualized and I will need to get to know them. The global students take longer to become independent because you don't know them. The students on campus, you get to know them more quickly and then you can direct the level of support or independence appropriately . . . you figure this out quicker with the on-campus students. For those who get it and who are self-starters, you can get to a level of independence quickly. Sometimes, especially with our global students, it takes longer to build a relationship. That takes a lot of time. It takes a little longer to get them to the place of independence.*

*Bob: I have to be somewhat weasely on this, but it really depends on the student. For some, I'm working as a facilitator, guide . . . at the other end, I have students who have far less independence skills and far less confidence*

*and I have to take a more hands-on role in terms of pushing them to making good decisions and asserting their independence in the context of the dissertation. That's tricky because that takes longer than if I just said I'll lead you by the hand with this, but that's not really the PhD.*

**Olivia:** *I do frequent check-ins and ask them what they are thinking, where do they feel competent and not competent. And I can gather enough information to know when the next task comes how much independence or scaffolding do they need or want. So I think frequent interactions face-to-face and on the phone are the best . . . That has to do with the seniority of the student's status. I scaffold more and help with the first and second year students. I expect more independence when they get to the dissertation. With the students I mentor the most, who are my own doctoral students, I offer the road of independence even earlier because I'm so close, I'm kind of the default person in the back always supporting them and very closely there. So, I ask them to do things more independently because I am so close and accessible. Sometimes I ask for independence too early, asking them to do certain skills, taking for granted that they are ready to be independent, to do synthesis of the literature, for example, but they may be struggling with those things, but then I realize maybe this was too challenging a task . . . they were not ready for that yet . . . I can pull back (on my push for independence) and insert my assistance.*

An irony in the experiences of Olivia and Bob was that the students who were the closest to the mentor were the ones who gained independence earliest and the ones who were farther away, took longer to gain independence. One might think the opposite would have been true.

Pertaining to this theme, one mentor, Helen, appeared to struggle as she developed her ability to discern the students' level of maturity and direct her instruction appropriately.

**Helen:** *Yes, I think I have become less about editing as when I sat down with that student and worked on Ch. 5 with her . . . I don't do that anymore. Because I agree, I have one student who couldn't quite get to her question on her qualifying exam . . . but then she wrote something that was not a good prospectus, so now I use questions . . . she keeps sending us questions that are not good, I will not edit, but I ask, "What are you trying to do here?" She is expecting me to do it for her, but that is her job. I wish I knew how to know if I'm doing the right thing for her . . . I have a strong sense in myself that she has to sit down and do it . . . she's having trouble with Chapter 1 and she needs to go back to the literature . . . if she can't write Chapter 1, she doesn't know the literature well enough . . . I'm here to provide guidance, I tell her to go back to the literature, she hasn't dug deep enough into the literature, it's like a dance, I hope I'm right . . . it's difficult, all students are different. I have a brilliant student who is more of a colleague. I listen to him, he doesn't need as much guidance. We discuss things and go back and forth. I have other students who want me to do it for them. Different students are good in different ways. For some it is easier than others. I want the ones who are*

*having more difficulty to know that I'm there, but I'm a guide, I'm not going to do it for them.*

Related to “assessing students’ competence” was the need to provide scaffolding at the correct level (the zone of proximal development) to move the student to the next level, and also to gradually remove the scaffolding as the student gained competence. Some examples are as follows:

***Fran:** Regarding clarity of expectations, I communicate that I am here if you need hand holding, but you need to ask for that. We don't know if you need support if you don't tell us. Competence is not expected on Day 1. Part of becoming independent is using the supports to get there.*

***Inge:** I make sure they know how to use search engines and I might sit down with them and go through a few search terms with them and see what pops up, but I make sure they learn this skill so they can do it independently.*

***Zeke:** There may be times you have to give them a crutch, but then you have to back off and let them muck around, let them deal with the frustration, and find answers for themselves. There is not a single formula . . . sometimes this happens at the beginning, sometimes, you have to say, “I can help you through this hurdle, let's plan this out together,” but then I have to back off. You have to say, “This is yours.” It's like good parenting—moving from pure dependence to codependence, then when they get to Chapter 5, they should be hearing their voice.*

Regarding Zeke’s statement about “hearing their voice” by Chapter 5, we assume he meant the student should be independent at that point, not in need of the mentor’s voice to guide him. However, students may have different kinds of needs. For example, they may no longer need technical support when they get to Chapter 5, but they may still need encouragement and moral support. We will return to this idea in our conclusions.

### **Some mentors had no tension between support and independence.**

When asked this question, seven mentors (33%) said they have not had tension between providing support and requiring independence. For example, some of the responses are as follows:

***Sally:** I've not had nonindependent thinkers. My students are overqualified for the programs they're in. I've had no problems with codependency.*

***Tom:** No strategies. The job of the dissertation is the student's. Your job is to advise, they have to do it independently; my job is to read and critique, not write. You might send them articles you come across in your own writing. I have not had any tension between providing support and encouraging independence.*

***Walt:** I don't have any strategies; everything they write should be considered a possible publication, so one way to encourage independence is to encourage them to write about things that are not in my area of expertise. When my students are venturing into new areas, they become the expert in those areas. My students tend to be independent. Some faculty have struggled with this, though. I've been lucky . . . the students I selected have been independent. I know other faculty struggle to keep students on track. It's not always all roses.*

***Rita:** I think the No. 1 thing is I give support, but stop at doing too much for them. I'm demanding; they don't say I gave too much support or became a crutch for them. I don't recall I ever had experiences where I did too much and I just continued to do too much to get the student out of my queue. (Researcher: Is there an indicator, a feeling or an intuition that you have to keep you from doing too much for the student?) Rita: If I feel like a coauthor, that is doing too much.*

#### **Push a student to be more independent.**

Five mentors (24%) gave answers that had to do with independence demands. These mentors claimed they needed to push some students to be more independent. For example, consider the following comments:

***Zeke:** Sometimes you have to push them to take the risk, but you can't take the risk for them.*

***Lisa:** If it becomes clear to me that someone is cognitively loafing and expecting me to pick up the slack, we have an honest conversation early on.*

Lisa focused on the problem of “cognitive loafing” or laziness on the part of the protégé. This brings up a direction for future research. When students are not producing quality work, it would be helpful for the mentor to know if they are just lazy or if there are other reasons for low performance. For example, maybe the student does not have the required skills; maybe they have the skills, but are not confident enough to move forward; maybe there are other circumstances going on in their life that are draining their time and energy. It is helpful if the mentor and protégé have open communication so that they can identify the source of the problem and devise solutions.

Another example of a mentor who needed to push students to be more independent was the following comment by John:

***John:** The boundaries are super important to any type of advisor role. I have been asked by advisees some things that I don't think are my role . . . “Can you do this for me? How do I do this?” I say, “This is your dissertation and your research. I'm your advisor, but I'm not going to do this for you.” The first time we meet, we have a heart to heart and I tell them this and say,*



*“There will be a boundary and this is yours; I’m an advisor; I guide you, but I’m not going to do this for you. I’m up front. I have been challenged on this, but I go back and say this is your document, not mine.*

There is a logical link between this theme, requiring students to move toward independence, and theme pertaining to setting boundaries. One way to push students toward independence is to make one’s boundaries clear. A mentor must let the student know what she is willing to do and what she is not willing to do. Also, if the mentor has established a trust relationship, the process of setting boundaries runs more smoothly; when the student trusts the mentor has his best interest in mind and in heart, he understands the mentor is setting the boundary not to push the student away, but to push the student toward growth.

### **Discussion and Conclusions**

We asked a group of effective doctoral student mentors the strategies they use to find a balance between providing support and encouraging independence as they guide their protégés through the dissertation phase of their program. The most frequent response was to provide structure, point students to resources, and set appropriate boundaries. Mentors also said they assessed each student’s level of competence and directed their instruction at a level slightly above the student’s level of independent competence. In this way, the mentor was not so far ahead of the student as to cause confusion, but just far enough that the student had to stretch his competencies to meet the mentor’s expectations. About a third of the mentors said they had not encountered tension in this regard; about a quarter said they had to push students to be more independent. It is interesting to note that none of the respondents said their protégés were too independent and needed to be reined in.

### **Integrate With Prior Literature**

**Consistency with prior research** — Our research is consistent with similar research conducted in other contexts. Our research was conducted in several geographic locations in the United States with mentors in educational leadership departments and related education departments. Some, but not all of our respondents, said they experienced tension between providing support and encouraging independence. This is consistent with doctoral mentors in the United States interviewed by Lovitts (2008), representing seven different disciplines (biology, engineering, physics, astronomy, economics, psychology, English, and history). This is also consistent with Dutch doctoral mentors in the field of medicine interviewed by Woolderink and her colleagues (2015).

**Setting boundaries and pushing for independence** — The finding that effective mentors set boundaries and push students to think and work independently is consistent with Lovitts’ theoretical notion (2008) that creativity is a factor in completion of the PhD. One of the requirements of a doctoral dissertation is that the student must make an original contribution to the scholarly literature. Original thought requires creativity; that is, the student must go beyond what he has read or learned from his mentor; he must present ideas and test hypotheses that are wholly his own. By setting an appropriate boundary, the mentor communicates to the student, “I am not going to do this thinking for you; I am not going to write this for you; and I am not

going to take this risk; you must take the risk on your own.” Creative thinking requires moving outside the comfortable space of ideas that have been tried and tested before; creativity requires the student to take a risk and perhaps put forth a hypothesis that turns out to be wrong. A truly creative student can then accommodate his thinking to the new information and use it to advance knowledge in his topic area.

**Providing support at the proper level** — These findings are also consistent with research that showed effective mentors are both tough and trustworthy (see Roberts, Ferro Almeida, & Bandlow, in press). More specifically, they show toughness by their uncompromising insistence on high-quality thinking and writing; they earn student trust by being honest, competent, and benevolent. To activate high-quality thinking and writing, a mentor constantly directs her dialog at the upper end of the student’s ZPD and thus, continually pushes the student to stretch his level of competence. To achieve learning and growth, the student has to take risks. He must move outside of his comfort zone and experiment with new ideas and new methods, while recognizing the risk that he may fail. As we have noted, the failure rate in doctoral education is about 50% on average. So, it is imperative that the mentor is accurate in her ability to “read” the student’s level of competence at his particular developmental level and to then direct her guidance at the appropriate level. Moreover, she must demonstrate that she is benevolent. A student will be more likely to take the necessary risks if he believes the mentor has his best interest in mind.

### **Implications for Practice**

Some mentors encounter students who do not take responsibility for their work. According to Woolderink and her colleagues (2015), mentors must open up communication and provide a safe space to discuss this problem. Mentors must address this problem explicitly and tell the student she expects more independent work. We encourage mentors to (a) speak directly with students to tell them they are expected to move toward autonomy and (b) advise students about specific steps they can take to move toward autonomy. For example, mentors should direct students to resources where they can find answers to their questions about methods, rather than simply giving the answers.

The element of trust can help the mentor deliver this message in a competent way. Research has shown, it is essential for the mentor to establish a trusting relationship with the student early on (Roberts, Ferro Almeida, & Bandlow, in press; Gearity & Mertz, 2012; Kram, 1985; Woolderink et al., 2015). We believe a relationship grounded in trust will provide a safe space in which the mentor and student can successfully address dependency problems. Without a foundation of trust, one can imagine that the student could feel alienated by this conversation (i.e., he may feel that the mentor is pushing him away or that the mentor is too busy or does not care). However, when trust is present, the mentor can deliver this demand for greater independence with benevolence and care; she can convey the message that she cares about the protégé and she has faith in his ability to seek out resources and make decisions independently. She can convey that the push toward greater autonomy is in the student’s best interest as a promising, independent scholar. Also, the push toward autonomy does not mean that the mentor and student must go their separate ways. Often, mentors and students reunite in a new kind of relationship in which they become colleagues and collaborators. In this kind of relationship, the power differential often shifts and they begin to work together as peers.

The process of using scaffolding and directing instruction to the student's zone of proximal development forces the student to stretch his capabilities. This stretching of capabilities can be uncomfortable for students; they must be able to tolerate ambiguity, take risks, and bounce back after failure (Lovitts, 2008). Moreover, the mentor must learn to be patient and to step back and allow the student to struggle. Some people are drawn to the mentoring role because they want to support others and help them grow. However, it is important to draw the line between empowering student growth and enabling student dependency. Some help and support can empower the student to gain in competence, but too much support may be counterproductive and actually prevent the protégé from moving forward on the path toward independent scholarship.

**Attitudes toward power** — Perhaps one of the key factors that can bring about the student's transformation to independence has to do with the mentor's attitude toward power. In the beginning of the relationship, the mentor holds most of the power. As the student grows in competence, it is important for the mentor to cede power to the student, to give the student more control over the process, and to allow him to develop his own unique research and writing style; but at the same time, the mentor must provide guardrails that keep the student moving forward in a way that is consistent with the standards and traditions of scholarly work.

**Mentors need to give up control** — If the mentor has a great need to be in control and becomes too attached to her status as the expert and provider of knowledge, problems may arise. It is essential that the relationship between the mentor and protégé evolves toward collegiality and toward equal status. By gradually relinquishing control of the process, the mentor opens up space that the student needs to explore his own thoughts and establish his independence.

### **Implications for Scholarship**

Our research builds on the work of Susan Gardner (2008) in which she documented the perceptions of doctoral students in two disciplines (chemistry and history) as they negotiated the transition to independent scholarship. Our work differs from Gardner in two important ways: (a) we focused on mentors' perspectives of this transition and (b) we studied mentors in disciplines related to educational leadership. Our work is connected to Gardner's work in that we both focused on the evolving relationship between the mentor and the student. Moreover, we both used Weidman's theory of socialization as the framework for our thinking about the development of scholars. Our work is similar to Weidman in that we focused on the later stages of development (the dissertation phase), whereas, Gardner looked at all stages of development.

How do our findings expand upon or improve Weidman's theory? Our work expands and builds upon Weidman's theory because we provide empirical data that are consistent with the theory. Our work improves upon Weidman's theory by emphasizing the close relationship between mentors and students. Moreover, we believe effective mentors possess refined communicative competence skills that allow them to leverage the power of the student-mentor relationship to motivate students' successful transformation to independent scholarship.

### **Directions for Future Research**

With regard to future research, one question that comes to mind is, "Do some mentors unknowingly foster codependency? And if yes, why?" Perhaps, these mentors' needs for friendship are being met through their relationships with protégés. It is not necessarily

unhealthy to become friends with one's protégés if the mentor can maintain her objectivity. More specifically, she must not allow her feelings of friendship to cause her to go easy on the student. Some have advised mentors to keep an appropriate boundary during the early stages of the student's development; that is, to postpone friendship until later in the process. As the student moves to the independent phase of his journey, the mentor-protégé relationship often matures to a healthy collegial and friendly relationship.

Another area for research is to learn whether some mentors foster codependency to delegate tasks to students. This may happen if a student is insecure about his competencies and exhibits a sense of neediness; this may cause the student to accept work responsibilities that really belong to the mentor. Sometimes, the mentor may delegate a task that provides an appropriate and valuable learning experience for the student, such as conducting journal article reviews. However, some tasks are inappropriate, such as delegating clerical chores. During the early phase of the relationship, when the student is dependent on the mentor, there are dangers of exploitation; the mentor must be aware of this danger and do everything in her power to protect the student from abuse. This is a relationship dynamic that should be explored in future research.

These findings also provided a springboard for a question pertaining to the difference between technical, managerial, and moral support. According to these respondents, mentors need to find a balance between providing too little support and providing too much support. We wondered if the balance differs for technical, managerial, and moral support. With regard to technical support, our data indicate that as students become more competent and independent, mentors should point students to resources rather than giving them answers to their questions about methods and theories. It seems entirely appropriate for mentors to pull back the supportive scaffolding regarding technical aspects of the dissertation because one of the goals of doctoral education is to teach students to seek out information independently. However, effective mentors also provide managerial support (e.g., help with time management) and moral support in the form of encouragement (Roberts, Tinari, & Bandlow, in prep). We believe students' needs for support in these two areas will be present throughout the dissertation journey. Thus, we believe managerial and moral support are two areas that mentors should not pull back, even for students who have gained a great deal of technical competence and independence. The doctoral journey continually presents new challenges and new demands for growth. Even the most accomplished students will be challenged by these demands and may need continuous encouragement and management help. However, it is important for students to ask for support if they need it. We would like to explore these dynamics in future research.

### **Strengths and Limitations of Method**

With regard to external validity, we recruited a small, nonrandom sample; so generalizability of findings may be limited. We believe we can generalize our findings to effective mentors in programs similar to the ones we studied (i.e., selective doctoral programs in educational leadership and similar fields with mentees who are primarily part-time students). However, perhaps we can generalize even further as research has shown this is a common source of tension in many different doctoral contexts (Lovitts, 2008; Woolderink et al., 2015). Our purpose, however, was not to provide a generalizable description of mentors' attitudes regarding the balance between providing support and encouraging autonomy. We had hoped to provide guidance and insight to all mentors about the ways *effective* mentors can negotiate this

balance. Thus, we believe these findings can be helpful for all doctoral student mentors who experience this tension. With regard to construct validity, there is a clear alignment between the scholarly research question and the question posed to mentors in the interview. Thus, we deemed construct validity to be strong. Conclusion validity and internal validity are not relevant to this study because our purpose was not to study correlations and causes.

### Conclusion

Regarding the skill of providing the proper level of support, the goal for mentors is to find the sweet spot for each student; each student is at a different place in his developmental trajectory on the path from dependent student to independent scholar and each student is perpetually evolving. Typically, students are more dependent in the beginning of their program and move gradually toward greater independence, so their needs for some kinds of support change over the course of their program. And, development is not always smooth. Sometimes a student seems to be moving toward autonomy one week, but then regresses back to a more dependent state the following week. For the mentor, the skill of providing support at the proper level is like trying to hit a moving target and it is difficult to get it right every time. While it is important for mentors to provide support, to read drafts of students' work, to give constructive feedback, to direct students to appropriate resources, and to help them with networking, it is also important to remain aware of the big picture, which is to help the student move toward independence. The mentor's underlying message must include a consistent push toward independence.

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# **Differences Between Fairness and Likelihood of Use of Distinctive Justice Principles and the Relationship with Organizational Commitment, Job Satisfaction, and Turnover Intentions**

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The funding of postsecondary education is a large and complicated issue (Johnstone, 2005). College and universities face increasingly difficult decisions related to resource distributions due to changes in state funding and the pressure to control tuition increases. In an environment of scarce resources, resource distribution decisions have an even greater impact. Researchers have begun to examine these resource distribution decisions by using the organizational justice theoretical framework (Bradley Hnat, Mahony, Fitzgerald, & Crawford, 2015; Fitzgerald, Mahony, Crawford, & Bradley Hnat, 2014; Mahony, Fitzgerald, Crawford, & Bradley Hnat, 2015). Because prior research has found organizational justice can impact a number of key organizational variables including organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and turnover intentions (e.g., Colquitt, Conlon, Wesson, Porter, & Ng, 2001; Cropanzano, Rupp, Mohler, & Schminke, 2001; Thorn, 2010; Volkwein & Zhou, 2003), research in this area is particularly important. The current study builds on this emerging line of research, by examining the impact of differences between administrators' perceptions of the fairness of a distributive justice principle and the likelihood this principle will actually be used on several key organizational variables.

## **Organizational Justice**

Organizational justice research is composed of three key aspects - procedural justice, interactional justice, and distributive justice. Procedural justice is “the fairness of the procedures responsible for reward distribution ” (Mahony, Hums, Andrew, & Dittmore, 2010, p. 92). Interactional justice is “the interpersonal treatment and communications used while implementing the procedures” (Mahony et al., 2010, p. 93) and focuses on the perceived fairness of “how decisions are enacted by authority figures” (Colquitt & Greenberg, 2003, p. 166). While both of these areas are important in the literature, the current study focused on distributive justice.

Distributive justice examines the “fairness in the distribution of resources” (Mahony, et al., 2010, p. 92). Work in this area is generally traced to Adams (1963, 1965) Equity Theory (Harris, Andrews & Kacmar, 2007). According to Adams, people compare the ratio of their inputs to outputs to this same ratio for others. When they perceive the rations as being equal, Adams



believed they would see distributions as fair. However, when they believed the ratios were unequal, they would see them as unfair and this would lead to a change in behavior. In other words, Adams thought people believed those who contributed more to the organization should receive more, while those who contributed less should receive less. However, later researchers argued people in some settings would perceive resources distributed equally or based on need as being fair (e.g., Deutsch, 1975; Sheppard, Lewicki, & Minton, 1992). In fact, prior research did find differences based on organizational setting (e.g., Hums & Chelladurai, 1994; Mahony, Hums, & Riemer, 2002; Dittmore, Mahony, Andrews, & Hums, 2009).

Moreover, distributive justice principles often vary across organizational types (e.g., Mahony et al., 2010). In particular, the sub-principles of equity, or contribution, often vary because what is considered a key contribution is different. For example, the number of cars sold may be a key contribution at an auto dealership, while winning games may be an important contribution in a sport organization. Two recent studies in higher education identified several sub-principles of equity in higher education, including research funding, research publications, quality teaching, impact on students, quality service, student credit hours, and enrollment in the major (Bradley Hnat et al., 2015; Fitzgerald et al., 2014).

Prior research found that among the distribution principles identified in higher education, administrators believed compensating faculty based on the quality of teaching was the most fair, while equal distributions and distributions based on faculty need (those paid less should receive more) were the least fair (Fitzgerald et al., 2014). Similarly, the same group believed distributing resources to departments based on the quality of teaching and the impact that faculty have on their students was the most fair and equal distributions to departments was the least fair (Fitzgerald et al.). Perhaps the most interesting result in that study was these same administrators had different responses when asked which distribution methods were likely to be used at their institutions, because they were not the same as those perceived as being most fair. When distributing compensation to faculty, administrators indicated compensation based on the quality and quantity of publications, research funding secured, and the competitive rates in the discipline were the most likely to be used. Quantity and quality of research articles, research funding secured, needs due to high costs, needs to stay competitive, number of credit hours, and enrollment growth were all identified as being most likely to be used for distributing resources to departments.

What makes these results particularly surprising is prior research on administrators in other settings had found little differences between fairness and likelihood of being used (e.g., Mahony et al., 2002). The prior results appear to be more logical because one would expect administrators, who are generally in the decision-making positions, to make the distributions based on what they perceive as being fair. However, although the respondents who participated in the higher education study (Fitzgerald et al., 2014) were administrators who would appear to be in decision-making positions (i.e., deans and department chairs), they seemed to believe their organizations were behaving in a manner different from what they perceived as fair. The finding that there was a gap between perceived fairness and likelihood of use among college administrators provided a unique opportunity to examine the impact of this gap on key organizational variables. Specifically, the current study examined the impact of the gap in perceptions and likelihood on organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and turnover intentions.

## Key Organizational Outcomes

Organizational commitment has been defined in various ways, primarily with a focus on the degree of involvement or fit between employees and the organization (Buck & Watson, 2002; Daly & Dee, 2006). Balay (2012) noted being committed to an organization involves the employee identifying and internalizing the goals and values of the organization (Susanj & Jakopec, 2012). For this study, organizational commitment can be understood as “the strength of an individual’s identification with and involvement in a particular organization” (Porter, Steers, Mowday & Boulian, 1974, p. 604). Organizational commitment has been the focus for a number of researchers because of its linkages with various outcomes, including sense of (institutional) community as well as performance/productivity (Barnes, Agago, & Coombs, 1998; Fedor, Caldwell, & Herold, 2006; Susanj & Jakopeck, 2012).

Job satisfaction relates to “the extent to which people like their jobs” (Spector, 1996, as cited in Lambert, Cluse-Tolar, Sudershan, Prior, & Allen, 2012, p. 71). For the purposes of this study, job satisfaction is defined as an employee’s evaluation of the cognitive, emotional, and behavioral elements their job responsibilities (Chelladurai, 1999; Thorn, 2010). Historically, higher education studies on this topic focused on satisfaction levels of campus faculty rather than other employee categories (e.g., Bateh & Heyliger, 2014; Miller, Mamiseishvili, & Lee, 2016). The research that has focused on administrators has identified a number of factors that may impact job satisfaction, including demographic variables and organizational variables (Glick, 1992; Volkwein, Malik & Napierski-Pranci, 1998). It is important to note although job satisfaction and organizational commitment are positively correlated, prior research suggests they are distinct (e.g., Glisson & Durick, 1988) and are developed differently. For example, organizational commitment tends to develop more slowly than job satisfaction (Martin & Bennett, 1996). An individual may be satisfied with their job almost immediately, but it takes longer to develop a feeling of commitment to the organization.

Studies on turnover have mostly centered on employees within an organization and their choice to leave that organization (Weiler, 1985; DeConinck & Bachmann, 2011). For the purposes of the study, turnover intention is an individual’s desire, or even willingness, to seek employment with another organization (Smart, 1990). However, it is important to note there is a difference between actual turnover and the intent to leave, with actual turnover referring to an employee no longer being at an organization and intent assessing the chances an employee will leave their organization (Johnsrud, Heck & Rosser, 2000; Daly & Dee, 2006). The current study only examined turnover intention.

Although Cohen-Charash and Spector (2001) found all three aspects of organizational justice were predictive of commitment, satisfaction, and turnover intentions, prior research has suggested relationships among these variables may vary across organizational types (Alexander & Ruderman, 1987; Tyler & Caine, 1981). In addition, research suggests the strength of the relationship between aspects of organizational justice and organizational outcomes may vary (e.g., Dailey & Kirk, 1992; Folger & Konovsky, 1989; McFarlin & Sweeney, 1992). In particular, the research suggests distributive justice, the focus of the current study, is the best predictor of satisfaction, while other aspects of organizational justice are better predictors of commitment and turnover intentions (e.g., Dailey & Kirk, 1992; Folger & Konovsky, 1989; McFarlin & Sweeney, 1992).

While the review of literature provided some insight into factors related to faculty commitment, satisfaction and turnover (e.g., Smart, 1990; Daly & Dee, 2006), there was less

insight regarding postsecondary administrators and the factors impacting their commitment, satisfaction, and turnover (Glick, 1992; Johnsurd et al. 2000; Johnsurd, 2002). Therefore, this study also adds to the literature by expanding the limited examination of the factors impacting these three outcome variables for postsecondary administrators.

## Method

Data for this study were generated from a state-wide survey of deans and department chairs/directors employed at public and private universities and colleges in one mid-west state. Deans and chairs were identified based on reviews of university and college websites.

### Participants

The total number of respondents consisted of 126 administrators employed at public and private universities and colleges from one mid-west state. Based on the data from those who responded to the demographic questions, the majority of respondents were Caucasian ( $n = 102$ , 89%), male ( $n = 67$ , 61%), and ranged in age from 40 to 72 ( $M = 55$ ). Sixty-percent ( $n = 68$ ) were department chairs or directors while 40% ( $n = 46$ ) indicated they were serving as a dean, assistant dean, or associate dean. Most were employed at public institutions ( $n = 88$ , 75%) that were classified as either a research university ( $n = 43$ , 37%) or doctoral/research intense university ( $n = 39$ , 34%). Twenty-nine percent indicated they were employed at a non-doctoral granting university or college. The number of years in higher education for this group of respondents ranged from 10 to 43 with an average age of just over 25 years. The total number of years as an academic administrator varied from less than one full year to over 30 years ( $M = 9.5$ ). The number of years in their current academic position also varied considerably, ranging from less than a year to just over 22 years ( $M = 6.5$ ).

### Questionnaire

The online questionnaire was composed of six subscales, each constructed following guidelines specified by Dillman (2000) for questionnaire and survey development. The survey was reviewed by members of the team to assess both face and content validity. Sections of the 50-item survey used in this study included questions that focused on organizational commitment, job satisfaction, turnover intentions, compensation practices for faculty members, resource distribution methods for schools and departments, and demographic characteristics.

▪ **Organizational Commitment.** Organizational commitment focuses on the degree of involvement or fit between employees and their organization. The study used the six item organizational commitment subscale from the 31-item General Index of Work Commitment (GIWC) scale developed by Blau, Paul, and St. John (1993). Respondents were asked to rate aspects of organizational commitment based on a scale ranging from “1,” indicating strong disagreement with a statement, to “7” indicating strong agreement. The six items were summed to produce a composite organizational commitment score ranging from a value of “7,” indicating very low organizational commitment, to a value of “42,” indicating very high organizational commitment. The original scale validation work for the organizational

commitment subscale of the General Index of Work Commitment (GIWC) scale developed by Blau et al. revealed a single factor model with high levels of internal consistency reliability,  $\alpha = .81$ , and test-retest reliability,  $r = .94$ . Internal consistency for the scale based on this sample of university administrators was also high,  $\alpha = .89$ .

▪ **Job Satisfaction.** In this study, job satisfaction is defined as an employee's evaluation of the cognitive, emotional, and behavioral elements of their job responsibilities. The research team utilized a five-item job satisfaction survey developed by Judge, Locke, Durham, and Klurger (1998) to assess overall job satisfaction of the respondents. Individual questions were scored with values ranging from "0," indicating strong disagreement with a statement, to "10," indicating strong agreement. The five items were summed to produce an overall satisfaction score ranging from a value of "0," indicating complete dissatisfaction, to a value of "50," indicating very high job satisfaction. The original scale validation of the survey developed by Judge et al. had high levels of internal consistency reliability,  $\alpha = .88$ . Internal consistency for the scale based on this sample of university administrators was also high,  $\alpha = .87$ .

▪ **Turnover Intention.** To assess turnover intention, defined as the desire or even willingness to seek employment with a different organization, the research team utilized a four-item survey developed by Kelloway, Gottlieb, and Barham (1999) where individual questions were scored using values ranging from "1," indicating strong disagreement with a statement, to "5" indicating strong agreement. The four items were summed to produce a composite organizational commitment score ranging from a value of "4," indicating low turnover intentions, to a value of "20," indicating very high turnover intentions. The original scale validation work for the scale developed by Kelloway et al., revealed a single factor model with high levels of internal consistency reliability,  $\alpha = .92$ . Internal consistency for the scale based on this sample of university administrators was also  $\alpha = .92$ .

▪ **Compensation.** To assess perceptions related to different means for distributing compensation among faculty in higher education, participants were asked to consider *fairness* and *likelihood of using* various distributive justice principles and sub-principles. Based on the work of Fitzgerald et al. (2014), six sub-principles of equity or contribution and need were examined: (a) quantity and quality of research publications, (b) quality teaching, (c) impact on students, (d) amount of research funding, (e) unit need based on staying competitive, and (f) quality service. Some principles examined in the Fitzgerald et al. study were not included in the current study because respondents consistently indicated they were perceived as fair and were unlikely to be used. For each method considered, participants were asked to indicate the level of fairness and the likelihood of using each method based on a 7-point Likert scale. When considering *fairness*, the response choices ranged from "1" (Very unfair) to "7" (Very fair) and when considering *likelihood of use*, response choices ranged from "1" (Very unlikely) to "7" (Very likely).

▪ **Resource Distribution.** To assess perceptions related to different means for distributing resources among schools and departments in higher education, participants were asked to consider *fairness* and *likelihood of using* various distributive justice principles and sub-principles. Based on the work of Fitzgerald et al. (2015), nine sub-principles of equity or contribution and need were examined: (a) quantity and quality of research publications, (b) quality teaching, (c) impact on students, (d) amount of research funding, (e) unit need based on operational costs, (f) unit need based on staying competitive, (g) credit hour growth, (h) enrollment growth and (i) quality service. Some principles examined in the Fitzgerald et al. study were not included in the current study because respondents consistently indicated they

were perceived as fair and were unlikely to be used. For each method considered, participants were asked to indicate the extent to which they believed each method was fair or unfair and the likelihood of using each method based on a 7-point Likert scale. For each method considered, participants were asked to indicate the extent to which they believed each method was fair or unfair and the likelihood of using each method based on a 7-point Likert scale. When considering fairness the response choices ranged from “1” (Very unfair) to “7” (Very fair) and when considering likelihood of use response choices ranged from “1” (Very unlikely) to “7” (Very likely).

