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## CONTENTS

- 4 **Negentropy: Systems Theory and Chaos for University Leadership and Management** (*Ali Carr-Chellman, Sydney Freeman, and Allen Kitchel*)
- 12 **Leadership Development: A Fresh Look at the Need for a Focused Approach at the Campus Level** (*William E. Hill & Christy Nolan*)
- 18 **A Path to Promotion and Reward Structures for Full-Time, Non-Tenure Track Faculty: One University's Process for the Teacher-Scholar Model** (*Linda J. Schoenstedt & Christina Davlin-Pater*)
- 28 **The Implicit Costs of Regulatory Compliance in Higher Education: A Case Study** (*Phillip A. Olt*)
- 44 **Adding a New Football Program: The Impact of Socioeconomic and Geographic Diversity at Small, Private Institutions** (*Joe Mullins & Daniel Teodorescu*)
- 65 **Faculty Club: Innovation in Improving Collegiality, Climate, and Collaboration at a Research University** (*Kaprea F. Johnson & Timothy L. Davey*)
- 79 **The Community College Choice Process: Why New Hampshire Students Decide to Attend an Out-of-State Community College** (*Daniel M. Richer*)
- 91 **Women's Participation in Management in the University for Development Studies: The Role of Mentorship** (*Juliana Agalga, Patience AdiiKANbasi, and Agnes Atia Apusigah*)
- 103 Directions for Contributors

# Negentropy: Systems Theory and Chaos for University Leadership and Management

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*Just as the constant increase of **entropy** is the basic law of the universe, so it is the basic law of life to be ever more highly structured and to struggle against **entropy**.*

—Vaclav Havel

## Introduction: Scientific Foundations

Within chaos and systems theories, negentropy has been rarely applied to social systems. This paper addresses the theoretical application of negentropy as a force to decrease disintegration and devolution of the system of higher education. Negentropic actions by faculty and leaders are described along with a theory of how those actions are integrated into higher education innovative practice. The foundations of negentropy and the distinctions between other forms of change in higher education, such as entrepreneurship and innovation, are explored. Negentropy is offered as an alternative, and powerful tool for significant positive evolution of the university toward more sustainable models.

Negentropy is the mathematical function represented by the opposite of entropy. (Ho, 1994). It is simplest to begin the conversation on negentropy in the university with a deeper understanding of physics, thermodynamics, and entropy and why so many suggest that the university is in a state of entropic energy loss. Physics itself is a science that focuses on the natural properties of energy and matter. Thermodynamics is a branch of physics that focuses on heat and energy, including mechanical, electrical, chemical energies—really all forms of energy are included in considerations under the umbrella of thermodynamics. (Lucas, 2015). Entropy and its converse, negentropy are theoretical constructs nested within thermodynamics.

Within physics, there are many branches including cosmology, optics, and Einstein's own relativity. Thermodynamics was developed by Carnot in 1824 to make steam engines more efficient. There are four laws of thermodynamics; zeroth which is similar to mathematical laws of equilibrium in which if two systems are in equilibrium with a third system, they would also be in equilibrium with one another, similar to the familiar, 'if  $a=c$  and  $b=c$  then  $a=b$ .' (Lucas, 2015). The first law asserts that energy is constant within a closed system, that it cannot be created nor destroyed, but that it can change form and flow from one location to another. The second law asserts that heat does not flow from cold to hot...this is the law we are most interested in for entropy and negentropy. This law is a basic expression of the principle of decay over time—entropy is the measure of how much decay has taken place in a system. This law asserts that over time, any isolated system, not in equilibrium, will decay

over time—or that entropy will tend to increase over time. Despite some of the notions of negentropy, this law asserts the irreversibility of systems decay over time. The third law asserts that despite entropy, no system will reach absolute zero in terms of energy or temperature. Absolute zero would be complete cessation of all activity—it is the ‘nothingness’ which cannot ever, according to this law, occur completely.

The essentials of thermodynamics are, according to Percy Williams Bridgman, 1946 Nobel Prize winner in Physics, completely unsettled and incomplete. He suggested in 1941 that thermodynamics is a field that is both incomplete and under analyzed. Part of what we believe about the field of thermodynamics is that the metaphorical application of these constructs to far-from-equilibrium systems, social systems, human systems, is one of the important contributions that social scientists can have to the further development of the theory. We believe this is an area worthy of much ongoing research. We are focused specifically on the entropic and negentropic forces within universities.

The reason 'negentropy' continues to be used is that 'entropy with a negative sign' simply does not capture what is intended by the original term. Schrödinger uses it to identify the remarkable ability of the living system, not only to avoid the effects of entropy production - as dictated by the second law - but to do just the opposite, to increase organization, which intuitively, seems like the converse of entropy. Szent-Györgi, on the other hand, alludes to both the notions of free energy and of organization in his use of the term. Both scientists have the right intuition - energy and organization are inextricably bound up with each other.

From Ho 1994: <http://www.i-sis.org.uk/negentr.php>

It is worthy of note that negentropic behaviors can only take root inside an organization that is entropic. By its definition, negentropy is the relief side of entropy. That said, almost all universities are entropic in some ways or other. Finding entropy is relatively easy in today's universities. Thus, applying negentropy is also relatively easy once we have clarity of understanding and openness to change current behaviors to stave off entropy. The task, then, becomes clarifying the flows of energy and resources within the university itself.

### **Methods: Applying Negentropy**

The focus of our work has been the general understanding of the application of entropy and negentropy within the university. We have focused on faculty behavior (Author, 2017), though we could as easily examine negentropic leadership, negentropic support work, or negentropic organizational principles. All of these overlap somewhat with our analysis of faculty behavior, but the focus is on faculty behavior as seen through the lens of negentropy. Entropic and negentropic behaviors happen in all sectors of a faculty job description from scholarship to teaching to service. The foundational notions are that negentropic scholarship tends toward social or public intellectual work, teaching goes beyond excellence in the classroom (though it does indeed include that) to engage in enrollment growth, and new curricular offerings, service/outreach goes beyond simply staffing committees that tend to reify existing entropic structures and processes, and tend, instead, to move toward public service and outreach. Why is this? Negentropic faculty behaviors fall into the same essential categories that are required for faculty positions, but they are done in a different, more energy-releasing way, which infuses new ideas, organization, heat, and light, into the system broadly.

