Organizational Values, Social Responsibility, and Corporate Citizenship: The case of Nevada State College

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Organizations contribute more than products and services to the society. The generation of jobs, creation of wealth and satisfaction of needs are only a portion of the influence that organizations have in a community. Likewise, organizations are increasingly engaging in social responsible initiatives to respond to the concerns of their various stakeholders (Aguilera, Rupp, Williams, & Ganapathi, 2007). Organizations with a genuine interest for social responsibility and citizenship possess value systems that articulate and integrate these social motives into their corporate strategy (Graber & Kilpatrick, 2008).

Higher education institutions in the United States face the challenge of aligning their value systems -deemed altruistic and oriented to the social-good- with those of their student body, faculty members, administrators, board members, and community. In an era of declining state and federal support (Weerts & Ronca, 2006) integrating values of accessibility and teaching excellence could be overwhelming (Rich, 2006).

This document contains an analysis of the organizational values, social responsibility and corporate citizenship of Nevada State College, a state-funded public college located in Southern Nevada. The document is divided in six sections, starting with a brief background of the college. The second and third sections include the conceptual framework of value systems in general and in public higher education, respectively. The fourth section contains an analysis of the organizational value systems at NSC and their effect on performance, stakeholders’ relationships and competitive advantage. The document ends with an analysis of the agency problem and recommendations to articulate organizational values to enhance performance.
Background about Nevada State College

Nevada State College (NSC) is a four-year public baccalaureate institution founded in 2002 in Henderson, Nevada. The Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE) is comprised of seven other institutions: two research-doctoral universities and five community colleges operating in Northern and Southern Nevada (Nevada System of Higher Education, 2009). The college operates with three academic schools: Education, Nursing and Liberal Arts and Sciences. Additionally the college offers degrees in 14 majors including business administration, public administration, psychology, visual media, environmental science, speech pathology and mathematics (Nevada State College, 2007). NSC’s faculty body included 51 full-time professors and 93 part-time instructors in 2008. Courses are taught in three modalities: on-site, online, and hybrid, catering to the demands of students who balance their professional and college life.

The mission statement of the college reads: “Educate the next generation of professionals for the state of Nevada” (Nevada State College, 2007, p. 17). Grounded in this mission statement NSC emphasizes teaching excellence as a core value and promotes principles of shared governance through the participation of stakeholders in the decision-making process and formulation of the organizational strategy.

Conceptual Framework about Value Systems

Successful organizations are characterized for their strong culture grounded on shared value systems (Schermherhorn, Hunt, & Osborn, 2004). The strength of a culture is given by the degree to which values are shared by the members of the organization (Buystendijk, 2006). Not all values are manifest explicitly by the organization; rather they are implicit but still represent the set of “meanings and perceptions” (p. 223). The alignment of the organizational values with the values of employees, customers and other stakeholders is essential to success (Buystendijk,
Agreed-upon values internally must match customers’ values to enhance organizational agility (Buytendijk, 2006).

The identity of an organization is comprised of a combination of structures, practices and routines that guide the response of the organization to ethical challenges and demands from stakeholders (Handelman, 2006). Graber and Kilpatrick (2008) contended that organizations faced “competing, conflicting and shifting values” (p. 188) that effective leaders would be able to conciliate and communicate. Furthermore, the participation of stakeholders in the formulation of company’s values has become increasingly salient in recent scholarly research on leadership (Graber & Kilpatrick, 2008).

A mission statement is the visible artifact through which an organization communicates espoused values (Schein, 1997). When effectively written, the mission statement expresses the core values of the firm, the constituents it serves, and the philosophy that drives its operation (Buytendijk, 2008). Most firms recognize their customer, owners and employees as their main stakeholders, restating how they would ensure returns to shareholders, quality products for their customers, and stability for their staff while behaving in socially responsible ways (Buytendijk, 2006). Although for some authors the legitimacy of certain groups is questionable for others there is substantial empirical evidence that responding to the demands of all stakeholders enhances the firms’ reputation and competitive advantage (Huse & Rindova, 2001). The role of leadership is to identify and address these challenges by being open to understand differing viewpoints while staying true to their core values.