▪ **Demographic Characteristics.** Demographic questions required participants to indicate age, ethnicity, gender, administrative appointment (dean/chair), Carnegie classification (research/non-research), type of university/college (public/private), number of years as an academic administrator, and number of years in their current academic position.

## Procedures

A list of deans and chairs, along with their email addresses, was developed based on reviews of public and private universities and colleges web sites. Following standard protocol for online survey administration suggested by Dillman (2000), a pre-notice email invitation was sent to the distribution list asking for participation and providing an opportunity for any recipient to opt out of the study. Two weeks after the pre-notice email, the survey invitation was sent via a second email with an explanatory cover letter from members of the research team, followed by a “reminder” email two weeks later.

Based on data gathered from university and college web sites there were 1,669 positions at the chair, director or dean level. Of those, 271 did not have a contact name associated with a position or email address listed, 148 were associated with email addresses that were no longer functional, and 53 asked to be removed from the survey leaving 1,197 potential respondents. One hundred and twenty-six respondents completed the survey and this represented a response rate of just over 10%. A computer-based glitch and mailing the survey close to the beginning of an academic semester negatively affected the survey return rate.

▪ **Response Rates with Web-based Approaches.** Although web-based (online) surveys offer numerous advantages over mail survey approaches, especially as it relates to cost, implementation, and ease of completion (Dillman, Smyth, & Christian, 2009), some studies suggest they are susceptible to lower response rates. A meta-analysis conducted by Lozar-Manfreda, Bosnjak, Berzelak, Haas, and Vehovar (2008) revealed web survey response rates tended to be approximately 10 percent lower than other survey approaches. Furthermore, when considering specific populations of interest, some research does suggest that web-based response rates can be significantly lower than other data collection approaches. For example, when considering educational professionals, results from several studies do suggest more favorable response rates for mail surveys than web-based approaches. Shih and Fan (2008) reported that while college students responded more frequently to web-based surveys, other groups, including medical doctors, education professionals, and the general population, tended to respond better to mail surveys. Using experimental approaches to study differences in response rates in web-based and mailing approaches for samples of educational professionals, Mertler (2003), Converse et al. (2008), and Tepper-Jacob (2011), discovered similar differences in response rates.

▪ **Assessing Non-response Bias.** Given the response rate for this study was lower than anticipated, and thus susceptible to potential non-response bias, the authors assessed the potential for bias across three different demographic variables---gender, university research classification (i.e., research or non-research), university type (i.e., public or private), and administrator classification (i.e., dean or chair/director). To determine whether the proportion of responses in each of these demographic variables observed in the sample differed from those observed in the population surveyed, a chi-square goodness-of-fit test was used. Analyses revealed no significant differences in the proportions observed in the sample compared to the population for gender,  $X^2(1, N = 110) = 0.45, p > .05$ , university classification,  $X^2(1, N = 102) = 0.13, p > .05$ , university type,  $X^2(1, N = 117) = 1.01, p > .05$ , or administrator classification,  $X^2(1, N = 116) = 2.77, p > .05$ .

## Research Questions and Analyses

The following research questions were investigated in this study to assess differences in three organizational variables based on discrepancies in perceptions of fairness and likelihood of using different compensation and resources distribution practices:

### ▪ Research Questions—Compensation Practices

Research Question 1: Do differences in administrator’s perceptions of fairness and the likelihood of using different *Compensation Practices* impact *Organizational Commitment*?

Research Question 2: Do differences in administrator’s perceptions of fairness and the likelihood of using different *Compensation Practices* impact *Job Satisfaction*?

Research Question 3: Do differences in administrator’s perceptions of fairness and the likelihood of using different *Compensation Practices* impact *Turnover Intention*?

### ▪ Research Questions—Resource Distribution Practices

Research Question 4: Do differences in administrator’s perceptions of fairness and the likelihood of using different *Resource Distribution Practices* impact *Organizational Commitment*?

Research Question 5: Do differences in administrator’s perceptions of fairness and the likelihood of using different *Resource Distribution Practices* impact *Job Satisfaction*?

Research Question 6: Do differences in administrator’s perceptions of fairness and the likelihood of using different *Resource Distribution Practices* impact *Turnover Intention*?

## Statistical Analyses

The independent variable in this study consisted of a categorical variable with four levels created by grouping respondents based on the congruency observed between their perceptions of fairness in using certain compensation and resources allocation practices and the likelihood of using these practices. The four distinct categories represented groups of individuals who perceived each compensation and resource distribution practice to be: fair and likely (group 1), fair but not likely (group 2), not fair but likely (group 3), and not fair and not likely (group 4). The outcome variables in this study were continuous variables measuring organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and turnover intentions. Analysis of variance (ANOVA) was

used to investigate the research questions considered for this study. IBM SPSS Statistics for Windows, version 22 (2013) was used to analyze these data.

## Results

Table 1 presents descriptive data for each of the three organizational variables (*Organizational Commitment, Job Satisfaction, and Turnover Intentions*) based on the four groups and five compensation practices considered.

### Research Questions 1-3

Are there differences in *Organizational Commitment, Job Satisfaction, and Turnover Intentions* based on differences in administrator's perceptions of fairness and the likelihood of

Table 1 – Means and Standard Deviations for Organizational Commitment, Job Satisfaction, and Turnover Intentions when Considering Different Compensation Practices by each Group.

Practice	Group	Organizational Commitment <i>M (SD)</i>	Job Satisfaction <i>M (SD)</i>	Turnover Intention <i>M (SD)</i>
Research	Fair and Likely	25.74 (6.99)	44.89 (7.97)	9.21 (4.97)
	Fair but Not Likely	21.30 (7.40)	38.69 (14.68)	10.84 (4.21)
	Not Fair but Likely	18.90 (3.63)	35.60 (10.67)	13.70 (3.77)
	Not Fair and Not Likely	25.66 (8.30)	39.80 (13.35)	11.00 (5.20)
Teaching	Fair and Likely	26.31 (7.09)	44.80 (9.19)	8.56 (4.40)
	Fair but Not Likely	23.25 (7.06)	41.68 (10.50)	10.34 (4.34)
	Not Fair but Likely	32.01 (7.17)	44.14 (10.07)	14.31 (4.61)
	Not Fair and Not Likely	23.27 (7.10)	41.61 (11.58)	11.94 (4.88)
Faculty Impact	Fair and Likely	27.33 (7.46)	47.75 (8.02)	8.48 (4.61)
	Fair but Not Likely	23.30 (6.86)	40.63 (10.73)	10.36 (4.72)
	Not Fair but Likely	32.30 (7.33)	44.82 (10.36)	14.10 (4.77)
	Not Fair and Not Likely	22.95 (7.23)	40.08 (10.77)	11.50 (4.69)
Funding	Fair and Likely	25.71 (7.47)	45.56 (7.90)	9.47 (4.95)
	Fair but Not Likely	20.66 (8.00)	40.5 (13.07)	10.83 (4.28)
	Not Fair but Likely	21.75 (5.13)	40.43 (9.48)	11.62 (4.20)
	Not Fair and Not Likely	27.07 (8.16)	40.14 (13.34)	10.02 (5.07)
Competitive Need	Fair and Likely	27.27 (6.40)	47.21 (6.72)	9.09 (4.98)
	Fair but Not Likely	23.38 (8.83)	39.61 (12.39)	10.16 (4.27)
	Not Fair but Likely	23.83 (7.22)	42.66 (7.52)	9.66 (4.81)
	Not Fair and Not Likely	21.47 (7.30)	39.36 (11.74)	12.05 (4.98)
Service	Fair and Likely	24.95 (7.40)	43.65 (9.56)	9.36 (4.59)
	Fair but Not Likely	24.56 (7.06)	42.25 (10.08)	9.98 (4.80)
	Not Fair but Likely	23.72 (7.13)	38.77 (11.46)	9.88 (5.23)
	Not Fair and Not Likely	24.11 (6.23)	41.66 (10.24)	11.70 (4.84)

using different *Compensation Practices*?

Tables 2 presents the results of each ANOVA related to analyzing differences in *Organizational Commitment*, *Job Satisfaction*, and *Turnover Intention* based on groups of administrators who perceived each *Compensation Practice* to be: fair and likely (group 1), fair but not likely (group 2), not fair but likely (group 3), and not fair and not likely (group 4).

- **Organizational Commitment.** When considering organizational commitment, administrators who perceived awarding compensation based on research productivity to be fair and likely (group 1) reported higher levels of commitment than those than those who perceived the practice as unfair but likely to be used (group 3). In addition, administrators who perceived awarding compensation based on competitive need to be fair and likely (group 1) had higher organizational commitment than those who perceived the practice as unfair and unlikely to be used (group 4).

- **Job Satisfaction.** Significant differences in job satisfaction were observed across groups and several compensation practices. Similar to the findings for organizational commitment,

Table 2 – ANOVA for Differences in Organizational Variables by Group (1 = Fair and Likely, 2 = Fair and Not Likely, 3 = Not Fair and Likely, 4 = Not Fair and Not Likely) when Considering Different Compensation Practices.

	<i>F</i>	<i>P</i>	<i>Group Differences</i>
<b>Organizational Commitment</b>			
Research	$F(3, 90) = 3.69$	.01	1 > 3
Teaching	$F(3, 94) = 1.80$	.15	
Faculty Impact	$F(3, 87) = 2.48$	.06	
Funding	$F(3, 86) = 2.85$	.05	
Competitive Need	$F(3, 87) = 2.86$	.04	1 > 4
Service	$F(3, 93) = 1.29$	.74	
<b>Job Satisfaction</b>			
Research	$F(3, 92) = 3.35$	.02	1 > 3
Teaching	$F(3, 96) = 0.78$	.51	
Faculty Impact	$F(3, 89) = 3.57$	.01	1 > 2, 4
Funding	$F(3, 87) = 1.95$	.12	
Competitive Need	$F(3, 87) = 3.91$	.01	1 > 2, 4
Service	$F(3, 95) = 1.82$	.17	
<b>Turnover Intentions</b>			
Research	$F(3, 92) = 2.75$	.04	1 < 3
Teaching	$F(3, 96) = 3.01$	.03	1 < 3
Faculty Impact	$F(3, 89) = 2.13$	.10	
Funding	$F(3, 87) = 0.99$	.39	
Competitive Need	$F(3, 87) = 1.57$	.20	
Service	$F(3, 95) = 2.38$	.10	

administrators who perceived awarding compensation based on research productivity to be fair and likely (group 1) reported significantly higher levels of satisfaction than those who perceived



the practice to be unfair but likely to be used (group 3). When considering awarding compensation based on the impact faculty have on their students, as well as awarding based on competitive need, this same group (group 1) also reported higher levels of satisfaction than groups two (perceived practice as fair and not likely) and four (perceived the practice as unfair and unlikely).

▪ **Turnover Intentions.** Levels of turnover intention among administrators examined in this study did not differ across groups when considering compensating faculty based on the quality of teaching, amount of grant funded research, or competitive need. However, administrators who perceived awarding compensation based on research productivity to be fair and likely (group 1) reported lower levels of turnover intentions than those who perceived the practice as unfair but likely to be used (group 3). Similar differences between groups 1 and 3 were also observed when considering compensation based on the quality of teaching.

Table 3 presents descriptive data for each of the three organizational variables (*Organizational Commitment, Job Satisfaction, and Turnover Intentions*) based on the four groups and nine resource distribution practices considered.

#### **Research Questions 4-6**

Are there differences in *Organizational Commitment, Job Satisfaction, and Turnover Intentions* based on differences in administrator's perceptions of fairness and the likelihood of using different *Resource Distribution Practices*? Table 4 presents the results of each ANOVA related to analyzing differences in *Organizational Commitment, Job Satisfaction, and Turnover Intention* based on groups of administrators who perceived each *Resource Distribution Practice* to be: fair and likely (group 1), fair but not likely (group 2), not fair but likely (group 3), and not fair and not likely (group 4).

▪ **Organizational Commitment.** Significant differences in organizational commitment were observed across groups and several resource distribution practices. Administrators who perceived distributing resources based on the impact faculty have on students and amount of service commitments to be fair and likely (group 1) reported significantly higher levels of commitment than those who perceived the practice to be unfair but likely to be used (group 3). In addition, administrators who perceived distributing resources based on operational cost needs to be fair and likely (group 1) reported higher levels of organizational commitment than those who perceived the practice as not fair and not likely (group 4). Similar differences between groups one and four were observed when considering distributing resources based on program enrollment growth as well as amount of service commitments.

▪ **Job Satisfaction.** When considering job satisfaction, group one (fair and likely) levels of satisfaction were higher than group 4 (not fair and not likely) when considering the distribution of resources based on amount of grant funding received, operational cost needs, and enrollment growth. When considering distributing resources based on the impact faculty have on students and service commitments of faculty, those who perceived this to be fair and likely (group 1), administrators reported significantly higher levels of job satisfaction than those who perceived the practice to be unfair but likely to be used (group 3) as well as group four (unfair but likely to be used). Higher levels of satisfaction were also observed for those who perceived distributing resources based on service commitments to be fair but unlikely (group 2) compared to those who perceived the practice to be not fair but likely (group 3) as well as those who perceived the practice to be not fair and not likely (group 4).

Table 3 – Means and Standard Deviations for Organizational Commitment, Job Satisfaction, and Turnover Intentions when Considering Different Resource Distribution Practices by each Group.

Practice	Group	Organizational Commitment <i>M (SD)</i>	Job Satisfaction <i>M (SD)</i>	Turnover Intention <i>M (SD)</i>
Research	Fair and Likely	26.02 (6.88)	47.11 (5.98)	9.41 (4.84)
	Fair but Not Likely	23.19 (7.60)	42.09 (11.78)	10.09 (4.33)
	Not Fair but Likely	21.50 (6.88)	35.62 (12.28)	12.75 (4.23)
	Not Fair and Not Likely	23.85 (7.64)	37.21 (12.18)	12.71 (4.44)
Teaching	Fair and Likely	27.20 (6.66)	45.63 (8.93)	8.03 (4.08)
	Fair but Not Likely	24.89 (7.00)	44.00 (8.76)	10.86 (4.53)
	Not Fair but Likely	27.00 (7.54)	38.66 (13.42)	10.33 (5.50)
	Not Fair and Not Likely	21.27 (5.51)	37.63 (12.36)	13.00 (4.58)
Faculty Impact	Fair and Likely	28.17 (5.58)	46.68 (7.47)	8.48 (4.75)
	Fair but Not Likely	24.29 (6.44)	43.26 (9.07)	10.41 (4.39)
	Not Fair but Likely	20.02 (6.46)	33.12 (9.54)	13.08 (4.72)
	Not Fair and Not Likely	22.20 (6.33)	38.00 (11.57)	11.80 (5.01)
Funding	Fair and Likely	26.20 (7.66)	45.16 (8.65)	9.36 (5.19)
	Fair but Not Likely	23.42 (6.34)	45.14 (8.10)	10.50 (3.65)
	Not Fair but Likely	23.29 (6.11)	38.94 (10.68)	10.35 (4.28)
	Not Fair and Not Likely	23.62 (7.50)	36.87 (11.48)	11.93 (4.38)
Competitive Need	Fair and Likely	25.37 (8.72)	43.71 (10.14)	9.50 (5.10)
	Fair but Not Likely	24.94 (6.09)	41.77 (9.81)	11.33 (5.00)
	Not Fair but Likely	24.62 (5.60)	46.25 (3.53)	10.50 (3.20)
	Not Fair and Not Likely	22.11 (7.16)	39.00 (10.58)	11.94 (5.01)
Cost Need	Fair and Likely	27.69 (7.13)	46.60 (7.67)	8.32 (4.61)
	Fair but Not Likely	24.72 (5.65)	42.50 (10.60)	11.27 (3.99)
	Not Fair but Likely	23.28 (7.15)	43.14 (6.06)	10.14 (3.07)
	Not Fair and Not Likely	20.50 (6.99)	36.92 (11.77)	13.21 (4.62)
Credit Hour Growth	Fair and Likely	26.21 (7.79)	44.33 (10.04)	8.30 (4.41)
	Fair but Not Likely	25.06 (5.59)	44.06 (7.13)	10.73 (4.90)
	Not Fair but Likely	25.72 (6.16)	39.18 (8.57)	9.63 (4.41)
	Not Fair and Not Likely	21.94 (7.15)	39.47 (11.56)	13.11 (3.65)
Enrollment Growth	Fair and Likely	26.58 (7.47)	45.34 (7.65)	8.36 (4.72)
	Fair but Not Likely	23.64 (5.84)	40.17 (10.81)	12.76 (3.63)
	Not Fair but Likely	30.33 (2.08)	45.07 (1.57)	8.83 (4.93)
	Not Fair and Not Likely	18.14 (7.01)	33.28 (14.60)	14.42 (3.15)
Service	Fair and Likely	28.29 (6.53)	46.16 (9.92)	8.88 (4.65)
	Fair but Not Likely	25.38 (6.19)	45.31 (7.25)	8.31 (4.19)
	Not Fair but Likely	17.50 (7.85)	32.50 (15.26)	11.50 (6.60)
	Not Fair and Not Likely	23.18 (7.21)	39.65 (10.23)	11.48 (4.73)

▪ **Turnover Intentions.** Levels of turnover intention among administrators considered in this study did not differ across groups when considering distributing resources based on the amount and quality of research, amount of grant funded research, impact that faculty have on students, or competitive need. When considering the distribution of resources based on quality of teaching, as well as operational cost needs, credit hour growth, and enrollment growth, group one (perceived practice as fair and likely) had significantly lower turnover intentions than group four (perceived the practice as unfair and unlikely). Group 1 also reported lower levels of

turnover intentions than those than those who perceived the practice as fair but not likely (group 2) when examining the quality of teaching and enrollment growth. Lastly, lower levels of turnover intentions were observed for those who perceived distributing resources based on service commitments to be fair but unlikely (group 2) compared to those who perceived the practice to be not fair and not likely (group 4).

Tables 4 – ANOVA for Differences in Organizational Variables by Group (1 = Fair and Likely, 2 = Fair and Not Likely, 3 = Not Fair and Likely, 4 = Not Fair and Not Likely) when Considering Different Resource Distribution Practices.

	<i>F</i>	<i>P</i>	<i>Group Differences</i>
<b>Organizational Commitment:</b>			
Research	$F(3, 84) = 1.36$	.26	
Teaching	$F(3, 80) = 2.21$	.09	
Faculty Impact	$F(3, 72) = 3.43$	.02	1 > 3
Funding	$F(3, 81) = 1.03$	.39	
Competitive Need	$F(3, 79) = 0.73$	.53	
Operational Cost Need	$F(3, 64) = 3.62$	.02	1 > 4
Credit Hour Growth	$F(3, 80) = 1.45$	.23	
Enrollment Growth	$F(3, 72) = 3.81$	.01	1 > 4
Service	$F(3, 94) = 4.02$	.01	1 > 3, 4
<b>Job Satisfaction:</b>			
Research	$F(3, 86) = 6.15$	.01	1 > 3, 4
Teaching	$F(3, 80) = 2.20$	.10	
Faculty Impact	$F(3, 74) = 3.24$	.03	1 > 3
Funding	$F(3, 82) = 3.87$	.01	1 > 4
Competitive Need	$F(3, 80) = 1.35$	.26	
Operational Cost Need	$F(3, 66) = 3.36$	.02	1 > 4
Credit Hour Growth	$F(3, 81) = 1.55$	.20	
Enrollment Growth	$F(3, 72) = 4.21$	.01	1 > 4
Service	$F(3, 96) = 5.19$	.01	1, 2 > 3 2 > 4
<b>Turnover Intentions:</b>			
Research	$F(3, 86) = 2.55$	.06	
Teaching	$F(3, 81) = 4.16$	.01	1 < 2, 4
Faculty Impact	$F(3, 74) = 1.86$	.14	
Funding	$F(3, 82) = 1.16$	.32	
Competitive Need	$F(3, 80) = 1.18$	.32	
Operational Cost Need	$F(3, 66) = 4.73$	.01	1 < 4
Credit Hour Growth	$F(3, 81) = 4.99$	.01	1 < 4
Enrollment Growth	$F(3, 72) = 5.71$	.01	1 < 2, 4
Service	$F(3, 96) = 3.37$	.02	2 < 4

## Discussion

The findings of the current study were generally consistent with the predicted results. First, there were significant differences in organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and turnover intentions based on the differences between the respondents' perceptions of fairness and the likelihood of distribution principles being used. Second, the significant differences were generally between the groups that perceived a principle as fair and likely to be used and the other groups. In other words, those who believed their organization would use fair principles in making distribution decisions had higher levels of organizational commitment and job satisfaction and lower turnover intentions. Third, the groups that were significantly lower were often those who believed there was a discrepancy between what was fair and what the university was likely to do (groups 2 and 3). While this is the first study to examine these relationships, these findings are consistent with prior research that found those who perceive distributive justice as high are more committed, satisfied, and less likely to turnover (e.g., Cohen-Charash & Spector, 2001; Tag & Sarsfield-Baldwin, 1996).

The findings also includes some results that were not predicted. While there were a number of significant differences, there were also a number of principles in the two scenarios in which there were no significant differences. Moreover, there were few consistent patterns. In other words, it was generally difficult to determine if a discrepancy between fairness and likelihood of use for a given distribution principle was more impactful or impactful in a consistent manner. More research is needed to determine, for example, why research funding differences had a significant impact on job satisfaction in the department distribution scenario, but did not have a significant impact on other variables in that scenario or on any variables in the individual distribution scenario.

In addition, it was not predicted that the largest number of differences would be between group 1 (fair and likely) and group 4 (unfair and unlikely). It was expected respondents who indicated a principle was both unfair and unlikely to be used would not be less committed, less satisfied or more likely to turnover because the organization is behaving in a fair manner (i.e., it is not using a principle perceived to be unfair). While this needs more research as well, one explanation would be some people are consistently more likely to disagree. In other words, these respondents may rate nearly everything as unfavorable, including fairness, likelihood of use, commitment, satisfaction, and intention to leave. This would be unrelated to distributive justice and, therefore, future research may need to control for negative personalities.

There are both practical and research implications that emerge from the current study. The findings that those who perceive the distribution principles likely to be used as fair were more satisfied, committed to the university, and less likely to turnover suggests that it is important for universities to explain the resource distribution decisions made and hopefully convince administrators the principles used were fair. While this is likely not possible to do with every employee, the more people who perceive the principles used as fair, the better and more stable work environment a university is likely to have. As previously discussed, there are several aspects of the current findings for which additional research is needed in order to better understand the reasons for these results. This is particularly true for some of the unexpected results. It would also be helpful to examine the impact of organizational justice perceptions on key organizational variables for other members of the university including faculty and non-academic staff.

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# Faculty Psychological Contracts in a Precarious Time: The Need for Strategic Human Resources Management in Higher Education

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The psychological contract between an employee and their employer has long been accepted by scholars and practitioners of human resources as a relevant and significant aspect of the working relationship. In higher education institutions, however, the practice of human resource management, strategic or otherwise, has not been prioritized. As a result, I argue, academic faculty members are particularly vulnerable to the consequences of broken psychological contracts. Furthermore, without strategic human resources for faculty members, universities risk unnecessarily low morale and high turnover. I recommend the creation of an office of faculty human resources to coordinate and train faculty and administration on best practices in strategic human resources management.

## Working in Precarious Times

Higher education is facing a number of significant challenges: rising tuition costs, a student-as-consumer mentality, high numbers of contingent faculty, threats to the tenure system, heavier workload expectations, and less autonomy. It is within the context of these broader challenges that faculty members develop expectations about their working conditions and relationships. One significant shift in the nature of the academic workplace is the increase in the number of non-tenure-track and contingent faculty members. The increase in contingent academic workers exists within a larger societal context of weakened union protections and more pressures for public and nonprofit institutions to become more like the private sector (Kalleberg, 2009). In academia, the number of contingent, part-time faculty has increased to about 48% of the instructional body in degree-granting institutions (Kalleberg, 2009, p. 9). This in turn leads to feelings of insecurity and mistrust.

Psychological contract theory postulates that employees and employers develop informal, mutual expectations. There are three basic kinds of psychological contracts: transactional contracts regarding expectations around compensation and resources, ideological contracts regarding shared visions of professional and ethical values, and relational contracts regarding support, honesty, reliability, and trust (O'Meara, Bennett, & Neihaus, 2016). Although they are informal, even at times implicit, psychological contracts have a significant impact on motivation and morale. Psychological contract theory is subsumed within expectancy theory, which posits that “before people exert effort, they engage in a rational calculation of expected performance and rewards and an assessment of how much these outcomes matter to them” (Denhardt et. al, 2016, p. 158). According to expectancy theory, in order for an employee to feel motivated, “effort has to be [perceived as] instrumental to good performance”, they need to feel that “performance is clearly linked to certain outcomes”, and value those outcomes (Denhardt et. al. 2016, p. 158). As part of expectancy theory, the psychological contract governs the links between effort, performance, and value for employees in relation to their superiors.



Intact psychological contracts are associated with increased organizational citizenship behavior, as well as motivation, satisfaction, and morale (Coyle-Shapiro & Kessler, 2003). When they are broken, there can be far-reaching consequences. In the case of university faculty, a broken psychological contract can result in disengagement, incivility, and attrition as faculty members seek out other positions or leave academia altogether (O'Meara et. al, 2016). In particular, studies have shown that faculty tend to focus their psychological contracts on research, resources, fairness in promotion, and availability of collaboration (O'Meara et. al, 2016). When psychological contracts are intact, individuals and institutions reap the benefits. Employees are more willing to participate in organizational citizenship behavior, which, in the academic workplace, may involve serving on university committees or advising student clubs.

According to Dabos and Rousseau, psychological contracts “reduce insecurities and anticipate future exchanges, helping both individuals and organizations meet their needs (2004, p. 53). There is more to a job than what is contained within the four corners of the employment contract, and psychological contracts fill in where the formal contract leaves off. There are two main components of the psychological contract: mutuality and reciprocity According to Dabos and Rousseau, “mutuality describes the degree to which the two parties agree on their interpretations of promises and commitments each party has made and accepted” and “reciprocity refers to the degree of agreement about the reciprocal exchange” (2004, p. 53). Norman, Abrose, and Huston (2012) found that faculty morale depended on the quality of their interactions in three key areas: collegiality, leadership, and support. Research suggests that, while higher education is in a time of transition and contingency, faculty morale boils down to very mundane aspects of the academic workplace: how they are treated by their colleagues, their department head, and their administration. In the university setting, where things like sick days are often not kept track of, a psychological contract may be made up of expectations about things such as how often an instructor cancels class and whether they provide alternate assignments. It can also include expectations about workload, including how many publications of a particular caliber are sufficient to achieve tenure. In addition, in my experience as a faculty member, a psychological contract can be made up of an expectation that one's expertise and autonomy are respected and too many constraints are not put on one's work time (in terms of things like set work hours). When conflicts arise between faculty and students, faculty often may have an expectation that the department chairperson is to be supportive of the faculty member and the chairperson can reasonably expect the faculty member to behave in an ethical manner.

Psychological contracts are mutual, which means they are built in interaction between an employee and what Dabos and Rousseau (2004) call a “primary agent” (p. 52). The primary agent is the person who represents the organization in the employee's eyes. Identification of a primary agent can be a challenge in an academic workplace, because although there are levels of rank among faculty in departments, there is no clear hierarchy. For instance, there are differences in rank between non-tenure-track faculty, those on the tenure track, and already tenured faculty members. However, these distinctions do not necessarily come with increased decision-making weight. Further, although the department chairperson has increased responsibility for the coordination of department activities, support staff, and serves as liaison with the administration, they cannot unilaterally fire a full-time faculty member. In addition, while they are responsible for the departmental budget, in my experience budgets can be very limited and in practical terms chairs may not have much actual discretion in these areas. However, chairs have more discretion in the mediation of faculty disputes with students and

other faculty. Further, while the college dean is positioned above the department chairperson in the academic hierarchy, faculty do not often have day-to-day contact with the deans. Studies have shown that faculty create psychological contracts with their departmental colleagues, including their chairperson (O'Meara et. al, 2016). Academic researchers create psychological contracts with their research lab supervisors (Dabos and Rousseau, 2004). However, the unclear nature of power hierarchies among faculty in academic departments present a clear challenge to the participants in a psychological contract. Nonetheless, psychological contracts remain an important part of the employer-employee relationship, even in academia.

The question of the primary agents in the psychological contract is complicated by the widespread view espoused by faculty that their interests are diametrically opposed to and generally more reputable than those of administrators. For instance, the titles of several articles in a special issue of *New Directions for Higher Education* on academic administration included the phrase "the dark side" (see Glick, 2006; Palm, 2006). This perception of opposing values and interests places a strain on the psychological contract because such a contract requires a shared understanding that implies some common ground. While the administrators learn to see the university as an organization, faculty members are enculturated through their own educational experiences to see themselves as individual scholars (or teacher-scholars) housed within universities. One aspect of the problem may be a lack of engagement of faculty in the financial decision-making for the university. Another aspect may be the lack of a cultivation of an organizational culture among faculty. If faculty generally are not trained to see the university as an organization and themselves as employees, while simultaneously facing challenges to multiple aspects of their expectations of what it means to be a university professor in the form of neoliberal reforms (Levin & Aliyeva, 2015), then the faculty-administration relationship is vulnerable to the impact of the broken psychological contract.

The structure of universities places the responsibility for the resolution of conflict between faculty members in the hands of the department chair. The department chair, however, is likely someone who has been elevated from the ranks of senior faculty without any specific management or human resources training. Strathe and Wilson (2006) point out that faculty become department chairs as they become senior members of a department, "in spite of the fact that faculty members are prepared through their degree programs for teaching, research and scholarship, and service responsibilities, not administrative roles" (p.7). This pattern is repeated at more senior administration positions, with chairs transitioning to deans and so on. According to Strathe and Wilson, "Often beginning at the level of department chair or head, faculty members frequently did not choose to enter academic administration; rather it was their turn, the 'first among equals' notion" (2006, p. 6). Coupled with this lack of preparation, the imprecision of the departmental hierarchy, and the lack of discretion in the realm of firing faculty or providing raises, department chairs are also often expected to solve sticky situations without the benefit of a dedicated human resources staff. Because the deans are in charge of the chairs and the chairs are in charge of their departmental faculty, the university structure is unlike that of a conventional business or government organization. In universities, the human resources department coordinates faculty benefits, such as health insurance, but has much more authority over the staff than the faculty. In the university with which I am familiar, the human resources department had no jurisdiction over faculty affairs. Conflicts are dealt with by the department chair and/or the dean.

Without a strategic human resources management department for faculty, universities are shortchanging themselves out of a number of benefits for both employees and institutions. In

*Human Resources Management for Public and Nonprofit Organizations: A Strategic Approach*, Joan E. Pynes (2013), lists eighteen different “core competencies” (p. 39) that strategic human resource professionals bring to organizations. These competencies run the gamut from “developing others” to “strategic thinking” (p. 39-40). In fact, many of the identified core competencies focus on skills that would be very valuable to department chairs embroiled in mediating a faculty conflict and to deans seeking a more strategic approach to management. Specifically, according to Pynes, these important competencies include: coaching, credibility, critical/analytical thinking, cross-cultural intelligence, effective communication, ethical behavior, flexibility, HR knowledge, integrity, leading change, and organizational knowledge (p. 39-40). As Pynes points out, if it is done correctly, HR management is about much more than making sure employees comply with the policy handbook. However, the compliance piece of the HR manager’s job could be a useful component of a well-run academic unit.

