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People, Policy and Process in College-level Academic Management

Thang N. Nguyen
California State University Long Beach

ABSTRACT

Academic institution structure is both hierarchical and committee-based. It is hierarchical in the Administration including staff, similar to business corporations. It is committee-based for the Faculty body in a fashion similar to US Congress. It can exploit the best of both models for better governance and rightfully democratic decisions. The key component is the colleges it houses. Academic management is exercised via the decisions by the people based on policy and process they create. It can be good or bad. It has a dipole scale. The bad side as the opposite is labeled the other side in this paper. This article examines the other side of management exploiting the collaboration between the people, which could foster self-interest and power building. This collaboration takes advantage of flaw policy and/or missing process permitting aberrant decisions by Administration and Committees by the people at the college level and below. The paper proposes a management measurement model for a continuously improved academic environment.

PEOPLE IN AN ACADEMIC INSTITUTION

State academic institutions exist to fulfill the need of good education and the pursuit of education excellence, primarily for the community it serves. Academic institution is both hierarchical and committee-based in structure. It is hierarchical for the Administration including staff, similar to any organization in business industry or government. It is committee-based for the Faculty body in a fashion similar to US Congress.

Academic institution can be viewed from the perspective of an open system (von Bertalanffy, 1950; Kast & Rosenzweig, 1972), as an Input-Process-Output system in the educational environment. The major part of the Input component is the student body. Although the students pay for the educational service, they are hardly considered as "customers". Instead they are considered as the ingredient to the Process component. They are also part of the Process since they have to do the work in learning. The expected "processed" Output is that they become the "educated" graduates.

The Administration portion of the Process component consists of the Board, President, Provost, VPs, College Deans, and Department Chairs, and staff organization units supporting them. The ranked Faculty body consists of tenured full professors and associate professors, tenure/tenure-track assistant professors, and adjunct faculty including full-time lecturers and part-time lecturers. It is organized in a committee-based structure with Councils and Committees. Some of them include representatives from staff and/or students, and administrators as ex-officio members.

Also part of this grand organization is the California Faculty Association (CFA) as a union organization. Each CSU campus has a CFA Chapter which works closely with the university administration for the protection of faculty rights and other matters.

Check and balance between administration and faculty body is somewhat similar to the US government (executive branch) and US Congress (legislative branch). Check and balance are almost everywhere in a public university, except at the department level. In fact, at the university level, one has the Academic Senate, at the college level, the Faculty Council. But there is no organization unit equivalent to either Faculty Council or Academic Senate, at the department level.

The following gives a brief description of the key People entity of a college: faculty, chair and dean. We include the discussion on staff and student representatives in this paper only when necessary although they do participate in ballot concerning college-level decision making.

Faculty Appointment

Faculty appointment, tenure-track (T/T) and tenure (T), is done via a national search process. An appointment is recommended by the Department Search Committee and the Dean office. Full-time and part-time lecturers however have a different process. They are appointed by the Department Chair.

A newly appointed faculty is given a Faculty Handbook which describes three major activities: teaching, research and service, to be evaluated in future Retention Tenure and Promotion (RTP) filing. The teaching is practically

in the capable hands of individual faculty member (T, T/T, and full-time and part-time lecturers). The research is commonly conducted either individually as sole-author or in collaborative group. The service, however, is all committee-driven or council-driven. The decisions of the committee or council are primarily based on existing policy and process.

Chair Appointment

When a current department Chair finishes his or her term and s/he is not subject to reelection, a new Chair is needed. Department Chairs are commonly appointed from within, at the discretion of the Dean after the ballot recommended by a Department Chair Election Committee created for that purpose.

What the above means is that the Dean has the right to appoint the one s/he sees fit from the result of the ballot. It is specifically written in the college policy. Exercising the discretion policy, the Dean can appoint whoever s/he wants. A candidate with winning vote might not be selected by the Dean. This makes sense, however, since the Dean has to work with the department Chairs.

The Chairpersonship term is 3 years. In some department, the term can be extended one more time. In other departments, it can be more than two terms. This inconsistency can be problematic

Dean Appointment

A College Dean is appointed after a national search at the recommendation of a College Search Committee. Candidates can be from within the college but more commonly, they are from the outside. A newly elected Dean commonly assumedly has the support of most existing Chairs, at least from the ones of the Search committee. After all, these are the people who recommended the dean appointment. The deanship term is 6 years.

A MATTER OF POLICY AND PROCESS

From the perspective of information management "Strategy-Capability-Value" (Applegate, 2008), a university can be considered as an information model for student knowledge development. The university and all its components are driven by policy and processes for the definition and development of university strategies, capabilities in different colleges, and values to the students.

The university, college and department policy and associated processes supposedly exist for supposedly every aspect of university governance and operations. The policy and the process are supposedly carefully drafted, fully deliberated, approved and posted in the university website. Academic policy and processes are assessable to all personnel and students.

It is assumed there is a process for anything and everything. It appears that nothing could go wrong. However, flawed policy exists, and processes can be flaky, incomplete or non-existent.

The institution as a whole is moved from a point A to a point B by the mesh of decisions over space (cross organization units) and over time (past, present, future) made by the administration, councils and committees at all three levels of organization: university, college and department. Most activities of the councils and committees are transparent via minutes of meetings and reports, except faculty evaluation such as RTP and/or a couple of others such as Finance Review.

The committees and councils meet a couple of times during a semester. Each meeting would last between one to two hours. Once in a while in a semester but not every semester, a department-wide or college-wide faculty retreat occurs to discuss issues raised by the Administration, by the AACSB accreditation organization or others. Issues normally raised in one meeting would be resolved during the next meetings by the committees and councils in observing a priori defined policy and process. As such, one can expect the concerned issues in question are slow to be resolved, except RTP filings which have to be timely executed.

Decisions recommended by Councils and Committees should be rational or logical, as one might expect. They might be based on studies, statistical analyses, trends, performance, etc.

But there are also irrational decisions. These are the results of what Daniel Kahneman called Thinking fast (or System I) as opposed to Thinking slow (or System II) exercised in the human mind (Kahneman, 2011). As reported in Antonio Damasio's Descartes' Error (Damasio, 2005), many irrational decisions are influenced by the mammalian brain portion of the *three brains in one* (reptilian brain, mammalian brain and neocortex) or Paul Maclean's triune system (Newman & Harris, 2009). These are identified as emotion-driven decisions which practically everyone exercises consciously.

In business environment, the irrational decisions are quite often driven by monetary incentives, greed, etc. They can lead to fraudulent activities, corporate fiascos, and subsequently to bankruptcy. We have witnessed these aberrant decisions as covered by news media and research articles when they happened. Examples are (1) Nicholas Leeson of Barings Bank (Hogen, 1996; Leeson,1995; Rawnsley, 1995), (2) Jeff Skilling and Andrew Fastow of Enron (Dharan & Rapoport, 2006; Eischenwald, 2005; Fox, 2003; Healy & Palepu, 2003), and most recently (3) Richard Fuld of Lehman Brothers (Azadinamin, 2012). The latter initiated an economic meltdown which still exists in some shape or form (Shell, 2015).

There have been new regulations e.g. Sarbanes-Oxley Act in 2002, reforms in accounting, finance, corporate governance, etc. (Higgs, 2003; Powers, 2002). For the most part, there were only isolated solutions. There were no integrated solutions. Apparently, the solutions were questionable since newer bankruptcies kept occurring.

Academic institutions are not different from corporate institutions from this decision perspective. There are good decisions and bad decisions, rational or irrational. There are right decisions and wrong ones. Some good decisions which are not timely or due to other reasons turn bad (Campbell, Whitehead & Finkelstein, 2009). The rational (calculated) and irrational (emotion-driven) decisions happen every day in the academic environment especially at the college level and below, without being truly monitored and accounted for. These decisions form a sequence or series which affect faculty and staff life and student life.

One possible difference is in the participation of individual members in numerous committees and councils since it is the committee's decision. No individual member is accounted for any of the allegedly faulty decisions and nobody is at fault. Outsiders do not know what has been discussed or who vote what, except maybe in RTP filing, members have to sign their own recommendation: positive or negative. Injustice, double standard, favoritism, etc. can be exercised due to flaws in the college policy and process.

AN EXAMPLE CASE

The academic institution of interest selected for study in this paper is one of the largest of 23 campuses in the California State University (CSU) system, servicing some 36,833 students (IRA-1, 2015) as of fall 2014. One of its colleges has 3,999 students, broken down to 1,022 (Accounting), 867 (Finance), 185 (Information Systems), 1,043 (Management/HRM), 690 (Marketing), and 150 (MBA students).

One can look at the institutional statistics for a rough idea on the institution's performance. For example, in 2012, for public institutions, the average national graduation rate was 57.2% (NCES-1, 2015) at year 6 of 2006 cohorts (i.e. graduated in 2012). The graduation rate of cohorts entering the said college in 2006 at year 6 was 40.11% (IRA-1, 2015) while the corresponding rate at the university was 56.62%. The university rate was competitive. The college rate was low. There is room for improvement in the Process component of the college.

To get a feel on or to measure the teaching part in the college of interest as a whole (Table 1), one could examine the number of T's and T/T's in a particular department versus the number of lecturers. In some cases such as IS and CBA in Table 1, there are fewer T's and T/T's than lecturers by a relatively large difference (e.g. row IS, information systems and IB, International Business). This situation should be looked into and explained. It should be handled if it was a problem.

Another example is FTES indicator in the IS department. It measures faculty effectiveness with respect to enrollments (Table 2). For example, in Information Systems, it

Table 1
Cohorts from 2006-2013 by business majors and faculty (IRA-1, 2015)

Cohort	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	T & T/T	Lecturers
Acct	98	84	97	63	91	67	78	63	13	9
Fin	49	60	36	29	36	42	42	51	12	6
IS	7	3	2	3	3	4	5	10	13	17
IB	41	38	45	30	31	30	50	36	0	1
CBA	8	16	25	9	23	72	63	0	1	5
Mgnt	239	200	202	110	126	104	119	131	19	15
Mkt	114	94	108	77	73	62	65	89	12	4
CBA	556	495	515	321	383	381	422	380	70	57

varies from 605.60 in Fall 2003 to 146.00 in Fall 2014. Appropriate analysis and decisions should be of concern for various issues. For individual faculty teaching performance, there is the Student Perception on Teaching or SPOT.

One would think (Table 1), with 70 T's and T/T's and 57 lecturers (totaling 127, as of 2014), to service some 4,000 students in this college one would get a very decent performance. Furthermore, just think of all 70 T's and T/T's in the college. If these 70 members collaborate in good faith (most, if not all of them, with Ph.D. as the terminal degree in all majors of business such as Accounting, Finance, Information systems–including Decision science and Business communications, International business, Management, Marketing and Legal studies), they would be equivalent to any think tank of any large corporation. If they work together through proper collaboration and coordination, they could achieve education miracles.

The results have been however less than desired. Table 3 shows the performance of the college of interest in terms of graduation within college rate at year 6 is **40.11**%, and the persistence rate and retention rate are **3**% and **43.17**% respectively. There is much to discuss about.

TABLE 2:
TES BETWEEN 2003-2015 (IRA-1, 2015)

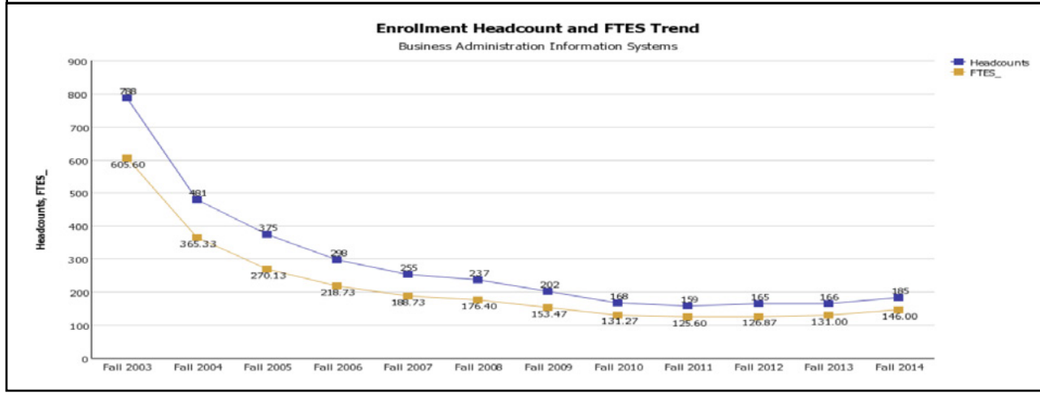

TABLE 3
GRADUATION RATE
(IRA-1, 2015)

Cohort Year	Year	Cohort Count	Graduated	Grad within College	Graduation Rate	Grad Rate within College	Still Enrolled	Still Enr within College	Persis_Rate	Persist Rate within College	Total Retained	Total Retained within College	Retention Rate	Retention Rate within College
Fall 2006	1-Year	556	0	0	0.00%	0.00%	471	431	84.71%	77.52%	471	431	84.71%	77.52%
Fall 2006	2-Year	556	0	0	0.00%	0.00%	416	330	74.82%	59.35%	416	330	74.82%	59.35%
Fall 2006	3-Year	556	8	6	1.44%	1.08%	390	265	70.14%	47.66%	398	271	71.58%	48.74%
Fall 2006	4-Year	556	79	57	14.21%	10.25%	302	185	54.32%	33.27%	381	242	68.53%	43.53%
Fall 2006	5-Year	556	249	182	44.78%	32.73%	125	58	22.48%	10.43%	374	240	67.27%	43.17%
Fall 2006	6-Year	556	334	223	60.07%	40.11%	39	17	7.01%	3.06%	373	240	67.09%	43.17%
Fall 2006	7-Year	556	360	235	64.75%	42.27%	12	5	2.16%	0.90%	372	240	66.91%	43.17%
Fall 2006	8-Year	556	367	237	66.01%	42.63%	2	0	0.36%	0.00%	369	237	66.37%	42.63%

An Example Practice of Appointment of Faculty, Chair and Dean

National search or not, a candidate can enter the competition via networking with a chair and his/her close friends via past acquaintance at the same graduate school or of the same origin. Networking is not a bad scheme. Prior acquaintance is not bad. Same origin (country, state, prior employment, etc.) is not bad. One should bring in good candidates to the department. It should be encouraged but it has to be done right. It should end after the appointment.

Networking scheme will turn bad, however, after the candidate is appointed, s/he feels obligated and grateful to the department Chair who brings in the candidate. These obligations happen. The candidate allegedly repays the favor by positive vote in numerous department activities which serve the chair's self-interest.

One might ask how a department chair can strengthen his/her position. It's not too tough. S/he can start bringing in people s/he knows as exemplified earlier. Appointment is normally based on the list of recommended candidates, but the Administration would go with the one who accepts the lowest salary. That's how the "favored" candidates commonly got in: being in the recommended list and accepting the lowest offer. There have been cases where the newly appointed "favored" T/T's have been groomed from the start by the department chair and his/her close friends in the department at the expenses of other new hires who might have been misled in their preparation for RTP or received no proper guidance and/or assistance. Some degree of favoritism exists.

These will eventually serve in the future search committees for recommendation of other friends of the same graduate schools, same origin or not. No one would know or can blame the fact that behind the scene these newly hires would get the undivided attention and/or support to be quickly tenured or promoted as this has already happened in this college.

Again, as in the case of faculty appointment recommended by the department search committee and by the chair, loyalty of a chair to the dean after being selected is a good thing. But it would not service the purpose of the education if loyalty is misplaced or exercised for the self-interest or power seeking of the Dean or of the leadership team the Dean is building.

It is allegedly possible for self-interest and power seeking chair or dean to recruit senior faculty and T/T faculty and place them in strategically important committees and councils such as Faculty Council, Finance Review, RTP (Retention Tenure and Promotion), Faculty Development to achieve his/her goals. It is not a tough job to maneuver this scheme. The dean can get these committee or councils work for him or her.

The above argument is to illustrate that it does not take much for a chair or dean pursuing self-interest or power seeking with a hidden agenda to manipulate the policy and the democratic process via committees and councils to serve their purpose. The irony is that the revised or change to policy and process manipulation are in the name of student interest.

During the last 15 years, the college of interest has witnessed three deans. The first one left abruptly before his term, and resumed his teaching position at the department he came from. The second one left at the end of his term, and he did not have another job waiting. He went back to his former college elsewhere before he landed a deanship at another private university. In both cases, no reasons were given on why they have left. The current dean has reached, supposedly, the end date of his term more than a year ago but no dean evaluation is yet seen.

Commonly, college deans come and go. Chairs do not. For the most part, the chairs return to their department as faculty members, after the appointment expires. Some deans return to their original college. Other deans might go on to other things or retire. Tenured full professors stay where they belong. The latter keep the minimum participation when they don't care.

But, T/T faculty is a different story. The T/T's invest five to six years of their life, trying to get tenured and promoted. Contrary to some fast track T/T's, others receive no mentoring, no guiding from the department or college except the seminars offered at the university level during their first year. They have to work on their own, no advice and at times no respect. Also, at times they are lured into activities which interfere and jeopardize their plan for RTP. They are commonly under a lot of pressure in three areas of activities: teaching, research and service.

