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Intellectual Property and Higher Education: Challenges and Conflicts

Virgil Van Dusen

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Writing the Letter from the Editor is an opportunity to speak directly to our readers. Each issue, one of the editors takes this opportunity to highlight changes to the AIJ from one issue to the next, and each board member brings their unique perspective to the discussion about the progress and future of the journal.

To prepare to write this letter, I revisited the first I wrote for Volume 1, Issue 1, in the spring of 2011 and the subsequent letters from each of my editorial colleagues. We have seen a great deal of change over the three years of the journal’s existence, and these last six months have been no exception. Two of us on the editorial board made a cross-discipline move to teach in the College of Pharmacy. Because of this transition, the School of Business and the College of Pharmacy on the campus of Southwestern Oklahoma State University have come together in support of the AIJ, a collaboration that emphasizes the value of a cross-disciplinary platform for discussion of all types of administration issues bridging many different industries. We hope this is only the start of the conversations that will develop because of the evolving nature of the disciplines represented on our editorial board. Such dialogue is important in our fast-paced global environment in which knowledge-sharing is essential for the attainment of higher levels of success. Our hope is that the AIJ can play a role in developing these conversations connecting research, practice, and teaching in a practical and useful format that is relevant across disciplines and professions.

To further the development of these conversations, we have added two new features to the AIJ. First, we have begun inviting a practitioner, researcher, or teaching scholar to contribute an article targeted toward the interests and concerns of our readship, the purpose of which is to foster scholarly discussion. The second addition to each AIJ issue is a book review. These review feature texts that our book reviewers think are useful in today’s complex administrative environments.

As always, we look forward to any feedback you may have to improve our service to the academic and practitioner community.

Sincerely,

Tami Moser
Editor-in-Chief
Intellectual Property and Higher Education: Challenges and Conflicts

Virgil Van Dusen, R.Ph J.D.
Southwestern Oklahoma State University

Intellectual property has become a highly coveted asset that can potentially reap a financial windfall for the owner who exploits its utility. Higher education has focused on the discovery of new knowledge, which can translate into intellectual property, but legislation, higher education policy, and/or contractual engagement may dictate ownership or opportunities for ownership of intellectual property by those involved in the discovery process. The dissemination of new knowledge acquired in the discovery of intellectual property may be limited for purposes of protection of commercial development. At the same time, higher education is becoming more involved in the oversight of technology transfer, oversight that includes seeking funding for academic research by private investors, licensing of intellectual property, and serving as a liaison for economic development for local communities. Because of the investment of time and resources in the development of intellectual property, a discovery may result in conflict over ownership, which may, in turn, lead to litigation. The complexity of the overall process of academic discovery moving into commercialization is fraught with challenges and potential conflict.

Keywords: university intellectual property, discovery, litigation, university intellectual property policy, Bayh-Dole Act, technology transfer departments

INTRODUCTION

Intellectual properties are products of the human intellect that are unique, new and innovative, have some value in the marketplace, and are the creation of a single person or a team. Intellectual property can be an idea, an invention, a patented work, an expression or literary creation, a copyrighted work, a trademark, an industrial process, a composition of matter, a medicinal formulation, a computer program, a presentation, or data of digital magnetic origin. While it may seem that almost anything can be considered intellectual property and fall into one of the previously mentioned categories, such is not the case. Consider a recent Supreme Court ruling regarding the discovery of the precise location and sequence of genes, mutations of which can dramatically increase the risk of breast and ovarian cancer. Myriad Genetics, a molecular diagnostic company, obtained several patents from this discovery. Myriad then developed medical tests useful for determining a patient’s cancer risk. However, the Supreme Court ruled that the patents obtain by Myriad were invalid because they were covered “products of nature.” While a tremendous amount of intellectual effort was expended to determine the gene location and sequence, the Patent Act permits patents to be issued to “whoever invents or discovers any new and useful…composition of matter, but laws of nature, natural phenomena, and abstract ideas ‘are basic tools of scientific and technological work’” that lie beyond the domain of patent protection.

In recent years, intellectual property has become increasingly important to academic institutions throughout the United States. As research initiatives continue and expand, in part based on accreditation requirements, old and new issues arise regarding research discoveries. These issues include private sector sponsorship of university research, ownership of research discoveries, dissemination of new knowledge, and technology transfer policies. Also at issue today is whether universities will allow commercial forces to determine their educational missions and academic goals. Interaction and collaboration between university scientists and private firms have become the norm in many educational research facilities. Because of that connection, scientists today are well aware of the opportunity for financial incentives and security based on the commercial success of licensed products, which can result in a continu-
ing debate over the ownership of intellectual property.

Because research can result in the creation of knowledge that may have commercial application, universities commonly have moved toward using a technology transfer department within the university to handle the complexities associated with the licensing of the commercial opportunities presented by university-created intellectual property. Nevertheless, questions arise as to whether these departments and institutions understand the multitude of issues surrounding intellectual property and whether these institutions are sufficiently protected by their current intellectual property policies. This article will explore the many concerns relating to intellectual property in the higher education environment.

**PURPOSE OF HIGHER EDUCATION**

Discovery and knowledge dissemination has always been a key component of the university mission. This dissemination of knowledge in the form of high quality academic publications, abstracts, conference proceedings, and invited presentations is a measure of success, both for the university and for the individual researcher. Knowledge generation and transfer is what we, as academics, do. It is our core business.

However, that core mission has been under challenge. While basic scientists would submit that discovery and knowledge dissemination, rather than profits, should be the focus, today, teaching and research institutions not only aim to serve the public interest with educational objectives, but also focus on the receipt of revenue through the exploitation of intellectual property created by university employees. The primary justification for adding commercial value as a component of the university mission relating to the dissemination of knowledge is that it promotes technological development for the benefit of society as a whole. Yet commercialization of research discoveries has, in many cases, discouraged the dissemination of knowledge in the public domain for the purpose of delaying the release of codified knowledge in scholarly publications in order to protect the novelty of patentable inventions. In such cases, it is profits, royalties, or licensing agreements that drive the university research machine, not research for the sake of research. Faculty, who in previous years may have been hired for their teaching skills or basic science research ability, may now be hired with a focus on expertise in a particular field for the specific purpose of developing intellectual property that can result in commercial application. Higher education no longer sees itself as being devoted merely to education and research. Today higher education also sets policy to assure commercial application of intellectual property.

This policy transformation of merging basic research and applied technology, particularly in the area of biotechnology, is common throughout the industrialized world and, in a more defined context, higher education. A linear model of the modern university with a focus on a profit-generating research mission may now be discovery, patenting, disclosure, licensing, assignment of patent rights, and knowledge dissemination in the form of education and publication. This mechanism for converting research into commercial application and subsequent knowledge for educational purposes is and will continue to be the model for research intensive institutions of higher education.

**EVOLUTION OF RESEARCH**

While research and the discovery of new knowledge has traditionally been encouraged by universities, federal and state legislation has also been a means to accomplish university based research and convert that research into economic gain. The view that universities can foster economic development through technology transfer dates back to the Morrill Act of 1862. The Morrill Act, signed by Abraham Lincoln, allocated public land in each state, based on the 1860 census, to establish what is commonly referred to today as land grant colleges. The grant amounted to 30,000 acres of land for every member of its congressional delegation. The land was then sold off to fund public colleges, with a particular focus on schools that specialized in agriculture, engineering, and science. The act ultimately funded 69 universities.

In 1890, during the Industrial Revolution, another Morrill Act was passed that also increased the endowment and support to colleges for the agricultural and mechanical arts and extended the land grant provisions to sixteen southern states. The Morrill Acts were a major boost to higher education in America as they led to the establishment of extension services as a means of technology transfer and economic development activities.
Wars also have had a propensity to generate research. World War II played a key role in increasing the practice of encouraging university inventions. The government during this time did not have the resources to conduct all the scientific projects necessary to win the war. The need to use the best available technology and know-how created a rapid proliferation of government-sponsored research agreements. An example of this was the $6,000-funded research team that would ultimately embark on the two billion dollar Manhattan Project, which was designed to research and produce an atomic bomb. Congress continued after World War II to fund university sponsored research. In 1950, Congress allocated $15 million to establish the National Science Foundation (NSF) to support basic scientific research at universities and continues today to fund, through a variety of methods, research initiatives.

**BASIC VERSUS APPLIED RESEARCH**

Basic research is driven by a scientist’s curiosity or interest in a scientific question. The main motivation has been to expand human knowledge, not to create or invent something. Generally, there is no obvious commercial value to the discoveries that result from basic research. Applied research, however, is designed to solve practical problems of the modern world, rather than to acquire knowledge for knowledge’s sake. This type of research commonly results in discoveries with commercial application and, as a result, possible patentable products.

The demand-side pull of patents may lead universities to favor research pathways that generate patentable results. The result may be to fundamentally skew university-provided infrastructure toward applied, readily commercialized, and profitable research at the expense of basic research that generates greater long-term spillovers. Academic patenting, fueled by profit motives, may critically alter university research agendas. The allure of patents and commercial interests for universities will in all likelihood increase. Contrary to this applied research commercialization aspect promoted by private industry, the most significant funder of university research—the federal government—has traditionally focused on basic rather than applied research. For example, the National Institutes of Health, which provides about thirty billion dollars per year for biomedical research, largely funds fundamental biological investigations rather than research with immediate commercial application. Unfortunately, the future of such funding may be in question as government deficits mount and expenditures are limited to projects with possible application.

**INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY: WHAT HAS VALUE?**

Intellectual property is commonly deemed patentable inventions or discoveries, trademarks, or copyright items. These patents may be viewed as the crown jewel for the university, as they provide a vehicle for universities to project their unique norms and objectives into the marketplace and, at the same time, reap a financial benefit. Even though new knowledge may be considered intellectual property and may be patentable, not all intellectual property may have value to a university.

For instance, patenting of basic biomedical tools could potentially inhibit basic research; therefore, universities may conscientiously choose not to patent certain discoveries—such as DNA sequences that only serve as markers—which can be foundational research tools, and by so doing assure wide availability in the public domain. Another method universities can use to assure widespread distribution and adoption of discoveries that are patented at university expense is the use of royalty-free nonexclusive licenses for academic research, allowing the use of such technology to be acquired at much lower fees than that of the commercial use application. In effect, there is a bifurcation of the discovery into a research use versus commercialization pool, creating an opportunity for affordable access for noncommercial research purposes.

Universities may also use their patents to push non-market objectives. For example, universities are leveraging their patents on essential medicines to enhance the availability of such products to underserved communities. Such is the case with AIDS medicines. One well-documented case involves Yale University, which patented Stavudine, a medicine used in antiretroviral combination therapy useful in treating HIV infections. Yale exclusively licensed the patent to Bristol-Myers-Squibb (BMS), which manufactured the medicine. With the urging of Medecins San Frontieres, Yale and BMS entered into an agreement whereby they would permit the sale of generics in South Africa; additionally, BMS agreed to substantially lower the price for stavudine throughout sub-Saharan Africa for governments and non-profit organizations, thus enhancing access to this critical therapeutic resource. Such an action can reflect the altruistic nature of the university community.
OWNERSHIP OF INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY AND LEGISLATION

Before 1980, the Federal Government’s consistent position was that the results of any research and development funded with taxpayer’s money should be in the public domain and freely available to the public. Absent protection to develop intellectual property created with some form of governmental funding, U.S. productivity began to fall and the Japanese economic engine began rising to competitively challenge domestic output.

To address these concerns, in 1980 Congress passed the Bayh-Dole Act, otherwise known as the Government Patent Policy Act. The impetus for Bayh-Dole was the belief that a wealth of basic, useful research developed in U.S. universities was languishing in those ivory towers. A frequently cited statistic in hearings on the Act was that, as of 1976, less than 5% of the 28,000 government-owned patents were licensed. This figure was attributed to private industry’s reluctance to invest in commercializing federally funded research because they could not obtain exclusive rights to it. The Bayh-Dole Act provided a “bridge” over this valley by allowing universities to take title to inventions developed with federal funds and to grant exclusive licenses to entities willing to commercialize such technology.

The outcome was also a change in the presumption of title to any invention made by small businesses and other non-profit entities through the use of government funds from the government to the contractor-grantee. This act ended confusion and uncertainty over the ownership and commercialization of government sponsored research. Until that time, the ownership and commercialization of government sponsored research was governed by twenty-six separate federal agency regulations. The Act permitted organizations to retain title to inventions they created while working on a government sponsored program, apply for and receive patents when appropriate, and pursue options to commercialize their discoveries. The Act was expanded in 1983 by a presidential memorandum to cover any private party to a funding agreement. This expansion permitted large, for-profit companies to also retain title to inventions developed with federal governmental funding in order to accelerate the commercialization of technology for the public’s benefit.

Before the passage of Bayh-Dole legislation, universities, as a general matter, did not aggressively pursue intellectual property rights. Exceptions to this are evident as may be noted by reviewing actions of the Wisconsin Alumni Research Foundation, which was chartered in 1925. The passage of the Bayh-Dole Act of 1980 ushered in a second era characterized by vastly increased university licensing, as well as concomitant rises in technology transfer offices, licensing revenues, and, most controversial, commercial influences on universities. Since the passage of the Bayh-Dole Act, universities and other public research organizations have been some of the most active patent producers in biotechnology, and patent licenses and options executed have increased steadily. Nevertheless, while universities still retain the right to taxpayer-funded inventions under Bayh-Dole, they do not exercise that right indiscriminately. In some cases, universities forebear upstream research tools so as to enhance their widespread availability, as was previously mentioned.

Because of the Bayh-Dole Act, research and development managers increasingly have approached research-producing universities to help industry meet the demand for growth and innovation. Seeing the potential for mutual economic benefit, university administrators embraced the joint venture concept. Agreements created from these joint ventures provided universities with new operating funds and offered companies funding academic research exclusive rights to that research. Because of the need to protect the prized information resulting from this research, information that typically flowed freely from academic endeavors now flowed in only one direction: to the source of the funding—the company. This restriction in knowledge dissemination was often viewed as compromising an academic’s ethical posture. Companies played hardball based on contribution to the research endeavor. Companies insisted that funding would only be available and continue in return for research secrecy and exclusive rights to the intellectual property produced. Because the money was such a tangible resource, both universities and their faculty have reluctantly relinquished ownership rights and, in so doing, their rights to an immediate open exchange of knowledge and information.

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY AND UNIVERSITY POLICIES

The interest in the ownership by universities of intellectual property occasioned by the Bayh-Dole Act has precipitated rather intense efforts by many institutions to establish or refine policies defining the respective rights of all parties.
to own, use, and otherwise profit from such intellectual property.24 While it makes sense that universities would need such policies, a survey reported in 2002 indicated that the majority of universities had no intellectual property rights policies or policies.25 However, the last few years have witnessed a dramatic change in that circumstance, as policies regarding ownership of intellectual property are now readily accessible on the websites of many, if not most, U.S. colleges and universities. Even regional universities, not traditionally considered to be research intensive institutions, are likewise implementing extensive policies dealing with these same issues.

While typical university intellectual property policies include a statement of purposes and objectives—such as encouraging creativity, fostering innovation, the sharing of ideas, and the protecting of academic freedom—the overriding reasons for such policies may really be to define who owns intellectual property and thereby provide, through careful guidance, for the future generation of revenue for the university. For example, Boston College’s Policies and Procedures Manual expressly recognizes that “scholarly and research efforts often have social and commercial implications” and explains that its policy is designed to “define the conditions of ownership, legal protection, development and licensing of intellectual properties conceived or first reduced to practice by any Boston College employee or student.”26 Harvard University has a similar approach, but further clarifies the importance of exploiting the possible financial windfall by stating in its policy that, “Although this policy recognizes that public benefit should be placed before financial gain, it is appropriate and often desirable for the University and inventors and authors to benefit financially from the use of a particular invention or creative work.”27

Once creativity and money start to mix, there can be tension between those who believe that they are entitled to a vested right of ownership. Creators and inventors of intellectual property can easily rationalize that if they invented a product, they should own it. However, university policies typically alter this assumption. Policies must be drafted in such a way to define ownership rights so that administrators, faculty, staff, and students may peacefully co-exist. In general, university intellectual property policies cast a wide net in bringing a variety of works and inventions under the umbrella of the policy. Frankly, anytime intellectual property is created at the institution’s direction, on its premises, with its resources, by its employees, students, or by grants awarded, there is a high likelihood that the policies will apply, specifying ownership rights and/or sharing of royalties or profits.

Policies, much like contracts, need to be clear and unambiguous, addressing common issues and providing for methods of conflict resolution. University legal counsel should closely supervise the drafting and editing of such documents even though such policies may be put forth by Intellectual Property Committees. Final approval by administration of such proposed policies should include close examination and may require several drafts exchanged between the committee and administration. In light of recent litigation, periodic review of these policies should take place in order to address concerns. All those involved as stakeholders should be made aware of policies and policy changes, and should be provided with in-services regarding current university policies, thus potentially addressing concerns that can arise over ownership issues. Some universities are known to provide these mandates to faculty on an annual basis, the purpose of which is to give notice to faculty members of the ongoing importance of the intellectual property policies.

In the event of a dispute over ownership of intellectual property, policies should be in place to provide express provisions for potentially controversial interpretations and determinations of ownership under the policy. Policies should clearly set forth procedures for resolution of disputes, which will hopefully avoid litigation. Such policies will detail the grievance process, methods of mediation, possible hearings, and even possible appeals, which may conclude with a decision by the university president.28

**OWNERSHIP OF KNOWLEDGE AND DISCOVERY**

In recent years, universities have taken the approach with regard to intellectual property that all inventions, patentable products, or copyrightable materials are subject to university policy, which typically gives the university first claim to the right of ownership. While such policies may allow universities to claim ownership, these same policies often expressly acknowledge the possibility of the university waiving or releasing such right in favor of the inventor or author.29 The university may do so if it believes that the discovery or invention is non-patentable, or that it does not warrant further evaluation as to patentability, or if a discovery or invention is returned to the university after negative evaluation by its patent evaluation agent(s). Universities may likewise simply ignore the creation of newly created in-
tellectual property because of a lack of interest by the university in pursuing ownership, even though such ownership is clearly permitted by university policy. A variety of reasons may exist for the university to ignore such intellectual property. For example, these creations may not generate interest for the university because the technology transfer department does not understand the significance of the discovery. In some cases, administrations may view certain types of intellectual property as not worth the effort to protect, or there may be a lack of interest among university officials in enforcing policies intended to benefit the university.

While policies regarding intellectual property may appear to clearly vest ownership in the university, a variety of situations may raise questions about that ownership. Not all situations neatly fit into the policies addressing intellectual property ownership. For example, one might ask who owns the intellectual property created by a faculty member who conducts research on a product, leaves and goes to another university or private organization, and then completes the research. If the research was conducted on personal time and used minimal university resources, who owns the intellectual property? What is “minimal university resources”? Who owns intellectual property, and to what degree, when a private sponsor who provided financial or other support withdraws from the project before the research is completed? Would partial ownership be applicable? While the university policy is the logical place to denote ownership based on unique situations, not all situations can be foreseen. Litigation has resulted when the clarity of ownership of intellectual property is uncertain and parties are disputing who owns what.

It is not uncommon for universities to address student creations of intellectual property in much the same way as faculty creations are handled. Typically the university view would be that, if the student was an employee performing work for hire or sponsored by commissioned research, or who had made significant use of the university resources, then the university reserves the right to claim ownership in the student’s creation. Students, especially at the undergraduate level, are becoming more involved in research projects. Today these students are acutely aware of the reward that may await a new discovery, considering the visibility of other young people who are finding financial success for their applied intellectual property products. Policies, once again, should be clearly drafted to address ownership of intellectual property by the university in relation to both graduate and undergraduate students. General university policies may include clauses indicating that, as a condition of enrollment, students will be subject to the policy regarding intellectual property and, simultaneously upon enrollment, grant the university a royalty-free license to use their works even if the circumstances under the policy do not lead to university ownership of the work.

General university policies regarding intellectual property may yield to specific research policy handbooks when it comes to this topic involving students. For example, Stanford University details guidelines on relationships between students, including postdoctoral students and outside entities, in its Research Policy Handbook. While such policies may encourage research activities, these same policies can declare that both the university and the outside entity may retain ownership rights in any resulting intellectual property created by the student.

CONCERNS REGARDING PUBLICATION OF NEW KNOWLEDGE

While universities may encourage the creation of intellectual property, disseminating such knowledge may be tempered by the applicable commercial value of the knowledge and the need to protect it prior to publication. This is especially true when universities accept sponsored research grants from industry which demands restricted access to results. Contract clauses in these private grants may specify delays or limitations in the publication of research results, with the natural outcome being a suppression of research results for the purpose of commercial gain. Intellectual property created with private funding, for their purpose, to be used in application for the creation of a profitable product, will necessarily need to have restrictive access consistent with any other company trade secret. All this delay in openness makes perfect sense, considering that private enterprise is well known for protecting trade secrets. It is accepted business practice for a commercial enterprise to vigorously defend patentable property and trade secrets.

Competition for private and public funds has encouraged universities to accept sponsored research grants from industry that restrict access to results. Contract clauses specifying delays or limitations in the publication of research results and the possibility of the suppression of research results for commercial gain are and should be a grave concern. Higher educational institutions should find some conflict, possibly academic schizophrenia, with this thought as contrary to their primary purposes: the creation and dissemination of knowledge. Since the government is so involved in sponsoring research, the NIH recommends that universities allow corporate sponsors to prohibit the publication of
new knowledge for no more than one or two months. This is the typical time required to file a patent application. On a practical note, while an immediate news release might indicate the creation of new intellectual property, publication of such information in a peer reviewed journal detailing the find may be months away.

Since the passage of the Bayh-Dole Act, lengthier delays in knowledge dissemination are becoming standard. For example, in exchange for $25 million to fund basic research in the Department of Plant and Microbial Biology, “Berkley granted Novartis first right to negotiate licenses on roughly a third of the department’s discoveries” and allowed Novartis to postpone publication for up to four months. Such delays will probably become typical, versus the exception, as more power is exerted by private investment in research endeavors. This power can be noted in industry’s contribution to academia of approximately two billion dollars per year.

UNIVERSITY LICENSING OF DISCOVERIES AND TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER

While higher education may be interested in capitalizing on intellectual property, the expense of attaching commercial value to knowledge is not cost-free. Initially significant funds will need to be allocated by the university to set up the infrastructure for capturing the commercial value of transferred knowledge. This begins by establishing a technology transfer office. This office may begin with a single individual sitting in the university’s main research center, or the function could be carried out by engaging companies with multiple personnel with technology transfer expertise. In any event, success is not guaranteed, but costs are. Regional or smaller universities with limited funds and high aspirations will find themselves competing with large university operations for research faculty, private funding, government grants, and adequate research facilities, and may find themselves struggling for years to meet strategic goals with the capability of producing any results. These organizations must realize that there will be instances in which infrastructure costs may far outweigh the returns.

Patents are a key to the protection of intellectual property and generation of revenue. And while patents may be important to the university, the real measure of success may be viewed as the amount of patented technology that has been transferred to the private sector for further development into commercially viable products and processes that are useful to society. However, different universities will have different philosophies regarding the extent to which they will pursue patent opportunities, and it is the technology transfer department that will be the go-to group for oversight and decision-making in this area. Many universities, such as the University of California and Columbia University, have been particularly aggressive in seeking and asserting patent protection. Others, however, owing to their unique culture, such as Johns Hopkins University—a major recipient of research funds—have been reluctant to assert intellectual property rights on their discoveries.

Revenue maximization continues to constitute the overriding focus of most university technology transfer activities. Today, universities operate technology-licensing offices to manage their patent portfolios as aggressively as any private enterprise would. Offices of “technology transfer” are becoming offices of “technology transfer and economic development.” There is now a growing trend toward universities pressuring their technology transfer specialists to become not only stewards of the universities’ intellectual property assets, but also to serve as liaisons to the region’s economic development. Trends in academic patenting indicate the importance of academic research to economic gain not only to the university but also to the region and state in which the university is located. There is increasing pressure on universities to forge stronger relations with local government economic development agencies, as well as the business community.

CONTRACTUAL AGREEMENTS REGARDING DISCOVERY

There appears to be a trend of “privatization” even of public universities, such that the real distinction between public and private universities may soon have little analytical value. More and more, university faculty, regardless of whether working for a public or private university, look to what corporations want researched because corporations that once gave unrestricted money to colleges to cultivate good will now mainly want projects that have direct commercial payoffs. Furthermore, corporations typically ask, and rightfully so, for the first, and possibly exclusive rights to intellectual property resulting from research.

The practical benefit associated with the drive to realize the commercial value of knowledge is that it provides a re-
ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL IMPACT OF DISCOVERY

Today, universities operate in an economic climate that requires both capital and knowledge, taking advantage of government technology initiatives (namely the Bayh-Dole Act), and serving as a catalyst for the creation of a large number of new, incubated companies. There is great opportunity in creating a system that can capitalize on intellectual property transfer. In 1998 alone, colleges amassed more than $576 million in royalties from inventions licensed to industry and were awarded more than 2,681 patents. The institutions surveyed reported 279 start-up companies based on inventions by their faculty or graduate students. Fast forward to 2004 and one finds that, in that year alone, approximately 154 U.S. universities reaped over $1 billion in net patent licensing income, executed 3,928 new licenses, and were issued over 3,800 patents, largely as a result of some type of university-industry technology transfer initiatives. Based on data from the Association of University Technology Managers, hundreds of start-up companies are formed annually on the basis of licensed academic inventions.

In the 1980s, after Congress passed the Bayh-Dole Act, the small business incubator model began to be used for university and federally funded lab technology commercialization. Generally, incubators receive financial backing from a number of resources. Overall, however, in the 1990s, the largest contributors were local and state governments, foundations, academic institutions, corporations, financial institutions, and economic development agencies (EDA). The majority of incubators are owned and operated by economic development agencies, yet universities are known to sponsor technology incubators and are often willing to take equity as partial compensation for a license agreement since start-up companies are typically cash poor.

Likewise, there is tremendous outside pressure on universities to forge stronger relations with local government economic development agencies and the business community. Local governments may see the university research community as a source of potential revenue in the form of startup companies and entrepreneurial activity. Universities are a rich source of science and technology that can support local government and business development, as well as economic growth. In some cases, local governments are willing to support the development of these technologically rich environments. In 1996, the Association of University Technology Managers (AUTM) estimated that a survey of licensing activities of academic institutions, nonprofit organizations, and patent management firms add more than $24.8 billion and 212,500 jobs to the U.S. national economy each year. Another study estimates that technology transfer programs put $434 million into local economies annually. Therefore universities can have a great seedbed effect on their local economic environment.

Technology transfer specialists need proper training in order to facilitate communication and build coalitions between the relevant local economic planning entities in the public and private sector. University technology transfer offices and entrepreneurship programs personnel and the inventors with whom they work would no doubt attest that there is often a substantial amount of red tape involved in the process of seizing opportunities to commercialize university-generated inventions, but it can work with commitment and planning.

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Van Dusen
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nesses and entrepreneurial projects is an important component of economic growth, and incubators can provide the forum for these collaborations. These incubators may position themselves directly in the development path between the laboratory or university and the market. Incubators are not only important for job creation, but also for wealth creation, industrial regeneration, and technology transfer.

FACULTY REWARDS

Although it is true that most universities are prepared to let their professors fully enjoy the insignificant rewards of publishing an article, they continue to formulate policies that assert their joint or full ownership over property that is created with the use of university materials or facilities by faculty. But even with ownership assured by the university under polices, many universities provide some sort of split-royalty provision, thereby allowing the faculty member to reap some financial reward from their efforts. Other financial rewards may flow back into the department of the faculty member so that funding will be available for future research needs. The pot of gold reaped from intellectual property on the university campus is seldom reserved to one party, but rather is distribute to multiple parties. As a result, accounting measures need to be put in place to assure proper dispersal of receipts of royalties received by the institution.

LITIGATION ASSOCIATED WITH INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

The commercialization of knowledge brings together a unique collection of collaborators: university administrators, researchers, and industry. Each of these groups is likely to bring quite different interests, agendas, and experience to the bargaining table. Administrators certainly are considering cost recovery by way of licensing fees and ongoing contractual benefits. Researchers understand the technology and science involved. Industry, on the other hand, is concerned about commercial production, marketing, and long-term benefits of product development. Nevertheless, all of these groups bring to the table the concern of determining ownership and value of the discovered item. Who owns it? What is it worth? How will the proceeds be shared, if at all? When will fees be paid? Will there be restrictions on product distribution or production?

What all of this should tell us is that these parties may have different agendas, but little guidance in creating a working contract. Yet details in such documents are critical. Intellectual property attorneys are necessary to craft working contracts that provide details for clarity between the parties. They should be engaged early and consulted often in order to address concerns and prevent, if possible, litigation regarding intellectual property.

However, even with a comprehensive contract and/or policy, litigation may ensue. For example, Interactive Return Service (IRS), a corporation sponsored research at Virginia Polytechnic Institute (also known as Virginia Tech) and agreed to reimburse the university for the costs incurred to conduct research and development. The corporation stopped making payments early, yet, six months later, agreed to enter into an industry project agreement with an intellectual property company that was to address funding for the research and intellectual property rights. Another six months passed, and the university ceased working on the project, assigning its rights to another intellectual property company, and then that company licensed those rights to a third party. IRS then filed a breach of contract action against Virginia Tech. The court ruled that the first company, IRS, may still have property rights, even though it failed to make appropriate payments, as the university waived its requirement for prompt payment because of its past history of working on the project without requirement of prompt payment. In this case, Virginia Tech kept the agreement alive by not requiring prompt payment. This and the fact that Virginia Tech sold the license to a third party did permit the possibility of damages to the originally contracting party, which ultimately resulted in an award of $110,000 to IRS.

In the case of University of Pittsburgh v. Townsend, the university alleged that the defendants Townsend and Nutt subverted and misappropriated the university’s rights and interests in valuable medical scanning technology, namely a combined PET/CT scanner that was developed collaboratively at its campus over the course of several years. The university also alleged that the defendants’ wrongful actions included breaches of, and interference with, the University of Pittsburg’s contractual rights to joint ownership in the technology, as well as tortuous misrepresentations and misappropriation. The university also alleged ownership in certain patents.
Dr. Townsend, when hired by the university, disclosed the existence of his agreement to the university through conflict of interest forms. While federal research grants are applied for by professors, any funds awarded are paid directly to the applicable university. Though a grant from the NIH was utilized for certain research performed by Townsend, Townsend testified that there was no NIH funding for the clinical validation of the PET/CT scanner, and that, in fact, NIH had specifically declined to fund the clinical portion of the process. However, the NIH Final Report stated that the original grant proposal did include funding from a preliminary clinical evaluation of the scanner.