Without clear guidelines about what is and is not ethical behavior, university faculty run the risk of wading into problematic territory. Because ethical breaches are more likely to happen when employees are not sure about the boundaries between ethical and unethical behavior, and when there is a lack of consistent oversight. Writing in *New Directions for Higher Education*, Nathaniel Bray (2012) proposes the need to develop codes of conduct for academic deans, as well as separate codes for department heads, faculty, and so on. Bray argues that written codes of conduct are especially useful “for positions in organizations that have multiple stakeholder groups whose perceptions can influence the effectiveness and role set of the given position” (2012, p. 19) and identifies academic deans as one such position. Deans are beholden to the university president and board of regents, to faculty, to students, to parents, to alumni, and to the community at large (especially in the case of public universities and those with strong ties to the community). Bray points out that existing scholarship has identified the relationship between faculty and the deans as being particularly crucial to the deans’ perceived effectiveness (2012, p. 20). Therefore, the faculty-dean psychological contract should be a point of attention for those seeking to retain satisfied, motivated university faculty. Codes of conduct, however, are not sufficient to strengthen these contracts.

In addition to all of the other challenges presented by the absence of an HR department for faculty, including poorly-trained administrators and department chairs, the absence of clear enforcement of ethical conduct and training on how to avoid common ethical pitfalls present a critical challenge in the academic sector. Despite the need for clear communication and enforcement of ethics, however, HRM scholars point out that there are also pitfalls in relying too heavily on a compliance-based approach. Robert Roberts (2009) argues that “heavy reliance on compliance ethics has made it much more difficult for employees and officials to hold organizations accountable for actions that fall outside the scope of compliance-based ethics laws and regulations” (p. 261). In other words, organizations need a body that is flexible and respected enough to be able to investigate and resolve conflicts that fall outside the scope of codified ethical expectations.

### **Recommendations**

Given the state of affairs outlined above, I offer the following recommendations for how universities can strengthen the framework within which psychological contracts between faculty and administrators are made and upheld.

- Creation of an Office of Faculty Human Resources that is tasked with providing strategic human resources management to faculty in academic departments. The benefits of such an office are that experienced third-party HR specialists would be available to mediate disputes, monitor and enforce ethical standards, and train faculty, department chairs, and deans on the existence of things such as the concept of the psychological contract. A Faculty HR Officer could bring the best practices of strategic human resources management to the university where they could be put to use to improve the experiences of employees and strengthen institutions' strategic outlook.
- Entrance and exit interviews with faculty members. O'Meara et. al (2016) suggest that one way to gain a more nuanced understanding of the kinds of psychological contracts that faculty members create is to conduct interviews not only when faculty leave the institution, but also when they begin. These interviews, which could be done through the Office of Faculty HR, would delve into new employees' expectations and understandings about their relationships with their colleagues and administration. O'Meara et. al. (2016) also recommend that some of the specific expectations that come out of these interviews could be formalized in a memorandum of understanding that could be attached to the employee contract for future references (p. 292). The goal of these interviews is to make explicit as many of the informal, often implicit, promises and obligations that faculty members enter the position with. Conducting both entrance and exit interviews could also provide valuable information to department chairs and deans that help flesh out the nature of psychological contracts so that they can expand their understandings of what faculty expect of them.
- Train all existing and especially new department heads and deans on best practices in human resource management, conflict resolution, and psychological contract theory. Because department heads and deans often are chosen from the ranks of senior faculty members and are not usually trained in how to manage people in an academic setting, this training is vital to their success. A mandatory leadership development program for department heads and deans could be developed.
- Clarification of the decision-making role of faculty. University faculty have traditionally been involved to some extent in decision-making through a faculty senate body. However, given the division of roles between faculty and administration, faculty sometimes feel like the notion of "shared governance" is symbolic rather than meaningful (Gardner, 2016). This feeling of powerlessness can lead faculty to feel disengaged and mistrustful. Administrators should think strategically about the roles faculty members can play in institutional decision-making, provide them with information and training in strategic planning and organizational analysis, and put procedures in place to allow faculty to make meaningful contributions to university administration.

### **Conclusion**

In conclusion, due to a number of structural factors, such as increasing contingency; lack of clear definition of roles and responsibilities for faculty in relation to department heads and

deans; absence of training on best practices in conflict resolution and human resource management; and often no clear HR body dedicated to faculty relations; university faculty are vulnerable to having their psychological contracts violated. These violations result in a number of problems for the individuals and institutions, including disengagement, incivility, and attrition. Scholarship suggests that faculty relationships with their department heads and their deans are particularly significant locations of psychological contracts being developed. Given the scholarship and my experience as a university faculty member, I recommend the creation of an Office for Faculty Human Resources; the training of department heads and deans in strategic HR management, conflict resolution, and psychological contract theory; and conducting entrance and exit interviews with faculty members in order to make some of the implicit aspects of their psychological contracts explicit.

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## **Perspectives on Improving Higher Education: Faculty and Administrative Priorities**

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The idea for this research came from several sessions at the 39<sup>th</sup> National Assembly of the American Association of University Administrators (AAUA) held in November 2010. The concept was further crystallized by interactions with international members of the AAUA. Through these contacts, we realized that the key groups of educators (faculty, administrators, and academic leaders) share some common concerns and aspirations for improvement of higher education world-wide.

Higher education has been facing a number of persistent challenges for some time, including quality assurance and quality enhancement, which made the call for improvement an urgent one. Furthermore, while higher education has been seen as the best path for establishing a career and college presidents are still optimistic about the value of college degrees (Carter 2016), a recent study points to a widening divide in estimates between college and business leaders on the quality of college graduates and the preparedness of graduates for today's and future job markets (CHE 2017). In addition, studies indicate that college presidents are less optimistic about the future of higher education than ever before (Carter 2016). We believe that there is no better way to determine the most promising approaches to addressing these issues than to ask those who are entrusted with ensuring the quality and sustainability of the higher education mission, vision, and goals.

Analysis of the study revealed some surprising outcomes. We propose that being aware of how faculty, administrators, and academic leaders themselves perceive the question of what needs to be changed is a necessary first step in finding workable solutions that could lead to improved higher education systems at the local, national, and international levels.

### **The Research Study**

#### **The Research Question**

*"If you had the power, the will, and the means to improve one thing in higher education, what would you choose as your highest priority at the international level, the national level, and at your own institution?"* This open-ended question was answered through a questionnaire

by 1085 faculty, administrators, and academic leaders from colleges and universities within and outside the U.S. (see Table 1). While the data generated from open-ended questions are not easy to compile and quantify, this format is often the most effective way of identifying the issues that respondents are concerned with.

Table 1 – The Survey’s Format and Main Questions

If you had the power, the will, and the means to improve one thing in higher education, what would you choose to improve as your highest priority at the international level? . . . at the national level? . . . at your own institution?				
International Level:				
National Level:				
Own Institution:				
Optional Questions: Please select one under each category:				
College Level:	2-year	4-year		
Profession/ Occupation:	Faculty	Administration / Academics	Administration / Non-academics	Staff
# of years in Higher Education:	1-5	6-10	11-20	More than 20
Type of College/University:	Public	Private Non-profit	Private for-profit	

### The Study’s Target and Response Population

A total of 1085 faculty and administrators completed the survey through one of the following means: direct e-mails through the Internet or paper responses from participants attending regional, national, and international conferences , including *The Higher Learning Commission* (2014, 2015), *American Association of University Administrators* (2014, 2015, 2016, 2017), *SENCER Summer Institute* (2015, 2016, 2017), *Midwest SENCER Annual Meeting* (2014, 2015), and the *Illinois Annual Community Colleges Assessment Fair* (2014, 2015).

Of the 1085 completed surveys, 37% came through direct e-mail and 63% came from randomly distributed copies to participants attending regional, national, and international conference meetings. Characteristics of the respondent group of 1085 individuals were as follows:

- 74% were from individuals at American colleges and universities, while 26% were from colleges and universities outside the U.S.
- 58% of the respondent group identified themselves as faculty, 35% as administrators (broadly defined); 7% did not provide information on their specific professional role.

To prepare the raw data for analysis, a copy of each response was distributed to three reviewers. Each of the reviewers identified key words, phrases, or sentences that indicated answers to the questions posed. Upon completion, the three reviewers shared and compared findings. Table 2 shows the methodological strategy and mechanism that the three reviewers followed and applied for accepting a given answer.

After agreement was reached on the key words, phrases, and sentences that indicated answers to the posed questions, responses were compiled into a list with the number of times each response was mentioned or identified.



Table 2 – Methodology applied for accepting a given answer

	Outcome Condition	This means . . .	Result
1	An answer selected by the three reviewers.	Agreement among all three reviewers.	Accepted with no further analysis for use in the study.
2	An answer selected by two of the three reviewers.	Agreement among two of the three reviewers.	The answer was critically discussed, but the one who disagreed with the answer must convince at least one of the two who selected the given answer. If at least one of those who selected the answer agreed with the one who didn't select the answer, then the answer was rejected and is not included in the analysis. If neither of the two who selected the answer agreed with the one who didn't select the answer, then the answer was selected and is included in the analysis.
3	An answer selected by only one of the reviewers.	Two reviewers disagreed with the third reviewer for selecting a given answer.	The reviewer who selected the given answer must convince the other two with the reason for selecting this answer. If at least one of the other two agreed with the reviewer, the answer was selected and is included in the analysis. If neither of the two who disagreed changed their mind, the answer was rejected and is not included in the analysis.
4	The answer was not selected by any of the reviewers.	Agreement among the reviewers.	The words, phrases, and sentences that were not selected by any of the reviewers were revisited, discussed, and if one of them was selected by the three reviewers, then it is included; if one was not selected by the three reviewers, then it was rejected.

*(Adapted from Cherif, Movahedzadeh, Adams, and Dunning 2013)*

To analyze the insights, the agreed-upon key words, phrases, and sentences were listed along with their frequency of use and given again to the three reviewers, who were asked to individually group these terms into categories and subcategories. Upon completion, the three reviewers discussed how they congregated the participants' answers into categories and subcategories, and gave specific reasons for their choices. Then, using a process similar to the one outlined above, the reviewers confirmed use of the agreed-upon categories and subcategories for grouping the respondents' answers.

## Results and Findings

The priorities identified in the study were organized into three areas: the international level, the national level, and one's own institution. At each level we first looked at the overall results, and then tried to compare participants' responses from U.S. and non-U.S. colleges and universities. However, at each level, while we listed all the identified categories, we focused on the three or four most frequently mentioned areas of improvement. After we looked at the results, we found no compelling reason to discuss the U.S. and non-U.S. participants' responses separately for the international level, because the identified concerns were closely shared by both populations.

### The International Level

Of the 1085 respondents, 1010 (93%) answered the question and provided one or more areas for improvement. The remaining 7% either stated that the question "is not applicable" or provided no clear answers.

As shown in Table 3, common world-wide standards for higher education degrees and common articulation standards are the most frequently mentioned responses (90.2% of the total). World-wide access and collaboration between colleges and universities are mentioned second most often (86%). Global literacy, quality of education, and incorporating global issues, including learning a second language, into curricula are mentioned third most frequently (77.1%). Cost, affordability, and access were cited fourth most often (60.7%). Universal study-abroad requirements were fifth most frequent (59%).

Table 3 – Most desired improvements in higher education at the international level (n=1010)

		Number	Percentage
1	Common Standards for Academic Degrees and Articulation	912	90.2%
2	World-wide Access and Collaboration Between Colleges and Universities	869	86%
3	Global Literacy and Incorporation of Global & Cultural Issues into Curricula	779	77.1%
4	Cost, Affordability, and Access to Higher Education	614	60.8%
5	Study Abroad Requirements for All Students	596	59%
6	Other Areas mentioned	375	37.1%

At the international level, overall agreement on the three highest improvement priorities between American and non-American survey respondents was observed.

### The National Level

Of the 1085 respondents, 1042 (96%) answered the question and provided one or more areas for improvement. The remaining 4% either stated that "it is not applicable" or provided no clear answers.

As shown in Table 4, reducing the cost of education and making education affordable, especially for students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds, was the number one area for improvement, mentioned by 90% of the participants. Students' college preparedness and readiness was the second most frequently mentioned area of improvement, by 87% of respondents. The need for more and sustained funding for higher education, especially to support research in pedagogy and student-centered approaches was third most frequent, mentioned by 84% of respondents. Better and more meaningful collaboration within and between institutions was fourth most frequent, mentioned by 70%. Service-learning and civic responsibility were fifth most frequent, mentioned by 63%. The need for better faculty development and administrative leadership was sixth most frequent, cited by 57%. Other ideas for improvement were collectively mentioned by 12% of respondents.

Table 4 – Desired improvements in higher education at the national level (n=1042)

		Total Responses	
		Frequency	Percentage
1	Cost of Education, Access, and Affordability, especially for students from Low Socioeconomic Backgrounds	941	90.3%
2	Students' College Readiness and Preparedness	917	88%
3	Funding to Support Research in Pedagogy and Student Centered Approaches	876	84%
4	Collaboration Between and Within Institutions	731	70%
5	Service-learning for Civic Responsibility	658	63%
6	Faculty Development and Administration and Academic Leadership	594	57%
7	Other Ideas	126	12%

Table 5 provides a comparison of improvement priorities at the national level between American and non-American colleges and university respondents. While American respondents identify cost of education (95.2%), students' college readiness (93.6%), and funding for pedagogical research (79%) as the three highest priorities, the non-American participants identify funding for pedagogical research (85.4%), collaboration between and within institutions (73.4%), and service-learning (64.9%) as their three highest priorities.

### Priorities at Own Institution

Of the 1085 respondents, 1064 (98%) answered the question and provided one or more areas for improvement. The remaining 2% provided no clear answers.

As shown in Table 6, student retention, success, and support is the most frequently mentioned area of improvement, by 93% of the respondents. College readiness is the second most frequently mentioned area, by 84% of respondents, with a focus on ensuring that all new students are prepared for college courses and college life as the first step in the students' success. Faculty development and administrative leadership issues are the third most frequently cited area of improvement, by 79% of respondents. Improving curriculum and programs to meet not only student needs but also ensure that students are prepared for the current and future job market is the fourth most frequent area of improvement, cited by 67%.

Table 5 – Priorities for improvement at the national level from American and non-American college and university respondents (n=1042)

		Total Responses		U.S. Colleges (n=803)		Non-U.S. Colleges (n=282)	
		n	%	n	%	n	%
1	Cost of Education, Access, and Affordability, especially for students from Low Socioeconomic Backgrounds	941	90.3%	765	95.2%	176	62.4%
2	Students' College Readiness and Preparedness	917	88%	752	93.6%	165	58.5%
3	Funding to Support Research in Pedagogy and Student Centered Approaches	876	84%	635	79%	241	85.4%
4	Collaboration Between and Within Institutions	731	70%	524	65.3%	207	73.4%
5	Service-learning for Civic Responsibility	658	63%	475	59%	183	64.9%
6	Faculty Development and Administrator Leadership	594	57%	421	52.4%	173	61.3%
7	Other Ideas	126	12%				

Better communication and collaboration between departments, as well as between administrators and faculty is the fifth most frequent area, cited by 60% of respondents. Cost of education and affordability is the sixth most frequent area, cited by 56%. Improving funding models for departments and faculty related activities is cited by 38% of respondents. All other areas are at 2%.

Table 6 – What respondents most want to improve at their own institutions (n=1064)

		Total Responses	
		n	%
1	Student Support, Retention, and Success	989	93%
2	College Readiness and Student Preparedness	894	84%
3	Faculty development and administration leadership related issues	841	79%
4	Curriculum	713	67%
5	Communication and Collaboration Within and Between Departments	639	60%
6	Cost of Education and Affordability	596	56%
7	Less Dependence on Tuition for Institutional Funding	405	38%
8	Other Ideas	22	2%

Table 7 shows significant agreement between participants from American and non-American institutions on priorities for improvement at their own institutions. While American participants identify student support, retention, and success (95.1%), student college readiness (93%), and faculty development and administrative leadership (77.6%) as the three highest priorities, the non-American participants also choose student support, retention, and success

(80%) and faculty development and administrative leadership (77.3%) as priorities, followed by curriculum matters (74.4%).

Table 7 – What participants from American and non-American institutions most want to improve at their own institutions

		Overall Total Responses (n=1064)		U.S. Colleges (n=803)		Non-U.S. Colleges (n=282)	
		n	%	n	%	n	%
1	Student Support, Retention, and Success	989	93%	764	95.1%	225	80%
2	College Readiness and Student Preparedness	894	84%	746	93%	148	52.4%
3	Faculty development and administrative leadership issues	841	79%	623	77.6%	218	77.3%
4	Curriculum Matters and Issues	713	67%	503	62.6%	210	74.4%
5	Communication and Collaboration Within and Between Departments	639	60%	458	57%	181	64.1%
6	Cost of Education and Affordability	596	56%	447	55.7%	149	52.8%
7	Financial Independence (Less Dependence on Tuition for Institutional Funding)	405	38%	314	39.1%	91	32.2%
8	Other Ideas	22	2%	10	1.2%	12	4.3%

### Comparative Summary of Results and Findings

Comparative overall summaries of survey results and findings are illustrated in Tables 8 – 10.

### Analysis of the Study

Based on the preceding tabulations of the leading suggestions, in this section we proceed to analyze the similarities and differences and discuss why these occur. In this endeavor, we have chosen to focus only on those areas of improvement that are cited by 70% or more of the respondents at each level. Areas of improvement mentioned by 60-70% of the respondents at each level are considered important but are only selectively discussed.

### The International Level

The most significant overall suggestions for improvement at the international level are common standards for academic degrees and articulation (90.2%), world-wide access and collaboration between colleges and universities (86%), and global literacy and incorporation of global issues into curricula (77.1%). These three areas for improvement are not only related, but all the other areas mentioned at the international level, regardless of how many times they are mentioned, are related to and in support of these three significant issues. This means that the concerns for common academic standards, access, and collaboration are shared by college faculty and administrators in many countries across the globe. However, it is also clear that

these issues are of greater concern internationally than among participants from American colleges and universities (Table 11).

Table 8 – Comparative summary of results from American college and university participants

	<b>International Level</b> (n=802)	<b>National Level</b> (n=803)	<b>Own Institution</b> (n=803)
1	Common Standards for Academic Degrees and Articulation (79.8%)	Cost of Education, Access, and Affordability, especially for less affluent students (95.2%)	Student Support, Retention, and Success (95.1%)
2	World-wide Access and Collaboration Between Colleges and Universities (75.8%)	Students' College Readiness and Preparedness (93.6%)	College Readiness and Student Preparedness (93%)
3	Global Literacy and global Issues in curricula (72.2%)	Funding for Research in Pedagogy and Student Centered Approaches (79%)	Faculty Development Support and administrative leadership (77.6%)
4	Cost, Affordability, and Access to Higher Education (54.1%)	Collaboration Between and Within Institutions (65.3%)	Cost of Education and Affordability (56.7%)
5	Study Abroad Requirements for All Students (55.1%)	Service-learning for Civic Responsibility (59%)	Curriculum Matters and Issues (62.6%)
6	Other Areas mentioned (30.7%)	Faculty Development, Administration and Academic Leadership (52.4%)	Communication and Collaboration Within and Between Departments (57%)
7		Other Ideas mentioned (12%)	Less Dependence on Tuition for Institutional Funding (39.1%)

Table 9 – Comparative summary of results from  
Non-American college and university participants

	International Level (n=282)	National Level (n=282)	Own Institution (n=282)
1	Common Standards for Academic Degrees and Articulation (96%)	Cost of Education, Access, and Affordability, especially for less affluent students (62.4%)	Student Support, Retention, and Success (80%)
2	World-wide Access and Collaboration Between Colleges and Universities (92.1%)	Students' College Readiness and Preparedness (58.5%)	Faculty Development Support and administrative leadership (77.3%)
3	Global Literacy and global Issues in curricula (70.6%)	Funding for Research in Pedagogy and Student Centered Approaches (85.4%)	Curriculum Matters and Issues (74.4%)
4	Cost, Affordability, and Access to Higher Education (63.5%)	Collaboration Between and Within Institutions (73.4%)	Communication and Collaboration Within and Between Departments (64.1%)
5	Study Abroad Requirements for All Students (54.3%)	Service-learning for Civic Responsibility (64.9%)	Cost of Education and Affordability (52.8%)
6	Other Areas mentioned (45.4%)	Faculty Development, Administration and Academic Leadership (61.3%)	College Readiness and Student Preparedness (52.4%)
7		Other Ideas mentioned (12%)	Less Dependence on Tuition for Institutional Funding (32.2%)

Table 10 – Overall comparative summary of results and findings

	International Level (n=1010)	National Level (n=1042)	Own Institution (n=1064)
1	Common Standards for Academic Degrees and Articulation (90.2%)	Cost of Education, Access, and Affordability, especially for less affluent students (90.3%)	Student Support, Retention, and Success (93%)
2	World-wide Access and Collaboration Between Colleges and Universities (86%)	Students' College Readiness and Preparedness (88%)	College Readiness and Student Preparedness (84%)
3	Global Literacy and global Issues in curricula (77.1%)	Funding for Research in Pedagogy and Student Centered Approaches (84%)	Faculty Development Support and administrative leadership (79%)
4	Cost, Affordability, and Access to Higher Education (60.8%)	Collaboration Between and Within Institutions (70%)	Cost of Education and Affordability (56%)
5	Study Abroad Requirements for All Students (59%)	Service-learning for Civic Responsibility (63%)	Curriculum Matters and Issues (67%)
6	Other Areas (37.1%)	Faculty Development, Administration and Academic Leadership (57%)	Communication and Collaboration Within and Between Departments (60%)
7		Other Ideas (12%)	Less Dependence on Tuition for Institutional Funding (28%)

Table 11 – The leading suggestions for improvement at the international level

	U.S. Participants	Non-U.S. Participants
1	Common standards for academic degrees and articulation (79.8%)	Common standards for academic degrees and articulation (96%).
2	World-wide access and collaboration between colleges and universities (75.8%).	World-wide access and collaboration between colleges and universities (92.1%).
3	Global Literacy and Incorporation of Global Issues into Curricula (72%)	Global Literacy and Incorporation of Global Issues into Curricula (70.6%)

### Common Standards for Academic Degrees and Articulation

Shared definitions of what constitutes an Associate, Bachelor, or Master's degree in terms of learning and outcomes, say the respondents, will strengthen communication and collaboration among colleges and universities within a country and world-wide. These will also provide better oversight of international exchange programs, grants and funding, and joint academic research. Common standards for degrees in higher education would achieve the following:



- Better articulation standards across institutions, both for transfer students and for accepting and using faculty and students in exchange programs
- Recognition of common goals that go beyond international and national entities
- A basis for sharing and integrating best practices, including more effective curriculum, infrastructure, and organization
- A basis for shared research outcomes and collaboration in verifying research outcomes and conducting new studies

The respondents also cited the need for common standards in technology, the role of technology in education, and student expectations in higher education. A number of participants, mainly faculty, added that common standards in higher education would also help promote the understanding of general education, which is the core component in the development of critical thinking skills, civic engagement, self-responsibility, and empathy—cognitive skills that seem to be needed globally today more than ever before.

A number of participants, mainly administrators and academic leaders, stated that academic leaders should be aware not only of how institutions are accredited in their own regions, but also in other areas worldwide. Understanding how colleges and universities are accredited in various countries would help in the development of global competency measures and provide easier access to best practices worldwide.

### **Access and Collaboration Between Colleges and Universities**

Respondents wanted to see more open and easier collaboration and exchanges of faculty, students, and academic leaders not only within a given institution but also between colleges and universities nationally and globally. Better collaboration between educational institutions across borders would lead to more global awareness and knowledge among students, who would become better global citizens. But for collaboration across national boundaries to be effective, it needs to include exchange of ideas from all higher education stakeholders (students, faculty, administrators, and academic leaders). More collaboration among institutions globally could also help set up mechanisms that make transfer of course credit more logical and effective.

Participants thought that the first step for improved collaboration globally is to ease or remove barriers in areas such as visas, currency exchanges (for academic purposes), and transfer of credits. They support developing agreements between groups of national and international universities to offer courses that are open to all their students regardless of residence. There is a need also for service-based learning opportunities globally. Two example statements from two respondents follow,

*Today more than ever before, the whole world needs to collaborate in creating global opportunity to collaborate in making a big impact in the world and curricula of higher education must be the driving force in making people's lives more productive and creative. For example, we need to collaborate on artificial intelligence, energy, biosciences and medicine to help people live longer, healthier lives, on climate change to keep this planet earth for the next generations, and on food and agriculture to feed the growing population of our world.*

*Create and implement initiatives to infuse and weave character education through all undergraduate curriculum, including compassion, kindness, empathy, caring, peace, and freedom for members of all countries and nations. This of course must come from within each nation, country, and community rather than be orders from outside organizations, other countries, etc. The idea is to get college students to think beyond themselves and their narrow group and to begin to care for others.*

## The National Level

The leading overall suggestions for improvement at the national level are reducing the cost of education and making education affordable for all qualified students (90.3%), students' college preparedness and readiness (88%), sustainable funding to support research in pedagogy and student centered approaches (84%), and collaboration between and within institutions (70%). However, it is clear that participants from American and non-American colleges and universities differ in their priorities for improvement in higher education at the national level (Table 12).

Table 12 – The leading suggestions for improvement at the national level

	U.S. Participants	Non-U.S. Participants
1	Reducing the cost of education and making higher education affordable for all qualified students (95.2%),	Reducing the cost of education and making higher education affordable for all qualified students (62.4%)
2	Students' college preparedness and readiness (93.6%)	Students' college preparedness and readiness (58.5%)
3	Sustainable funding to support research in pedagogy and student centered approaches (79%).	Sustainable funding to support research in pedagogy and student centered approaches (85.4%).
4	Collaboration Between and Within Institutions (65.3%).	Collaboration Between and Within Institutions (73.4%).

For example, the highest priorities of respondents from U.S. institutions are the need for reduction of higher education costs (95.2%), students' college preparedness and readiness (93.6%), and providing sustainable funding for research in pedagogy and student centered approaches (79%). Respondents from non-U.S. colleges and universities see the priority needs in providing sustainable funding for research in pedagogy and student centered approaches (85.4%), collaboration between and within institutions (73.4%), and the reduction of costs (62.4%). Furthermore, while students' college readiness is a top concern for U.S. participants (93.6%), it was only cited by 58.5% of the participants from non-American institutions. The same discrepancy is present in the priority given to affordability and cost of higher education by American (95.2%) and non-American (62.4%) respondents.

The cost and affordability of higher education in the United States has become an ethical issue facing our society. According to The Higher Learning Commission (HLC) of the North Central Association, college costs have increased 500% in the last 25 years, far more than the cost of living, and have become a challenge for most Americans to afford. Furthermore, many students are defaulting on loans. Indeed, the current national student loan debt in the U.S. is \$1.3 trillion and continues to rise (Martinkich 2014). Student loan debt remains the largest

source of debt next to mortgages (Fortrell 2015). Because of such factors the cost of education in the U.S. raises a critical ethical issue for educators and students (Cherif et al. 2016). As one respondent put it, “How can we accept bailing out banks and automobile companies and not do the same for students, the citizens and the future generations of this country?”

On the other hand, while access to higher education—as distinct from affordability—is not a significant problem in the U.S. and some other Western societies, the problem in other countries (the international level in our study) is structured the other way around. Internationally, higher education is affordable but the access, in terms of available seats in colleges and universities, is limited. For a limited number of openings, the strongest students (and/or the well-connected ones) are selected. This is reflected in the fact that while college readiness among students in the U.S. is perceived to be a critical challenge, the issue does not emerge as a priority internationally, while access to a limited number of seats does.

Basic learning skills, including how to manage time, ask questions, look for help when needed, take notes, and organize information are essential for success at the college level. Under the premise of providing opportunity to pursue higher education, faculty in the U.S. encounter students who lack academic preparedness and/or organizational skills. As a result, many of these students fail because they are not ready cognitively nor prepared academically for college work (Cherif et al. 2013).

### **Cost, Affordability, and Access to Higher Education**

Education for all people—not just for the well-to-do—is one of the leading concerns for respondents at the national level (90.3%), and to a lesser extent internationally (60.8%) and at one’s own institution (56%). Participants argued that education is a vehicle not only for escaping poverty, but also for fostering global understanding and collaboration. Through educated citizens in educated societies, the transfer of ideas and knowledge throughout the globe can be achieved.

When we make learning accessible to all, through free or affordable higher education, through open lectures and materials for all, better access to all levels of education, especially for students from low-income families and females in underdeveloped countries—we provide opportunities for all to help build their societies and participate in their rewards. To make expanded access cost-effective, however, we need to focus on two aspects of education at the same time: quality and cost controls. The process should include efforts to move educational strategies toward critical thinking and away from spoon feeding, and making sure that students are ready for college.

However, while access to higher education—as distinct from affordability—is not a significant problem in the U.S. and some other Western societies, the problem in other countries (the international level in our study) emerges in another way. Internationally, higher education is affordable but the available seats in colleges and universities are limited. For these openings, the strongest students academically, or the best-connected, are selected. In a few other countries (as reflected in our study), the problem is seen as both one of cost and availability of seats.

A number of respondents discussed access to education as a universal need and right. Reducing the cost of education and maintaining affordable, high-quality education, especially for students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds, is seen by the participants as the best way to build strong communities with productive citizens. A number of respondents even urged free college education for all, at least in community colleges and vocational institutions.

However, most of the participants agreed that the most urgent need right now is to deal first with student debt, especially in the U.S., emphasizing the need for more governmental and private funding that is targeted to improving educational outcomes. Many participants also cited the moral responsibility of colleges and universities in helping lower student loan costs by educating students on how to manage their financial status to achieve this task. They would provide financial education to help decrease student loan default rates.

Most of the participants felt that affordability and access to higher education without college readiness cannot work, nor leads to desirable outcomes in college completion and student success rates. Affordability/access and students' college readiness are related and thus we cannot deal with one issue without facing the other. For example, participants would like to see their institutions guarantee financial support to every student, as well as provide every student who does at least B-level work free junior and senior year tuition. Responses also focused on the needs of lower socioeconomic group students at small institutions, including colleges that serve certain populations, such as tribal colleges and institutions in rural areas. In short, the cost of education in the U.S. still raises a critical ethical issue for educators and students.

### **College Readiness and Student Preparedness**

In general, participants felt that it is the responsibility of colleges and universities to ensure that all students who are admitted are prepared for college academically, socially, emotionally, and financially. A number of respondents also mentioned the moral and ethical responsibilities of providing the needed help and support for those who are already admitted, supporting use of the phrase "You own them if you admit them."

The participants believe that setting firmer expectations to incoming students for college learning is important, but even more important is ensuring college readiness among students and dealing with those who are already accepted but not yet ready.

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics projected that the fastest growing occupations in the 21<sup>st</sup> century would require strong science and math skills. Science, math, and critical thinking and communication skills are clearly the major areas of concern, and respondents want to see improvement in students' readiness and preparation in these areas across the board. They urge collaboration with school systems to improve K-12 education starting with development of an educational vision for K-12.

Colleges and universities also need to work with schools to help them develop effective strategies for computer science and mathematics education at a younger age and to improve student attitudes about math, especially among girls. The collaboration between K-12 and colleges and universities should also focus on reducing dropout rates and enhancing persistence and success levels, and on increasing STEM retention rates for women and minorities.

ACT research has shown that students who don't meet college readiness benchmarks on the ACT exams are less likely to stay in school and earn their degrees. Data compiled by ACT show that in the U.S., 25% of freshmen do not return for their second year (ACT 2013, 2006; Grossman 2005).

The participants also believe that the completion of required math and English courses before taking major courses sows the seeds for development of critical thinking skills that are needed for success at higher college levels and beyond. Today, the ability to think critically, numerically, and scientifically is essential for success in education and life. Providing such

skills, however, requires sustainable leadership support and funding, especially for research in curriculum, instructional pedagogy, and student centered approaches.