For the college in this study, the faculty attrition rate is sort of high. Some, of course, left after they were recommended by the Dean to be offered a terminal year after RTP filings. There was the case of a young full-time lecturer who worked his way to finish his doctorate program. He was then appointed as an assistant professor. He was misguided since he was not among the "favored". He was late in producing the number of articles as required in RTP policy. He was let go. Of course it was his fault.

For some cases of negative recommendation, the RTP candidates did not take no for an answer. They followed up with their rebuttals, and the Provost office overturned the Dean and all RTPs committees' recommendations.

But the damage left a scar so deep that the tenure and promotion would not heal properly.

Nevertheless, life goes on in the college. New candidates are appointed to replace the departed ones. The new T/T's would be productive for their upcoming RTP filings, therefore the department college performance indicators would stay in the acceptable range of AACSB while some of the senior ones remain inactive in publication. A quick look into the college website will reveal the contributions of all these members. Is it time that someone should voice proper governance and control process to the department and college activities?

ACADEMIC MANAGEMENT AND DECISIONS AT COLLEGE LEVEL: HIDDEN ISSUES AND EXAMPLES

Besides the observable from the institutional research and assessment unit which provides data and statistics, we examine issues which can be hidden at the college and its departments. These issues are primarily the results of Dean's power building and some department chairs who take advantage of the less structured or missing process at the department level, where the adherence to policy is less than expected. These might cause the loss of faculty and faculty confidence, degrading performance, and once in a while some turmoil and other situations which could involve CFA. The followings exemplify the signs and symptoms of the hidden issues.

Issue 1: Dean's Power Building Rather than Leadership

Every newly appointed Dean initially wants something good for the college as portrayed in his/her vision made known to the entire college during his/her candidacy. A new dean is motivated to perform well while many faculty members are in a wait-and-see position.

The newly appointed Dean already has the undisputable support of his/her Associate Deans and Assistant Deana and his/her staff in organization unit such as Business Development, etc. While good leadership should be the main task of a new dean, some dean could pursue self-interest. A power-seeking dean can structure or restructure easily his organization by manipulating some organization units in his/her dean office. The dean might need more people to support him or her outside of the dean's office. Over the term of the deanship, there might be more than one new Chair selected by the dean to replace the ones whose terms are expired or who stepped down for some valid reason. This is the opportunity for the dean to strengthen his support.

It was not unusual that the Dean would seek the support of some senior or T/T faculty members. It is a matter of negotiations. It's sort of "You scratch my back, I do yours". The new Dean can influence membership to various committees and councils. The senior members would be members or chairs of some important committees or councils. Some most important ones are the Faculty Council (Policy and Process), RTP Committee (Retention, Tenure, Promotion), Finance Review Committee (Finance and Accounting), and Faculty Development Committee (Awards). Membership to important College Committees can be easily placed, via democratic process (ballot, etc.), in three-year, two-year or one-year term, based on the influence of college administrators and other supporting senior faculty members. The dean would be able to control every aspect that deems important to the dean.

Issue 2: College Governance

The Department and/or College committees and councils, now under the control of the Dean, can make changes to policy and relevant process. It is highly possible in this situation at this point to run the college to the liking of the dean.

Resistance to the power building in the college is scarce. Part-time lecturers mostly are not involved. Staff and full-time lecturers do not have a strong voice. Some full professors mind their own business. Tenure-track faculty members try to be productive for retention and promotion in due time since they would face the potential offer of terminal year, if they are not. Tenured associate professors can speak out but they also are subject to promotion as well.

Aberrant college decisions start to grow and invade the system much like cancerous cells which grow and invade nearly tissues, and proliferate to other organs. Aberrant decisions for some self-interest groups can be exercised at the expenses of everyone in the College.

To object or remove a chairpersonship, the department needs strong, productive, caring and compassionate faculty members. While there are a few, they are outnumbered by the others "favored" voting members. The removal or recall won't happen.

To object or remove deanship, the college needs strong chairs. These won't happen either when the college leadership and management are controlled by the dean, especially in the case where the majority of chairs are appointed by the Dean.

Signs and symptoms of problematic issues start to surface, as indicated by many RTP filings which are overturned by the Provost office with or without the help of CFA. Other indicators to problematic issues can be detected by looking at student declining success rate or attrition rate, declined or non-existence of outside grants, college culture, increasing number of part-time lecturers, no activities or reports from Finance Review Committee.

We present in this section a number of example cases, namely, Example 1 on Assigned time; Example 2 on Election procedure; Example 3 on policy change; Example 4 on Faculty evaluation, and past RTP overturned examples.

Example 1: Assigned Time Award Handling

The Business Development unit of the Dean office is supposed to work on grants for the college. We haven't seen any sizable grants. The faculty on their own brought in some small grants and stipends for their research, unlike other colleges of the university who brought in millions and millions of dollars in their research.

The college relies on assigned time awards set aside by the university. Everyone in the college competes for a piece of the funding, worth some $5,000-6,000 to hire part-time lecturers to teach in the faculty's place.

In a particular year of the past, there was an announcement of assigned time awards for research activities. Faculty was to submit research proposal. The proposals were to be evaluated and ranked by the College Committee, formerly called Faculty Development Committee. There were 5 members. Each represented one department of the college. One of them was elected chair. The task described in the Faculty handbook was to provide the Dean with a recommendation list. There was no written policy or procedure on how to do the task.

In this example case, one Committee member named X recused himself according to the policy, because he submitted a proposal for award consideration. There was no alternate member for him. As suggested by a senior member, the Committee executed an ad hoc process: read all submitted proposals, use a numerical scheme to rank them, and combine all ranked values of all individual members for final discussion on overall ranking. The Committee completed the recommendation with X's proposal ranked last. It sent the recommended list to the Dean office.

When the department Chair (the same chair for decades) of member X found out, he protested on the reason that there was no input from a representative of his department. The Committee Chair who was a T/T faculty replied that the said department sent no alternate before the meeting, despite the request. The department Chair argued that he would have been the alternate by default, and he had sent his ranked list which was placed in the Committee Chair mailbox. There was no list received. It was a lie.

The department Chair bypassed the Committee, escalated the issue to the Dean office. The Dean altered the list of assigned time awards recommended by the Faculty Development Committee and sent the revised list which now included faculty X with higher ranked value to the University administrators for the award. Such arbitrary violations of policy, process and protocols have been commonly practiced. The email exchange and reports on the case should be still in the system as proof.

Example 2: Missing Election Procedure

There was a ballot to be counted by a department Election Committee on an important issue. There was no voting procedure defined at this department level.

To manipulate the result for unknown reasons, the Chair of the Election Committee changed the date of meeting to an earlier date so that one of its members could not attend. This member raised the issue to the Faculty Council (FC). There was an investigation by a sub-committee of FC. The sub-committee found violations of process. Original ballot records were apparently tampered with. The report was submitted to FC. It was buried in subsequent meetings as there were more important issues to be dealt with.

Example 3: Policy Change

Under the pretext of improving faculty research and raising faculty qualification standards, a former Dean placed an item on a change to RTP policy to the Faculty Council which s/he was controlling. The change required that all new RTP filings for promotion must have at least three journal articles on an approved list of journals. The RTP policy change was passed.

As a result, there were two RTP policies: an old one and the one newly passed. Subsequent RTP filings were allowed to select one of the two RTP policies for some arbitrary period of time. At an arbitrarily selected time, the new one completely replaced the old one.

The issue was that the new RTP policies were flawed due to omission. It did not count research manuscript or textbook as research, scholarly and creative activities. A simple reason for this omission: no faculty of the college has published any research manuscript (not book chapters)

or textbook for more than 15 years, so books (not book chapters) do not count. The recent RTP candidates who published research manuscripts or textbooks did not have these products counted towards RTP criteria.

The irony was that even students entering the school would have enjoyed the criteria set forth in the Catalog of the year they enrolled in the university. Not the faculty. Faculty appointed before the new RTP policy now has to adhere to the new policy after the arbitrary cutoff date.

Example 4: Faculty Evaluation

Faculty evaluation is one of the toughest tasks. The article-counting rule of the new RTP policy mentioned above created unjust and sloppy evaluation and decisions. The department and College RTP just count articles. If the number is less than three articles published in journals not in the approved list, RTP filing will be negatively recommended, without any true evaluation. A couple of simple unjust and unfair situations occurred as briefed below.

At times, three or four authors, each work on an article, resulting in three or four different articles, each faculty now has three or four articles counted towards meeting the criteria of RTP research, scholarly and creative activities (RSCA). The contribution should be measured as 1/3 or ¼ of each article. This has discouraged serious researchers. In other cases, professional articles are not counted in one department. In a different department, they are.

RTP-overturned examples

Multiple RTP filings were unjustly recommended. For example, a Department RTP Committee whose members had no knowledge of the business communications was to evaluate the filing of such T/T members.

The Committee should have recognized that the domain was not their expertise. It should have sought inputs from external reviewers. Instead they did the article-counting scheme and offered a negative recommendation. It happened twice. In both cases the Provost office overturned the College recommendations.

In another case, there was the manipulation of double standard: one candidate got promoted to full professor with one journal paper while another one who filed one year later ended with negative recommendation. The double standard was so severe that after rebuttal and rebuttal, the second faculty was finally awarded the promotion to full professor but he immediately retired because he was so devastated with the process. A good educator was lost. Two other cases in a couple of years later were also overturned by the Provost office, due to double standard. The above sent a negative message and impression on the College's ability to be ethical.

A PROPOSED MANAGEMENT MEASUREMENT

In a sense, there is no perfect management model, but there is appropriate model to meet some well-defined objectives. One of the two models cited in Section 1 and Section 2 can be used as departure point for details on improving the academic modeling. Actually the current model or any decent management model would work for this academic environment if most of the people in it behave ethically.

But people are people. There are always some good people, some bad people and/or some good people turned bad due to self-interest, or other reasons such as self-interest, greed, power seeking, fraudulence or the like. The remaining constitutes the silent majority.

After the collapse of so many business institutions during the last two decades, ethics has received a lot of attention in this college. Ethics is recommended to be part of most courses offered in this college. This college even has a Center for Ethical Leadership. Can this college walk the talk? The above cases were some proofs of flaws in the policy and process facing the college which prevent the college from implementing ethics policy.

We feel that management modeling for a better college is not the issue because there is always someone smart enough, who can come up with scheme to abuse it. There is nothing in the literature to help prevent the other side of academic management from growing. We propose a different approach with a focus on measurement.

In this measurement model, we do not address good performance but only problematic ones. Here are the what, the how and the why of such a measurement model.

The What

A special college committee will be created. It is tentatively called Oversight Measurement Committee, for the sake of this discussion. The term is two to three years. Members of this Committee are subject to a ballot, college-wide, like any others. Commonly, some good people in the college are known and well respected. Faculty, staff, and students know them well, and can identify them for nomination. If they agree to run, they would be elected.

The Committee reports to the Provost office. The Committee should not be part of the Academic Senate but it could. It should play, in part, the role of the judiciary branch of government (no punishment, just investigation).

The How

The Oversight Measurement Committee is funded by the College. Its members are compensated adequately, outside of their usual service and salary. They have data access to anything and everything in the college.

They do not interfere with decisions made by the Dean, Chair, Committees or Councils. However they can question anybody in the college committees including the College administrative team after decisions are made. Their job is to produce a measurement report to the Provost office every semester on administrative and committee performance during the past semester. Its creation and organization should be on the Academic Senate floor for discussion.

The Committee is problem-focused. It can bring in external reviewers for assistance. It can invite other faculty members whom it needs for the task of data collection, analysis and review. It collects data on administrative decisions throughout the semester. At the end of the semester, it meets for analysis and measurement.

The Committee reports on questionable decisions and negative impact of those decisions to the college as a whole. Initially, it develops policy and process for its organization and tasks. It includes but is not limited to the following concerns, to name a few. For starting, it can use some criteria from AACSB Accreditation.

- Faulty policy, faulty processes, double standard, faculty evaluation such as RTP, mini-review, and etc.
- Increasing attrition rate, declining graduation rate, no outside grants from Dean office
- Issues involving ethical behavior of faculty and college administrators
- Others

The Why

For Chairs and Dean, maneuvers like the ones exemplified in the previous sections are not difficult to achieve. As a matter of fact, we have experienced many of these maneuvers in practice. They need be stopped or constrained. Confidence among faculty members would be degraded to the point it might influence their teaching and their research. Collaboration and cooperation is in doubt.

It will take a couple of years, maybe half the term of a Dean, for a particular dean to reach a major part of its power seeking implementation. When this is progressing towards full speed, the damage is already done so severely that the only available decision is the removal of the dean. It is not fair however to the students during the term of deanship.

Power building under the pretext of education excellence is common, at least in the environment cited as example in this paper. Integrity and ethics of leadership team in the college should be of primary concern.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

One would ask, what happens if the Oversight Measurement Committee is unethical? Well, we won't have another one overseeing this Committee. We just have to make sure a democratic process is in place for the selection of its good members. Many good people are there too in the academic environment. They just do not have the opportunity or mechanism to serve properly. The Committee is the alternative to the flaws in academic organization at the college level and below.

The question is if the above arguments on the events that happen in a college, why academic institutions do not experience bankruptcies, or similar fiascos. The answer is three fold: (1) business corporations bankrupted because of the three L's: leverage, loss and liquidity after frauds; academic institutions especially public ones, always have funding; it comes from at least three sources: student tuition and fees, state funding, and others such as alumni, outside sources, etc. (2) most abuse and wrongdoings occur at the college level or below, and (3) deanship term is six years subject to dean evaluation.

When things get worse, the administration will remove the dean. A new dean will arrive and things will get back to its normality, at least for a couple of years.

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Understanding Legitimacy and Impact within Differentiated Academic Markets

Matthew Valle
Martha and Spencer Love Professor of Business
Department of Management
Martha and Spencer Love School of Business
Elon University
Elon, North Carolina

ABSTRACT

Stakeholders continue to question the value of higher education policies, practices and costs in an era of declining enrollments and shrinking budgets. In addition, they question the very nature of the knowledge creation mechanisms (e.g., research) that lie at the heart of the value proposition for post-secondary educational institutions. The purpose of this paper is to review the role of conceptions of research legitimacy and impact as manifestations of the strategic intent of business schools, and to reframe discussions of research impact in terms of an underlying strategic orientation to the institution's primary stakeholders. Implications for a more mission-focused implementation of research activities are discussed.

INTRODUCTION

There are a host of seemingly insoluble problems in higher education today, as students, parents, educators and government officials continue to attest (Arum & Roksa, 2011; Brandon, 2010; Deresiewicz, 2015; Hacker & Dreifus, 2011; Khurana, 2007). Within business schools, we have been told that the end is near (Pfeffer & Fong, 2002), that management education is at risk (Olian, 2002), if not hopelessly adrift (Arum & Roksa, 2011), and that we are no longer relevant (Pearce & Huang, 2012; Zell, 2005) or legitimate (Alajoutsijarvi, Juusola, & Siltaoja, 2015). Not only do stakeholders question the value of higher education policies, practices and costs in an era of declining enrollments and shrinking budgets, they question the very nature of the knowledge creation mechanisms (e.g., research) that lie at the heart of the value proposition for post-secondary institutions (Pearce & Huang, 2012). Indeed, an ever increasing volume of journal space is being devoted to detailing the unarrested slide of an academic body which seems, if you are to believe authors, editors and accrediting bodies, to care little, or not enough, about producing legitimate and impactful research (Adler & Harzing, 2009; Aguinis, Shapiro, Antonacopoulou, & Cummings, 2014; Alajoutsijarvi, Juusola, & Siltaoja, 2015; Alvesson & Gabriel, 2013; Alvesson & Sandberg, 2013; Bailey, 2013; Birkinshaw, Healey, Suddaby, & Weber, 2014; Pearce & Huang, 2012; Pfeffer & Fong, 2002; Trank & Rynes, 2003).

The purpose of this paper is to review the role of conceptions of research legitimacy and impact as manifestations of the strategic intent of business schools, and to reframe discussions of research impact in terms of an underlying strategic orientation to the institution's primary stakeholders. I review conceptions of legitimacy and impact within the field of management, define a continuum of strategic orientations to stakeholder groups who are the primary customers for research outputs, note some concerns regarding the tendency toward isomorphism in research generation and publication, and close with a call to administrators and educators to better define and implement strategies to maximize the impact of their institution's research contributions in light of the choice of strategic orientation.