It is important to distinguish between negentropic behaviors and more commonly understood progressive faculty behaviors such as entrepreneurial or innovative behaviors. The chart below serves as an outline of these distinctions:

**Table 1 – Negentropic vs. Entrepreneurial vs. Innovative models within faculty tasks**

|               | Negentropic  | Innovative   | Entrepreneurial  |
|---------------|--|--|--|
| Scholarship   | Reaches out to public  | Breaks new ground  | Focuses on marketability of ideas, transfer to industry, patents                                     |
| Teaching      | May disrupt away from current content, tends to question the foundations             | Utilizes new technologies and approaches to deliver current content                        | Engage learners in partnerships with industry, ‘pitches’ competitive models                          |
| Curriculum    | Creates new programs focused on connecting across disciplines, disrupting status quo | May work within existing programs but with different class approaches                      | Creates new programs focused on market need, gaps, contracts   |
| Service       | Transcends to real outreach practice   | Works to improve current committee work and try new ideas for improving existing practices | Considers how to connect service with community companies and translate into consulting or contracts |
| Overall focus | On fighting back entropic tendencies   | On doing new things, new for better/ improvement   | On personal advancement typically through consulting   |

Perhaps among the most important functions for faculty, particularly in the most prestigious universities, is the scholarly work that they conduct. (O’Meara, Chalk-Bennet, Neihaus, 2016). This includes writing for publication, empirical research, creative activities (in the arts and related areas), external funding proposals, grant administration, and public presentations of research work. This is the general outline of what most research faculty devote about half of their time to. Research faculty are primarily concerned, in their research, with building a coherent and cohesive body of scholarship that represents a clear trajectory of progressive work. (O’Meara, Chalk-Bennet, Neihaus, 2016). This leads to increased domination of siloed scholarly behavior which has, in turn, led to increased interdisciplinary collaboration (Thorp & Goldstein, 2010). Within an *entrepreneurial* frame, scholarship begins to pay attention to marketable ideas, particularly those which may lead to patents, industry application, or potential to build consulting opportunities. Within an *innovative* frame, scholarly research may tend toward interdisciplinary work, but always focuses on breaking new ground, rather than simply replicating or evolutionary empirical work. In contrast, *negentropic* scholarly faculty

work does not focus on narrow constructions of scholarship, but rather thinks about ways that scholarship will have broad public application, and how to position their work as public intellectuals rather than disciplinary experts.

While scholarship should represent approximately half of a faculty member's time, teaching may take even more despite the common understanding that the teaching should take slightly less time than scholarship leaving only a slim piece of pie for outreach, service and other tasks. (Neumann, Finally-Neumann, & Reichel, 1991). Within teaching, *entrepreneurial* faculty will tend to engage learners in partnerships as much as possible. There are often strong connections between industry and teaching with reliance on internships, practicum and even competitive 'pitches.' *Innovative* teaching practices tend toward the uses of new technologies and approaches within the existing teaching structure. Unlike these models, *negentropic* faculty will tend toward disruptive behaviors. They will question the foundations of a field, wonder about new opportunities for significant overhaul and redefinition of courses. Unconventional approaches could be considered innovative or entrepreneurial models, but when the practice tends to extend beyond the existing structure of assigned teaching duties, then negentropic forces are likely at play. Working beyond the edges of the organization will be more likely to create new opportunities which may temporarily disrupt but ultimately stave off the kind of entropic winding down that the university faces with declining enrollments, increasing tuition and too often a degradation of the university's mission.

Many faculty don't consider curriculum development as an essential job duty, particularly in the early phases of a faculty appointment. (Harshbarger, 1989). Most faculty focus teaching assigned courses well, and ensuring learners have firm foundations to perform well in the next course or job market. *Entrepreneurial* curriculum developers create new programs with a focus on market needs. *Innovative* curriculum making tends toward renaming, modernizing, and focusing on new approaches. The *negentropic* faculty member, in contrast, will create wholesale new programs, often interdisciplinary, in hopes of increased energy release due to collaboration. In general, negentropic curriculum making disrupts the status quo in an effort to likewise disrupt the entropic forces at play. A good example of this would be the first ever Doctorate of Athletic Training established here at the University of Idaho. Through the work of particularly negentropic faculty members, new programs were inaugurated in the athletic training field. This was a disruptive action that embraced alternative fiscal plans as a self-sustaining program (one of only a few in the university). Negentropy seeks out new opportunities, works beyond the traditional boundaries to procure new ways to deliver curriculum.

While few promotion and tenure cases are made or broken on the back of service or outreach (Woolston, 2018), this area is a significant opportunity for negentropic actions. Within an *entrepreneurial* frame, faculty engaged in service and outreach tend to look outside—they connect service with other opportunities such as working with companies, forwarding patents to industry and the like. *Innovative* service works to improve current committee practices, whereas *entropic* faculty service reaches out to broader goals particularly to release energy into the system via legislative or community support. These forms of outreach tend to enrich communities and release energy for new approaches.

Naturally, these distinctions are not as neat and clean as a chart or description portrays. Indeed, many faculty mix all of these approaches, and sometimes a single action might be considered entrepreneurial, innovative and negentropic all at the same time. It's much more permeable and fuzzy.

### Seeing Negentropy Over Time

As any organization progresses, it will continually add new charges, respond to new requirements, spread out, and create natural entropy. Negentropic actors keep disintegration from taking over. There

is this confusion however, because simply maintaining the existing structure, what we may think of as preventing disintegration, isn't sufficiently negentropic for the organization of higher education. Release of new energy involves something *new* that may initially disrupt but not disintegrate. Here, we are not meaning merely maintaining the status quo, keeping things alive. Rather, we're trying to maintain a vibrant, active organization that is constantly reaching out to new energy sources. It's not just about making sure we have a chair for all of the existing committees. Rather this is about fighting against energy loss by mapping it, understanding it, fighting it, and bringing in new sources of energy.

### **Results for Application: Negentropic Faculty**

What are the central characteristics of negentropic faculty? In general, negentropic faculty:

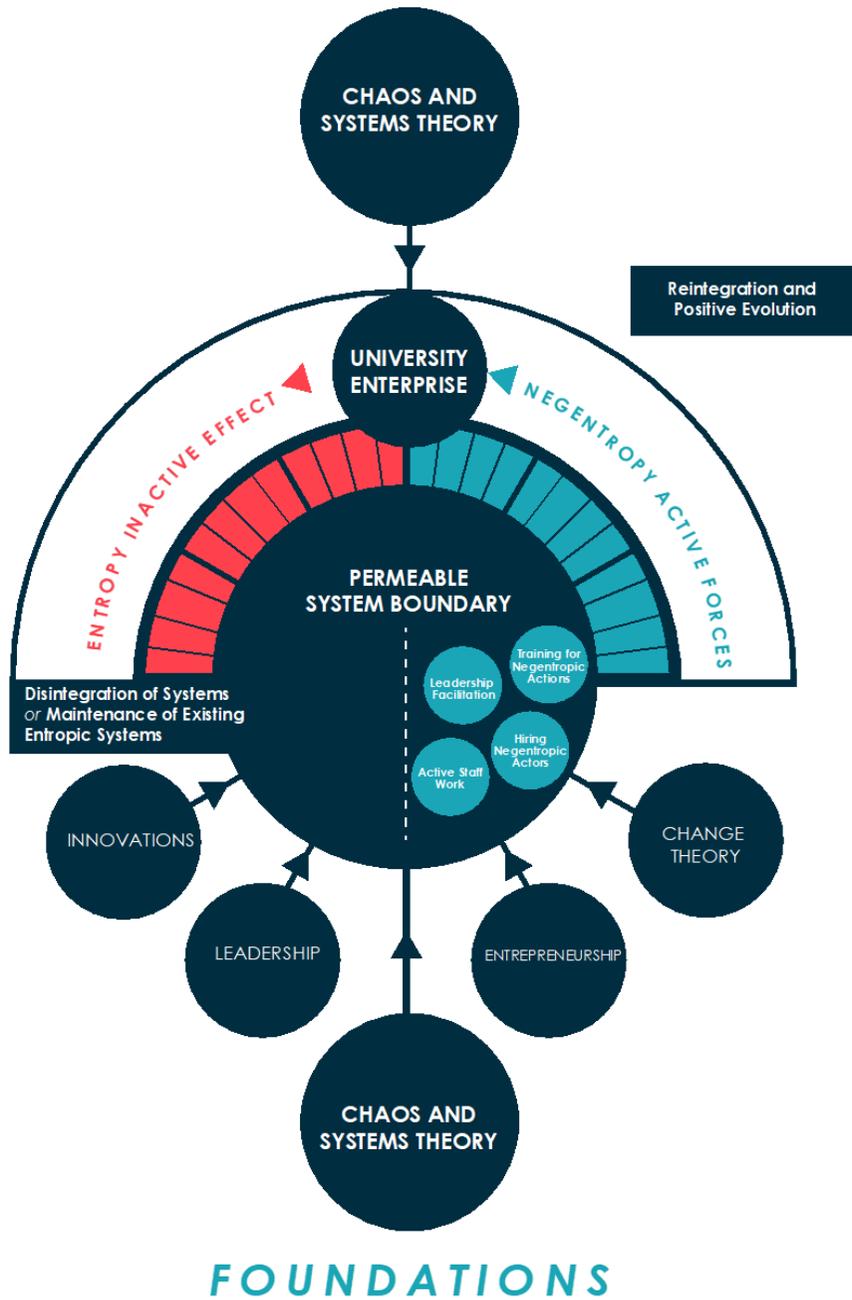
- Begin from a position of devotion to the university ideal
- Look at the work of the university as essential to society
- Tend to be highly empathetic
- Understand the mission of their institution and higher education as a whole
- Focus on applying their work in ways that advance cohesive forward motion
- Think beyond themselves
- Are creative and full of ideas
- Persist and persevere
- Understand how to grow from failure and improve incrementally
- See dysfunctional existing systems that cannot be improved, but need to be overhauled
- Embrace expansive, growth mindsets

Deeper understandings of the negentropic framework are conveyed in Figure 1.

The negentropic model is founded on, most prominently, the chaos and systems theory research (Prigogine, & Stengers, 2018). Entropy is a relatively automatic process, if left to itself, the system will continue to lose energy. Conversely, negentropy is a highly active and intentional process where faculty consistently and constantly *choose* to behave negentropically. The negentropic view idealizes a re-integration of the system parts, as well as a positive evolution toward potential revolution. Disruption is facilitated through careful negentropic leadership, hiring faculty with negentropic mindsets, faculty and staff actively engaging negentropic work, and training for negentropic actions. There is a directionality in that the more negentropic action in a system, the more entropy attempts to maintain system equilibrium. This is the inertia of the system avoiding dramatic or disruptive change. The more entropy that occurs in the system, the more the need for negentropy becomes increasingly obvious and heralded including various public reports of the downfall of the system. A simple review of headlines in the *Chronicle of Higher Education* or *Inside Higher Education* helps to illustrate this kind of public discourse.

As we examine opportunities to for negentropy within universities, we identify four paths forward; hiring negentropic actors, leadership facilitation, teaching for negentropic actions, and active staff work. Each of these, and many more, represent opportunities to stave off entropy within the university. Hiring and leadership are actions taken by leaders, teaching is a faculty activity, while active staff work can be a vital disruption across the university. Leadership to facilitate negentropic actions has been described earlier within the frame of online learning (Author, 2017). Ultimately, these are only a few of the potential negentropic actions that may be taken to stave off the inevitable chaos that entropy naturally brings to organizations of higher education.

Figure 1 – The Negentropic Framework



## Limitations and Future Directions

This first foray into the theoretical and metaphorical application of negentropy to the university organization, and faculty as negentropic actors, is limited. First, while the work is grounded in the foundations of physics the work remains untested. We are, however, currently collecting data on negentropic tendencies across faculty as they are socialized into the university. Additionally, it is a reasonable pursuit to attempt to identify negentropic faculty characteristics and hire accordingly. It is important to recognize, however, the necessity of balance, and hiring solely negentropic actors could create too much disruption, splintering, change and while it might not disintegrate in the way we imagine in entropy, it could create a new form of chaos, that might distract from organizational mission. Nevertheless, identifying negentropic organizational actors could be a benefit and thus the instrumentation of negentropic behavior and temperament, a worthwhile pursuit.

Finally, in addition to testing this theory and identifying ways that university organizations, faculty and other actors behave in negentropic and entropic fashion, and creating instruments for identifying negentropic actors themselves, it is clear that better models of individual institutions in terms of the entropy would be a very useful next step. Being able to assist in identifying sources of disintegration and energy losses would be a very helpful function for an external consultant interested in helping universities to better meet the challenges of the evolving university. In fact, it could be possible to create 'heat map' type illustrations of university components, systems, actors, and units to better visualize the energy flows across the institution (See Authors in review for more on how to implement these ideas). Such illustrations could be powerful for decision makers across institutions and higher education more broadly. It is perhaps only through this scientific approach to understanding entropy and negentropy that we can stave off the imminent decline of the finest system of higher education the world has ever seen. Understanding negentropic actors may not be the key to this grandiose goal, but it surely will be an important contributor.

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# Leadership Development: A Fresh Look at the Need for a Focused Approach at the Campus Level

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Given the number of individuals stepping down from the position of president over the past several years, there is a need to take a fresh look at higher education leadership and the development of the next generation of leaders on campus. While the reasons for leaving office vary, a number of those factors could be characterized as a lack of development. The problems range from a clear lack of emotional intelligence, the misuse of budget, tensions with the board, to the mishandling of issues of sexual misconduct just to name a few (Focus, 2016).