Schermihorn et al (2004) argued that corporate strategies reflected the attributes of the organization and the contributions offered to the society. The process of defining goals is an expression of the willingness of an organization to respond to the demands of stakeholders,
considering that “no firm can be all things to all people” (Schermernhorn et al., 2004, p. 175). Freeman (1984) maintained that a holistic approach in which the firm considers all possible stakeholders. Conciliating these views, Friedman and Miles (2002) advised that firms could benefit from identifying the type of stakeholders and the type of relationship and compatibility of values. In the implementation of shared-value systems organizations struggle with conciliating competing and overlapping values across organizational groups and misalignment of rewards and value systems (Graber & Kilpatrick, 2008)

Value Systems in Public Higher Education

Public higher education has a public purpose and delivers a public good (Gregorutti, 2008). Newman, Couturier and Scurry (in Thomson, 2009b, p. 11) defined some critical attributes of higher education institutions that reflected values espoused by public colleges and universities:

(1) Quality of learning to develop skills and knowledge in the workforce.

(2) Quality of learning linked to community civic and social life.

(3) Access for underrepresented social groups.

(4) Social mobility for low-income and minority groups.

(5) Critical debate to improve communities.

(6) Contribution to the development of K-12 (elementary and secondary) education

(7) Equalization of community service and academic knowledge.

Despite the altruistic view of the mission of higher education institutions, concerns exist because some of these “public good” attributes and values may be disregarded in exchange of business-like approaches. In an era where higher education faces significant changes in enrollment size, intense competition, high levels of differentiation, and global scope (Rich, 2006)
the impact on organizational values must be assessed. The mission of education is for many scholars purely humanistic and any indication of business-like attitudes would be considered damaging (Cangemi, 1971). Holbrook (2007) brought attention to the risks of measuring the merits of higher education institutions with an emphasis in student-customers” or the worth (in dollars) of graduates in the market place (Badenhausen & Kump, in Holbrook, 2007, p. 1). Holbrook expressed his concern about threats to academic values and indicated (p. 3):

“[T]he whole logic of education viewed as a market-driven customer-oriented business-like enterprise has prompted probing critiques and voluble attacks from commentators (…) who have shown deep concern for threats to academic values and who have worried loudly about dangers to the integrity of universities formerly seen as communities of scholars but now regarded as consumer-centered bastions of the business ethos”

Rhoades (2005) agreed with Holbrook’s view and posited that a major risk for higher education was the transition towards an academic capitalism. In this new scheme, faculty become more interested in allocating time for research that yields economic revenue than on student services, teaching and advising. Conflicts of interest emerging from the support of research tied to corporate sponsorship attempt again the ethical values in higher education (Burkardt, 2007; Burris, 2007).

Organizational Value System at Nevada State College

The organizational value system of Nevada State College (NSC) is expressed in the iTeach Value Model (Nevada State College, 2007). The iTeach values are integrated to the decision-making process through the business plan and operation plans. iTeach stands for
innovation, teaching excellence, economic development, assessment, customer service, and heritage (Nevada State College, 2007).

The value of innovation recognizes that the members of NSC are committed to foster creativity in learning. Teaching excellence is the most important value in this system and emphasizes exemplary education as a major responsibility of NSC members. The economic development value acknowledges the participation of NSC in both the economic growth of the state and the improvement of the individual economic conditions of students. The assessment value purports the commitment of all NSC members to “instill the value of reflection, continual improvement, and accountability” (Nevada State College, 2007, p. 221). The customer service value prioritizes outstanding service and satisfaction for all college constituents. Lastly, the core value of heritage restates that the college supports the diversity of each member of the NSC community.

Figure 1. Components of the NSC iTeach Values Model. Adapted from NSC Self Study (2007)
At Nevada State College, students, faculty, staff, administrators and board members expect to receive fair and equitable treatment and participate in decision-making processes. NSC operates with core-value-based decision-making principles derived from the iTeach system (Nevada State College, 2007). These espoused core values are communicated through concrete artifacts (Schein, 1997) such as the mission statement, the vision statement, and the iTeach acronym.