The key to this case is that the university should have been able to see that Townsend had assigned his rights to the invention to another company, and not to the university, as the university claimed he was required to do. The University of Pittsburgh claimed that Townsend committed fraud in concealing his assignment and, because of that action, the statute of limitations on the action should be tolled until the fraud was identified. The court held, however, that, because of the prior disclosure by Townsend, the university's mistake, misunderstanding, or lack of knowledge in regard to Townsend was simply not sufficient to toll the statute of limitations. The prior actual notice of Townsend's conflict of interest arising from his assignment of his ownership could easily have been discovered by reasonable due diligence of the university.

In yet another case a dispute arose over an invention in the field of mass spectrometry that Dr. John Fenn developed at Yale University. Fenn was an expert in the field of mass spectrometry, eventually winning the Nobel Prize for the mass spectrometry invention which was the subject of the dispute. Even before Fenn joined Yale in 1967, Yale had policies that provided that patentable inventions resulting from a faculty member's research conducted at Yale belong to Yale and the faculty member, unless Yale expressly released its interest in such inventions. Fenn would have been aware of such policies, as evidence indicated that he had served on panels at Yale that reviewed the institution's policy on intellectual property.

The threshold question in this case was whether university intellectual property policies are generally enforceable. The federal district court in Connecticut answered in the affirmative, stating that, “University patent policies such as Yale's have long been recognized as a valid and enforceable part of the contract of employment." In general, court opinions have favored university enforcement of such policies, despite some arguable grounds to at least question that outcome.

The course of this case resulted in Fenn bringing an action against the university, alleging conversion, theft, tortious interference with a business relationship, and violations of the Connecticut Unfair Trade Practices Act (CUTPA) after Yale entered into its own licensing agreement with a private company to market the invention. The action concerned a patent that was issued to the professor while he was working for the university. The university asserted counterclaims against the professor, seeking an accounting and assignment of the patent, as well as damages for breach of contract and fiduciary duty, fraud, negligent misrepresentation, conversion, theft, and CUTPA violations.

The court found that the professor violated the university's patent policy and committed a material breach of the policy. The court also found that the professor had engaged in fraudulent misrepresentation and fraudulent nondisclosure. Fenn had stated to Yale that he did not believe the invention had the potential for much commercial value because any patent issued would be a “use” patent, as opposed to an “apparatus” patent, and, as such, it would be difficult to protect against infringement. Fenn did not disclose that Pfizer Corporation, colleagues at the Yale Medical School, and others had previously expressed a strong interest in the commercial viability of the invention. Fenn also did not disclose his own view, and the view of others, that the invention was in fact “revolutionary” or “important” and that it would likely have substantial commercial value. Yale, therefore, had not filed a patent application before the statutory deadline, relying on Fenn's representations about the importance of the invention. Nevertheless Fenn, in his own name, and within the statutory time frame, filed a patent application that was financed by a company that had exploited some of Fenn's prior inventions and who subsequently received licensing of the patent from Fenn. The court ruled against Fenn, awarding Yale $545,000 in royalties and $500,000 in legal fees.

**CONCLUSION**

Intellectual property created at the university level has resulted in challenges and conflicts. These challenges and conflicts revolve around ownership, disclosure of new knowledge, and relationships with private business entities.
Academic administrators, technology transfer departments, faculty, students, private investors, local governments, and attorneys all have become important players in determining how intellectual property can and will be used. Additional challenges and conflicts will arise as more universities expand their interest in intellectual property and as this area of law matures.

NOTES

3. 35 U.S.C. §101
9. Id.
15. Id. At 1034-37.
16. 35 U.S.C. §§200-211, 301-307
22. Kesan, supra note 13, at 2202-03.
33. Id. At (3)(C)(2).
37. Id. at 40-41.
38. Robert Buderi, From the Ivory Tower to the Bottom Line, 103 Tech.Rev. 4, at 82-86.
42. Press, supra note 36.
44. Id. at 414.
45. Id. at 399.

47. Hamilton, supra note 43, at 397.


55. Rezendes, supra note 21, at 17.

56. Dennis R. Trune & Lewis N. Goslin, University Technology Transfer Programs: A Profit/Loss Analysis, 57 Technological Forecasting & Social Change, 197, 202 (March 1998).


59. Financing Environmental Technology, supra note 52, at 75.


64. Id. at 628-629.

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The original goal of the Higher Education Act of 1965, the amendments to that act in 1972, and reauthorizations through 1998 was to increase accessibility of higher education to all. Initially these system-level efforts substantially enhanced equity, but recent enrollment trends raise the question: Is our system becoming more or less equitable? By conducting a policy analysis of the HEA reauthorizations and other legislation, in respect to policy decision-making and policy implementation on federal and state levels, this paper examines how financial aid policy influences college access and choice for low- to moderate-income undergraduate students. Key elements in the federal policy process are examined and recommendations for future state policy are addressed.

Keywords: higher education, financial aid, public policy, access, choice, equity

INTRODUCTION

The role student aid plays in American higher education finance has evolved in recent decades with limiting consequences for students (Hearn & Longanecker, 1985; Heller, 1999; McPherson & Schapiro, 1998; Mumper, 1998; Paulsen & St. John, 2002). How undergraduate education is aided financially with respect to differing student social backgrounds has an effect on access to and choice of undergraduate college. Furthermore, pricing, student aid, and the demand for college enrollment have set trends that directly impact college opportunity (Heller, 1999). Succinctly, patterns of rising tuition have been replacing government spending at both public and private institutions. States have decreased funding, federal grants have remained fairly constant, institutional grants have tripled, and federal loans have dramatically increased and changed due to the needs analysis methodology introduced in the 1992 reauthorization of the Higher Education Act (HEA) (McPherson & Schapiro, 1998). “High tuition, high aid... with an emphasis on loans rather than grants... [negatively] influence opportunities of students in different income groups to attain higher education” (McPherson & Schapiro, 1998, p. 35). By conducting a policy analysis of the HEA reauthorizations and other legislation, in respect to policy decision-making and policy implementation on federal and state levels, this paper examines how financial aid policy influences college access and choice for low- to moderate-income undergraduate students.

The HEA of 1965, an omnibus bill, changed federal support for higher education. In the mid-1960’s, federal support consisted primarily of development, research, and student or institutional subsidies in areas defined as national priorities. The HEA of 1965, signed into law by Lyndon B. Johnson, appropriated $804 million to support community service and continuing education; library assistance, training, and research; strengthening developing institutions; student assistance; teacher programs; and facilities construction (Hannah, 1996; Prisco, Hurley, Carton, & Richardson, Jr., 2002). “The clear intent of federal policymakers was that higher education remain a federal concern but a state responsibility” (Prisco et al., 2002, p. 3). Original federal authority did not extend to administration, personnel, curriculum, or library resources of any institution except in three areas: (a) equal protection (Fourteenth Amendment), (b) research and development appropriations, and (c) fund matching of loans for postsecondary students. “Subsequent reauthorizations have pressured states to establish some form of coordinating agency, initially to monitor academic quality and later to become involved in accreditation-like activities” (Prisco et al., 2002, p. 3).
HEA reauthorizations occur every six years, building on, extending, or modifying the programs established by the 1965 law. Reauthorizations reflect the changing needs of higher education and associated constituencies, as well as policy leaders’ perceptions of national priorities. For example, “the 1998 reauthorization included provisions for the establishment of a Web-based education commission to address technology-driven needs” (Prisco et al., 2002, p. 3).

The HEA was substantially amended in 1972 and reauthorized in 1980 and 1986. By 1992, and continuing in 1998, HEA reauthorizations accounted for 74% of all financial aid available to students enrolled in postsecondary education in the United States, “thus making it perhaps the single most important piece of legislation affecting higher education (Hannah, 1996). The federal government impacts higher education performance primarily through defining the terms under which financial resources are distributed. “Student financial assistance is at the core of federal strategies for influencing higher education priorities and outcomes” (Prisco et al., 2002, p. 12). Federal student aid, which is typically based on financial need, exceeds all other federal appropriations for higher education combined (Prisco et al., 2002). Two-thirds of all full-time undergraduates receive financial aid through programs funded by the federal government, the states, and postsecondary institutions. “During the 1990s, total aid nearly doubled (in constant dollars), while loan aid increased by 136% (Prisco, et al., 2002, p. 13). Not surprisingly, regulatory requirements which maintain a level of control by the federal government are attached to distributed federal funds.

With the government controlling the financial aid purse strings, institutions can be coerced into following federal and state requirements for collecting and reporting data for assessing the degree to which postsecondary institutions are responsive to public priorities. Furthermore, federal and state requirements for reporting information in specified formats apply to all institutions and systems receiving federal funds. Prisco et al. (2002) state:

> The data bases produced through this massive collection and reporting effort support ongoing studies of a wide range of higher education indicators, including student progress; effects on financial assistance; progress in improving access and equity for underserved populations; student completion; faculty characteristics and job satisfaction; accountability; and consumer protection. (p. 19)

Although the intentions of the federal government to examine existing policy and increase safeguards by promoting accountability across institutional systems seem beneficial, exactly how policy implementation affects students is an outcome which will need further policy improvement. Accountability measures for completion rates at the state level have been highlighted in many reports such as Measuring Up 2004: The National Report Card on Higher Education; Policies in Sync: Appropriations, Tuition, and Financial Aid for Higher Education; A Matter of Degrees: Improving Graduation Rates in Four-Year Colleges and Universities; and Accountability for Better Results: A National Imperative for Higher Education, to name just a few. The issue of improving access and choice for low- to moderate-income undergraduate students with regard to postsecondary institutions is currently being researched, and the need to improve policy is being established. “Too often, policymakers ignore the many challenges entailed in the effective implementation of new legislation” (Rice & Hampton, 2000, p. 3).

The 1998 HEA reauthorization focused on the federal student aid programs making only minor modifications, but the legislation, with emphasis on implementation, enacted three new initiatives: Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness in Undergraduate Programs (GEAR-UP), Learning Anywhere Anytime Program (LAAP), and Title II Teacher Quality. These initiatives go beyond traditional financial aid programs to recognize that K-12 schooling must be improved, particularly for disadvantaged youths, and “guarantees of college financial aid delivered at a much earlier age” (Rice & Hampton, 2000, p. 2).

**ISSUE OF IMPROVING ACCESS AND CHOICE FOR UNDERSERVED POPULATIONS**

The original goal of the Higher Education Act of 1965, the amendments to that act in 1972, and reauthorizations through 1998 was to increase accessibility of higher education to all. Initially these system-level efforts substantially enhanced equity, but recent enrollment trends raise the question: *Is our system becoming more or less equitable?* Current governmental policy-making relates educational opportunity to access or the ability to attend college. Policy providing access to a student primarily means that a student can attend college.
In consideration of equity in higher education, are over-represented high-SES students accessing elite institutions or choosing elite institutions? Do middle- and low-SES students obtain their choice of institution? The concept of student choice raises a new question: access to what type of institution? Providing choice to a student goes beyond access to mean that a student can attend an institution appropriate for his or her desires and academic abilities. Unfortunately, the financial hurdles to elite institutions are still barriers for low-income students. In order to judge the effectiveness of government policy in encouraging choice, the concept needs to be defined within the public policy context. Specifically, college choice refers to college admittance outcomes (i.e., the pattern of enrollment at various types of institutions are increasingly becoming more stratified). As Astin and Oseguera’s (2006) article explains, public policy is not addressing the growing trend of stratification and declining equity for students to choose elite institutions of higher education.

**KEY ELEMENTS IN THE FEDERAL POLICY PROCESS**

“Constraints and crosscurrent” shape the dynamics of policy making in four areas: (a) the structure of the decision-making process; (b) the participants; (c) the economic, social, and intellectual environment; and (d) “the impact of the policy outcome itself” (Hannah, 1996, p. 501). Understanding these critical components and their relationships enables a better comprehension toward the policy process of the HEA reauthorizations.

**Structure of the Policy Makers**

“The structural fragmentation of the American policy making process invites wide participation and is open to broad environmental influences” (Hannah, 1996, p. 501). The enormous number of loosely-coupled participants influences a “highly relative and pluralistic decision-making system characterized by compromise, incrementalism and continual adjustment, yet subject to biases in one direction or the other” (Jones as cited in Hannah, 2002, p. 501). Thus, the policy outcomes reflect the preferences of influential participants.

**Participants**

The three major clusters of players active in HEA reauthorizations include:

1. a legislative [House and Senate] cluster of the relevant congressional authorizing and appropriating sub-committee and committee members and their staffs; 
2. an administrative cluster including the president, the Department of Education, the Office of Management and Budget, and the Executive Office of Policy Development; and
3. a loose cluster of affected interest groups including (a) the higher education “community” of associations and lobbying firms representing higher education institutions and programs in Washington, and (b) a coalition of financial organizations, professional associations, and lobby firms whose private and public sector agency members service HEA’s student aid programs. (Hannah, 1996, p. 513)

The legislative cluster is politics at its best—“the totality of interrelationships in the higher education arena involving power, authority, influence, and manipulation” (Encarta English Dictionary Online). The reauthorization process is dominated by the chairs, members, and staffs of the relevant House and Senate authorizing committees and sub-committees concerned with higher education where political power shifts affect the policy outcomes.

The administrative cluster defines the extent of participation of the Department of Education (DOE) in reauthorizations of the HEA; different administrations (President and Secretary for Education) call for different amounts of participation by the DOE. For example, in 1986, President Reagan’s anti-DOE stance meant that DOE sent recommendations only at the end of the legislative process. However, in 1992, Secretary Cavasos wanted the DOE to be an active participant and created an Internal Steering Committee to develop HEA recommendations (Hanna, 1996).

The higher education community cluster comprises advocacy organizations, which have no statutory authority for postsecondary education in Washington. Although there are hundreds of higher education organizations, the six key advocacy groups that represent institutional interests include the American Council on Education, the American Association of Independent Colleges and Universities, the National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges, and the American Association of Community Colleges (Prisco et al., 2002).
Given the number of participants, higher education policy development may best be described as incremental. Policy formation is incremental in three ways: “It occurs within the limits of a slowly evolving political culture; it’s built on and related to existing policy; and it draws from existing policy models” (Hanna, 1996, p. 499). Within this policy process, specific policy outcomes are shaped by the skillfulness and agendas of key participants and the limitations and conflicting trend of ideas and opinions of the political environment.

The Decision Making Process

The incremental theory of decision making in policy development describes how public officials actually make decisions. Instrumentalism has three characteristics: (a) “the decision maker considers only some of the alternatives for dealing with the problem, and these will differ only incrementally from existing policies,” (b) “only a limited number of ‘important’ consequences are evaluated” (i.e. responses of the vocal middle-class to affordability of higher education), and (c) “decision making is geared more to the amelioration of the present” (i.e., politicians meeting the needs of middle-class political stakeholders) (Anderson, 1997, p. 179). By taking into consideration the process of adjusting policy as a direct response to the political reactions of constituents, the components of incrementalism describe the deficiency of current finance policies in addressing the needs of low-income families. “Decisions made by incrementalists would reflect the interests of the most powerful and organized interests in society” (Anderson, 1997, p. 179).

The significance of this higher education policy trend away from enabling access for lower-income families is that it negatively impacts college access and choice for low-income students, and little progress has been made to close the gap in college choice over the past 20 years (Perna, 2002).

In response to middle-class stakeholder demands, policy makers have taken action with several pieces of legislation. One example is the 1992 reauthorization of the Higher Education Act. The reauthorization established a new loan program (the unsubsidized Stafford loan) for which financial need is not a qualifying factor. The purpose of the new loan was to increase financial aid targeted toward the middle-class. Another example is the Taxpayer Relief Act of 1997. The Act includes tax breaks that benefit middle and higher income families, and students with no tax liability (i.e., students from low-income families and independent students with low incomes) receive no benefit.

In summary, while the primary goal of federal student aid policy has traditionally been to create access to some type of postsecondary educational institution, the trend in financial aid policy currently is declining support for college choice in the case of low-income students. “Closing the knowledge gap requires identifying the public’s concerns and educating the public as appropriate,” where public includes all income levels of families (Perna, p. 235).

Environment

Policy making should pay equal attention to broader influences, including societal norms, the role of business, and the extent of socioeconomic and political inequality in American society. “The state of the economy, political power, social demands, and public ideas significantly direct policy choices” (Hanna, 1996, p. 502). Spitzer explains that policy itself is viewed as coercion, with the differing political and social forces driving their agendas with the aim of influencing policy decision making. Based on Lowi’s systems of policy making, Spitzer revises the arenas of power. The arena that includes reauthorizations of the HEA and financial policies is termed redistributive. “Redistributive policies incorporate those that are broad in scope, affecting classes of people – black versus white, poor versus rich, etc. …[and] are long-range, insofar as they deal with the long-term allocation or reallocation of resources among these broad classes” (Spitzer, 1997, p. 18).

In respect to financial aid, reauthorizations of the HEA legislate a redistribution or transfer of subsidies to the less advantaged at the expense of the more advantaged to provide an educational opportunity for postsecondary students with exceptional financial need. For example, the HEA of 1965 was supported by presidential leadership, congressional support, a broad constituency in the “war on poverty,” the momentum of the civil rights movement, and a growing economy that could afford redistribution (Hannah, 1996, p. 503). Currently, the political and vocal social demand is for middle class affordability as demonstrated by policies that promote tax breaks, merit or special purpose aid, and College Tomorrow Fund programs.
STATE POLICY ADOPTION

Similar to federal policy making, states are influenced by political climates. “Republican-controlled legislatures were positively associated with the adoption of new merit scholarship programs, college saving programs, and prepaid tuition programs,” while the interests of Democrats have been in the form of direct institutional subsidies (McLendon, Heller, & Young, 2005, p. 386). Although policy making is not influenced by the party’s control (Democrat or Republican) alone, postsecondary financing represents an effort to privatize college financing in the states (Heller, 1999; Mumper, 1998; Paulsen and St John, 2006; St John et al., 2005). This neoliberal philosophy describes policy which “emphasize[s] and reward[s] individual or family investment in preparation for college” instead of states subsidizing public colleges through direct state appropriations (McLendon et al., 2005).

Beginning in the 1990s, the trend of decentralization and “the new federalism” were directing “responsibility for policy-making increasingly downward toward the states” (McLendon et al., 2005, p. 365). Financial pressure on state budgets, increasing college costs, constant criticism regarding the effectiveness and efficiency of public postsecondary institutions, and the rising challenges of student access make clear the need for new approaches to existing policies (Mumper, 1998).

McLendon, Heller, and Young’s study built upon Walker’s work in analyzing postsecondary policy innovation and diffusion. The study proposed that states tend to copy one another because of the decision behavior by government officials. “The lack of time, incomplete information, and the cognitive constraints of human beings lead policy makers to take cues from their neighbors in an attempt to simplify complex decisions” (p. 368). In respect to why states borrow policy ideas from other states, the study suggested two explanations. The first potential reason may be that state governments are in direct competition involving their postsecondary educational systems. In other words, states may be “motivated to adopt new policies and programs in an effort to ‘keep up’ with their neighbors” (McLendon et al., 2005, p. 287). A second possible reason also is competitive in nature, but this competition relates to electoral pressures within states. If a state adopts a policy perceived as successful and popular both inside and outside of the state, “this condition may ‘raise the stakes’ for elected officials in neighboring jurisdictions to adopt the same policy” in an effort to improve their chances for election or re-election (McLendon et al., 2005, p. 388). Although, policy diffusion is one explanation of policy adoption in states, modification to policy making may take the form of policy replication “(i.e., duplication of policies as policies spread from state-to-state),” policy tinkering “(i.e., slight alterations in policy content or scope as policies spread),” or policy reinvention “(i.e., extensive alteration in policy content or scope)” (McLendon et al., 2005, p. 389).

STUDENT AID FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO PROMOTE ACCESS AND CHOICE

Considering that the primary objective of financial aid is to provide equal educational opportunities to students regardless of financial income, it is important to clarify whether financial aid promotes educational opportunity, not just measured in terms of access (getting students into college), but also in terms of choice (which college students want to attend the most). Equal educational opportunity in terms of college choice can be achieved by offering financial aid to families to lessen the costs of the particular institution the student wants to attend (Chen & DesJardins, 2008). However, underrepresented and low-SES students respond differently to different types of financial aid. For example, minority students tend to avoid loans for their education (St. John, Paulsen, & Carter 2005), which then restricts students’ college choice.

According to St. John, Paulsen, and Carter (2005), policymakers need to understand the disparate impact of financial aid on equity in relation to student characteristics and devise programs that target those groups who are the most impacted negatively. Additionally, equal opportunity of college choice can be improved by providing students with information about the availability of financial aid and the different characteristics of specific types of financial aid, as well as information about how different types of colleges may impact students’ higher education experience and their future economic and social goals (Kim, 2004, p. 63). McPherson and Schapiro (1998) state that, at the initial stages of the enrollment decision, students often lack information about their eligibility for financial aid and the amount of aid they would be likely to receive. “There is much evidence that students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds and minority students are less knowledgeable about financial aid and about strategies for obtaining it” (Kim, 2004, p. 63).
63). Familiarity with the process and availability of financial aid is a crucial factor in students’ decisions about attending or choice of college.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE STATE POLICY

The U.S. Department of Education Advisory Committee on Student Financial Assistance (2005) issued a report in support of Congress and the Secretary in creating and implementing improvements. The executive summary states:

Students and families are overwhelmed by the complexity of student aid. Uncertainty and confusion rob them of its significant benefits. Rather than promote access, student aid often creates a series of barriers—a gauntlet that the poorest students must run to get to college. Replacing complexity with a steady stream of encouragement that makes access to college simple and certain is a top priority of Congress and the higher education community. Congress mandated this simplification study as part of the current reauthorization of the Higher Education Act in order to identify and eradicate major sources of complexity in student aid. Our major finding is that a sweeping and cost effective simplification initiative could significantly improve access and increase the return on the nation’s already sizeable investment in student aid. (2005, pp. 1-2)

The report includes ten recommendations (see Appendix), that if implemented, could result in benefits to students with special consideration of the poorest families. Eight of the 10 recommendations do not cause a financial increase in program costs. However, initial financial investment is worth the price to be paid to increase students’ access and choice in postsecondary institutions.

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APPENDIX

The Student Aid Gauntlet

Exhibit One: Simplification Study Recommendations

1. **Create a System of Early Financial Aid Information.** Provide students from middle school through adulthood with accurate and timely information about financial aid, including estimates of awards from multiple sources in the context of college costs.

2. **Make Federal Need Analysis Transparent, Consistent, and Fair.** Reform four major structural weaknesses in the current eligibility model: the treatment of student earnings, college savings plans, state and local taxes, and special circumstances.

3. **Expand Existing Simplification to More Students.** Extend the benefits of the automatic zero Expected Family Contribution (auto-zero EFC) and the Simplified Needs Test (SNT) to as many low- and moderate-income students as possible.

4. **Allow All Students to Apply for Financial Aid Earlier.** Align the financial aid application and college admissions processes and allow students to apply in order to receive estimates of their eligibility earlier in the college preparation process.

5. **Make the FAFSA Relevant and Understandable.** Eliminate questions that are redundant or irrelevant to federal or state aid eligibility and simplify the language used on the form to make it more accessible to students and families.

6. **Create a Simpler Paper Form for Low-Income Students.** Provide low-income students with a paper EZ FAFSA, a highly simplified paper application, and maximize to the extent possible the number of students who can use this form.

7. **Phase Out the Full Paper Form and Increase the Use of Technology.** Establish a five-year timeline for phasing out the complex, full paper FAFSA and move all applicants to the FAFSA on the Web.

8. **Simplify and Streamline FAFSA on the Web.** Ensure that applicants complete a tailored, on-line form that contains the minimum number of questions necessary to deliver federal and state aid and can sign their application electronically without delay.

9. **Simplify the Verification Process.** Create and implement a centralized, web-based verification system to reduce burden on students, lower costs to institutions, and improve the quality of data used to ensure program integrity.

(U.S. Department of Education Advisory Committee on Student Financial Assistance, 2005, pp. 3-4)
In this paper, we will develop the justification for study abroad. We will discuss the current economic climate and its impact on budgets. Next, we will explain the many benefits of the study abroad programs. Then we will propose some less expensive alternatives to the traditional study abroad programs. We will conclude with expectations for the future.

“Studying international business in a classroom is a bit like learning how to swim on a grass field” (Taras et al., 2012, p. 11).

Keywords: study abroad, study tour, international travel, budgets

INTRODUCTION

The world has become smaller. Our grandparents’ generation considered international travel only for the elites, and imported items were rare and always were luxuries. Today, imports are in every American home (and in many driveways) and cover every income group. International travel is a possibility for even middle class families for summer vacation. The world has changed.

The global reach of business has increased significantly in recent years (Laufer, 2012). In the past, relocating for a job might mean moving across the state. Now it could mean moving across the globe. Students must acquire knowledge of the global markets and the globally changing landscape (Freeman, Knight, & Butt, 2011). Most schools are not bringing globalization into the classroom in a way that fulfills the needs of business (Bruner & Iannarelli, 2011). Study abroad provides a key element to students’ global development (Paus & Robinson, 2008). We, as educators, should desire our students to experience the rich tapestry of the global culture. Study abroad may be the only opportunity for many students to incorporate a global experience into their undergraduate program (Denbo, 2008).

In this paper, we will develop the justification for study abroad. We will discuss the current economic climate and its impact on budgets. Next, we will explain the many benefits of the study abroad programs. Then we will propose some less expensive alternatives to the traditional study abroad programs. We will conclude with expectations for the future.

THE ECONOMICS

In a dream world, colleges would send every student on a study abroad program, perhaps even flying first class. That is not the current reality. We must admit that colleges are in difficult economic times. Higher education budgets are being slashed, and fortunate schools are forced to justify maintaining their budgets. Increases in funding seem a distant memory. From 2005-2010, thirty states reduced their funding for higher education (Pulley, 2012). Recently, Alvarez (2012) found 41 states had cut higher education funding in 2011. The proposed across-the-board federal cuts would cut an additional $4 billion from common and higher education (Dervarics, 2012).
Some states have been hit especially hard. The University of California funding was reduced $1.2 billion in 2012, following a $695 million cut in 2010 (Pulley, 2012). Florida has seen state funding for higher education drop 24% in four years (Álvarez, 2012). America is seeing the same type of drastic cuts as have occurred in Greece, Ireland, Spain, Italy, and Portugal (Labi, 2012).

Ironically, while the budgets are being slashed, some areas see an abundance of funding, especially for new buildings. College campuses have invested $11 billion in new buildings in the last two years (Marcus, 2012). While there is no doubt that college infrastructures could be made better, perhaps those funds could be better spent than adding more fixed costs.

One area in need of funds is study abroad. Administrative costs for study abroad are significant. It is no surprise to anyone that funds are decreasing for study abroad. Many programs have been zeroed on the budget, making any study abroad completely funded by the students and faculty. Often coordinators for study abroad are part time positions, or combined with other job duties, which results in little time dedicated to the difficult process of coordinating study abroad opportunities.

Study abroad is not inexpensive. The high cost of study abroad is discouraging students from participation. Presley, Damron-Martinez, and Zhang’s (2010) study of business students attending study abroad (n = 188) found that cost of study abroad is a major impediment to participation. In addition, the opportunity cost (time) is substantial for student to travel to another country for four months. The length of time commitment for study abroad deters some students (Loh, et al., 2011). While time away from family is a burden, the loss of a part time income for four months can be devastating for students. For students with children, the opportunity costs might be insurmountable. Schools often try to subsidize student travel, lowering the costs for the individual student, but increasing the overall costs to the school of the program.

**THE BENEFITS**

Historically, only a small number of students take advantage of study abroad. Lewis and Niesenbaum (2005) found that less than 1% of U.S. students study abroad each year. Aggarwal and Goodell (2011) explained, “In view of the rising costs of higher education, many students are finding it difficult to find resources to pay for the extra costs of study-abroad programs even though such programs are increasingly important in a rapidly globalizing business environment.” From the administration side, study abroad has to be justified by a cost-benefit analysis with evidence of learning (Paige, Cohen, & Shively, 2004).

Although few students take study abroad, the benefits are great and are not in dispute. Our students need to understand how the world works. Just understanding the U.S. market is not enough anymore (Loh, et al., 2011). Within business disciplines, there is a growing emphasis on globalization (Presley et al., 2010). Developing skills to manage intercultural business transactions is crucial to success (Tuleja, 2008) and better prepares them for working in the global village (Alon, 2012).

Students who engage in study abroad are more likely to develop interpersonal skills, team building, and problem solving skills (Alon, 2005; Braskamp, Braskamp, & Merrill, 2009). As a result of the process, (international travel) students can synthesize information they have already gained in the classroom (Alon, 2005). Lane and Bird (2012) have explained that preparing students for globalization (and for the travel/international experience) is extremely important.

This type of experiential learning is more effective than other methods (Joplin, 1981) and cannot be gained in the typical classroom experience (Clarke, 2007). Lewis and Niesenbaum (2005) found that all students gain greater understanding of globalization. Putting the benefits into an economic context, Loh, et al., (2011) found significant consumer surpluses for students participating in study abroad programs.

This is not to imply that the only benefits are for business students. All students can and do benefit from study abroad. The benefits of study abroad cross all academic disciplines. Study abroad can improve cultural knowledge and transform world views (Braskamp, Braskamp, & Merrill, 2009; Lewis & Niesenbaum, 2005). For example, students who studied abroad showed signs of growth in emotional resiliency, flexibility, openness, and personal autonomy.
Students returning from study abroad will “see and hear the world becoming smaller and becoming a better, more peaceful place” (Schaub, 2009, p. 31). Study abroad allows for personal growth in a way that cannot be repeated in the campus dormitory (Franklin, 2010).