Finally, many participants maintained that students’ academic readiness is a shared responsibility among the students themselves, the high schools they attended, and their college admissions offices. In this perspective, college readiness starts at pre-college levels, and colleges and universities must work with K-12 administrators. In doing so, there is an urgent need for:

- More effective communication and collaboration for pathways from K to 16
- Real and adequate pre-college preparation
- Re-examining the effectiveness of the current standardized testing in light of result levels from the 1980s.
- Placement exam practice for all high school graduates

### One’s Own Institution

The overall leading suggestions for improvement at one’s own institution are the need for student support, retention, and success (93%) and college readiness (84%), with a focus on ensuring that new students are prepared for college courses and college life as the first step in the students’ success. Faculty development support and administrative leadership are also rated highly (79%); these factors have a direct impact on both the type of students enrolled and on how students perform. However, it is clear that participants from American and non-American colleges and universities differ on the priorities for improvement at their own institutions. Even when these two groups agreed on a given priority, they differed in the degree of need (Table 13). For example, U.S. participants identified college readiness as a priority at the 92.9% level, while non-U.S participants saw college readiness as an issue only at the 52.4% level.

Table 13 – The leading suggestions for improvement at one’s own institution

	U.S. Participants	Non-U.S. Participants
1	Student support, retention, success (95.1%)	Student support, retention, success (80%)
2	College readiness (92.9%) with a focus on ensuring that all new students are prepared for college courses and college life.	College readiness (52.4 %) with a focus on ensuring that all new students are prepared for college courses and college life.
3	Faculty development support and administrative leadership (77.6%).	Faculty development support and administrative leadership (77.3%).
4	Curriculum Matters and Issues (62.6%)	Curriculum Matters and Issues (74.4%)
5	Communication and Collaboration Within and Between Departments (57%)	Communication and Collaboration Within and Between Departments (64.1%)

The cost of education, which emerged as a leading issue at the national level, is seen as a lower priority in looking at one’s own institution. This is likely because here survey respondents are more concerned with the success of students who are already enrolled. They are focused on supporting these students and retaining them. While the respondents feel they

can do little about the cost of education at their own institutions, they are aware that they have to work with the students they already have, and do everything they can to support them and help them succeed.

### **Student Support and Success**

The participants made their concerns clear about the lack of needed support for student retention and success. While this is more of a concern in the U.S. than internationally, respondents believe that finding effective ways to increase student success rates should be the top priority for all stakeholders at a given institution. They asked for more cohesive application of personal responsibilities and accountability to support student persistence, retention, and graduation.

Participants indicated that their own institutions needed to devote more resources to research focused on how to help students be more successful in college. They also see a need for more rigorous assessment, so students aren't pushed through by spoon-feeding in classes without real learning. Concrete suggestions were offered, such as devoting a small portion of the course to a weekly in-class tutoring session that all students should attend. In this session the concepts taught during the main class would be further explained and explored in depth and then applied and practiced until they were mastered.

Specifically, participants mentioned the need for improving student support systems that can identify at-risk students as early as the first semester, as well as high-performing students who are in need of greater challenges than the course outcomes demand. Working with dropout indicators, for example, will help improve the predictability of existing analytical systems.

### **Faculty Development Support and Administrative Leadership**

Faculty development, academic leadership, and institutional governing structure issues are also mentioned by the participants as needing improvement at one's own institution (as well as nationally).

**Faculty Development and Support.** All of the faculty participants and many administrators expressed the need for empowering faculty to make curriculum decisions beyond their own courses, including in academic programs and institutional policies, vision, and mission as well as through instructional roles in the community. This requires treating faculty based on the qualifications and academic degrees they hold and not on the disciplines they teach, the research they are involved in, or their interpersonal relationships with college administrators.

Participants identified areas including faculty development, faculty qualifications, the role of research in effective teaching, funding for improving teaching, faculty empowerment and trust, flexible classrooms, supporting all faculty (part-time and full time), merit-based assessment, and opportunities for advancement in their own academic disciplines, to name a few.

Faculty need to teach and do research, and it is the faculty with research experience that students most need in order to learn how to identify and solve problems. Thus, faculty professional development should not only be mandatory but also more efficient and effective. It was suggested that faculty be offered specialized professional development courses throughout the year that would help them provide the best possible education for their students. Their institutions should support pedagogical research and not only academic research. They

also suggested more support funding for innovative, non-traditional curriculum, learning communities, civic engagement, and action research.

Professional development workshops need to address how faculty and administrators can work together on curriculum, teaching, and learning, and the best ways to support students. Participants also wanted to see more support and provisions for faculty collaboration within and outside their institutions, as well as channels for faculty to freely communicate with administrators and academic leaders on matters related to curriculum, pedagogy, retention, and student success.

**Administration and Academic Leadership.** Participants want an administration that will support students and faculty and is not driven just by political or financial aims. This would require transparent mechanisms and accountability to all stakeholders, not only to members of the board of trustees.

The respondents see a need for administrators and academic leaders who measure their success by an accurate rate of student completion; who believe in service leadership; who understand how to create a climate of trust in an environment in which all stakeholders are important and all ideas count; who are capable of delegating; who uphold ethical and moral values over loyalties and friendships; and who motivate by both respect and role modeling. As stated by Welch and Welch (2005) and Casey (1997), such leaders are not satisfied with good results, but strive for great results.

Participants also want academic leaders who are capable of explaining the importance of higher education to state legislatures. They want leaders with purpose, passion, and a willingness to act. They want leaders who know that faculty are the backbone of every institution through their ability to drive the production of curriculum, academic programs, effective pedagogical strategies, and assessment—that are all needed to fuel not only enrollment but also student retention and success.

### **Areas Deemed Important, but Mentioned by Less Than 70% of Respondents**

Global literacy, service-learning and civic responsibilities, and curriculum matters are cited here because each of them has a direct connection with one or more of the areas of improvement mentioned by more than 70% of the participants.

**Global Literacy and Incorporation of Global Issues into Curricula.** Today, almost every local issue is a global issue and every global issue is a local issue. Today's higher education needs to provide the opportunity for cultural and global literacy and the educational experience that increases students' engagement and boosts their global mindset to help develop global attitudes toward inclusion, equity, and global change. When students graduate and seek jobs, they encounter and interact with workforces that reflect diverse cultures. Having gained cultural literacy and basic global understanding helps them to know and appreciate the practices within diverse cultures, which is a foundation for success. Unfortunately, however:

The Council on Foreign Relations (CFR) and the National Geographic Society have commissioned a survey to gauge what young people educated in American colleges and universities know about geography, the environment, demographics, U.S. foreign policy, recent international events, and economics. The survey ... revealed significant

gaps between what young people understand about today's world and what they need to know to successfully navigate and compete in it (CFR 2016, ¶ 1).

Developing cultural and global literacy among college students cannot happen if the faculty and academic leaders of higher education institutions themselves lack global understanding and appreciation for its importance in student development, education, and careers.

Providing the opportunity for and better support of study abroad programs is seen by the participants as an essential component of today's higher education. All those who mentioned study abroad wanted to make it a requirement for all students in higher education and to find ways to make it more affordable. For example, exchange programs that are designed in blended delivery formats might allow students to spend the first 2-3 weeks learning online, then travel to the designated country, state, or region for 1-2 weeks of face-to-face instruction.

**Service-Learning for Civic Responsibility.** The participants, especially at the national level, want to see colleges and universities offer academic programs and sound instruction that also help to prepare students to be socially aware, actively engaged citizens who can make a difference in the civic life of their communities. Unlike *civic* duty, which refers to actions that are legally required, civic responsibility encompasses actions not required by law but helpful to the community and contributing to the common good. The participants' thinking is also reflective of the following definition of "academic service learning":

A teaching method that combines community service with academic instruction as it focuses on critical, reflective thinking and civic responsibility. Service-learning programs involve students in organized community service that addresses local needs, while developing their academic skills, sense of civic responsibility, and commitment to the community (MSU 2017, ¶ 3).

### Conclusion and Recommendations

Overall, there is agreement about what faculty and academic leaders want to improve in higher education at the international level. Respondents most frequently identified the need for common academic standards and collaboration between colleges and universities across the globe (90.2%). These are achievable goals as long as there is a commitment to solutions among institutions and directly or indirectly by governments, accrediting agencies, and private foundations and organizations. The biggest challenge would be how to maintain and monitor agreements such as those between universities both at the national and the international levels. Could, for example, the six regional accrediting agencies in the United States take the lead in creating common academic standards across the globe by communicating and organizing meetings with accrediting agencies from outside the U.S.? Or could the United Nations and its UNESCO agency be the best choice for leading this important endeavor on behalf of colleges and universities world-wide?

What is clear is that today's world is more connected and interdependent, with a more widespread effect created by democracy and capitalism, which have led to significant movement of people across borders and cultures. Additional dislocation has been created by the upsurge in refugees of the past few years. These factors have fueled the growth of



globalization to an extent that humanity has not experienced before, nor will this trend likely be reversed going forward (Johansson 2006).

The second leading area of improvement at the international level is access and collaboration between colleges and universities across the globe (86%). We believe that individual colleges and universities need to motivate their faculty, administrators, and students from different departments in different countries to find common interests and intersections, and to collaborate on program contents and research and also on how to better prepare students for the future. This type of interaction needs to occur between departments within a given institution, but also between colleges and universities across a nation and world-wide.

In the U.S., the cost of education is deemed to be the factor most in need of alleviation. In other countries, where the cost doesn't seem to be as great a problem, access to higher education emerges as the top priority. In these countries, a limited number of seats is made available every year and these seats are much fewer than the number of high school graduates. In other countries, the government guides high school graduates on where to go and what to study based on the students' academic record (GPA). So students who want to study, for example, engineering but don't have the needed grades cannot enter engineering programs nor have the chance to take additional courses to improve their grades and improve their chances of acceptance.

The question might be framed thus: "What strategies are needed to reduce the cost of education where that is the issue, and to make higher education more widely available where access is restricted?" While, for example, the majority of college and university presidents in the U.S. are more optimistic today than a few years ago about the value of a bachelor's degree in the job market, having minimal or no higher education debt was the fifth of the six learning outcomes identified by American university presidents in a recent survey conducted by *The Chronicle of Higher Education* and *Inside Higher Ed* (CHE 2017; McMillen 2016; Carter 2016; Jaschik & Lederman 2016).

Many questions come to mind when the issue of cost and affordability in higher education is discussed. More than half of the presidents at public and private institutions in a 2015 survey believed that higher education is going in the wrong direction financially (McMillen 2016). The issues identified included these: Why are higher education costs so high in the United States? Are there effective ways to lower the cost of higher education? Will federal and the state governments act on this matter? How can we reduce the cost of education, make it affordable, and graduate students with reduced or no debt, and still provide quality education for all?

To be effective, colleges and universities need to have updated curriculum and adequate facilities, laboratories and equipment, highly educated and effective faculty, and competent administrators and academic leaders. All these things require not only enough funding but sustainable funding and resources. You cannot keep highly effective faculty, administrators, and academic leaders without proper compensation. You cannot have smaller classes if you don't have enough funding to hire more faculty, and more academic advisors to help students succeed and navigate college life. One cannot ask for higher salaries for faculty and academic leaders, for smaller class sizes, and better facilities—while also reducing the cost of education by lowering tuition and fees.

So, can the cost of education be reduced and made affordable? The answer is yes, but only if we look at ourselves (faculty, administrators, and academic leaders) first. For the adequate salaries we earn and the superior resources we access or command, we need to be more efficient

and effective in fostering learning and helping students to succeed in college and beyond. By leading the effort to educate our students, we can also lead the effort to deploy a more productive combination of the multiple resources needed to support higher education including:

- Tuition
- Government funding (local, state, and national)
- Donations from alumni and non-governmental agencies
- Private-public initiatives

An example of the last category might be leading a national initiative to reduce the cost of student loans, which currently carry market and even above-market interest rates. It should be possible for the government to engage lending institutions in establishing programs that allow student loans to be offered at below-market rates.

Support for reducing the cost of higher education, however, is subject to factors that justify and support the value of higher education to a given society and its members. Thus, the efficiency and effectiveness of higher education institutions must be high, in terms of the satisfaction and productivity of their graduates and the contributions made by institutions to learning and knowledge in many fields and to the economic, social, and cultural well-being of the society.

Finally, participants also perceived “access” in terms of the acceptance of students across international boundaries, rather than just as the cost of education or the number of seats available. This kind of access would presumably be fostered by common academic standards for degrees and consistent definitions of academic standing.

At the institutional level, it was found that college readiness and support of enrolled students were the leading issues. This simply means colleges and universities must take the responsibility for their students’ learning, performance, and success. Because students learn with faculty and with other students in learning environments that provide opportunities to interact and collaborate, the priorities for faculty and administrators should be the retention, satisfaction, and success of their current students. But the participants in this study want more resources and funding to support their own efforts in helping students to learn and succeed. The resources and the funding should come from the improved efficiency and effectiveness of institutions that dedicate themselves to serving their students as the first priority. Senior faculty, for example, might decide that remediation and other tutorial support for underprepared students are not outside their personal sphere of activity. In the same spirit, research faculty used to teaching only graduate students within small teaching loads might decide that undergraduate teaching, and teaching in general, adds value to their institution’s educational mission.

Another important factor is how to ensure that high school graduates are ready for college. If high school graduates are not academically prepared for college-level work, the fault lies not only with the students, but also with their parents, community leaders, the K-12 system, as well as academic college leaders. To bridge the gap, partnerships between K-12 and colleges as well as between colleges and parents are needed.

Finally, there is no doubt that education in general and higher education in particular open doors to substantially higher-paying jobs and employability worldwide. Indeed, it is safe to say that it takes a higher education degree to have the best prospects for employment and career potential in most countries (Banerjee et al. 2016; Moleke 2005). Colleges and universities

whose leaders understand the power of convergence and intersection across national boundaries are increasingly teaming up with other colleges and universities, as well as industries and communities, to develop more effective and efficient kinds of higher education. We need to focus on the emerging academic leaders who can make positive differences in higher education, not only at their own institutions, but also on the national and international levels.

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## **A Model for Enhancing Student Engagement Within the Context of Higher Education Quality Assurance**

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Since the turn of the new millennium the governance discourse in higher education (HE) has been dominated by issues of efficiency and accountability (Meek & Davis, 2009). This has been emboldened by adoption of the new public management (NPM) model by many nation-states. It is in this realm that the need for accountability, quality and relevance of HE to society have taken center-stage (Manatos, Sarrico, and Rosa, 2017). As such, one of the major changes in HE has been the development of quality assurance mechanisms for accountability and improvement (Santiago, Tremblay, Basri, and Arnal, 2008). It is now common to find well-defined internal quality assurance (IQA) mechanisms in many higher education institutions (HEIs).

Using the NPM model, Kogan and Bleiklie (2007) described a university as a ‘stakeholder organization’. The concept of the university as a ‘stakeholder organization’ is central to quality management in HE. Meek & Davies (2009) defined a stakeholder as ‘any individual or group who can affect or is affected by achievement of an organization’s objectives’. Universities by their nature are multi-stakeholder organizations. Students, staff, professional bodies, employers, governments, funding bodies and others are key stakeholders of HE. The stakeholder theory can be used to explain the disparate roles of multiple stakeholders of HE (Amaral and Magalhaes, 2002; Jongbloed, Enders, and Salerno 2008). In this vein, it is universally accepted that students are important stakeholders of HE (Patil, 2006). Students’ participation in quality assurance and enhancement is important (Helle, 2009; Elassy, 2013). They must play a meaningful part in both IQA and external quality assurance (EQA).

It is usually recommended that all HEIs need to ensure student engagement in quality management (Elassy, 2013). A corpus of literature has established correlations between student involvement in quality management and positive outcomes such as student satisfaction, academic and social achievement, amongst others (Astin, 1984; Kuh & Vesper, 1997). The term ‘student engagement’ needs to be defined. Broadly, it is used to refer to ‘how involved or interested students appear to be in their learning and how connected they are to their classes, institutions and each other’ (Axelson & Flick, 2010). A definition of student engagement by Trowler (2010) is seminal and resonates well with the objective of this paper. Trowler’s (2010) definition is as follows:

*‘Student engagement is concerned with the interaction between the time, effort and other relevant resources invested by both students and their institutions intended to optimise the student experience and enhance the learning outcomes and development of students and the performance, and reputation of the institution’.*

It is worth noting that the terms ‘involvement’ and ‘engagement’ are widely used interchangeably in literature. Elassy (2013) used the term ‘involvement’ with reference to student participation in quality assurance processes. The Student Participation in Quality Scotland (SPARQS) body (2004) and Cockburn (2005) described ‘engagement’ as the deepest level of ‘involvement’. The term ‘engagement’ is used in this paper as it is more encompassing and is what HEIs should aim for in student participation in quality assurance and enhancement (Cockburn, 2005).

This paper presents a theoretical model of promoting student engagement in quality assurance and enhancement at institutional level. The paper focuses on the enablers of student engagement and describes mechanisms for implementation of the proposed model.

### **Rationale for Student Engagement in Quality Assurance and Enhancement**

Students as key stakeholders can contribute to quality management in HEIs (SPARQS, 2004; Lewis, Millar, Todorovski, & Kažoka, 2013). Students are an input into the educational system, and they are also one of the main outputs of the system (Elassy, 2013). Hill (1995) aptly stated that students are the primary consumers of HE services and are best placed to assess their quality. Probably one of the most seminal work on this subject was provided by the European Students’ Union (Lewis, Millar, Todorovski, and Kažoka, 2013) which provided an elaborate rationale for student participation in quality assurance and enhancement. The premise of the rationale is that students benefit from and contribute to educational processes.

The Asia-Pacific Quality Network, quality assurance agencies in Europe and many other quality assurance agencies take students as the most important stakeholders of HE systems (Patil, 2006; Helle, 2009). Thus, their voice is important in both IQA and EQA (Patil, 2006). According to Elassy (2013) the benefits of student engagement can be put into three groups, which are:

- Providing information on student experience;
- Validating information about quality; and
- Enhancing quality of HEIs.

The benefits derived from student engagement in quality assurance and enhancement are summarized in Table 1.

It must be pointed out that student participation in quality assurance and enhancement is not without challenges. Some of the challenges reported in literature include the following:

- It can be difficult to motivate students to participate and make effective contributions (Froestad and Bakken, 2004; National Union of Students (NUS), 2009a)

- Students do not have sufficient experience or training to contribute effectively to quality assurance and enhancement (NUS, 2009)

Table 1 – Benefits of student participation in quality assurance and enhancement

Dimension	Benefits	References
Quality assurance	Informs the university about student experience; Provides valuable information to IQA and EQA; Provides validity to quality information; Enhances credibility and transparency of institutional processes; Builds a quality culture in the student body	Helle (2009); Cadina (2006); Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) (2006); Elassy (2013); Froestad and Bakken (2004); Lewis, Millar, Todorovski, &Kažoka (2013)
Quality enhancement	Enhances student learning outcomes; Improves quality of student experience; Improves quality of university processes and services; Enhances students’ understanding of academic programs and support services	Cockburn (2005); Elassy (2013); Patil (2006); Lewis, Millar, Todorovski, &Kažoka (2013)

- Students may be biased and only a limited number of students speaks on behalf of a large student body (McCutcheon, Zhang, Lennon, &Lüttman, 2017)
- Staff resistance to student evaluation (McCutcheon, Zhang, Lennon, &Lüttman, 2017)

### Student Engagement Model

#### Backbone of the Model

The model proposed in this paper is based on SPARQS (2004) and Cockburn (2005) model which organizes student involvement into three ascending levels as shown in Table 2.

Table 2 – Ascending levels of student involvement in quality assurance processes

Level	Descriptors
Opportunity	Students are presented with the chance to attend meetings and events
Attendance	Students use these opportunities to join meetings and events
Engagement	Students are able to make an effective contribution during the meetings and events

*Source:* Adapted from SPARQS (2004) and Cockburn (2005)

The *opportunity-attendance-engagement* model shown in Table 2 is based on student representation and participation in institutional committees. It also embeds involvement outside



committee structures (Cockburn, 2005). In this context, it is desirable that HEIs have an enabling framework that students can utilize to contribute to quality assurance and enhancement. A proposed variation of the model given in Table 2 is shown in Figure 1.

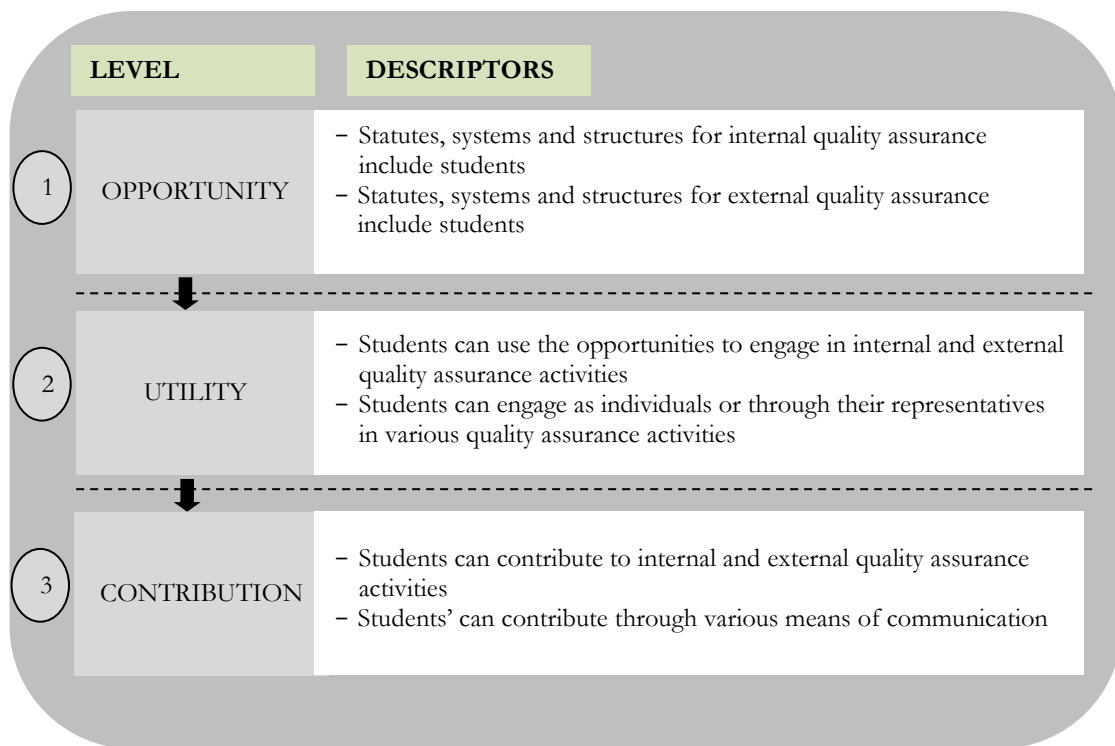


Figure 1 –Levels of student engagement in quality assurance and enhancement

Figure 1 provides the basic requirements that HEIs and EQA agencies must ensure exist, are understood and used by students. Ordinarily, the ‘opportunity’ level is inherent in most HE systems, both for IQA and EQA mechanisms. It is the other two levels (utility and contribution) that need attention. Reference is thus made to Arnstein’s ladder of citizen participation in decision-making processes (Arnstein, 1969). The ladder has eight rungs denoting extent of participation, from non-participation to effective participation at the topmost rungs. It is imperative that the ‘utility’ and ‘contribution’ levels in Figure 1 must be characterized by active participation and not tokenism. This cannot be taken for granted. It is the responsibility of HEIs institutions to instill the requisite attributes in the students’ body.

### Building a Quality Culture

The fundamental driver for implementing the model depicted in Figure 1 is to build a quality culture in the students’ body. HEIs must endeavour to build a quality culture amongst their students’ bodies. The rationale is that it is only when students embrace a quality culture that

they will be active and effective stakeholders in quality management. The definition of quality culture is adapted from Srinivasan and Kurey (2014) as follows:

*‘An environment where students not only follow quality guidelines but consistently see others talking about quality focused actions, hear others talking about quality and feel quality all around them’*

This definition is attractive on the basis of its simplicity and lack of technical jargon. Based on the work of Srinivasan &Kurey (2014), the factors that build a quality culture can be placed into four domains as follows:

- (a) Quality infrastructure
- (b) Leadership
- (c) Communication
- (d) Ownership and recognition

A model is proposed that unpacks each of the four domains into disparate dimensions which form the basis for building a quality culture in the student body. This model is adapted from Srinivasan &Kurey (2014). For illustration purposes, the domains and their dimensions are given in Figure 2. The four domains have a total of ten dimensions.



Figure 2 – Dimensions for building a quality culture in the student body

Figure 2 presents a framework that can be used by HEIs to build a quality culture in the students’ body. Descriptors need to be provided for each of the ten dimensions. This is done in Figure 3. The descriptors articulate actions that must be undertaken. Firstly, it is important to identify key players that need to be involved. A typology of the key players is shown Table 3.

Domain	Dimension	Recommended Action
Quality infrastructure	Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Students must be made aware of quality management structures in place</li> <li>- Student quality management structures must be established and supported</li> </ul>
	Systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Improve student knowledge about quality assurance systems in vogue</li> <li>- Document quality management system and make available to students</li> <li>- Develop a policy for student engagement in quality assurance</li> </ul>
	Processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Document all quality management processes</li> <li>- Integrate processes to show relevance to students' activities</li> <li>- Identify and fix broken processes</li> </ul>
Leadership	Capability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Train students for leadership in quality assurance work</li> <li>- Encourage distributed leadership across the student body</li> <li>- Use meetings and events as 'learning' opportunities for students</li> <li>- Ensure students know 'accountability' and 'responsibility' roles</li> </ul>
	Effectiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Incentivise student leadership in quality assurance</li> <li>- Inculcate a self-evaluation culture amongst student leaders</li> <li>- Provide resources for student work</li> <li>- Provide key performance indicators for effective leadership</li> </ul>
Communication	Channels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Develop a communication strategy</li> <li>- Use multiple forms of communication</li> </ul>
	Access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ensure easy accessibility of information</li> <li>- Provide information in a timely manner</li> </ul>
	Feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ensure two-way communication between staff and students</li> <li>- Communicate both success and failure</li> <li>- Communicate both IQA and EQA issues</li> <li>- Listen to students</li> </ul>
Ownership and Recognition	Ownership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Educate students on their role as key stakeholders in the university</li> <li>- Ensure students are accountable and responsible in quality matters</li> </ul>
	Reward	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Recognise students who are active in quality assurance work</li> <li>- Reward students for good work and commitment</li> </ul>

Figure 3 – A framework for building a quality culture in the students' body

It is recommended that staff in IQA units must be the main drivers of the processes. It is important to emphasise that all the four domains are equally important and HEIs must strike a

balance in emphasis. However, it is worth noting the centrality of the existence of an appropriate quality infrastructure. This puts the foundations in place. Setting up the quality infrastructure must be done in an inclusive manner, i.e. with full student participation.

Table 3 – Key players involved in building a quality culture in the student body

Students	Support Staff	Academic Staff
- Representative Councils	- Deans of students	- Deans
- Committee representatives	- Quality assurance staff	- Deputy deans
- Class representatives	- Administrators	- Chairpersonsof departments
- Individuals		- Lecturers

### Conclusion

There is no doubt that students, as the primary consumers of the HE services, must play an active role in quality assurance and enhancement. Their involvement in quality assurance and enhancement should therefore be deliberate and systematic if it is going to be effective. This paper presented a framework that can be used by HEIs to enhance student engagement in quality assurance and enhancement. The framework is based on building a strong quality culture in the students' body. It is envisaged that a strong quality culture within the students' body will embolden their contribution to quality assurance and enhancement. It is the responsibility of HEIs to build and ensure the sustainable functionality of these mechanisms. Through the establishment of appropriate quality infrastructure, effective leadership, communication, ownership and recognition, opportunities can be availed to students to participate in both internal and external quality assurance. Such opportunities should facilitate increased utility of the quality assurance mechanisms and ensure meaningful student contribution to the quality of academic provision in higher education institutions.

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## **A Profile of and Generational Change in the Leadership of American Research-Intensive Universities**

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American research-intensive universities are among the most prestigious and influential in the world. Their presidents and provosts rightly cite the work of professors, researchers and students as the element that makes their universities what they are.

But it also makes a difference who holds leadership roles in such universities, so who they are and where they hail from and are educated are matters of importance. Moreover, comparing characteristics of presidents over time makes possible an assessment of the extent to which change has taken place and provides a basis for more informed speculation about what future change might take place in the profile of institutional leadership of these organizations.

Here, I examine the current 60 American institutional members of the Association of American Universities (AAU; [www.aau.edu](http://www.aau.edu); Table 1) across a small set of personal/demographic and professional characteristics of their presidents one generation apart, 1992 and 2017. AAU has long been the “gold standard” of American universities, and as such, their leadership merits attention.

In addition, the same characteristics are considered for the current provosts of the same universities. The inclusion of provosts was prompted by the extent to which analysis indicates that that position became the launching point in the professional advancement journey of nearly half of the current group of presidents (but not so in the 1992 cohort) and, again, invites speculation as to the degree of change that might be expected in the near future.

Two further notes pertaining to the universities used in this analysis are in order. First, some of the universities included here were not members of AAU in 1992. However, those not members in 1992 were well on the way to becoming the research-intensive institutions required for AAU membership and are therefore included for 1992 and 2017.

A second note is one of caution related to the small number of American universities considered here. AAU membership criteria are quite stringent (see <https://www.aau.edu/who-we-are/membership-policy>) and omit many institutions in which research is nevertheless a priority. A more comprehensive survey of 840 American university presidents is available in Selingo, Chheng and Clark (2017). But for the purpose of taking a “snapshot” of leadership in research-intensive universities, AAU membership is representative of that particular institutional type.

### **The Data Analyzed**

The data used here are straightforward for the most part and include gender, race, foreign-born and foreign-educated, positions held, and principal discipline or profession of the president and the provost. The data were drawn from institutional websites and are generally quite reliable.

Table 1 – American-Member Institutions of the  
Association of American Universities

Boston University	Brandeis University
Brown University	California Institute of Technology
Carnegie Mellon University	Case Western Reserve University
Columbia University	Cornell University
Duke University	Emory University
Georgia Institute of Technology	Harvard University
Indiana University	Iowa State University
Johns Hopkins University	Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Michigan State University	New York University
Northwestern University	Ohio State University
Pennsylvania State University	Princeton University
Purdue University	Rice University
Rutgers University	Stanford University
Stony Brook University	Texas A&M University
Tulane University	University of Arizona
University at Buffalo	University of California, Berkeley
University of California, Davis	University of California, Irvine
University of California, Santa Barbara	University of Chicago
University of Colorado, Boulder	University of Florida
University of Illinois	University of Iowa
University of Michigan	University of Minnesota
University of Missouri	University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill
University of Oregon	University of Pennsylvania
University of Pittsburgh	University of Rochester
University of Southern California	University of Texas, Austin
University of Virginia	University of Washington
University of Wisconsin	Vanderbilt University
Washington University in Saint Louis	Yale University

Foreign-born is an unambiguous attribute and to a lesser extent so is foreign-educated, this latter defined here as undergraduate or graduate enrollment in a country outside the United States. It does not include post-doctoral studies or research abroad or subsequent involvement in international higher education or affairs. These universities were and are all actively engaged in a variety of programs and relationships with entities of numerous types located around the world.

Moreover, many of the 1992 cohort of presidents are described as children of immigrant parents and often were first-time college attendees in their families from homes in which mothers and fathers spoke in native tongues, not English. They thus represent and reflect the American experience of the past century, especially its latter third.

With very few exceptions, the administrative and other positions held by the presidents and provosts were generic academic titles comparable across the institutions and to other research-intensive universities.

The academic specialization of the presidents and provosts was determined by the terminal degree. As is discussed below, the number of fields of specialization has increased and many



senior administrators hold faculty appointments in multiple departments. In the latter cases, the discipline/professional field that corresponded with that of the terminal degree is used here.