Nevada State College is committed to institutional integrity and operationalizes the core values through guidelines contained in the Nevada System of Higher Education Code, Board of Regents handbooks, Student and Faculty Handbook, NSC and Faculty Senate Bylaws (Nevada State College, 2007, p. 222). Academic freedom of faculty and researchers is explicitly supported by the administration of the college, as per dispositions of the Nevada System of Higher Education.

Social responsibility and citizenship are promoted by NSC through the creation of a culture of knowledge-sharing, that protects the rights to free speech of all constituents, committing to “graciousness and civility” (Nevada State College, 2007, p. 222) in the resolution of potential conflicts. The leadership of NSC maintains open communication with all layers of the organization and encourages jointly work across the schools of education, nursing, and liberal arts and sciences.

Organizational values and System Performance at NSC

In public higher education profitability is not the indicator of performance; rather academic success is the ultimate goal of colleges and universities (Edwards, Cangemi & Kowalski, in Thomson, 2009a). Academic success is explained by seven factors (Rich, 2006, p. 8): (1) faculty quality, (2) student preparation, (3) academic program rigor, (4) teaching
effectiveness, (5) scholarly productivity, (6) public service responsiveness, and (7) learning infrastructure.

**College Performance**

Nevada State College pursues excellence in performance through careful planning of academic priorities, student success strategies, and resources for business support (Nevada State College, 2007, p. 18). The NSC iTeach core values are aligned with these factors of success. Faculty quality and teaching effectiveness are contained in the Teaching Excellence value. Student preparation and academic program rigor are included in the assessment value that ensures that graduates of NSC “are able to think critically, communicate effectively and participate as citizens contributing to the community” (Nevada State College, 2007, p. 226). The scholarly productivity and learning infrastructure are part of the innovation value, and public service responsiveness is contained in both economic development and customer service values. Although Rich’s (2006) factors of success did not include diversity and heritage, NSC deems this value critical to sustain the harmonious collaboration between faculty, students, and administrators.

The mission and core values of NSC inform the strategic planning process providing support to the academic priorities of each biennium, and the development of metrics for enrollment and staffing growth (Nevada State College, 2007). “Enrollment is the bottom-line measure of success at NSC” (Nevada State College, 2007, p. 40) and therefore requires careful attention. Enrollment goals are set based on community needs, supported by the formulation of a campus master plan and main strategic goal of the biennium, and contingent to state and legislative support (Nevada State College, 2007). Any changes in the business plan are discussed with the members of the college through town hall meetings, faculty meetings and board
meetings and “the leadership makes concerted efforts to adhere to the mission and core values in its decision-making” (Nevada State College, 2007, p. 41).

**Program Performance**

Nevada State College conducts reviews of the effectiveness of academic programs periodically at the first, third, fifth and tenth year. The review includes quantitative and qualitative measures, direct assessments, self-assessments and peer-reviews (Nevada State College, 2007, p. 39). The creation of new programs must respond to the demands of the community and requires the alignment to four factors: (1) institutional mission, (2) cost, (3) relationships to existing programs, and (4) student outcomes. Factor one restates the importance of the mission statement in performance evaluation.

Holbrook (2007) observed that administrators, recruiters, and prospective students in business schools increasingly rely on external rankings issues by U.S. News and World Reports and Business Week to measure the prestige of an institution, although those rankings were highly subjective. Gimzauskiene and Kloviene (2007) argued that the choice of performance-measurement systems was influenced by organizational values. Because values define how people act and what they do, a performance measurement system that is not compatible with the values purported by the organization will not be effective. NSC relies on a system of monthly assessments where student artifacts are evaluated in their adherence to NSC outcomes (Nevada State College, 2007, p. 222). Consistent with the core values of teaching excellence, faculty members participate actively in advisory for the creation of courses, programs and evaluation models.
Faculty Performance

Outcome-oriented performance systems assist in clarifying the expectations of performance through objective measures (Elmore, 2008; Young, Stedham, & Beekun, 2000). At NSC the iTeach core values are incorporated into the performance evaluation processes of academic and administrative faculty. The Standards of Academe frame the annual performance evaluation of academic faculty in three areas of interest: teaching excellence, service, and scholarship. These standards contain “criteria that assists faculty in progressing toward promotion and tenure and merit” (Nevada State College, 2009, p. 1).