There is an abundance of research which shows study tours have a significant impact on language learning (Amuzie & Winke, 2009) and cultural awareness and understanding (Black & Duhon, 2006; Braskamp, Braskamp, & Merrill, 2009; Fairchild, Pillai, & Noble, 2006; Pedersen, 2010; Rotabi, Gammonley, & Gamble, 2006) and in content areas outside of business and language (Poole & Davis, 2006). Further, study abroad has developed cultural sensitivity even without any language development (Anderson, Lawton, Rexiesen, & Hubbard, 2006).

The overall benefit to students is very important to administrators. Helping one student in one subject area is beneficial, but may not justify an entire semester abroad, given the costs both to the student and to the school. Holoviak, Verney, Winter, and Holoviak (2011) found some results that students’ grades improved after the study abroad experience. Additionally, Malmgren and Galvin (2008) found that students who participate in study abroad graduate at a significantly higher rate than other students. The graduation benefit was even stronger for students of color who participate in study abroad.

Interestingly, students do not go on study abroad programs to find jobs. Most students who take study abroad are more concerned with new experience rather than career benefits (Loh, et al., 2011). The career benefits are a “bonus” from the student’s perspective, but they do exist. Franklin (2010) and Orahood, Woolf, and Kruze (2004) found that students who study abroad gained significant long term career benefits from their study abroad experience in terms of compensation, mobility, opportunities, and self-confidence. Tucker, Gullekson, and McCambridge (2011) argue that study abroad will give graduates a competitive edge in the job market and provide future opportunities for advancement later. In fact, Orahood, Woolf, and Kruze (2008) posit that failing to have international experience can be detrimental to a career.

Despite all these benefits, advocates of study abroad cannot ignore the dire financial situation in most universities. Perhaps the study abroad coordinators should adopt the advertising slogan for hair products, “Expensive, but worth it.”

THE ALTERNATIVE

If the benefits to study abroad are great, but few students participate due to costs, there needs to be a solution. The alternative must gain the benefits from study abroad without the costs and time commitment. One option which has similar experiences (and similar cultural benefits), but lower costs and time commitments are short term study tours. Short term study tours are becoming more popular than longer programs (Gullekson, Tucker, Coombs, & Wright, 2011).

The authors have led numerous short term study tours with students over the past two decades to England, Ireland, Italy, Greece, and China. We have seen the difference it makes in students’ lives and experiences. Students return from study tours enriched and knowledgeable in a way that cannot be gained from a textbook. One of the authors also participated in a study abroad program as a student. The opportunity to participate as both a student and as faculty has magnified his dedication to this endeavor.

Study tours offer the students to experience the foreign cultures, the intricacies of international travel, and the related benefits. The eye-opening, first day experience in another country is the same for a student, whether the trip is for two weeks or two semesters. In addition, short term programs give students the confidence to participate in longer term programs or other foreign travels (Lewis & Niesenbaum, 2005).

Students participating in short term study tours develop the same benefits (intercultural development) as those from longer programs (Gullekson, Tucker, Coombs, & Wright, 2011). Taylor & Finley (2010) argued that even short term international travel courses have meaningful learning opportunities. The authors can attest to the transformative experiences of students. They return with far greater knowledge than they could acquire from spending five times as much time in the classroom or library.

Study tours also open the opportunity to a greater number and variety of students. The sheer number of students

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Study tours also open the opportunity to a greater number and variety of students. The sheer number of students
participating increase with short term study tours as opposed to semester/year abroad programs. In addition, the short trips allow some students (married, with children, working full-time) the opportunity to participate in the process who would never be able to take a semester abroad. In fact, students dependent completely on financial aid can participate (although with some planning and budgeting).

By making the trip shorter, the costs per student are lower. While programs vary, and costs vary depending on the host country cost of living, students can participate for about a third of the cost of a semester abroad program. This is an excellent value for the school: a transformative experience for student for a fraction of the price.

As a final benefit, study tours benefit not only students but enrich the faculty. The authors have participated in many trips combining disciplines. This yields several important benefits. First, interdisciplinary trips allow for an economy of scale (group discounts on housing, airfare, etc.). This is important, as each dollar of additional savings is multiplied by the number of students. Second, interdisciplinary trips allow the professors to alternate who is conducting the daily activities. Short term study tours are physically and mentally demanding, and having another professor to assist in invaluable. This is especially important in crisis situations, such as a student becoming ill or lost. Finally, the professors also personally gain insights from interdisciplinary learning (Denbo, 2008; Paus & Robinson, 2008). By combining disciplines on one trip, students gain from exposure to multiple perspectives, interests, and subject matter expertise.

In our case, the interdisciplinary trips to London and Dublin from the University of Central Oklahoma have combined history, finance, and legal studies. We approach the tour to expose the students to all of England’s influence on the United States. Each faculty member can add to this goal by using his/her expertise. Students get to experience Parliament, Westminster Abbey, and the British Museum for a view of England’s history. In addition, we tour the Bank of England and Lloyds of London to see England’s financial influence on America’s economy. Finally, we tour Old Bailey, the Royal Courts, and the English Supreme Court to see the effect England has had on the American legal system. By combining the disciplines into one trip, the experience for the students is more rich and full than any one professor could accomplish acting alone.

CONCLUSION

We must acknowledge that budgets are extremely limited and each expense must be justified in terms of student benefits. We strongly believe that study abroad is worth the investment in transforming students’ lives. For an alternative to the traditional programs, we believe short term study terms offer a viable, affordable, and beneficial option to increase the number of students who can experience study abroad.

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Student Equity: Discouraging Cheating in Online Courses

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As online programs at conventional universities continue to expand, administrators and faculty face new challenges. Academic dishonesty is nothing new, but an online testing environment requires different strategies and tactics from what we have had to consider in the past. Our university has recently adapted successful face-to-face programs in financial management, both graduate and undergraduate, for delivery in a fully-online format. This paper discusses our experiences moving to a new environment, the challenges of student attempts to cheat and plagiarize, and techniques that we have found to prevent both cheating on high-stakes assessments and plagiarism. We present a number of essential ideas for creating an awareness of an honesty culture among both students and faculty, and we stress that the most important aspect of any campaign against academic dishonesty is prevention.

Keywords: academic integrity, academic dishonesty, cheating, plagiarism, online assessment, high-stakes assessment

INTRODUCTION

We began planning and designing for the BS Finance and MS Finance online programs in the spring semester of 2008 for delivery in select courses beginning in fall 2009. Our MBA program was mostly available online, but our department was not fully part of the “online” faculty at that point. Most of us had limited experience with actual testing online, but we were very familiar with learning management systems and the online delivery of materials.

Student Equity

Our overriding design principle was student equity. In looking at the universe of online courses and experiences, and in talking with other faculty, students, and employers here and elsewhere, we discovered that a chief concern with online classes was their rigor and consistency. Our primary challenge would be to make sure that we applied the same learning objectives, resources, and expectations to the online sections of our courses because we would likely be teaching online and face-to-face sections simultaneously. We wanted to avoid creating arbitrage opportunities over different modalities and semesters.

We wanted to make sure that students were given the same access to knowledge in both types of classes, and we wanted to make sure that the courses were the same difficulty level. Having an easier online course, for example, would not only leave those students unprepared for later courses and the working world, but it would create an equity imbalance with those students in the face-to-face class. Each modality had its own challenges, to be sure, but we felt that keeping honest students “whole” throughout should be one of our most important considerations.

Our resulting course designs reflect this principle. To every extent possible, we have mirrored the face-to-face expectations and content in the online sections, and this has actually enriched our face-to-face courses in many ways. We also decided early in the process that we would try to limit the “noise” in our courses out of respect for our students’ capacity to absorb only so much new information each week. The idea that students (and faculty) have a limited
bandwidth with which to absorb material kept us to only the essentials for learning the existing material and kept us focused on learning objectives. This was at odds with our assigned instructional designers, who felt that a variety of tasks should be assembled to allow students with different learning styles to engage the course differently. Our decision has allowed us the freedom to add material and activities as we have seen the need for them over time.

We rewrote our notes to be clearer and more detailed, redesigned PowerPoints to be free-standing (not requiring clarification through discussion if possible), and we figured out how to podcast our lectures, problem sets, and current events discussions throughout the semester. We grappled with technology for presenting material online, finding by trial and error that Adobe Acrobat was much more robust than Microsoft Word or PowerPoint. We also worked very hard to keep the courses tied to our individual teaching styles because “branding” in this manner seems important and valuable to students and it appears to be one of the few ways that we can keep some semblance of control of our intellectual property in an online environment as well.

Our final challenge, and the most demanding one so far, has been to address the problems of academic dishonesty, including cheating on exams, plagiarism on exams, and plagiarism on other written assignments. We worried about both panic (opportunistic) cheating and planned cheating, and we have seen evidence of both (along with defensive cheating). The most important thing that we have learned is that there is no single secret to dealing with cheating; managing academic integrity requires a great deal of imagination and a great deal of hard work on the part of the teaching faculty. If given the chance, unfortunately, we have found that a small percentage of students will cheat at every opportunity. For the valuable reputation of a program or school, “a few” appears to be damaging enough to make an impact.

Prevention versus Prosecution

Often the question of what to do about the risk of cheating involves determining whether we are trying to prevent and/or discourage, simply catch, or catch and prosecute students who have chosen to behave in a certain proscribed manner. As might be expected, the burden of proof can at the same time be very simple with plagiarism cases and very difficult with other types of dishonesty. There is an additional consideration of the cost in time and effort: faculty members already spend a great deal of time on assessment, and dealing with dishonesty just adds to the list of tasks. Each university has a different system for prosecuting suspected dishonesty cases.

The methods we advocate in this paper will vary in their efficacy in preventing and punishing, but it has been very clear in our experience that the majority of the time our efforts have paid off the most in prevention, in student awareness, and an improvement of student preparedness and outcomes. For us, having just been through the implementation phase of several large online programs in financial management, it has been less important that we successfully prosecute suspected cheaters than whether we have changed the expectations of the students, faculty, and alumni at our university. We have been able to catch and punish many students since we started using the techniques we outline here, but more importantly there has been a culture-level awareness that online courses are important and valued within the finance curriculum and within the School of Business. Our efforts have also been recognized at the university level and have led faculty in other programs to engage in dialogue about academic integrity and student outcomes across a wide spectrum of issues.

Student Awareness

The most important considerations for faculty, students, and administrators must be creating awareness of the problem. Establishing a successful learning culture requires a constant respect for academic integrity and an understanding of what that means. If students can understand why it is that we promote integrity within academia, they are more likely to subscribe to its tenets. Additionally, they are more likely to be able to take pride in their work. In a culture that seems to value the importance of building each student’s self-image, it would make sense to take every opportunity to prevent and discourage students from toxic behaviors, such as cheating and plagiarism. If we truly respect our students and their needs, we will allow academic integrity to have a very large role in what we do. If we do not actively demonstrate that there is value in academic integrity, we can easily undermine all of our other current efforts and also undo much of the progress our profession has made in creating better student outcomes over the past several generations.
LITERATURE REVIEW

A central discussion in the existing literature about online course design focuses on academic integrity, plagiarism, and other cheating issues. Student surveys about cheating are one of the well-established research focal points. Watson and Watson (2011), in a survey of 635 undergraduate and graduate students, report that students admitted to higher rates of cheating in face-to-face courses than in online classes. Meanwhile King, Guyette, and Piotrowski (2009) survey 121 undergraduate business students and find that almost 75% of the students in the sample thought it is easier to cheat in an online course. Using student surveys as well, Charlesworth, Charlesworth, and Vicia (2006) find that cheating is no more likely to take place in online courses, while Kennedy, Nowak, Raghuraman, Thomas, and Davis (2000) report that cheating in online courses is more likely. The evidence from student surveys on online cheating appears to be mixed.

Interestingly there are very few empirical studies that actually model whether cheating occurs more frequently in online courses. Harmon and Lambrinos (2008), using principles of economics courses taught online, develop a model to predict exam scores using student characteristics when some final exams in online courses are proctored and others are not. They find the explanatory power of the student variables such as student GPA at the beginning of the semester is lowered when the final exam is not proctored.

The other large segment of literature about online instruction assumes that online cheating is a problem and addresses what can be done to fix it. Rowe (2004) and Olt (2002) offer various strategies for helping to minimize academic dishonesty in online courses. Cluskey, Ehlen, and Raiborn (2011) outline some of the techniques that we discuss for high-stakes assessment and recommend that online instructors use very small testing windows. Ultimately, the conclusion of many of these types of studies is that the only definitive way to curb cheating is to have proctored exams of some fashion. Interestingly, Dunn, Meine, and McCarley (2010) discuss the development and use of The Remote Proctor as one solution to the proctoring issue. The Remote Proctor is a camera and microphone system for monitoring events in the testing environment. Our paper adds to this growing body of the literature on online course integrity.

CHEATING RISKS IN HIGH-STAKES ASSESSMENTS

In quantitative fields such as finance and accounting, it is common to rely on high-stakes assessments of skills at some basic level; naturally, faculty want to carry this over to online or hybrid delivery. More importantly, if a program or course is simultaneously administered online as well as face-to-face, it is absolutely necessary (and usually required by accrediting bodies) that the courses mirror one another as closely as possible in order to avoid arbitrage between the online and traditional credit hours. Translating traditional testing methods to an online or hybrid environment can be extremely challenging as there is an entirely new set of behaviors to control for, along with the familiar ones.

In a traditional classroom we must control for different types of cheating behavior when the exam is administered—students using “crib” notes, copying from their neighbor, taking copies or photos of the exam out of the classroom, or students working together in other ways. We attempt to keep our exam questions and methods out of circulation in a variety of ways. In an online environment, there are a variety of ways that students will try to cheat, some involving collaboration and some not. If the overwhelming majority of “online students” also attend regular classes each week at the university and know each other from their other classes, then they will have the opportunity to work together on exams and other assignments that might not exist in a program consisting of truly online or distance education students.

Designing high-stakes assessment for online instruction involves a new set of decisions that faculty may have never considered before. For example, if a faculty member teaches two sections of a traditional class on different day schedules (or on the same day with a 2- or 3-hour break in between), then we may encounter students from the first section informing students from the second section of the test material. This type of “leakage” requires that we develop separate versions of the same exam for the different tested sections, and it becomes more and more difficult to be fair to each section as we develop more and more versions of the assessment. In an online or hybrid environment, or in the case where all modalities are taught simultaneously, the faculty member will need to consider that there may be “leakage” across or between all sections. For online testing, the faculty member must also decide the calendar timing...
of the test (will it be on weekends, late at night) and the length of the window that students will have in which to take the exam, as well as the amount of time for each question. They must also decide whether or not to allow students to “backtrack” when taking the test. Each of these parameters can determine how and why students attempt to cheat on their exams.

Cheating Risks in Testing

Some cheating is done on an individual basis, and some is done because students can work together. The online environment, by its nature, may make it more difficult to prevent or catch students who are involved in working together when they are not supposed to be. These problems will likely be more evident when the online courses are taken by students who are part of a traditional campus student body because they will have fewer costs to working together. We have observed several behaviors to plan for and work against in any instance.

Recording, saving, or purchasing test material. This is, in part, the high-tech version of the tests databases that have been maintained by social organizations at larger universities for several generations. In this version, though, students can use software such as Google Docs to search test items more quickly (Young, 2012). They have unprecedented access to instructor test banks through the Web, and they can search through them easily or maintain their own unique test banks semester after semester, or even put them together quickly on the fly and access them through mobile devices. When an online class gives instant feedback on a test item, for example, the question and the answer can be saved and distributed easily from then on. If these questions are also being used in traditional classrooms, then online testing can dilute the value of face-to-face examinations in following semesters as well.

Taking the test together. Some students will try to work together in real time during their online tests, either in the same location or at their separate locations using the Internet or phones for communication. We have encountered students who set up “LAN parties” to take tests at one student’s home simultaneously even when we have shortened the test windows and exams to discourage this type of behavior. Students have also tried to get ahead this way by coming to campus and working together at computers in the library or in computer labs. One “ring” was broken up taking tests from our university in a computer lab at a local community college, and they had been doing it for months.

A related version of this is when one student gets an excused absence from the exam in order to take it later once they have been briefed by classmates. This also occurs in face-to-face instruction, but it seems less likely for students who have to maintain a weekly presence and perhaps have to explain themselves face-to-face.

Ordered pairs. If the testing window is large enough that one student can finish the exam in time to help others, then some students will try to work in pairs or even triplets. In this situation, one student will take the test first, this time, and record their answers, and the next will take it first for the next exam, and they will rotate like this in order to give the subsequent students each time extra knowledge of the exam material.

A recent Chronicle of Higher Education article illustrates how students can use some combination of these techniques to bypass the learning process altogether (Young, 2012). In that instance, a student admitted that he and several other classmates took turns, maintained their own Google Docs file of the randomized questions (complete with certified answers) and worked simultaneously to avoid studying or learning in an online course. The student blamed the university for not trying to stop or catch cheating, saying, “If they didn’t think students would do this, then they didn’t think it through” (Young, 2012).

Using the Internet during exams. We have caught students, both graduate and undergraduate, who tried (unsuccessfully) to search for essay answers on the Internet during their tests. This costs little in the way of social investment or exposure risk, but it requires professors who have left a great deal of time for each question, as well as professors who were not diligent enough to look for obvious plagiarism (or, in at least one case, embedded links and fonts pasted into Blackboard) when grading. These attempts are sometimes easy to catch, but prevention would be much more efficient.

Outsourcing. There always exists the chance that students have simply hired someone else to take their exams or write their papers for them. Another recent article from The Chronicle of Higher Education discusses the types of arrangements that can be made in order to receive assistance in online classes (Dante, 2010). In this article, an indi-
individual describes his or her career as a professional online student for hire, the Shadow Scholar:

I’ve written toward a master’s degree in cognitive psychology, a Ph.D. in sociology, and a handful of postgraduate credits in international diplomacy. I’ve worked on bachelor’s degrees in hospitality, business administration, and accounting. I’ve written for courses in history, cinema, labor relations, pharmacology, theology, sports management, maritime security, airline services, sustainability, municipal budgeting, marketing, philosophy, ethics, Eastern religion, postmodern architecture, anthropology, literature, and public administration. I’ve attended three dozen online universities. I’ve completed 12 graduate theses of 50 pages or more. All for someone else. (Dante, 2010)

As faculty, we have very few ways to determine whether the students who are supposed to be taking our online exams are actually the ones taking them. Unfortunately, the perception of academic integrity and the reputation of the university are most often attributed to (or blamed on) the faculty who teach there. Students and other external constituencies expect faculty alone to protect academic integrity, and to the extent we neglect this role we are in some ways enabling dishonest behavior and harming the students who choose to remain honest. It is understandable, yet still unfortunate, that defensive cheating appears to be on the rise, at least in our experience.

Remedies

Many online cheating behaviors will have a face-to-face analog, but it seems that many educators initially take for granted the level of consistency and integrity that regular face-to-face meetings and examinations provide. For example, it stands out easily when an unfamiliar student shows up to the final examination in a traditional course. With online classes, the problem becomes much more difficult to deal with: how do we know who is on the other side of the computer connection?

Additionally, the question of examination or assessment integrity is not simply one of changing assessment strategies in a class or course. During our development phase, there was a loud chorus from both peers and developers who decried high-stakes assessment and told us that it was simply “out of date” and suggested that we should just embrace that fact and move ahead to a different teaching model as we went to an online modality. While we have refused to change our teaching to that extent, we have recognized that online tests change our understanding and preparation of assessment nonetheless, both in our traditional and our online courses.

For one thing, student prowess with cheating in both modes will evolve over time, and our techniques must adapt as well. As their opportunities change, we must change with them. Unfortunately, the development model used by instructional technology professionals for online courses (like the tendency of software developers in general) may be partial to “locking in” content and establishing courses that change little during the academic year; this model works against good pedagogy and also stands in the way of most of the preventive recommendations we have outlined below. Static content and assessment is one of the most common factors in student cheating, online or otherwise. Inflexible testing methods and projects that never change from one year to another invite students to find and exploit weaknesses. The burden of reputation and pedagogy falls on faculty. We are ultimately responsible, again, to the university and the community as a whole for these behaviors and outcomes, whether we like it or not. If we choose to remain silent about ineffective university policies and practices, then we will also be the ones expected to revitalize the lost reputation of our programs. The same is true if we allow marketing or enrollment issues to take precedence over the quality and content of instruction, online or otherwise.

It must be said here, again, that prevention and awareness are the two most important goals of any effort to deal with academic integrity issues. We provide some suggestions based on what has worked in our programs, but no one method will work to control or prevent all behaviors. Newly-online faculty may find themselves becoming familiar with some of the behaviors we mentioned above, and we have listed here some basic techniques that may help.

Proctoring. The obvious solution to prevention is absolute control of the testing environment. It has the additional advantage of being something we are all familiar with already. Many “online” programs require students to find a local testing center or proctor and then provide the exams for those proctors on an individual basis. Some schools require students to come to campus to take important assessments, including comprehensive examinations, at the end of their programs. Other universities allow students to take online tests using a computer at a controlled testing center.
near the student’s physical location.

The most recent solution is to actually allow students to use their own computer, in their preferred location, but to monitor them using a camera and microphone. Vendors provide either real time or recorded proctoring in this manner for a fee and report back to the faculty members if any incidents are controlled. These vendors typically make use of software to control the access of the student’s computer during the exam (what is known as a “lockdown” browser option, mentioned next). In addition, they verify the identity of the test taker, using external databases such as those maintained by Equifax and other credit monitoring agencies.

Unfortunately, some universities have chosen to actively work against faculty who need to proctor. Some programs have refused to support proctoring activities for a variety of reasons, including expense, student opinion, and/or enrollment impact. Although Cruskey, et al. (2011) provides a laundry list of techniques to help faculty maintain academic integrity without proctoring, their ultimate recommendation is that proctoring is likely the only way to maintain absolute security in online programs. The efficacy of traditional proctoring versus remote proctoring remains to be seen, and each method of proctoring certainly has its own costs and benefits.

For spring 2013, our School of Business began a pilot study with one of the more popular proctor vendors, ProctorU.com. It has been easy to implement, although the university has yet to pass the dollar cost on to students (which would be very simple to do on a class by class basis). Interestingly, in one set of classes, students were given the choice of taking their comprehensive final examination with a Web proctor or in a special face-to-face session on campus, and the overwhelming majority of our “online” majors chose to come to campus on a Saturday to take the tests. We anticipate additional pilot studies with at least two additional vendors over the next several semesters in an effort to understand the costs and benefits of this technique for reducing the incidence of cheating on exams.

Software control of the environment. Products are available that will limit a student’s access to material outside of the examination during the examination. One of the best known is the Respondus Lockdown Browser application, which keeps students from opening other documents or surfing the Internet during the test. In order to work properly, these products must be compatible with the learning management system (such as Blackboard) that the university is using for distance courses, and therefore the university computing personnel must be amenable to implementing such solutions. With an application of this type in place, exams can be administered without the fear that additional resources will be available to dishonest students and not available to those who are trying to do things honestly.

Algorithmic test banks. For those subjects that rely on math- or problem-oriented questions, faculty can program most learning management systems with questions that change at each implementation. This has recently been incorporated into products from textbook publishers as well. McGraw-Hill’s Connect software, for example, is integrated into a university’s learning management system. Unfortunately, these questions can still be copied by students and added to databases unless students are restricted from doing so by one of the other methods discussed here.

Deep test banks. Test banks for every major textbook are readily available over the Internet, but if faculty choose to develop their own test banks it is best to make them very deep and very broad. It must be recognized, too, that, as in our Google Docs example, it is likely that most or all of the faculty member’s intellectual effort will be widely available on the Internet soon after it is used in class. Of course, then the burden for students becomes searching for the questions that they seek the answers to, and in an age of text files and Control-F, this search becomes less and less costly.

We have had some success with tweaking publishers’ test banks on a question by question basis, specifically by changing questions slightly and also changing the company names used in the problems. This also allows us to more accurately reflect the way we cover certain material in class or shape the questions to match our preferred conventions and terminologies. Changing individual questions in this manner is much simpler for the professor, and probably more fair to the honest student, but as with other techniques, this is one that must be done on a regular basis.

Actual test parameters. Different learning management systems have different settings that can be used to control behavior during exams. In particular, it is important to scramble question order and answer order (for objective questions) during the tests. In addition, the exam software should only show one question at a time (to make it harder to obtain the questions in general for those who are copying them). It is also important to prevent students from scrolling through the entire test at one time, which is known as “backtracking.” Preventing backtracking requires a student
to save each answer before moving on, and students who work together will not be able to align their questions during an exam. Additionally, this prohibits students from copying each test question, then claiming that they were forced out of the exam to obtain a retest of the same material (which if the instructor is conscientious then forces the faculty member to write a new exam for each student if the questions on the original exams are the same or related for every student). Finally, it is important to record each student’s IP address during the test in order to document their physical location to some extent and also to remind students that the instructor will be recording that information. IP address information, while in no way definitive by itself, has been very useful in catching students who are trying to work together because it can establish that they may have been in the same vicinity during the testing window.

The instructor must put a great deal of thought into deciding how much time to allow for each question (which sets the testing window), how much time to allow for the examination to be available to students (the testing period), and when to schedule the test (night, weekend, etc.). It is important that students not have time to dig through their book, the notes, or the Internet if those are the restrictions of the exam. In our experience more than a few students come to an Internet course with the expectation that they should be allowed to use any resource during the test, and they are unprepared to learn the material beforehand as a result. For example, open-book exams, as we all know, should be different from and usually harder than close-book tests, for various reasons. This is no different for online courses, and it illustrates the type of tradeoffs that exist in designing assessments for any modality.

Most importantly among all of these considerations, though, absent proctoring, is the idea that all students should be taking the examination at the same time, within a narrow window. To do otherwise is to encourage cheating, even when other measures have been taken. To give undergraduates a day or even longer in some cases to take an exam, regardless of the length of the actual test period, is to encourage collaboration, in our experience.

We do not release traditional feedback in the learning management system (nor do we allow our face-to-face students to keep exams outside of class). Within our learning management system, releasing anything other than the basic score for a question releases the entire question and the answer choices itself. Instead of using that method and releasing the exact questions every semester, we have developed a system of releasing comments that provide the topic of each question and a statement or two about why the answer was deficient. This works best for short-answer and essay questions, but it is useful for algorithmic problems as well. Of course, if students want more detailed feedback on an individual basis, we will provide it either by giving them additional information about specific questions or by meeting with them, if that is viable. We never, however, release the exact questions or answers to students because that simply compromises the material from one semester to the next.

As might be imagined, many of these techniques will be unpopular with any students who expect to do whatever they would like to do without restraint on exams and other assignments. A good guideline or starting place for making these decisions is the structure used for testing in the face-to-face sections of a course. For example, if the face-to-face section gets a mix of short-answer questions, problems, and objective questions in a 3-hour period three times per semester, that’s where the online course could start. Of course, short-answer and essay questions have both advantages and disadvantages in an online environment, and the chief disadvantage is the sheer amount of time it takes to grade effectively and give constructive feedback without giving out the exact questions every term.

**Short-answer, essay or other open-form tests.** For those of us who have used this type of exam format for many years, it may seem to be an easy transition to simply continue using these in online courses. We are already accustomed to the time needed to compose and grade such assessments in a face-to-face context. However, there is a greater risk that these questions will be collected over time from unmonitored online tests, and if instructors give back complete test keys, it is likely that they will make their way into student answers in future exams, verbatim. More importantly, the larger risks for this type of exam in an uncontrolled test session are outright Internet insertions and plagiarism. In just the first few years of our online programs, we routinely caught students copying answers from the Internet (even though the answers were not correct) and also using an open document to copy out of their notes into the exam.

One way to mitigate the damage from this type of behavior and actually turn it into a positive factor is to provide students with extensive exam reviews that outline each important question, problem, or topic in the class well before exam dates. If better students have worked through these questions, they will be better prepared, and it gives little
advantage to the students who have only taken the time to copy the questions from the old exams. In addition, as we cover information each semester we will emphasize different aspects of many of the questions in our lectures and podcasts, and this helps distinguish those students who might be using older answers they have obtained from others. Those students who choose to emphasize the wrong aspect of a particular essay answer will likely earn few points on those questions. As with all things, students will decrease their behavior if the costs increase or if the benefits decrease, and we have found that short-answer or essay questions based on questions from extensive exam reviews are a singularly effective way to both increase the costs and decrease the benefits of cheating behaviors.

PLAGIARISM AND REMEDIES

Unfortunately, plagiarism has become a more common concern in the age of the Internet, and not just for online courses. Overwhelmingly, the best remedy for plagiarism is to show students that it is never necessary. If we show them that they can write well, and think well, and that they can do their own work, they won't need to plagiarize. If we give them difficult assignments to challenge them and build their confidence, then they are much less likely to need to copy from others. Confidence and ability trump cheating every time. Of course, it also helps to minimize the opportunities for students to be tempted because they may not understand the karmic consequences of cheating: cheating undermines one's self-esteem and changes one's self-image in addition to all of its other byproducts.

Consistency

After prevention, the most important consideration for dealing with suspected plagiarism is to be consistent when dealing with it. Consistency within a program (in our case, among finance classes within the School of Business) is very important—it helps students recognize the gravity of the issue, as well. For new faculty members, the university catalog should have a description of the school’s policy on academic dishonesty and the process used to deal with suspected violations. Every faculty member should be familiar with this process, to the point of even volunteering to sit on hearing panels, if possible, to be able to understand what happens. Additionally, each instructor should prosecute every instance of cheating that he or she observes, and they should encourage and help colleagues do the same. Prosecuting requires a great deal of documentation, and it is not always going to be successful (at punishing the student). From a larger perspective, though, a consistent focus on academic integrity in this manner will eventually convince a program’s students that their professors and the university take this stuff seriously. That alone is worth all of the cost and preparation because students’ awareness will go a long way toward preventing plagiarism and cheating behaviors in general.

Resources

There are several software programs on the market that can help faculty identify plagiarized passages in student writing, but often they won’t be necessary. When looking at answers in an online exam, for example, and it appears that the student’s answers are mechanical and based on a few keywords in the question, it is often a simple task to insert part of the given answer into Google to find the Internet source very quickly. However, the programs developed for this purpose are very useful for another reason: they allow faculty to maintain databases of old student papers for comparison. This feature alone is extremely useful in catching multiple submissions, and we have (unfortunately) had several instances of this with our students in the past few years.