While the age of presidents and provosts was not examined in this analysis, three cases raise the interesting scenario of “senior” persons serving in those roles well beyond what has usually been seen as customary retirement in the mid- to late-60s. Henry Yang, Chancellor of the University of California, Santa Barbara, is age 77. Dr. Yang’s fellow chancellor at Berkeley until very recently, Carol Christ, accepted appointment at age 73 after serving as the interim provost there. Wallace Loh, President of the University of Maryland is, by comparison, a mere stripling at age 71. For the persons who become provosts and presidents in the near future, longer life expectancies for their generation as well as improvements in overall health may well raise the age at which they assume posts and the length of their tenure in those posts.

### Analysis

Notwithstanding the limitations of a small number of universities, some generational change is apparent from analysis of the data. But the primary result from analysis indicated in Table 2 is that the presidency of AAU universities was and remains the domain of white males. Indeed, the 20 percent of women who are AAU presidents or chancellors at present is actually lower than the

Table 2 – Demographic Attributes

	Presidents <u>1992</u>	Presidents <u>2017</u>	Provosts <u>2017</u>
Female	5% (3)	20% (12)	37% (22)
LBGTQ	(0)	(0)	2% (1)
Male	95% (57)	80% (48)	61% (37)
African-American	(0)	5% (3)	7% (4)
Foreign-born or <u>-educated</u>	18% (11)	23% (14)	22% (13)
Australia		2% (1)	
Canada	2% (1)	3% (2)	
China	2% (1)	3% (2)	
Cuba		2% (1)	
Cyprus		2% (1)	
Germany	5% (3)		
India		3% (2)	5% (3)
Iran	3% (2)	2% (1)	
Netherlands		2% (1)	
New Zealand			2% (1)
Norway	2% (1)		
South Africa			2% (1)
Sweden	2% (1)		
United Kingdom	3% (2)	3% (2)	13% (8)
Venezuela		2% (1)	

30 percent of current female presidents of all American postsecondary institutions (American Council of Education, 2017). Moreover, recent changes in AAU presidencies announced or

taking place since this analysis was performed during late 2017 do not change the percentage of presidents who are women. Women made gains over the generation analyzed here, but they remain under-representative of their numbers in society as a whole and in student populations. This condition appears to sustain the “pipeline myth”,

the persistent idea that there are too few women qualified (e.g., degree holding) for leadership positions. However, the data indicate that there are more than enough qualified women to fill available leadership positions. In fact, the pipeline is preparing women at a greater rate than it does men. For example, female students have earned half or more of all baccalaureate degrees for the past three decades and of all doctoral degrees for almost a decade (Johnson, 2016: 1).

The three current African-American AAU presidents are especially noteworthy for their actual number but all the more so because they represent a three-fold increase from the complete absence of persons of color from the presidency in 1992.

Other changes can be observed over the span of a generation. The seven countries from which presidents in 1992 hailed from and/or were educated in were European or Canadian and increased to ten from a more diverse group of countries (although the actual number of presidents born or educated outside the United States remained similar).

Since the position of provost is the major source of presidents (more below), the change observed between a generation of presidents remains roughly the same in the case of foreign-born and foreign-educated provosts, (albeit, from a smaller number of countries), with a small increase in the number of African-American provosts. But women constitute more than one-third of current provosts and it seems reasonable to expect there will be more women presidents of this particular group of universities.

By contrast, it is difficult to project an increase in African-American presidents of these universities comparable to that of women, unless, of course, some of the women provosts of 2017 were African-American. They are not.

Elsewhere, Skinner (2018) makes the case that governing boards apparently see increased value in the experience of being a foreign-born and/or foreign-educated president, at least among universities ranked highly internationally. Data for the 50 highest-ranked institutions in the Times Higher Education World Rankings of Universities for 2017 (which include 25 of the American AAU members analyzed here) offer support for that case. The number of foreign-born and second-generation deans (the position from which nearly half of all provosts move) who come from Asia and most prominently India augur for increased numbers of provosts and then presidents/chancellors with those origins.

Between the cohorts of presidents in 1992 and those who now hold those posts (see Table 3), the path of professional advancement in American AAU institutions changed. First, service as a provost became the jumping-off point for most presidents in 2017. Whereas 38 percent of presidents in 1992 came into the presidency directly from service as a provost, 53 percent of presidents in 2017 took that route.

A change of comparable size took place over the period 1992-2017 as one quarter of presidents in 2017 had been a chancellor, president or acting/interim president, 39 percent in 1992 arrived in the presidency from having served as a president or in an acting capacity. By 2017, nearly half of all presidents had been provosts immediately prior to their appointments, whereas the number and proportion of deans remained unchanged over the same period.

While the numbers are small, it is of note that among presidents in 1992, only one came from outside of academia; four presidents (three of whom served in government) were “outsiders” in 2017. None of the current provosts assumed that office from service outside academia, but the path to becoming a provost is diverse *within* universities. Still, service as a dean remains the more frequent path to becoming a provost of these institutions.

Table 3 – Professional Advancement of Presidents and Provosts

<u>Immediately Prior Post</u>	Presidents	Presidents	Provosts
	<u>1992</u>	<u>2017</u>	<u>2017</u>
Chancellor/President	34% (21)	22% (13)	3% (2)
Acting/Interim Chancellor/President	5% (3)	3% (2)	5% (3)
Provost	31% (19)	46% (28)	3% (2)
Acting/Interim Provost		2% (1)	8% (5)
Associate Vice Chancellor/Provost	2% (1)		6% (4)
Vice Chancellor/Provost	5% (3)	5% (3)	15% (9)
Dean	16% (10)	15% (9)	43% (26)
Acting/Interim Dean			2% (1)
Deputy/Vice Dean			3% (2)
Department Chair			2% (1)
Director	2% (1)		2% (1)
Professor	2% (1)		5% (3)
CEO (non-academic)	2% (1)		2% (1)
Governor (government)		2% (1)	
Deputy Secretary (government)		3% (2)	
Executive Vice President (foundation)	2% (1)		
Managing Principal (private firm)		2% (1)	

The story to be told when it comes to which fields and disciplines presidents of research-intensive universities emerge from should offer comfort to those who relish tradition and consistency of a sort (Table 4). The traditional “professions” – by which are meant architecture, clergy, engineering, law and medicine – maintain something of a hold on university presidencies of the types of institutions considered here. The relative importance of any one varies vis-à-vis the others, but they persist as preparation for and backgrounds of academic presidencies.

Architecture is the exception that proves the rule. Observers of higher education are hard-pressed to name an architect who is a university president, but they will readily attest to the interest and joy presidents have in planning and opening new buildings and those may compensate in spirit for a lack of formal training in architecture.

Clergy are hard to come by among academic presidents, save for religious-affiliated institutions which are not now AAU members. Still, in 1992, two presidents of the 60 institutions studied here held doctorates in theology. No such expertise is present among current presidents and provosts and therein, no doubt, tells a tale . . . untold here.

In 1992, presidents from law, medicine, engineering and theology made up nearly one-third of American AAU leaders. A generation later, presidents from the professions constituted almost half. Conspicuous is the growth in the number of engineers who preside over research-intensive universities today.

Table 4 – Doctoral Disciplines/Fields

<u>Discipline</u>	Presidents	Presidents	Provosts
	<u>1992</u>	<u>2017</u>	<u>2017</u>
Law	13% (8)	20% (12)	2% (1)
History	12% (7)	2% (1)	8% (5)
Medicine	8% (5)	10% (6)	3% (2)
Engineering	8% (5)	18% (11)	15% (9)
Political science	8% (5)	2% (1)	3% (2)
Psychology	7% (4)	5% (3)	5% (3)
Computer science		7% (4)	
Economics	5% (3)	5% (3)	10% (6)
Languages	5% (3)		
Physics	5% (3)	3% (2)	5% (3)
Philosophy	5% (3)		2% (1)
Biology	3% (2)	3% (2)	2% (1)
Geology	3% (2)		3% (2)
Mathematics	3% (2)	2% (1)	3% (2)
Theology	3% (2)		
Biochemistry	2% (1)		3% (2)
Classics	2% (1)		2% (1)
Industrial Relations	2% (1)		
Linguistics	2% (1)		
Journalism	2% (1)		
Literature	2% (1)	2% (1)	2% (1)
Business		3% (2)	3% (2)
Chemistry		3% (2)	3% (2)
Education		3% (2)	2% (1)
Physiology		3% (2)	3% (2)
Sociology		3% (2)	
Communications		2% (1)	2% (1)
Geography		2% (1)	2% (1)
Oceanography		2% (1)	
African-Am. Studies			3% (2)
Entomology			2% (1)
Geography			2% (1)
Library Science			2% (1)
Microbiology			2% (1)
Oncology			2% (1)
Org. Behavior			2% (1)
Toxicology			2% (1)

But signs that might be omens suggest that the traditional professions' hold on the academic presidency may not prevail into the next generation. Among current provosts of the 60 universities, the professions are represented by only 20 percent, as law and medicine declined and engineering slipped slightly.

One other observation that emerges from analysis of the data here deals with the fragmentation of many of the traditional academic disciplines and their remixing into partially- or wholly new fields. In any one of the 60 universities studied here it is common to have a professor whose appointments include neuroscience, linguistics, electrical engineering, philosophy, ethics. And if the professor is a medical doctor, the conventional business card cannot contain all the characters that describe her/his appointment.

Very seldom does a university president—especially at one of the 60 AAU institutions—lack experience as a faculty member. It therefore seems plausible that some of these multi- and inter-disciplinary professors will find their way to administrative posts, including the presidency given the scope of research and scholarship represented in research-intensive universities. And this rather bifurcated fragmentation and expansion of disciplines could serve to “squeeze out” traditional disciplines and the professions from the provost and president posts.

### **Discussion**

Universities are often caricatured as graveyards where everyone knows their place and very little changes, save for the periodic addition of another member whose arrival makes only a bit of commotion for a very short while.

Some have noted that overhead projectors were ubiquitous in bowling alleys long before making their way into university classrooms.

After raucous controversy over online learning spanning much of the generation studied here, virtually every institution now offers such courses and they “count” for credit the same as conventional classroom instruction. What were once academic anathema are now just another way of teaching and learning. Change comes, but it comes slowly.

With respect to the sorts of people who become leaders of universities, that too can be viewed as changing gradually. After all, a quarter century during which women became the majority of students in college and women of color showed tremendous gains in higher education finds the sector one in which the leadership is predominantly male and white.

At the same time, analysis here reveals the growth in the number of women presidents in American AAU universities from three to twelve between 1992 and 2017. In addition, 22 of the women who are now provosts of those institutions are likely to become presidents of their current institutions, one of the other universities studied here or another, non-AAU research-intensive institution. The degree of change is, again, likely to be gradual.

The small representation of persons of color among presidents and provosts reveals again an incremental change of leadership. Anecdotal evidence suggests that the pipeline of African-American, Latina/o and Chicana/o deans may accelerate the growth in their numbers who are provosts and presidents, but here too the increase will likely be modest and gradual.

To the extent the experiences of women and persons of color imbue these leaders in decidedly different ways than those of white men, it seems reasonable to expect those differences will unfold in a variety of manners, some of which will depart from those of previous eras. A commitment to access, for example, while by no means the province of any demographic group, does nevertheless seem likely to inform the processes and substance of decisions and actions for persons denied or afforded limited access to and/or progression in higher education and leadership therein.

At the same time, the gradual rate by which the diversity of university leadership changes will place a premium on presidents’ skills for listening and communicating to student

populations, staff and perhaps faculties much more diverse than the ones presidents engage with now.

Every generation of students passing through colleges and universities bring with them different perspectives than those of their predecessors and their successors. At present, “hate speech,” freedom of speech and the clash of competing ideas have fueled confrontations and clashes between presidents and provosts, on one hand, and students on the other, the latter frequently, including under-represented racial and ethnic students. As the latter increase in number and if the leadership of universities remains primarily male and white, presidents and provosts will need to possess strengths that enable them to work with diverse groups. America’s record of racial and ethnic relations tempers and gives pause to expectations of immediate or dramatic success.

The trend of globalization of higher education may slow for a time as more nationalist and less international sentiments seem to prevail. But it is difficult to imagine that a force of such scope and such duration as globalization will be reversed. Students will still seek to study abroad, professors will teach and research in places different than their native countries and talented leadership will be sought out by governing boards seeking presidents of research-intensive institutions without much in the way of limits on geography or places of origin.

Fragmentation of universities into less conventional forms and names than the disciplines and professions that served as bases for organizing those institutions and giving identity to professors and students may make the work of provosts and presidents somewhat more difficult to communicate beyond the academy. New fields with unfamiliar names and research and scholarship on newly-discovered or -defined subjects do not lend themselves to “sound-bite” explanations.

One recourse will be to borrow a page from the National Academy of Engineers and its “Grand Challenges” which serve to organize and orient the research and pedagogy for that profession by making explicit the types of issues and challenges academic engineering take on (<http://www.engineeringchallenges.org/challenges/16091.aspx>, or <http://www.engineeringchallenges.org/File.aspx?id=11574&v=34765dff>). Recent capital campaigns of AAU member institutions reflect this approach with universities staking out selected areas such as “individualized, precision medicine,” “more just redevelopment of cities,” and the “causes and consequences of climate change” and then attaching philanthropy that supports the people and processes by which the areas are addressed.

The analysis performed for this model study enabled a most curious bit of happenstance, one related to the discipline/field origins of AAU presidents. A striking change in the disciplines of presidents over the generation 1992-2017 is the near disappearance of historians from university presidencies. Ironically and only because a generation usually equates to 25 years, 1992 was the point in time by which to frame this data collection and their analysis. That same year, the historian Francis Fukuyama published his often-cited book, **The End of History and the Last Man**. As detailed in Table 4, between 1992 and 2017, historians-as-presidents dropped in number from seven to one.

It turns out that Fukuyama’s title may be more prescient and precise than could ever be imagined, what with the absence of historians from academic presidencies and the continued (albeit, gradual) growth in the number of women presidents. Where Clio, the muse of history and not the award, resided remains a matter of some dispute, but this analysis suggests the Office of President is not now a likely residence. Or, if one historian does call the place home

at present, *he* (although, in fact, he is actually *she*—Drew Gilpin Faust) may well be, as Fukuyama’s title portends, the last man.

Finally, the 60 universities examined here are not representative of all of the 5,000 or so colleges and universities in the United States, with the rich diversity of missions among them. But these 60 are the institutions to which the nation turns when it seeks to tackle problems and seize opportunities. And while such universities are rich in tradition and complex in operation, their futures do depend on who leads them. Who leads them is changing.

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## **Freedom of the Quad: Academic Integrity, Free Speech, and the Goldwater Institute’s Model Legislation**

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### **Two Otherwise Unrelated Areas of Student-Conduct Policy, or, a Hypothetical to Get Us Going**

A hypothetical: Gaia University has recently experienced an academic integrity problem of catastrophic proportions. In one academic year, 99 percent of undergraduate students have been accused of cheating on 99 percent of examinations and plagiarizing 99 percent of academic writing submitted for evaluation.

Gaia’s in tumult. The institution’s rife with blame and disagreement, but one fact is relatively undisputed: The unprecedented volume of academic integrity violations undermines the institution. Imperiled is Gaia’s mission of teaching and research, of discovering and disseminating knowledge. The teaching faculty are bereft. Many believe cheating, especially on this scale, threatens the academic enterprise. Some are scrambling to diagnose and treat the integrity problem; others are seeking employment elsewhere. News of the integrity violations has rippled beyond the cozy confines of the Gaia campus. Employers as well as graduate and professional schools for which Gaia has historically been a reliable “feeder” no longer have faith in the university’s credentials. Some schools and employers have recently said Gaia graduates need not apply.

A revised scenario: Gaia University has recently experienced a free-expression problem of catastrophic proportions. In one academic year, 99 percent of undergraduate students have been accused of shouting down 99 percent of campus events featuring invited speakers and disrupting 99 percent of their fellow students from hearing these invited performers.

Does the free-expression scenario pose an equivalent danger to the institution as the academic-integrity hypothetical?

At fictional Gaia University or at any other institution of higher education, policies intended to promote academic integrity and free expression tend to appear on different pages of the university website, academic catalog, and student handbook. The rules, punishments, and enticements related to academic integrity, for most institutions, are categorically different than the rules, punishments and enticements related to free expression.

Free speech policy statements tend to privilege philosophy over process. Here’s how St. Anne’s College at the University of Oxford addresses freedom of expression:

Free speech is the lifeblood of a university. It enables the pursuit of knowledge. It helps us approach truth. It allows students, teachers and researchers to become better acquainted with the variety of beliefs, theories and opinions in the world. Recognising the vital importance of free expression for the life of the mind, a university may make



rules concerning the conduct of debate but should never prevent speech that is lawful.  
(n.d.)

The St. Anne's entry briefly limns some of the "rules concerning the conduct of debate," including the assertion that relevant-to-the-community-of-scholars views, and the speakers who expound upon them, be confronted with "evidence, questioning and argument" and that speech acts be subject to "appropriate regulation of the time, place and manner of events."

Academic integrity policies, not surprisingly, spotlight process. University of Malta students are assured lowered assignment grades or reprimand for plagiarism cases "deemed to be minor" or constituting a "first offence" (2009, p. 16). Major offences and subsequent charges deliver the student unto the mercy of the University Assessment Disciplinary Board, which can strip credentials (2009, p. 16). The University of Melbourne has an extensive policy—and remarkably good online training materials—that covers topics such as "educative responses to plagiarism and collusion," readmission after suspension or termination, and information regarding fee forfeiture (2017).

At first blush, academic integrity and free speech don't have much to do with each other. My sense of these two matters of student-conduct policy as having any relationship first arrived when I read the "Campus Free Speech Act," written for the Goldwater Institute by Stanley Kurtz, James Manley, and Jonathan Butcher, and already submitted for consideration by a few state legislatures in the United States, including Michigan, California, and Wisconsin. The "Campus Free Speech Act" defines the punishment—expulsion or a year-long suspension, on the second offense—a public university must exact on a student who "infringes the expressive rights of others" (2017, 1.9). Kurtz, Manley, and Butcher's "Free Speech: a Legislative Proposal" also demands institutions under its purview craft "an official university policy that strongly affirms the importance of free expression," and it "prevents administrators from disinventing speakers, no matter how controversial"; "allows persons whose free-speech rights have been improperly infringed by the university to recover court costs and attorney's fees"; "reaffirms the principle that universities, at the official institutional level, ought to remain neutral on issues of public controversy"; and creates a "special subcommittee of the university board of trustees to issue a yearly report to the public, the trustees, the governor, and the legislature on the administrative handling of free-speech issues" (2017, p. 2).

University administrators may feel these provisions constrain their ability to carry out their institutional missions. The institutional neutrality mandate will likely quash, or at least require some careful trimming of, many institutions' diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives, among others. There will be logistical challenges presented by the mandate for bigger swaths of the physical campus dedicated to free speech.

All of these matters deserve attention. The "two strikes policy," though, is the focus of this essay, for a few reasons. First, the mandatory punishment on the second offense is the most problematic feature of the "Campus Free Speech Act," in part because the disciplinary handcuffs of a "two strikes" policy intensifies and clarifies problems that codifying agents and enforcers will face in administering a policy imposed from without rather than grown from the local educational environment. Plus, the "two strikes" policy is the component of the model legislation about which I feel my experience on the faculty at a public university may be relevant and about which I have something to add to the conversation. In the past two years I've been involved in an effort at my university to replace a "two strikes" policy for academic integrity with a modified honor code. In addition to outlining some of the problems inherent in

any “two strikes” student-conduct policy, in this essay I will also argue that the Goldwater Institute model legislation is too vague, which will result in uneven or no enforcement. Further, by not distinguishing between academic and extracurricular speech in its disciplinary framework, the “Campus Free Speech Act” is overbroad and therefore infringes on the academic freedom its other provisions nominally seek to protect.

### **Why Isn’t This Working?, or, The Inherent Trouble with “Two Strikes” Policies**

Recently, I worked with a group of faculty at my institution, Northwest Missouri State University (hereafter Northwest), to revise our academic dishonesty policy.

The group of seven faculty members began with a “benchmarking” exercise, where we compared Northwest’s academic integrity policies with peer institutions in our geographic area. At Northwest, a moderately selective institution that enrolls roughly 6,000 undergraduates and 1,000 graduate students, instructors were expected to charge students in all cases of academic dishonesty. The standard sanction, if the charge was uncontested or upheld on appeal, was a failing course grade. Any student who twice committed academic dishonesty was automatically expelled from the university. Our “two strikes” policy, we learned by benchmarking, was the most punitive of any of our regional peers.

Once we’d done our benchmarking, we examined historic academic dishonesty data at our institution, surveyed and read policy papers by Northwest faculty, and reviewed the peer-reviewed research on academic integrity<sup>7</sup>. Eventually, we identified a few problems:

- Northwest’s academic dishonesty policy didn’t provide for lesser administrative sanctions, such as probation or suspension, for violators.
- The policy didn’t include a formal review—by a faculty panel, for instance—before administrative sanctions were imposed.
- No formal process of remediation and/or education.
- Disparate faculty beliefs about which cases deserve formal charge, which may have been one cause of disparate application of the policy across academic units.
- Lack of consistent due process and burden-of-proof standards.

These distinct issues could be viewed as constituent parts of the “two strikes” academic dishonesty policy’s major problem: The faculty at Northwest had little confidence we were expelling the worst offenders—repeat and egregious and unrepentant plagiarizers, for instance—rather than students who had, occasionally without reasonable time and opportunity to learn from their mistakes, twice misunderstood expectations. For example, still attending classes, with an F on her transcript that she’d later supersede, was the student who had once entered a professor’s office and changed an exam grade on the professor’s open laptop. Meanwhile, expelled without an appeals hearing, because she didn’t think an appeal would succeed, was the student who had, simultaneously in two courses her first semester of her first year, not cited sources properly.<sup>8</sup>

The working group had built-in momentum for our work: We agreed why academic integrity was important—and what it was. We wanted students to perform with integrity in all

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<sup>7</sup> See Bowers (1964) and McCabe, Butterfield, & Treviño (2012).

<sup>8</sup> These examples have been modified to protect the identities of the students involved.

academic situations but especially when submitting work for honors, publication, or evaluation. If an instructor's instructions say students should knit their own stuff, they should knit their own stuff. Students should acknowledge help and ideas received from others. They should make it clear, when writing, when they're using ideas and language that originated outside their own brains and when they're relying ideas and language resulting from their own thinking and writing process. Unless given permission otherwise, they should take their own exams without unauthorized collaboration.<sup>9</sup>

When students fell short of these standards, most of us in the working group felt, the integrity of the institution was harmed. Our first decision: We'd move away from the "two strikes" disciplinary regime in a way that didn't make cheating and plagiarizing seem more acceptable but rather gave faculty and students better opportunities to know, and perhaps even believe in the value of, our community standards for academic integrity.

### **Cousins of the Faith, or, What You Might Learn When Your University Reads Mill's *On Liberty***

At first, I was reluctant to alter our "two strikes" policy for academic integrity. An early suggestion: What if we went to three strikes? I worried that would send the wrong message: Cheat at your leisure. Northwest's soft on academic dishonesty. I viewed academic integrity as an existential concern, and I hoped our working group might find a way to both encourage more student compliance and expel fewer students.

When I encounter a violation of academic integrity in a course I'm teaching, I usually experience a sinking feeling; something underlying the basic principles and ambitions of academic inquiry and creative thought has been nicked a little, perhaps not destroyed or damaged beyond repair but, nevertheless, nicked. Northwest—and what it's all about—has been harmed. I'm unaware of any empirical proof of such harm. So it's a matter of faith, perhaps cousins of the faith expressed by the majority authors of the 1974 "Report of the Committee on Freedom of Expression at Yale," often referred to as The Woodward Report:

We take a chance, as the First Amendment takes a chance, when we commit ourselves to the idea that the results of free expression are to the general benefit in the long run, however unpleasant they may appear at the time. The validity of such a belief cannot be demonstrated conclusively. (1974, sec. I., par. 2)

Derek Bok sounds a similar note: "We must acknowledge that our commitment to free speech is more a matter of faith than a product of logic or empirical demonstration" (1982, p. 18).

"Empirical demonstration" of the essential role of free expression in the acquisition and dissemination of knowledge is elusive, and so John Stuart Mill goes historical and points in one example to "Socrates, between whom and the legal authorities and public opinion of his time, there took place a memorable collision" (1859/1879, p. 47). The trial and death sentence imposed on Socrates serves as an exemplar of what can go wrong when free speech isn't part

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<sup>9</sup> This description of standards is not intended indicate a paucity of academic-integrity cases in the "gray area." In my experience on Northwest's university-wide academic appeals committee, approximately one-half of all cases have fallen within my "gray area," which I think of as 40 to 60 percent confidence that a violation has occurred.

of the cultural and intellectual program: the state thinking it knows best—better than the best thinker around, in fact—and therefore getting it wildly, tragically wrong.

Absolute free-speech believers nurse the belief that free expression may be “to the general benefit in the long run,” as the Yale authors put it. Skeptics are inclined, in Bok’s language, to the “possib[ility] that the exercise of this liberty will produce mistakes and misperceptions that will mislead the public and actually result in harmful policies” (1982, p. 18). For every speech by Socrates we may have two or three from tin pot dictators. If the Goldwater Institute model legislation becomes law, for every speech by Socrates we’ll have two or three by *anyone* a student’s invited to campus.<sup>10</sup>

In a 2015 article in *National Review* that previews the underpinnings of the “Campus Free Speech Act,” one of the “Free Speech: a Legislative Proposal” authors, Stanley Kurtz, encourages universities to assign John Stuart Mill’s *On Liberty* as a first-year common read. It’s a fine suggestion. I imagine faculty, student, and administrative readers would be intellectually and ethically engaged by a discussion of Mill’s “harm principle”: “The only purpose for which power can be rightfully exercised over any member of a civilized community, against his will, is to prevent harm to others.” (1859/1879, p. 23). All in the university community may find it enlivening to think about, and apply to their institutional context, the difference between speech that harms and speech that offends.

How does Mill draw the line? His argument in *On Liberty* is at times close to absolutist, but in many passages there’s light between Mill’s view and a purist’s dream of absolutist free speech. One notable passage of such light seems a precursor to the “time, place, and manner” restrictions codified at St. Anne’s College at Oxford University and in various decisions—*Cox v. State of Louisiana* (1965), *Grayned v. City of Rockford* (1972), and *Ward v. Rock Against Racism* (1989)—of the U.S. Supreme Court:

No one pretends that actions should be as free as opinions. On the contrary, even opinions lose their immunity, when the circumstances in which they are expressed are such as to constitute their expression a positive instigation to some mischievous act. An opinion that corn-dealers are starvers of the poor, or that private property is robbery, ought to be unmolested when simply circulated through the press, but may justly incur punishment when delivered orally to an excited mob assembled before the house of a corn-dealer, or when handed out among the same mob in the form of a placard. Acts of whatever kind, which, without justifiable cause, do harm to others, may be, and in the more important cases absolutely require to be, controlled by the unfavorable sentiments, and, when needful, by the active interference of mankind. The liberty of the individual must be thus far limited; he must not make himself a nuisance to other people. (1859/1879, p. 100-101)

After talking about what it might mean to be a “corn-dealer,” the first place many students—and their faculty and administrative common-read discussion leaders—may want to linger is on the word *nuisance*. Surprising that all it takes for “active interference” of someone’s speech is

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<sup>10</sup> The “Campus Free Speech Act” empowers the individual university student to issue a difficult-to-rescind invitation to any outside speaker (2017, 1.4., 1.5). To the extent that such a provision enables the intellectual autonomy of our students, we should all applaud. But we should also not pretend that all of these extracurricular events, as all of the extracurricular events currently on the menu, will have a direct and meaningful relationship to university pedagogy and curriculum.

that the speaker has become a “nuisance”! A linguistic investigation of the different connotations of the word in 1859 and, say, 2017 will certainly be fruitful but may not settle every question.

The Goldwater Institute authors remind us that “the Supreme Court has recently made clear that the lodestar of First Amendment protections is content neutrality—regulation of speech must be evenhanded, regardless of the message” (2017, p. 7). Yet, as Mill’s corn-dealer scenario makes clear, even those who embrace in principle “content neutrality” are likely to discover myriad difficulties in application. Speech becomes a nuisance, and therefore subject to “active interference,” because of the context: proximity to the “house of a corn-dealer,” presence of an “excited mob.” The manner and situation of delivery, as many of us who teach writing instruct our students, is often difficult to pry apart from the content. Further, students familiar with the Occupy Wall Street movement or the street protests of the Arab Spring may suspect being a nuisance and telling corn-dealers they’re starvers of the poor to their faces is at least some of what’s valuable about free expression.

What counts as a nuisance at an academic institution? The answer varies from culture to culture, from nation to nation. In the United States, the answer has sometimes been left up to the community of scholars, the institution of learning itself, to determine. Freedom of thought, the U.S. Supreme Court affirms in *Tinker v. Des Moines School District* (1969) and other decisions, is essential to intellectual work, learning, the discovery and dissemination of knowledge, the pursuit of truth and other scholarly and creative ends. In *Tinker*, the court upheld high-school students’ rights of free expression in wearing black armbands to school in peaceful protest. Since the Civil Rights Era court decisions of the 1950s and 1960s, free expression has generally been protected in educational environments in the U.S. as long as the speech in question doesn’t threaten the school’s ability to, well, do school things: to function as an educational institution. The quiet symbolism of a black arm band? Not a Millian “nuisance.” A loudspeaker blasting a song of protest in the library? Probably is. As Thurgood Marshall reminds us in the majority decision of *Grayned v. City of Rockford* (1972), the court has “nowhere suggested that students, teachers, or anyone else has an absolute constitutional right to use all parts of a school building or its immediate environs for his unlimited expressive purposes.” At least in the U.S., schools are not, first and foremost, free-speech zones. If they’re anything, first and foremost, they’re schools.

If the “nuisance” that precipitates “active interference” at a university is anything that interrupts a school’s ability to carry out its scholarly and pedagogical functions, why does it not seem wrong, or even especially controversial, to call free speech at the university “lifeblood”? Perhaps because scholars have—unevenly, for sure—sometimes seen the value in and sometimes advocated for their and their colleagues’ freedom of expression, especially as it relates to the freedom from outside interference. The “lifeblood” for the scholar trying to craft an argument, to test a hypothesis, to weigh various possibilities for truth—especially if those intellectual activities, a la Socrates, conflict with the ideology or other ends of one’s superiors—is “academic freedom.”

Academic freedom, or scholars’ and students’ freedom from the interference of thought-policing or speech-limiting governing boards, administrators, or the government, depends on the cultural valence of freedom of thought and expression. And that cultural valence, even in the best of times and places, has probably been far short of where many scholars and students would like it to be; there’s likely never been a place and time of perfect academic freedom. Thus, undervalued was free speech and the tenets of academic freedom in instances such as the

three University of Washington professors, in the late 1940s, fired for being suspected communists and more likely to appease the state legislature's "Fact-finding Committee on Un-American Activities" committee (Schrecker, 1986, pp. 94 -112); a Missouri state legislator attempting to block a graduate student's thesis project critical of the state's abortion regulations (Keller, 2015); and an adjunct professor at the University of Delaware recently being dismissed for an offensive posting on social media (Quintana, 2017).

The question *On Liberty* raises isn't so much whether universities should insist on absolutist free speech or to institute an authoritarian censorship regime. What most administrators and faculty face is making the best situation possible in the educational and research environment, and often balancing the ideals of academic freedom against the banalities of public relations, out of a patchwork of competing values. What university administrators face, if the Goldwater Institute model legislation becomes law, is a patchwork of competing values that's been rearranged and prioritized by the government.