Faculty members and administrators at each school worked jointly in the definition of the standards of academe, through multiple intra-departmental meetings in fall 2009. In a first stage, this process ensured that each school had the opportunity to discuss criteria that was specific to their field of practice. In a second stage, a collective agreement on campus-wide standards increased the sense of equity and fairness for all three schools.

Nevada State College integrated the iTeach core values to an extrinsic-rewards program started in 2006, denominated the iTeach Awards (Nevada State College, 2009d) that grants a monetary stipend to awardees. This award recognizes teaching and non-teaching initiatives that promote the six core values of the college and is aimed at faculty and staff.

Organizational Values and Stakeholders’ Relationships

A stakeholder is “any individual or group who can affect or is affected by the achievement of the organization’s objectives” (Freeman, 2004, p. 46). Stakeholders’ theorists have argued for a broader definition of corporate social responsibility that includes attention to at least six stakeholders: employees, suppliers, customers, environment and the community and shareholders (Jamali, 2008). Stakeholders’ expectations inform the behavior of board of directors
and their adherence to principles of good corporate governance (Huse & Rindova, 2001). According to Chowdhury (2003, p. 137) when organizations have value systems that are not in balance, stakeholders perceive inequities that hinder value creation. Conversely, when the value systems are balanced, stakeholders perceive equity in their relationships and value creation is enhanced.

Nevada State College understands the importance of stakeholders’ expectations and has permanently included faculty, staff, students, board members, and community members in the formulation of the campus master plan (Nevada State College, 2007). As suggested by Petit (1961) organizations must be committed to social responsibility, interest in the well-being of their employees, generating trust in their customers, suppliers, government and community.

Friedman and Miles’ (2002) posited that organizations develop different types of relationships with their stakeholders. Depending upon the type of social contract, stakeholders may be compatible or incompatible, necessary or contingent. Table 1 presents an adaptation of Friedman and Miles’ (2002) model for Nevada State College, identifying the types of stakeholders that NSC recognizes in the 2007 Self-study. In quadrant A (necessary/compatible) Friedman and Miles placed shareholders and management, only. For the NSC case, quadrant A should include the board of regents, faculty members and administrators. In quadrant B (contingent/compatible) Friedman placed neighbors, which would be the City of Henderson community. In quadrant C (contingent incompatible) the original model included social activists and other groups without social contract. For NSC this quadrant would include biased media and groups of interest. Finally, in quadrant D (necessary and incompatible) Friedman and Miles placed worker groups but at NSC there seems to be support for faculty associations and student groups making them necessary and compatible. The only necessary incompatible groups would
be other higher education institutions. This framework may be useful to prioritize certain business practices aimed at specific stakeholders.

Table 1. Types of Organization/Stakeholder Relations at Nevada State College

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<tr>
<th>Compatibility</th>
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<th>Incompatible</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Necessary</td>
<td>A: Administrators and Board of Regents. Faculty, Student groups</td>
<td>D: Other higher institutions in the system.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contingent</td>
<td>B: City of Henderson community</td>
<td>C: Biased media, groups of interest.</td>
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Adapted from Friedman and Miles (2002).

Faculty

Nevada State College involves faculty members in the decision-making process through “direct interaction with departmental deans and dialogue among colleagues” (Nevada State College, 2007, p. 40). NSC administrators restate the importance of faculty ownership of the initiatives started on campus. Faculty members are involved in regular assessments, participate in search committees, conduct advisory through steering committees and Faculty Senate, a top-level “recommending body that advises the president of the college on issues that are important to faculty” (Nevada State College, 2009c).

NSC fosters an environment of openness and respect for all faculty members and supports the core value of teaching excellence, providing faculty members with all the resources for their teaching tasks. The recruitment of diverse faculty responds to the commitment to the core value of heritage. Faculty members have been active participants in the formulation of the master campus plan ensuring that their opinions about physical and teaching resources are met.