The Blackboard Learn learning management system incorporates SafeAssign. This allows students to submit their written assignments directly into the SafeAssign system to have them both compared with the existing database and also evaluated against other documents on the Internet. SafeAssign produces a report which can be optionally shared with the student that not only shows similar sources on the Web but also scores each passage that might be a violation within the student’s document. It then produces an overall index number that reflects the originality of the document. SafeAssign’s index number is not particularly useful by itself, but the SafeAssign report can be a starting place for the faculty member in the investigation. In addition, the SafeAssign report can be used to show students how their writing compares to their sources, and the report can be very useful in academic honesty hearings should all of our preventive measures fail. When confronted with a SafeAssign report, students can no longer live in a state of denial—having SafeAssign’s nearly objective evaluation of a student document has substantially changed the confrontational aspect of meetings with students about suspected plagiarism. Of course, there are still marginal cases, or
cases that require a great deal of judgment and analysis on the professor’s part, but it is much nicer to be able to work with students on those cases and avoid wasting time arguing with other students about whether or not they copied something directly from one of last year’s student papers without proper attribution.

We have assembled the following list of tips and techniques that should help newly-online faculty deal more effectively with the risk of plagiarism.

**Discuss plagiarism consistently and persistently within the course:**

- In the syllabus, make students aware of what constitutes plagiarism and how you handle it (as well as the penalties for it). Be explicit.
- Especially in online sections, have a “syllabus quiz” explaining the course policies, and explaining your definition of plagiarism. Require students to earn 100% on this quiz before any other course material will be unlocked for them. Give students a hard deadline to do this so they won’t wait too long to study.
- Discuss in class the university process for dealing with academic dishonesty and plagiarism.
- Explain the SafeAssign tool in BlackBoard in your writing assignment outlines.
- Point students to library and Internet resources on plagiarism. Have these in your materials and assignment handouts.
- Point students to your university’s Writing Center. Have the Writing Center speak to your class.
- Talk about copyright and the Internet. Talk about how to document information from the Internet, and the value of different sources (legitimate news agencies vs. bloggers or Wikipedia).
- Make sure students know that you actually read the papers that are handed in. Give as much feedback as humanly possible.
- Use a plagiarism screening software as much as possible. SafeAssign (within Blackboard) allows faculty to keep a running database of old papers.
- Make sure that they know you will send their paper to SafeAssign, and that you will add their paper to your ever-expanding database of those that get checked against every semester.
- Allow students to self-submit a draft into SafeAssign early in the semester and actually see a report, with or without you getting a copy. In this way they can see where they have been too casual about citations.

**Focus on the structure and process of professional (technical) writing:**

- Be prepared to hear “But this isn’t a writing class!” and be ready to respond.
- Give a list of allowed topics for students to choose from, and rotate it often, eliminating those topics that have been “overdone.”
- Do not let students get into a time crunch, which drives panic cheating.
- Ask students to keep a writing journal (or a blog) throughout the semester that they update and submit for review periodically. It will help them learn to document sources better and provide a window to their process. This (and scaffolding, see below) are also good defenses for students if they need to defend themselves or their work at any point.
- Have conferences with students regarding their progress and to see what they have written or journaled about thus far.
- Be familiar with a student’s style of writing, grammar, and vocabulary. This makes it easier to determine if they are the actual writer of the paper.
Use “scaffolding” or have students turn in any or all of the following over the course of a semester:

- A thesis statement/abstract
- A written proposal for the paper
- Outlines (as they progress)
- A working or annotated bibliography and/or literature review
- Rough drafts or working notes. Drafts should be cited properly, too.
- All working drafts turned in with the final paper
- Copies of cited references. (Some online “paper mills” will send these for an extra fee.)

Tie the topics and assignments to the class experience:

- Use writing assignments that have students analyze classroom activities or discussions in light of the text.
- Ask students to summarize their findings in class on the day they turn it in, or ask for one unusual thing that they learned about their topic or field.
- Ask test questions for each student tailored to their specific writing topics.
- Use local issues as topics.
- Ask students to include a section in their term paper that discusses their topic in light of what was covered in class.
- On the final exam, ask students to summarize the main points of their research paper.
- As part of the paper or as a separate assignment, have students reflect personally (in writing or in class) on the topic they are writing about or on the process of doing research and writing.
- Require a short paper on academic dishonesty and plagiarism (which is also very useful in academic honesty hearings).

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

Some faculty members when confronted with the risk of cheating behavior and plagiarism choose to ignore the situation or leave the problem for someone else. The decision to offer online courses (in conjunction with face-to-face alternatives) merely represents another opportunity to dialog about these important issues. We have seen programs go through the understanding and recognition process with respect to both face-to-face as well as online programs, and we have colleagues at other institutions who have had to embrace different ways of dealing with these issues at various points in their careers.

One solution, as mentioned above, is to do as some of our colleagues suggested and simply avoid high-stakes assessment altogether. Faculty can simply adopt a completely new and innovative system for assessment in classes that is unrelated to the years and years of success and experience with high-stakes testing. If choosing this option, though, it will be important to change all of the other classes in the major, too, because students will slowly become accustomed to the stress of high-stakes assessment. If you are in a discipline with external accreditation by exam (such as public accounting or financial analysis), it will be difficult for students to assimilate that method of assessment after graduation.

Another solution is to do nothing and assume that the bad karma associated with cheating will lead to terrible things happening to the student later in life, such as being hit by a bus. This is known, therefore, as the “Bus Method.” We have had numerous colleagues who harbored this belief over the years, but we have yet seen this result come about for any of the students that we knew it should apply to.

Yet another solution is to do nothing and assume that “the market will straighten it out” once our students have graduated. Unfortunately, the market tends to straighten out uncertainty about program quality by not hiring any of
our graduates. This is called a “lemons problem,” and the basic idea won a Nobel Prize a few years ago (Akerlof, 1970).

Another solution, one that seems to be popular with our professional colleagues in student services administration, says we should do nothing and assume that “cultural differences” or student status as a Millennial, international, first-generation, or non-traditional student (or perhaps all four) is to blame for academic dishonesty behavior. Unfortunately, most of those things are outside of our control as mere university faculty, and it will likely be more efficacious to try to change behaviors prior to graduation instead.

Dealing with the risks of plagiarism and cheating in online courses is more challenging than in face-to-face courses, but we have tried to show that online programs have both opportunities and challenges. Faculty and administrators have to be proactive in thinking about course and program design, as well as simply deciding what compromises to make when migrating existing pedagogy and assessment schemes. As we have found, a great deal of information has to be available to students in order to give them the resources they need to succeed in an online environment, and they have to be made aware of why academic integrity issues are important. Taking steps to prevent academic dishonesty can be costly, but refusing to prepare for it can also be costly in many ways.

In conclusion, we offer a few final suggestions based on what we have discussed above:

• Give students enough resources (reviews, etc.) that they are not tempted to cheat.
• Explain to students often that they do not need to cheat or plagiarize to do well in your class.
• Give them enough difficulty in assignments to build confidence in their abilities throughout the semester.
• Prosecute each and every instance of academic dishonesty and encourage your peers to do the same.
• Discuss penalties and the university process in the syllabus and the test instructions. Make sure students understand that cheating will be prosecuted.
• Give students explicit incentives to report cheating by others as required by the student code of conduct at most universities.
• Have a very explicit statement in your syllabus that clearly articulates the penalty for cheating or plagiarism in your class. For example, “Academic dishonesty of any kind in this class will result in an “F” for the course.” This one is very useful in academic honesty hearings.
• Have students complete individual honor pledges for the class and/or each assignment.

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Student Perceptions of Integrative Field Seminar: A Comparison of Three Models

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Student perceptions of 63 concentration year MSW students, grades, and faculty perceptions were examined to evaluate differences in educational outcomes and in learning experiences among a traditional classroom model, a mixed or hybrid model, and a webinar online model for delivery of integrative field seminars. No significant differences were found in the grades among the three models. Findings showed strong support for the traditional model for students in local field internships and the webinar model for students in distant site placements. Reciprocity among students and faculty was a major factor in seminar integration and effectiveness, regardless of the mode of delivery.

Keywords: MSW field internships, distance site field placements, webinar model, reciprocity, online courses

INTEGRATIVE FIELD SEMINARS

There is arguably no more exciting time in social work education than the field practicum or internship. The integrative seminar is central to the interplay between classroom curriculum and field practicum. As students seek field internships in distant site locations, delivering the integrative field seminar is increasingly challenging. Phone-in participation in traditional seminars and on-line field seminars are approaches to providing the seminar to students placed away from the campus. The question, however, is whether or not they are educationally equivalent. Do students who are not “in the classroom” for integrative seminars receive the same benefits from the seminar experience? This study examines one program’s attempt to address these questions.

Why Have Field Seminars Anyway?

According to Wayne, Bogo, and Raskin (2010) and Birkenmaier and Berg-Weger (2007), the seminar is a specific method for meeting CSWE mandates that programs ensure the integration of theory and practice. The field seminar provides a forum to share field learning, explore values and ethics, discuss and compare policies and procedures in agencies, examine evidence informed practices, evaluate personal responses, and facilitate networking. Seminars provide safe environments for discussion of field experiences, processing of feelings, and examination of best practices. Most programs provide weekly or bi-weekly integrative seminar meetings to process field experiences and share case (identities disguised) issues and resolution (Favier, Eisengart, & Colonna, 2000).

Accreditation

In the latest iteration of the Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS) provided by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE), field education is identified as the signature pedagogy of social work education. For many programs, the field experience is the final educational experience in the curriculum and includes the summative evaluation of the students’ demonstration of competencies. Current accreditation standards address the integration of field education with the program curriculum in this way:

Field education is an integral component of social work education anchored in the mission, goals, and educational level of the program. It occurs in settings that reinforce students’ identification with the purposes, values, and ethics of the profession; fosters the integration of empirical and practice-based knowledge; and promotes the development of professional competence. (CSWE, 2008)
Further, the newly approved EPAS state that “the intent of field education is to connect the theoretical and conceptual contribution of the classroom with the practical world of the practice setting” (2008). Accreditation standards focus on standardizing a number of elements in the field education experience. All students must have a minimum number of hours in a field setting that meets program criteria. Supervision is provided by social workers with degrees from accredited programs or at a minimum the program provides to each student a social work perspective for the field experience.

Connection of Theory to Practice

As programs connect the theoretical to the practice setting, students in integrative field seminars meet regularly to interact around their practice experiences. Some field seminar models are process only; others include content and assignments, while others are a mix of the two. The field seminar provides a forum for students to compare practice experiences, agency policies and procedures, differences and similarities in ethical issues, and to experience diversity in both context and client populations. Competencies that are standardized and evaluated across agency experiences provide a basis for assessment of professional development and for gatekeeping. This evaluation is achieved when students present practice scenarios, dilemmas, and interventions while peers and faculty members make an assessment of the student’s application of knowledge and practice skills.

Despite the clear value of the integrative field seminar, some programs are eliminating it, particularly for the MSW concentration year. One explanation is the difficulty of delivering the seminar as students increasingly request field practicum experiences in locations around the country and globe. As this trend developed, it was not surprising that block placements became the preferred delivery model for students doing their field internships in sites far removed from the campus and standard classroom. There is some indication that the value of the integrative seminar is recognized as supporting field as the signature pedagogy in social work education (Wayne, Raskin, & Bogo (2010).

One Program’s Field Seminar Model and Challenge

At Baylor University’s School of Social Work (BSSW), the integrative field seminar is a central mechanism for linking classroom curriculum and the field practicum experience. While agency social work practitioners are the instructors of social work in the field, students also discover broader application of their learning through the seminar classroom faculty and through the shared experiences of their colleagues. The seminar faculty also serves as field liaison with regular contact with field instructors. Similar to the model described by Royse, Dhooper and Rompf (2007), the seminar is interactive and participatory. Seminar assignments flow out of the field experience, providing a rich seminar opportunity for exchange of experience between students. The combination of feedback from seminar faculty, students, and on site field instructors informs the critical interfaces between classroom and practicum. Each student intern prepares a learning contract with the field instructor that addresses the program learning objectives by operationalizing them with tasks in the agency. This standardized rubric is particularized to the agency tasks and evaluated by both field instructors and field seminar faculty. Field instructors and field seminar faculty complete field orientation and training to provide consistent, reliable and valid grading of students.

Concurrent and Block Placements

The Baylor University School of Social Work is a mid-size school with both BSW and MSW degree programs. The BSW program has been accredited for almost 40 years. The program added an MSW program in 1999, graduating the first class in 2001 from a fully accredited program. The BSW field program uses a concurrent model, with students completing one field placement of a minimum total 480 hours over two semesters. MSW students in the foundation year complete 480 hours over the fall and spring semesters. The concurrent nature of the BSW and foundation placements makes it necessary for students to be placed in the local geographic area. These generalist placement sites are within 50 miles of the university and typically within 10-15 miles. However, concentration year students are in a modified block placement arrangement that makes distant site placements possible. Field placement assignments are made in the spring and summer prior to the concentration year. Students complete an orientation to the field and develop their basic learning contracts during the fall semester while engaged in the majority of their concentration coursework. Field instructors and field seminar faculty complete an orientation to the field that speaks both to the construction of the learning contract and grading rubric and to the assessment process and criteria. The spring semester is
a block placement that begins the first week of January and concludes the middle of April. Students complete a research project and paper during the internship and return to campus for the final two weeks to complete a full time Capstone Seminar. During the block placement, students are engaged in an integrative field internship seminar once a week for two hours designed to provide both processing of the internship experience and presentation of a case and treatment approaches. Thirty percent of the field internship grade comes from seminar assignments, including weekly log/journals and a case presentation to their colleagues. The block nature of the field internship allows the flexibility of placements in distant sites, including out of state and international placements.

The Challenge of Distance

The delivery of integrative seminars with block placements in distant locations is particularly challenging when students are geographically separated from the school and each other. Students placed within 120 miles of the school have historically driven to campus once a week for the seminar, which creates an unnecessary time burden. The school has tried a number of avenues for providing the seminar experience for students in distant site placements. For several years, students in field internships more than 120 miles from the campus were registered for standard integrative field seminars and used web cameras to connect to colleagues in the classroom. Challenges included hardware and software issues as the program determined the minimum necessary equipment for students to connect through web camera technology. Another challenge was adequate broadband access. Securing adequate technology on both ends of the connection did not solve the problem of busy internet traffic and areas with minimal broadband width. As students in distant sites experienced technological problems, students on site in the classroom experienced interruption of their seminar.

The decision was made to explore the use of several different models to deliver the integrative field seminars for concentration students. The three models included a traditional model, a mixed model, and a webinar model. The traditional model is an integrative field seminar with 10-12 students in a variety of local field placement assignments who meet each week at the school for two hours. The mixed model includes 8-10 students placed locally and 2-3 students in placements more than 120 miles away who telephone in to the seminar and interact on the phone for the two hour weekly seminar. The webinar model includes up to 10 students, all of whom are in placements more than 120 miles from the school and who participate in the weekly webinar. The webinar model is provided through Elluminate Live, an interactive software program provided by the university through the Blackboard software system. Prior to implementation, the field seminar faculty reviewed the literature for other integrative field seminar models and for evidence of the use and effectiveness of various field seminar models.

DISTANCE EDUCATION AND FIELD SEMINARS

There is very limited research on integrative field seminars and an increasing literature on distant site education particularly in the past 3-5 years. There is no previous literature on distant site webinar integrative field seminars. It is, however, a topic of some discussion on field and social work education list serves. List serve conversation includes seminars that meet as few as three times a semester to a number of programs using hybrid models combining traditional sessions in the classroom and online sessions. Some programs are using online field instructor training, though there is no current literature examining the equivalency of those programs. Innovations in field education in the early 1990s included the trends toward multi-method generalist practice; part time, older students working and attending school; field placements accommodating student requests for non-traditional and international settings (Lough, McBride, & Sherradan, 2012); and the move away from MSW practitioner-educator to PhD research-educator (Sneck, Grossman, & Glassman, 1991). Field education is historically a venue for innovation in social work education (Sheafor & Jenkins, 1982). The purpose of this research is to examine both outcomes and student perceptions of a field innovation in social work practice; specifically, the use of distance site education to provide educational support for national and international field practicum.

The population of students being served via distance learning and the availability of online learning has been expanding, resulting from outreach efforts to students previously limited by geography, cost, family or work concerns (Allen & Seaman, 2013; Ayala, 2009; Vernon, Vakalahi, Pierce, Pittman-Munke, & Adkins, 2009). While the use of distance learning in social work education is widespread, the use of internet technology for integrative seminars has
only recently begun to emerge (Birkenmaier, Wernet, Berg-Werner, Wilson, Banks, & Olliges, 2005). Research on student satisfaction with the use of internet technology is mixed. Some results show students significantly favor live instruction over televised distance learning, and other research suggests that internet technology that supplements a course (such as a class e-mail project) enhances the educational experience (Birkenmaier, et al., 2005).

Comparison In-class and Online Field Seminars

Wolfson, Magnuson and Marsom (2005) compared both in-class and online field seminar sections around meeting learning objectives and student satisfaction with the learning environment over a 3-year period (2000-2002). Online (70%; n = 10) students rated the experience as equally or more favorable than in class or traditional seminar. The ability to participate on their own terms and at convenient times was reported as a definite asset. Some students who had been quiet and reluctant to share in the classroom setting participated more in the online course. These students reported feeling more comfort in sharing their experiences and thoughts. Even so, more than half of the respondents suggested that future online seminars include some type of in-class sessions during the semester. Nearly half the students reported they disliked the absence of face-to-face interaction and missed the physical presence of their peers. They also noted that computer-mediated communication could be more easily misunderstood. Generally, the online seminar was successful in assisting students to meet their individual learning objectives and the school’s practicum objectives. The convenience of the online seminar outweighed its limitations.

McFall and Freddolino (2000) compared MSW field instruction at one local and two distance campus locations. Local resources, sensitivity, and on-campus field office resources were evaluated. The research question examined whether students in the two distance sites had significantly different perceptions of their field instruction environments than did on-campus students. The results indicate that while the geographic location and the strength of the difference varied, in none of the cases can we assume comparability across all three sites. Students in both distance sites reported more positive experience with local field resources than students on campus. A similar pattern appeared as distance cohorts reported more positive perceptions regarding agency climate agency support for protecting the student role. However, students on campus perceived the operation of the field office more positively than did the students in distance sites.

These findings suggest that with planning and the willingness to commit sufficient resources, it is possible to implement a quality field instruction component in a distance education setting at least comparable to what is provided on campus, and which, in some cases, provides benefits over the traditional offering. Specifically, the innovative nature of many distance education programs seems to provide a level of creativity and energy that surpasses ongoing campus-based programs (McFall & Freddolino, 2000). Researchers generally agree that there is no difference between campus students’ and distant students’ acquisition of course content (Cummings, Foels, & Chaffin, 2012; Webber, Currin, Groves, Hay, & Fernando, 2010). Abels (2005) concludes that results from distance education evaluations suggest that satisfaction levels with instructional quality are at least equivalent to those obtained for traditional courses.

Equivalence and Outcomes

Evidence supports the idea that distance education can make graduate study available to a larger number of students and that it is at least as effective as classroom instruction in terms of student learning (Allen & Seaman, 2013; Blakely, 1992). Online students also frequently commented that they came to know their online classmates well and relied on their help with course material (Wilke & Vinton, 2006). Interactions among students and between students and instructors were strengthened through the use of technologies such as interactive television, teleconferences, computer discussion groups, videoconferences, and e-mail (Berger, Stein, & Mullin, 2009; Huff, 2000). According to instructors, the computer has enhanced practicum experience discussions and the integration of theory with practice (Birkenmaier, et al., 2005).

Critical Appraisal

No differences were found between distant social work students and on-site social work students with regard to their level of critical appraisal and research method skills (Webber, Currin, Groves, Hay, & Fernando, 2010). Abels’ (2005) findings support the proposition that the educational achievements of distance education students are at least comparable to those of traditional students (p. 102). Compared to an on-campus cohort, distance education students
appear to earn equivalent grades. Abels found the rewards of distant site education included providing learners with more professionally trained social workers, increasing understanding of community-specific needs and resources, and accessing a diversity of rural communities.

Some studies included concerns about distance education in social work. Blakely (2005) found that in one distance education system, faculty were not routinely personally available to students, requiring extra effort to assure positive socialization outcomes. A criticism of online learning has also been that the critical element of human contact is missing (Wilke & Vinton, 2006). Some MSW students described a loss of autonomy because barriers prevented them from attending school in the preferred traditional classroom environment (Pardasani, Goldkind, Heyman, & Cross-Denny, 2012). Abels (2005) identified these challenges in distance education—difficulty adjusting and creating a classroom environment, the need to adjust the instructor’s teaching style, and obstacles to effective communication restricting opportunity to assess the effectiveness of teaching as the semester evolves. Some studies have found that students prefer face-to-face classes, citing difficulties with technology, the learning environment, access to libraries and other student services, and classroom interaction. Others have suggested that there are significant pedagogical losses because of technology (Huff, 2000).

THE STUDY

The literature suggests that online field seminars can provide students with a successful experience. The students in the school expressed requests for distant site placements and interest in having the integrative field seminar experience while in block placements across the country and, in some cases, in international settings. The faculty’s interest is in meeting student needs and ensuring academic excellence.

Research Questions

This study asks several questions. Is there a difference in student perceptions of learning experiences in field practicum across three models of integrative field seminar (traditional, mixed, and webinar)? Does the model of integrative field seminar make a difference in student outcomes (grades) both in seminar assignments and in field practicum evaluation? What is the most effective model of integrative field seminar for students in local placements and in distant site placements?

Methodology

Sample. Sixty-three students participated in the MSW concentration year experience at the BSSW in academic year 2007-2008. Forty-eight field instructors supervised and graded the concentration students’ work; of those, thirteen (almost one-third) are faculty in the School of Social Work and intimately acquainted with the curriculum, program objectives, and field education program. Six faculty members taught the integrative field seminars. The students and field office completed practicum assignments in August, 2007. Students were assigned to sections of the integrative field seminar based on concentration, practice focus, and distance of the placement site from Baylor University. Traditional= 41 interns; mixed=17 interns, and webinar=5 interns. Students in placements further than 120 miles from Baylor were placed in a webinar with the exception of students in congregational placements. They were placed in mixed seminar sections with no more than three students phoning in to any mixed section. A total of 23 interns participated in distance and/or mixed seminars.

All concentration field students participated in a fall course entitled Introduction to the Internship. Students were required in the fall to complete orientation to the agency and develop a learning contract for the spring block placement. Additionally, students in the webinar section were required to secure hardware and software and complete orientation and training to the Eluminate Live system. That orientation included successful webinar sessions on campus, off campus, and in their distant site placement location prior to the launching of the spring block internship. Field instructors and seminar faculty participated in the orientation and training as well.

Instrumentation. Several data points were considered in this study. Student outcomes were defined as performance in the major grading categories: case presentation, class participation, and field evaluation. Case presentation is 15% of the seminar grade. Each student prepares written information for colleagues, including background of the case, description of the problem, the work, the policies impacting the work, and the current status of the case.
Seminar participants read this material prior to the presentation. The presenting student makes a 45 minute case presentation that includes a power point of major points, a sample of work that is audio, video, or process recording, and facilitation of the case discussion. Class participation is a difficult variable to quantify. Students receive a grade for class participation partly based on attendance and largely based on contributions made to the learning of others.

The final evaluation of the field internship includes the student and field instructor’s assessment of 21 course objectives that have been operationalized in the agency with specific agency tasks for which the student is responsible. The data includes student grades on each of the 21 objectives and a final field evaluation grade constituting 70% of the field internship seminar grade for each student. The large percentage of the grade derived from the field evaluation is significant in assessing differences in student grade outcomes among the three models of seminar.

To examine student perceptions of the equivalency of the experience, all students were asked to complete a pre-test in January on the first day of the integrative seminar. That pre-test included four Likert scale questions asking students to assess, after the fall semester together:

- Relationship with Seminar Professor
- Relationship with Student Colleagues
- Ability to benefit from seminar experience
- Ability to contribute to colleagues’ seminar experience

The same questions were asked in a post-test on the last day of the spring seminar experience. It is expected that student response to these four 5-point Likert scale questions will help in measuring the effectiveness of each of the three models under consideration. Responses for each question were assigned numeric values (1=Poor, 2=Minimal, 3=Fair, 4=Good, 5=Excellent).

**Data Analysis**

Of the 63 MSW students in concentration internship placements, 95% \( n = 60 \) completed the pre-test. Eighty-seven percent \( n = 55 \) completed the post-test, and 95% percent \( n = 58 \) of the students completed the survey instrument. The focus of the study is to compare students’ learning experiences and performance across the three models of field seminar. Sixty-seven percent \( n = 41 \) were in the traditional seminar model. Twenty five percent \( n = 17 \) were in the mixed seminar model. Eight percent \( n = 5 \) participated in the webinar model. In this first year of offering the seminar options, since only five students participated in the webinar model, an analysis of the data is provided with the recognition that the small sample size makes accurate comparisons more difficult.

A Wilcoxon signed rank test was performed for each student’s pre-test and post-test scores on each of the four items that relate to their perception of the quality of the experience. This test was used to compare the differences in the pre- and post-test scores for each of the four questions as a combined sample including all three seminar models, followed by comparing the traditional model to the mixed and webinar models. Finally the three models were analyzed individually for any differences that might be present within the sample between the different models. This is a non-parametric test that assumes the paired differences (Post-Pre) are independent and each paired difference comes from a symmetric distribution with identical medians. The test uses the ranks of the paired differences to compute its test statistic. Paired differences of zero are ignored in the analysis. For each question, we wanted to investigate the change in response values after attending the spring seminars. For example, if a student rated their relationship with their colleagues as a “1=Poor” on the pre-test, we would expect an increase (ideally to “5=Excellent”) on the post-test. Therefore, we want to test the following hypotheses:

\[ H_0: \text{The median of the paired differences (Post-Pre) is less than or equal to 0,} \]
\[ H_A: \text{The median of the paired differences (Post-Pre) is greater than 0.} \]

Therefore, we will reject \( H_0 \) when the statistic \( T^- \) is less than or equal to the critical value \( T^-_{\alpha/2(n-1)} \), where \( T^- \) is the sum of the negative ranks assigned to the paired differences, \( \alpha \) is the type I error (significance level), and \( n \) is number of valid paired differences minus paired differences of zero.
FINDINGS

There were no significant differences among the students' average final grades (Table 1) and among the final evaluation grades (Table 2) for the three seminar models for all of the assignments.

Table 1. Final Grades by Seminar Model

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>85-90</th>
<th>91-95</th>
<th>96-100</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Traditional</td>
<td>7.89%</td>
<td>44.73%</td>
<td>47.36%</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>53.33%</td>
<td>46.66%</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Webinar</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2. Final Evaluation Grades by Seminar Model

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>85-90</th>
<th>91-95</th>
<th>96-100</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Traditional</td>
<td>7.69%</td>
<td>35.89%</td>
<td>56.41%</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Webinar</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Final evaluation grades are computed by the field instructor, i.e. the practitioner on site in the field experience who evaluates the student's practice. This final field evaluation is 70% of the final overall grade in the course. While the seminar faculty member has final grade authority, the field instructor's grade assessment is almost universally retained. The other 30% of the final overall grade comes from student presentations and participation and is assessed by the seminar faculty member.

There is very little difference in the assessment of student performance by field instructors and by seminar faculty totals in the three models. There is an indication that seminar faculty are somewhat more distinguishing between high and low “As” in the traditional and mixed models. All students in the webinar model received an A in both the final field evaluation and the final overall grade, but the low N (5) makes that finding inconsequential.

The Wilcoxon signed rank test was performed for each student’s pre-test and post-test scores on each item of the four questions as a combined sample. Table 3 summarizes the results of the test for the entire sample, combining all three models, using a type I error of $\alpha = 0.05$. For each question, the number under the column $T-$ is the number to be compared to the critical value which determines the conclusion and p-value of the test for that question.

For Question 2, the null hypothesis is rejected since $T- = 84.5 \leq 100$ with $p < 0.025$, as shown in Table 3. Overall there was a significant increase in response values on the post-test for students feeling a stronger connection with their fellow colleagues after attending the seminars. That is, there was a significant move in the direction of responses toward excellent on the post-test for Question 2.

Next, the complete sample was divided into two separate groups: (1) traditional and (2) mixed and webinar. The assumptions and hypotheses will be the same as those mentioned previously. However, due to the small sample sizes for the two groups being considered, a type I error of $\alpha = 0.10$ will be used instead. Table 4 summarizes the results of the test for the traditional seminar group and Table 5 displays the results for the mixed and webinar group combined. Again, for each question, the number representing $T-$ is the number to be compared to the critical value which determines the conclusion and p-value of the test for that question.
Table 3. Wilcoxon Signed Rank Results for Total Sample, including all 3 Models

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>$T_{α(1),n}$</th>
<th>$T$-</th>
<th>Conclusion</th>
<th>$p$-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) Relationship with Professor</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>86.5</td>
<td>Fail to Reject</td>
<td>$p &gt; 0.25$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) Relationship with Colleagues</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>84.5</td>
<td>Reject</td>
<td>$0.01 &lt; p &lt; 0.025$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) Benefit from presentation</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>Fail to Reject</td>
<td>$0.10 &lt; p &lt; 0.25$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4) Benefit from Colleagues</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>128.5</td>
<td>Fail to Reject</td>
<td>$p &gt; 0.25$</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For Question 2 (Relationship with Student Colleagues), the null hypothesis is rejected for both groups in Tables 4 and 5 since $T = 30 \leq 31$ with $p < 0.10$ and $T = 15.5 \leq 17$ with $p < 0.10$, respectively. Hence, students in both groups experienced a significant increase in responses regarding their relationship with other student colleagues after attending the seminars. That is, there was a significant move in the direction of responses toward excellent on the post-test for both groups regarding Question 2.

Breaking down the group containing both mixed seminars and webinar into their respective groups further addresses the results found in Table 5. In Tables 6 and 7, the results for the mixed seminar and webinar are shown with $α = 0.10$. For the webinar sample, the small sample size prevented the use of the Wilcoxon signed rank test on three of the questions. However, notice there were no negative differences (Pre-Post) in responses for the webinar sample. For all four questions, there was not a single student who responded numerically less on the post-test than they did on the pre-test, suggesting the webinar model successfully improve students in all four of these areas to some degree.