What has become painfully apparent is that these cases of presidential failure appear to be occurring at a much higher rate. The question is why? Why do we see repeated missteps by leadership and why haven't "we" learned from the mistakes of others? Part of the reason may be due to the growing complexity of the academy which has been impacted by local, state and federal political influences. These influences only compound on-campus pressures that are driven by budget, access, equity and free speech on campus. Probably as a result of these issues facing institutions of higher education, there is a continuing decline in the number of years university presidents serve in that capacity at their institutions. According to the ACE's American College President Study (2017), presidents in 2006 held their positions for an average of 8.5 years. By 2011, the average number of years had decreased to 7 years and has decreased farther by a half year to 6.5 currently. The more frequent turnover of leadership at institutions of higher education could be leading to greater instability and even chaos on campuses.

Because of the rapidly changing educational landscape due to the social, cultural, economic and technology pressures that society faces, greater focus should be placed on the development of the next generation of higher education leaders. Unfortunately, little research exists either on the development of higher education leadership in general, or on pressures faced by those in leadership roles due to the ever changing academic environment and the supports needed by both students and faculty and staff, to be successful.

In one review of the role of university presidents, Harper, Mathuews, Pulcini and Tackett (2017) indicate that the position of president is going through a "historic transformation" because of the increasing number of non-academics filling this role. This is due to what the authors suggest as a lack of higher education's critical examination of the role of presidents, as well as, the meaningful development of those for the role. They go on to state that the higher education community struggles with how to handle contemporary issues and how to best align the role of president with those issues (Harper, et al, 2017, p. 150). The authors conclude by making two solid points. First, today's university president is more of an ambassador with responsibilities of securing funding and building relationships. Second non-traditional presidents "may be best served by respecting the academic traditions of higher

education' (p. 162) What the authors don't explore is how the higher education community should develop the next generation of leaders on campus to address the issues they have identified.

Brown (2012) suggests that this century has ushered in the "Big Shift," a period of "digital innovation" where skills evolve with technology changes that occur every year and a half. He contends in this model that old skills and knowledge must be unlearned to make way for new skills.

As it stands, the academy has functioned in an "S-Curve society" where education's main concern had been to pass along "expert-generated knowledge to the next generation. However, this model no longer works in this digital world. Instead, we need to move from what Brown (2012) calls "skill efficiency and scalable efficiency to scalable learning." This is the concept of incorporating thinking within depth participation in the continuous stream of understanding, where failing and retrying is expectable and understood as part of the learning environment. This is no different than what is considered common practice in any current video game. Video game players can be observed repeatedly trying, failing and trying again to learn how to make it to the next level of the game.

According to Thomas and Brown (2011), "In the new culture of learning, the classroom as a model is replaced by learning environments in which digital media provide access to a rich source of information and play, and the processes that occur within those environments are integral to the results." The authors suggest that within this "new culture" of learning, focus is placed on the students' engagement "within the world."

If this is true about the type of learning that must take place in the academy, and we have moved from an "S-Curve" learning environment to a "Big Shift" environment, then both teaching and learning must find a way to adapt to this new model as does leadership in its support of such a dynamic learning environment. The way in which we view, develop and foster the next generation of leaders must shift to keep up with the realities of the 21<sup>st</sup> century academy.

It could be argued that some of the issues/struggles faced by current academic leaders could very well be linked to an "S-Curve" mentality in every evolving "Big Shift" world. One in which current leadership, having been indoctrinated in an "S-Curve," world struggle with even the routine issues such as enrollment, budget, faculty recruitment, only to be confounded by the digital world encroaching on the academy. This may provide some understanding of the negative trend of years served by presidents of institutions, as noted in the American College President Study (ACE, 2018).

Kerr (2001) describes our current model of higher education as the "Multiversity," which is a combination of the German educational model whose focus is research, a British model which seeks knowledge for knowledge sake and the American model whose concern is on serving the common citizen. These views of contrasting higher education have long endured. However, since Kerr first wrote about the "Multiversity", a shift towards the "American model", with its focus on the common citizen has occurred. And while this can be seen in some cases as a good thing, it may have also created a more unstable, unfocused institution, now dealing with the rapid explosion of technology and information and therefore more unable to navigate all of the issues and obstacles facing today's higher education.

"The Multiversity is an inconsistent institution. It is not one Community but several" (Kerr, 2001, p. 14). And while Kerr goes on to name the various communities that he considered on and off campus, he had not foreseen either the global or digital communities that we now reside in. He does suggest, rightfully so, that the institution "looks far into the past and far into the future, as often at odds with the present (Kerr 2001, p. 14)."

In addition, presidents of these institutions have an expectation of being everything to everyone with an eye towards being guardian of education in general. This would require that a successful president loves the arts, academics, as well as, sports (Kerr, 2001). The expectations of those in this position have become crushing, leading to a decline of years serves. This may have also led to fewer

academics willing to seek the position of president which, at some point, will have a profound impact on the pool of academics at all levels of leadership in the academy.

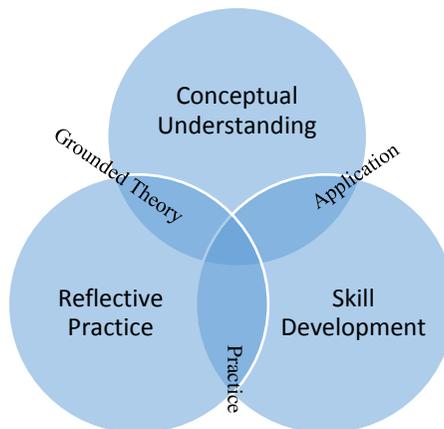
Also impacting the leadership pool are the number of faculty retiring, as well as the number of tenure and tenure track faculty in the pipeline who have an interest in leadership roles. “Whether the choice is retirement, teaching or a new career outside academe, the pool of experienced leaders competent to enter the deanship is dwindling” (Gmelch, Hopkins and Damico, 2011). The academy maybe reaching a critical point where new strategies must be employed to encourage and develop the next generation of academic leaders in tune with and equipped with the skills necessary to guide the academy farther into 21<sup>st</sup> century education.

How should the academy handle this potential crisis in leadership? How should the academy begin to develop the next generation of leaders who can help mold and help guide educational institutions found in the world and are faced with rapidly changing external pressures?

In exploring the role and development of leadership at the dean level, Gmelch, Hopkins and Damico (2011) advised that deans go through what they call “seasons” in their development where spring represents the beginning of their leadership learning and skill development, summer represents hitting one’s stride in the position, and fall represents what comes after the end of the deanship. This suggests that a fair amount of time is needed to develop an individual into a well-rounded dean. If this is the case and the next generation of leadership must be more creative, innovative, possesses problem solving skills, as well as be technologically and globally aware, then development must begin on campus and early in the career of those in the university community. I maintain that a new college president/dean leadership development is overdue.