LEGITIMACY AND IMPACT

As an academic body, it is understandable that much has been written about the craft of management research and the creation of knowledge in the management discipline (Birkinshaw, Healey, Suddaby, & Weber, 2014; Rynes, 2007; Zell, 2005), the value of our research (AACSB International, 2008; Aguinis, Suarez-Gonzalez, Lannelongue & Joo, 2012; Bedeian, Cavazos, Hunt, & Jauch, 2010; Extejt & Smith, 1990; Judge, Colbert, Cable, & Rynes, 2007; Pearce & Huang, 2012; Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Podsakoff, & Bachrach, 2008; Starbuck, 2005), the nature and extent of scholarly influence (Aguinis, Suarez-Gonzalez, Lannelongue & Joo, 2012; Judge, Cable, Colbert, & Rynes, 2007; Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Bachrach, & Podsakoff, 2005; Podsakoff et al., 2008), and the measurement of research productivity (Adler & Harzing,

2009; Buchheit, Collins, & Reitenga, 2002; Long, Bowers, Barnett, & White, 1998; Podsakoff et al., 2008; Trieschmann, Dennis, Northcraft, & Niemi, 2000), among other things. A number of factors have driven these examinations into the research of management research, but an important explanation has to be that research should matter to what we do as an academic body. The differentiating purpose of post-secondary education is the generation of new knowledge in a variety of disciplines. Instruction exists as a way to disseminate this new knowledge, but instruction serves fundamentally instrumental purposes – it is a means to affect a relatively permanent change in the behavior individuals, groups and organizations based on new information, continually discovered. Therefore, the scholarly currency (medium of exchange/store of individual academic value) of the members of the Academy of Management has always been the record of one's publications or research outputs (Aguinis, Suarez-González, Lannelongue, & Joo, 2012). As such, we have devised ways to evaluate to worth/value of various research publications, and while there may not be complete agreement on journal rankings and measures of journal quality, there is relative consensus about the comparative worth/value of one journal or set of journals over others, especially among faculty at the leading business schools.

Criteria for tenure and promotion at the top business schools (Mudambi, Hannigan & Kline, 2012) have always emphasized the currency associated with the production of research outputs in top-tier or so-called "A" journals (Starbuck, 2005; Trieschmann et al., 2000), and an increased emphasis on the concept of research "impact" by AACSB (AACSB International, 2008) has prodded more schools to analyze the relevance of their research (Adler & Harzing, 2009; Pearce & Huang, 2012). The rationale for this particular descriptive word, impact, can be framed and understood with reference to the concept of legitimacy (Alajoutsijarvi, Juusola, & Siltaoja, 2015; Bailey, 2013; Rynes & Brown, 2011). Legitimacy refers to the perception that what an organization or group of people does is proper and appropriate (Rynes & Brown, 2011). Legitimacy ensures continued survival and often results in increased power and influence, and continued access to resources. It only seems logical that we take steps to analyze and report on the legitimacy of our work.

Subsequently, researchers have tried to identify the top journal outlets (Currie & Pandher, 2013; Long, Bowers, Barnett, & White, 1998; Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Bachrach, & Podsakoff, 2005; Podsakoff et al., 2008), the factors which lead to publication in the top outlets (Long et al., 1998; Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Bachrach, & Podsakoff, 2005; Podsakoff et al., 2008; Valle & Schultz, 2011), and the consequences of top tier research productivity, some of which include increased personal and institutional prestige (Bedeian et al., 2010; Podsakoff et al., 2008), enhanced institutional reputations (Boyd, Bergh & Ketchen, 2010; Rindova, Williamson, Petkova, & Sever, 2005), and the allocation of resources and rewards to individual faculty members (Aguinis, Suarez-Gonzalez, Lannelongue & Joo, 2012; Gomez-Mejia & Balkan, 1992; Mittal, Feick & Murshed, 2008). While this research may or may not be interesting in itself, and may or may not be of some merit for proving legitimacy, it is clear that this research highlights the competitive strategy choices available to academic researchers at different institutions. For most, legitimacy and impact are a matter of how you define the words within an operational context.

Trieschmann et al. (2000) suggested that business schools typically acknowledge two main constituencies – students/business practitioners and academics. They also suggested that when resources were relatively scarce, schools often focus on one constituency over the other. In doing so, they suggested that business schools employ different adaptive organizational strategies and use different measures to assess unit performance. They suggested that private institutions, which tend to be more dependent on students and businesses for resources, tend to use their scarce resources for knowledge exploitation (through instruction, particularly in highly visible MBA programs), whereas public universities, which are less tuition driven, tend to use their scarce resources for knowledge exploration (through research). On the other hand, Trieschmann et al. (2000) found that schools (both public and private) with greater human, social and financial resources had greater research productivity and quality, as did Podsakoff et al. (2008) and Valle and Schultz (2011), and that public flagship institutions, in general, tend to focus their resources more on exploration (research) activities and their attendant outcome measures.

A RESOURCE-BASED VIEW OF LEGITIMACY AND IMPACT

The strategic choice to explore or exploit has more to do with the administration and deployment of resources (resource-based view–see Barney, 1991; Wernerfelt, 1984) than conscious choices associated with a movement between categories (exploitation to exploration, and vice versa). Institutions with sufficient resources to enact an exploration strategic orientation include the prominent private universities and the flagship state institutions (see Podsakoff et al., 2008), and their resources can be grouped into three broad categories. One category of resource endowments includes human capital. The most research productive institutions (public and private) have doctoral programs and they also possess the ability to attract the best doctoral students and faculty. Long et al. (1998) suggested that prestige, or status, affected student and faculty recruitment, and in turn, research productivity. They hypothesized that higher status schools would be able to recruit doctoral students of better input quality. Second, they suggested that higher status schools could provide their doctoral students with better preparation for academic research, thus increasing specific human capital. It might be the case that at higher status schools, doctoral students receive better mentoring in the research process, which allows them to develop a better publication record and better developed research skills, all of which can help secure better quality jobs (see, e.g., Ferris, Perrewé, & Buckley, 2009). Bedeian et al. (2010) argued that this form of cumulative advantage could help explain career mobility within strata in the management discipline. Podsakoff et al. (2008) and Valle and Schultz (2011) found that higher status was associated with increased top-tier research productivity. Williamson and Cable (2003) found that doctoral student research productivity was a function of dissertation advisor research productivity and the research output of a faculty member's academic origin and initial placement.

A second category of resources includes social capital. D'Aveni (1996) suggested that hierarchies based on prestige or status rankings tend to create closed systems of institutional groupings, where schools trade outputs (e.g., Ph.D. graduates) and share resources (e.g., faculty research co-generation) within these groupings in an attempt to maintain their status. Blumberg and Pringle (1982) emphasized the increased opportunities associated with social groupings and subsequent effects on performance. Their lesson continues to remind us that the presence or absence of important social variables may dramatically impact outcomes. In the context of research productivity, those factors may include things like access to, and interaction with, top research mentors, the availability of research assistants, access to symposia and conferences where professional connections can be made, and other opportunities, such as opportunities to join journal editorial boards (Bedeian, Van Fleet & Hyman, 2009; Judge, Weber, & Muller-Kahle, 2012; Podsakoff et al., 2008), which may not be available to researchers at lower status institutions. The value of social capital with regard to research productivity is that these high prestige groupings may indeed create what D' Aveni referred to as "mutually reinforcing and supportive homosocial reproduction networks" (1996: 166) where there is a greater likelihood of research productivity. Rynes and Brown (2011) also suggest that institutions with higher legitimacy can attract more capable human resources than those institutions with lower legitimacy. In other words, better schools are able to attract better faculty (emphasis mine).

The final category of resources includes financial resources. The factors that have been previously shown to positively impact faculty research productivity include increased financial support and incentives (Podsakoff et al., 2008; Trieschmann et al., 2000; Tsui, 1990). It only makes sense that private institutions with extensive financial resources (e.g., large endowments, grants, etc.), or flagship public institutions, would have the ability and orientation to pay for, and support, exploration activities in the form of cutting-edge discipline-based research. As Trieschmann et al. (2000) suggested, most private institutions are tuition driven, and therefore must develop a strategic orientation that is necessarily exploitative. Their value lies in servicing their immediate stakeholders (students and businesses) through undergraduate and MBA programs that emphasize applied learning.

There should be no doubt that the resulting job context at institutions with an exploration research focus is appreciably different than the job context at exploitation institutions. The job context factors that have been previously shown (in the management discipline and in other disciplines) to positively impact faculty research productivity include increased individual faculty financial support and incentives (Gomez-Mejia & Balkin, 1992; Hearn, 1999; Podsakoff et al., 2008; Trieschmann et al., 2000; Tsui, 1990), schools/departments with doctoral programs (Podsakoff et al., 2008; Valle & Schultz, 2011), and a larger percentage of academic work hours devoted to research (Hedrick, Henson, Krieg, & Wassell, 2010) due to smaller faculty teaching loads (Bellas & Toutkoushian, 1999; Hedrick, Henson, Krieg, & Wassell, 2010; Stark & Miller, 1976). In short, institutions with an exploration research focus are research machines – the machine is designed to maximize the production of exemplary theoretical and empirical discipline-based research.

This results in two different general types of institutions, each with its own strategic focus, its own market, customers and stakeholders. I realize that this dichotomy is artificial and does not fully or adequately describe the wide range of educational institutions, missions and related activities, but it serves as a useful starting point for discussion. The exploration-focused institutions, generally, spend the bulk of their resources developing, supporting, and executing significant discipline-based research. The exploitation-focused institutions, generally, spend the bulk of their resources developing, supporting, and executing distinctive pedagogies and programs designed to appeal to their market's undergraduate/MBA students and business practitioners.

Institutions in each market domain can exhibit varying degrees of legitimacy/impact, depending on the outputs most valued by the majority of their stakeholders. For

the exploration focused institutions, value is defined by the incidence of high impact, discipline-based research produced by the institution's faculty (Aguinis, Suarez-González, Lannelongue, & Joo, 2012). As Podsakoff el al. (2008: 649) demonstrated, 28 of the 30 top journals (based on measures of journal influence) in the management discipline focus on discipline-based empirical and theoretical research – only 2 (Harvard Business Review and California Management Review) can be considered applied or managerially-relevant outlets. For the exploitation focused institutions, value is defined primarily by other factors (e.g., school rankings in the popular press) related to instruction and community/stakeholder service. In summary, it is primarily the institutions focused on exploration that have the most impact on management knowledge creation. Conversely, institutions focused on exploitation engage primarily in activities that disseminate the outputs of exploration research.

UNDERSTANDING LEGITIMACY AND IMPACT WITHIN EACH STRATEGIC DOMAIN

Whether by design or as a consequence of environmental contingencies, each institution has adopted a unique strategic orientation with regard to competition and market development. This is a good thing, for when there is an appropriate match between strategy and environment, organizations experience greater success (Ketchen et al., 1997). One can easily imagine the difficulties associated with exploitation focused institutions attempting to develop reputations for high quality research; unless the appropriate resources for such a strategic orientation are present (and they usually never are present), such a goal will prove elusive and frustrating for all stakeholders. Therefore, there appears to be an understandable bifurcation in institutional mission and research strategy across the field of management. For individual institutions, success in their mission domain can justifiably be considered the evidence of legitimacy. Just as there are high prestige institutions that continuously produce high quality research outputs, there are high prestige institutions that excel at knowledge dissemination (e.g., Babson College, Wake Forest University) and are the epitome of success in their market domain.

The advantages which accrue to institutions with a strategic orientation toward high-impact empirical and theoretical discipline-based research are many. They include the ability to attract, develop and maintain a faculty complement which is capable of producing significant, legitimate research (Rynes & Brown, 2011). The composite human/social/financial capital of these institutions is great. These institutions attract top researchers and place them within a milieu which supports and nurtures their research productivity by providing the appropriate human, social and financial resources. These institutions are also able to attract doctoral students who contribute to the research mission (Podsakoff et al., 2008, lists the 100 most-cited universities in the field of management – the vast majority are doctoral institutions). These faculty have lower teaching loads and often teach doctoral seminars which are focused on furthering knowledge in their chosen research area (Valle & Schultz, 2011). Doctoral faculty often have lesser service requirements (e.g., student advising and committee work) and are more focused on editorial board memberships and journal service, conference activities, and other external activities that support their research productivity. Given this environment and context, it is easy to see why the top universities excel at producing exploration-focused research – and why they are generally considered to be legitimate within their market domain.

There are also advantages associated with a strategic orientation toward the exploitation of new knowledge through teaching/learning and business outreach activities. Faculty at these institutions serve as an important interface linking management theory and management practice. They are most likely to be attuned to changes in management practice which necessitate changes in SoTL activities within the management disciplines. These institutions are also more likely to be at the cutting edge of new pedagogical approaches that blend traditional pedagogy with emerging technologies. There is great value, and an underlying value proposition, in being able to translate the leading research in the field so that it is more amenable to consumption by students and practitioners – translation is inherently more actionable (Pearce & Huang, 2012). Faculty at exploitation institutions are the boundary spanners (Tushman, 1977) of the academy and should be more aware of trends or broad changes in managerial practice. In short, there are distinct advantages to having separate groups of institutions with separate research and teaching foci.

CONCERNS FOR INSTITUTIONAL SYSTEMS

But there are also problems with relying on one model for educating, socializing and staffing faculty bodies for different market domains, and these problems disadvantage both the development of management theory and the practice of management. The threats associated with this distinct delineation of research orientations include a reduction in research diversity and approaches to research, a decrease in the interactions and information sharing between the two groups, and a proliferation of research based on a rational-deductive model from the exploration domain which does not suit the resources, perspectives and needs of stakeholders in the exploitation domain.

D'Aveni (1996) suggested that hierarchies based on prestige or status rankings tended to create closed systems of institutional groupings. These closed systems were considered previously in this paper as a distinct advantage for research production. However, given that these systems tend to remain somewhat closed to a limited subset of institutions, the likelihood of intellectual isomorphism (Alvesson & Gabriel, 2013; Bailey, 2013) within these closed groups' increases. Hambrick (1994) referred to this setup as a "closed incestuous loop" where scholars both produce and consume their own research (p. 13). Alvesson and Grabriel (2013) lament the increasingly formulaic nature of management research, resulting in research that they argue is characterized by increased specialization, gap-spotting incrementalism, ultra-rationalism, standardized text structures, and the creation of manuscripts targeted toward a sympathetic sub-community of like-minded researchers. The rational-empirical, deductive approach to management research practiced by faculty at the leading U.S. universities dominates the top-tier journals, and with modest exceptions, excludes the inductive, qualitative approaches to research practiced by faculty at the leading universities outside the U.S. The current predominant exploration formula (a U.S.-centric model) does not bode well for research diversity and knowledge creation.

Growth in the knowledge base in the field of management requires the active interplay of ideas, concepts and theories. We know that the quality of ideas within a group increases when the number of group members grows (e.g., Mathieu, Maynard, Rapp, & Gilson, 2008). In the marketplace of ideas, a larger number of competitors and competing research models and approaches should contribute to a healthier and more robust market. Alvesson and Gabriel (2013) refer to this as polymorphic research, or research using a variety of structures, styles and research approaches. Anything which limits ideas and competing perspectives is likely to do the opposite.

We should also be concerned about a reduction in the interactions and information sharing between the two groups. Granted, given their different missions and capabilities, it is understandable that each group would develop different systems and mechanisms to optimize and pursue their strategic orientations. However, this reality increases the likelihood that the academy will fragment into two very different groups, the "thinkers" and the "do-ers". Imagine a field where the individuals who develop and test theory come from an increasingly small and isomorphic group. With no feedback mechanisms from those on the outside of the closed system you might eventually see a dysfunctional closed-loop system that only listens to itself, writes for itself, and publishes for itself (Hambrick, 1994). On the other hand, a vigorous interchange of ideas and insights should be the goal of the academy. And while I can think of individuals who excel in both domains, the vast majority of faculty do their best to maximize their value within their market domains. While the Academy of Management has broadened the scope of its annual conference and added new journals to include and highlight alternative research methodologies and applied and pedagogical research, the conference and journals are still dominated by faculty from research intensive, exploration focused institutions, and the limited conversations engaged in in journals and at conferences are predominantly about the legitimacy and impact of contributions in the top journals (Pearce & Huang, 2012; Rynes & Brown, 2011).

A growing gulf between the two groups may contribute to a situation where some individuals may be less and less inclined to participate in a publication process dominated by gatekeepers from the exploration focused institutions. These individuals may develop their own publication outlets for research which might generously be characterized as less impactful. Trained in the rational deductive tradition of incremental knowledge generation, these researchers may be wasting their limited time and resources studying the wrong things, in the wrong way, for the wrong reasons, and for the wrong audience. Alvesson and Gabriel (2013) put it less delicately when quoting a researcher who was increasingly concerned about the diffusion of research outputs– "There are more unqualified people pumping more crap into more unread outlets than ever before in history" (p246). The top outlets in the management discipline have been known for a long time, and the list remains relatively unchanged (See Podsakoff, et al., 2005). However, the number of outlets (journals) in management has grown from 540 in 2001 to 1150 in 2011 – a 100% increase over that period (Cabell's, 2011). Clearly, the market has responded to the perceived need for additional outlets, though the quality of the final products in some of these new outlets may leave some with concerns. Publish or perish, not quality, has become the driver of outlet volume, and the market for ideas is becoming increasingly muddled and muddied. The consuming public for exploitation institutions (undergraduate/ MBA students and business practitioners) has little knowledge of the journals which are a significant source of new knowledge in the field (Pearce & Huang, 2012). Witness the repeated fads and rebranded theories in management education and their effect on the trust between practitioners and academics. We risk eroding that trust further if we do not find ways to expand and enhance knowledge generation and dissemination, with appropriate attention to measures of quality and impact in each domain.