Table 4. Wilcoxon Signed Rank Results for the Traditional Seminar Sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>$T_{α(1),n}$</th>
<th>$T$-</th>
<th>Conclusion</th>
<th>$p$-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) Relationship with Professor</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>22.5</td>
<td>Fail to Reject</td>
<td>$p &gt; 0.25$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) Relationship with Colleagues</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Reject</td>
<td>$0.05 &lt; p &lt; 0.10$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) Benefit from Presentation</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>Fail to Reject</td>
<td>$0.10 &lt; p &lt; 0.25$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4) Benefit from Colleagues</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>Fail to Reject</td>
<td>$0.10 &lt; p &lt; 0.25$</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 5. Wilcoxon Signed Rank Results for the Modified and Webinar Sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>$T_{a(1),n}$</th>
<th>$T$-</th>
<th>Conclusion</th>
<th>$p$-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) Relationship with Professor</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>Fail to Reject</td>
<td>$p &gt; 0.25$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) Relationship with Colleagues</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>15.5</td>
<td>Reject</td>
<td>$0.05 &lt; p &lt; 0.10$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) Benefit from Presentation</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Fail to Reject</td>
<td>$p &gt; 0.25$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4) Benefit from Colleagues</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>17.5</td>
<td>Fail to Reject</td>
<td>$p &gt; 0.25$</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results for the mixed seminar group in Table 6 show no significant differences in student responses for any single question between the pre- and post-tests. However, the webinar group in Table 7 rejects the null hypothesis for Question 2 since $T_\alpha = 0 \leq 0$ (the critical value is 0) with $p < 0.10$. Therefore, the results of Table 5 can largely be attributed to the webinar sample of students. Both the traditional and webinar groups experienced significantly increased response values on the post-test compared to the pre-test for Question 2 relating to student colleagues relationships. However, the mixed seminar group experienced no such change, suggesting that the mixed seminar group may be the least effective in improving relationships and providing convenient methods for benefitting from and contributing to the seminar experience. Examining the mean response for Question 2 on the pre-test for the different seminar models yields $x-bar = 4.375$ for traditional, $x-bar = 4.533$ for mixed, and $x-bar = 3.400$ for webinar. Post-test mean responses for Question 2 give $x-bar = 4.543$ for traditional, $x-bar = 4.600$ for mixed, and $x-bar = 4.600$ for webinar. Hence, the webinar sample experienced the greatest increase in mean response for Question 2 and then the traditional seminar group. However, the mixed seminar group experienced the smallest increase, which resulted in no significant changes between the pre- and post-tests.

Table 6. Wilcoxon Signed Rank results for the Modified Seminar Sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>$T_{a(1),n}$</th>
<th>$T$-</th>
<th>Conclusion</th>
<th>$p$-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) Relationship with Professor</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Fail to Reject</td>
<td>$p &gt; 0.25$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) Relationship with Colleagues</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>Fail to Reject</td>
<td>$p &gt; 0.25$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) Benefit from Presentation</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Fail to Reject</td>
<td>$p &gt; 0.25$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4) Benefit from Colleagues</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>Fail to Reject</td>
<td>$p &gt; 0.25$</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 7. Wilcoxon Signed Rank Results for the Webinar Sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>T(1),n</th>
<th>T-</th>
<th>Conclusion</th>
<th>p-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) Relationship with Professor</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) Relationship with Colleagues</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Reject</td>
<td>0.05 &lt; p &lt; 0.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) Benefit from Presentation</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4) Benefit from Colleagues</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Student Comments

While this study was primarily a quantitative analysis, students were provided opportunity in the survey instrument to comment on the strengths and challenges of their particular seminar model and to make recommendations for the future. Student comments were grouped by model and by positive or negative response. Overwhelmingly (73%; n = 22 of 30), students commented that a positive feature of the traditional model is the opportunity to be present with colleagues and interact around the field experience. More than half (55%; n = 11 of 20) in the traditional model commented that students who drive in some distance for the seminar experience a significant challenge in the traditional model. They recommend that those students be allowed to participate in a webinar option to prevent tardies and absences.

Students in the mixed model recognized that there was an advantage to students at a distance not having to drive in (22%; n = 2 of 9) and recognized the benefit of conversation about field in the seminar (33%; n = 3 of 9). However, those same students commented repeatedly (80%; n = 12 of 15 comments) about the difficulties in interacting in the mixed model. Those students recommended that students be offered either the webinar model (distant site) or the traditional model, but that the school should not provide a mixed model. Students in the webinar model commented on the benefit of being able to be in distant site placements and still interact with their colleagues. The primary challenge noted was around technology (occasional difficulty connecting or being “bumped off the network”). Students in the webinar model recommended continued use of the webinar, with increased work around preparation in the fall semester through hardware and software in-service training. Students in the webinar model mentioned several times the benefit of recorded webinar sessions to “make up” sessions that were missed because of technology challenges.

Faculty Comments

While seminar faculty did not participate in the survey experience for this study, they were interviewed by phone or in person for their impressions and perception of the seminar experience. Of the six sections of integrative field seminar, three were traditional model, taught by three different faculty members. All three commented that the traditional model works well with the exception of students driving some distance for the seminar. All three noted problems with absences and late arrivals for those students who were driving in from out of town. Two faculty members taught mixed model seminars, and both commented about the challenge of securing equal participation of those students who were phoning in to the seminar. Audio quality was a particular challenge. However, neither felt that the students’ field experiences or case presentation experiences were compromised by the mixed model. Only one faculty mem-
ber taught a webinar. That faculty member commented on her surprise at the relative ease of the experience, the benefit of being able to record the sessions, and the remarkable response of students to the webinar option.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Students in a mid-size graduate social work program participated in an integrative field seminar as part of their modified block field internship. The program provided the seminar through traditional, mixed, and webinar models and compared student grades and pre-post test perceptions of their ability to participate fully in the experience including both their relationship with professors and colleagues.

Perhaps predictably, there was no significant difference in student grades in the internship evaluation, seminar case presentation, or class presentation. This is a final block field internship and, thus, it is anticipated that students will do well academically in this experience. These students have all completed extensive, rigorous coursework prior to the internship, including successful completion of a foundation/generalist practice internship. It can be argued that gatekeeping processes eliminate students without capability or drive to make good grades in the final internship. Additionally, class participation and case presentation assignments are designed to help students transition from the student role to the role of colleague with their peers. One would anticipate competence for this transition in the semester prior to beginning professional practice.

The analysis of student pre- and post-test responses with regard to the seminar experience did not demonstrate significant differences between models with regard to student relationship with professors or with regard to their perceptions of their ability to contribute to or benefit from the seminar. However, there was a significant difference in the webinar students’ perception of relationship with colleagues before and after the seminar experience. Notably, these five students reported that their relationships with colleagues were much improved despite not having been in the historically preferred traditional model of internship seminar. We might speculate that the shared experience of trying something new, the need for collaboration and collegiality in trying out a new model, and the need for a group in those students in distant site locations for placement contributed to this result. In any case, the webinar held its own and in fact excelled in the pre-post test comparisons.

Limitations

This study was limited in scope in several respects. It covers one program in one academic year. It includes only 5 students in the webinar model. The small number makes it impossible to generalize much from the results. The program plans to repeat the study this coming year with at least two differences:

- No mixed model seminars. Students beyond a 50 mile radius to the school will be allowed to participate in the webinar model.
- Two sections of webinar seminars with a minimum of 12 webinar students with formalized preparation for the webinar experience in the fall semester.

Recommendations

Both student comments and faculty comments were consistent with the quantitative findings and with the following recommendations:

- The traditional seminar is the preferred model for integrative internship seminar when possible.
- The mixed model is least effective and preferred for the integrative field seminar.
- The webinar model provides an effective alternative for the integrative field seminar for students in distant site placements.
- Continued training of both faculty and students is essential to success of the webinar model.
- Refinement of hardware and software are important to success of the webinar model.
- Small class size is important to the webinar model.
Conclusions

Field internship is for most students the highlight of their social work education. It may only be rivaled by that first day in the first social work class when students wonder what this profession called social work really is and whether or not it is for them. Field internship marks for students the launching of their own social work practice. The face of the client is central to the experience while classroom readings and theories are integrated into the field experience. Field instructors in agencies are the seasoned professionals and mentors who structure the learning for students. The integrative field seminar is the bridge insuring learning exchanges between field and classroom, between concept and practice. The online seminar is an effective venue for delivering the integrative field seminar to students whose placements take them too far from the school to participate in traditional seminars. Students in the webinar option experience equivalent educational outcomes and report improved collegial relationships with seminar participants.

Implications of this study are limited by the small number of participants and one year of data collection. Even so, they are important. The student grades and responses suggest that the delivery of synchronous on-line field seminars produces equivalent educational outcomes. This is a strong statement about the possibilities of distant site placements in field education that include the substance of the integrative seminar and the role of faculty in guiding the practicum experience. This is one interface between the models of practicum education of the past and the possibilities of practicum education in the future as technology makes more of the world accessible to students and to faculty. In a global economy and higher education that is dually invested in competencies and outcomes and in the effective use of technology, this study provides one example of maximizing a number of those values simultaneously.

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Leaving the Dark Side for the Light: Twelve Strategies for Effective Transition from Academic Administrator to Faculty Member

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University of Texas-Pan American

Copious literature is available to provide nascent administrators with guidelines and advice for being a successful administrator. Likewise, faculty new to academia have many available resources both from the literature and from campus-based support services, such as new faculty development programs, mentors, and special internal funding programs. However, there is a paucity of academic discussion explaining the process of the return of an administrator back to faculty. The purpose of this paper is to delineate strategies for the transition back to faculty from the administrative ranks. Twelve pragmatic strategies for re-entering the world of faculty teaching, research, and service are provided.

Keywords: faculty development, career development, administration, higher education

INTRODUCTION

An academic career most often takes one of two paths. Both paths usually begin with a faculty member taking a job as an assistant professor and then striving to meet their new institution’s criteria for tenure and promotion to associate professor. Many then go on to pursue the coveted rank of full professor. Sometime after the acquisition of tenure and promotion, and either before or after the acquiring the rank of full professor, faculty members are often faced with a choice of whether to a) dedicate most of their effort to excelling in their discipline through research, including securing external funding, and service to the profession, or b) to dedicate most of their effort to service to their institution through progressively more responsible administrative assignments.

Faculty members on both paths are needed to create a vibrant institution that meets the needs of the students and the communities within which they are situated. Student learning and the creation and application of new knowledge are the primary functions of all institutions of higher education. Talented and dedicated faculty members who remain throughout their career as teachers and scholars—that is, those who remain on the “light side”—are needed to insure optimal accomplishment of the institutional mission. Ample information about how to be a “successful” faculty member can be found in the literature (Gaskin, Lumpkin, & Tennant, 2003). New faculty members are also afforded resources to help their advancement toward tenure and promotion through various professional development and mentoring programs (Jones, 2008; Ledford, Peel, Good, Greene, & O’Connor, 2006; Leslie, Lingard, & Whyte, 2005; McLean, Cilliers, & Van Wyk, 2008; Zeind et al., 2005).

Institutions must also be organized to respond to the needs and demands of their local, state, and sometimes larger communities. Full time administrators—often referred to as those on the “dark side” of the Academy—serve to organize resources and attend to the orderly management of the institution so that it can achieve its mission and meet the needs of students, faculty, and other constituencies. In the common shared governance model, both faculty and administration assume leadership of the institution, but the administration is held accountable to a much higher degree than faculty. For those who choose to move from a faculty role to dedicate most of their time to the administrative path, there are ample resources to describe how to succeed as a department chair (Buller, 2012; Chu, 2006; Gmelch, 2011; Hecht, 2004), a dean (Buller, 2007), a provost, (Ferren & Stanton, 2004; R.V. Smith, 2006) and a president
The tenure of higher level administrators is, with notable exceptions, growing shorter. Some have cited the average tenure at the same institution of the provost as about 4.7 years, and the tenure of the president at 8.5 years (from the American Council of Education, reported in Pierce, Susan, 2011). Indeed, most provosts and presidents acknowledge the brevity of their tenure as administrators and seek contractual language guaranteeing certain provisions, including tenure in a “home” department, as part of their initial contract.

For those former administrators who remain at their institution and who choose to remain professionally active, re-entry to the faculty ranks can be a challenge. While serving as an administrator, their professional networks have changed. If the returning administrator has not taught at the current institution, the former administrator is largely naïve to the student abilities and preferences at the institution. And, finally, teaching and research technology has advanced during their administrative service. During their administrative service, disciplinary knowledge has changed, new themes have emerged which effect funding opportunities, and licensure, certification, and/or professional accreditation standards have changed. Finally, they must navigate the interpersonal aspects of faculty life with colleagues who were most recently subordinates.

Little has been written about this often silent, obscure group of (re)turned professors. And, unlike the fanfare and resources associated with being a new faculty member or an administrator taking a new administrative position, former administrators have little formal assistance for their adjustment back into a faculty role. Without proper preparation, maladjustment can cause emotional turmoil and feelings of inadequacy for the returning faculty member, can create performance-based issues that must be addressed by current administration, and, tragically, the under-utilization of the knowledge, skills and abilities of a seasoned veteran in higher education. The purpose of this paper is to delineate strategies for the transition back to faculty from the administrative ranks. After a brief discussion of the choice process of remaining at an institution after leaving administration, twelve pragmatic strategies for re-entering the world of faculty work—teaching, research and service—are discussed below.

These strategies will be presented from the perspective of a returning upper level administrator—provost or president. They will also be most useful to longstanding deans who may be stepping back into a faculty role. While some of the strategies may be useful to a Department Chair, the physical proximity to the department, the often concurrently assigned teaching duties, and the day to day contact with students and colleagues in closely related disciplines make re-entry into the faculty role less problematic. Longstanding deans, provosts and presidents are typically much further removed from daily faculty life and have been away for a longer period from the teaching, research, service responsibilities of a faculty member. The term “returning faculty member” will be used throughout this paper to mean longstanding deans, provosts, and presidents who have vacated their positions and who have the opportunity to return to the faculty based on their tenure status at the institution. Obviously, there will be administrators who do not have that option or who choose during transition negotiations to give up tenure and/or the right to return as faculty.

**CHOOSE, PLAN, NEGOTIATE**

**Choose**

Most administrative positions do not become vacant without warning; the incumbent has had enough experience to see the signs of an impending change. These transitions at the higher level are somewhat predictable and often occur with a change of board or presidential leadership.

Administrators themselves may decide that they will return to the faculty for the joy of being a faculty member. Conversely, perhaps there is a sense by the faculty or superiors that a “change of direction” is needed (with or without a no confidence vote!). Regardless of the reason for the change, like the choice to become an administrator, the decision to return to a faculty position at the same institution should be deliberate and undertaken in consultation with trusted friends, colleagues, and family members.

The decision process should begin well before the soon to be ex-administrator completes their administrative duties and before the administrative change is a fait accompli. Factors such as projected faculty member income, commitment to the institution including its students and mission, and the ability of the institution to serve the needs of the
returning faculty member’s new research agenda should all be considered during this decision process. The returning faculty member must also carefully self-assess their resiliency and humility, because returning to the faculty is emotionally taxing and, like the choice to enter administration, is a career changing decision.

The focus on internal locus of control at the decision points is a critical starting point for effective re-entry. An ex-administrator who does not want to be a faculty member can often turn into an embittered colleague if he or she represents being in the faculty ranks. Conversely, one who perceives that returning to the faculty was their decision (even if under stressful circumstances) will likely be more positive, productive, and collegial.

Plan

Upper level administrators should be cognizant of the time limited nature of their appointments and of common signs associated with impending change. Often those wishing to remain in administration (albeit at another institution) will begin job seeking well before announcing a resignation or before a transition is forced. Administrators who desire to stay at an institution should plan their stay with the same dedication of a job search. Table 1 delineates some of the planning questions that should be addressed prior to a step back to faculty. Note that current provosts and presidents are likely to have ready access to data sources required to answer these questions. While conversation with the faculty, department chair, or dean may be possible, this may not be desirable at this point in time. Therefore, the data sources listed can be accessed quietly. Access to the data after stepping down from the administrative position may be limited or awkward to obtain.

Table 1. Questions to Consider when Deciding whether to Return to Faculty

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions</th>
<th>Data Sources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Are there adequate institutional resources to refine knowledge of the discipline?</td>
<td>Paid leave, Access to journal articles, Conference travel funds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are there adequate physical resources (e.g., labs, computer hardware and software, specialized materials) to support teaching and research in the area of interest?</td>
<td>Space studies, Asset inventories of hardware, software and other equipment (both for individual and departmental use)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are resources available to initiate intra and interdepartmental collaboration, along with interinstitutional collaboration?</td>
<td>Faculty rosters, Budget documents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will there be personnel support (e.g., clerical, teaching, and research assistance)?</td>
<td>Organizational charts, Budgets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are start-up funds for re-entry regularly given?</td>
<td>Policy documents, Budgets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will merit raises be available?</td>
<td>Policy documents, Post tenure review documents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will the salary be sufficient after a return to faculty status?</td>
<td>Budget documents, CUPA data, History of others who have returned</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Negotiate

It is almost always in the best interest of the institution that the returning faculty member be satisfied with the terms of the return to faculty. Therefore, as an administrator makes known a proposed departure to their superiors, or vice
versa, a period of negotiation for the return to faculty begins. This may occur over weeks or days, or even just hours, and with or without legal counsel or a third party mediator. It is beyond the scope of this current discussion to detail at length negotiating strategies for the myriad of situations possible in a transition. However, answers to the major questions asked in the planning phase yield a beginning point for negotiations. Table 2 provides examples of some negotiating points as they relate to the previous questions. Each situation will provide unique opportunities and constraints. Negotiation will be guided by institutional or state rules and policies, budget, and institutional master agreements, if any, and/or the administrator’s existing employment contract.

**Table 2. Negotiating Points during the Transition**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Areas for consideration</th>
<th>Negotiating points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Increasing disciplinary knowledge</td>
<td>Paid leave</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Conference travel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Course assignment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insuring adequate physical resources (e.g., labs, computer hardware and software, specialized materials)</td>
<td>Assignment of office space</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Acquisition of new hardware, software and other equipment (both for individual and departmental use)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initiating intra and inter departmental collaboration, along with inter institutional collaboration</td>
<td>Joint appointments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Concurrent funding and/or travel with departmental colleagues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Conference travel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Opportunities for co-teaching (e.g., seminars, doctoral dissertation work, etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insuring personnel support (e.g, clerical, teaching, and research assistance)</td>
<td>Time limited additional personnel, including secretarial, undergraduate workstudy, and graduate research/teaching assistance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Securing funds for re-entry</td>
<td>Time limited dedicated travel funds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Equipment purchase, set-up, and maintenance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merit raises</td>
<td>Establish post-tenure review timeline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Designate modified merit criteria for first three years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salary</td>
<td>Present analysis of current salary in department</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Present data from sources such as CUPA and AAUP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Get it now!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Even though this is often a difficult time for all involved, reasonableness must and most often does prevail. As in any negotiation, getting to a “win-win” situation is an optimal outcome. The agreement should be in writing—players change and so do memories! Most often, negotiation will lead to a paid leave of absence or sabbatical. After resting (take care of yourself!) for a period of time, refocus on returning now to the light side: that role we envisioned as we exited graduate training and took our first position.

The next sections of the paper will detail strategies for planning teaching, research, and service reentry. Upper level administrators rarely have unscheduled time. A lack of structure during the paid leave is at best disorienting and, at worse, can be the source of tremendous undue stress near the beginning of the first semester as a full time faculty member if the time has not been used wisely. Whether the paid leave is for a year, six months, or less, a plan is essential for effective reentry. The plan should be written with goals, outcomes, and intermediate and final target dates for expected milestones (see “Personal Goal Setting - Goal Setting Tools from MindTools.com,” n.d.)
LEARN, TALK, TEACH

Neumann (2005) notes that “Learning, as changed cognition, involves the personal and shared construction of knowledge; it involves coming to know something familiar in different ways, or to know something altogether new, from within one’s self and often with others” (p. 65). An administrator returning to faculty is indeed going to know something familiar in different ways! New knowledge within the discipline, knowledge of new teaching techniques, and knowledge and skills in software, including learning management systems need to be acquired prior to the first day of teaching. Additionally, teaching norms for the department (e.g., number of assignments, intensity of writing assignments, etc.) as well as student abilities must be learned by a returning faculty member who has not previously taught in the new department. Six suggestions may ease the return to teaching:

1. **Get assigned courses soon.** If courses were not assigned during the negotiation phase of your transition, sit down with your department chair early in your leave to decide which courses you will teach during your first semester. This will allow you to target areas in your discipline that you will first need to research. For example, new federal definitions and criteria for assignment of categories to young people with disabilities required a significant learning effort during my transition back to the classroom. Clearly, the longer one is away from the field the more one needs to study new or reinterpreted disciplinary knowledge.

2. **Secure course materials from colleagues.** Colleagues who have recently taught the assigned courses are a valuable trove of information that will help you design newly assigned courses. Talk with them early in the sabbatical period. Most will willingly share syllabi, textbook recommendations, notes, assignments and other course materials. In addition to the expected content to be covered in a given course, these materials will also provide insight into the department’s teaching philosophy, practices, and general expectations. One can gain a sense of where to set the bar for student workload, etc., and review common practices such as attendance, cell phone and computer use in class, and accessibility of the instructor can be gauged from these syllabi. For example, text messaging did not exist at the time of my previous teaching. My colleagues regularly provide their cell numbers to graduate students and encourage the use of texting. Though completely foreign to me and seemingly intrusive, there were student expectations, and I conformed. I thank them for the expectation as I find the technology quite useful—it has not been abused by students! Additionally, a review of the syllabi will also provide ready-made boilerplate text for standardized statements, such as Equal Opportunity statements, incomplete procedures, and how to access disability services. These boilerplate statements are often required by the institution to be in syllabi and having copies in one place will save time!

Many colleagues will give you permission to use their materials *carte blanche*. It is important to give proper attribution to the materials that you use that colleagues have developed. Several of my syllabi still carry that attribution, even though I have made changes. And I readily give my syllabi to anyone who asks.

3. **Explore campus based and other teaching technologies.** Things have definitely changed since most upper level administrators last taught! For example, most campuses now utilize some type of Learning Management System (LMS) such as Blackboard™ to allow students to access materials anytime and anywhere. Returning administrators must at least become knowledgeable about the structure and utility of these systems as they begin to plan for their teaching. Some campuses have staff dedicated to working with the subject matter expert and then creating digitally based materials and activities. However, many administrators who are returning to teaching must themselves construct the digital materials. Students are likely to now expect you to use these systems and will expect you to maintain an online presence. It is beneficial to create an LMS shell or test space early in the sabbatical so as to develop skills and fluency in the preparation of digital materials and activities.

A number of campuses also use other technology aids to facilitate teaching. These range from the now basic classroom technology console, including a projection system tied to a computer, to classroom based recording systems such as Tegrity™, to automatic student response systems that allow an instructor to ask a class a question and then instantly obtain their responses via handheld devices (e.g., Turning Point Technologies™). Additionally, instructors have an ever-expanding array of free, internet based services that they can use *a la carte*. Examples include audience response systems such as Poll Everywhere™, which records and displays answers to questions via students’ text messages; SurveyMonkey™, which allows quick surveys of students’ attitudes and knowledge; and, Dropbox™, which
allows students to turn in papers electronically. These are but a few examples of current technologies available to assist in instruction. I use mainly The Chronicle of Higher Education’s ProfHacker blogs and the EDUCAUSE materials to become familiar with new technology based teaching techniques.

4. Expand your repertoire of teaching techniques. Knowing the format of the course (large lecture, seminar, practicum, etc.) will also allow you to focus on redeveloping specific methodologies for teaching the assigned courses—new teaching strategies have emerged since your trip to the dark side. For example, in my previous teaching life, a “flipped classroom” meant I needed better classroom management techniques. During my administrative service period, flipped classroom techniques have taken on a different meaning (i.e., using face to face class time to work on problems, cases, etc. instead of lecturing) and have emerged as common practice for some topics and disciplines (see Lage, Platt, & Treglia, 2000). The use of microlectures (short, focused lectures, usually less than 20 minutes) is another example of an emerging instructional technique that was not feasible during my previous teaching career (see EDUCAUSE, 2012). I use the Teaching Professor and Faculty Focus (Magna Publications, 2013) to keep me abreast of new media and non-media based techniques and conversations about teaching. Materials from the EDUCAUSE Learning Initiative (ELI) have also been helpful as I have learned to navigate this new digital world.

5. Practice with real students. The students that returning administrators will teach are from a different generation, have different experiences, and have different expectations of instructors. Undergraduate students have never known a world without the internet, and most graduate students grew up with computers. Indeed, the current generation has been referred to as the “net generation.” Even if your most recent experience has included some of this generation, YOUR teaching skills have become rusty while attending to administrative duties. I have yet to decide which conjured more fear: testimony in front of legislators or my first class session with undergraduate students after returning to the classroom! As one tries to remember about basic teaching skills such as wait time and open ended questioning and also tries to integrate unfamiliar teaching technologies with a group of students who have different expectations, unpleasant physical reactions can occur. This can be remedied by asking several colleagues if you can teach a session or two of their course during the latter part of your sabbatical. By then you will know about the various teaching technologies available on your campus. You will have to remember and utilize teaching techniques in vivo while utilizing the projection system and other technologies which are probably unfamiliar. This will give you confidence when you have to make the first impression during the first session of your course.

6. Get help from colleagues! Teaching, like administration, is best executed in a collaborative way. Returning administrators who are paid to project confidence to faculty may be reticent to seek advice and coaching from those who they were most recently in front of as an academic leader. Ask colleagues to review your syllabi. Talk with them about what techniques they have tried and found to be successful (and unsuccessful). Learn about their experiences with various technologies. In addition to providing you with valuable information, the activity of talking with new colleagues about content will allow them to see you in a much different role—a role like theirs!

RETURNING TO RESEARCH

Based upon a survey of department chairs returning to the faculty, Smith, Rollins, and Smith (2012) concluded that “The primary concern for chairs returning to the faculty included securing funding and establishing their research productivity as time required for serving as chair had severely encroached on this aspect of their faculty responsibilities” (p. 10). The principles of the scientific method have not changed during your administrative service; however, many other aspects of conducting research and securing external funding may have changed since you last engaged in the methodological study of a research question or prepared a grant application. For example, your previous research agenda may now be obsolete; someone else may have answered your substantive questions or a new technology may have rendered the questions moot. And while the principles of the scientific method have not changed, there is an expanding set of new tools to facilitate research in a more timely and cost effective manner. Priorities from research agencies have also changed during your administrative service, as well as the requirements of proposal submission, grant implementation, and grant monitoring/outcome reporting. Several suggestions for the administrator who is returning to faculty research are listed below:

7. Re-establish a research agenda. It is likely that our initial research agenda was some combination of what we were interested in, what our major professor was interested in, and what funding was available to support the work
during our doctoral program. After receiving the terminal degree, the work became more focused, funding was secured, and life was good on the light side. When the step was taken to become a full time administrator, our time was divided, and, if we moved up the administrative ladder by changing institutions, our research dwindled to near extinction. Indeed, the decision to move to administration has been called by others the “kiss of death” for scholarship (Aggarwal, Rochford, & Vaidyanathan, 2009). One’s perspective changes as we progress through life (see Maslow & International Study Project, 1979). Returning faculty must assess their current interests, which may have changed since the execution of their last research agenda. Realistic goals should be set based upon current interests, disciplinary directions, funding priorities, mission of the current institution, availability of collaborators, and the time horizon remaining in the faculty member’s career. Reconnecting through conferences and professional meetings (if funding for this was negotiated), joining disciplinary specific web blogs, browsing journals, and reviewing funding agency priorities/recently funded proposals are excellent beginning points for setting this agenda.

8. Review established and emerging methodologies and technologies. The fundamentals of analysis of variance, regression, and factor analysis have remained essentially unchanged in recent decades. However, returning faculty may need a refresher to rediscover knowledge in these and other areas related to statistics and research design. Both quantitative and qualitative research methodologies have expanded during your administrative service period. For example, mixed model studies have recently emerged to explain to a deeper level observed phenomena. Content analysis has been significantly extended through the development of computational algorithms. The internet has opened new methods for conducting large scale surveys, and “data mining” techniques have allowed more robust analyses of large datasets. These new methods may shorten what would have been a decade of research into a mere year’s worth of research. The returning faculty member should be aware of these new methods. Talking with current graduate students and reviewing the materials used in doctoral level research courses in the department (or a related department) is an excellent way to brush up on old and new research methods.

Database search engines and anytime-anywhere access to reference material via the internet have reduced the physical effort needed to find material related to one’s research agenda. Gone are the days of hours of work sitting with large volumes of “rotated display” of terms just to identify topic areas. Using aggregators such as EBSCO Host™ several mouse clicks now yield a list of sources that would have previously taken days to compile. Inter-library loan departments are thriving because of the inter-connectedness of vast repositories of information. Month-long waits for a document from another library has now often been shortened to a day, which in turn has increased the speed at which one can understand the extant knowledge base on a topic of interest. Returning faculty members should (swallow their pride and) schedule time with the library staff at their institution to learn about local and digitally connected resources and services. Two hours spent becoming familiar with the institutions services can save a tremendous amount of research time for either you or a research assistant you negotiated for during your transition.

Finally, methods for collaborating with colleagues have reduced the time and expense of joint research projects. DropBox™ was mentioned earlier in the context of teaching, but can also be useful in as a repository for developing collaborative papers. Likewise, free cloud based web services like Zotero™ facilitate citation management and document gathering and allow access to multiple simultaneous collaborators on a given project. Internet voice and video services (e.g., Skype™) have reduced the need to travel to collaborate in real time with others on a project. ProfHacker (Chronicle of Higher Education) and EDUCAUSE provide good collections and reviews of these productivity tools.

9. Become knowledgeable about internal and external funding mechanisms. Upper level administrators facilitate faculty acquisition of public and private dollars through resource allocation, encouragement and affirmation, and sometimes persuasion. However, there is often little time for administrators to write and submit a proposal—they have people for that. After the transition to faculty, the returning faculty member becomes those people! Like the dwindling or extinct research agenda, the once fully funded faculty member turned administrator has often been unable to remain connected to their network of program officers (government funders) or heads of philanthropic organizations (private foundations). Those networks must be re-established. This often means travel to the funding organization (negotiated during the transition) or at least regular phone contact. A careful review of the current organizational structure of government agencies will most often reveal a change in organization resulting in a change in funding mechanisms within an agency. Similarly, funding priorities have certainly changed to reflect advances in the field. With tentative research agenda in hand, the returning faculty member should spend time with staff in their
institution's office of sponsored programs and the institution's advancement office (or equivalents on their campus). They will have their fingers on the pulse of a wide variety of potential funders. Often these offices will have regular workshops that will be helpful as a returning faculty member begins their quest for external funding.