Students

Nevada State College is a student-centered institution. Students participate with administration and faculty in decision-making and advisory (Nevada State College, 2007). The
NSC self-study includes an explicit statement indicating that “the integrity and diversity of students is respected and promoted at NSC” (p. 226). The majority of students at NSC comes from low-income households and receives financial aid through scholarships, Millenium scholarships and Pell Grants. Given the small size of the NSC campus, some aspects of the college life are still in progress but administrators have prioritized funding for the construction of a student-services building.

The budget crisis facing Nevada has forced all higher education institutions to increase their tuition in approximately 10% for the biennium 2009-2011 (Ryan, 2008). Nevada State College has comparatively lower fees than the first-tier universities (University of Nevada in Las Vegas, and University of Reno) and slightly higher fees than the other 5 community colleges. NSC administrators have designed special payment plans to help them cope with the additional expense. Faculty members and advisors are also involved in enhancing the student experience to increase the perceived value of their education.

The City of Henderson

The City of Henderson was a strong ally in the creation and survival of the college. The master planning process conducted by NSC had the active participation of the city. According to the NSC Self Study “the city shares and in some instances has shaped the college’s core values” (p. 217). The City sponsors some of the diversity initiatives of the college and provides funding and resources for the celebration of heritage in the Festival of cultures of April each year.

Community Relations

Nevada State College maintains public-private partnerships with various organizations in the state of Nevada. The Clark County School District and the Public Health System are natural partners of the college, given that almost two-thirds of the enrollment at NSC is in both the
teacher preparation and nursing fields (Richardson, 2009). As stated in the NSC Self Study (2007) the partners of NSC “are in concert with the college’s mission and core values” (p. 38).

NSC also partners with other public higher education institutions in the preparation of jointly grant proposals (Nevada State College, 2007). Transfer coordination with community colleges ensures that students transition from two-year degrees to four-year bachelor’s degrees, adhering to the core value of customer service. Another successful initiative that supports the core values of heritage and economic development are the NSC Step-Up program that allows high-school students interested in teaching to take courses at the college level.

Organizational Values and Competitive Advantage

The core values of iTeach are complemented by a philosophy promoted by the president of the college, Dr. Fred Maryanski, called the iron triangle (Maryanski, 2007). The iron triangle illustrates the three sides of the competitive advantage of a higher education institution: quality (academic success), convenience, and cost. These three aspects enter a trade-off process in which high quality may be associated with high cost, and low cost may be associated with low quality of services. The challenge for NSC is to continue to maintain the iTeach core values in the midst of a stressful financial crisis.

To maintain competitiveness among the other seven institutions in the system, NSC administrators constantly realigns the strategy to the mission statement and iTeach core values. Consistent with the importance of building brand equity, NSC administration appointed members of the faculty, staff, and external stakeholders as members of the “Long-range marketing committee” (Nevada State College, 2009a). This committee is tasked with conducting market research to identify and understand the profile of current and future NSC students. This initiative responds to the biennial business plan and the priorities of resource allocation aimed at increased
enrollment. The official Enrollment for fall 2008 was 2,196 (Nevada State College, 2009b) and in fall 2009 internal reports indicated a growth of 23%, representing less than 2% of the market share of Nevada higher education.

At this time, NSC operates with a cost-leadership approach and a mechanistic organizational structure (Thomson, 2009a) that responds to small size of the college and the interest in making education accessible to low-income students. Should NSC opt for a differentiation strategy the administration would have to transition to a more organic structure (Jones, 2003). A strong culture facilitates changes in the corporate strategy of a firm (Carpenter & Sanders, 2008) because leaders and members of the organization share the same values and have the same goals. At NSC the cohesiveness of core values among faculty, staff, administrators and board members is evident and supported by an ongoing participatory planning process. Schein (1997) argued that a strong culture represents an asset or distinctive resource of the organization that could be used as a distinctive competency that leads to competitive advantage in the industry.