We start with Gmelch’s (2002) dean leadership development model that consists of three important areas of influence with regard to the development of a dean, “conceptual

Figure 1 – Academic Leadership Development

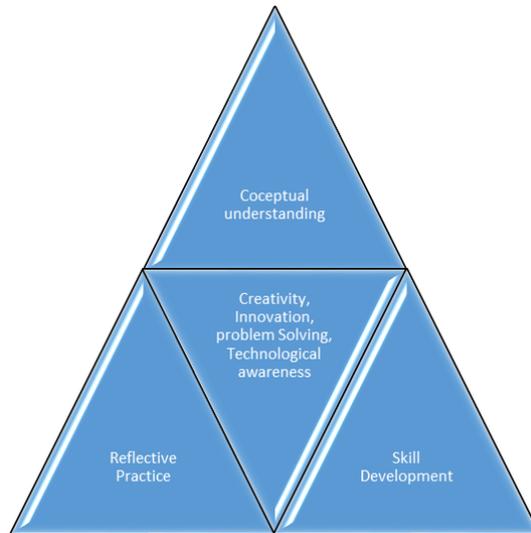


Gmelch, W.H., and Buller, J.L. (2015)

understanding, skill development and reflective practice.” We must now incorporate the growing need for new skills that can help leaders to navigate the rapidly changing environment that universities are facing. The result is a proposed new model where creativity, innovation, problem solving and

technological awareness would comprise the heart of the model—Gmelch’s components would remain—while emerging skills would be incorporated into the professional’s development (see Figure 2).

Figure 2 – **Hill Model of Leader Development**



Because as a whole “we fail to cultivate leadership talent in our junior faculty” and academia values “experts” over leaders (Gmelch, 2002, p.3), the academy needs to shift away from its current model of leadership and consider looking inward on our campuses for possible solutions to the growing leadership shortage. The following steps should be considered in moving forward with rethinking how the academy views leadership and the development of leaders:

- Engage the campus on board with the development of a leadership program for faculty and staff.
- Structure the development program to be on-going and relevant.
- Identify individuals on campus for the development program.
- Develop outside partners that could enhance on-going leadership development on campus.
- Assess what we are doing and make the appropriate adjustment when needed.
- Be open minded. Leaders come in varying shapes and sizes, not to mention degrees and experiences.

### **Discussion**

Moving forward with leadership development that can meet the needs of the academy will be a challenge because of the grassroots effort that it will take. Therefore each of the previous bullets must be addressed, as a start, to see this through.

### ***Get the Campus on Board.***

Leadership development on campus, as suggested, will be a large undertaking, one in which the campus community must be on board in hopes of sustaining the program into the future. This would mean that the institution's governing board, president, provost, faculty and staff should come together to agree on the need for such a program and lend their support for helping to develop future leaders on campus.

In coming together, all segments of the academic community would have a vested interest in leadership for their institution. Even students through student evaluation of teaching or student council deliberations might present an opportunity for helping with the identifying possible faculty or staff capable of leading.

### ***Structure the development program to be on-going and relevant.***

This may be the most difficult task that must be undertaken for a leadership development program. How can we ensure that an established program is on-going? The fact is, we can't. What can be done is to consider putting in place some kind of department or organizational body that has the responsibility to oversee the program.

This might suggest that additional dollars be spent to form such a program. Understandably, this could make a leadership program a non-starter. Development of any leadership program must take into consideration the institution's available assets including faculty, staff, and programming before moving forward with a structural strategy for the program. Inventory of those individuals, programs and courses that have expertise in leadership could prove invaluable to the development and continuation of a leadership program on campus. The use of those leadership "experts" on campus in the development of the program could prove to be more effective in the program's development and overall sustainability and could ultimately demonstrate the commitment that both the administration and board possess for the program and its development through the resources on campus. It would be important to allow the influence of the campus culture to direct the development of the program. By doing this the campus can have the opportunity to reflect on who and what it is, and determine what elements must be incorporated into the program.

Within the basic structure of leadership development Gmelch's (2002) components, and now Hill's (2019) model, a leadership program can be created to produce the next generation of campus leaders. The "model" development program should strive to provide a diversity of learning, team building and intellectual activities that would challenge the members of the program. This should include issues faced by the current campus administration and society at large, as well as issues faced by "like" institutions in the region, conference or category.

### ***Identify individuals on campus for the development program.***

One of the greater challenges for any institution may be its ability to identify individuals willing to be groomed for leadership roles. There seems to be less interest in leading organizations than ever before. And while this might be a generalization and just observation, the need to identify the next generation of leaders for the academy still remains.

One possible means for identifying potential leaders could be to use a form of a 360-degree assessment tool. One good reason for using this method is that individuals at different levels of an organization are more likely to see different leadership behaviors (Bergman, Lornudd, Sjoberg and Schwarz, 2014), which may lead to a stronger leadership pool.

Using the five general dimensions of human personality (extraversion, openness, agreeableness, and emotional stability) Bergman, et.al (2014) explored the "emergence" and "effectiveness" of leaders

through their personality characteristics and traits and to find that agreeableness, conscientiousness and openness were key to explaining leadership behavior. In addition, it was found that there was variation among those rating leaders by level (e.g., staff, assistant professor, associate professor...) with the best observations of leadership behavior coming from them. This may suggest that identifying those with leadership characteristics could best be done by those we interact with in various situation/relationships (colleagues, direct reports, support). This means of identifying the next generation of leaders might also serve as a sign of support and encouragement by one's colleagues for those being considered for leadership development. This support could be the key motivator for those individuals unsure of themselves, their skills as a leader, or their desire to take on the responsibility of leadership.

Whatever the method of identifying the next generation of leaders, institutions of higher education should take more of an active role in this process, early in their careers, and put in place the means for developing them for the betterment of the academy.

***Find outside partners that could enhance on-going leadership development on campus.***

The academy should take advantage of the talents on and off campus in its pursuit of leadership development. There may be individuals who can provide valuable knowledge and expertise in coaching others in the skills of creativity, innovation, problem solving and technological awareness. Take advantage of those talents like you would with the other needed skills for leadership. View such people as an asset and not a threat. In doing so, a leadership development programs may help those in the program to grow stronger in the needed skill set for future leadership roles through the exposure of a deeper, richer and diverse knowledge base. This means that should take advantage of the knowledge that corporations and institutions around us might possess and be willing to share.

***Assess what we are doing and make the appropriate adjustment when needed.***

It is not good enough to begin a program on campus. There is a need for ongoing assessment of the program to be conducted. The program needs to determine whether there is value in continuing, but it also needs to use assessment to determine where changes need to be made. Given the rapidly changing educational environment, assessment should be the vehicle used to stay on top of the change. Assessing the program and its participants on a regular basis could help to ensure that the program can evolve with the changes faced by higher education and meet the needs of the campus.