One final concern is the potential impact on knowledge creation mechanisms and incentives. The split system of knowledge creators and knowledge disseminators risks

undermining the entire system of knowledge generation in management. Different groups, with different needs and different goals, may eventually give way to completely different systems for generation and dissemination. In an era when knowledge is becoming increasingly commoditized and widely available, the bifurcated model could speed the collapse of management research (and education) as we know it. Knowledge creation could be left in the hands of increasingly narrow schools of thought, guided by increasingly narrow orthodoxies. Or worse, other schools of thought and knowledge creation mechanisms (e.g., content aggregators), may arise, and the field of management could become a confused jumble of competing theories and models which the consuming public would be ill-prepared to sort through. Even though management science is a weak paradigm field (Glick, Miller & Cardinal, 2007; 2008), and a broad toolbox of theories, models and research approaches is understandable valuable, what we need are not more theories but more useful theories. A common refrain is that much of management research today is overly esoteric, with too many people answering too many questions that no one has asked, or about which few care (Pfeffer & Fong, 2002; Mohrman & Lawler, 2012). And yet faculty at exploitation focused institutions continue to aim for those very publication outlets for their work, using the same rational-empirical approaches, methods and models taught in graduate school. That, I believe, is a disservice to the stakeholders of exploitation institutions. And I believe it is a waste and a strategic misappropriation of resources to expend effort doing research that consumes much while providing little in return. Faculty at exploitation institutions should, and do, have more important, mission-focused things to do with their time. Dissemination models for knowledge exploitation are changing and moving quickly, perhaps faster than our collective ability to absorb and evaluate. Exploitation focused institutions are rightly concerned about their value proposition – will their teaching function be outsourced via MOOCs or technology-mediated platforms developed by large content aggregators?

DEFENDING LEGITIMACY AND IMPACT WITHIN DIFFERENTIATED MARKET DOMAINS

The essential problem is this – we don't spend enough time defending the legitimacy and impact of our work within our specific market domains. We speak too often as if we are all part of one academy, with one voice and one set of concerns. But we know that this is not true. It is understandable that we do not discuss these things, for we are all busy doing the job that our domains direct.

First, I think we need to dial the hyperbole down a notch. We are not near the end of business schools, we are not hopelessly adrift, and what we do in our attempts to learn and grow as scholars is not crap. We are just two groups of faculty, in two (generally) different markets, doing the best we can with the resources available to meet the needs of our stakeholders. Faculty at the exploration focused institutions do wonderful and creative things to expand the body of knowledge in the management discipline, and I am proud to be associated with people who do such extraordinary things. And faculty at exploitation focused institutions, those who have more direct and potentially impactful customer-facing roles, do wonderful and creative things, too. Harping on one group because they don't do your thing well, whatever that thing may be, is not helpful. We (faculty) live in two different worlds, and what constitutes legitimate and impactful work in your world may be different than what is legitimate and impactful in mine. That is, and should continue to be, okay. The problem comes when we assume otherwise, or when faculty and administrations try to be and do things that do not fit their market environment. The primary focus of faculty at exploration institutions should be the production of new knowledge. The primary focus of faculty at exploitation institutions should be the dissemination of new knowledge and the management of the interface between theory and practice. Mission, vision and values should incorporate those distinct conceptions of strategic intent.

Second, the essential role of the Academy of Management should be to facilitate the work of faculty in both market domains. In this I do not mean that more attention should be paid to SoTL issues at the AOM conference or the development of journals like AMLE (though those efforts are a good start). But it is increasingly evident that once the majority of management educators progress to mid-career they interact less and less with the academy. We often measure impact via citation counts, but we are beginning to use other ways to measure impact (Aguinis, Suarez-Gonzalez, Lannelongue & Joo, 2012) and are not corroborating the general impression that citation counts equal impact. Understand, it is not that AOM does not do what it does well, it is just that it does not represent or support the majority of faculty at exploitation-focused institutions (the majority of management faculty).

In support of the goal of increasing the knowledge base in management, the academy must guard against intellectual isomorphism and closed-loop research output generation, and advocate for research diversity in terms of approaches, methods, models and outputs. Faculty in both market domains can help in this regard. Faculty at exploration institutions can be more open to the wide variety of traditional and non-traditional, quantitative and qualitative approaches to research available, and open to the teaching of those approaches in doctoral programs. We don't need more theories, we need better theories, and we'll take them however we get them. The goal should be the same, but the path to that goal should not be constrained by rigid orthodoxies or intellectual sloth. Faculty at exploitation institutions have a say in this matter, as well. As boundary spanners, we should be focused on the rapid prototyping, testing and evaluation of evidence-based approaches to management in organizations. We are qualified to evaluate and report on research and theory-driven interventions, and so our feedback should provide a useful mechanism to close the loop between research and practice. At present, however, there are limited opportunities and venues to provide this feedback. We must be more vocal in communicating what we need, what works, what doesn't, and what we think should be done about it. I believe that faculty at exploitation institutions have been far too timid in this regard. For many, if a new concept or theory doesn't show up in the latest edition of a textbook, they don't discuss it. That has to change. We must be willing to propose, test and evaluate this new knowledge, and on a quicker timeline than a textbook revision schedule.

Third, we must begin to modify the conversation concerning legitimacy by adjusting the definition and measures of legitimacy and impact in the exploration domain (e.g., journal rankings, impact factors) to domain-specific measures of impact on stakeholders and constituents in the exploitation domain (e.g., business organizations improved, jobs saved?). The former are based on product-centric considerations, while the latter should be based on customer-centric considerations (Galbraith, 2005). Faculty at exploration institutions are already familiar with their "product" (significant discipline-based research). If you are a faculty member at an exploitation institution, think, for a moment, about what your students/stakeholders would say is important to them. Ask them how they should evaluate the service you provide. Impact is another word for difference, and their reply should be that you have made a positive difference in how they manage organizations. That would be legitimate. That would be powerful. How many of us can truthfully say that we have made a difference?

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Satisfaction and Dissatisfaction: Formulating Digital Marketing Strategy for Online Faith-Based Education

Kelly Price, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor of Marketing
Department of Management and Marketing
East Tennessee State University
Johnson City, Tennessee

Julia Price, Ed.D.
Assistant Professor of Education
Department of Education
Carson Newman University
Jefferson City, Tennessee

ABSTRACT

When digitally marketing an online educational program, degree or course, an institution must realize the target market which it is trying to reach. However, the demographics of the online student is extremely diverse, making marketing efforts difficult. With such a demographically diverse online student population to attract, it is important to understand what attributes make current online students satisfied or dissatisfied with the online education experience. Once these attributes are understood, organizations can effectively formulate digital marketing strategy to attract future students.

While the efforts to understand satisfaction and dissatisfaction of the online student have been numerous, these studies have mainly centered upon secular organizations. Therefore, to contribute to the literature, this study identifies which attributes make online students satisfied or dissatisfied within the faith-based online educational environment. The results of the study may help organizations and educational institutions with a faith-based mission be more effective in their digital marketing efforts to attract and enroll online students.

INTRODUCTION

Digital marketing strategy is important to all types of educational institutions/organizations. Whether the entity is large, small, non-profit or profit, primarily on ground or online, the digital marketing strategy executed must be effective to achieve any proposed promotional objectives. However, as the educational landscape continues to change with the evolution and growth of online education at many types of educational institutions, marketing programs and courses becomes increasingly difficult. Furthermore, with a diverse and growing online student market and vast competition, attracting the online student is more challenging than ever. Thus, an effective digital marketing strategy is extremely important for those institutions/organizations with online programs and courses.

One way to develop digital marketing strategy in the educational setting is to assess the current state of students and their satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the institution or program in which they are enrolled. (Anderson, et. al, 2006). This assessment may help future digital marketing efforts. While satisfaction and dissatisfaction with online learning has been studied extensively, there has been little distinction between the satisfaction/dissatisfaction factor and the type of institution in question. For example, one area of study, which has received only occasional attention in the academic literature, is online faith-based programs and courses. Therefore, it is the purpose of this study to analyze satisfaction/dissatisfaction attributes within the faith-based online learning environment to help institutions and organizations more effectively market to the diverse online student population seeking this type of online education.

RELATED LITERATURE

Marketing online programs

"What do students want?" is the main question for those who develop marketing strategy for educational entities (McGee, 2012). Though many institutions are very obvious regarding their mission and course/program in their digital marketing efforts (Van Rooij & Lemp, 2016), it is still quite difficult to determine the most effective way to

attract such a diverse online student population. Many online programs digitally market themselves as convenient and flexible. While this is an acceptable and widely used tactic, research has indicated that online programs should also promote other items such as quality, reputation, and individualization (Petina & Neeley, 2007). Digital marketing efforts of the organization, such as the web site and social media, are crucial components of digital strategy. For example, admissions, content, organization and ease of navigation have been shown to be important to an institution's web site (Saichaie & Morphew, 2014) along with the use of social media for competitive advantage (Cho & LoCascio, 2013). Many times, an educational institution touts traditional items such as good teaching or research, but as Chapleo, Duran and Diaz (2010) found, it may also be important to promote emotional values such as social responsibility in digital marketing efforts, as well.

Student satisfaction of online programs

The demographics of the online student ranges drastically. Many are over the age of 30, unmarried and predominately employed full-time (Radford, 2011). Furthermore, almost one-third of the entire higher education student population has enrolled in at least one online course (Allen & Seaman, 2010). With such a diverse online student population, the attributes that affect student satisfaction or dissatisfaction within the online education experience, is crucial to understand when formulating marketing strategy to recruit and retain students.

Online students have been shown to experience higher levels of challenge, reflective thinking, practical competence, personal/social development and satisfaction with their educational experience as compared to on-ground instruction (Chen, et. al 2008). Several studies have indicated some of the attributes which determine student satisfaction within the online learning environment. These attributes include interaction, Internet self-efficacy, self-regulated learning (Kuo, et., al, 2013), instructor feedback, knowledge/ facilitation and course structure (Eom, Wen & Ashill, 2006). From a digital marketing perspective, it is important to note that perception of the institution impacts online student satisfaction. In fact, it can be one of the most important satisfaction measurements (Noel-Levitz, 2011). Even formal review rubrics have been developed to determine online student satisfaction by measuring course overview/introduction, learning objectives, assessment, course technology and learner support (Simpson, 2013). However, some measurements are not useful as satisfaction determinants such as the number of posts an online student makes (Kranszow, 2013). Similarly, Cole, Shelley and Swartz (2014) found that lack of interaction created dissatisfaction in the online learning environment. However, communication with the instructor via video, online chats and the telephone can evoke high satisfaction rates among online learners (Joyner, et. al, 2014). Finally, faculty empathy has been shown to increase online student satisfaction (Parahoo, et. al, 2016).

Faith-based online education

There is no doubt that faith-based organizations must use marketing communications as a brand positioning tactic (Abreu, 2006) and that media richness theory impacts religious marketing (Iyer, et. al, 2014). These institutions are often early-adopters of communication technology in an effort to promote their ideas, missions and goals (Winston, 2011) and are moving online in rapid succession (Business Wire, 2009). As the online population grows, faith-based organizations and institutions are creating more online educational programs (Rogers & Howell, 2005). Therefore, many students seeking a faith-based education are examining online programs and courses to receive their education (Carnevale, 2006). While there may be many reasons a faith-based organization or institution chooses to offer online programs and courses, they must do so because of their competition who offers online learning. Some faith-based organizations concluded that they should not offer online programs until the medium was proven effective and the materials were of proven quality. However, it has been suggested that these obstacles have been solved by advances in online learning (Rogers & Howell, 2004.) Therefore, it has been suggested that when developing a brand digital marketing strategy for a faith-based educational institution, it should include not only the educational program itself, but an emphasis on the faith-based setting and how it is a part of a community (Gallagher, 2016).

Furthermore, faith-based organizations and institutions have a unique mission. They must meet the spiritual needs of the online student in a holistic manner. Not only is spirituality important in a student's life, but little research has been done to understand these spiritual needs and faith development. One study found that interactions and relationships with faculty and other students were important and that each encouraged spiritual growth (Comeaux, 2013).

PURPOSE

Understanding what attributes make online students in the faith-based online learning environment satisfied or dissatisfied may provide digital marketers information regarding how to formulate digital marketing strategy. Examining these attributes may provide insight concerning how faith-based organizations and institutions can enrich the online student learning experience both academically and spiritually. Therefore, the primary purpose of this descriptive, comparative study is to identify satisfaction/dissatisfaction attributes within the faith-based online learning environment to help institutions and organizations more effectively market to the diverse online student population seeking this type of online education.

METHODOLOGY

Based on the literature, the research question was posited: Which attributes of faith-based online education most prominently evoke satisfaction or dissatisfaction from participants?

In order to gather data relevant to the study, the BeADisciple organization was investigated.

Beadisciple.com (http://www.beadisciple.com/) is a faith-based online educational resource which houses over 100 courses taught by over 40 instructors, all of whom are laity or clergy. Online courses range in price (generally under $100) and in length (days to weeks). A description of their mission and organizational composition is noted from their web site:

"Since 2006, BeADisciple.com has been committed to providing quality, online educational experiences with roots in Wesleyan theology. We offer online studies, workshops, and courses on a variety of ministry, formation, and leadership topics. Our goal is to make rich learning experiences accessible to church leaders and laity, no matter their location or life situation.

BeADisciple is also a community of people who are invested in becoming better Christian disciples. As courses are conducted in small groups with a trained facilitator or a certified instructor, students and instructors have an opportunity to get to know one another. Groups begin together, progress through materials, and end together.

While our background and primary perspective is United Methodist, we believe in an ecumenical mission. Students from any Mainline Protestant (Lutheran (ELCA), Presbyterian (PCUSA), Episcopal, United Church of Christ (UCC), American Baptist, Friends/Quakers, Disciples of Christ, Reformed Church in America, Metropolitan Community Churches, etc.) or Wesleyan (Nazarene, Free Methodist, African Methodist Episcopal (A.M.E.)) denomination ought to feel at home in most of our courses, and students from any Christian tradition will be able to learn and grow in their faith" (http://www.beadisciple.com/about-us/).

With permission of the organization, the researchers were given access to one year of data. Data consisted of end-of-course surveys completed and submitted online by students within the course platform. Twenty-three courses were analyzed for the study. Using content analysis (after a 90% inter rater reliability test), the researchers analyzed open-ended "Comments/Essay" sections from each survey. This was the only consistent section that was included on every survey, since individual instructors used varied questions for their end-of-course surveys. Demographic questions were not included on the surveys. A total of 450 responses were analyzed by the researchers. To be consistent with the literature, the researchers grouped responses into three main categories: comments relating to the participants defined in this study as things important to them as individuals (coded as 1), items relating instructor (coded as 2), and matters concerning materials/course (coded as 3). In addition, it was noted if the comment was positive, negative, or neutral/could not determine.

FINDINGS

Data were collected from 23 courses with a total of 450 end-of-survey comments. Three attributes of course satisfaction were materials/course, instructor and participants. Using content analysis, two main findings were determined.

Finding #1

Of the three designated categories, the materials/course attribute was the most important in regard to factors which produce course satisfaction among students (51%), followed by the instructor (27%) and the participant (23%).

Finding #2

Within each of the three satisfaction attributes, it was found that all three had overwhelmingly positive perspectives toward the faith-based course that was analyzed.

Summary of Tone of Comment (N=45)

Tone of comments	Materials/ Course		Instructor		Participants	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Positive	137	60	90	75	76	75
Negative	78	34	29	24	15	15
Neutral/ cannot determine	13	6	1	1	9	9

DISCUSSION/CONCLUSION

Some inferences may be posited based on the literature and the two findings. First, by gathering, reviewing and utilizing student feedback, the digital marketer can formulate more effective strategy. For example, positive feedback in this study such as, "I greatly appreciate the depth and quantity of materials that were provided as the course progressed" (materials/course); "The instructor was always available for questions, concerns and coaching" (instructor) or, "The course was a spiritual refresher course for my skill and knowledge" (participant) are all useful for digital content creation. Other negatively-based comments such as, "I found navigating the course platform to be complex; Felt cumbersome" (materials/course); "The instructor never gave me indication that I was behind or that I needed to improve" (instructor); or "I was pretty intimidated at times" (participant), may be useful insights into what topics to avoid in digital campaigns and could be used for course improvement. Further, since materials/course are very meaningful in the faith-based program, digital marketers may want to prominently emphasize the nature of the program content in their digital marketing strategy and should formulate materials which appeal to this construct. The fact that materials/course (depth and quantity of materials, assignments, resources, text, discussions, and pace of course,) was the most important attribute for determining satisfaction in this study, could be very useful information and utilized by digital marketing professionals in the faith-based genre and become essential promotional aspects of the digital marketing campaign.