Agency Problem at Nevada State College

Agency theory explains the relationships between principal and agent, where the principal trusts the agent to operate the organization and reciprocate with appropriate returns (Jensen & Meckling, 1976). Agency problems emerge from the differing views of performance held by principals (Board of Directors or Boards of Trustees) and agents (i.e. CEO or college presidents) and the moral hazard created by agents whose goals might contradict those of the shareholders (Vancouver, 1996; Young, Stedham & Beekun, 2000). The discussion of the agency problem at Nevada State College is two-layered. At the first level the agency perspective
in the relationship between governance bodies and the administration of NSC. At a second level, an agency view of the relationships between NSC administration and faculty and staff.

Governance in public institutions differs from that in private corporations, mainly because the board members or trustees “serve colleges and universities that are ‘owned’ by citizens” (Association of Governing Boards of Public Universities and Colleges, 2008). Governing board members are elected or appointed and have the responsibility to represent governmental control on higher education, set mission and purposes and appoint the president and chancellor. In Nevada, governance in higher education institutions is represented by the Board of Regents whose members are elected by the citizenship (Richardson, 2009).

From the perspective of agency theory, independence of the Board and top management would ensure proper monitoring and control through formal performance reviews (Young et al. 2000). According to the Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges (2009) the appointment of college presidents is one of the most difficult decisions of board members. For once, college presidents have a short tenure of average six years, and due to the political complexity of this function, potential successors, such as Vice-presidents and deans, become reluctant to take over.

Colleges and universities in Nevada (both public and private) abide by the regulations and bylaws issued by the Board of Regents in a system of check-and-balances where college administrators periodically report all aspects of strategy and operation of their campuses. Tan and Peng (2003) posited that an agency problem would arise in organizations where agents were prone to create slack or underutilization of resources in pursuit of “power, money, and job security” (p. 1251). In the case of Nevada State College, this moral hazard is not present.
Reporting systems are public and the decision-making process includes participation of faculty, students, administrators and staff (Nevada State College, 2007).

The agency problem at NSC is not ethical in nature as suggested by Heath (2009) rather it is derived from structural difficulties experienced since the foundation of the institution in 2004. Nevada State College (NSC) is a state-funded college that depends on state and federal support for its operation. As a newcomer in a system with seven other higher education institutions with tradition and influence in the state, NSC struggled to obtain support from the Legislature, local politicians and peer-institutions in early 2002. In 2009, drastic budget cuts mandated by the State, increased NSC vulnerability, forcing the college to reformulate its strategic plan for the biennium 2009-2011 and forgo of enrollment and physical expansion. In this unstable environment, the interest of NSC administration is to prioritize attention to its student-centered strategy, teaching excellence and outreach to underrepresented populations. The interest of the Board of Regents is to ensure the survival of all institutions. Yet, throughout these challenges the Board of Regents and NSC administration have remained open to faculty and student input to face the crisis with the least negative effects possible.

The second level of analysis of the agency problem relates to the expectations of the administration of the college (principals) about the performance of faculty members (agents). In this relationship faculty members have the responsibility to provide high-quality educational services to the student body. Based on this characterization faculty members become agents of the administration in the generation of well-educated graduates.

While high-quality education is a desired expectation for both administrators and faculty members, in periods of financial crisis some expectations may not hold true. The low teacher-student ratio (25 to 1) that characterizes NSC may be impacted as enrollment continues to grow
while faculty and staff reduce. The risk of strain on existing faculty members with higher student-faculty ratio (40 to 1) would require attention. Salaries for academic and administrative faculty were frozen and reduced by 4% for 2009-2011 (Richardson, 2009). Yet, performance evaluation criteria did not change and faculty members would be expected to meet the same standards of excellence in teaching, service and scholarship existing before the crisis. Hence, an agency problem may arise. As suggested by Tan and Peng (2003), following agency theory, administrators could expect that faculty members create slack or underutilize resources to compensate for the additional strain.