***Be open minded. (Leaders come in varying shapes and sizes. Not to mention degrees and experiences.)***

We can no longer rely on those at the rank of full professor to carry the load of leadership in the academy. Our society is too dynamic and ever evolving for that to continue. With the general decline in tenure/tenure track lines on campus and the likelihood of a decrease in full professors, we must change the way in which we view leadership overall. Consider the number of individuals who recently have become presidents of universities that are non-academics. This alone should signal a need to shift our thinking and welcome innovation and creative leadership from those on campus who were not seen as traditional members of university leadership. If the academy is to continue to promote and expand on Kerr's (2001) notion of the "multiversity" to be something greater, we will need to tap into the collective knowledge of our campuses through ways in which all members of the institutional community are encouraged, developed, acknowledged, celebrated and rewarded.

***Benefit of a leadership program beyond next generation of leaders.***

Building such a program could open the opportunity for campuses to conduct a variety of activities beneficial to the overall growth of an institution moving forward, thus providing the campus with the

motivation to review itself and stimulate the basic questions of: *what is needed? What is in need of change? And what might be possible?* It could be these very questions that lead the university to reflect on the direction and needs that keep the institution relevant into the future. Sparking individuals to think differently may lead to enterprising thinking around the likes of governance, policy, curriculum, and campus culture, all of which would promote continued growth in the academy through innovative and creative leadership.

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# **A Path to Promotion and Reward Structures for Full-Time, Non-Tenure Track Faculty: One University's Process for the Teacher-Scholar Model**

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In the spring of 2014, Xavier University's Provost/Chief Academic Officer in recognition of the changes in various faculty roles, charged the Chair of Faculty Committee (equivalent to a Faculty Senate) and Faculty Assembly (all full-time faculty with eligibility to vote in a shared governance model) to examine the domain of work of all full-time faculty in light of teaching, research, service, student learning, shared governance, University needs, and the like. This was not necessarily about creating an updated job description. It was about creating a supportive environment for all faculty so that they would be more fulfilled in their careers and could provide better service and support to their constituents.

An Ad Hoc Task Force was formed of current faculty of every designation except adjuncts and became known as the Next Gen Teacher Scholar Task Force. Early in the process it became apparent that the task force would be split to create one group that would work on the issues affecting the full-time, non-tenure track faculty (NTTF), and another group that would work on the needs of tenured and tenure-track faculty (TTF). This paper will only highlight the work of the group that focused on the NTTF. Work began over the summer of 2014 and culminated in the Xavier Board of Trustees passing a proposal in May, 2017.

The leaders of the task force chose an auto-ethnography methodology that was used to reflect critically on the experience. In order to conduct this process, the authors referred to notes from Task Force meetings, reflected on discussions with stakeholders, and reviewed correspondence and documents (e.g. emails and numerous proposal drafts), over the 3-year span of the project and the year following implementation. Throughout this process, both expected and unexpected challenges were encountered. It is hoped that Xavier's process and experience will be helpful to others who may also be seeking to improve the work conditions and culture of their NTTF.

## **Background**

Xavier University is a private institution founded in 1831. According to the Carnegie Classifications website, Xavier has a total combined undergraduate and graduate enrollment of 6,508. It is an urban campus with 175 acres in Cincinnati, Ohio and utilizes a semester-based academic calendar. Xavier University, a Jesuit college located in Cincinnati, is among the oldest Catholic universities in the country. In 2015 and 2016, after an Ad Hoc Committee called the Next Gen Task Force was created, there were approximately 238 tenure-track, full time faculty or Principal Faculty and 96 non-tenure-track, fulltime faculty (NTTF) that provide a curriculum of 90 majors (Table 1).

Table 1 – **Full-time Faculty Data from Fall 2015**

| Instructor head count: | Xavier University | CAS       | CPS      | WCB      |
|------------------------|-------------------|-----------|----------|----------|
| Principal Faculty      | 71% (238)         | 37% (124) | 22% (72) | 16% (54) |
| FT Non-Tenure Track    | 29% (96)          | 16% (53)  | 9% (30)  | 4% (14)  |

\* Note: Data from a Fall 2007 report and data from Fall 2016 is fairly similar.

CAS = College of Arts & Sciences

CPS = College of Professional Sciences

WCB = Williams College of Business

### **Aims of the Next Gen Teacher Scholar Model Task Force**

The work of the taskforce spanned 3 academic years and focused on 5 main areas:

1. Identifying the roles, responsibilities, and perceived challenges of NTTF
2. Creating a new faculty category that better reflected current practices and needs
3. Establishing respectful & appropriate titles for the new category of faculty
4. Designing a model for evaluation and promotion
5. Remaining true to the intent of the Faculty Handbook

**Roles, Responsibilities, & Perceived Challenges of NTTF.** One of the first areas of investigation for the task force was to determine the roles and responsibilities of the current NTTF faculty. When the Task Force began, there were 4 categories of full-time non-tenure track faculty. These included a) Clinical faculty that could be hired in field-based professional programs in the College of Professional Sciences, b) Instructors, that were allowed to teach only lower division or laboratory courses in 7 specific departments in the College of Arts & Sciences, c) Academic Staff and d) Visiting Faculty that could be hired in any department but were limited to a single 3 to 4-year term. The classifications did not suitably reflect the multi-faceted responsibilities of these faculty members, that included teaching, service, administration, and in some instances, scholarship. In some cases, the restrictions for each designation was no longer benefiting the faculty members or the departments. For example, there were faculty members with the title of “Clinical Faculty” who provide more than clinical instruction, and Visiting Faculty members who had worked at Xavier for considerably longer than 3 years and in faculty lines not considered temporary.

In the Fall of 2015, the task force gathered input from the NTTF. Members of the task force interviewed NTTF from across the university. Questions included: 1) “In what areas are you passionate about your job?”; 2) “What would I find surprising about your job?”; 3) “Tell me about a time that you felt there was a barrier that made it challenging to do your job?”; 4) “How do you prioritize your work?”; and 5) “Tell me about a time that you really valued the work you did?” This was followed with a faculty forum in November, 2015, in which more questions were asked.

From this information, the task force determined that; 1) the NTTF were not being optimally served by having separate designations in the Faculty Handbook; 2) the lack of promotion, reward structure, and job security was frustrating and stressful for some NTTF; 3) many NTTF were frustrated with their titles (more than one visiting professor felt like the letters of recommendation they wrote for students might hold less weight simply due to their title); 4) in some cases NTTF felt like valued members of the faculty and other NTTF felt marginalized and not fully part of their department or college

community. The task force then took this information and created a plan to address each item. This plan included creating a new faculty category, establishing new titles, and designing a model for evaluation and promotion.