A final word about the processing of grant submissions is in order. Government agencies now mandate electronic submission of grant proposals, as do many private foundations. The days of yore when faculty used to rush to find the post office or delivery service location that stayed open the latest so that proposals could be dropped at the last second of the mailing date are gone. Faculty members must now complete web based materials about themselves and their institutions prior to the electronic grant submission. Budgets, narratives, and support materials are submitted differently than was the case in the previous light side days. This requires a different planning schedule than earlier in one’s career. It can be frustrating, demoralizing, and sometimes humiliating to have to submit materials repeatedly before they are electronically accepted. Improper electronic preparation may ultimately result in a missed deadline. Again, staff in the office of sponsored programs should be able to help with this process. Begin early with grant submissions until you have become thoroughly familiar with the process.

SERVICE

A faculty member’s choice to become a full time administrator is based at least in part with their desire to serve the institution. Once an administrator, service consumes the large majority of one’s day: committee meetings, internal and external board work, mediation among various groups, etc. Indeed, service is the one area that becomes more refined as a result of moving to the dark side. And, this the most recently familiar role experienced by the returning faculty member. However, caution in the service area for the several years after a return to faculty is warranted.

10. Choose service opportunities wisely. Administrators are selected because of their ability to lead and to get things done. The returning faculty member’s new chair and dean know this well and may request significant service effort within the department or college. As a senior faculty member, the returning faculty member has a responsibility to shoulder significant responsibilities. However, like brand new faculty members, returning faculty members must prioritize teaching and research activities during the first several years of returning to the faculty. Especially during the year of the sabbatical, returning faculty members should refuse service assignments. This time is for re-establishing teaching and research prowess. Administrators are also often placed on external boards due to their position. Returning faculty members should make a graceful exit from those boards unless the service work directly related to the individual’s discipline. This will free up the position should the organization want to offer a position to the succeeding administrator.

Returning faculty members should be cognizant of service work that may lead to conflict with succeeding administrators. For example, even though former provosts have a vast array of institutional knowledge, service as a faculty union representative or on the faculty senate may present problems for the returning administrator and the institution which is now led by new leaders. The right to enjoy the full privileges of a faculty member should be balanced against the need to maintain a healthy separation between current and former administration. Prudence would suggest a several year absence from these potentially adversarial situations.

11. Be conscious of what you say and how you say it. Members of certain committees may give deference to your opinion as a former administrator, thus bestowing upon you more power within the committee than the other members have. Indeed, returning administrators have just left an environment in which it was important to speak with authority in order to persuade others. This can cause resentments and may even cause less tenured faculty members to inhibit their opinions on committee matters. Likewise, administrators may be asked for their knowledge of “facts” about a given situation. It is wise to remember that some of these facts have likely changed since the transition. Talking with authority when current information is unavailable is very risky for the reputation of the returning faculty member and the current administrators. Again, the guidance and input should be given as a participating faculty member, but should not be given with any greater authority than that given by other committee members.

12. Remember role perspective. Situations may arise in which a colleague on committee may question or challenge a decision made during your administration. Collegial disagreements are common and are a hallmark of a healthy institution. The policy and practices established during a returning faculty member’s administration were made at a
given time under given circumstances. Those circumstances may or may not be known to fellow committee members and may or may not be available for public dissemination. Returning faculty members must hold in confidence those matters that cannot legally or ethically be discussed. Additionally, if additional information can be provided that justified a decision, that information should be shared to fully inform committee deliberations. Deliberateness in word choice and tone is important to avoid the perception of defensiveness.

Finally, it is likely that you made decisions at the administrative level that you did not agree with individually, but were in the best interest of the institution at the time. At this new time in the life of the institution and in your new role as a faculty member, you may be placed in a situation where you speak or vote against your own previously implemented policy or practices. It is incumbent that the returning faculty member clearly state why she or he has changed their mind on a given position. This will provide additional insight to fellow committee members and will communicate reasonableness on your part.

CONCLUSION

Leaving an administrative position and returning to faculty is a stressful time in the career of an academic. Regardless of the reason that an administrator has returned to faculty, a systematic reentry is beneficial to both the faculty member and the institution. The twelve strategies presented in this paper will facilitate the transition and increase the probability that the returning faculty member will remain productive during the remainder of their tenure at the institution.

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The Future of Adjunct Teaching at American Colleges and Universities under the Shared Responsibility Provisions of “Obamacare”

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This article examines the effect that the Affordable Care Act may have on adjunct teaching faculty at universities and colleges across the nation.

Keywords: Obamacare, Affordable Care Act, Adjunct teaching faculty, tenure track faculty, Carnegie Unit

INTRODUCTION

Today, approximately 47% of faculty making up the teaching work force at American colleges and universities are part-time, adjunct faculty (AFT Higher Education, 2010). At community colleges alone, the percentage is much higher. Nearly 70% of the teaching faculty at community colleges is part-time, adjunct. Deployment of part-time faculty began rising in the 1990’s and has continued to rise at an astonishing rate.

On June 28, 2012, the United States Supreme Court issued its momentous decision (National Federation of Independent Business v. Sebellius, 567 US ___, 2012), on the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (henceforth, the “Affordable Care Act”), commonly known as “Obamacare” (Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act), in which it upheld the Affordable Care Act as a constitutional exercise of Congress’ taxing power. Section 1513 of the Affordable Care Act sets forth the requirement that employers share responsibility for their employees’ health coverage. Section 4980H of the Internal Revenue Code, entitled “Shared Responsibility for Employers Regarding Health Coverage” implements the new law by requiring employers to offer healthcare coverage to their full-time employees or be subject to assessment of a penalty by the Internal Revenue Service (Internal Revenue Service, Internal Revenue Code §4980 H).

The Affordable care Act is problematic for universities and colleges across the nation. Due to rising costs and shrinking budgets, institutions of higher learning have increasingly relied on adjunct teaching faculty to deliver the curriculum (Kezar & Sam, 2010). Adjuncts are usually paid by the course, and only rarely paid by the hour. The problem for administration is in determining how many hours an adjunct is actually working. Under the federal law, employees working over 30 hours are considered full-time, and must be offered affordable health coverage.

The new law is slated to take effect in January, 2014. It is hoped that the federal regulations will set forth a standard that will serve as a measure that colleges and universities can use to determine whether adjunct faculty are serving full-time, thus triggering the requirement to offer benefits or suffer the penalty assessment. Currently, however, the federal law simply puts forth the requirement that institutions of higher learning use a “reasonable method” to determine whether adjuncts are teaching full-time (The Federal Register, 2013).

In the meantime, American colleges and universities are cutting back on adjunct teaching schedules in an effort to avoid the penalty provisions of the Affordable care Act (Greenfield, 2013). This unintended consequence of the new law is making it difficult for adjunct teachers to make ends meet. It is also creating an incentive among adjuncts to misrepresent the hours they work outside of the classroom (Dunn, 2013). The Affordable Care Act was intended to help American workers, but in the case of part-time/adjunct teachers, the new law appears to be hurting more than it helps.

This paper reviews the proposed rules in relevant part, and details the administrative difficulties they pose. While
there is no definitive answer to the dilemma at present, I offer perspectives on the issue of guidance for institutions of higher learning grappling with the adjunct problem.

THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT

The Affordable Care Act (the Act) was enacted by the United States Congress on March 23, 2010. Following a lawsuit initiated by twenty-six states, as well as other litigants, the United States Supreme Court upheld the Affordable Care Act as a legitimate exercise of congressional power (National Federation of Independent Business, 2012). Since the Affordable care Act was upheld, the IRS has been engaged in the process of promulgating regulations to carry out the provisions of the Act. Promulgating regulations is carried out in an interactive process involving the Internal Revenue Service and Department of the Treasury. For the limited purposes of this paper, I refer to the regulations as being promulgated by the IRS.

Section 4980H is the part of the new law that mandates shared responsibility for employers that meet the definition of “applicable large employer” as described in the proposed regulations. (Code of Federal Regulations, 26, part 54, section 4980H). As defined in section 4980 H(c)(2), an applicable large employer is an employer that employed an average of at least 50 full-time employees on business days during the preceding calendar year. A full-time employee is one who is employed at least 30 hours (on average) per week. This calculation is made with respect to any month in the calendar year.

Generally, large employers will be assessed a penalty or payment under Section 4980H in either of the following two circumstances:

1. Under 4980H(a), a payment will be assessed if the employer “fails to offer to its full-time employees (and their dependents) the opportunity to enroll in minimum essential coverage (MEC) under an eligible employer-sponsored plan and any full-time employee is certified to the employer as having received an applicable premium tax credit or cost sharing reduction”; or

2. Under 4980H(b), a payment will be assessed if the employer “offers its full-time employees (and their dependents) the opportunity to enroll in MEC under an eligible employer-sponsored plan and one or more full-time employees is certified to the employer as having received the applicable premium tax credit or cost-sharing reduction” (See Appendix A). Thus, employers will be assessed a payment if they provide coverage, but that coverage is not affordable or if the coverage does not provide minimum value.

Most colleges and universities are applicable large employers within the meaning of the Affordable Care Act, and are, therefore, subject to the shared responsibility requirements. Shared responsibility will not pose a problem for colleges and universities with respect to tenure track/tenured faculty members, as these employees are generally full-time employees who receive health coverage from the institution. However, the uncertainty about whether adjunct faculty members meet the definition of full-time employees in the regulations is causing a great deal of apprehension for American educational institutions.

The adjunct problem was addressed in comments to the proposed regulations. Specifically, it was noted that educational organizations do not ordinarily track adjunct faculty members' hours of service, but instead usually pay adjuncts for credits that they teach. The Internal Revenue Service noted:

Until further guidance is issued, employers of employees in positions described in the first paragraph of this section II.B.4 of this preamble (and in other positions that were a similar issues with respect to the crediting of hours of service) must use a reasonable method for crediting hours of service that is consistent with the purposes of section 4980 H. A method of crediting hours would not be reasonable if it took into account only some of the employee's hours of service with the effect of recharacterizing, as non-full-time, an employee in a position that traditionally involves more than 30 hours of service per week. For example, it would not be a reasonable method of crediting hours to fail to take into account travel time for a traveling salesperson compensated on a commission basis, or in the case of an instructor, such as an adjunct faculty member, to take into account only classroom or other instruction time and not other hours that are necessary to perform the employee's duties, such as class preparation time.
THE ADJUNCT PROBLEM

American colleges and universities employ adjunct faculty to teach courses because it is financially expedient. Since adjuncts are part-time, they are not salaried employees like tenure-track and tenured faculty. Typically, adjuncts are paid by the credit hour (Dunn, 2013). Depending upon the adjunct’s level of preparation for teaching, e.g., whether he/she holds a doctoral degree or a master’s degree or whether he/she has experience teaching, the institution will pay a set price for each credit hour the adjunct teaches. Course credits are variable, but a typical general education course or business school required course is either 3 or 4 credit hours. Schools often hire one adjunct to teach several courses.

With total institutional debt soaring, colleges and universities have had to rely more heavily on adjuncts in recent years (Greenfield, 2013). According to the National Center for Education Statistics, the percentage of faculty teaching part-time or adjunct at American colleges and universities has increased from 22.2% in 1970 to over 50% in 2011 (National Center, 2012). Adjunct faculty earn roughly 60% less than tenure-track and tenured faculty when salaries are compared on an hourly basis (Kezar & Sam, 2010). Simply put, it is much less expensive to use adjuncts when possible.

Most scholars agree that institutions of higher education began to deploy adjuncts in response to temporary financial stress (Kezar & Sam, 2010). Using adjuncts to teach basic courses, such as general education courses in writing and math, is cost-effective in a number of ways. First, adjuncts are paid significantly less than tenure track/tenured faculty, allowing a school to cover more courses for less money. Also, adjuncts are not generally provided health care or other benefits that tenure track/tenured faculty receive. As enrollments increased in the late 90’s, adjuncts could meet rising demand with less expenditure of resources, allowing institutions to maintain tuition at a relatively lower rate (Kezar & Sam, 2010). Second, adjuncts are generally hired in a more streamlined fashion with the dean or other responsible administrator making the decision in his/her sole discretion. The hiring of tenure track faculty takes place in a decentralized hiring process, which can take months to conclude and can be quite costly. Candidates must often be flown in, housed, wined and dined in a ritual of mutual wooing which, it is hoped, will result in a hire. Third, using adjuncts allows for fiscal flexibility. Courses must be scheduled and staffed, but the administrative landscape is unpredictable. Student enrollments may fluctuate, demand for specific courses may decline, and unexpected budgetary constraints may stifle the best laid plans. The use of part-time faculty allows a rapid and seamless response to these issues. These benefits result in effective cost savings for institutions of higher learning (Kezar & Sam, 2010).

The cost savings have been attractive enough to induce institutions to increase reliance on adjuncts, but unexpected benefits flow from using such faculty as well (Kezar & Sam, 2010). For instance, adjuncts are often specialists or experts in their fields, and schools can gain prestige from having renowned part-time faculty on campus. Also, hiring part-time faculty can free tenure track/tenured faculty to pursue research and engage in scholarly activities which are vital to academia.

So, who are part-time/adjunct teachers? Generally speaking, adjuncts are individuals who may be at the end of their careers, either retired or about to retire. They are experts, specialists, and professionals who want to share their experiences. They are aspiring academics who would one day like to have a full-time teaching job. And they are freelancers, making extra money with a part-time gig (Kezar & Sam, 2010). A national survey conducted by Hart Research Associates for AFT Higher Education (“American Academic,” 2010), a division of the American Federation of Teachers, reveals that adjuncts are fairly evenly split between men and women at two-year institutions and public four-year institutions. Men represent the majority at private four-year schools. Adjuncts are primarily white, non-Hispanic, and 83% have earned a PhD or a master’s degree. Twenty-eight percent of the individuals polled reported that they had been teaching 11 to 20 years at his/her institution, while 57% reported teaching for 10 years or less at his/her institution. Most adjuncts have multiple jobs (“American Academic,” 2010).

The survey also reveals that adjuncts teach because they love teaching. Part-time teaching may fit into their lives better than a tenure track position would. They are passionate about their subjects, and while they generally perceive themselves to be underpaid, compensation is not a primary reason for adjunct teaching (“American Academic,” 2010). Forty-six percent of part-time faculty earn less than $15,000 per year. Per course taught, 35% make less than $2,500 per course, while 42% make more than $2,500 per course. When it comes to health care, most part-time faculty members do not receive benefits from their employer:

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Just 28% of faculty members say their employer at their teaching position provides them with Health Insurance. Among those who are covered, 58% say their employer covers most medical costs (16% say their employer covers all costs), but 34% say their employer only covers half (16 percent) or less (18 percent). Also, most (78 percent) who receive Health Insurance from their employers say their plan covers family members as well. (“American Academic,” 2010)

Adjuncts under 50 years of age would prefer full-time teaching positions, while those over age 50 would prefer part-time positions. Sixty-two percent believe that full-time opportunities fall short of their expectations (“American Academic,” 2010). Individuals who have taught full-time in the past are even more dissatisfied with opportunities to move to full-time. Seventy-four percent report dissatisfaction in this regard.

The survey also polled adjuncts on what they would like to see improved at their institutions. Forty-seven percent of faculty at four-year institutions saw improving salaries as a distinct priority, while adjuncts at two-year colleges saw greater access to full-time opportunities and health benefits as priorities (“American Academic,” 2010). Along gender lines, men were more interested in improving salaries, and women were concerned with access to health benefits.

THE COMMENTARY ON THE PROPOSED REGULATIONS TO ENFORCE THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT

The proposed regulations to enforce the shared responsibility provisions of the Affordable Care Act have provoked much commentary. According to an article in The Chronicle of Higher Education, more than 500 comments have been collected by the IRS in response to the proposed rules (Dunn, 2013). The American Council on Education (ACE) submitted its comments on March 18, 2013, in which it points out that tenure track/tenured faculty do work and are expected to work more hours outside of the classroom than what is typically expected of adjunct faculty (American Council on Education, 2013). Adjuncts are generally not expected to advise students, nor engage in departmental administration, institutional service, and/or scholarly activity.

American Council on Education (ACE) proposes two options giving educational institutions safe harbor when deploying adjuncts. The first option is to classify adjuncts as full-time employees, thus triggering the shared responsibility provisions of the Act “if the course load they teach meets or exceeds three-quarters of the course load for a full-time, non-tenure-track (NTT) teaching faculty member in that academic department.” ACE proposes this comparison because of the noted differences in work expectations for tenure track/tenured faculty. ACE advocates that this is a predictable measure and will fairly reflect actual working hours of adjunct faculty members. In order for an institution to avail itself of this safe harbor, ACE dictates that the institution should have written policies defining adjunct teaching faculty in each academic department in which adjuncts are used.

The second option put forth by ACE is to calculate total hours worked by adjuncts by crediting them with one hour of work outside the classroom for each hour of classroom teaching. ACE says that although this measure could in some cases result in an erroneous calculation of actual hours worked, it “reflects assumptions, practices, and data found at many institutions of higher education.”

The New Faculty Majority (NFM) also weighed in on the proposed regulations (Comment to the internal revenue service by the new faculty majority, the national coalition for adjunct in contents and equity, re: shared responsibility for employers regarding health coverage; proposed rule March 18, 2013). NFM is an advocacy group for adjuncts, and so quite understandably, does not view adjuncts as having different, less onerous work expectations than tenure track/tenured faculty. NFM states that—in fact—adjuncts engage in institutional service and scholarly activities, often without formal recognition. Quoting from an article in The Chronicle of Higher Education, NFM further asserts that these activities are “expected.” NFM proposes that individual campuses determine their own standards for calculating the full-time status of adjuncts, and that the determination of standards be “carried out intentionally, transparently, inclusively, and comprehensively by every institution that employs adjunct faculty” (Jenkins, 2011). Finally, the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) advocates that colleges and universities appreciate the importance of providing health coverage to their employees. In a recent article in The Chronicle of Higher Education, AAUP is quoted as saying: “We call on [colleges and universities] to comply with the law and devise fair methods of calculating adjunct faculty hours, methods that fully take into account the many activities in which such faculty members engage”
To be sure, American colleges and universities use a great number of adjunct faculty members in their instructional workforces. The number of credits that adjuncts teach varies greatly among individual adjuncts, and for individual adjuncts, who may teach one course one semester and three courses the next. It is also true that adjuncts teach in all disciplines and that depending upon the academic department, adjunct work expectations will vary. Also, depending upon the courses that adjuncts teach, actual work hours outside of the classroom will vary. Adjuncts who teach writing are widely recognized to work more hours than adjuncts who teach in lower level business or humanities courses, for example. As a result of these inevitable differences, there may be no “one size fits all” standard for calculating adjunct hours of service for the purposes of the new law.

Nevertheless, the ambiguity in the current version of the proposed regulations requiring institutions of higher learning to employ a “reasonable standard” to determine adjunct hours is untenable. Without guidance, colleges and universities are worried that they will run afoul of the new rules, thus triggering the penalty provisions. The IRS has said that guidance may be forthcoming, but for the time being, the “reasonable” standard is to be used. In response to this lack of guidance, institutions are cutting back on the credits adjuncts are teaching on their campuses (Jenkins, 3). Money is a big factor for American colleges and universities. And money is, after all, the driving factor that led to the adjunct explosion across America. It only stands to reason that money will drive colleges and universities to attempt to cut adjunct teaching loads to avoid being assessed payments by the IRS. This doesn’t mean that fewer courses will be taught by adjuncts, although that may happen on individual campuses, only that more adjuncts will be used because each individual adjunct will teach fewer courses.

What does this mean for adjunct teachers? The Chronicle of Higher Education reports that adjuncts are beginning to teach courses at different institutions to make ends meet. Whereas an adjunct may have been teaching three courses, nine to twelve hours depending on the institution, now the same person will be teaching one course, perhaps two courses at most, leading to a substantial reduction in his/her already notoriously paltry salary (Ryesky, 2013).

This, added to the general lack of support that adjuncts receive from their institutions, is making life harder for these workers. Adjuncts are often denied adequate working space, resources for development, and other means widely regarded as necessary for tenure track/tenured faculty members. Adjuncts are not accorded the recognition that they deserve for being a vital part of the majority of academic institutions in the United States. The response they are receiving so far from institutions that are understandably concerned about meeting the requirements of the new shared responsibility provisions adds injury to insult.

**CONCLUSION**

It is ironic that a law that was intended to make the lives of workers in America better would have the opposite result for a class of workers whose services are a vital component of higher education today. Left to their own devices, American colleges and universities have shown that they will err on the side of caution with respect to calculating adjuncts’ hours of service. Without guidance from the IRS, rather than chance a penalty which they can ill-afford, institutions of higher learning are making the lives of adjunct faculty members more difficult.

At the same time, it is clear that the IRS is limited with respect to available options for guiding American colleges and universities as they navigate the new legal landscape. As has been noted, one option is to simply multiply the number of credit hours an adjunct teaches by some factor. The “Carnegie Unit” sets a standard which counts three hours for every credit hour taught, so that, for every hour an adjunct spends in the classroom, he/she is calculated to actually work three hours. However, educators say that the Carnegie hour is misleading. Some courses take much less time outside the classroom to prepare lectures, grade, etc. While other courses take more than the two additional hours specified by the Carnegie Unit. By all accounts, the three to one ratio does not accurately reflect actual hours worked by many adjunct faculty members. Some commenters recommend a two to one ratio; at least that’s predictable. But again, it will not be an accurate measure in many cases.

The other proffered measure is to compare the credits taught by adjuncts with those taught by tenure track/tenured faculty. This option suffers from the same deficiency. Work expectations for adjuncts do differ. The comparison model
will result in at least as much error as the ratio model.

It may be that NFM’s proposal to allow teaching institutions to determine their own standards to calculate adjunct hours of service is best. It is notable that it is the option put forth by the group dedicated to advocacy on behalf of adjunct teachers. Allowing for flexibility in this area may protect both the institutions and the adjuncts. Institutions that develop standards in a transparent manner, taking into account all of the variations in adjunct services on their campuses and applying those standards in an ethical manner, could be spared the harshness of an assessed penalty. At the same time, allowing institutions to set their own standards could lead to further distortion. The Chronicle of Higher Education reports that, in some cases, adjuncts have an incentive to lie about the hours they work so as not to lose their employment (Jenkins, 3). As noted by the article, in one example, a university issued a policy that limited all adjuncts to 29 hours per week. This could lead adjuncts to misrepresent the time they spend outside of the classroom.

There may be no reliable manner for calculating adjunct hours of service. Perhaps the best that can be achieved for all concerned is predictability. Only the IRS can achieve this result. For now, however, in the absence of much needed guidance, the proposed rules are wreaking havoc in the lives of the very workers the new law aims to protect.

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APPENDIX A

The applicable provision of the Affordable Care Act is reprinted below:

SEC. 1513. SHARED RESPONSIBILITY FOR EMPLOYERS.
(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 43 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by adding at the end the following:
"SEC. 4980H. SHARED RESPONSIBILITY FOR EMPLOYERS REGARDING HEALTH COVERAGE.
"(a) LARGE EMPLOYERS NOT OFFERING HEALTH COVERAGE.—
If—
"(1) any applicable large employer fails to offer to its fulltime employees (and their dependents) the opportunity to enroll in minimum essential coverage under an eligible employersponsored plan (as defined in section 5000A(f)(2)) for any month, and
"(2) at least one full-time employee of the applicable large employer has been certified to the employer under section 1411 of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act as having enrolled for such month in a qualified health plan with respect to which an applicable premium tax credit or cost-sharing reduction is allowed or paid with respect to the employee, then there is hereby imposed on the employer an assessable payment equal to the product of the applicable payment amount and the number of individuals employed by the employer as full-time employees during such month.
Market Orientation and its Measurement in Universities

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Historically, the measurement of market orientation has proved to be difficult, due to the low external validity of the concept. Existing scales exhibit acceptable properties in measuring market orientation in business organizations, but are less accurate in the context of higher education institutions. This paper compares the performance of three scales – the MARKOR scale, the MKTOR scale, and the University MARKOR scale – in the context of academic organizations. Results indicate that the MARKOR and the MKTOR scales need modifications, in order to accurately measure the construct in the new context. Evidence suggests that the student-oriented University MARKOR scale outperforms existing scales in predicting university performance.

Keywords: market orientation, higher education, MARKOR scale, MKTOR scale, University MARKOR

INTRODUCTION

Market orientation is a business philosophy directed toward employing all departments and subdivisions of the organization to discover and better serve consumer needs at a profit. It implies optimal implementation of business activities and mechanisms that generate, disseminate, and respond to market intelligence pertaining to the consumer (Kohli, Jaworski, & Kumar, 1993). Such a focus can allow organizations to increase their overall performance and, ultimately, achieve competitive advantages over rivals (Jaworski & Kohli, 1993; Kirca, Jayachandran, & Bearden, 2005). Subsequently, the philosophy has been embraced by various organizations and applied across cultures (e.g., Gray et al., 1998; Kirca & Hult, 2009) or in diverse settings – such as healthcare (White, Thompson, & Patel, 2001), tourism (Greenley & Matcham, 2001), retail banking (Papasolomou-Doukakis, 2002), or manufacturing (Anderson, Fornell, & Rust, 1997), among others. Its wide applicability has also stimulated scale development to address measurement inconsistencies across contexts, either by adapting existing scales to new contexts (e.g., MARKOR; Kohli, Jaworski, & Kumar, 1993), or by creating new context-specific scales (e.g.: Hampton, 2007), with no consensus regarding the superiority of one strategy over the other (Matsuno, Mentzer, & Rentz, 2005). In this context, the purpose of this paper is to examine the role of market orientation in a non-business context—that is, higher education—and to assess the relative merit of three scales in this role.

LITERATURE REVIEW

There is probably no one universally accepted and fully definitive conception of the market orientation concept (Kirca, Jayachandran, & Bearden, 2005; Kohli, Jaworski, & Kumar, 1993). For example, Avlonitis and Gounaris (1999) have suggested that this orientation should include both attitudinal and behavioral aspects. On the other hand, Lado, Maydeu-Olivares, and Rivera (1998) have emphasized the influence of distributors and environments on market orientation and defined it as a two-dimensional structure, including both market orientation and a country-specific residual. Meanwhile, Sharp (2001) has argued that market orientation should consider both the customer and product development, while Hult, Cravens, and Sheth (2001) regard market orientation as a phenomenon that
describes elements in the “market value chain” of “culture–behaviors–processes–actions–performance.” Finally, Matsuno, Mentzer, and Rentz (2005) posit that the perception of market orientation should embody influencing factors such as social, regulatory, and macroeconomic factors. The above-cited perceptions are indicative and by no means exhaustive of the diversity in views that exist (see Lings & Greenley, 2009).

Among all of the studies, market orientation theories set forth by Kohli, Jaworski, Narver, and Slater may be the most widely-accepted (Kohli & Jaworski, 1990; Narver & Slater, 1990). Their definitions of “market orientation” are extensions of the ‘marketing concept’—defined as a set of values and beliefs that always consider customers first and foremost (Webster, 1994, p. 203). According to them, marketing orientation is a process of continuous creation of superior value for customers. More specifically, Kohli and Jaworski (1990) view market orientation as the implementation of the marketing concept philosophy, which is centered on customer needs and organization profits. This view includes the generation of need-related intelligence on consumers, the dissemination of this intelligence to management, and the responsiveness to this intelligence in an organization, as well. However, Narver and Slater (1993, p. 243; 1990, p. 21) describe market orientation through a different perspective: as a type of business culture. They have noted that culture creation is the indispensable element for creating continuous superior value for customers and for obtaining sustainable competitive advantage. Hence, they have proposed that the marketing orientation is comprised of three components – customer orientation, competitor orientation, and inter-functional coordination. These considerations lead to a discussion of the merits of market orientation.

Advantages of Market Orientation

Why has market orientation been studied by so many scholars? Why has the strategy been widely accepted by both practitioners and researchers in recent years? Previous studies outline and demonstrate its advantages.

Perhaps most importantly, market orientation can work—it often produces notable business performance. Some researchers have uncovered a robust positive relationship between market orientation and business performance (Jaworski & Kohli, 1993; McNaughton, Osborne, & Imrie, 2002; Noble, Sinha, & Kumar, 2002). Further, Dawes (2000) has deconstructed market orientation and found that one element – the competitor orientation component – is positively correlated to company profitability. He also has noted that customer orientation and responsiveness were important ingredients to business success. This finding was corroborated by Zhou, Brown, and Dev (2009). Finally, Brown et al. (2002) analyzed the customer orientation component of market orientation and found that it exerted a positive impact on overall customer performance ratings. Similar results have emanated from the work of Ledwith and O’Dwyer (2009).

There are other advantages forthcoming from the application of market orientation. Some studies show that this orientation can increase customer perceived value, and as a corollary, result in customer satisfaction and loyalty (McNaughton, Osborne, & Imrie, 2002; Reichheld & Sasser, 1990). In turn, this orientation is correlated with firm’s growth objectives driven by the identification and subsequent exploitation of untapped market opportunities (Baker & Sinkula, 2009). It also can lead to coordinated decision making and action between different organization departments and divisions (Lings & Greenley, 2009), and may serve as a means of more adequately uncovering customer needs in e-business (Borges, Hoppen, & Luce, 2009). In addition, some researchers have found that it can create effective means of achieving competitive advantages (Hunt & Morgan, 1995; Morgan, Vorhies, & Mason, 2009), more effective service innovation (Ordanini & Maglio, 2009), improved organizational commitment in the public sector (Carruana, Ramaseshan, & Ewing, 1999, p. 65), wealth for the owners of a firm (McNaughton, Osborne, & Imrie, 2002), and an increase in new product success (Slater & Narver, 1994). Others have reported that market orientation can induce superior customer value and assist the organization in achieving effective and efficient experiential learning and enhanced supplier partnership status (Soehadi, Hart, & Tagg, 2001). Further, this strategy can lead and motivate front line employees to more adequately serve customers (Herington & Weaven, 2009). Finally, market orientation can assist in enhancing necessary leadership capabilities, and in attracting and retaining profitable customers (Narver & Slater, 1990). Given these advantages to business firms, can this orientation serve non-businesses, in general, and higher education institutions, in particular, in a beneficial manner?
Applications of the Marketing Orientation to Universities

There are a number of indications that suggest that a marketing orientation has potential benefit for universities. Studies have indicated that this philosophy may be applicable to nonprofit organizations and that it may also be related to superior organization performance (Duque-Zuluaga & Schneider, 2008). In this regard, managerial ideology has provided a range of discourses and practices originating in the corporate world to higher education. Kolsaker (2008) has conducted research that suggests that managerial modes of operation can be beneficial to academia, provided that autonomous niches can be protected.