### **The Elephant in the Room, or, Fear and the Universities**

"Free Speech: a Legislative Proposal" and its "Campus Free Speech Act" are predicated on a belief that university faculty, students, and administrators are largely oblivious to the difference between speech that harms and speech offends—or that they're wrongly drawing the line. Perhaps that's why much of the language in "Free Speech: a Legislative Proposal" is concerned with matters tangential to free-speech policy implementation in an academic environment: "freedom of speech . . . is increasingly imperiled in society at large" (p. 2); "Speakers who challenge campus orthodoxies are rarely sought out" (p. 3); "'trigger warnings' and 'safe spaces' shelter students from the give-and-take of discussion and debate" (p. 3); "When protestors . . . break in on meetings to take them over and list demands, administrators look the other way" (p. 3); "The classic advocates of liberty of thought and discussion are rarely taught" (p. 3); "Substantial sections of the faculty have abandoned the defense of free speech" (p. 3); "students or faculty who disagree with current campus orthodoxies are left intimidated and uncertain of administrative support for their rights" (p. 5).

The model legislation may be "content neutral"—the campus speech receiving protection could ostensibly be advancing arguments from the Left, Right, or neither—but it certainly arises from political environment and seeks political ends. Kurtz, Manley, and Butcher are likely addressing recent deployments (mostly against speakers on the Right, recently) of the "heckler's veto," noisy, impolite noisemaking that disrupts and aims to shut down another's speech. They're responding to the "current campus orthodoxies," including official institutional proclamations about social justice, and the broad range of issues—we might call them, collectively, "political correctness"—explored by, among many others, Jonathan Haidt.

In a 2016 talk at Duke University, "Two Incompatible Sacred Values in American Universities," Haidt guides listeners through a few related concepts: the increasingly left-leaning professoriate in the U.S., the long-term dangers of "safety culture," the manifest fragility of "safe spaces" and "trigger warnings," the pedagogical and civic value of heterodoxy, and recent intellectual foibles in pursuit of social justice at the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights specifically and as official university telos more vaguely. About social justice, Haidt concludes,

When social justice, as I see it, as we practice in this country—when social justice demands equal treatment, it is justice; it is right; it is good. And when it demands equal outcomes, without concern for inputs or differences, it is unjust. And the only way to achieve those equal outcomes is through injustice. (“Two,” 2016, 1:01-1:02)

Not only is injustice occurring in this corrupted version of social justice; Haidt’s broader conclusion is that social justice, as currently pursued on college campuses, is incompatible with truth. He calls for a schism to take place between institutions of higher education devoted to truth and those devoted to social justice.

Haidt’s “social justice vs. truth” debate points up how a diverse set of “problems” or “developments,” depending on your conception of the university, are now higher education’s burden—to correct, if they’re problems, or defend, if they’re developments. Political ideology certainly plays a role in how one might name and rank these problems, from “snowflake-ism” to the left-leaning professoriate. But universities cannot be silent because these “problems” or “developments” have begun to affect mainstream thought. Perhaps spurred by media coverage of the “crisis” on university campuses, some affiliated with the Right now view universities as adversarial political operators. A recent survey by the Pew Research Center showed that 58 percent of Republican and Republican-leaning independents in the United States had a negative view of the role of higher education in society, a significant shift over the past few years (Fingerhut, 2017).

The “two strikes” provision of the “Campus Free Speech Act” perhaps seems necessary, then, to those who believe that universities present, at the very least, a political problem in need of a political solution—and for those who are afraid. The fear is diffuse across the political spectrum, and, arguably, it’s providing more heat than light. What fear was motivating, for instance, the bill submitted by an Iowa state legislator imposing a political test in hiring, by mandating rough parity—within 10 percent of total faculty—between Democrats and Republicans among the state’s public university professors (Chelgren, 2017)? What role did fear play in 800 academics signing an open letter (Schuessler, 2017) calling for the retraction of Rebecca Tuvel’s “In Defense of Transracialism” from the spring 2017 issue of *Hypatia: A Journal of Feminist Philosophy*, with the claim that the article’s continuing availability “causes further harm” (Shotwell, 2017)?<sup>11</sup> What do we name the fear propelling the disciplinary actions,

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<sup>11</sup> Tuvel’s stated intention in the article is to “think seriously about how society should treat individuals who claim a strongly felt sense of identification with a certain race” (2017, p. 264). “In Defense of Transracialism” may have flaws in concept and approach, in methodology and even in its conclusions, but it also seems to fit the Millian parameters of speech that doesn’t harm—or that’s trying really hard not to harm. It presents not a call to burn down the house of any corn-dealers but rather a measured academic argument, namely, “that the recognition of transracial identity might eventually involve a shift away from an emphasis on ancestral ties or skin color of origin toward an emphasis on racial self-identification” (2017, p. 272). Tuvel is careful not to make an oversimple equation of *transgender* and *transracial*, and, in fact, she acknowledges that whether transracialism is “*practically possible*” doesn’t only depend on her, or any other, theoretical justification but “on a society’s willingness to adjust its rules for racial categorization” (2017, p. 267). The open letter signed by about 800 academics claims the continuing availability of the article “causes further harm” by communicating “that white cis scholars may engage in speculative discussion of these themes without broad and sustained engagement with those theorists whose lives are most directly affected by transphobia and racism” (Shotwell, 2017). This may be a legitimate scholarly complaint, but I’d argue it’s a complaint best remedied by *more academic work*—articles, conference panels, monographs, spirited debate in university classrooms—rather than by the flawed artifact’s removal from the internet.

prompting his early retirement, against Paul J. Griffiths at Duke University, for sending an email urging colleagues not to attend a two-day diversity training seminar (Griffiths, 2017; Richardson, 2017; Hartocollis, 2017; Dreher, 2017)? These fears likely rhyme with those that motivated the firing of political dissidents, suspected communists, and certainly a few scapegoats—usually casting victims permanently out of academic work—at American universities during the McCarthy era (Schrecker, 1986). And, lest any of us feel any vicarious virtue in history, they rhyme with the fear underlying the tacit and sometimes explicit endorsements of many of those dismissals, often after finding evidence only of effective teaching and substantive scholarship, by faculty oversight panels (Schrecker, 1986).

While the “Campus Free Speech Act” and its “two strikes” provision may appeal to the fearful across the political spectrum, in the end it is unlikely to ameliorate the underlying fears.

### A Patchwork of Competing Values

Kenneth Barnes, the lone dissenter in the “Report of the Committee on Freedom of Expression at Yale” reminds us that the “short run” costs of free speech may sometimes be at the expense of other values held by the community of scholars:

If, for example, Hitler was invited to Yale to discuss his research into the area of Aryan racial superiority, and his policy prescription of extermination of all non-Aryans, I would have a hard time justifying allowing him to speak. Even if I were confident that his theories would, if wrong, eventually be disproved in the “long run,” I have learned from history that the “short run” costs would be overwhelming. (1974)

Barnes is not arguing that a Yale student or faculty member should be prevented from checking out *Mein Kampf* from the university library. He’s not advocating a ban on learning and writing about Hitler as part of a scholarly inquiry. Rather, he’s wondering whether Hitler in person, standing at the prestigious Yale podium, may present an amped-up version of the corn-dealer problem.

Further complicating whether Hitler should be disinvited or shouted down is how such an extracurricular event is essential to the university’s mission. According to Barnes’s analysis, the university’s core “purpose,” the discovery and dissemination of knowledge through teaching and research, operates independently of “people invited from outside the University to give public speeches,” which “further the University’s purpose in only a peripheral way, if at all” (1974). How peripheral? St. Anne’s College at Oxford sees other values—“expertise and intellectual achievement”—as equally relevant to the university’s mission. Barnes, somewhat presciently in 1974, describes what was at that time a dissenter’s view but which has since become the state of play at many universities, especially in the U.S: “the university’s commitment to minority groups and to equal opportunity is at least as laudable a value as free expression.” Ulrich Baer relies on Jean-François Lyotard’s premise of free speech as a public good to argue that demonstrations, protests, and perhaps judicious use of the heckler’s veto are not so much “censorship” as efforts “to ensure the conditions of free speech for a greater group of people” (2017).

Commitment to minority groups, social equality, the elimination of oppression, the public good, perhaps even limiting the speech of a power-hungry politician on his way to mass murder—some may see these as political goals inappropriate for a university’s embrace,



especially if that university has “appeal[ed] to the general public for contributions and for moral support in the maintenance, not of a propaganda, but of a non-partisan institution” (Association of American University Professors, 1915), a.k.a. a public institution subsidized by the taxpayers.

For those critics, I offer up Stanley Fish, who believes universities should “be in the education business” and not “the partisan-politics business” (2017). Fish argues not that social justice, or any other value in the patchwork, should win the day, but rather that “Freedom of speech is not an academic value.” Universities, according to Fish, value not the free-for-all nature of speech in a public forum but the “accuracy,” “completeness,” and “relevance” of speech as it furthers “the goal of academic inquiry: getting a matter of fact right.” A university can fit the contours of its definition—i.e., it can be a university—without hosting controversial speakers and their attending disruptions. A university can meet its research and teaching obligations without peeling “free speech” from academic freedom and then sharpening its teeth: “Students will know from the moment they enter the university that they must respect the free expression of others, and will face significant consequences if they do not” (Kurtz, Butcher, & Manley, “Free,” 2017, p. 5). A university isn’t a public square and therefore doesn’t value freedom of speech above all else. Free speech enables academic freedom but then, broadly speaking, ceases to function as a principal value in the day-to-day operation of the university.

This may sound like sacrilege, until we think about the constituent parts that make up a university’s core purpose: teaching and research. Teaching, for instance, certainly doesn’t require, or even benefit from, absolutist free speech. If it did, students would routinely not be assigned reading and writing by their instructors but would rather construct course syllabi on their own. As a member of Northwest’s teaching faculty, what I value in the classroom is making the environment conducive to learning. What I cannot value, if we’re using the classroom for an educational purpose, is every student getting equal time at every class meeting to say whatever he or she wants. On the research front, scholarly journals must limit speech; otherwise they’d be required to publish everything that came across the transom. Scholarly peer review—making decisions, for instance, about whose speech gets broadcast and whose doesn’t—is certainly a messy, imperfect means of quality control; still, its principles offer the best possible means of arriving, albeit in a sometimes frustratingly meandering way, at provisional truths.

Does the “Campus Free Speech Act” delineate the speech protections appropriate to pedagogical and research situations versus extracurricular events? One provision zigzags its way, perhaps, near such a line:

Any person lawfully present on campus may protest or demonstrate there. Such statement shall make clear that protests and demonstrations that infringe upon the rights of others to engage in or listen to expressive activity shall not be permitted and shall be subject to sanction. This does not prohibit professors or other instructors from maintaining order in the classroom. (Kurtz, Manley, & Butcher, 2017, “Campus,” Sec. 1.4.)

The oddly placed sentence about maintaining order is the only nod in the legislative proposal toward one of the traditional pillars of the modern university: teaching. Perhaps we should be grateful the classroom is mentioned at all. In another passage of “Free Speech: a Legislative Proposal,” a model policy statement perhaps stumbles by a discussion of the

faculty's role in curricular design: "Although the need for intellectual freedom cannot by itself fully resolve the question of what to teach or how to structure the curriculum, free expression is a central value and priority of university life" (Kurtz, Manley, & Butcher, 2017, p. 12). I *think* this sentence indicates faculty would still, under the regime imposed by the "Campus Free Speech Act," design curriculum and determine relevant means of student evaluation and assessment. But the Goldwater Institute authors are hesitant to admit that absolutist free speech is not a pedagogical value, and so this muddled expression—where no named agents are structuring the curriculum or deciding what to teach—is the best indicator that the professoriate would continue to exist. The poorly written sentence sends up a red flag: The law is overbroad.<sup>12</sup>

That brings us back to that group of seven faculty members at Northwest, shaking their heads about the "two strikes" policy but broadly agreeing about cheating and plagiarism being bad for our educational business and poisonous for the university's long-term health. It brings us to the early edge of the beginning of what's different about the conversations about, and policies directed at, free speech and academic integrity: Academic integrity is unambiguously valued at Northwest. Absolutist free speech cannot be.

### **Imagine a Faculty Meeting**

Let's return to imaginary Gaia University. Faculty "buy-in" at Gaia matters because they've been assigned to sit on the disciplinary panels for free-speech violation and, as the new state law based on the "Campus Free Speech Act" dictates, to draft a compliant university policy. In those two roles, as enforcers and codifiers, and because of the handcuffs of the "two strikes" provision, the work of the Gaia faculty has been, to risk understatement, complicated.

What follows is certainly not an exhaustive accounting of all the questions, hazards, and gray areas that a Gaia University faculty committee empaneled to craft local regulations to comply with the "Campus Free Speech Act" considered. Rather, it's what arose during a "brainstorming" meeting, a snapshot of the tenth of the iceberg visible above water.

- Venue matters? Behavior and speech which the faculty don't find "interfering" at an outdoor extracurricular event, such as athletic events, may be unacceptable in an indoor meeting room.
- Many areas of Gaia's campus are at times informally "open to the public" and at other times are used for specific university purposes. So are these spaces sometimes free-speech zones, sometimes not? Should there be a sign indicating when the switch has been flipped?

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<sup>12</sup> We can identify that the law is overbroad and still, for instance, not like the heckler's veto. Timothy Garton Ash, a contemporary free-speech advocate, who argues convincingly against the heckler's veto, says, "No reasonable person would question the principle that a self-governing community of scholars and students has the right to set its own rules for civilized interaction" (2016, p. 85). The question is not whether universities can limit speech but how, as part of their educational missions, universities draw the speech-limiting lines, to keep things "civilized," and whether those lines are sometimes drawn at the expense of the "pursuit of knowledge" and the capacity to "approach truth." And then, of course, how should conflicts be handled and by whom?

- Equal protection for all extracurricular events? Must the rules be written for and applied equally to basketball games and poetry readings? Sorority philanthropic fundraisers get the same treatment as campus bible studies? Spin class at the fitness center is as much a free-speech opportunity as the spontaneous protest on the Quad?
- Administrator-invitees get different treatment? At Gaia, the university president usually chooses speakers for commencement exercises. The “Campus Free Speech Act” indicates a president’s, or any other administrators’, rights of free expression are different from those belonging to faculty members and students. Should commencement exercises be treated differently than, say, academic departments hosting visiting lecturers?
- How to handle 1/500<sup>th</sup> of a disruption? The Gaia committee is unsure how to ensure just enforcement for incidents in which multiple voices—a roomful of hecklers—collaborated to cause a disruption but in which no single voice crosses the threshold for interference.
- What if the heckling is interspersed with argument? How to determine when a student’s speech has crossed the line from expressive activity to infringement of another’s expressive rights?<sup>13</sup>
- What to do about Mill’s “excited mob” problem? The Gaia committee believes that, following Mill, once an “excited mob” is present an individuals’ expressive rights are downgraded.
- Who is responsible for identifying when context warrants examination into content—thus, abandoning content neutrality—which may then warrant the “active interference of mankind”? A dean? Any faculty or staff member? Students?
- Delay is not interference? If alternate means are provided for students or faculty to access an invited speaker’s ideas and expression—published works, appearance by videoconference—has an infringement of another’s expressive rights occurred?
- Who has the right to bring charges of violation?

The more the Gaia faculty discussed what situations were likely to arise and how to draw the line between acceptable and unacceptable behavior, the more it seemed they’d been given a Sisyphean task. For instance, the faculty had a lengthy discussion about what volume, duration and quality of booing directed at an invited speaker should count as “interference.” Thirty seconds? A minute? Loud enough to be heard from across a room? Examining their partial list of gray areas and questions posed by but left unanswered by the “Campus Free Speech Act,” the faculty determined their task related to extracurricular free speech—establishing clear, bright lines between acceptable and unacceptable behavior, for all campus situations and locales—was beyond difficult; it was impossible. The “Campus Free Speech Act” is too vague.

Here’s Justice Thurgood Marshall, in *Grayned v. City of Rockford* (1972), on the trouble with vague laws:

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<sup>13</sup> In a recent post on *The New Yorker’s* website, Harvard Law professor Jeannie Suk Gersen aptly describes the dilemma posed by the “Campus Free Speech Act” and its kin: “Universities face a thorny situation in which they must threaten discipline for disruptive conduct, including speech that forecloses other speech, while also protecting student speech that protests other speech” (2017, June 4).

It is a basic principle of due process that an enactment is void for vagueness if its prohibitions are not clearly defined. Vague laws offend several important values. First, because we assume that man is free to steer between lawful and unlawful conduct, we insist that laws give the person of ordinary intelligence a reasonable opportunity to know what is prohibited, so that he may act accordingly. Vague laws may trap the innocent by not providing fair warning.

The “Campus Free Speech Act” doesn’t give enough guidance to faculty charged with codifying these rules, or administrators providing guidance to those faculty rule-writers, that pass the basic vagueness test: that a “person of ordinary intelligence [has] a reasonable opportunity to know what is prohibited.” Therefore the law may be a trap.

### **Conclusion, Or, Freedom of the Quad v. Freedom of the Classroom**

A “two strikes” policy may appeal to the fearful, but it won’t in the end satisfy them. At Northwest, we had little confidence our academic dishonesty policy was expelling from the institution the most egregious repeat offenders, and so it wasn’t providing adequate balm for those who feared the direst consequences of academic dishonesty. The “two strikes” policy appealed to many faculty because it seemed “tough” and communicated the seriousness with which the institution viewed violations. In practice, it didn’t allow the faculty to improve the climate of academic integrity through both educative and punitive measures.

In writing our new Code of Academic Integrity at Northwest, we gave instructors more freedom to apply course-level sanctions commensurate to offenses and gave similar discretion to a newly created student-faculty disciplinary body, the Academic Integrity Panel, which, after a hearing and a review of evidence from all cases, recommends administrative sanctions, including but not limited to—on *any* offense—expulsion. The new policy goes into effect in fall 2017.

Kurtz, Butcher, & Manley say they are “mindful of the need for both administrative flexibility and for avoiding potentially expensive and burdensome procedures in less serious cases” and have thus created “a multitier system of sanctions that distinguish between greater and lesser offenses, and between first-time and repeat offenders” (2017, p. 8). In a qualified sense this statement is true, according to one provision of the “Campus Free Speech Act” (2017, 1.7), and false, according to another (2017, 1.9). The “Campus Free Speech Act” distinguishes between greater and lesser offenses on the first charge, but, on the second, the legislation constrains an institution to punitive measures: yearlong suspension or expulsion. For a fully functioning “multitier system of sanctions,” an institution would need to go beyond the guidance in the bill—so, I suppose, break the law—and distinguish between “greater and lesser offenses” even on offenses after the first.

One of the results of the “two strikes” policy for academic integrity at Northwest was that some academic units didn’t participate in the official reporting system, perhaps in an effort to save students from the rigidities of the disciplinary structure; in essence, these departments and schools refused to comply with the policy and therefore handled cases of academic dishonesty in house. Even in egregious cases, instructors were therefore constrained to asking students to redo the assignment or retake the exam. Further, students’ due process rights were likely undermined; if no official charge has been brought, then the student has nothing to appeal. A

“two strikes” policy—for academic integrity or free speech—looks muscular and consequential on paper but in practice it creates an environment where no small number of clear, blatant violations get swept under the rug.

Fear may not be the only problem. Implementing the “Campus Free Speech Act” may fall not only to administrators but to faculty as well. As I’ve attempted to outline, the faculty may not have immediate “buy-in” to a policy that doesn’t spring organically from the educational environment and that isn’t essential to the teaching and research mission of the institution. Compare that to the situation of the academic integrity working group at Northwest, which had built-in momentum at the outset. Our work was motivated by shared concerns. Ten minutes of casual conversation, and this much was clear: Academic integrity is unambiguously valued at Northwest.

I’m hesitant to advocate that university administrators oppose all parts of the “Campus Free Speech Act.” As I’ve already intimated, some universities are likely infringing on the academic freedom of their faculty by policing their social media accounts or responding to unpopular or controversial statements by professors with public condemnation, disciplinary action, and in some cases dismissal; there are no shortage of historical examples of attempted and successful intrusions—by government officials, embarrassed or pressured administrators, or governing boards—on the intellectual work, or even the continued employment or funding, of scholars and students. Academic freedom depends on free expression being widely valued; the “Campus Free Speech Act,” despite its many flaws, could serve a useful function: bringing into focus the free-speech protections that students and faculty need for the long-term health of intellectual and artistic work. But I am advocating that administrators lobby, personally and with the assistance of their government affairs offices, for the “two strikes” provision of the “Campus Free Speech Act” to be rescinded or modified.

The state of Louisiana in the United States perhaps anticipated some of the inherent problems of a “two strikes” policy. House Bill 269, which was vetoed by Louisiana’s governor in June 2017, modified section 1.7 of the “Campus Free Speech Act” by providing “a range of disciplinary sanctions for anyone under the jurisdiction of an institution who substantially and materially disrupts the functioning of the institution or the free expression of others” (Harris, 2017). The bill had excised the “two strikes” provision.

Yet, even if a legislature omits the two-strikes provision, the “Campus Free Speech Act” remains overbroad, which will likely result in situations where academic speech is infringed in service of protecting or promoting another’s free speech. The legislation doesn’t account, for instance, for those situations beyond the maintenance of “classroom order” where speech is necessarily limited in an academic environment. Sanctions can be leveled against any university student “who interferes with the free expression of others,” regardless of context: academic speech or extracurricular speech. The proposed law doesn’t delineate between the quad and the classroom in its punishment regime. The “Campus Free Speech Act” therefore doesn’t account for the ways in which, all the time, in likely every discipline of university study, and for very good pedagogical and scholarly reasons, speech needs to be less than absolutely free.

There’s a significant failing inherent in any “two strikes” policy, what I think of as the firing-squad moral calculation for enforcers. At Northwest, because expulsion was “automatic” on the second offense under the academic dishonesty policy, teaching faculty confronted with an instance of possible academic dishonesty often behaved as if they were participants in a firing squad. If a charge was to be brought against a student the faculty member had reason to believe had been charged once before—there was no way to access this information, beyond

asking the student—the professor had to decide not only whether the instance qualified as academic dishonesty but whether the student should be expelled because of it. Or, to change metaphors, if you're a police officer operating under a mandatory-sentencing regime, your decision about whether or not to arrest someone may include not only a determination of whether the criminal code has been violated but also whether the violation is substantial enough to *deserve* the mandatory sentence.

So there's yet another reason—which, in the end, may be more important to the Goldwater Institute authors and others who believe in the virtues of the “Campus Free Speech Act”—why faculty and student resistance, or ambivalence, to this law may matter. George Orwell reminds us in “Freedom of the Park” that the freedoms we enjoy may be enumerated or not in law, but their true source and guarantor is “public opinion”:

The law is no protection. Governments make laws, but whether they are carried out, and how the police behave, depends on the general temper in the country. If large numbers of people are interested in freedom of speech, there will be freedom of speech, even if the law forbids it; if public opinion is sluggish, inconvenient minorities will be persecuted, even if laws exist to protect them. (1945, December 7)

Replace “police” in the passage above with “associate professors of English.” Replace “country” with “student body.” If the opinion of the enforcers of this policy—students who might be asked to testify as witnesses or bring charges; the faculty who will serve on the disciplinary panels; the faculty, staff, and students who will presumably file the charges of violation, or provide evidence, against disruptors—is deeply divided, if there are a few out there who are convinced by the arguments of Barnes, Baer, or Fish, I'd wager the policy will be ripe, if not for abuse and discriminatory application, at the very least for uneven enforcement. Many will act as if the rules didn't exist. Administrators at institutions whose students and faculty value, say, social justice as much or more than free speech, should prepare both for complying with the law and for inevitable civil disobedience.

What university administrators will face, if the Goldwater Institute model legislation becomes law, is not only a patchwork of competing values rearranged and prioritized by the government. They will face a depressed ability, alongside faculty, to determine the norms for speech that serve the teaching and research functions of their institutions. Those norms will have been replaced by vague and overbroad policy imposed from without and in service of a political rather than educational agenda. What they will face is a university dedicated, by law, to free speech more than academic speech. What they will face is a bizarre, yet significant, challenge to academic freedom in the form of government-imposed standards—perhaps intended originally to protect only extracurricular speech—being enforced not merely on the quad but in university classrooms and research environments.

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# The Role of Ethics in 21<sup>st</sup> Century Organizations: A Call for Administrators to Understand the Implications of Students' Moral Development During the Collegiate Experience

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Access to higher education indicates an ideal for personal and financial improvement; and the substantial employment of skilled workers with a postsecondary degree is the key to the attainment of global economic advantage (Eakins, 2016). Consequently, there has been a push for increased access to postsecondary degrees from parliamentary and political parties nationally. The drive to increase enrollment and graduation rates have placed a great emphasis on the number of postsecondary degrees that are produced annually and a diminutive focus on the quality or moral development of the individuals who attain those postsecondary degrees.

Colleges and universities have been inundated with the occurrences of indignities that reflects negatively on the moral development of its students, which adversely affects its reputation and ultimately its enrollment and graduation rates. In a research article published by the Journal of Harvard Business School, entitled *The Impact of Campus Scandals on College Applications (2016)*, scandals on college campus negatively affects their applications and decreases the institutions ranking in the US News and World Report by at least 10 points. Corruption and scandals have a detrimental impact on businesses and their reputation. According to Stanford Graduate School of Business, "fraud can take many forms and reduces business credibility and profits when professionals misuse their positions for personal gain.

Low level of moral reasoning amongst employees appears in organizational corruptions and scandals and continues to negatively affect corporations to include colleges and universities. However, universities, which are considered the zenith of academic excellence play a pivotal role in molding and producing productive citizens with higher levels of moral development. But, do these ideals hold true to the current events that are plaguing the academy?

In this paper, the author seeks to examine the literature on postsecondary institutions' role in developing students' moral reasoning by analyzing various theoretical constructs of moral development. The author will conclude this study with a comprehensive analysis of the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AACU) five core Commitments (Liddell & Cooper, 2012), paired with a comprehensive analysis of the role of the university in these endeavors.

## **Social Interactions**

The effects of moral development can be traced back to the 1960's and 1970's, an era in higher education where educators and administrators placed little to no value on the curricula of pedagogical instructs that would stimulate the moral cognition of a student's development. This is partly due to corporations capitalizing on students' activism against police brutality, Apartheid, and other economic and societal turmoil decisions carried out by politicians and big

corporations (Liddell & Cooper, 2012). To combat these societal issues, and encourage moral reasoning in higher education, Liddell & Cooper (2012) introduced the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AACU) five core Commitments as an integral instrument in supporting students as they develop their moral reasoning. These factors are noted as (1) Achieving their greatest excellence, (2) Nurturing integrity both personally and academically, (3) Developing a sense of community, (4) Cultural competence, and (5) Ability to reason both ethically and morally.

As professionals continue to research and analyze the implications of ethical dilemmas on the important societal subjects at post-secondary institutions what's essential is that efforts are driven to ensure that students are receiving the support they need in favor of developing their moral reasoning (Griswold & Chowning, 2013). As such, there are several factors that must be considered on university campuses as we discuss the moral and ethical reasoning for students to include diversity, the use, and influence of Drugs and Alcohol, Sex/ Interpersonal Relationships, Socioeconomic Status and Politics (Feldman, 2014). These influences while diverse can all affect a student's decision-making process. According to Feldman (2014), to understand development, we must reflect on the implications diversity will have on an individual's growth. To this end, Feldman (2014), encourages social scientist to find trends in characteristics that are common across multiple ethnic groups and compare them to those that seem to appear within specific cultural groups.

The work of several researchers has focused on how the socialization of students during their collegiate experience is affected by their moral and ethical reasoning. Mayhew & Engbeg (2010), researched the way in which the moral rationale of students are influenced by the negative interactions they have with their peers in specific courses. Their findings were astounding- and found that student's contact with their peers is not enough to see ones' moral reasoning negatively impacted. Instead, race was mentioned as a major influencer in the way a student's moral reasoning is affected by their academic studies. In considering diverse populations, administrators must have the ability to look beyond race, and ethnicity; socioeconomic status, and religion are also critical factors in understanding the implications of moral reasoning during the developing years of the young adult (Mayhew & Engbeg, 2010).

In another study conducted by Mayhew, Seirfert, and Pascarella (2012), the researchers focused on the moral reasoning of first-year students in higher education who were in the consolation and transitional phases of moral development. The researchers found that students who were in the transitional stages of moral development were more likely to become influenced by their campus experiences thus making them more susceptible to ethical reasoning development.

When religion was the variable being studied, Tatum, Foubert, & Fuqua (2013), found that male students in their first year of college who identified as not having a religious preference had a higher degree of reasoning than their peers who identified as belonging to a particular faith. The researchers used the Defining Issues Test (DIT) as their instrument of choice to survey 513 men in higher education. In another study of two cohorts; one of 4,501 students and the other of 3,081 students, Mayhew (2012) researched the effects of institutional influence on the way in which a student reasons ethically. The targeted institutions for this study were research universities, regional universities, community colleges and liberal arts colleges.

The implications of Mayhew's findings indicate that a student's moral reasoning is, in fact, indicative of the institution type that they attend. Lastly, the work of Nather (2013) delineates

how a student's educational background affects their moral reasoning. Nather's (2013) analysis revealed that students who were formally educated were more likely to exercise sound ethical logic because of a desire to increase their self-efficacy.

Research shows that while the implications of diversity greatly impact the moral reasoning of students, ethical decision-making spans beyond race and ethnic groups. Sex, religion, geographic locations are all factors in how young adults reason during their academic studies (Feldman, 2014; Mayhew, 2012; Mayhew & Engbeg, 2010; Mayhew, Seirfert & Pascarella, 2012; Nather, 2013; Tatum, Foubert, Fuqua, 2013) and the academy plays a significant role in these regards (Nather, 2013).

### **Role of the University**

The list of ethical dilemmas in higher education is extensive and ranges from skipping classes to corrupt advances such as academic dishonesty and sexual assault. While this crisis ranges from minor infractions to more despicable acts, the university has an obligation to ensure that the programs they are developing will afford the young adult with a platform that will encourage them to deal with situations by incorporating problem-solving skills in our academic curriculum programs (Feldman, 2014); that will promote compassion, morals, and a sense of purpose amongst college students Larussi (2013). According to Larussi (2013), institutions can accomplish this task by creating a counseling atmosphere that encourages the students to explore their identities instead of a more direct route in which suggestions are made to students about changes regarding their moral development. Larussi's (2013) study is the first of its kind to research the correlation between students' moral reasoning and their learning styles. To realize this study, the researchers sampled more than 1,400 students that stemmed from more than 19 universities and collected data on the students during their first year as a student in higher education.

The findings of Larussi's (2013) research prompt the researchers to encourage educators to foster environments of learning that will integrate varied aspects of moral development outside of the classroom for first-year students. However, discussing ethics in the classroom is often seen as a taboo due to the challenges that accompany the topic. Faculty across disciplines are usually not trained on the topic, and students ethical and moral reasoning is not well developed thus conversations involving the subject matter lends itself to unwanted arguments in the classroom (Griswold & Chowning, 2013).

The moral reasoning of a student in higher education can be affected by several factors such as race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status and a student's level of education. Ultimately, moral reasoning can also become affected by the type of higher education institution that the student is enrolled in (Mayhew, 2012). To this end, university administrators have an obligation to their students to ensure that (1) they are providing training opportunities to their faculty in facilitating ethical conversations in the classroom (Griswold & Chowning, 2013); (2) the academic curriculum regardless of the discipline incorporates discussions and assignments (Larussi's, 2013) and (3) the curriculum strategically features the five core Commitments (a) Achieving their greatest excellence, (b) Nurturing integrity both personally and academically, (c) Developing a sense of community, (d) Cultural competence and (e) Ability to reason both ethically and morally (Liddell & Cooper, 2012) that will encourage ethical reasoning and support students moral development during their collegiate experience.

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## Guns on Campus: Implementing Campus Carry

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The 2007 active shooter incident on the campus of Virginia Tech marked a “watershed event” in the debate over guns on college campuses (Birnbaum, 2013). Policy responses by the states to this and other similar events and threats reflects the cultural and political diversity that marks American federalism. Debate has been fierce and emotional. Some states have reinforced bans on guns on campus while others have, through legislative or judicial action, implemented both comprehensive and limited guidelines for campus carry (Morse et al., 2016).