Secondly, digital marketers in the faith-based environment should consider a slightly non-traditional perspective of data. Traditionally, consumers have been defined mainly by demographics such as age, gender or income. However, it has been noted that online consumers do not define themselves by their demographics but by their interests, behaviors and beliefs (Kuhn, 2011). This includes the faith-based community who may be deeply connected with others by their beliefs. While the researchers were initially concerned with the lack of demographic data, the absence of this data actually caused the researchers to look more closely at the affective nature of the data. This type of education is respected by the student for the intrinsic and spiritual values it may present. Specifically, the materials/course became vitally important to the student and were even more important than individual concerns or the instructor who was presenting it. Therefore, digital marketing professionals should develop strategy based on affective traits more so than the demographics of the online consumers themselves.

As competition increases in the online environment for educational organizations and institutions, the digital marketing of these entities becomes increasingly important to attract, recruit and maintain the student population. While the popularity of online education becomes even more prevalent among all types of organizations, including faith-based, determining what makes online students satisfied or dissatisfied with their experience becomes imperative to future digital marketing strategy. However, the faith-based organizations and institutions may benefit to not only look at what their students find important in a course, but they may also want to look beyond traditional metrics, like demographics, to understand more about the person behind the number.

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The Impact of E-mail Address on Credibility in Higher Education

Jeffrey A. Livermore, Lecturer
University of Michigan-Flint
Flint, Michigan

Marla G. Scafe, Professor
Walsh College
Troy, Michigan

Corinne Asher, Instructor
Henry Ford College
Dearborn, Michigan

ABSTRACT

The researchers have often been surprised to see the e-mail addresses used by our students and colleagues. Many students and faculty choose their own user names and choose their providers. E-mail addresses may provide an insight into the background and employment situation of the user. This study quantifies the impact that e-mail address choices have on the perceived credibility of the person who uses that account. The authors make recommendations on how individuals and institutions can maintain their credibility simply by adopting e-mail policies.

INTRODUCTION

The learning environment is constantly changing as the technologies used by faculty and students change. Current students expect technology to be part of their education and e-mail is commonly used for communication and teaching technology [1]. University students tend to be ahead of the rest of society in the adoption, use, and abandonment of technologies [2]. In the early days of e-mail, there was not much choice in which e-mail account to use. Faculty only had their school account. With free accounts, anonymous accounts, and accounts tied to cell phones, many faculty members now have their choice of a number of e-mail addresses.

Schools are using more adjunct or part-time instructors than ever before [3]. Many schools rely on large numbers of adjunct faculty who have "day jobs" with other employers. Many of these adjunct faculty members use their work e-mail accounts to maintain their connection to students. One study found that only 23.9% of adjunct faculty had school-provided e-mail accounts [3]. Without a school e-mail account the adjuncts have no choice but to use their work e-mail accounts or a commercial alternative.

THE IMPACT OF E-MAIL ADDRESS ON FACULTY CREDIBILITY

Maintaining credibility in the classroom is important to all faculty members. There are a number of components that have been proven to impact the perception of faculty credibility including gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and choice of clothing [4]. Student impressions of faculty credibility impact the ratings that they give to faculty. Several studies have documented how increasing the amount of faculty-student contact outside of the classroom increases the positive ratings students give to faculty.

To determine student perceptions of faculty credibility, students were asked to take a survey presenting a series of questions about a fictional faculty member teaching a class they would be taking. The only information that the students had about the faculty member was their e-mail address. To eliminate or at least minimize gender and name bias, the survey only used popular male names. The names used in a survey were a combination of the most popular first and surnames according to two different sources. The three most popular surnames in America were once Smith, Johnson, and Brown [5]. According to the United States Social Security Administration, the three most popular first names for males in 2007 were Jacob, Michael, and Ethan [6].

The username and e-mail service provider were the independent variables and perceived credibility was the dependent variable. The following research hypotheses were evaluated:

H1: Student perception of faculty credibility will be impacted by the domain name used in the email address

H2: Student perception of faculty credibility will be impacted by the use of nicknames in the user name

This survey was created with the NSurvey tool and invitations to take the survey were sent to 1,000 of the currently enrolled students at an upper division business school in the suburbs of Detroit. Upper division students have all had a minimum of two years of college courses and thus been exposed to a variety of faculty.

The survey questions were structured like: You are considering taking Professor Michael Johnson for a section of the "Introduction to Technology" course that is a requirement for your major field of study. Based on his e-mail address of Michael.Johnson@aol.com, how credible do you feel Professor Johnson is? Please rate Professor Johnson's credibility on a scale ranging from 1 (not at all credible) to 7 (extremely credible, credible, no opinion, not credible).

The survey found that both username and domain name were significant in determining the students' perception of faculty credibility [7]. The most credible combination was using a full name as the username on the school's e-mail domain. Using a nickname or commercial e-mail provider led to low perceptions of credibility. The survey results are summarized in Table 1.

It is also important how faculty feel about the credibility of other faculty members. Many faculty do research and grant applications with colleagues that they only contact via e-mail. To determine faculty perceptions of peer credibility, faculty members at a community college in Southeastern Michigan were asked to take a survey presenting a series of questions about a fictional faculty member proposing a collaborative research project. The only information that the surveyed faculty members had about their peer was their e-mail address. To eliminate or at least minimize gender and name bias, the survey only used popular male names

The username and e-mail service provider were the independent variables and perceived credibility was the dependent variable. The following research hypotheses were evaluated:

H1: Faculty perception of peer credibility will be impacted by the domain name used in the email address

H2: Faculty perception of peer credibility will be impacted by the use of nicknames in the user name

The survey was constructed with the Survey Monkey tools. The survey questions were structured like: You received an e-mail from someone claiming to be a faculty member of a school in another state that is similar in size and mission to your school. The person is sending the e-mail is proposing a research collaboration between the two schools and is requesting your involvement. All you know about the faculty member is their e-mail address of Michael.Johnson@HFCC.edu. Based solely on the e-mail address how credible do you feel this faculty member is?

The survey found that both username and domain name were significant in determining the faculty's perception of faculty peer credibility [7]. The most credible combination was using a full name as the username on the school's e-mail domain. Using a nickname or commercial e-mail provider led to low perceptions of credibility. The survey results are summarized in Table 2.

Table 1
Summarized Survey Results of
Student Perceptions of Faculty Credibility

Email Account	Extremely Credible	Credible	Not Credible	No Opinion	Total
Full name at walshcollege.edu	84	52	0	21	157
Full name at EDS.com	35	90	12	22	159
Full name at aol.com	4	95	26	34	159
Nickname at EDS.com	3	48	76	32	159
Nickname at walshcollege.edu	3	47	82	27	159
Nickname at aol.com	0	26	100	32	158

THE IMPACT OF E-MAIL ADDRESS ON STUDENT CREDIBILITY

The researchers determined that there are two components of student credibility that are impacted by e-mail address. The first component is the impression their e-mail address has on faculty and the second component is the impact their e-mail address has on how other students perceive them. Many students maintain multiple e-mail accounts to separate their social life from their educational life [2]. Students are using e-mail to communicate with each other and their faculty. Faculty members are increasingly relying on e-mail to communicate with their students. E-mail allows faculty to communicate with individual students, small groups, or entire classes at the same time [1]. Many faculty use e-mail to communicate with their students in both on-ground and online classes. A research study was done for each of the two aspects of student credibility. The first study was to measure faculty perceptions of student credibility based on e-mail address. The username and mail service provider were the independent variables and perceived credibility was the dependent variable. The following research hypotheses were evaluated:

H1 Faculty perception of student credibility will be impacted by the domain name used in the email address

H2 Faculty perception of student credibility will be impacted by the use of nicknames in the user name

This survey was created with the SurveyMonkey tool and invitations to take the survey were sent to the full time and adjunct members at an upper division business school in the suburbs of Detroit. Upper division students have all had a minimum of two years of college courses and thus been exposed to a variety of faculty. The survey questions were structured like: You received an e-mail from Michael Johnson who has registered for one of your classes next semester. Based solely on his e-mail address of Michael.Johnson@AOL.com how credible do you feel this student is? Please rate Michael Johnson's credibility on a scale ranging from not credible to extremely credible (not credible, credible, extremely credible, no opinion)

The survey found that both username and domain name were significant in determining the faculty's perception of student credibility [8]. The most credible combination was using a full name as the username on the school's e-mail domain. Using a nickname or commercial e-mail provider led to low perceptions of credibility. The survey results are summarized in Table 3.

The second component of student credibility is student perceive their fellow students. The growth in online education has led to students working together on projects that have never met or even seen pictures of each other. Online students are placed into small groups to complete group assignments and promote a collaborative learning process [9]. In some cases, the only clue to peer credibility that online students have is the e-mail address used by their fellow students. Students will question how credible their peers are and whether they will be able to perform on the group assignments [10]. Students who feel that they are teamed with less credible peers may become discouraged.

Researchers have studied how e-mail addresses impact how credible students appear to their peers [11]. The population for this phase of the research project was students at a community college in suburban Detroit. All of the students were enrolled in at least one online class. The username and mail service provider were the independent variables and perceived credibility was the dependent variable. The following research hypotheses were evaluated:

H1 Student perception of peer credibility will be impacted by the domain name used in the email address

Table 2
Summarized Survey Results of
Faculty Perceptions of Peer Credibility

Email Account	Extremely Credible	Credible	Not Credible	Doubtful Credibility	No Opinion	Total
Full name at HFCC.edu	4	61	11	4	31	109
Full name at EDS.com	0	9	14	47	41	111
Full name at aol.com	0	3	20	60	29	112
Nickname at EDS.com	0	0	37	58	17	112
Nickname at HFCC.edu	0	0	92	57	13	112
Nickname at aol.com	0	1	18	61	31	11

Table 3
Summarized Survey Results of
Faculty Perceptions of Student Credibility

Email Account	Extremely Credible	Credible	Not Credible	No Opinion	Total
Full name at walshcollege.edu	31	22	0	8	61
Full name at EDS.com	18	32	2	9	61
Full name at aol.com	15	36	1	0	62
Nickname at AOL.com	0	29	20	13	62
Nickname at walshcollege.edu	1	7	45	7	60
Nickname at aol.com	0	10	43	7	60

H2 Student perception of peer credibility will be impacted by the use of nicknames in the user name

This survey was created with the SurveyMonkey tool. The survey questions were structured like: You are enrolled in an online section of the "Introduction to Technology" course that is a requirement for your major field of study. You have never met any of the other students enrolled in your section and are unlikely to meet them in the future. You have been assigned to work with another student on a group project. All that you know about this student is their e-mail address. Based on the e-mail address of MrBaseball@ EDS.com, how credible do you feel that your fellow student is? Please rate the student on a scale that ranges from not credible to extremely credible (not credible, credible, extremely credible, no opinion).

The survey found that both username and domain name were significant in determining the students' perception of peer credibility [11]. The most credible combination was using a full name as the username on the school's e-mail domain. Using a nickname or commercial e-mail provider led to low perceptions of credibility. The survey results are summarized in Table 4.

CONCLUSIONS

All four studies found that both username and domain name significantly impacted the perception of credibility for both students and faculty. In all cases, the strongest perceptions of credibility were using the full name for the username and the school domain. Using nicknames and other e-mail providers weakens the perception of academic credibility.

These studies were significant for a number of reasons. Students who wish to appear more credible to both their peers and faculty should use their school provided e-mail accounts. Faculty members need to be careful to avoid the "halo" effect when evaluating students and not allow one perception of credibility to impact their assessments in other areas. A study in the United Kingdom found that faculty members carried positive impressions over from one area of student work to others [12]. This type of halo effect might be stronger in online education because there are fewer types of student-faculty contact.

Faculty who wish to appear more credible to their students should use their school provided e-mail account. Faculty who are used to using their cell phones and outside e-mail accounts must understand the price they pay for the convenience of using these accounts.

The impact of faculty losing credibility by not using their school provided e-mail account should be reflected in school policy. Schools that are interested in increasing or at the very least, maintaining perceived faculty credibility should require faculty to use their school provided e-mail accounts [13].

Table 4
Summarized Survey Results of
Peer Perceptions of Student Credibility

Email Account	Extremely Credible	Credible	Not Credible	No Opinion	Total
Nickname at EDS.com	2	12	30	53	97
Full name at AOL.com	7	37	8	34	96
Full name at HFCC.edu	24	43	2	22	91
Full name at EDS.com	7	41	10	35	93
Full name at HFCC.edu	19	37	2	22	80
Nickname at AOL.com	3	18	23	44	88
Full name at AOL.com	3	27	9	44	83
Nickname at HFCC.edu	7	18	18	41	84

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Impacts of the FOCUS Act on Governance in Tennessee Higher Education Institutions

Jennifer H. Barber, MA
Doctoral Student, Educational Leadership & Policy Analysis
Clemmer College of Education
East Tennessee State University
Johnson City, Tennessee

Colin G. Chesley, MBA, NHA
Doctoral Student, Educational Leadership & Policy Analysis
Clemmer College of Education
East Tennessee State University
Johnson City, Tennessee

Bethany H. Flora, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor
Educational Leadership & Policy Analysis
Box 70550, 506 Warf-Pickel Hall
East Tennessee State University
Johnson City, Tennessee

ABSTRACT

With the final passage of the Focus on College and University Success (FOCUS) Act which was signed into law on April 19, 2016, state universities within Tennessee are heading for major transitions in governance structure and autonomy. With changes moving at a speed atypical of higher education, these six soon-to-be former Tennessee Board of Regents (TBR) universities must determine the best way to proceed from the current governance structure to a localized governing board while considering the future direction of the institution. Drawing on historical precedents and current policy changes, recommendations are made to the six universities for future governance structure, appointment of the board, and proposed future directions and policy discussions for the institutions.

INTRODUCTION

With the passage of the FOCUS (Focus on College and University Success) Act on April 19, 2016, it is necessary to analyze the Act itself and the governance changes it legislates and make recommendations to administrators while informing the academic community about the Act itself. The legislation mandates the restructuring of Tennessee higher education by incorporating independent governing boards to oversee each of the state's six public universities, which are: Austin Peay State University, East Tennessee State University, Middle Tennessee State University, Tennessee State University, Tennessee Technological University, and the University of Memphis. These local, independent governing boards will ultimately report to the Tennessee Higher Education Commission (THEC). The Tennessee Board of Regents (TBR) previously governed the six public universities as well as Tennessee's 13 community colleges and 27 technical colleges. After the FOCUS Act is fully implemented, the TBR will only have jurisdiction over the community colleges and technical schools. These changes are part of Tennessee Governor Bill Haslam's Drive to 55 Initiative, wherein the stated objective is to have 55 percent of the citizens of the state with completed collegiate education or training by 2025. As a part of this initiative, the Tennessee Promise ensures last dollar funding toward community college tuition, thereby making community college education essentially free for Tennesseans who qualify. Because of these higher education reforms and initiatives at the state level, a major revision of the state's governance and system structure in higher education should not be altogether unexpected.

Currently, the TBR's mission is varied and includes acting as the "responsible agency for purposes and proposals of the (TBR) System subject only to legislative mandated

review," providing coordination of institutions, and establishing and overseeing uniform policies and procedures (TBR, 2016). The TBR is designed to help the system's institutions to more effectively compete for state appropriations and efficiently distributes funds. Laypeople serving on the board are intended to preserve public control of Tennessee higher education (TBR, 2015). In sum, none of the 46 institutions governed by the TBR could implement policies, create programs, make curriculum changes, or request funds without oversight and approval.

Because the TBR served as the coordinating entity for the 46 total institutions, the FOCUS Act was created to redistribute this responsibility, thus allowing the TBR to have a greater focus on community colleges and technical schools – the primary vehicles of the governor's education initiative for the state. Independent boards are slated to individually govern each four-year institution, which have separate missions that are largely based on programming, geographical location, corporate ties, and political situation. The six independent Boards of Trustees will provide focused oversight for their individual institutions, but will ultimately report to THEC. This will arguably transform THEC from a relatively silent commission compared to the oversight of the TBR system, to one that is empowered to a greater level. The FOCUS Act will essentially strengthen THEC's influence and base.

The TBR system has traditionally been viewed by administrators and faculty to be a cumbersome and largely bureaucratic organization, and many have expressed dissatisfaction with current practices (Lederman, 2016). There is undoubtedly some concern that the scope, membership, and goals of the Boards have not been clearly stated within the FOCUS Act itself. Although Tennessee is a pioneer state in this project, governing boards at other institutions have many similarities to what Tennessee is doing. As such, the researchers explored board membership, demographics and qualifications of other institutions to determine where these similarities lied and if best practices could be seen. Additionally, a university president of a medium-sized institution in Tennessee was interviewed for additional perspective on the implementation of the act. This research has resulted in a list of pros and cons for policy-makers and administrators to consider as they move forward with implementation and a set of recommendations for university governing boards.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

The FOCUS Act is part of a larger statewide program that focuses on higher education, which is part of the larger implementation of the governor's Drive to 55 program and is seen by many as the next step. The FOCUS Act was written in order to provide decentralized governance for the state's four-year institutions, and greater oversight for the community colleges and technical schools, while at the same time reducing redundancies in the state system. With the TBR's primary focus on community colleges and technical centers, the six independent governing boards will provide direct oversight while also being a part of THEC in order to maintain some consistency between schools and ensuring coordination around programming and tuition caps. More focused and directly supervised institutions are expected to have increased ability to reach potential students, retain current students, and promote higher educational attainment across the state (Lederman, 2016).