Of course, it is well-recognized that students are the primary focus of the university. That is, university education should aid in fulfilling their significant needs and not be directed merely toward immediate popularity with those students who enroll in individual professors’ classes. This latter process can be counter-productive to effective teaching and learning core values (Schuck, Gordon, & Buchanan, 2008). These needs include both immediate skills required for the first job, and philosophies, perceptions, insights, motivations, and other mental capabilities that are useful throughout one’s career (Walkenhorst, 2008). In turn, a true student-oriented marketing effort places the university ideology at the center of its efforts and uses marketing-specific tools to communicate such ideologies. In this case, a market orientation is closely related to relationship learning in much the same way as relationship development is in the corporate domain (Lai et al., 2009).

The benefits of applying market orientation in university settings include creating an environment that is student oriented. Customer orientation, competitor orientation, and inter-functional coordination are values that can help administrators and instructors to better understand and structure the school environment (Oplatka & Hemsley-Brown, 2007). For this orientation to be effective, however, both administrators and instructors must be convinced that the impact upon students will be favorable. The results of implementing this philosophy are likely to include better service for customers (i.e., students) and competitive advantage over rival institutions (Voon, 2007). In turn, evaluations of market orientation require measuring instruments, usually scales, either adapted from the business environment (e.g., MARKOR; Kohli, Jaworski, & Kumar, 1993), or created for the higher education specific context (e.g., Hampton, 2007). Next, we summarize the most popular scales developed to measure market orientation.

Marketing Orientation Scales

Although most researchers understand the nature of market orientation and are aware of the probable benefits, the cognitions on how to best measure market orientation are diverse. Kohli and Jaworski’s (1990) seminal article that defined market orientation was followed by more same-author research to construct a market orientation scale and its corresponding business performance measurement scale. This scale is labeled as the “MARKOR” scale and contains 32 items. At the same time, Narver and Slater (1990) created a competing scale based on their understanding of market orientation and its components. This new measurement device was entitled the “MKTOR” scale, and included 15 refined items that captured three dimensions. Deng and Dart (1994) expanded Narver and Slater’s conceptualization to incorporate profitability as the fourth component of market orientation, and then produced another market orientation scale with 30 items. Later, Matsuno, Mentzer, and Rentz (2005) extended the scope of market orientation and created an expanded scale (EMO) embodying 22 purified items. Finally, Lado, Maydeu-Olivares, and Rivera (1998) generated a two-dimensional structure scale with 30 items as components.

Obviously, there are diverse outlooks on market orientation measurement, as well as the effectiveness and efficiency of each scale. On the one hand, some researchers (Siguaw & Diamantopoulos, 1995) have questioned the authenticity of Narver and Slater’s MKTOR instrument. They conducted an exploratory research and found that Narver and Slater’s original items were just partially related to the proposed dimensions, and illustrated that the scale did not fit the data well.

On the other hand, research by Chakrabarty and Roge (2003) and Han, Kim, and Srivastava (1998) have supported the Narver and Slater’s MKTOR scale and argued that individual dimensions of this scale fit the data adequately. Additionally, Mavondo and Farrell (2000) compared the reliability of the MARKOR and the MKTOR scales and suggested that the MKTOR scale was superior to the MARKOR instrument in cross-culture, cross-industry studies. Finally, Soehadi, Hart, and Tagg (2001) contrasted the MARKOR and Deng & Dart (1994) scales and found that the latter of the two
exhibited higher reliability and validity.

Although there have been numerous studies relating to market orientation scales, these studies have focused more on business than on nonprofit organizations. In particular, few studies have emphasized the university context and its unique needs. An exception, the University MARKOR scale (Hampton, 2007; Hampton et al., 2009), described below, was generated to fulfill this gap.

The University MARKOR scale measuring student-focused market orientation is based on previous works designed to measure market orientation (Caruana, Ramaseshan, & Ewing, 1998, 1999; Kohli, Jaworski, & Kumar, 1993) and customer orientation (Brady & Cornin, 2001; Saxe & Weitz, 1982). The scale development resulted in a focus shift from an organizational and top management level to a faculty level perspective. The purpose was to concentrate on those market oriented activities faculty commonly engage in when they interact with students. The 44-item instrument assesses several dimensions of student orientation (see Appendix). Intelligence generation and responsiveness are similar to the dimensions in the MARKOR scale. In addition, the intelligence dissemination dimension in MARKOR was replaced with two new factors: 1) advising and mentoring of students, and 2) department head role or leadership, as these two were important activities of professors in their educational service delivery. While similar to items in the market orientation scales, the new factors are clearly student-oriented and pertain to faculty activities.

The development of this student-oriented scale may be the result of inconsistent measurement via traditional market orientation scales and suggests that research analyzing the performance of adapted and context-specific market orientation scales in universities is at the point where further progress is needed. This leads us to an examination of the unique needs of these institutions.

Market Orientation Scales in the Context of Universities – A Comparison

Universities have different features from those found in business enterprises. For example, university activities are related to and heavily dependent upon a knowledge-based culture. Thus, existing marketing orientation scales may not have the capability to appreciate the nature of university goals and functions. Therefore, market orientation scales suitable to businesses may not be entirely appropriate for universities.

In order to be of assistance to institutions of higher learning, an assessment of competing university scales is vital. The authors modified the original 32 items of the MARKOR scale and the 15 items of the MKTOR scale to adapt them to the university context (see Appendix). Then, a comparison was made of these two scales and the student-directed University MARKOR scale (Hampton, 2007). The aim of this research is to evaluate the effectiveness of the three scales in the context of universities and to find out which best predicts university performance. The methodology involved survey research and structural equation modeling, as discussed below.

METHOD

Sample and Procedure

Three hundred randomly chosen faculty members of a southwestern U.S. university were invited to participate in voluntary field surveys over an eight month period. One hundred and eighty of these professors responded positively to the invitation and were periodically given a set of questionnaires on several topics, including the measurement of marketing orientation via three independently developed scales: (1) MARKOR (Kohli & Jaworski, 1993), (2) MKTOR (Narver & Slater, 1990), and (3) University MARKOR (Hampton, 2007; Hampton et al., 2009) scales. In addition, we separately measured perceived organization performance. Tenured and tenure-track faculty from 45 different segments of the university completed the surveys, and yielded a total of 122 usable questionnaires.

Measurement

The sample respondents were asked to complete paper-and-pencil surveys. In turn, they read a set of instructions, and then completed multi-item measures of the various constructs of interest. Next, the sample members provided general comments relating to their department’s performance over the last five years in an open-ended section. The final portion of the survey constituted requests for demographic information.
Market Orientation Scales. The authors assessed marketing orientation by applying three existing scales: a refined 25-item MARKOR scale by Kohli and Jaworski (1993), a 15-item scale by Narver and Slater (1993), and a 44-item scale developed by Hampton (2007). All three use 7-point Likert type ratings (i.e., 1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree). To enhance reliability, the scales were cleaned of items with low loadings (i.e., λ < 0.50) through confirmatory factor analysis: items loading below 0.50 indicated insufficient accuracy in construct measurement. Cronbach’s alpha values measuring scale reliabilities were α = 0.76, α = 0.89, and α = 0.90 for the clean MARKOR (22 items), MKTOR (10 items), and University MARKOR (16 items) scales, respectively.

Organization Performance. The authors indirectly measured three dimensions of organization performance – (1) overall performance, (2) retention and recruiting, and (3) fund raising and grant generation – via a 10 item seven-point Likert scale (scale reliability α = 0.89).

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics and Correlations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Construct Dimensions (# of scale items)</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>AVE</th>
<th>Overall performance</th>
<th>Funds</th>
<th>Retention</th>
<th>IG Markor</th>
<th>ID Markor</th>
<th>Responsive Markor</th>
<th>CO Mktor</th>
<th>COMP Mktor</th>
<th>IC Mktor</th>
<th>ADM Univ. Markor</th>
<th>ADV Univ. Markor</th>
<th>IG-R Univ. Markor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overall Perf. (5)</td>
<td>26.73</td>
<td>6.07</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>(0.92)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funds (2)</td>
<td>8.85</td>
<td>3.18</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>0.58*</td>
<td>0.65</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retention (3)</td>
<td>14.67</td>
<td>3.66</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>0.67*</td>
<td>0.37*</td>
<td>(0.85)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IG Markor (8)</td>
<td>33.47</td>
<td>8.85</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>0.72</td>
<td>0.44</td>
<td>0.40</td>
<td>0.82</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>ID Markor (6)</td>
<td>22.80</td>
<td>6.99</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>0.58</td>
<td>0.42</td>
<td>0.36</td>
<td>0.93</td>
<td>(0.78)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responsiveness Markor (8)</td>
<td>36.86</td>
<td>8.61</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>0.81</td>
<td>0.41</td>
<td>0.53</td>
<td>0.98</td>
<td>0.86</td>
<td>(0.84)</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CO - Mktor(4)</td>
<td>21.87</td>
<td>5.71</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>0.40</td>
<td>0.35</td>
<td>0.46</td>
<td>(0.80)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMP-Mktor (3)</td>
<td>14.72</td>
<td>4.71</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>0.57</td>
<td>0.41</td>
<td>0.53</td>
<td>0.91</td>
<td>(0.74)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IC - Mktor (3)</td>
<td>12.29</td>
<td>3.57</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>0.63</td>
<td>0.40</td>
<td>0.46</td>
<td>0.86</td>
<td>0.98</td>
<td>(0.68)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADM Univ. (6)</td>
<td>27.88</td>
<td>9.24</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>0.64</td>
<td>0.38</td>
<td>0.49</td>
<td>(0.95)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADV Univ. (6)</td>
<td>37.04</td>
<td>4.45</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td>0.17</td>
<td>0.10</td>
<td>(0.90)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IG-R Univ. (4)</td>
<td>16.86</td>
<td>5.51</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>0.46</td>
<td>0.30</td>
<td>0.37</td>
<td>0.61</td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td>(0.87)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: (1) N=122 respondents
(2) Alpha reliabilities reported in parentheses
(3) Correlations between constructs reported below the diagonals
(4) M=mean; SD=standard deviation; AVE = average variance extracted; CO = customer orientation; COMP = competitor orientation; IC = inter-functional coordination; ADM = administration leadership; ADV = advising and mentoring; IG-R = intelligence generation and responsiveness; Univ. = University Markor scale (Hampton); Markor = market orientation scale (Kohli & Jaworski); Mktor = market orientation scale (Narver and Slater).
(5) Significance levels: * p < .05; ** p < .01.
ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

The authors adopted a two-step approach, as described in Anderson and Gerbing (1982, 1988) to evaluate the competing models. This procedure generated the assessment and refinement of the measurement models, followed by a separate estimation of the structural models.

Measurement Models

The items in the measurement models were refined via confirmatory factor analysis. The item loadings exceeding the recommended 0.5 threshold level suggest acceptable convergent validity (Anderson & Gerbing, 1982). In turn, all of the final scales included in the study displayed evidence of convergent validity. Table 2 presents a summary of fit indices and the results of confirmatory factor analysis.

Table 2. Summary of Measurement Models

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>MARKOR</th>
<th>MKTOR</th>
<th>UNIVERSITY MARKOR</th>
<th>Organization Performance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Convergent validity</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discriminant validity</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dimensions</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Model fit</td>
<td>$\chi^2_{(204)} = 486.3$</td>
<td>$\chi^2_{(30)} = 49.5$</td>
<td>$\chi^2_{(101)} = 156.3$</td>
<td>$\chi^2_{(32)} = 61.6$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CFI = 0.78</td>
<td>CFI = 0.96</td>
<td>CFI = 0.96</td>
<td>CFI = 0.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NFI = 0.68</td>
<td>NFI = 0.92</td>
<td>NFI = 0.90</td>
<td>NFI = 0.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>TLI = 0.75</td>
<td>TLI = 0.95</td>
<td>TLI = 0.95</td>
<td>TLI = 0.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>RMSEA = 0.107</td>
<td>RMSEA = 0.073</td>
<td>RMSEA = 0.067</td>
<td>RMSEA = 0.087</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: Sample size $N = 122$.

The authors tested for discriminant validity by comparing the average variance extracted (AVE) against a recommended 50% threshold level (i.e., the variance explained by the items should be higher than the variance due to uniqueness). Next, we investigated whether correlations between constructs were significantly different from 1 (Fornell & Larcker, 1981); in this case, a lower correlation indicated that each dimension measured different aspects of the construct and suggested discriminant validity. The authors found evidence of discriminant validity in the University MARKOR and Organization Performance scales, only. The MARKOR and MKTOR scales passed the convergent validity tests, but failed to produce sufficient discriminant validity, as the construct dimensions almost completely overlapped (see also Table 1 for correlations between construct dimensions).

Structural Models

The authors made use of structural equation modeling to assess inter-construct relationships between market orientation and organization performance. Standard practice suggests that accounting for measurement error before the estimation of structural coefficients abates interpretational confounding (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988). The procedure implies that (a) setting the measurement error to $(1-\alpha) \times (\text{variance of the sum of items})$ for each construct dimension and (b) using the sum of the scale items as the construct measure – are appropriate. Significantly, inadequate psychometric properties in the MARKOR and MKTOR scales resulted in impossible estimates in the structural models. Lack of convergence was not a factor when market orientation was operationalized via the University MARKOR scale; the structural model testing the relationships between market orientation and organization performance exhibited adequate fit, with $\chi^2(6) = 6.57$ (n.s.), CFI = 0.99, NFI = 0.97, TLI = 0.99, AGFI = 0.93, and RMSEA = 0.03. The reduced model with path coefficients corrected for attenuation is shown in Figure 1.

Finally, the authors tested for common method variance. As per Podsakoff et al. (2003), they separately loaded all items in the model on a first-order factor to account for same-source common variance. Re-estimated loadings sug-
gest that common method bias is unlikely to play a significant role, as the pattern of relationships remained consistent with initial results even after accounting for common variance.

**FIGURE 1. University MARKOR – Standardized Structural Estimates**

![Diagram showing relationships between market orientation and performance measures.](image)

The Impact of Market Orientation on University Performance

Figure 1 shows that market orientation significantly impacts university performance through its three components measured via the University MARKOR scale: administration leadership (University ADM), advising and mentoring (University ADV), and intelligence generation and responsiveness (University IG-R), respectively. First, administration leadership significantly drives all performance measures (overall performance, $\beta_1 = 0.64, p < 0.01$; funding, $\beta_2 = 0.44, p < 0.01$; student retention, $\beta_3 = 0.58, p < 0.01$). These results suggest that market orientation should focus on strong leadership to make impacts in the competitive market place. It also seems that administration leadership may be an overlooked component that other market orientation scales could adopt to improve their predictive power in the business sectors. While research in the non-profit sector is frequently driven by findings in the business areas, there is no reason to believe that aspects of non-profit business research cannot be transferred to the business sector.

Second, advising and mentoring (University ADV) has a significant impact on overall performance ($\beta_4 = -0.18, p < 0.01$). While the negative effect may come as a surprise, we recognize that advising and mentoring takes valuable time. An increase in time spent on advising and mentoring comes at a cost, as this time would otherwise be spent on teaching, an activity that is arguably more beneficial to students.

Third, intelligence generation and responsiveness ($\beta_5 = 0.17, p < 0.10$) only has a positive effect on overall performance. The weaker effect relative to that of the other two market orientation dimensions on overall performance may (1) be a particular aspect of the non-profit sector, and (2) explain the poor predictive power of the competing MARKOR scale that shares this component with University MARKOR, but not the components of administration lead-
leadership and intelligence generation and responsiveness. The effect also suggests that context-specific scales (e.g., university settings) may be more appropriate to measure market orientation than adaptations of no context-specific scales.

DISCUSSION

Strong evidence in the literature suggests that market orientation often engenders business enterprise profitability and superior performance. It would seem that the strategy could be equally beneficial to nonprofit organizations. Institutions that pursue this game plan can benefit through the usage of marketing orientation assessments. However, the construct can suffer from deficient measurement outside business contexts. Questionable measurement validity is especially prevalent in higher education applications. In this context, the present work compares three scales to assist universities in tracking market orientation with minimal measurement error.

The authors have uncovered evidence that popular scales in the business-to-business sector – such as the MARKOR (Kohli & Jaworski, 1990) and MKTOR (Narver & Slater, 1990) scales – are not appropriate for the assessment of market orientation in universities. The authors contrast the two established scales against a recently generated scale specifically developed for higher education (Hampton, 2007; University MARKOR). In turn, the results of this comparison suggest that a university-specific scale may be more useful in higher education settings, as it was found to outperform established scales in predicting university performance, while exhibiting superior psychometric properties.

From a practical standpoint, administrators in universities are in a position to utilize the market orientation strategy to guide various consequential policy decisions. They may use it to determine superior approaches to the achievement of student satisfaction and educational accomplishment, as well as subsequent improvements in enrollment, prestige, and student retention rates. Such goals are aligned to any university’s mission and highly dependent on market orientation in the university. Universities operate in a competitive environment and the market orientation may allow institutions that adopt it to achieve comparative advantages over rivals that do not.

A market orientation stipulates that the university focuses its efforts on students. Of course, these institutions have a number of constituencies, including legislators, employers, students’ parents, and the public at large. These cannot be ignored. But a market orientation does not require this. It does stipulate, however, that students are the most important constituent, and that efforts should be extended to satisfy their needs. Failure to do this is likely to result in failure to satisfy needs of the other important publics.

Some university studies may find market orientation in universities, especially their own institution, to be unrelated to performance, and may, in turn, trace inconclusive or even negative results to inefficient measurement. We suggest an instrument that is specifically adapted to the higher education context that may capture aspects otherwise omitted by traditional (i.e., non-specific) or business-based measurement tools.

Finally, this study provides a theoretical and practical foundation to expand research on further applications of market orientation in nonprofit organizations outside academia, such as charitable, religious, and governmental organizations. Some of these possess properties, bearing on top management decision-making, that are analogous to universities.

LIMITATIONS AND FURTHER RESEARCH

Several constraints of the study may pose limitations and conditions upon the generalizability of the findings. First, the study data originated from respondents in one university. This places constraints on external validity findings, and recommendations should pertain mainly to universities of similar size and student population. Second, our sample size – while justified by standard practice “from the perspective of accurate parameter estimation” in the population (Fabrigar, Porter, & Norris, 2010) – may have resulted in missing of other interesting effects, had its size been larger. Some effects may have been omitted from the analysis as they did not reach traditional significance levels. Third, collecting within-subject data at different points in time raises several issues. For example, the findings may be subject to order effects, as scales were completed in the same sequence. However, if sufficient time was allowed to erase this possible bias between surveys, a change in respondents’ perceptions about the university from one survey to another would deem the impact of market orientation on organizational performance measures less relevant.
Scale validation and refinement is a never-ending process. This being the case, the authors suggest that further studies should be undertaken to evaluate the market orientation scales in other higher education-related contexts. Future studies could use hierarchical linear modeling to analyze responses to market orientation within and between universities, and at the same time producing higher response rates and bigger sample sizes. Another research route could focus on measuring the impact of market orientation in universities on student-related outcomes, such as student recruitment, student quality, learning outcomes, student turnover, graduation rates, and job placement, or on university fundraising efforts and financial help from donors.

REFERENCES


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APPENDIX

MKTOR Scale
(adapted from Narver and Slater, 1990)

INSTRUCTIONS

The following set of statements relates to how your department or college relates and responds to students and other universities. For each statement please indicate the extent you agree or disagree by circling a number from (7) strongly agree to (1) strongly disagree. You may circle any of the numbers in between that show how strong your feelings are. There is no right or wrong answer. We are only interested in your opinions. Please respond to all statements using the following scale.

ITEMS:

1. Our objectives are driven by satisfaction of our students.
2. We measure satisfaction of our student systematically and frequently.
3. Those responsible for recruiting students regularly share information with our department concerning our competitors’ strategies.
4. Our marketing strategies (such as recruiting and retention) are driven by our understanding of the possibilities for creating value for our students.
5. We respond rapidly to competitive actions that threaten us.
6. We constantly monitor our level of commitment and orientation to students.
7. University administration regularly discusses competitors’ strengths and strategies.
8. All levels of administration understand how the entire university can contribute to creating value for students.
9. We give close attention to service of students after enrollment.
10. Our strategy for competitive advantage is based on our understanding of our students’ needs.
11. We encourage other staff and faculty outside of our department to meet with our prospective students and their parents.
12. Our department is responsive to serving students.
13. Information on recruiting successes and failures are communicated to members of the department.
14. We share information and coordinate resource use with other departments in the university.
15. We target potential students where we have or can develop competitive advantage.

Note: Items 1, 2, 4, 6, 9 measure customer orientation, items 3, 5, 7, 11, 15 measure competitor orientation, and items 8, 12, 13, 14 measure inter-functional coordination. Items in italics were excluded during confirmatory factor analysis.

MARKOR Scale
(adapted from Kohli and Jaworski, 1990; Caruana et al., 1998, 1999)

INSTRUCTIONS

The following set of statements relates to how your department or college relates and responds to students and other universities. For each statement please indicate the extent you agree or disagree by circling a number from (7) strongly agree to (1) strongly disagree. You may circle any of the numbers in between that show how strong your feelings are. There is no right or wrong answer. We are only interested in your opinions. Please respond to all statements using the following scale.
Intelligence Generation (IG)

1. In my department we meet with students at least once a year to find out what courses and services they will need in the future.
2. In this department we meet with those that hire our students at least once a year to find out what courses or services they think students will need in the future.
3. In my college we do a lot of in-house market research.
4. We are slow to detect changes in our students’ course preferences.
5. We survey students at least once a year to assess the quality of our courses and services.
6. We survey industry at least once a year to assess the quality of our courses and services.
7. We are slow to detect fundamental shifts in tertiary education environments [government regulation, technology, competition, delivery systems].
8. We periodically review the likely effect of changes in tertiary education environment on students.

Intelligence Dissemination (ID)

9. We have inter-departmental meets at least once a semester to discuss market trends and developments.
10. Academic staff in our department spends time discussing students’ future needs with other staff in the college.
11. Academic staff in our department spends time discussing industries’ future needs with other staff in the college.
12. When something important happens to a student or course, the whole department knows about it within a short period.
13. Data on student satisfaction are disseminated at all levels in this college on a regular basis.
14. Data on industry satisfaction with our graduates are disseminated at all levels in this college on a regular basis.
15. When one staff member finds out something important about a department in another university, he/she is slow to alert other colleagues.

Responsiveness

16. It takes us forever to decide how to respond to fee changes for foreign students by other universities.
17. For one reason or another we tend to ignore changes in our students’ course or service needs.
18. We periodically review our course development efforts to ensure that they are in line with what students want.
19. We periodically review our course development efforts to ensure that they are in line with what industry or those who hire our graduates wants.
20. Several department heads in my college get together periodically to plan a response to changes taking place in the education environment.
21. If a major university were to launch an intensive campaign targeted at our student market, we would implement a response immediately.
22. The activities of the different staff members in this college are well coordinated.
23. Student complaints fall on deaf ears in this department.
24. Even if we came up with a great course initiative, we probably would not be able to implement it in a timely fashion.
25. When we find that students would like us to modify a course or service, the staff members involved make concerted efforts to do so.

Note: Items in italics were excluded during confirmatory factor analysis.
University MARKOR Scale (Hampton, 2007)

INSTRUCTIONS

In this survey you are asked to respond to statements related to student services at [university name]. Using the 1 to 7 scale below, indicate your agreement with each item by circling the appropriate number that reflects how you feel. Please respond to each statement. The seven point scale is [1= strongly disagree to 7=strongly agree].

ITEMS:

Advising and Mentoring (University ADV)

1. In my interaction with students, I try to determine what they need.
2. I try to give students an accurate expectation of what our education program will do for them.
3. I am willing to disagree with a student in order to help them make a better decision.
4. I try to match a student’s educational needs with courses that best suit that need.
5. I answer students’ questions about our courses and services as correctly as I can.
6. I suggest a program of courses that is best suited to the students’ needs.

Administration leadership (University ADM)

7. My department head asks for, and considers, my ideas about improving the quality of our services for students.
8. My department head frequently gives me honest and direct feedback about how well I am serving students.
9. My department head seeks opportunities to try new ways of doing things to serve students better.
10. I know what my department head expects of me in serving students.
11. My department head makes efforts to remove obstacles that hinder serving students well.
12. My department head helps me learn from experiences with students, both successes and failures.

Intelligence Generation and Responsiveness (University IG-R)

13. We use the information we collect from students to identify ways to improve service to them.
14. In our department, we regularly ask our students about their needs, wants, and expectations.
15. We survey students regularly to access their academic needs.
16. Information from student surveys are regularly used to improve the service we provide to students.
Performance Scale
(Caruana et al., 1998 & 1999)

INSTRUCTIONS

In this section we want you to gauge the performance of your department in the last five years. Please use the following scale to rate the performance of your department [1=very poor to 7=very good].

ITEMS:

**Overall Performance**

1. The overall performance of this department in the last three years has been:
2. The performance of my department in creating student satisfaction in the past three years has been:
3. The level of student services provided by my department in the last three years has been:
4. In relation to the resources committed, the improvements achieved by my department in the last three years has been:
5. The level of cost effectiveness achieved by my department in the past three years has been:

**Funding**

6. Compared to other departments at this university, the overall ability of my department to raise funds in the past three years has been:
7. The overall ability of my department in obtaining research grants in the past three years has been:

**Retention**

8. The performance of my department to retain students as majors over the past three years has been:
9. The ability of my department to increase graduation rates in the last three years has been:
10. The performance of my department to recruit students as majors in the past three years has been:
Collaborative Preference: The Role of Homophily, Multiplexity, and Advantageous Network Position across Small and Medium-sized Organizations

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The purpose of this paper is to examine collaboration between individuals across organizations. While both for profit and not-for-profit organizations utilize collaborative efforts, the factors that are important for bringing individuals and businesses together for collaboration still remain somewhat unresolved. In this paper, colleague similarity, the quality of pre-existing relationships, and the relative power of the other colleague are all examined for their correlation with the desirability of collaboration with that individual. In a study of pastors of small and medium sized churches in a southwestern protestant conference, we examined these areas through the lenses of homophily theory, multiplicity theories, and network positioning theories and found support for each of our hypotheses. Implications for management as well as future research directions are also presented.

Keywords: homophily, small business, networks, collaboration

INTRODUCTION

Teams are used increasingly in the modern workplace, and their study continues to be an area of high research interest (Mathieu & Rapp, 2009; Mesmer-Magnus & DeChurch, 2009). While research into team performance suggests that diverse teams outperform homogenous teams (Shaw, 1983), homogenous teams achieve trust faster than diverse teams (Spector & Jones, 2004) and have higher levels of process effectiveness early in the life of the team (Watson, Kumar, & Michaelsen, 1993). We also know that self-selection to teams and self-managed teams heighten team commitment (Cummings, 1978; Goodman, DeVadas, & Hughson, 1988).

Very little is known about the formation processes for teams. Perhaps one explanation for this paucity of research into self-selected teams is the difficulty inherent in studying the phenomenon. If the focus is only on existing teams, we eliminate potential teams that failed to form. One path towards addressing the needed research is to examine work preferences between co-workers. Identifying factors which correlate with desirability (or lack thereof) to collaborate addresses one key component in self-selected teams. While other factors, such as task opportunity to collaborate and organizational cultures that foster collaboration, play a role in whether teams form, preference to work together with a specific colleague should help explain membership in the team formation process.

The purpose of this paper is to identify factors that correlate with a colleague's interest in working with another colleague within small and medium-sized organizations. This research examines the extent to which co-worker similarity, the quality of pre-existing relationships, and the relative power of the colleague correlate with the desirability of collaboration with that colleague. The sample included 39 pastors in a southwestern protestant conference examined using a network analysis of dyadic differences (666 dyads) which tested dyadic and organization-wide correlates with work preference.
LITERATURE REVIEW

Research on team performance suggests that team diversity influences team performance (Watson, Michaelsen, & Sharp, 1991). When team formation is influenced by outside forces, it is easier to assure that team composition metrics optimize the performance potential of the team (Nielsen, 2009). However, in self-selected teams, such external forces are not present and the decision to collaborate is entirely at the behest of the potential team members.

Work Preference

While there is little direct research into the work-preference of individuals forming teams, studies that examine the formation of self-selected teams suggest that performance optimization may not be a significant factor in determination of membership in self-selected teams (Boschini & Sjogren, 2007). Similarity between teammates, proximity, and pre-existing relations between colleagues may dominate formation of self-directed teams (Forbes, Borchart, Zellmer-Bruhn, & Sapienza, 2006). Unfortunately, these same factors are likely to produce relatively homogenous team composition, which, research suggests, leads to underperforming teams.

It is evident that, in the case of self-selected teams, teams form when the members choose to work together. Lacking external directives, it follows that work preference determines whom a colleague will choose to work with when an opportunity to collaborate emerges. This study examines colleague similarity, relational quality, and the colleague’s power—each of which likely correlate with the desirability to work with that colleague.

Colleague Similarity

The degree of similarity between two parties influences a number of relational outcomes between those two parties. For instance, both ethnic and gender similarities explain affiliation patterns in MBA cohorts (Mehra, Kilduff, & Brass, 1998). In a similar university setting, pair similarity also correlates with the likelihood of affiliation (Kossinets & Watts, 2009). In a study of voluntary membership in civic associations, homophily was linked to the creation of teams less diverse than their representative population and also for reduced diversity in communication patterns (Weare, Musso, & Kyu-Nahm, 2009). Additionally, in a study of voluntary organizations, similarity of age, education, and gender decreases the diversity in within-group affiliation patterns (McPherson & Smith-Lovin, 1987). Age, education, and gender diversity play a role in both the dissolution of entrepreneurial ventures and the break-up of entrepreneurial teams (Hellerstedt & Aldrich, 2008). Finally, another study found that in the male-dominated field of economics, female Ph.D.’s are less likely to have collaborative research opportunities and more likely to engage in sole-research than their male counterparts (Boschini & Sjogren, 2007).