In August 2016, Texas implemented one of the nation’s most comprehensive campus carry statutes. The law prohibits public universities from adopting rules, regulations, or other provisions that prevent licensed gun owners from carrying concealed handguns on campus. Senate Bill 11 (SB 11) provides limited discretion for university officials in adoption of regulations and directs university administrators to consult with students, staff, and faculty regarding these regulations. This case study focuses on implementation of the law at Texas State University, a large public university. It presents a comparative analysis of Texas State’s experience with those of other Texas public universities and provides a model for implementing a challenging and emotionally charged policy.

### State Policy Responses

Cramer (Cramer, 2014) states that universities traditionally limited the possession of firearms on campus much more stringently than the larger society. Colleges regarded their relationship with students to be *in loco parentis*. As gun rights expanded, pro-gun student groups argued that holders of state-issued concealed handgun licenses should be allowed the same measure of personal protection on college campuses (Students for Campus Carry, (SCC), 2016). This argument was given significant momentum by two Supreme Court cases. In *District of Columbia v. Heller* (2008) the Court broadened the interpretation of the Second Amendment saying that its purpose was to protect an individual’s right to possess a firearm for traditional lawful purposes such as self-defense. Two years later in *McDonald v. City of Chicago*, the Court held that Second Amendment rights were equally applicable, via the Fourteenth Amendment, to state and local laws. The two cases did not directly consider the issue of guns on college campuses, but they established the legal framework for both past and future campus carry laws by the states (Birnbaum, 2013).

Neither of the Court’s decisions eliminated the possibility of laws forbidding possession of firearms in “sensitive areas” such as schools and government buildings (Kellar, 2011). However, the Court did not precisely define what constitutes a sensitive area. Hence much of the debate in states that allow guns in campus buildings and across campus grounds is focused on “carve outs,” that is, exceptions to areas where guns are generally allowed.

State policy responses to the national debate on gun regulation vary and reflect differences in political subcultures and lobbying efforts. As of 2017, 23 states had effectively banned guns on campuses or allowed individual campuses to make the decision; 10 states allow gun owners to carry a firearm on public campuses through either legislative action or court ruling (National Conference on State Legislatures., 2017). Analysis of the states' recent policy-making efforts indicates that the momentum is toward the latter. In 2015, 15 additional states considered legislation to adopt campus carry laws, but only Texas actually passed the legislation (Morse et al., 2016).

There are significant differences among the 10 states that have adopted campus carry laws. Many allow some exceptions through either statutory guidelines or specific campus regulations. For example, in Wisconsin, universities may prohibit firearms from campus buildings provided that signs are posted at entrances stating that weapons are not allowed inside the building (Grassgreen, 2011). On most of the 10 campuses, there has been an attempt to implement policies to allow guns in general with prohibitions in areas deemed "sensitive." For example, in Utah, where there are very few limits on gun regulations, the legislature has allowed the state's governing boards to limit the presence of guns in private hearing rooms designated as "secure areas" (Morse et al., 2016). Perhaps the most permissive campus carry legislation was implemented in Kansas where students over 21 may carry a concealed weapon on campus with no requirements for a permit or license (Najmabadi, 2016).

### **Campus Carry in Texas**

After repeated efforts in prior legislative sessions, Texas enacted campus carry legislation for the states' 38 public universities effective August 1, 2016. To give community colleges more time to prepare, the law did not go into effect for those schools until 2017. The state's private universities were given the choice to "opt out"; to date all but one have done so. Although there were attempts in the last session to allow constitutional or "open carry," at present campus carry applies only to individuals with concealed handgun licenses. And with a few exceptions, you must be over 21 and take state-approved training to obtain a license (Watkins, 2016).

Campus carry in Texas allows few statutory exemptions, among them the prohibition of guns at sporting events, any buildings used for functions by K-12 institutions, the premises of polling places on the day of election, and any premises used for religious services. Compared to the many of the other 10 states that have adopted campus carry, Texas law is relatively stringent. For example, Tennessee allows only faculty to carry guns on campus (National Conference of State Legislatures, 2017), while in Arkansas universities may opt out of the law on an annual basis (Ark. Code Ann. § 5-73-322 (2015)).

The Texas law does not allow the institution of higher education to establish provisions that "generally prohibit or have the effect of generally prohibiting the carrying of concealed handguns by license holders on the campus." However, it does state that the president or other chief executive officer shall establish reasonable rules, regulations, or other provisions regarding the carrying of concealed handguns. Final approval of these regulations lies with the respective Boards of Regents, although any reversals of presidential recommendations must be approved by a two-thirds vote of the Board.

Flexibility to establish regulations invariably results in discussion and interpretation of what constitutes “sensitive areas.” The Texas law provides three broad, acceptable justification for these exemptions. That is, gun-free zones may be established and justified based on the following: 1) the nature of the student population, 2) specific safety considerations, and 3) a unique campus environment. Thus, the challenge for university officials in the state was to balance the statutory mandate that did not allow a general prohibition against concealed carry with a need for judicious implementation of rules designed to enhance safety.

### **An Implementation Model**

Texas State University is a very large campus. In 2015, the year the law was passed, the university has a student body of 37,979, a faculty of 1,815, about 1,300 of which were full-time, and 2,124 staff. While the vast majority of students attend classes at the main campus in San Marcos, approximately 1,800 students attend class north of campus in Round Rock. Many of these students attend class on both campuses. The university houses 46 departments, offers 98 bachelor’s, 91 master’s and 13 doctoral degree programs. The large size of the campus and the intense interest of relevant constituencies added to the challenges of the implementation process. In addition to groups immediately effected, that is, faculty, staff, and students, the law had a broad reach effecting parents, alumni, and members of the community.

To implement the policy on campus, the president established a 25-member Campus Carry Task Force whose charge was the draft of policy recommendations. Given the broad impact of the law and the intense awareness of its potential impact, the first challenge was to decide who would be directly represented on this body. There were representatives from the primary constituencies: administrators, faculty, staff, and both undergraduate and graduate students. The directors of the student counseling centers and health centers were included.

In addition to obvious appointees such as a representative of the University Police Department (UPD) and Director of Housing and Residential Life, there were representatives from Facilities and Risk Management. The latter were crucial to the effort to formulate regulations for buildings and grounds. For example, there were many discussions about signage and physical dimensions of campus buildings and how parts of these might be restricted areas. Also included was the Director of the university’s Office of Institutional Research; strategic data collection would prove to be an important part of implementation. Texas State also houses The Advanced Law Enforcement Rapid Response Training (ALERRT) Center, a national research center focused on the education and prevention of active shooters and the Texas School Safety Center. These Center Directors also served on the Task Force and were valuable sources of information.

Questions were raised whether external constituencies such as alumni, community leaders, or parents, should be included on the task force. It was decided that these groups would be indirectly represented. For example, the Vice-President of Development, a member of the task force, served as a liaison to alumni groups. At 25 members, the group was already what some considered unwieldy.

After determining the composition of the task force, a task force philosophy was adopted to allow the task force members to address this policy development task with neutrality and with a strong institutional focus. The underlying philosophy was a commitment to create a policy in a manner that allows for broad-based consultation with students, staff, faculty, parents, and alumni, and informed by that consultation and the analysis of relevant data, create a set of



recommendations that will allow the university to implement the new campus carry law consistent with the legislative mandate and in a manner that will continue to allow the university to foster an educational environment that is safe, secure, open, tolerant, and rich with vibrant discussion, debate, academic freedom, and discourse. To operationalize that philosophy, the task force developed four strategies that facilitated the implementation of this emotional issue: data collection and dissemination, public outreach, deliberation and debate, and communication with the system office. See Appendix A for a summary description of the steps and timeline of implementation.

**Data collection and dissemination**

Data collection was important for two reasons. First, it was important to have a factual basis for establishing reasonable recommendations. Not only would this facilitate decision-making, it would help to justify why regulations were proposed, or often more importantly, why they were not proposed. For example, the discussion over whether to establish gun free zones in the university’s dormitories was influenced by the fact that very few students living in dorms were eligible for licenses to carry. Second, the collection and dissemination of data was an important strategy for allaying fears and anxiety regarding this sensitive issue. There were several realities revealed by the systematic collection of data that helped administrators address the fears of effected groups.

The first question addressed with data collection was to determine just how many students were eligible to carry concealed weapons, that is, how many students were over 21 or veterans. Although faculty and staff might also choose to carry, it was quite apparent that most of the concerns surrounded students. This is understandable given the age of most students and the often adversarial relationship between faculty and students as well as some staff and students. Using 2014 data, Table 1 shows that 21,871 of the 36,739 students enrolled on the main campus,

Table 1 - Rates for Individuals Eligible and Licensed to Carry

	All Students*	Undergraduate Students	Graduate Students	Dorms	Employees
<b>Eligible</b>					
Number	21,871	17,937	4036	468	4,862
Percent of Total Enrollment	59.5%	46.3%	88.5%	1.3%	100.0%
<b>Licensed**</b>					
Number	909	751	162	20	158
Percent of Total Enrollment	2.5%	2.0%	0.4%	0.05%	0.43%
Percent of Eligible	4.2%%	4.2%	4.0%	4.3%	3.25%

\*Only totals from the main campus are used because many students are enrolled at both the main campus and in Round Rock.

\*\*Estimates of students licensed for concealed carry are based on the average rates by Texas county. Estimates of employees for concealed carry are based on average rates for Hays and Travis counties.

or almost 60 percent, were eligible to carry. Of this group, almost half (46.3 percent) were eligible undergraduates. As expected a very large percentage of graduate students, almost 90 percent, were eligible to carry.

As mentioned earlier, one important issue was whether Texas State would declare dormitories gun-free zones. This restriction would broach the issue of “general prohibition” prohibited by the law, but like many of the proposed or discussed regulations, legal interpretation was uncertain. Because of rapid enrollment increases in the last several years, almost all of Texas State’s dorm residents, both on and off-campus, are freshman. Thus the numbers eligible were very low. Only 468 of students residing in campus housing, or 1.3 percent, of total enrollment were eligible for a concealed carry license.

Estimates were also calculated for the number of students and employees licensed for concealed carry based on rates by Texas county. That number for students was 909 or 4.2 percent of those eligible or 2.5% percent of the total students enrolled. Employees included faculty, staff, and administrators; the estimate of those licensed in this group was 3.5 percent.

Another important question to address was the likelihood that those who are licensed to carry will commit violent crimes. One of the most persistent arguments of pro-gun forces is that those licensed to carry weapons are responsible citizens who will defend others in the case of an active shooter. While the task force did not attempt to support or debunk the merits of the defense argument, it was relatively simple to assess the criminal records of those who possess licenses. In Table 2, using data from Texas Department of Public Safety, conviction rates in general for violent crimes in Texas from 1996-2015 are compared to conviction rates for LTC (formerly CHL) holders. In all three areas of major violent crime, LTC conviction rates are far lower than conviction rates in general. LTC average per year percentage rates are less than one percent of average conviction rates in general for all three types of crimes committed.

Table 2 - Conviction Rates for LTC Holders\* for Violent Crimes from 1996 - 2015)\*\*

Crime Committed	Total Convictions	Total LTC Convictions	Total Convictions: Average Per Year	LTC Convictions: Average Per Year	Percent LTC Convictions: Average Per Year
Aggravated Assault with a Deadly Weapon	45,705	96	2,285.25	4.80	0.22
Murder, Negligent Homicide, or Manslaughter	8849	54	442.45	2.70	0.61
Aggravated Sexual Assault	3622	8	181.10	0.40	0.22

\* An LTC and a CHL are the same thing. The official name changed from concealed handgun license (CHL) to license to carry (LTC) on January 1, 2016.

\*\*Aggregate data compiled by Texas Students for Concealed Carry from annual Conviction Rate Reports by the Texas Department of Public Safety. See <http://www.dps.texas.gov/rsd/LTC/reports/convrates.htm>

These data were important for administrators charged with implementing Campus Carry in a highly charged atmosphere. They were disseminated to faculty, staff, students, and the public to address the crucial questions of who might be carrying concealed weapons into a building or classroom and the likelihood that these individuals would be intentionally violent. It was important to disseminate the fact that only about two percent of students would likely be carrying, and that evidence showed that those licensed to carry were less likely to be perpetrators of violent crimes.

### Public Outreach

In Texas, the legislative mandate instructed university administrators to consult with students, staff, and faculty regarding the implementation of Campus Carry. At Texas State, extensive outreach occurred before final recommendations from the task force were sent to the president. This outreach included surveys, public forums, various campus meetings and dialogue, focus groups, and a campus carry website accessible through the university homepage and the President’s webpage that was continually revised as the process unfolded.

In early fall near the beginning of the implementation process, a general survey was developed and posted by the university’s Office of Institutional Research asking faculty, staff, and students as well as alumni, members of the community, and parents to describe concerns regarding “the implementation of Campus Carry at Texas State.” The survey was an open-link survey available through the campus website from August through December, 2015. There were 605 respondents. Table 3 summarizes categories of respondents and the general position these groups took on Campus Carry. As expected the large majority of responses were campus constituencies, but approximately 10 percent of responses came from external groups. Opponents of the law outnumbered supporters by three to one in the survey but the number of neutral respondents on what is normally a divisive issue reached 20 percent.

Table 3 - Open Survey Results

Respondents	Oppose CC	Support CC	Neutral	Total	Percent
Faculty	164	19	64	247	40.83%
Staff	53	23	23	99	16.36%
Students	117	63	21	203	33.55%
Alumni	15	4	4	23	3.80%
Parents	7	2	4	13	2.15%
Community	3	3	1	7	1.16%
Other	9	2	4	15	2.48%
Total	368	116	121	605	
Percent	60.83%	19.17%	20.00%		

In addition to serving as a venue for support or opposition to the law, the survey allowed respondents to express a general sense of fear and/or concern about general safety. It was a vehicle for those advocating for specific areas designated as gun-free zones. Not surprisingly, faculty expressed concerns for the quality of academic interaction. Several respondents identified topics that might be addressed through education and training.

The comments expressed in the surveys became much more extensive and passionate in the public forums sponsored by the task force. There were three open forums that took place at different times and locations in the fall before the initial recommendations were proposed.

Three subsequent open forums occurred in January and February after initial recommendations were revised. Although some of the forums were more heavily attended than others, all brought out passionate opinions on both sides of the guns on campus issue. Indeed, the pro-gun forces represented a much higher percentage of the opinions expressed in the forums than they constituted in the written surveys.

In addition to official forums organized by the task force, both formal and informal dialogues took place among faculty, staff, and students. For example, the College of Liberal Arts sponsored a series of roundtables to discuss the broader social and philosophical implications of the new law. Some academic departments developed formal statements submitted by their deans to the task force. University administrators, including a team of the Provost and several AVPs visited at least 10 academic departments and addressed questions by faculty. In addition, Campus Carry was the subject of intense discussion by the Council of Academic Deans, the Faculty Senate, the Staff Council, and student government representatives.

Finally, from the beginning of its work in the fall, the task force implemented a Campus Carry website that proved extremely useful. Open surveys were administered through the site, FAQs were addressed, and the proposed recommendations were disseminated. The site remains an important source of information and can be accessed at <http://www.txstate.edu/campuscarry>

## **Deliberation and Debate**

The timeline for implementation of the law mandated an intense schedule for the task force. The group began its work in September. The first draft of recommendations was distributed for comment in December; final recommendations went to the Board of Regents in May. The 25-member body was divided into the following eight subcommittees: data analysis, research, facilities, faculty, staff, students, drafting, and communication (See Appendix A for the full description of subcommittee responsibilities). The full task force met every two weeks; the subcommittees met between full task force meetings. Each subcommittee gave a status report at the full committee meeting.

Because the law allowed some discretion over sensitive areas, much of the policy adoption process focused on whether to establish gun free zones or “carve outs.” However, throughout the process legal, logistical, communication, and other issues had to be addressed. The following is merely a sample of the types of issues that arose:

- Should there be storage on campus for weapons?
- Should guns be prohibited in dormitories? Areas containing hazardous agents? Private offices? Clinics? Disciplinary hearings? Health care centers? Testing centers? Events with alcohol? Graduation ceremonies? Intramural events? Recreation Centers? Buildings conducting religious services?
- Does concealed carry means guns must be holstered?
- Should there be temporary carve outs for special events?
- Should the University Police Department sponsor related safety training for students, faculty, and staff?

The drafting subcommittee prepared a template that was to be used by subcommittees to report their proposed recommendations. The template asked for justification of the

recommendation by addressing one or more of the three statutory requirements: nature of the student population, specific safety consideration, and/or uniqueness of the campus environment. The use of the template helped the task force systematically evaluate the justifications for each recommendation.

There was a great deal of uncertainty regarding whether regulations would be subject to legal challenge. For example, while concealed weapons in classrooms would almost certainly be allowed (not to do so would violate the “general prohibition” clause of the law), the question of whether faculty and staff would be allowed to prohibit concealed handguns in their private offices was ambiguous? To provide some guidance, data was continuously gathered on policy recommendations at other Texas universities. Table 4 shows the frequency and percentage of regulations adopted at Texas universities as of September 2017, a month after the law was to be in place for four-year institutions. The 16 universities for which data is provided include those with enrollments of more than 10,000.

Table 4 - Comparison of Campus Carry Regulations at Texas Universities with Enrollments over 10,000

Policy	Number	Percentage
Storage provided on campus	3	19%
Guns must be holstered	5	31%
Dormitories	8	50%
Areas with hazardous agents (e.g., labs)	11	69%
Areas with magnetic fields	6	38%
Areas with minors/children	13	81%
Areas providing mental health care	16	100%
Areas providing health care	13	81%
Sports complexes	16	100%
Disciplinary Hearings	14	88%
Private Offices	6	38%
Testing Centers	6	38%
Events serving alcohol	3	19%
Graduation ceremonies	1	6%
Intramural events	5	31%
Recreation centers	6	38%
Religious buildings	5	31%
Temporary Exemptions	15	94%
Faculty/Staff/Student Training	4	25%

Examination of the data shows there were some areas of broad consensus. These included both mental and general health care centers. It is assumed that the carve out for sporting complexes means a prohibition of concealed handguns while sporting events are taking place since the statute itself prohibits weapons during sporting events. This distinction necessitates that temporary signage be established for sporting events since sports complexes may be used for other purposes. For example, many graduation ceremonies take place in sports complexes, and only one campus established a gun free zone for this purpose.

Other areas exhibiting significant consensus for either permanent or temporary carve outs included areas that house children and premises where student disciplinary hearings are taking place. The former includes child care centers and summer camps. Like sporting events, many

of the exemptions for disciplinary hearings necessitated temporary signage since these may take place in different areas of campus. Deans were asked to designate an area of their college specified for this purpose.

The exemption of areas with hazardous materials generated a great deal of discussion. For example, what constitutes a hazardous material? Although those materials normally housed in chemistry labs are obvious candidates, there are other science or engineering labs where at least some hazardous materials are present. For example, faculty from art departments argued that some materials used in sculpting, painting, or ceramics might present a threat to safety. On some campuses, there were exemptions given to physics or engineering labs where magnetic fields might create a concern. Another question that developed in this particular debate is the extent to which a hazard is activated as a result of interaction with a weapon that's discharged. That is, how would firing a weapon interact with certain materials, and would this pose an actual danger?

One other area generated wide consensus: temporary exemptions. The latter generally refer to events such as a guest speaker that might justify the need to screen for weapons. Approval of these exemptions fell to senior administration. No doubt this was a popular recommendation because it allowed university officials some flexibility and discretion to adopt temporary safety measures.

The issue of carve outs for private faculty and staff offices was the subject of extended discussion both at Texas State and other campuses. Six out of 16 universities implemented this exemption. Some maintained that such a ban would violate the "general prohibition" clause while others felt that faculty and staff should have the right to keep guns out of their private offices. Another issue associated with a ban on private offices was the process of notifying students and visitors. Would signs need to be posted outside all offices? Because enforcement of this method would be difficult on a large campus, Regents for the University of Texas system decided that notification would be through verbal communication (Madeline Conway, 2016).

### **Communication with System Office**

Although communication with the system office took place throughout the nine-month implementation period, it was particularly crucial early in the process. It is difficult to overestimate the atmosphere of uncertainty and anxiety that existed at the beginning of the implementation process. Early on the system's Office of the General Counsel created a system-wide campus carry task force to facilitate communication among the component universities on this issue. Additionally, it provided uniform and timely legal interpretations and opinions to component universities that established boundaries for recommendations and addressed general questions. In addition to questions about whether or not certain areas of campus could be designated as gun-free zones, examples of these questions include the following:

- Can faculty ask students on the first day of class for a list of all who are CHL/LTC's?
- Can the university require certification (in particular a mental health screening) over and above what the CHL/LTC laws mandate?
- Can the university require expert gun training (or make it voluntary for students with licenses)?
- Should the university take on storage of weapons or is that the responsibility of the CHL/LTC holder?

- What is the definition of “child” or “school” as relates to concealed carry of a handgun?
- In a survey, can respondents be asked if they are CHL/LTC holders?
- How is an athletic or sporting event defined? Does it, for instance, include athletic summer camps?

### **Comprehensive (Holistic) Review**

Because of continuing uncertainty and concern surrounding implementation of Campus Carry, senior administration pledged to conduct a comprehensive review of regulations adopted or considered after the first year of policy implementation. The review took place the following fall 2017 and followed the same timeline as initial implementation. It involved the same philosophy and four strategies described in the implementation model. The task force was reassembled, surveys and public forums were utilized to gain feedback, deliberation and debate, and consultation with the system occurred. The review had the advantage of knowledge gained from litigation. For example, the courts held that handguns could not be prohibited from classrooms; the courts have yet to preclude the prohibition from private offices.

At the end of the review, the university testing center was added to the areas designated as gun-free zones during the time period that the testing center was administering a national test where accreditation standards require that the test be administered in a gun-free location. The task force did not recommend a carve-out for sole occupant private offices for several reasons. In addition to adding confusion on a large campus concerning areas that are not designated gun-free, it was felt to be inequitable. The majority of employees work in shared offices or in an office located in a suite arrangement. Second, because there is no university storage facility, it would also create a burden for students, faculty, staff, and guests that desire to carry a concealed handgun and interact in multiple campus locations. Finally, although precedent existed at a small number of other Texas universities, the sole occupant office gun-free location carve out has yet to be subjected to legal scrutiny.

### **Conclusion**

The implementation of Campus Carry posed a unique challenge for higher education administrators in Texas. At Texas State every effort was made to follow a systematic inclusive process. The model described here has wider implications for both crises management and campus safety policy. In implementing policies where the stakes are very high, it is crucial that key data be gathered, that important constituencies be consulted, that a deliberative process be consistently followed, and that advice from legal experts be obtained. Adhering to a systematic policy process is crucial to defusing emotion and establishing a sense of security and stability in a volatile environment.

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## Appendix A – Campus Carry Policy Implementation Model

	<b>Tasks</b>	<b>Operational Items Included</b>
Step 1	Legislative and Comparative Research	Monitored Proposed Legislation During Session (several bills were proposed that related to guns including open carry, constitutional carry, and concealed campus carry)
		Completed Analysis of Legislative Requirements Contained in Senate Bill 11 that mandated concealed carry by license holders on public university campuses and provided limited discretion to University Presidents to establish rules for each campus based on 3 factors: nature of student population, specific safety concerns, and unique campus environment
		Conducted comparative research including analysis of implementation of campus carry legislation in the 8 other states that had already implemented campus carry legislation including Arkansas, Colorado, Idaho, Kansas, Mississippi, Oregon, Utah, and Wisconsin*
Step 2	Creation of a Transparent Communication Process	President Created a Broad, Representative Task Force, Announced the Creation of the Task Force at the Fall 2015 Convocation, and Sent an Email to the Campus Community Explaining Process
		President Created an Open-Link Campus Carry Survey to Hear All Voices During Rule Creation Process (Campus, Parents, Alumni, and Community) and Created a Campus Carry Webpage
		President Personally Charged Task Force
Step 3	Fall 2015 and Early Spring 2016 Task Force Work to Arrive at Recommendations**	Task Force Divided into 8 Sub-groups (Data Analysis, Research, Facilities, Faculty, Staff, Students, Drafting, and Communications) and Created Calendar with meetings each week of either the full task force or sub-groups
		Sub-groups Engaged in Qualitative and Quantitative Research (surveys, focus groups, analysis of institutional and comparative research data) and Sub-groups Arrived at Initial Recommendations and Used Uniform Template to Present to Full Task Force for Discussion and Debate
		Full Task Force Reached Consensus on 1 <sup>st</sup> Draft Recommendations, Posted the Recommendations on the Campus Carry Website, and Sent Email to the Campus Community Inviting All to Attend 3 Public Hearings Intended to Vet the Draft Recommendations or, in the Alternative to Post Comments on the Open-link Survey
		3 Public Forums Were Held
		Task Force Revised Draft Recommendations Based on Input from Public Forums, Revised Draft Recommendations Were Posted, and Email was Sent to Campus Community Inviting All to Attend 3 more Public Forums or Post Comments on Open-Link Survey to Vet Revised Recommendations
		3 Public Forums Were Held

		After Discussion and Debate the Full Task Force Reached Consensus on Final Recommendations Based on Input from Public Forums and Survey Comments, Posted the Final Recommendations, and Presented Recommendation to the President's Cabinet
		President Created Campus Carry Rules for Texas State University and Posted
		Prepared the President's Rules for Consideration by the Board of Regents of the Texas State University System
		Board of Regents of the Texas State University System Approved the President's Rules in May 2016
Step 3	Spring 2016 Task Force Work to Operationalize Final Recommendations	Task Force divided into Sub-groups to Operationalize the President's Rules (Data Analysis, Research, Facilities/Signage, Policies, FAQs, Website, Drafting, and Communications)
		Created and Updated Websites, FAQs, Guidelines, and Other Documents, Managed Signage, and Continued to Monitor Open-link Survey Comments and Make Educational Presentations to Campus Community
Step 5	Implemented Campus Carry Rules	President Modified Open Link Survey to Obtain Post-Implementation Feedback on Campus Carry Implementation
Step 6	Holistic Review of Campus Carry Rules and Implementation	Following the 1 <sup>st</sup> year of implementation of the Campus Carry Rules, the President Reconvened the Task Force to Conduct a Holistic Review of Implementation Efforts

\*Since the comparative state research was completed in Step 1, Georgia and Virginia have passed campus carry laws

\*\* The Chancellor of the Texas State University System also created a separate system-wide task force with all component universities represented and the Office of General Counsel provided legal advice to components

## **Incivility in the Workplace: The Experiences of Female Sport Management Faculty in Higher Education**

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Access to higher education for women has dramatically increased in the United States during the past 50 years. Female college graduates have reversed the figures and gone from being outnumbered by their male counterparts 3 to 2 in the 1970s, to now outnumbering male college graduates 3 to 2 (Becker Hubbard, & Murphy, 2010). Women also graduate from masters and doctoral programs at a higher rate than men. Statistics show that in 2016, 57.4% of master's graduates and 52.1% of graduates of doctoral programs were female (Perry, 2017).

However, increases in the number of women obtaining college and advanced degrees and advanced degrees has not translated to comparable representation in faculty positions or leadership roles in higher education (Lennon, 2014). Only 26% of college presidents were women in 2012, which is a noticeable increase from just 10% in 1986, but still equates to men holding a large majority of such positions. This imbalance is also evident at the lower levels of academia. Women hold more positions as lower ranking faculty than men, including 56% of instructor/lecturer positions (American Association of University Professors, 2014). Additionally, although women held nearly half (48%) of tenure-track positions in 2013, women only represented 35% of tenured faculty (Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, 2013). Women face additional challenges once they secure a position within a higher education institution as well. The Higher Education Research Institute Faculty Survey found that 31.4% of women feel they must work harder than their colleagues to be perceived as a legitimate scholar (Eagan et al., 2014). This study also found nearly four out of 10 female faculty (37.6%) felt they had been discriminated against or excluded because of their gender, compared to 11.7% of their male counterparts (Eagan et al., 2014).

The aforementioned lack of women in leadership positions and perceived discrimination against female faculty may be even more of a concern in sport management programs. Sport is considered a male domain and women are often seen as intruders in this realm (Anderson, 2008; Kamphoff, 2010; Taylor & Hardin, 2016; Walker & Sartore-Baldwin, 2013; West & Zimmerman, 1987). Thus, female faculty in sport management programs face gendered challenges in academia in general, in addition to the layer that is present due to the male-dominated nature of the sport-related discipline. Women working in male-dominated industries also face increased rates of bullying, incivility, and harassment (Vogt, Bruce, Street, & Strafford, 2007). Female sport management faculty members have many obstacles to negotiate in the higher education environment. Therefore, the purpose of the current study was to examine

the manifestation of incivility from colleagues and superiors experienced within a sample of female sport management faculty members utilizing social identity theory as a guiding framework. Incivility was conceptualized for the current study as deviant behavior that is not necessarily intended to physically harm the target (e.g., belittling others, showing disdain to someone while they are talking, engaging in outside tasks during meetings; Andersson & Pearson, 1999; Pearson, Andersson, Wegner, 2001; Porath & Pearson, 2010).

### **Social Identity Theory**

Social identity theory attempts to explain decision-making processes and behaviors as they relate to group membership and dynamics (Treppe, 2006). It suggests individuals have a personal identity as well as a social identity (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). Personal identity encompasses specific abilities and interests while social identity consists of group categories such as demographics or organizational membership (Turner, 1982). Social identity theory postulates individuals form categories of “us” and “them” or the “in” and “out” groups based on shared characteristics (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). This separation between the in and out groups is dependent on boundaries set and whether the relationship within each group is stable and secure (Rees, Haslam, Coffee, & Lavalley, 2015).

There is an adoption of group identity and goals when an individual becomes part of the “in” group. This embracing of overall group identity also causes coordinated behavior and motivations to match the group identity (Rees, Haslam, Coffee, & Lavalley, 2015). Individuals are motivated to embrace these “in” group behaviors because of their desire to increase self-esteem (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). Becoming part of an “in” group necessitates an individual’s actions and reactions are altered by the shared norms of that group (Abrams & Hogg, 1988; Tajfel, 1979).

Professions that are male-dominated illustrate the existence of “in” group harassment on “out” group members as women in these professions have been found to experience a greater number of issues with unethical or unprofessional conduct (i.e., incivility; Vogt et al., 2007). This may be attributed to the high value placed on masculine characteristics such as power, dominance, competitiveness, and aggressiveness (Vogt et al., 2007). Women are perceived as intruders in these professions potentially reducing the benefit of being part of the hegemonic group (i.e., men), which triggers higher rates of harassment-type behaviors (Bergman & Henning, 2008). It is not uncommon for women working in male-dominated professions to attract increased attention, be evaluated more critically, and experience less support, especially when they are new to their organization (Embry, et al., 2008; Kanter, 1977; Taylor & Hardin, 2016; Walker, & Sartore-Baldwin, 2013). Efforts to change gender inequity may be unsuccessful if employees and administrators are passive or accepting of this unequal treatment of female employees (Claringbould & Knoppers, 2012). Women working in male-dominated professions may come to expect and accept discriminatory treatment, such as incivility, as part of the territory (McLaughlin, Uggen, & Blackstone, 2012; Taylor, Hardin, & Rode, 2018; Taylor, Siegele, Smith, & Hardin, 2018). Thus, women may accept their membership within the “out” group in terms of their place within sport organizations and sport management academic programs.