**Creating a New Faculty Category.** The task force decided to streamline the designations and eliminate the multiple faculty categories of Clinical Faculty, Academic Staff and Instructors and combine them into a single faculty category defined as individuals who are full-time faculty members and are not eligible for tenure. The typical responsibilities for this category include teaching and service and might also include additional departmental duties. The proposal removed all restrictions on what departments could hire in this category of faculty, and removed all restrictions on what level or type of class could be taught. Additionally, all visiting faculty that were in permanent lines would be added to this group. As an aside, some Visiting Professors on what should have been 3-year maximum appointments had been in these lines for 10 years or more.

Once the decision was made to propose the changes mentioned above, the next step was to evaluate the challenges and pitfalls that might be encountered as this would be a major change to the Faculty Handbook. A course of action was devised to take the temperature of the faculty and administration and also to vet the feasibility of the proposed changes. The challenges were numerous, least of which were traditional viewpoints and hard-won faculty protections in the Faculty Handbook and Faculty Constitution. Despite an intent to demonstrate respect and add value to NTTF faculty, there were fears that proposing any changes to the Handbook would result in the Xavier Administration trying to leverage other changes including a challenge to tenure and diminishing a highly prized shared governance model.

Some faculty were concerned that these changes would make it easier for the University to choose the hiring of less expensive NTTF over hiring a tenure track faculty member and that over time the number of tenure-track faculty members would decrease. Thus, fear and distrust were a major challenge for faculty buy-in especially given a climate where some states were abolishing or threatening tenure.

That concern was not unfounded. The states of Wisconsin, Missouri and Iowa have either gutted tenure or are actively seeking to restrict or eliminate tenure even for those faculty who have already earned tenure (Flaherty 2017). Given the financial concerns of many institutions resulting from diminished enrollments, legislative cutbacks and increasingly competitive contributions from alumni and donors, most colleges and universities are trying to find ways to reduce costs. According to the National Center for Education Statistics and the IPEDS Data Center in 2012-13, instructional costs (30.98%) are second only to non-salaried Academic Support Staff (35.45%) in an institutions budget (as quoted in Barshaw and Dunietz 2015). Thus, faculty saw the possible preferential hiring of less expensive NTTF faculty as a real threat.

On November 11, 2015, due to the aforementioned issues and at the request of the Faculty Committee, Fr. Michael Graham SJ, the University President, wrote a letter to the Xavier University faculty specifically addressing the concerns that Xavier's Administration or Board might seek to undermine tenure or reconsider the benefits guaranteed to faculty in the current Faculty Handbook. The President stated in the letter that he had spoken with the Chair of Xavier's Board of Trustees and was very clear that both the Administration and the Board of Trustees supported tenure and the highly coveted shared governance model enjoyed by the faculty. He further promised that the Administration would not be seeking revisions to any benefits outlined in the Faculty Handbook. The reaction from faculty was mostly positive and the President's reassurances allowed the task force to continue making progress. Excerpts of the President's letter follow: "... I have learned that some faculty have expressed a concern that this important discussion might yield unexpected and deeply problematic results, namely an attempt by Xavier's Administration or Board to undermine tenure (as we have seen happen in several

places across the country in recent years, unfortunately) or to reconsider benefits guaranteed faculty in our current Faculty Handbook... I can assure you that it is the view of both Administration and Board that tenure constitutes one of the cornerstones of academic life, both in general and here at Xavier specifically, and as such is absolutely foundational to such essential institutional features as the care of our students, the excellence of our academic programs, our ideals and practice of shared governance, and more.... the conversation on the Next Gen Teacher Scholar Model suggest revisions to relevant portions of the Faculty Handbook, such an opening of the Handbook for potential revision will not be used as a pretext to seek alterations in other unrelated aspects of the Handbook, such as the language with respect to benefits” (M. Graham, personal communication, November 11, 2015).

**Establishing respectful & appropriate titles for the new category of faculty.** Once it was determined that we would combine all full-time NTTF into one category, a new title was needed. Research was conducted to identify commonly used titles for NTTF at universities across the country. Additionally, faculty titles from 10 Catholic universities, as well as from 7 other benchmark schools were identified. Faculty at Xavier University were then provided with definitions and examples of 5 commonly used titles for NTTF. These included; Teaching Professor, Academic Professor, Academic Faculty, Practice Faculty, and Instructor. The Faculty Committee used surveys and Faculty Forums to whittle the list to three acceptable options on which to vote.

The task force advocated for adopting “Teaching Professor”, because including the word “professor” in the title would signal to all the stakeholders that this category of faculty is thoroughly equipped and has full authority to educate the students in the content areas designated by the Department and, therefore should enjoy a title reflecting that judgment. Although using the word “teaching” was intended to mean that the main focus of these faculty members was “teaching”, some principal faculty members thought the title seemed “odd” because we all teach. There was also some concern over using a title with the word “Professor”. This was an issue of tradition. The title of “Professor” at Xavier University had only ever be used as a title for tenured or tenure-track faculty. Additionally, there was an issue regarding consistency of language in the handbook. Tenure-track faculty have the umbrella term of “Principal Faculty”. Thus a new umbrella term was needed for NTTF. The task force proposed two options for the faculty to consider; 1) “Non-Principal Faculty”, and 2) “Participating Faculty”. The task force advocated for “Participating Faculty”.

All title options were discussed in multiple faculty assemblies. Straw polls and electronic surveys were conducted to get feedback and in February, 2017, Xavier University faculty voted to adopt the titles of “Teaching Professor” and “Senior Teaching Professor”, with the umbrella title of “Participating Faculty”.

**Designing a process for promotion and consideration of a reward structure.** The task force looked at current models of promotion from numerous Colleges and Universities across the United States. The task force decided to mimic the promotion timeline and process for Xavier’s tenure-track faculty, while making appropriate modifications. The Provost/Chief Academic Officer was instrumental in determining and advocating for a reward structure that included extended appointment lengths for NTTF promoted to the rank of Senior Teaching Professor (i.e., “The minimum appointment for Senior Teaching Professors will be two (2) years, and for those faculty who have been employed in a Senior Teaching Professor position for at least six (6) years, the minimum appointment will be three (3) years.”). The Administration was also able to secure the necessary funds to allow an increase in salary for promoted NTTF.

The Assistant Vice President for Provost Budget and Planning and the Executive Vice President/Chief Financial Officer assisted the task force in developing a 3-year plan to phase-in the

promotions. In the first year, faculty that started prior to the 2000-2017 handbook could, upon their request, become immediately eligible for the rank of Senior Teaching Professor, with all the rights and benefits of Senior Teaching Professors who have been at that rank for 6 years or longer. There were 11 full-time faculty members to be ‘grandfathered’ in this group. All members of this group worked at Xavier for 20 years or longer.

Faculty that started under the 2000-2017 handbook with 10 years or longer of consecutive appointments could apply for the position of Senior Teaching Professor starting in the 2017-18 Academic year. In the third year of the phase-in process, all Faculty that met the requirements could apply for the position of Senior Teaching Professor.