Recommendations to Integrate Organizational Values

Based on the analysis of the organizational value systems of Nevada State College it is apparent that the institution has successfully implemented the iTeach core values in the business plan, decision-making process, performance evaluation and in the management of stakeholders expectations. The challenge facing NSC is two-fold: (1) maintaining the same high level of responsiveness to all stakeholders while the college grows and (2) maintaining the level of integrity in the midst of the financial crisis in Nevada.

The leadership of Nevada State College should continue to incorporate identified needs into the business plan, supporting the organizational mission, focusing on students’ needs, and dealing with the business community with fairness (Nevada State College, 2007, p. 227). Strategy formulation and implementation should continue to count with the participation of all college constituents. As stated in the NSC Self Study 2007 document, new faculty hires and new departmental and support services must be in place to grow and maintain the high quality of NSC educational services. With budget constraints, the expansion of the faculty base could be unlikely.
Communication

According to Greiss and Sharp (2008) communication is a key element in stakeholder management. Organizations that keep their stakeholders informed of new initiatives and the potential impact on performance succeed in reducing uncertainty and misunderstandings (Benjamin, Lewis & Thompkins, 2009). Sims (2008) recommended acknowledging and clarifying the expectations of stakeholders, even when (or especially when) they may appear incongruent with the mission of the organization. Nevada State College must continue with the plans of creating an “integrated communication system” (p. 227) to disseminate information to all stakeholders.

Accountability

Given the public character of the college, NSC must show higher levels of accountability with the community of the city of Henderson. Accountability is also important to guarantee state and federal support. Weerts and Ronca (2006) found that institutional characteristics and strategies influenced state support. States where local governments perceived that their goals were compatible with the mission of the college provided more financial support to those institutions (Weerts & Ronca, 2006, p. 942).

Leadership Strategies

Sims and Brinkman (2003) proposed five mechanisms through which leaders can influence an organization’s culture: (1) Attention, (2) reaction to crises, (3) role modeling, (4) allocation of rewards, and (5) criteria for selection and dismissal. The issues that attract the attention of the leader of an organization will most likely appeal their constituents. If NSC
leadership continues to focus on values of integrity and the support of iTeach core values, faculty members, students, staff, board members and other stakeholders will support them as well.

Schein (in Sims and Brinkman, 2003) purported that in times of crisis leaders are tested in their ability to communicate the true values of the organization. In Nevada, additional budget cuts will force more lay-offs and drastic financial measures. NSC administrators could use this opportunity to restate the core values of teaching excellence, supporting and rewarding the organizational commitment and performance of their faculty members. Leaders are role models that shape the culture of an organization (Sims and Brinkman, 2003) and therefore are urged to act with integrity, exemplifying with their behavior the expectations of behavior of their collaborators. The president of the college must balance strategic initiatives to face the financial crisis with espoused commitment to academic quality and promotion of human talent.

Lastly, leaders incorporate organizational values into short-term and long-term initiatives by selecting individuals whose values are compatible with the organization’s values, and dismissing those whose lack of integrity damages the reputation of the firm (Sims & Brinkman, 2003). At Nevada State College where academic hiring processes are stalled the focus on core values should assist in identifying actions that increase employee morale and organizational commitment.

Conclusions

The congruence of organizational value-systems with the values expected by organizational stakeholders is at the core of the discussion of organizational success. As social responsibility and citizenship become part of the demands of the contingent and necessary stakeholders, organizational leaders must pay attention to the alignment of corporate values with the values of employees, customers and other stakeholders. In higher education, competing
values of promotion of social good and corporatization are at the center of criticism of several scholars and practitioners.

This document presented an analysis of the value systems of Nevada State College (NSC), a small state-funded institution in Henderson, Nevada. The NSC iTeach value model informs the decision-making processes, performance evaluations, strategic planning, and responses of NSC to its stakeholders. Although the iTeach core values overarch the initiatives proposed by NSC administration, agency problems might emerge as result of financial crisis affecting Nevada higher education system. These changes in the environment might require NSC leadership to revisit the alignment of these core values. Recommendations for the integration of organizational values include leadership strategies to influence the organizational culture through role-modeling and allocation of rewards to members who enact and support these core values.
References