Social identity theory was used to guide this study in attempts to discover if “in” groups and “out” groups existed within sport management programs in higher education settings. Social identity theory was utilized as research suggests gender is a salient identity and it is

challenging to avoid identifying oneself or being identified by others based on gender (Hajek, Abrams, & Murachver, 2005). Hajek et al. (2005) also postulate that understanding one's gender identity often occurs through the comparison to the "other." An interesting power dynamic is created for female faculty due to the fact that the majority of sport management programs have male-dominated faculty and a male-dominated student bodies (Chen, Adams-Blair, & Miller, 2013; Jones, Brooks, & Mak, 2008; Mahoney, Mondello, Hums, & Judd, 2006). The male-dominated nature of sport and sport management programs within higher education institutions provides a potential location for unethical or unprofessional behavior to occur (Taylor, Hardin et al., 2018; Taylor, Smith, Rode, & Hardin, 2017).

Research has examined the experiences of student harassment (i.e., contrapower) aimed at female sport management faculty members (Taylor et al., 2017; Taylor, Hardin et al., 2018) however, research investigating experiences of incivility from colleagues and superiors (e.g., department chairs, deans) is lacking. It is important to assess these experiences from colleagues and superiors because of the power dynamic that often occurs within these relationships, especially in male-dominated departments. Not only does a male colleague or superior have societal power, due to traditional societal norms, they may also have organizational power within the department because of their seniority.

### **Incivility**

Similar to most forms of harassment, incivility can take place in a variety of forms (e.g., illustrating a lack of respect for others, poor etiquette, rude behaviors) and can be seen in all facets of life (Andersson & Pearson, 1999). Research on workers in North America found an astonishing 99% of employees have witnessed behaviors they classified as incivility in their workplace (Porath & Pearson, 2010), while 98% indicated they have been on the receiving end of incivility (Porath & Pearson, 2013). Incivility can be found across genders, races, and organizational ranks (Namie, 2003). Thus, making the workplace an area of interest for scholars who study uncivil behaviors and their negative consequences (Pearson, Andersson, & Wegner, 2001).

This discourteous or rude behavior is often in violation of norms for respect toward others in social interactions. This workplace aggression operates on a continuum with incivility at the beginning and physical violence at the end, with additional bullying, hostile, or sexually harassing behaviors as intermediate points (Nydegger, Paludi, DeSouza, & Paludi, 2006). These uncivil behaviors are often provoked by thoughtlessness as opposed to intentional malice (Porath & Pearson, 2013). Incivility has been identified as one of the most common forms of anti-social behavior engaged in by employees in the workplace (Cortina, 2008).

In the male-dominated realm of sport management departments in higher education, women face incivility in the form of written messages, non-verbal behaviors, verbally, unwanted attention, and added criticism (Embry, Padgett, & Caldwell, 2008; Kanter, 1977; Taylor et al., 2017; Taylor, Hardin et al., 2018; Walker & Sartore-Baldwin, 2013). Non-verbal incivility can be expressed through eye rolling, sighing, or complete lack of attention. Verbal incivility can occur as interrupting a faculty member in a meeting or in classroom discussion, teasing, making jokes, or questioning credentials in regards to content knowledge (Burke, Karl, Peluchett, & Evans, 2014; Clark, Olender, Kenski, & Cardoni, 2013; DeSouza & Fansler, 2003; Grauerholz, 1989; Johnson-Bailey, 2015; McKinney, 1990; Miller & Chamberlin, 2000). Lampman (2012) found 91% of female faculty members had experienced at least one

occurrence of student incivility. Taylor, Hardin et al. (2018) found female sport management faculty members experienced incivility from both female students (49%) and male students (76%). The incivility found was predominantly in the form of questioning content knowledge (51.4%), physical aggression (80%), and distracting behavior (80%).

### **Women in Sport Management Academia**

The field of sport management within higher education faces similar challenges of academia and the greater sport industry workforce when it comes to the underrepresentation of women. The majority of sport management programs across the United States have fewer than 40% female faculty members and female students (Barnhill, Czekanski, Pflieger, 2018; Jones, Brooks, & Mak, 2008). Jones et al. (2008) suggests the small number of female faculty may contribute to the low number of female students. It is necessary for female students to have the opportunity to observe women who exhibit managerial and leadership skills that result in potential career mobility (Moore & Huberty, 2014). Even more concerning are findings from Sosa & Sagas' (2008) investigation of perceptions of female sport management faculty. It was found students perceived female faculty as less capable than their male peers. Additional research on student-female faculty interactions indicate more than half of female sport management faculty have experienced sexism, while more than 80% have experienced incivility from students (Taylor et al., 2017). In turn, women who witness discrimination may hesitate to pursue a role as a member of sport management faculty in the future (Ilgen & Youtz, 1986). Also, a "women-less faculty could signal the wrong message to students and professionals that the 'good ole boys' networks' are standard practices" (Moore & Huberty, 2014, p. 22).

Academia is a ripe area for workplace incivility due to the high stakes involved in establishing social capital, duration of working relationships between faculty members, and the pressures of tenure (Faria, Mixer, & Salter, 2012; Keashly & Neuman, 2008; 2010; McKay, Arnold, Fratzel, & Thomas, 2008). Keashly and Neuman (2008) found colleagues were more likely to be identified as bullies by faculty (63.4%), while superiors were more likely to be identified as bullies by frontline staff (52.9%). Simpson and Cohen (2004) found women working in higher education were more likely than men to be bullied, and asserted bullying needs to be explored in a gendered power relation context to further understand the behavior. Therefore, it is important to understand key organizational contexts such as position and number of women working in the organization, which much of the research on bullying in the work place has failed to do (Simpson & Cohen, 2004). The aforementioned research and theoretical foundations led to the investigation of the experiences of female sport management faculty in relation to incivility from colleagues and superiors.

### **Method**

A qualitative research design was utilized in order to gain insight into the experiences and inner thoughts of the participants (Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Gratton & Jones, 2004). This approach allowed participants to tell their stories by responding to questions surrounding the topic of workplace incivility. The responses were then used to create themes and codes (Gratton & Jones, 2004). This qualitative research design was selected because it allows for meaning to

be drawn from participant interviews by placing common experiences and thoughts into themes and expressing them in a narrative format in the results and discussion (Dittmore, 2011).

Interviews are grounded in discussion and allow for a continuous dialog with a question-and-answer format (Rubin & Rubin, 1995). Interviews also aid in finding the meaning of fundamental themes in the subject's life (Kvale, 1996). The participants "work life" (i.e., experiences of incivility in the work place) was the central focus of the study, and interviews were utilized to allow researchers access into the participant's perspective and experiences (Yin, 1994). It would be impractical to observe all female faculty working within sport management programs in their work setting and interviews provide a more intimate perspective. Interviews also allow for probing and clarification of responses via follow-up questions due to their personal and conversational nature (Gubrium & Holstein, 2001).

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 14 female faculty members working within sport management programs at higher education institutions in the United States. Purposive, criterion based sampling was utilized as the participants needed to be tenure-track female faculty members in sport management programs (Creswell, 2014). The institution type and department classification could varied between participants, but all women who participated in the study were employed by a higher education institution performing assigned duties as a faculty member. The participants were purposefully selected because it was believed they would be able to provide the most accurate information to address the nature of the study (Creswell, 2014). Each participant offered a unique perspective due to different demographic characteristics including age, relationship status, years in position, departmental/college affiliation (e.g., kinesiology, business, education), and institution classification (i.e., teaching or research intensive). Interview questions were fashioned with the participants' personal and social identity (e.g., gender identity and "otherness") in mind and addressed female faculty members' experiences while working in a sport management program.

The recruitment process was based on Taylor, Hardin et al.'s (2018) study on contrapower harassment. Initial recruitment occurred at an international, professional sport management academic conference as potential respondents were asked to participate in the study. Initial recruitment secured seven participants. To gain a larger sample size, an e-mail inquiry was sent via the Women in North American Society for Sport Management listserv. This listserv was chosen because it was likely to have the largest number of female members who were teaching in sport management programs. The e-mail included a general description of the research, including the nature of the project, as well as the contact information for the principal investigator. The e-mail also specified the target audience was female faculty members who are currently teaching in sport management programs. The e-mail recruitment garnered an additional seven participants for a total of 14 study participants.

The average age of participants was 42-years old, with a range of 30 to 61 years. Four of the female faculty members identified working at a research intensive university (i.e., universities with high research activity expectations), while 10 identified their university as teaching intensive (i.e., universities with emphasis placed on teaching and lower expectations on research activity). Six of the participants identified as having a faculty rank of assistant professor, five had the faculty rank of associate professor, and three identified as full professor. The average time in their current position was 6.6 years with a range of 1 to 18 years, and the average time as a faculty member was 11.5 years with a range of 1 to 32 years. Half of the participants ( $n = 7$ ) identified as lesbian and half ( $n = 7$ ) identified as heterosexual. Ten of the participants identified as married; one identified as in a domestic partnership, and three

identified as single. All 14 participants identified as White. This lack of racial diversity in a small sample of women working within higher education is not surprising. The Chronicle of Higher Education Almanac (2015) reported that 72.1% of all faculty members self-identify as White. Taylor et al. (2017) found this to be true in sport management as well, as more than 75% of their population of female sport management faculty members self-identified as White. Participants were given pseudonyms in order to protect their identity. See Table 1 for demographic information.

Table 1. Self-Identified Participant Demographics

Participant	Age	University Type	Faculty Rank	Years: In current position / As faculty	Sexual Orientation	Relationship status
Ashley	45	Research intensive	Associate Professor	11 / 13	Lesbian	Married
Beth	36	Teaching intensive	Assistant Professor	1 / 7	Heterosexual	Married
Catie	34	Teaching intensive	Assistant Professor	1 / 5	Heterosexual	Single
Demi	55	Teaching intensive	Professor	12 / 10	Lesbian	Married
Ellie	36	Teaching intensive	Assistant Professor	1 / 1	Lesbian	Married
Felicia	30	Teaching intensive	Professor	5 / 10	Heterosexual	Married
Gigi	31	Teaching intensive	Assistant Professor	1 / 1	Heterosexual	Single
Hallie	55	Research Intensive	Associate Professor	18 / 18	Heterosexual	Married
Izzy	51	Teaching intensive	Associate Professor	8 / 19	Heterosexual	Married
Phoebe	34	Teaching intensive	Assistant Professor	4 / 4	Heterosexual	Single
Kim	38	Teaching intensive	Assistant Professor	4 / 10	Lesbian	Domestic Partnership
Lola	41	Teaching intensive	Associate Professor	10 / 13	Lesbian	Married
Maggie	43	Research intensive	Associate Professor	3 / 18	Lesbian	Married
Nora	61	Research intensive	Professor	14 / 32	Lesbian	Married

The utilization of semi-structured interviews allowed participants to fully explain their unique experiences with incivility. The open-ended structure of the interview questions permitted participants to put their perceptions, emotions, and feelings into words. Follow up questions were also used based on participant responses, which allowed for auxiliary clarification and increased detail. Topics of questions included: challenges of female faculty



(e.g., What is your biggest challenge as a female faculty member?), experiences of harassment (e.g., Can you give an example of a time a colleague or superior acted verbally disrespectful, challenge you, continually roll his/her eyes, or otherwise show disdain while you were talking?), knowledge of university policies on harassment (e.g., Can you tell me anything you know about your university's policies about harassment, or who you should contact if you receive harassment of any nature from a colleague or superior?), and how to combat incivility from a colleague or superior.

Interviews were conducted via telephone and were recorded for transcription purposes. The average interview length was 48 minutes. Researchers should attempt to achieve data saturation (Corbin & Strauss, 2008), and saturation was deemed to have occurred after 14 interviews, which is similar to other sport researchers using specific populations (see Sutherland, et al., 2014; Owton, Bond, & Tod, 2014; Taylor & Hardin, 2016; Taylor, Siegele et al., 2018). Interviews were transcribed and formatted for analysis. Transcripts were then returned to participants for member-checking. Member-checking allows for participants to review the transcript from their interview to ensure accuracy of the transcription (Andrew Pedersen, & McEvoy, 2011; Gratton & Jones, 2004). Three researchers then individually coded the transcripts for codes and themes and met to discuss their findings. Researchers reached agreement on all themes.

A constant comparative methodology was utilized for data analysis. In a constant comparative analysis, one section of the data is compared with another in attempts to uncover similarities and differences (Merriam, 2009). Themes emerge when related dimensions of data are grouped together. The overall goal of constant comparative analysis is to expose patterns. "Meaningful and manageable themes" were formed through grouping of quotes of related experiences and forms of academic bullying and incivility discussed by participants (Patton, 1987, p. 150). Themes and codes were discovered inductively, rather than deductively; during inductive analysis researchers make inferences from many elements of discourse from the interviews (Lindloff & Taylor, 2011).

## **Findings and Discussion**

The purpose of this study was to examine the prevalence of incivility and the manner in which it was manifested toward a sample of female sport management faculty. Incivility from colleagues and superiors was found to be profoundly prevalent in sport management programs as all 14 participants had experienced this behavior. Research has examined the experience of incivility aimed at female sport management faculty from students (see Taylor et al., 2018; Taylor et al., 2017); however, research on incivility from superiors and colleagues of this population is limited. The presence of workplace incivility is extremely high as 98% of employees report experiencing incivility and 99% report witnessing it within the workplace making the topic of this study extremely relevant (Porath & Pearson, 2010; 2013). Analysis indicated this incivility manifested itself in three ways: (a) female incompetence, (b) female irrelevance, and (c) female hostility. Female incompetence and female irrelevance occurred when the participants' gender influenced their treatment from male colleagues and supervisors. These forms of incivility are often subtle, and hard to pinpoint. Male colleagues and superiors were found to offer disrespectful commentary as it relates to female faculty's competence in the field. The unforeseen theme of female-on-female hostility (e.g., aggressive bullying) also arose. Despite the fact that participants indicated the importance of acting as a support system

for female junior faculty within their departments, especially when the department was male-dominated, the female faculty in this study indicated experiencing high levels of incivility from their female colleagues and superiors.

### **Female Incompetence**

Participants discussed experiencing a perceived lack of competence from their male colleagues and superiors, similar to that experienced from students in previous research (see Taylor et al., 2017; Taylor, Hardin, et al., 2018). Male colleagues and superiors were found to frequently question the knowledge, expertise, and ability of female faculty working in sport management departments. Several faculty members discussed being instructed to cover specific material in their courses while acknowledging none of their male colleagues received such instructions. Further, participants indicated receiving public, demeaning remarks regarding their promotion and tenure. This downplaying of female faculty's knowledge, expertise, and ability illustrates the existence of women as the "other," as described by social identity theory, within sport management programs. This "othering" of female faculty works to uphold the classic power structure within sport management programs where men find themselves in the "in" group holding positions such as department chair.

Ashley, who has experienced a great deal of professional success, discussed how her department chair would devalue her and other women during departmental faculty meetings. She referenced a specific meeting where the department chair randomly announced to the entire faculty how her promotion and tenure process was "definitely touch-and-go for a while." She added these types of comments became commonplace during faculty meetings, and were often directed at her and her two female colleagues. She said,

(We are) pretty accomplished women in sport management, and we were incredibly marginalized within our department. It was very difficult for us not to believe part of the reason why we were marginalized was because we were three strong women who asked a lot of questions and didn't just kind of go along to get along.

She also mentioned how she had never heard her department chair make degrading or devaluing comments to her male colleagues. In Ashley's case, her department chair was utilizing his organizational power to demonstrate Ashley and her female colleagues' "otherness" within the department. Despite the professional success experienced by Ashley and her colleagues, her (male) department chair was unwilling to accept them into the "in" group and had placed them into an "out" group together due to their gender, which social identity theory suggests is difficult to avoid identifying others with.

Ashley was not the only participant who experienced this type of incivility during meetings. Felicia discussed being singled out in a meeting, similar to the experiences of Ashley. During a faculty discussion about course assignments for the following semester, Felicia's department chair instructed her to cover specific topics in her course that were not currently being included in her course content, which was previously approved. Although Felicia acknowledged her department chair, who was also the associate dean, was in a position to offer guidance on course materials, she had never heard him openly instruct any of her colleagues on what topics should be included in their courses. Lola described a similar experience with the graduate coordinator in her department. She discussed how he would micromanage her and

"second guess just about everything that I said and did." She went on to say, "I've often had the thought (that) if a guy or some other male in my department had suggested something it wouldn't have been questioned. I just find that upsetting. It's very frustrating." Ashley, Felicia and Lola's experiences demonstrate a male who is in a power position asserting his organizational power over female faculty members and placing them into the "out" group as all of these women have male colleagues, but have never witness them being disrespected or micromanaged in this manner.

This type of incivility also manifested itself in a hostile nature at times. Nora discussed experiencing discrimination from her department chair based on her gender and sexual orientation (lesbian) that resulted in a university-level hearing where Nora had to fight to keep her job. Nora claimed her department chair was making false statements about her actions as a teacher and scholar; criticizing the way she taught classes, traveled to and from conferences, and conducted herself as a professional. In addition to these claims, Nora's department chair was continuously degrading toward her about her work as both an educator and scholar. He would try to embarrass her in front of her students and colleagues and pressure her to quit behind closed doors. After hiring a lawyer and successfully defending herself in the academic, university level hearing, Nora was still punished with no travel funding, no salary increases, and she was not allowed to teach summer courses which would have resulted in supplemental pay. Nora was hospitalized, medicated for depression, and forced to have a lawyer represent her. These events depict an extreme form of incivility, bullying, meant to intimidate the victim into engaging in certain actions wanted by the bully (e.g., Nora's department chair was perhaps hoping she would leave the university).

Workplace bullying is typically found when there are repeated and systematic accounts of social aggression in the workplace (Inceoglu, 2002). Examples of bullying in the academic setting include work overload, unfair criticism, excessive monitoring, intimidation, and humiliation, all present in Nora's case (Simpson & Cohen, 2004). The Workplace Bullying Institute (2007) reported approximately half of American workers have either been targets of workplace bullying or witnessed a co-worker being bullied. It was found that the majority of bullying came from superiors (72%), perpetrators were mostly men (60%), and women were the targets of majority of the bullying (57%; The Workplace Bullying Institute, 2007). Research has found 20% of faculty victims reported bullying lasting more than five years, and 32% of victims reported bullying occurring for more than three years (Keashly & Neuman, 2008, 2009; McKay et al., 2008). This continuous bullying works to show the victim they are in the "out" group and signals to anyone else in the department or organization who possess similar characteristics they need to engage in specific "appropriate" behavior as controlled by the individual who is in power.

Nora discovered several other women had suffered the same treatment as she had after the hearing concluded. Not all of these other women fought to keep their position like Nora; one had left the university and took a position at another academic institution and one had left academia completely and moved across the country to start a new life. This illustrates an acceptance in this type of hostile incivility behavior and the effectiveness of creating "in" and "out" groups within the department. This aligns with research that suggests there is a relationship between tolerance of harassing behaviors by organizational leadership and prevalence of harassment (Gallivan Nelson, Halpert, & Cellar, 2007; Miner-Rubino & Cortina, 2004). Nora's male department chair discovered he was able to bully certain members of the department without facing punishment from administration and continued to use his power until

Nora was unwilling to accept this unprofessional treatment. Previous attempts from Nora's department chair were successful in forcing members of the "out" group to leave the organization in order to escape the bullying so he continued to engage in this incivility in attempts to control the behavior of those in the "out" group.

Ellie discussed experiencing this type of harassment from other graduate assistants when she was completing her doctoral degree. She described how a fellow doctoral student, who was male, who would, "interrupt (us), cut us off, (thought he) always knew better, and (thought) we were never right." Ellie's experiences show these behaviors can be learned. This male doctoral student may have learned uncivil behavior from watching male faculty interact with female faculty. The perpetuation of "in" and "out" groups begins much earlier than when faculty begin their careers. Gigi experienced similar hostility from a male faculty member while she was completing her doctorate. After talking to fellow (male) doctoral students within her program she realized the male faculty member was treating her differently. This faculty member would "call her out" and attack her about her experience and expertise. Gigi felt he was perhaps, "threatened by (me as) a potentially successful female. Him thinking he should be a dominant male and questions how good I could be because I'm female. And maybe even being surprised that I was doing as well as I was because I was a woman."

The female incompetence theme was typically an assertion of power as male colleagues and superiors were attempting to assert their gendered and organizational power over the participants. Demi illustrated this phenomenon when discussing how one male colleague would "say at least one derogatory comment in my direction at every program meeting." She went on to discuss how she knew he was just "looking for a fight" so she would ignore the comments and not engage. The incivility itself was an illustration of the assertion of organizational power, while the sexist nature of the behavior was the demonstration of gendered power men have over women in a male-dominated industry.

### **Female Irrelevance**

Male colleagues and superiors engaged in uncivil behavior that illustrates they believe their female colleague's opinions are not as important or ignore her presence all together. Catie discussed how she received "loud, verbal attacks" from a colleague during a search committee meeting. She talked about how her colleague wanted a specific candidate and became hostile toward her when she disagreed and supported another. Again, this type of behavior illustrates how someone with gendered, or organizational, power will attempt to use their power and intimidate a member of the "out" group into engaging in a desired behavior. This exchange ended with disciplinary action for her colleague because her department chair was also in attendance at this meeting. However, this was not the first time her colleague had been hostile toward her, just the first time her department chair had witnessed the behavior.

Although many of the women talked about instances of verbal incivility, others discussed their encounters with nonverbal incivility. Demi discussed the hostile environment within her department stating, "A friend who is at another school and I had a contest to see who could go the longest without one of their cohorts saying good morning. I won, it was two months." She went on to say other faculty and staff within her college interact with her, but her colleagues within sport management are often aloof. While some member of the "in" group may utilize their status and power to intimidate members of the "out" group, others may cut off all ties to "out" group members as a manner in illustrating they are not welcome. Several participants

discussed receiving eye rolls or hearing “groans” from colleagues during faculty meetings when they voiced their opinions or made suggestions for change, something they believed occurred because of their gender. Research has suggested this idea of female irrelevance as well. Taylor et al. (2018) found when female faculty voiced concerns about contrapower harassment (i.e., harassment from students) their male colleagues did not take their concerns seriously. Participants indicated colleagues would make light of the situation and express a mocking jealousy for “flirtatious,” sexual harassing comments. Several faculty in the current study discussed being hesitant to report sexist incivility from colleagues and superiors for fear of being disregarded.

### **Female Hostility**

Participants in this study suggested in addition to experiencing incivility from male colleagues and superiors they also face this type of behavior from other women within the department and university setting. Workplace incivility is believed to operate on a continuum ranging from relatively non-harming, disrespectful behaviors such as eye rolling or snide commentary up to more aggressive forms such as bullying aimed to intimidate or dominate, which is what was found to exist in the current study from female colleagues and superiors. The general consensus of the participants can be summarized by Kim when she stated, "I've been burned by female colleagues far more frequently than I have (by) male and I don't know how to explain that, but that's the truth." Social identity theory posits a female faculty member who witnesses her male colleagues exhibiting harassing behaviors toward female colleagues may begin to engage in these harassing behaviors in attempts to gain entry into the “in” group in order to increase their self-esteem. The uncivil behaviors become adopted into the department’s or university’s organizational culture, thus normalizing them and suggesting they are acceptable.

Phoebe had several negative experiences with female incivility surrounding her research productivity. She explained how a female colleague told her conference attendance wasn't enough because, "you've got to present or no one gives a shit [sic]." Phoebe went on to discuss how she had a course overload (i.e., teaching additional courses beyond a typical semester load) during this time period and could not maintain a productive research line while prepping for all her courses, but felt her colleague “didn’t care about her work life balance or burnout level.” Phoebe continued to describe her relationship with this female faculty member who would repeatedly make, "digs about my workload, or my production, or my research, my scholarly work," and it was clear she was conflicted about this colleague. Although this colleague would sometimes bully and belittle Phoebe, other times she was overly supportive and praised Phoebe for her great work.

Felicia described an uncomfortable encounter with a female colleague while she was pregnant. While in the lunchroom of her building during her second pregnancy a female colleague said, "Whoa, your husband sure does keep you busy." Despite the fact it had been two years since her first child was born she felt as though many of her colleagues only saw her as the professor who had children. Although Felicia had come to expect this type of comments from her male colleagues, she was surprised to hear them coming from a woman. The idea of work-life integration served a continuous problem for Felicia as she was unable to find supportive colleagues and supervisors within her department.

Maggie discussed experiencing hostility from the (female) department chair at her first institution. Maggie described the following encounter:

When I questioned this individual (her department chair) about something she said, 'I'm the fucking [sic] department chair and if I want to make a God damned [sic] policy I can make a God damned [sic] policy.' That is one of the most horrific situations I've ever been in. The lack of, not just the lack of support, but the overall demeaning method in which she talked to me.

As Maggie was going through the promotion and tenure process this hostile behavior continued. Maggie remembers receiving her dossier after review and seeing comments such as, "you sound pathetic, like you are begging for tenure," written in the margins. Maggie knew the department chair was treating other faculty in the same hostile and abusive manner, but thought she probably received the brunt of it because she would question or challenge her. Maggie suffered from anxiety and took medication for depression and said, "I recognize it now as being completely verbally abused", but was hesitant to report her behavior because she feared this department chair would attempt to ruin her reputation. Eventually, formal complaints were filed, however, punishment was never given out and this department chair never changed her behavior. The behaviors of Maggie's department chair are consistent with literature on "Queen Bee" syndrome, which suggests female rather than male employees are particularly critical of the career commitment, assertiveness, and leadership skills of their female colleagues (Garcia-Retamero & Lopez-Zafra, 2006; Mathison, 1986; Parks-Stamm, Heilman, & Hearn, 2008).

The presence of female-on-female incivility may illustrate an instance where women are attempting to gain entry into the "in" group of their male colleagues and superiors as they see them possessing the organizational power. An individual's actions are driven by the need for high self-esteem, which is established, in part, by being a member of a social group (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). Men are commonly accepted as the norm for leadership positions within sport organizations because women are thought to lack the masculine qualities valued and perceived as necessary to be a successful leader such as toughness, strength, aggressiveness, and confidence (Anderson, 2008). Male employees who exhibit these qualities are privileged in sport organizations because they are thought of as superior (Kamphoff, 2010; West & Zimmerman, 1987). Women working in male-dominated organizations may experience a threat to their social identity when their gender is devalued by their male colleagues and superiors (Derks, Ellemers, Laar, & Grott, 2011). Women can react in two ways when this threat is experienced. They can attempt to improve the standing of the group (e.g., women supporting women in a collective mobility) or psychologically dissociating with the group that negatively affects their own identity (i.e., women; Derks et al., 2011). Engaging in psychological dissociation causes women to stress the difference between themselves and other women in the organization in attempts to improve their personal outcome. Women may then begin to engage in bullying behaviors to illustrate they believe other women are inadequate. Consequently, female faculty are experiencing incivility from both "in" group members, as well as, fellow "out" group members, creating a hostile work environment. This can be explained by one of the respondents who said, in describing her actions as they relate to her relationship with a male colleague and department chair, "We say things that friends would say to each other, so I think that if I'm going to be really honest, if other people were around we'd probably be creating a hostile work environment." She went on to say, "We say it to each other in our offices but we

don't say it publicly. But I think if anybody walked in, we would be creating a hostile work environment." This particular female faculty member discussed being bullied by a female faculty of more tenure, and the distress it caused her, however, she herself engaged in bullying behavior toward other female faculty members. Holm, Torkelson, and Backstrom (2015) found people who experienced uncivil behaviors from colleagues and superiors, as well as witnessed incivility in the workplace, would likely instigate behaviors of incivility themselves. The accepting culture toward this discriminatory and harassing behavior may pressure women into engaging in bullying as a way to gain access into the "in" group in hopes of securing acceptance from their male colleagues and potentially promotions such as tenure.

## Conclusions

It was no surprise the respondents indicated experiencing incivility in the workplace. Research suggests women working in male-dominated professions and organizations may experience higher levels of uncivil behaviors such as sexual harassment and bullying because of their minority status (Vogt et al., 2007). What was surprising was the intensity and prevalence of this type of behavior directed at the female faculty. The women in the current study discussed experiencing anxiety, depression, and even stress-related hospitalization as a result of the uncivil behaviors they experienced. There is a negative correlation between workplace satisfaction and harassment, which is clearly illustrated in this study (Fitzgerald, Drasgow, Hulin, Gelfand, & Magley, 1997). Women in some male-dominated organizations may come to expect and even accept this treatment as part of the working environment (McLaughlin et al., 2012). The findings of the current study suggest a harsher reality to the outcomes and negative side effects of workplace incivility.

This high prevalence of incivility, in addition to the gender skewness of sport management programs, causes female faculty members to be placed into the "out" or "them" group and may also work to limit career mobility as well. Individuals prefer to work with those who are similar to themselves (i.e., people of a similar race and gender, or have a similar cultural background) and therefore recruit, hire, and promote those individuals to and within their organization (Ramirez, 2004; Stafsudd, 2006). With only 26% of university presidents and 35% of tenured faculty being female, it may be difficult for women to be hired or get promoted to decision-making positions due to male leaders wanting to hire and promote faculty and administrators similar to themselves (i.e., homologous reproduction). Homologous reproduction occurs because individuals prefer to work with those who are of a similar race, gender, and cultural background (Ramirez, 2004; Stafsudd, 2006). Leaders then recruit these individuals to their organizations, decreasing the likelihood of a woman getting recruited into male-dominated industries. Women are more likely to remain in the "out" group if they are unable to climb the ladder into leadership positions. Additionally, male leaders may be more accepting of this incivility, creating an organizational culture accepting of these behaviors.

Department and university leaders must be aware of the areas where these types of behaviors are occurring and work to change the culture. The longer these behaviors go without consequence, the more difficult it will be to remove them from the culture of the organization. Employee perceptions of tolerance at the organizational level have been found to have greater influence on employee behavior and attitudes than the creation or existence of formal organization policy (Hulin, Fitzgerald, & Drawsgow, 1996; Lim & Cortina, 2005; Pryor, Giedd, & Williams, 1995). The creation of an inclusive environment is not only important for the

benefits associated with such a culture (e.g., increased workplace satisfaction, productivity, diversity of thought), it is also necessary to create a diverse workforce and give students role models and mentors. Female student may witness female faculty being mistreated by their male colleagues and superiors and begin to feel as though they are not welcome in the field, while male students will adopt those behaviors as acceptable.

Findings from the current study confirm the existence of uncivil behaviors ranging from non-verbal abuse to bullying in sport management programs within higher education institutions. This aligns with previous research that suggests higher levels of harassment behaviors within male-dominated organizations and industries. What has not been found in previous research is the same-gender, woman-on-woman, uncivil behaviors described by participants in this study. Social identity theory suggests both men and women will attempt to gain, and keep, membership to the “in” group, even if that means engaging in uncivil behavior. Although women in the current study expressed experiencing bullying from both male and female colleagues and superiors the small sample size and diversity within the sample does not allow for generalization. Future research should attempt to secure larger samples of women from similar institutions (i.e., teaching versus research intensive) or with similar demographics (e.g., white versus racial minority, age) in attempts to discover if more specific patterns exist.

Employees who work in environments that lack inclusivity and may be deemed unsafe can experience lower job satisfaction, as well as, lower productivity. Additionally, those employees who face high levels of harassment may leave jobs prematurely, leading to increased spending on the part of the organization to recruit and train new employees. Finally, if students witness these uncivil and bullying behaviors aimed at female faculty, they may deem these behaviors as acceptable and begin to engage in harassing behaviors toward female faculty, as well as, female students. If students consider this unethical behavior as acceptable, the cycle of harassment will continue and organizational culture will not change. The incivility is often manifested in subtle ways and is not always easily recognizable. Ashley described how the behaviors are "more difficult to name," she went on to say, “you can't put your finger on it and go, 'look, see, that's harassment; that's incivility' ... it's created over time and it's a lot more difficult to name and then respond to.” Beth echoed this experience saying the harassment she most often encounters is, “incivility, or benevolent sexism, the more underground type of conflict.”

The findings of this study shed light onto the need for sport management programs to change their organizational culture, norms, and behaviors associated with bullying. Department chairs, deans, and higher level administration must begin to implement policies that work to deter faculty from engaging in all forms of workplace incivility including bullying and encourage them to begin practicing behaviors and establishing norms rooted in inclusion.

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