New changes in leadership can cause concern in any organization, and higher education is no exception. The FOCUS Act is planned to be fully implemented in Tennessee by July 2016; though there are still many questions about how the four-year institutions will be impacted. Prior to the FOCUS Act, THEC held ultimate responsibility for higher education in the state, with the TBR and University of Tennessee Systems reporting directly to it. As stated previously, TBR oversaw the six universities, 13 community colleges, and 27 technical schools, while the UT system oversaw UT Knoxville, UT Chattanooga, UT Martin, and the UT Health Science Center (Appendix 3). After the full implementation of the Act, THEC remains at the top of the organizational chart, except each of the six universities will then report directly to THEC through the local governing board (Appendix 4). The most notable element of the Act will include the creation of decentralized local governing boards for the six regional universities. The FOCUS Act board membership requirements and major responsibilities include hiring the institution's president (who reports directly to the board), executive officers, confirming the appointment of administrative personnel, faculty, and other employees as well as the ability to set salaries, prescribe curriculum requirements for graduation, approve budgets, and establish campus policies.

It is important that the governing boards are organized in a logical manner based on proven methods. According to Cathy Trower, an expert in higher education board governance, there are several focal points that boards and university presidents should keep in mind in order to create exceptional governance, which includes oversight, foresight, and insight (Trower, 2014). Oversight pertains to operations, resources, and finances, or the "what" questions. Foresight is related to strategic planning, or the "how" questions, while insight is comprised of problem-framing and the confrontation of issues with institutional values and traditions (Chait, Ryan, Taylor, & BoardSource, 2005; Trower, 2014). Trower's recommendations include maintaining a clear focus and agenda for the board, aligning structure with strategy rather than allowing the structure of the board to dictate priorities, and building a culture of inquiry that focuses on an agenda with questions on critical issues and robust discourse rather than becoming impeded by excessive details (Chait, Ryan, Taylor, & BoardSource, 2005; Trower, 2014). It is also important for leadership to have a clear purpose, challenging goals and a sense of urgency with shared responsibility, as well as to have checkpoints of accountability and reflection for all members to prevent a "group think" mentality (Trower, 2013). Currently, it is unknown to what extent Trower's or other governance experts' advice will be heeded as boards are formed.

With the important oversight that the board is intended to provide, there are concerns about how effective boards can be in carrying out their responsibilities. Articles that appear Inside Higher Education detailing results of a college president survey claimed that "68 percent of public four-year college presidents said they would replace board members if they could, and 11 percent of college presidents clearly disagree that their institutions are well-governed at the board level" (Ryad, 2013). Bastedo (2009) conducted research on governing board conflicts and interviewed university presidents about issues within their boards. Some of the most common issues cited included strong alliances to a political party or to the governor that appointed them, strong financial interests in areas of university business (such as construction projects, for example), strong claims of competency, and cliques that formed among members, creating a harmful political environment (2009). The FOCUS Act does contain language to address some of these possible effectiveness issues. For instance, prohibitions are made for state employees and other members of university governing boards, and no elected official can serve; though there is no mention about limiting party affiliation as other schools have specified, such as West Virginia University (West Virginia Board of Governors). This presents the possibility of a politically affiliated board in lieu of a competency based board, which may be cause for concern. John Casteen, president emeritus of the University of Virginia, told Inside Higher Education that "some public college boards can end up populated by board members with a history of political donations to the governor who does the selecting rather than because of any higher ed experience" (Ryad, 2013).

In addition to specifying board member composition, the FOCUS Act has the potential to transform the way business is conducted at the university level. Although THEC will remain as the central coordinating entity, there is a possibility of less cohesion between schools, as stated by John Morgan, former TBR Chancellor upon his resignation. "Tennessee Board of Regents Chancellor John Morgan resigned over this very issue, saying in his resignation letter that the FOCUS Act would 'weaken the effective collaboration we have worked so hard to achieve and instead drive competition and shift priorities away from the state's goals'" (Freeman, 2015). Morgan called the program "unworkable" and "contrary to efforts to enhance oversight and accountability in higher education" (Shelzig, 2016).

Tennessee institutions have been collaborating in several ways, complicating the issue and making potential opportunities and threats less clear. Although the initial reason for the TBR's creation was to fairly distribute funding to its institutions in order to avoid competition for appropriations within the system (Stinson, 2003, p. 81), there have been cases that do foster competition. For example, the Tennessee Board of Regents offers Regents Online Degree Programs (RODP), recently renamed TN eCampus, to students within the state. Because many offered courses overlap with offerings at the various institutions, duplication and competition has been created. For instance, a student may take ENGL 1020, a basic literature class at East Tennessee State University (ETSU), or they may elect to take an online RODP course while maintaining enrollment at ETSU. There are over 500 degrees and certificates available as well as over 400 individual courses (TN eCampus). The tuition is billed separately, and the money is shared between the university and TBR. This program can be interpreted as direct competition between the six Tennessee universities and the TBR, because potential tuition money is lost to the program. It is unknown how the TN eCampus will change when the FOCUS Act is implemented and boards are in place.

Another outlier to the non-compete and non-duplication policies is the TBR's cooperation with a multi-state collaboration through the Academic Common Market program, which is overseen by the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB), a nonpartisan group that provides research, data, and recommendations to educational policymakers (SREB). The Academic Common Market allows students to enroll in programs at participating institutions throughout the Southeastern U.S. that are not offered in their home state at an in-state tuition rate. The program also includes various online courses and programs (SREB, Academic Common Market). In the 2014 calendar year, 174 Tennessee students participated in the program (SREB, 2015).

With the duplication that occurs through the TN eCampus and the Academic Common Market program, one may question whether there are quality differences among courses and programs based on location or students served. Tennessee higher education officials have been previously challenged on differences in institutional quality as well as diversity in Geier v. University of Tennessee

(1979), which was filed by a Tennessee State University (TSU) faculty member, Rita Sanders, who was eventually joined by other TSU professors Ray Richardson and H. Coleman McGinnis as co-plaintiffs (tnstate.edu/about_tsu/history.aspx). This is a significant case that led the state to combine the University of Tennessee-Nashville (UT-N) with Tennessee State University (TSU), which offered many duplicate programs and were located less than five miles apart (Epstein, 1980; Geier v. University of Tennessee.1979). TSU is a land grant university that was established in 1912 and is characterized as a historically black college and university (HBCU), while UT-N, a primarily white school, was established in 1947 as a way for students in Nashville to be able to attend class with greater convenience. Although desegregation in Tennessee higher education occurred in 1960, at the time of Geier, there had been little progress toward this end. Geier v. Tennessee challenged the higher education leadership by claiming that there was inequality and segregation among the schools because they were offering duplicate programs to different populations that were not equal in quality (Geier v. University of Tennessee, 1979). Geier v. Tennessee sought an injunction to dismantle UT-N and to create a single governing board that could equalize facilities and educational opportunities for students at TSU and to prevent even unintended segregation among institutions, and eventually the case led to the merging of UT-N and TSU in July of 1971, which helped desegregate the institutions as well as close the quality gap that Geier detailed (Epstein, 1980). Although the single governing board that Geier argued for was not realized, the court required that THEC, the State Board of Regents (an early version of the TBR), and the UT Board create a long-term desegregation plan (Geier v. University of Tennessee.1979).

Current TSU President Glenda Glover has expressed some concern about the FOCUS Act and the potential pitfalls of independent governance as Freeman (2015) discussed. Glover (2016) said that she believes that the six universities were stronger together, especially compared to the UT system. The UT system is of special concern to TSU because of the Geier case (Glover, 2016). Currently there is discussion of UT operating an MBA program in Nashville where TSU already offers their own MBA program; another concern to Glover due to a potential duplication of programs (2016). Glover's worry is that TSU will lose bargaining power and UT will be able to operate its programs in what has been considered to be the TSU market, thus reversing the landmark victory from Geier v. Tennessee.

Funding is another concern among some higher education officials, although according to Daniels (2016), the Governor's Office told The Tennessean that FOCUS will not change the current funding formula which has been in place since 2010. The current formula for all institutions involves the allocation of funds through the Tennessee Higher Education Commission and is based on student performance and other outcome metrics. However, there is still concern over state funding for special projects which was formerly filtered through the TBR. House Majority Leader Gerald McCormick, R-Chattanooga, has expressed concern that the independent governance structure could create unhealthy competition and an unfair advantage for some institutions (Shelzig, 2016). For now, Gov. Haslam has said that he is committed to preventing competing efforts (Shelzig, 2016).

According to the president of a medium-sized Tennessee public institution, the TBR has traditionally failed to maintain a level of control over competition in the state among the TBR institutions. Examples range from direct recruitment efforts for one institution in the campus area of a sister institution, to community colleges renting recruitment spaces near another state university, then leasing desk space back to that university for a transition counselor, to one state university implementing a masters program in the direct market area of another state university.

Historically, state regulating and coordinating agencies for higher education such as the TBR system have been charged with overseeing the efficient use of state resources. One of the most common forms of state oversight is non-duplication policies such as TBR's policy on program modifications and new academic programs. According to this policy, "if a university tries to develop a new program or modify an existing one, the university must notify the community college within the designated service area to ensure there is no unwarranted duplication of effort" (Program Modifications and New Academic Programs : A-010. According to a Tennessee university president, the TBR has attempted to maintain equality between the institutions by attempting to limit competition over geographic space and programming, thus expending effort to "level the playing field", but failing to promote excellence.

Historical Background and the University of Memphis

THEC was created in 1967 for several reasons, such as maintaining stronger oversight of the state's universities as they were growing and becoming interested in awarding doctorate degrees. The University of Tennessee's then president, Andy Holt, was concerned about the potential for funds to be diverted from the UT system. Other universities were in favor of the creation of THEC because it was seen as a way to more objectively process financial requests from institutions (Stinson, 2003), and so was viewed as a potential win-win for all the involved schools.

Over the past 30 years, even after agreeing to the creation of THEC, the leadership of the University of Memphis (UM) has repeatedly attempted to gain independence in governance (Stockard, 2015). Although reasons are not always clearly documented in the news or in scholarly journals, there are clear indications as to why leaders at Memphis would request some autonomy in the wake of the TBR controlled higher education system. Memphis has a reputation as a top tier research university, is categorized as having higher research activity by the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education, and is located in an urban setting, thus making its culture, population, and needs different than the other institutions previously governed by the TBR system.

Upon the creation of the TBR system (which was the State Board of Regents, or SBR, at the time) in 1972, UM pressed for its own governing board and voiced concern about the inclusion of community colleges. However, the concern over competing for funding with UT prompted then president of UM Cecil C. Humphreys to support the creation of the new board (Stinson, 2003, p. 82). Also of note is that Humphreys was selected to serve at the first chancellor for the SBR (Stinson, 2003, p. 83). In 1989, the school created the Board of Visitors, which was strongly in favor of an independent governance structure. The Board was founded by prominent business leader Robert Fogelmen and was comprised of other wealthy and well-connected people in Memphis. Former Governor Phil Bredesen agreed that the university would be more appropriately governed by an independent board, but his acknowledgement never turned into serious action (Roberts, 2013). In the 2010 election for Tennessee governor, candidates from Memphis, Bill Gibbons and Jim Kyle, both pledged to remove UM from the TBR system.

There has been some disagreement among administrators, however. Interim President Brad Martin, who led the university before the current president, M. David Rudd, switched his position on the matter. In 2013, The Commercial Appeal ran an article about Martin's dissatisfaction with the administrative lag in dealing with the TBR, but that he had brought his concern before the Board who agreed that the administrative processes should become more streamlined (Roberts, 2013). In light of that information, he was more hesitant than the board to voice support of autonomy. President Rudd has been a supporter of the FOCUS Act, however.

1999 Governor's Council on Higher Education

Tennessee has made several changes to its higher education systems over the last few decades. In 1999, there was a push to improve the higher education system in Tennessee, though not with same force that is being experienced with the FOCUS Act. In 1999 a group of business and community leaders across the state participated in the Governor's Council for Higher Education. The group dealt with issues ranging from student retention to equitable salaries to governance. At this time the Council recommended a stronger THEC which is coming to fruition with the FOCUS Act. The group recommended that THEC be responsible for several items that are also included in the FOCUS Act.

> "...allocating state resources to operating segments, consistent with budget deliberation priorities, coordinating activities occurring across segment of the public higher education system, and systematically reviewing, approving, and where appropriate, terminating Tennessee's publicly sponsored supported higher education programs" (Governor's Council on Higher Education, p. 43)

PROPOSED SOLUTION

Current guidelines in the FOCUS Act are ambiguous about the exact role of the governing board and their relation to the executive team at the institution; in particular to the president. In researching other institutions current localized governing boards, the investigators found that several schools had clear parameters defined for their boards, as well as functional, beneficial relationships with the university president. Though there are clear variances among the boards in relation to the institution's needs, there are several similarities among the committees, financial structures, and contract negotiations (Appendix 2). These governing boards traditionally appoint presidents and have a direct reporting structure for the position.

Appointment and Power of the Board

According to Section 19 of the FOCUS Act, appointment to the governing board will be a gubernatorial appointment. Of the ten board members, eight will be direct appointments of the governor and will be on a rotating term, with the ninth voting member being a faculty member that serves for a two year period, and the tenth member being a student who serves for a one year term. It is recommended that university presidents have the ability and opportunity to work closely with the governor to make recommendations, thus helping to avoid the potential for politically motivated appointments that can hamper the work of the board. It is further recommended that the eight gubernatorial appointments be diverse in background and knowledge, with each member having one of the following unique characteristics and background: prior knowledge of higher education administration, policy expertise in higher education or a related field, business

experience in marketing, finance, and leadership, medical or hospital administration experience on a corporate level, previous alumni of the institution, and some representation from across the state (not only in the geographic location of the university) and representation from out of state. These diverse individuals will then be equipped to meet the demanding changes in higher education and would represent various schools of thought and experience. Having such a diverse board would constitute a competency based board, rather than a constituency based board, which would be better able to lead the institution through the various changes (AHA, 2009).

In addition to the recommendations about board selection are recommendations about the governing practices of those boards. Common concerns among university presidents who will operate under the structures promulgated by the FOCUS Act center around the potential for overbearing board involvement. This ranges from dictating that classes such as constitutional law be mandatory for undergraduates in an effort to stem the tide of socialism among the student body, to wanting to be involved in the day to day operations of the university. Taking a "hands on, but fingers out" approach is most appropriate for the governing board. Amendment 1 of the FOCUS Act, which was proposed largely by ETSU faculty senate and ETSU President Brian Noland, proposed a non-interference clause, which essentially predicates a dividing line between being involved in the oversight of the institution, and being explicitly involved in or interfering with any employee, officer, or agent under the direction of the university president. It is recommended that the university president be the one and only employee of the localized governing board.

Potential issues can also arise between the governing board and the president if there is dissatisfaction from either party. Anne D. Neal, President of the American Council of Trustees and Alumni has said that presidents need to take responsibility for keeping their board members privy to the latest information on campus for board members to make the best decisions possible (Ryad, 2013). "So if the trustees are not well-informed, certainly some of the blame has to be placed at the foot of the presidents, or it certainly represents a failure of communication between the presidents and lay board members who are, at the end of the day, volunteers." (Ryad, 2013). Though the board members may be "volunteers" at the end of the day, they are endowed with the power to remove a president if deemed necessary. Potential conflicts between this lay board and the president can arise in myriad ways. The board must leave the day to day operations of the university to the president and allow them to execute their position as they see best. The board is only mandated to meet four times each year. Within those meetings the board must be focused on the performance and outcome metrics of the institution and use these as the indicators to measure the performance of the president and the institution.

Funding

In response to concerns about fair funding and proper representation, the legislators recently passed Amendment Four to the FOCUS Act, which says "each president from a state university in the state university and community college system, instead of just one such president, (will be assigned) to the THEC funding formula committee" (Tennessee General Assembly); an amendment that President Glenda Glover of TSU claims to have directly influenced as stated in a TSU FOCUS Act Update dated March 25, 2016 (http://www.tnstate.edu/president/documents/TSU_Focus_Update_2016_0325.pdf). Governor Haslam has also said that he would make it a priority to "consult with lawmakers to ensure strong boards would be appointed for each school and that he would work to avoid competing lobbying efforts by each institution for state dollars and construction projects" (Shelzig, 2016). However, Gerald McCormick expressed concern about what could happen after Governor Haslam's term is over in 2019 (Shelzig, 2016).