The reasons for these findings stem from our understanding of homophily—the concept that similarity breeds connectivity. Research has long suggested that people evidence affiliation preferences towards those most similar to themselves (McPherson, Smith-Lovin, & Cook, 2001). The tendencies towards homophily manifest in both dominant and minority elements of a population, thus, in this sense, the homophily function extends beyond discrimination (Mehra, Kilduff, & Brass, 1998). Even so, the consequences of homophilous behavior result in dramatically reduced opportunity sets for minority populations (Brass, 1985). Since individuals exhibit affiliation preferences for similar others, we expect that homophilous tendencies will explain a manifestation of work-preference in an organization.

Hypothesis 1: An individual’s preference to work with a colleague will positively correlate with that colleague’s similarity to the individual (e.g. age, ethnicity, education and gender similarity).

Relational Quality

Relational quality arguments suggest that individuals tend to increase types of affiliations with those for whom they already have other pre-existing affiliations. Here the argument turns toward the social network concept of multiplexity (Verbrugge, 1979), the tendency for existing relationships to deepen and become multi-layered over time (Granovetter, 1973). These existing relationships and common identity lead to more similar feelings and expectations in others (Weisenger & Salinpante 2007). In part, this tendency is related to the inherent trust existing in pre-established relationships, and, in part, this is tied to the emotional support gained from continuing connections with established relationships (Brass, 1985).
Much research exists on the value of these relationships. In terms of emotional support, co-workers who had friendship and advice network ties within their work teams were more likely to experience a sense of fulfillment at work and were less likely to experience depersonalization (Kruger, Bernstein, & Botman, 1995). Friends are more likely to engage in and receive organizational citizenship behaviors for coworker friends (Bowler & Brass, 2006), and employees who report higher levels of friendship opportunities at work are more likely to describe themselves as satisfied and involved with their jobs (Riordan, Griffith, & Weatherly, 2003). Both the emotional support obtained from friendship circles and the strategic advice obtained from advisory circles were positively related to workplace performance in a sales setting (Verbeke & Wuyts, 2007). Having friends within one’s team is linked to increased performance and positive leadership ratings for financial executives (Mehra, Dixon, Brass, & Robertson, 2006). Reflecting the support and trust of within-team friendships, such relations positively relate to students’ satisfaction with team-based learning outcomes after controlling for factors such as grade on project and within-project conflict (Baldwin, Bedell, & Johnson, 1997). Heightened levels of initial communication, trust, and cooperation allow friendship teams to outperform acquaintance teams (Jehn & Shah, 1997). Past relationships with other team members as well as current linkages to other team members each positively correlate with the effective influence of an individual director (Stevenson & Radin, 2009), more so than the director’s actual human capital or experience.

In terms of colleague work preference, the emotional support and trust associated with pre-existing relationships is likely a strong determinant. An individual might expect that prior knowledge of a colleague, particularly those associated with friendship and advice exchange, facilitates trust. Further, lacking such pre-existing ties, a potential colleague is largely an unknown commodity. While a colleague not directly linked to the individual may be a good fit for other reasons, lack of existing ties leaves the potential collaborator an unknown commodity. From this, we expect that individuals will prefer to work with those whom they already share other exchange relationships and for those they hold in high regard.

**Hypothesis 2:** An individual’s preference to work with a colleague will positively correlate with the existence and strength of previously established relationships (e.g. friendship, advice and esteem).

**Strategically Advantageous Partners**

Hypothesis three suggests that a colleague’s potential contribution plays a role in potential partner selection processes. Previous research shows that the human capital a partner brings to a project influences their desirability (Stevenson & Radin, 2009; King, 2004). However, the value of human capital is contingent upon the tasks associated with the team task. A potential partner valued highly for one project could be less useful on another project.

Many sources of power are simply perceptual. Specifically, one is powerful to the extent others perceive him or her as powerful (French & Raven, 1959). Within advice networks, highly central individuals are considered repositories of expert power. Since these individuals are frequently sought for advice on myriad topics, they have the ability to influence the behaviors of coworkers (Brass, 1984; Friedkin, 1993; Ibarra, 1993; Sparrowe, Liden, Wayne, & Kraimer, 2001). Advisors who occupy structural hole rich positions (Burt, 1992; Burt, 2001) are considered to hold network positions advantageous to receive rich, new, or novel information.

Research suggests that network position within friendship networks shapes outcomes for individuals and teams. Specifically, the presence of structural hole rich teams—based on friendship network data—were positively related to performance amongst both operational and staff support teams (Balkundi, Kilduff, Barsness, & Michael, 2007). Further, leaders with high friendship centrality—both within team and within organization—lead teams that out-produce their less central counterparts (Mehra et al., 2006).

There are three reasons why this partnership might be useful. First, structurally advantageous partners’ influence might lead to better resource acquisition for the team. Structurally advantaged individuals wield greater levels of power, and if these individuals are able to leverage this influence, it is beneficial to attempt to partner with them. Second, partners who occupy structural hole rich positions are less likely to become bogged down in repeating old processes and are more likely to know (or have access to) information otherwise unavailable to their partners (Burt, 1992; Burt, 2001). Thus, those who are able to bring new and novel ideas to the table are likely preferential to those more inclined to remain tied to the status quo. Finally, since network position is routinely correlated with influence,
creating and maintaining ties to such influential others offers the potential to bask in the reflected glory of one’s advantageous colleagues (Cialdini, Borden, & Walker, 1976). We thus expect an individual’s preference to work with a colleague to correlate positively with the colleague’s network position.

Hypothesis 3: An individual’s preference to work with a colleague will correlate positively to the network centrality and brokerage potential of a potential partner (e.g. advice and friendship centrality and structural holes).

METHODS

Sample

This study investigates the network affiliation patterns of pastors from an evangelical protestant conference in the Southwestern United States. Each of the respondents is the head of an independent evangelical church in the region. We use survey data from the 39 members of the conference and engage in a dyadic analysis of the resulting 666 pairs of pastors (Marsden, 1990). The conference has a relatively flat structure without fixed, formal leadership. Those in hierarchical positions are there because their peers placed them there.

Because of the relatively weak hierarchical power in this setting, there are few circumstances where collaborative work would be assigned or delegated. Rather, the principal of collaboration between pastors would be self-selected, self-directed, and based on individual preferences for project and partner selection. Additionally, pastors routinely collaborate on projects. This includes para-ministry activities (feeding programs, homeless programs, etc.); preparation in community projects (in many of these communities, the church is the “large entity” providing celebratory fireworks and facilities for major holidays, the costs for which are often jointly distributed); participation in conferences; governance boards (both for the church and related social activities); collaborating in speaking engagements; developing camps, retreats and trips, collaborating in development of mentoring associations; generation of best-practices, including publication of such; and collaboration for complementary expertise topics (e.g. tax preparation, financial planning, etc.). As such, this conference represents an ideal setting to investigate collaborative preferences.

The governing committee of the conference approved the study and the instrument used for data collection. Participants were sent the survey instrument utilizing a roster format common to network studies (Bowler & Brass, 2006; Labianca, Brass, & Gray, 1998; Marsden, 1990). Each respondent to the survey answered network questions pertaining to all other members of the conference regarding dyadic friendship, work preference, advice seeking frequency, and how highly they held the colleague in esteem.

The pastors studied in this network average 59 years of age and have been in their conference nearly eleven years. Ten of the pastors are female and 5 of the pastors are minorities. The pastors lead smaller churches with an average attendance of 51 members. Twenty-one of the pastors have educations below the undergraduate level, ten have Bachelors level degrees, and six hold advanced degrees.

Measures

Our survey instrument contained four network questions pertaining to friendship, work preference, advice seeking frequency, and esteem. Respondents were instructed to not answer questions for any conference member they were not familiar with. The friendship question asked, “How closely do you consider this person a friend?” and allowed for three levels of response ranging from acquaintance to close friend. Work preference asked, “To what degree do you prefer to (or not to) work with this person?” and allowed three levels of response ranging from (1) prefer not to, (2) neutral or (3) prefer to. Advice seeking asked, “How often do you go to this person for advice?” and allowed four frequency responses ranging from (1) annually to (4) daily. Esteem asked, “How high of esteem do you hold this person?” and allowed three levels of response ranging from (1) moderate to (4) very high. Respondents also provided demographic data pertaining to ethnicity, gender, education level, and tenure. The conference provided annualized information on attendance levels for each congregation.

Our dependent variable used for all hypotheses is the transpose of the work-preference matrix (Bowler & Brass, 2006; Contractor, Wasserman, & Faust, 2006; Labianca, Brass, & Gray, 1998; Marsden, 1990), which provides return informa-
tion from each of the colleagues and indicates the extent to which each of the column colleagues wishes to work with the row actor. Because our independent measures provide information on the actions of a respondent, and our dependent measures represent the returned attribution of a different individual, network analysis offers the ability to triangulate work setting attitudes across each of the n-respondents.

Hypothesis 1 explores the extent to which actor similarity predicts collaborative desirability. To measure age, education, gender, and ethnicity similarity (Hellerstedt & Aldrich, 2008; Kossinets & Watts, 2009; McPherson & Smith-Lovin, 1987; McPherson, Smith-Lovin, & Cook, 2001; Weare, Musso, & Kyu-Nahm, 2009), this study used the age (or education level) of a respondent and generated a matrix tracking the age (or education) difference between that respondent and all other members of the conference. For Ethnicity Difference and Gender Difference, a ‘1’ was used if the row respondent was the same ethnicity (or gender) as the corresponding column colleague and a ‘0’ if the pairing was mixed ethnicity (or gender).

Hypothesis 2 investigates the extent to which relational quality between a pair of colleagues influences the corresponding work preference using responses from the advice, friendship, and esteem matrices. The matrix interpretation is the extent to which the respondent (a) went to the colleague for advice, (b) maintained a friendship relation with the colleague, or (c) held the colleague in esteem.

To test hypothesis 3, network position measures of centrality and constraint calculated in UCINET 6 were used for the advice and friendship matrices. Our centrality measures use the normalized in-degree centrality score for each respondent. As with our dependent variable, the in-degree measure places an individual central in a network only to the extent that their colleagues report them so. In-degree centrality measures are commonly used as indicators of expertise in network studies (Borgatti & Cross, 2003; Bunderson, 2003; Hinds, Carley, Krackhardt & Wholey, 2000; Klein, Beng-Chong, Saltz & Mayer, 2004). For brokerage, we utilized the constraint measure for structural holes (Burt, 1992; Burt, 2001). Burt’s constraint measure focuses on the extent to which one’s advice or friendship networks are open or closed, and controls for size of ego network. In this case, the constraint measure increases as structural holes decrease. Thus we would anticipate a negative correlation between constraint measures and our work preference measure.

In addition to the above items, age, education, gender, and ethnicity of the pastor were examined, as well as organizational tenure and the attendance level of the pastor’s congregation as each of these potentially impact the level of personal influence for an individual pastor.

Analysis

UCINET 6 was used for all analysis. Descriptive statistics and correlations appear in Table 1. The transposed work-preference matrix reveals some interesting results. The homophily measures used for Hypothesis 1 evidence weak and largely insignificant correlations with work preferences. The ethnicity difference measure \( r = .13, p < .05 \) is significantly correlated, suggesting that pastors have a higher work preference for colleagues of the same ethnicity. This suggests that the homophily hypothesis H1 is not supported. Two of the relational measures have strong positive correlations with work preferences. Pastors who seek advice from their colleagues are more likely to be considered desirable work partners \( r = .33, p < .01 \), as are the colleagues considered a friend of the pastor \( r = .44, p < .001 \). Thus, H2 is supported. Finally, the measures associated with attractive network positioning are all significantly correlated with work preferences. Pastors who occupy central positions in the friendship \( r = .4, p < .001 \) and advice networks \( r = .36, p < .001 \) are more likely to be considered desirable collaborative partners. Further, colleagues who occupy structural hole rich positions in the advice \( r = -.24, p < .001 \) and friendship networks \( r = -.28, p < .001 \) are more desirable collaborative partners than colleagues situated in closed networks. These correlations suggest strong support for H3.

Inter-correlation among our measures is low. Specifically, examining correlations between advice, esteem, and friendship matrices indicates a few correlations and none at a concerning level. Pastors are likely to seek advice from friends \( r = .38, p < .001 \) and generally hold their friends at a higher esteem than non-friends \( r = .41, p < .001 \). There is no significant relationship between advice seeking frequency and esteem. Even with these positive, significant correlations, there is evidence that our respondents differentiate their friendship, esteem, and advice relationships (Zagenczyk & Murrell, 2009). There is a strong replication of centrality and brokerage patterns in the advice and friendship
networks. Pastors who are central in the advice network are also typically central in the friendship network \((r = .91, p < .001)\) and pastors who broker the advice network are also likely brokers in the friendship network \((r = .41, p < .001)\). This suggests that actors occupying advantageous positions in one network tend to have structurally similar positions in other networks. However, given the weaker correlations in the dyadic comparisons (e.g. advice to friendship), these advantaged actors are reaching their central positions through different mixes of contacts.

**Table 1. Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations**

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<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
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<td>1 Work Preference</td>
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<td>2 Age</td>
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<td>3 Education</td>
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<td>4 Gender</td>
<td>F = 10</td>
<td>M = 29</td>
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<td>5 Tenure</td>
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<td>6 Ethnicity</td>
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<td>7 Attendance</td>
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<td>8 Age Difference</td>
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<td>9 Education Difference</td>
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<td>-.07</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>-.53</td>
<td>.41</td>
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**Notes:** *p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001

The matrix regression analysis can be seen in Table 2 below. The hypotheses were tested using Multiple Regression Quadratic Assignment Procedure (MRQAP) regression preformed in UCINET 6. MRQAP regression uses a standard ordinary least squares regression procedure with a bootstrapping function to produce estimates for regression predictors. The MRQAP procedure then compares the regression parameters against randomly generated matrices of similar dimensions to produce p-values for the model and predictors. This technique produces coefficients robust to gross violations of normality assumptions and autocorrelation common in network data (Kilduff & Krackhardt, 1994). A regression of the dependent transposed work preference matrix was run against the control measures of age, education, gender, tenure, ethnicity, and attendance. While our control test, Model 1, is significant, the variance explained is low \((R^2 = .05, p < .001)\), and only congregation attendance is a significant predictor of work preference \((\beta = .13, p < .05)\). Further in our full test of hypothesis, Model 3, attendance is no longer a significant predictor, although pastors with higher education are generally more desirable colleagues \((\beta = .27, p < .001)\).
Following Model 1, a block of measures appropriate for a specific hypothesis was added. Thus Model 2 includes controls and predictors for H1, Model 3 adds in predictors for H2, and Model 4 adds predictors for H3. While Model 3 was used for evaluation of the hypothesis, this iterative procedure provides some indication of the additional variance explained by each block of measures. Ultimately, Model 4, which includes tests of all hypotheses, explains roughly 28% of the variance in colleague work preference.

**Table 2. MRQAP Regression Analysis for Dyadic Work Preference**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Model 1</th>
<th>Model 2</th>
<th>Model 3</th>
<th>Model 4</th>
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<tr>
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<td>Education</td>
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<td>.37**</td>
<td>.27**</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.02</td>
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<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenure</td>
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<td>Pastor Ethnicity</td>
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<td>.02</td>
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<tr>
<td>Attendance</td>
<td>.13*</td>
<td>.23***</td>
<td>.20***</td>
<td>.03</td>
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<td><strong>Homophily (H1)</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<td>Age Difference</td>
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<td>.01</td>
<td>-.05</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education Difference</td>
<td>-.42**</td>
<td>-.38***</td>
<td>-.32**</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Gender Difference</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.02</td>
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<td>Ethnicity Difference</td>
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<td>.02</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Dyadic Relations (H2)</strong></td>
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<td>Advice</td>
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<td>.01</td>
<td>.01</td>
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<tr>
<td>Esteem</td>
<td>-.08*</td>
<td>-.06***</td>
<td>-.06***</td>
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<tr>
<td>Friendship</td>
<td>.27***</td>
<td>.25***</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Power (H3)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Advice Centrality</td>
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<td>.00</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.03</td>
</tr>
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<td>Advice Brokerage</td>
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<tr>
<td>Friendship Centrality</td>
<td>.38***</td>
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<tr>
<td>Friendship Brokerage</td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td>.00</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

\[
R^2 \quad 0.05*** \quad 0.13*** \quad 0.2*** \quad 0.28
\]

\[
\Delta R^2 \quad 0.08 \quad 0.07 \quad 0.07 \quad 0.08
\]

**Notes:** Standardized Coefficients reported. * p<.05, ** p<.01, *** p<.001

Hypothesis 1 predicted that homophily would explain colleague work preference tendencies. While the addition of the similarity measures adds roughly 8% variance explained, only education difference is a significant predictor (β = -.32, p < .001). This suggests that pastors do not like to work with more educated colleagues. Interestingly though, higher education as a control is positively related to higher levels of colleague preference (β = .27, p < .001). Collectively, this suggests that education homophily is at play. Pastors seek collaborative work with colleagues of similar level, as indicated by the education difference measure. However, more educated pastors are more likely to show an interest in collaborative work than less educated pastors, as indicated by the education measure. The education difference measure is a strong predictor suggesting support for H1; however, none of the other homophily measures approach significance. As our analysis examines over 650 dyadic relations, power to detect is reasonably strong, suggesting that a homophily impact is, at best, weak.
Hypothesis 2 predicts that the strength of pre-existing relationships will positively predispose work preference tendencies. Collectively, these measures contribute roughly 7% to the overall variance explained in our model. Our multiplexity hypothesis evidences some support in examination of the friendship network ($\beta = .25, p < .001$). However, opposite of what we might expect, there is a tendency for colleagues reporting lower work preferences towards pastors who hold them in high esteem ($\beta = -.09, p < .05$). While contrary to our expected results, this relationship may reflect manifestations of negative social capital, which we explore in our discussion section. As with H1, we find moderate overall support for a multiplexity argument: pastors indicate a desirability to work with those they already consider friends.

Hypothesis 3 predicts that colleagues will indicate higher work preferences towards pastors who occupy strategically advantageous network positions. Inclusion of network positions contributes roughly 8% of the variance explained in our models. Here we find supporting evidence for friendship, but not for advice network positioning. Pastors who are highly central in the friendship network ($\beta = .38, p < .001$) are more desirable colleagues. However, advice network positioning and friendship brokerage evidence no significant impact on colleague work preference. As with our two previous hypotheses, we find a single strong predictor in line with this hypothesis. However, with several predictors not reaching significance, we list only moderate support for H3.

**DISCUSSION**

This study anticipated that homophily, multiplexity, and network positioning would each predict tendencies for colleague work preferences. Supporting homophily theory, pastors indicate a dislike in working with colleagues whose education is superior to their own. Supporting theories of multiplexity, pastors are more likely to indicate a work-preference towards a colleague that expresses friendship towards them. Finally, supporting network positioning theories, pastors are likely to indicate desired work preferences towards pastors who are central in the friendship network.

One common theme is the importance of friendship in this network. Most of the reported relations in our study were near the ‘2’ friend level (mean = 1.67) and above the ‘1’ acquaintance level. Further, both friendship and friendship centrality had strong correlations with work preference. Finally, coefficients for both friendship and friendship centrality were positive significant predictors of colleague work preference. Effectively, both the strength of dyadic friendship as well as the overall friendship relationships of a pastor positively correlate with their colleagues’ reported work preferences. While it is not unusual for friendship to shape organizational outcomes (Kruger et al., 1995; Mehra et al., 2006), it is also not uncommon for the friendship network to be subordinated to the importance of the advice network in some studies (Ibarra, 1993).

While advice networks are commonly used in studies of organizational power and influence (Brass & Burkhardt, 1993; Ibarra 1993), this study found advice has little to do with work preference. This might suggest that people opt against collaboration with powerful individuals in favor of friendly or popular individuals. The advice seeking measure indicated infrequent advice seeking interaction within this network. The mean for advice seeking is a 1.27, indicating that the average advice seeking relationship occurs somewhere between the ‘1’ annual and ‘2’ monthly level. Pastors in this sample do not frequently turn to each other for advice. While the dyadic advice relationships and advice network positioning each correlate strongly and in anticipated directions with work preferences, the coefficients for these predictors simply do not reach significance once controlling for other factors (most specifically friendship).

There was also an interesting, and unexpected, negative relationship between the esteem level reported by a respondent and the corresponding work preference of that same colleague. In other words, where one pastor reported a slightly higher esteem level, their colleague indicated a lower predisposition to work with that same colleague. Given that the correlation between dyadic esteem and work preference was positive, but weak, our significant negative regression findings are likely the remaining variance after controlling for an overlapping concept (again the friendship effect).

Reflecting on the strong findings for friendship and education similarity and the absence of findings for advice, it is believed that the nature of this organization plays an important role. Specifically, in this disaggregated organization, most communities have only a single church from this conference and many of these pastors are separated from each other by miles and cities. The governing body is self-elected and, at the church level, each pastor is the Chief Execu-
tive Officer of their operation. Further, the opportunities for collaboration in this type of organization favor those of voluntary cooperation. Given these combinations of circumstances, interest in collaboration intuitively links with those the individual is already comfortable with (dyadic friendship) or for those who carry a reputation of friendliness (friendship centrality).

It is interesting that our measures for age, ethnicity, and gender homophily did not produce results. Specifically, these forms of homophily have been linked to relationship development in other studies (Hellerstedt & Aldrich, 2008; Kosinski & Watts, 2009; McPherson, Smith-Lovin, & Cook, 2001; Weare, Musso, & Kyu-Nahm, 2009). Martin Luther King, Jr. once referred to Sunday mornings as the most segregated hour in the United States, and the practice of religion today maintains observed ethnic homogenization (Emerson & Smith, 2001). The vast majority of Christian churches in the United States are mono-ethnic, and even in multi-ethnic churches, individual services are often mono-ethnic (DeYoung, Emerson, Yancey, & Kim, 2004; Emerson & Smith, 2001). However, while the practice of religion seems to sustain ethnic divide, those at the head of religious services have long been a source of reducing ethnic distance (DeYoung et al., 2004; Emerson & Smith, 2001). The documented awareness of ethnic distance within Christianity likely fosters a resolve amongst its priests, pastors and ministers to take steps to reduce ethnic distance. This resolve might explain our lack of gender and ethnic homophily findings even when other studies of not-for-profit organizations typically find homophily induced affiliations.

There are three principal limitations in our study. First, because this study uses a single time-frame survey, we cannot address issues of causality. Second, the uniqueness of our sample may limit the generalizeability of our findings. Specifically, we draw upon a rural, religious conference for our data. It is possible, therefore, that our results may be specific to pastors of religious conferences. Given that our results are in line with prior studies, generalizeability of our findings is not necessarily limited. Indeed, there are specifics to our sample which have not been studied previously, and our study thus extends our knowledge of affiliation patterns. Pastors in this sample operate autonomously with minimal hierarchical distinction between colleagues. Finally, for those unfamiliar with network analysis, our sample size appears small, limited to 39 pastors. However, given that our analysis occurs at the dyadic level, our models actually analyze 666 unique dyadic relationships and take into account multi-directional attributions. Additionally, because of our use of network analysis, we are able to utilize all possible dyadic relations, both those present and absent, in our investigation.

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

There are important strengths to our study. First, because of the use of social network analysis, this study is able to identify multi-level factors in our analysis (Contractor, Wasserman, & Faust, 2006). Specifically, we are able to control for individual attributes while testing dyadic (H1 and H2) and organizational status (H3) variables. While the theories generally recognize the interplay of factors at multiple levels of analysis, network analysis represents one of the limited numbers of techniques able to simultaneously examine across levels. Second, it is difficult to study potential teams and collaborations. While our theories recognize the importance of group composition, it is difficult to study teams and collaborations before their existence.

The primary implication in this study lies in the importance of friendship networks. In settings where collaborative opportunities exist and for which collaboration is purely voluntary, friendships appear to serve as a driver of potential future collaboration. Specifically for organizations, the importance of fostering community interconnection cannot be understated. If friendship is a precursor to collaboration, opportunities to foster such friendships must be developed. Within the duties of organizational life, it can sometimes be too easy to forgo socializing in favor of getting things done. Our results suggest that, for hierarchically level colleagues, socialization opportunities today create willingness for future collaboration. For individuals, there are implications for managing networking activities. For junior colleagues, it is often difficult to remember the relational aspects of work in the face of the apparent need to focus on the task nature of work. However, since assistance on tomorrow’s tasks is most likely to come from today’s friends, it is important to remember to take time to develop and maintain friendships.

All organizations need to be flexible and adaptable in order to develop successful relationships. While large organizations often invest significant resources to develop more formal processes, the practices of small and medium-sized enterprises, such as the ones featured in this study, may be less refined and focus on personal connections and com-
communication sources (Morrissey & Pittaway, 2006). As suggested by Li and Qian (2007), strong alliances are built on sharing information and resources as a way to reduce potential risks. Similarly, Redondo and Fierro (2007) found that small and medium sized organizations are generally more reliant on trust, collaboration, and personal communication to create effective professional networks. Greater levels of communication may allow members of these organizations to refine their own collaborative capabilities and develop more professional associations outside their own friendship network.

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Editors’ Pick—Book Review: *Cultivating Inquiry-driven Learners: A College Education for the 21st Century*

Frederic Murray, MLIS
Southwestern Oklahoma State University


Hishman Matar, a Libyan novelist and essayist, is a man whose work is laced with a sense of urgency. As a contemporary to the events unfolding in the Arab Spring, and whose family's past is embedded with events both immediate and political, he is understandably an author whose books are written because he had no choice but to write them. They are written out of fire.

In the preface to *Cultivating Inquiry-Driven Learners: A College Education for the 21st Century*, Clifton Conrad and Laura Dunek introduce Matar as a source of inspiration for their equally urgent book and consider their work to be one also written out of fire. Convincingly, they describe a disconnect between a growing knowledge-based economy and the role that higher education plays in fostering this growth that is at odds with the glaring and steady defunding of our colleges and universities at Federal and State levels. The question that vexes and challenges these authors, and a question they invite their readers to consider, is one that has always been at the center of public higher education: *How do we support an education that is both meaningful and productive?*

At the heart of the book is the idea that there is an absence of a fundamental purpose underlying college education in the 21st century. Taken literally, this seems hard to believe; in fact, if asked, most students would reply automatically that the purpose is to get a well-paying job, to advance themselves into a career of their choice. But no one works seven days a week or 24 hours a day, and many college graduates are far divorced from their initial aspirations and the work that pays their way through life.

Early in the book, Conrad and Dunek provide several examples of the soaring rhetoric espoused by advocates of a liberal arts education and why this rhetoric no longer carries the authoritative currency of past eras. A gradual decanonization or erosion of core knowledge has come about because of the rise of other voices in the culture. This, per se, is not the problem, but this shift in conversation, a conversation of ideas that universities must always encourage, has occurred at the same time as a rapid rise in the practical arts and the prominent role they have begun to play in the traditional liberal arts education. It's as if a few interested people at a party devoted themselves to boutique cooking skills, while the rest of the crowd headed for the buffet line. The importance of liberal arts has been eclipsed by the practical arts, so much so that the authors feel that real erosion has occurred on our campuses—erosion that is leading to poorly educated graduates who know a great deal about how to pass a test or a course, but who are woefully deficient in the kind of critical thinking skills needed in a knowledge-based economy.

This is a stinging criticism, one that carries weight and which is important for understanding the central idea of the book: that the rise of the practical arts is undermining undergraduate education through the substitution of vocational training. One needs only to look at the exponential growth in online for-profit higher education to see the drift that is happening in educational markets, a point the authors take pains to examine.

A concomitant question posed in this shift towards “practicality” is one that asks whether state universities and colleges serve a public good or market forces. The authors cite the example of changes in health care as a clarion call to the dangerous shifts that could befall higher education in terms of cost and accessibility. The Affordable Health Care Act notwithstanding, hospitals and other health care centers were once seen as a public good and are now perceived as profit centers. The same changes could befall higher education and, indeed, are at work in the online sector.
It is a daunting picture concerning the state of contemporary higher education in the United States, especially if one believes in the ideal of engaged lifelong learners competent in their fields and comfortable in the world of ideas and change. Nonetheless, *Cultivating Inquiry-Driven Learners: A College Education for the 21st Century* is a thoroughly and deftly-argued work. The book is divided into four sections. The first is a concise overview on the purpose of a college education, both historical and contemporary. The second examines why the contemporary model is in imminent danger of obsolescence. The third and fourth sections are the solution driven responses to the problems surveyed and articulated in the first part of the book.

Learning, as Conrad and Dunek define it, should be both dynamic and recursive, a phrase that is used repeatedly throughout the book. The authors argue, however, that becoming “learned”—as an ideal in and of itself—is no longer relevant in today’s decentered, hyper-linked world. They posit four signature capabilities of an inquiry driven learner: core qualities of mind; critical thinking skills; expertise in divergent modes of inquiry; and the capacity to express and communicate ideas. For many readers, this may be the most interesting part of the book as these capabilities are then explored and defined. An interesting subchapter on teaching students to frame their own burning questions should find resonance with anyone who has faced the cavernous silence of undergraduates in a survey course.

As a practical manifesto, the book winds up its analysis in the fourth and final section devoted to ideas for developing inquiry-driven learners. The authors examine initiatives at eight institutions, ranging from the development of First Year Interest Groups (FIG) devoted to fostering interdisciplinary learning at the University of Wisconsin-Madison to a digital Critical Thinking Resource developed by the Nursing faculty at University of New Mexico. The range of the ideas cited are no doubt meant to serve as a springboard to action; they are also evidence that movement towards a more relevant undergraduate experience is already underway. *Cultivating Inquiry-Driven Learners: A College Education for the 21st Century* is an impassioned book, one written with a sense of urgency that fulfills its introductory mandate as a book written out of fire. It is also a highly disciplined work whose readers will find its content both rewarding and relevant.