Autonomy and the Move toward a Corporation

Autonomy from THEC for these governing boards is crucial for their success. While oversight is necessary, the previous size of the TBR system is a testament to how a large system with too much oversight can weaken the overall system with bureaucracy. It is recommended that THEC be the centralized voice for higher education within the state of Tennessee as is practiced in such states as West Virginia and Kentucky. In this case the chancellor or another key THEC figure would represent the interests of the six institutions and their Boards to the state legislature and governor. It is recommended that THEC not only increase in statute (as is proposed by the FOCUS Act), but that it also increase in practice. With this centralized voice in the state, it is important that each of the independent boards be allowed to operate with a level of autonomy that increases the interests of that institution. However, it is possible and a concern that with the increase in statute and practice, the same model that was just overturned by the legislature will be repeated as more regulation and oversight are promulgated by the newly empowered THEC.

Possible Future Directions and Conversations

A major interest of these boards will be financial. In other systems such as Virginia, these boards are referred to as "corporations". If true autonomy is ultimately granted, conversations in the future should revolve around the ability of each institution to issue debt, giving the institution the ability to build, lease, and ultimately drive investment at the institution without the heavy hand of a board of regents and the cumbersome pace at which it moves. Becoming a "corporation" of sorts would allow the institutions to deal in real-estate, issuing bonds to raise capital, and to manage and finance its own debt. Many universities use this structure currently by buying retail spaces that are then leased. The revenues from these real-estate investments are then used by the university to further the mission, offer scholarships, and to facilitate other institutional goals. According to one medium-sized university president, this is likely to be the conversation and debate that will ensue in the next 10 years within the state of Tennessee.

CONCLUSION

The true test of success for the FOCUS Act was not in the passage of the bill, which occurred in March and April 2016, but in the separation and restructuring of the Tennessee Board of Regents. As has been pointed out, THEC has been empowered beyond its current standing in statute, but in practice has yet to be seen. This is going to require a major organizational restructuring for THEC that may include the addition of staff members and departments. Though the necessity of additional personnel can be argued as many states, including neighboring Virginia, oversee many more students with less formalized structure at the state level. This may also promulgate the resurgence of a large, cumbersome system that delays and hinders the progress of the institutions. In either case, the formal passage of power from TBR to THEC may take time as TBR has expressed concern and doubt over the transition.

Of particular note is the large loss of revenue that TBR will experience when its oversight of the four-year universities is officially dissolved. Currently the system receives a total of $8.6 million in fees from the 46 TBR institutions. Of that amount, $5.7 million comes from the six universities that will transition away from TBR. That is an incredible financial loss for the system, and transition away from those fees will likely take time. Currently the universities are paying TBR for access to software systems for finance and administration and for teaching and learning. Those relationships will likely continue, though independent boards are likely to find other software systems that complement the needs and resources of the individual institution better. In this instance, THEC may be able to leverage the purchasing power that was had through the TBR system.

This leaves further questions about what will happen with university contracts. Will contracts still be maintained by the TBR system, or will they transition to THEC or to the university? Will previous agreements be honored and maintained? All of these questions and issues must be dealt with in the years, months, and even weeks ahead since the passage of the Act.

Despite the conversations and debates that will undoubtedly follow, the Act has placed things in motion that will fundamentally change the landscape of higher education within the state of Tennessee, and possibly the nation. Tennessee has been on the forefront of change in higher education, and has been frequently placed on the national stage. These changes are likely the subject of conversation at higher administrative agencies, and will certainly be closely watched by other states.

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APPENDIX 1
PROS AND CONS OF THE FOCUS ACT

Pros

- More local control by independent leadership.
- Increased speed and agility for the institutions.
- Increase in true shared governance among administrators, faculty, staff, and students.
- Increased and localized focus on institutional priorities and mission.
- Opportunities for future diversification of debt issuance and revenue sources.

Cons

- Alumni statues is loosely defined (two-year attendance), which means the member may not have a deep understanding of the campus culture and an appreciation for institutional history.
- No limits on political affiliation may mean a biased board.
- No current specifications on conflicts of interest, which may make it easy for members to act in their best financial or personal interest.
- Less power for small universities compared to the UT system.
- Potential political issues and conflict of interests with qualified board members.
- Potential for increased competition among universities that violates state interests.

Appendix 2
Public and Private University Governance Systems and Bylaws Matrix Diagram

Public

Institution	Control	Meetings	Officers	Responsibilities	Committees	Curriculum and Instruction
Virginia Tech	Under the General Assembly of the state. 14 voting board members (art. 1 §1)	Board sessions are open and may be attended by selected student constituents and the faculty senate president. Meetings occur 1x per year. Closed meetings are permitted for certain reasons. No voting is permitted unless a quorum is present.	The board annually elects a Rector to preside and Vice Rector if absent for a maximum of two one-year terms.	Responsible for the operation of the institution, and to write policy. Authority is delegated to the U. President. Responsible for capital improvement and care of property. Specific examples delineated below:	Executive, Nominating, Finance and Audit, Buildings and Grounds, Student Affairs and Athletics, Research	Must include agriculture, mechanic arts, military tactics, sciences and classes in conformity with institutional mission.
William & Mary	17 members including officers (Rector, Vice Rector, and Secretary) are gubernatorial. Student and faculty representatives are included.	Meets four x per year. A simple majority is required for a quorum to be present.	Rector, Vice Rector, and Secretary	Appoints President, Provost, and other key administrative positions.	Academic Affairs, Administration, Buildings and Grounds, Athletics, Audit and Compliance, Financial Affairs, Richard Bland College, Strategic Initiatives and New Ventures, Student Affairs, University Advancement. One or more board members appointed by Rector to be chair.	The Provost who reports to the board is responsible for curricular decisions.
University of Virginia			Rector, Vice Rector, and Secretary		Academic and Student Life, Advancement, Audit, Compliance and Risk, Buildings and Grounds, Executive, Finance, Medical Center Operating Board, MCOB Quality Subcommittee, UVA College at Wise	
West Virginia University	Supervised by the Higher Education Policy Commission. Made up of 17 members (including 1 faculty, 1 staff, and 1 student. The Chairperson of WVU Institute of Technology must hold a seat	Must meet at least 6 times per year with at least 9 members present. The executive committee creates the agenda with consultation from the university president.	Chair, Vice Chair, and Secretary, all of which serve one year terms. The Chair is selected from the laypersons serving on the Board. Officers can be removed at any time by majority vote.	Oversees financial, business and educational policy, appoints and evaluates the President; prepares budget requests; manages personnel matters; supervises fundraising; oversees contracts	Executive Committee; Strategic Plans and Initiatives Committee; Accreditation and Academic Affairs Committee;Health Sciences Committee; Finance Committee; Facilities and Revitalization Committee; Divisional Campus Committee; and Audit Committee.	Oversees educational policy; approves education programs
Marshall University	16 Board members, including a faculty member, staff person, and student.	Meetings have varied from 4-12 over the last 7 years.	Board Chairperson, Vice Chair, Secretary, and Committee Chairs	"Members…oversee the university's operations and establish its policies."	Academic & Student Affairs and the Finance, Audit and Facilities Planning Committee.	Oversees multiple facets from faculty compensation to policy regarding textbooks and syllabi, and more but with no authority over course curriculum.
University of Oregon	Currently, 15 serve on the board.	Meet at least once quarterly. A quorum is a majority.	President, Treasurer, General Counsel, Secretary and such other officers as may be deemed necessary by the President to conduct University business.		Executive and Audit; Academic and Student Affairs; Finance and Facilities	
Western Oregon University	Currently, 14 serve on the board.	Meet at least once quarterly. A quorum is a majority.	President, Provost, Vice President for Finance & Administration, General Counsel, and Secretary		Executive, Governance, and Trusteeship Committee; Finance and Administration Committee; and Academic and Student Affairs Committee	

Appendix 2 (Continued)
Public and Private University Governance Systems and Bylaws Matrix Diagram

Private

Institution	Control	Meetings	Officers	Responsibilities	Committees	Curriculum and Instruction
Yale	Board known as the "president and fellows of Yale College". Made up of 19 members, including the Governor and Lt. Governor of CT. There is no time limit for service.	Held 5 times per year.			Prudential (Executive), Finance, Audit, Investments, Educational Policy, Institutional Policies, Honorary Degrees, Buildings and Grounds, Development and Alumni Affairs, Compensation, Trusteeship, Investor Responsibility and School of Medicine.	
Duke University	The Board of Trustees has 37 members who are elected by the Student Government, Graduate and Professional Student Council, he Alumni Association, and the Duke Endowment. Two grad students observe.	3 meeting per year, plus special meetings as necessary. A majority is necessary for quorum.	Chair, two Vice Chairs, and the President of Duke.		Academic Affairs Committee; Audit, Risk, and Compliance Committee; Business and Finance Committee; Facilities and Environment Committee; Human Resourced Committee; Institutional Advancement Committee; Medical Center Academic Affairs Committee; Undergraduate Education Committee	The Academic Affairs Committee oversees all activities that support the academic mission of the University, including the articulation of the academic mission of the University, enhancing the quality of the academic program, considering new academic programs, all matters relating to the graduate and professional student experience, promoting scholarly research, and overseeing strategic planning for the University and its constituent schools.

Virginia Tech Board Responsibilities:

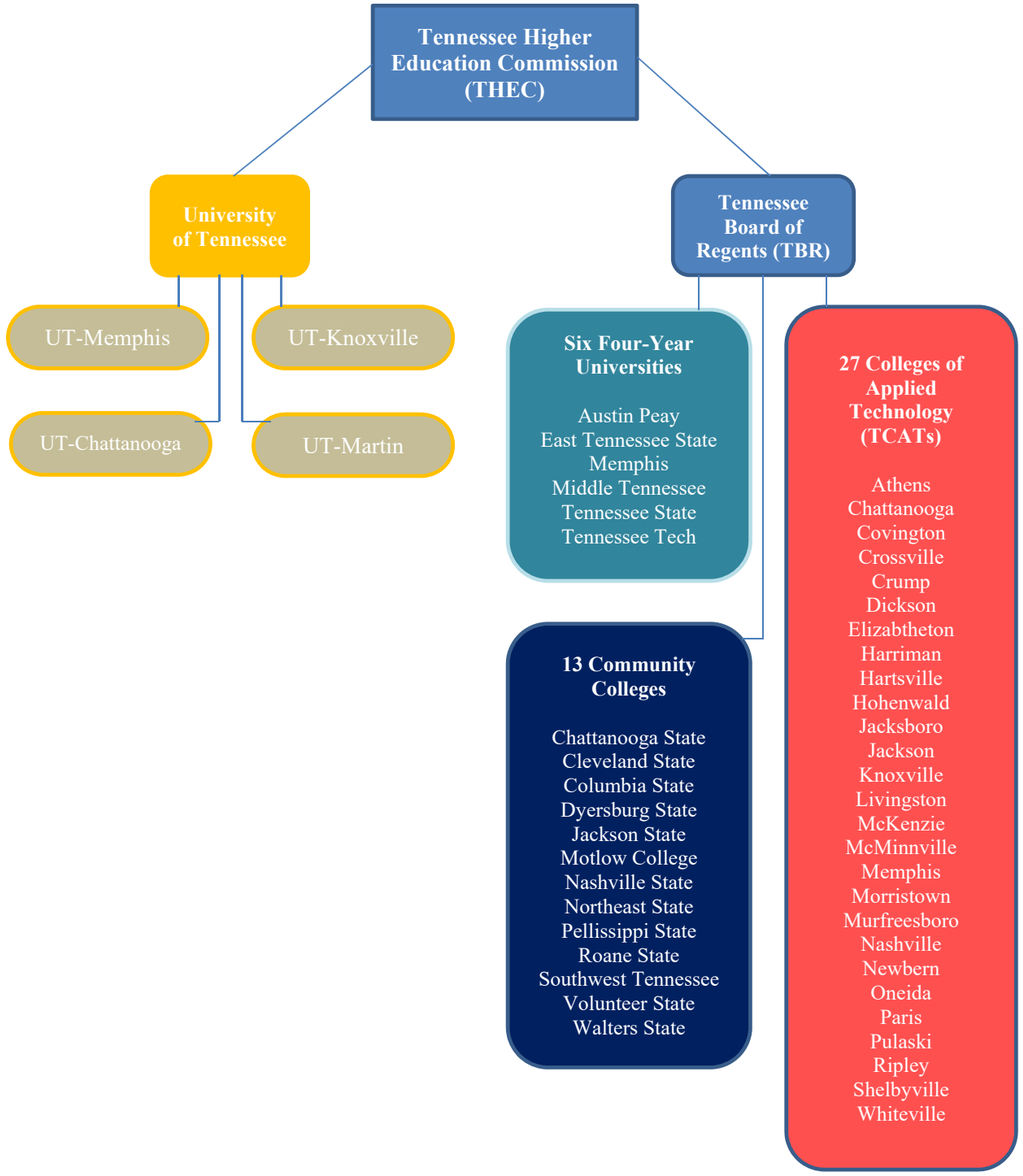
1. Appointment of the President of the University.
2. Approve appointments and fix salaries of the faculty, university staff, and other personnel.1
3. Establish fees, tuition, and other charges imposed by the University on students.
4. Review and approval of the University's budgets and overview of its financial management.
5. Review and approval of proposed academic degree programs and the general overview of the academic programs of the University.
6. Review and approval of the establishment of new colleges or departments.
7. Ratification of appointments by the President or vice presidents.
8. Representation of the University to citizens and officers of the Commonwealth of Virginia, especially in clarifying the purpose and mission of the University.
9. Approval of promotions, grants of tenure, and employment of individuals.2
10. Review and approval of physical plant development of the campus.
11. The naming of buildings and other major facilities on campus.
12. Review and approval of grants of rights-of-way and easement on University property.
13. Review and approval of real property transactions.
14. Exercise of the power of eminent domain.
15. Review and approval of personnel policies for the faculty and university staff.
16. Subject to management agreement between the Commonwealth of Virginia and Virginia Tech, the Board has full responsibility for management of Virginia Tech. (§23-38.91, Code of Virginia, as amended).

West Virginia University Board Responsibilities

1. The Board has the authority to control financial, business, and education policies.
2. The board oversees the master plan and files it with the WV Education Policy Commission.
3. The board prepared the budget request
4. The board reviews academic programs at least every five years to ensure transferability, logical course sequence, etc.
5. The board approves teacher education programs
6. The board manages personnel matters, such as compensation, employment, and discipline
7. The board supervises the fundraising arm (financial and in-kind)
8. The board appoints the President as well as evaluates his/her performance
9. The board oversees contracts/agreements with other schools of all types
10. The board manages the transfer of funds/properties to other agencies or institutions
11. The board has the right to delegate power to the President of other senior administrator in any case deemed necessary
12. The board has authority of the computer/computer donation program
13. The board decides where to concentrate attention and resources on state priorities
14. The board will continue to provide certain administrative services to WVE-Parkesburg

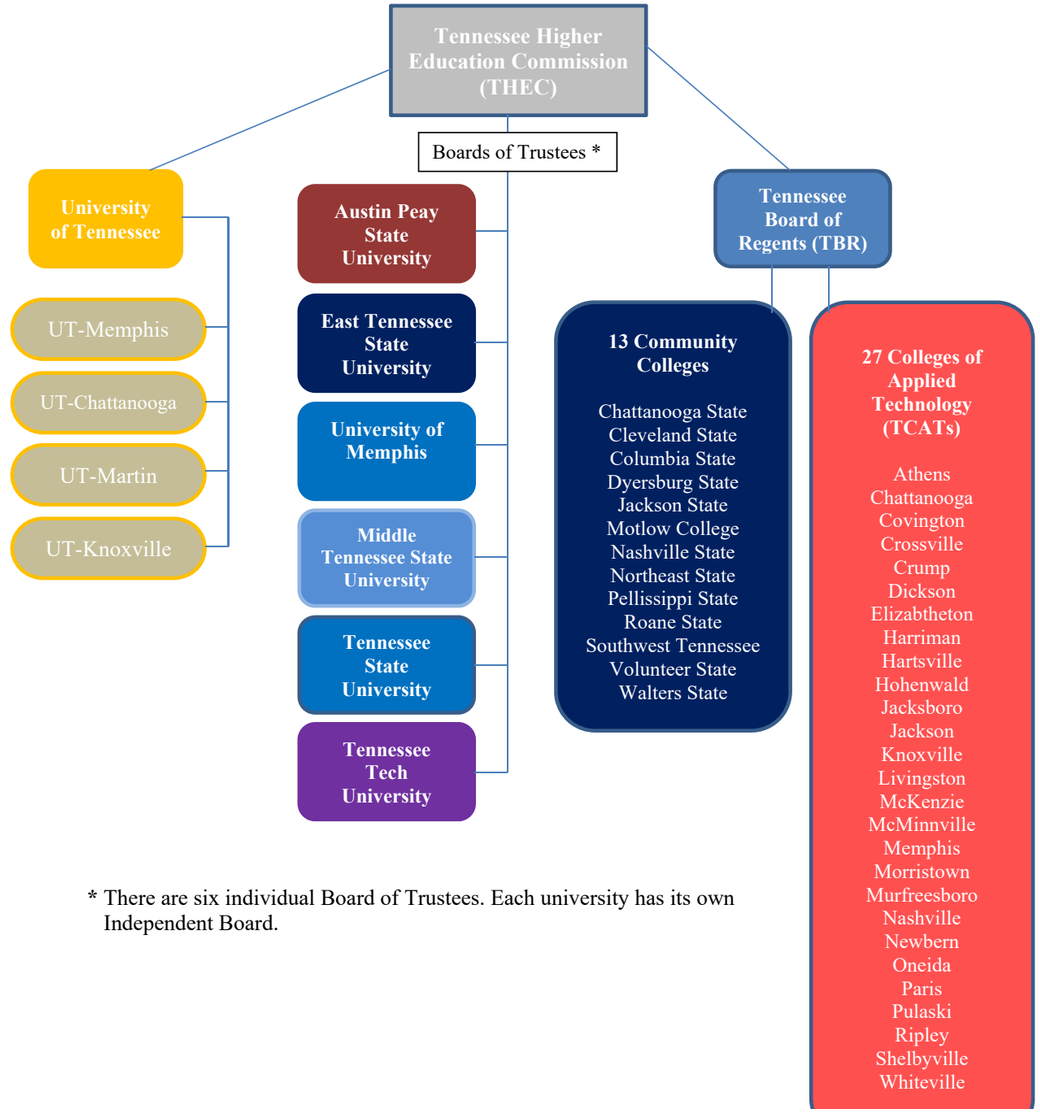
Appendix 3

Tennessee Higher Education Governance Structure before the FOCUS Act



Appendix 4

Tennessee Higher Education Governance Structure after the FOCUS Act



* There are six individual Board of Trustees. Each university has its own Independent Board.

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Doctoral Students in a Distance Program: Advising and Degree Completion Strategies

Marilyn L. Grady, Ph.D., Professor
Department of Educational Administration
University of Nebraska-Lincoln
Lincoln, Nebraska

POSITION STATEMENT

In 1996, with a colleague in the department of educational administration, we developed the first online graduate course for the students in the department. The department is graduate-only, offering masters and doctoral degrees.

The "pilot" we developed was a research methods course. The platform used was Lotus Notes. Our efforts were part of a college-wide initiative to develop online courses for students in a college of education. Each of the departments of the college was to develop one online course. A day of "training" was provided for the pilot project faculty.

The pilot class was offered in the spring semester 1996. I have memories of this new teaching format and my experiences at that time. One enduring memory is that at the end of a day on campus, I would leave my office and my computer. I typically felt "confident" that all was well with the students in the online course. However, when I returned to the office the next day, I was always stunned to read the "threads" the students had created in the time between my departure and my return. The number of threads was daunting. Lotus Notes was an excellent forum for students to become acquainted with each other; and, it also was an excellent forum for reporting on significant issues such as one of the class member's cat's gastric issues. The myriad of other personal issues and comments were mixed with requests for help from other students with the course assignments. Students were very generous in their responses to these requests. The number of threads of advice and information were impressive. This was an early example of the power of peer mentoring at the graduate level.

Unfortunately, the amount of "misinformation" provided, student-to-student, became a major challenge in the management of the course, the threads and the course content.

I am relieved that the university moved to Blackboard as the platform for online courses. However, in the spring semester 2016, I participated in the piloting of Canvas in one of the courses I taught. The students were very pleased with Canvas. As an instructional platform, it was an excellent experience.

Canvas will be offered as a faculty option during the summer and fall 2016 terms as an "experimental" option as well. I believe a university decision on investing in Canvas as the university platform will be made soon. The evolution of these platforms for course delivery has made course management much easier.

In 2016, the graduate programs offered by our department are primarily online. The available degree options are the Ph.D., Ed.D., M.A., and M.Ed.

The program has experienced success based on the number of applications and the number of enrolled students. For instance, in spring semester 2016, the number of doctoral students in the educational leadership and higher education programs was 251. At the May 2016 commencement, eleven individuals from the program received the doctoral degree.

PURPOSE

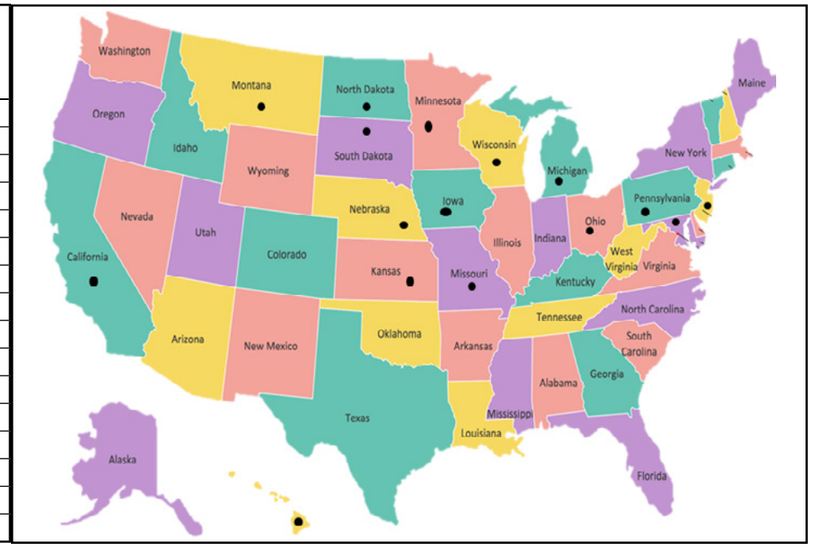
The purpose of this manuscript is to suggest strategies for advising doctoral students in an online doctoral program in educational leadership and higher education. The strategies are based on experiences with 33 doctoral students who completed their doctoral degrees 1992-2016.

These individuals were able to complete all of the course work online. Thirty-two of the students came to campus for advising and special events during their programs; however, one student did not come to campus until the final oral defense.

The strategies for doctoral advising offered in this manuscript are based on a long term commitment to helping students complete their doctoral programs. To advance this commitment, a doctoral advising approach was developed (Grady & Hoffman, 2007). This approach was designed to address the issue of attrition among doctoral students.

Table 1
Home States of the 33 Individuals

California	1
Hawaii	1
Iowa	2
Kansas	2
Maryland	1
Michigan	4
Minnesota	2
Missouri	4
Montana	2
Nebraska	7
New Jersey	1
North Dakota	1
Ohio	1
Pennsylvania	1
South Dakota	2
Wisconsin	1



A condensed version of this approach to guiding the dissertation process is presented as Figure 2.

The aspects of the guide reflect issues that a doctoral advisor may want to consider in structuring the advising plan used with students.

CHALLENGES

What special supports are needed by distance students?

The 32 students whose experiences are the basis for this report had one factor in common that contributed to their success in achieving the doctoral degree. Although the students were not required to come to campus, they all came to campus.

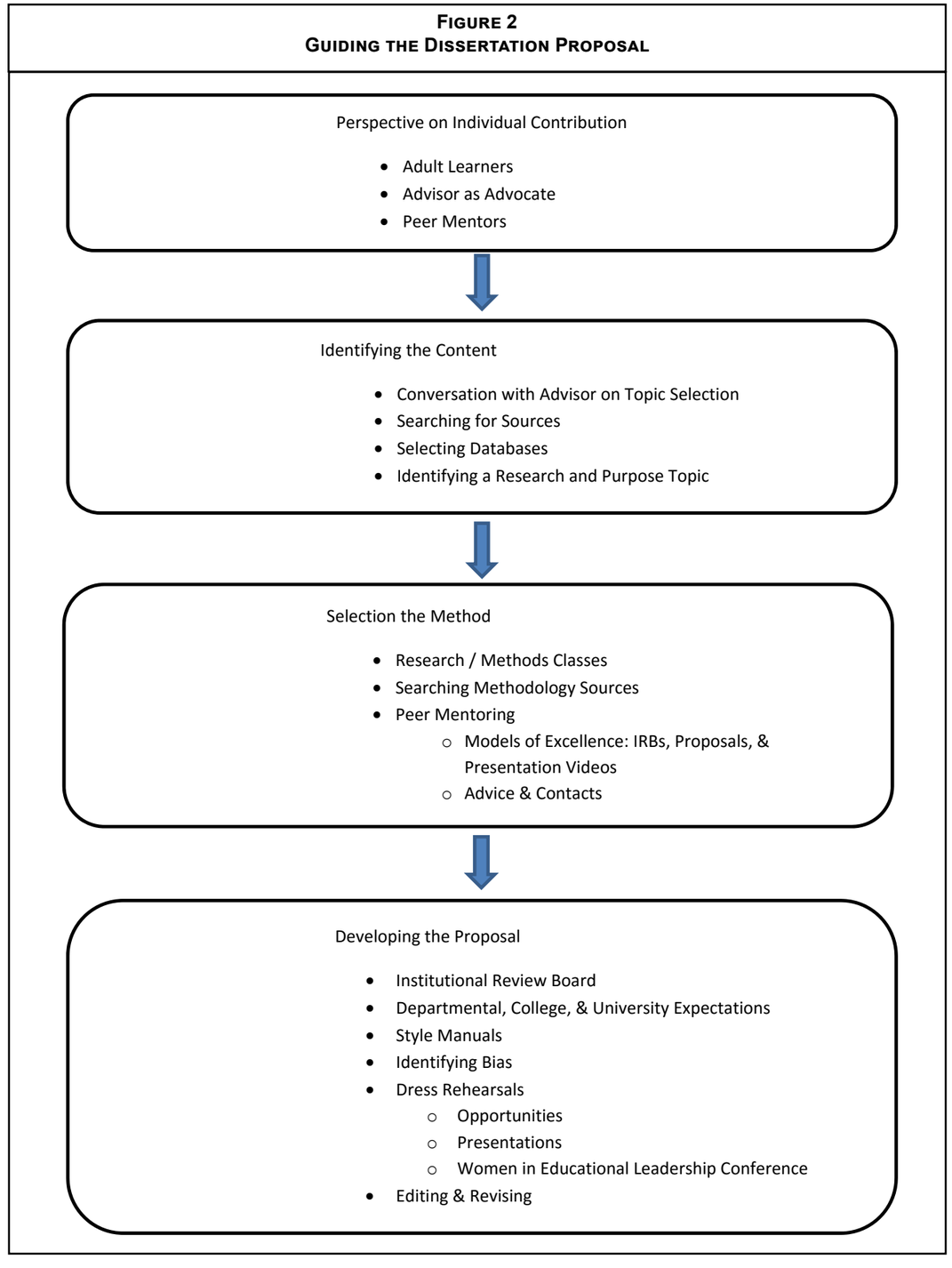
The strategy used to lure the students was an annual conference, the Women in Educational Leadership Conference offered in October of each year. The students were urged to come to the event. The conference begins on Sunday afternoon and ends by late Monday afternoon. I invite my doctoral advisees to come earlier if possible. The students arrive in time to attend a special meeting of my doctoral advisees on Sunday before the conference. Lunch is provided. All students introduce themselves. As the advisor, I provide an overview of the steps in completing their doctoral program that includes course completion, topic identification, proposal development and presentation to the doctoral committee, collection of data for the doctoral study and the details of the final oral defense. Additionally, the students are urged to remain on campus until noon on Tuesday. The event that encourages the students to remain on campus is an opportunity to attend the doctoral proposal meetings and final oral defenses for the students I advise. This opportunity is a chance to "SEE ONE." With this experience, the students are able to observe what the process involves. It demystifies an event that can cause considerable anxiety for the students. Students are exposed to the array of topics and research completed by the students. The students observe the doctoral committee in action. After the faculty members have questioned and discussed the student's presentation and paper, the students in attendance are invited to ask questions about the research topic and the methods.

This process has become an essential aspect of building a cohort or community for the distance students. The students leave the presentations with a group of students they can contact as they move through their doctoral experiences.

The enduring aspect of this process is evident as students who have completed their degrees return to campus when other members of this doctoral cohort return to campus for the proposal presentations and the doctoral defenses of these individuals.

The network of students reflects a special degree of "know how" in regards to the student's needs as they move through the program. They are available to answer questions from the students' point of view.

Figure 2
Guiding the Dissertation Proposal



Once students make the first trip to campus, they are typically convinced of the value of the experience in their quest to complete a doctoral program.

The students who approach the writing of the dissertation proposal will make the trip to campus in order to work on proposal development in an environment where they receive one-to-one guidance on the process. The students consistently verify that the time and money invested in these visits is worthwhile in their successful completion of the doctorate.

The students continue to return to campus as needed as they collect their research data and write the dissertation.

The students typically complete the doctoral degree in four years. However, some motivated individuals have completed the degree in fewer years.

What evidence exists that the approach is working? It is simply a matter of numbers. In an academic year, a minimum of four to seven students complete the doctoral degree by working according to this plan to complete their studies.

STUDENT INVESTMENTS

The student must be willing to take a risk. Each step requires the student to invest in the process, but more importantly, in themselves. They must spend the time and money to come to campus. They must be willing to follow the plan that leads to the development of a proposal, data collection, analyses, reporting of the results, and creation of the dissertation as well as its successful defense.

A number of students who begin doctoral programs do not complete the doctoral program. The non-completion, attrition rates, are a concern. Students who languish in these programs are not the best reflection on the programs. Students who linger in doctoral programs for extended periods of time consume departmental, faculty and administrative resources. Programs experience enrollment caps. When students do not graduate or withdraw from the program, programs are blocked from admitting additional students.

PRESENTATIONS

Another aspect that builds community within the student cohort is encouragement to make presentations at scholarly conferences. The doctoral students are encouraged to present their dissertation research at the annual Women in Educational Leadership Conference. They also are encouraged to attend and present at an array of state, regional and national conferences. These forums provide opportunities for the students to present their research, at whatever stage it is at, to audiences of scholars who provide critique as well as recommendations to strengthen the research. For individuals in academic settings or those who seek faculty roles, these events provide a "line on a vita" for the students. The students are encouraged to attend the same conferences so that they can support each other's work and presentations. This, again, strengthens the community among the students.

These are students' investments in themselves They carry a price tag in terms of time and money. However, these students are working toward doctoral degrees. The connections, exposure and experiences they have are career builders for them.

The doctoral experience should be more than a collection of classes. It includes performance/practice activities that strengthen the students' research skills, presentation skills, professional network, and broader engagement with the academic community.

ADVISOR INVESTMENTS

A critical issue in these proposed strategies is the willingness of faculty advisors to invest the one-to-one time working with the students. How much effort will a faculty member be able to dedicate to this work?

The number of students who begin doctoral programs and do not complete the degree is an important consideration. For this reason, I have focused on developing a process for working with doctoral students. I have worked with the model as a guide for all of the subsequent years; but, I continue to modify it as I work with new students.

The points summarized in the paper are starting points for discussions of these issues. The number of graduate programs available to students demands that existing programs be attentive to their work with the doctoral students, their advising needs and their degree completion rates.

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The aim of Academic Business World is to promote inclusiveness in research by offering a forum for the discussion of research in early stages as well as research that may differ from 'traditional' paradigms. We wish our conferences to have a reputation for providing a peer-reviewed venue that is open to the full range of researchers in business as well as reference disciplines within the social sciences.

Business Disciplines

We encourage the submission of manuscripts, presentation outlines, and abstracts pertaining to any business or related discipline topic. We believe that all disciplines are interrelated and that looking at our disciplines and how they relate to each other is preferable to focusing only on our individual 'silos of knowledge'. The ideal presentation would cross discipline. borders so as to be more relevant than a topic only of interest to a small subset of a single discipline. Of course, single domain topics are needed as well.

International Conference on Learning and Administration in Higher Education (ICLAHE.org)

All too often learning takes a back seat to discipline related research. The International Conference on Learning and Administration in Higher Education seeks to focus exclusively on all aspects of learning and administration in higher education. We wish to bring together, a wide variety of individuals from all countries and all disciplines, for the purpose of exchanging experiences, ideas, and research findings in the processes involved in learning and administration in the academic environment of higher education.

We encourage the submission of manuscripts, presentation outlines, and abstracts in either of the following areas:

Learning

We encourage the submission of manuscripts pertaining to pedagogical topics. We believe that much of the learning process is not discipline specific and that we can all benefit from looking at research and practices outside our own discipline. The ideal submission would take a general focus on learning rather than a discipline-specific perspective. For example, instead of focusing on "Motivating Students in Group Projects in Marketing Management", you might broaden the perspective to "Motivating Students in Group Projects in Upper Division Courses" or simply "Motivating Students in Group Projects" The objective here is to share your work with the larger audience.

Academic Administration

We encourage the submission of manuscripts pertaining to the administration of academic units in colleges and universities. We believe that many of the challenges facing academic departments are not discipline specific and that learning how different departments address these challenges will be beneficial. The ideal paper would provide information that many administrators would find useful, regardless of their own disciplines