This was an arduous task involving careful investigation by both the Office of the Provost/CAO, the Vice President for Provost Budget and Planning, the Office of Institutional Research and the University General Counsel’s Office to determine faculty that were immediately eligible for promotion as well as faculty that were eligible in the 2017-18 academic year.

**Remaining true to the intent of the Faculty Handbook.** Remaining true to the intent of the Faculty Handbook meant several things to the committee. First, it meant honoring Xavier’s mission. The very first part of Xavier’s mission states; “Xavier’s mission is to educate. Our essential activity is the interaction of students and faculty in an educational experience characterized by critical thinking and articulate expression with special attention given to ethical issues and values.” The last part states “Xavier believes that these goals can be achieved only through academic programs of high quality that are served by a faculty devoted primarily to excellence in teaching, are nurtured by scholarship and research and are supported by a broad range of university ministry and student life programs.” Thus, the choices made by the task force were done in an effort to support the NTTF in alignment with the University Mission Statement and encourage its fulfillment. The task force believed that by providing full-time NTTF with more rights and more support, the university would be helping to promote excellence in teaching and the promise of high-quality academic programs.

Secondly, it meant protecting the rights and the role of tenure and tenure-track faculty. Tenure track positions and non-tenure track fulltime faculty may be viewed by some as competing entities. It was important to the taskforce that the role of tenure-track faculty was not weakened unintentionally. Thus, the language describing the Principal Faculty did not change and the language used for NTTF does not compete. They are considered to be two separate roles, each promoting the values in Xavier’s Mission Statement. This aligns with the AAUP statement; “The AAUP recognizes that there is one faculty with common work and common interests: the voices of non-tenure-track faculty members are just as important to education today as the voices of their tenure-track and tenured peers.” (Barnshaw & Dunietz 2015, 17).

*Definition of Principal Faculty from Xavier Universities Faculty Handbook:*

*“Principal Faculty are individuals who are tenured or who are eligible for tenure holding the rank of Professor, Associate Professor, and Assistant Professor in an academic department. The role of the Principal Faculty is unique in that the faculty is responsible for such fundamental areas as curriculum, subject matter and methods of instruction, research, faculty status, and those aspects of student life that relate directly to the educational process. The Principal Faculty also exercises its institutional commitment by participating in the shared governance of the University.”*

*Definition of Participating Faculty from Xavier Universities Faculty Handbook:*

*“Participating Faculty: Participating Faculty are individuals who are full-time*

*faculty members and are not eligible for tenure, holding the rank of Teaching Professor and Senior Teaching Professor in an academic department. The typical responsibilities include teaching and service, and may also include additional departmental duties.”*

Finally, remaining true to the intent of the handbook meant providing clearly written documents that reflected the wishes of the Faculty Assembly. Special care was taken by the task force to use similar language and formatting to what was already present in the handbook. It was important that continuity was maintained. Newly created handbook items included; a policy for how the new Teaching Professor positions could be created, the hiring procedures, the process of promotion from Teaching Professor to Senior Teaching Professor, the contractual status of Participating Faculty at both levels (general principles, appointment lengths, and conditions of reappointment), norms for evaluation of Participating faculty, norms for advancement of Participating Faculty, criteria for promotion to Senior Teaching Professor, and the annual review of all Participating Faculty. Each new document was reviewed and approved by the General Counsel’s Office at Xavier University.

### **Lessons Learned**

There were several challenges and surprises during this process. One such challenge was that many tenured or tenure track faculty viewed NTTF through the limited lens of their own personal experiences in their department or college. Some departments hired NTTF as program directors or in other significant leadership roles. Several departments employed NTTF with doctoral degrees. Many of these NTTF were involved in significant service or leadership roles. For tenured or tenure track faculty members who worked with NTTF serving in some of these capacities within their departments, this proposal was easy to support. However, there were departments that either had no experience working with NTTF or there were few expectations for the NTTF in their departments in terms of participation in department meetings, service, leadership and the like. For a faculty member in this situation, it was understandable that they might have concerns about or a bias against a promotion or reward structure. It was learned early on that the excellent work of the NTTF needed to be effectively communicated to the entire campus. A better understanding of the NTTF was critical to understanding their primary concerns for job stability and respect.

Related to this was the choosing of an appropriate title for this new category of faculty. It was surprising for two reasons, 1) a google search identified hundreds of options from which to select a title, and 2) the faculty were unexpectedly emotional about the choices. As mentioned before, there was concern expressed from some faculty over using a title with the word “Professor”. “Professor” at Xavier University has only ever be used as a title for tenured or tenure-track faculty and this was a break with tradition. Because there was no single commonly used title for NTTF among Xavier’s benchmark schools or similar Catholic institutions, simply adopting a title that was the norm was not deemed appropriate.

Clearly, the biggest challenges were the concerns that NTTF with typically lower salaries, would be the preferred hire over tenure track faculty and that tenure at Xavier would be undermined and threatened. This concern was present throughout the process and to a certain extent remains. Assurances were provided by each College Dean. Additionally, the letter written to the faculty by the University President was key in allowing the work of the task force to continue and for the resulting proposal to be approved by the Faculty Assembly. The ongoing monitoring of the proportion of NTTF vs. tenure track faculty hired will be extremely important given the institutional stated support of tenured faculty to attract faculty and maintain a consistent and loyal workforce. The faculty remain

watchful over hiring practices, and will likely remain so.

The logistics of working with all the stakeholders on campus from NTTF to the Board of Trustees (BOT) required several meetings with the Chief Financial Officer, the Provost's Office, Institutional Research and faculty from which financial preparations, academic contracts, legal considerations to the shared governance model and concerns of faculty were discussed prior to Presidential and ultimately BOT approval. The shared governance model worked well for this initiative as it required transparency on the part of both faculty and administration to arrive at compromise and, ultimately, implementation.

The final lesson learned was that the work was not over when the proposal was approved by the President and the Board of Trustees. After all the changes were adopted into the new updated handbook, work needed to begin on developing promotion timelines and templates. Additionally, each department was charged with developing promotion criteria for their respective faculty. Department chairs and eligible faculty needed help navigating the new policies and procedures. Fact sheets for faculty and department chairs were created to help everyone involved navigate the new process.

### **Conclusion**

In this paper, some of the challenges of enacting a major change like this at a university have been discussed. The task force felt strongly that a change of this magnitude was required to address several of the significant the issues of the NTTF. Creation of this new category of faculty with improved rights, a path to promotion, and a reward structure was a massive undertaking, even though we are at a relatively small institution. A great deal of patience was required, as well as, prioritizing listening, learning, and gaining buy-in across multiple stakeholders on campus.

Like many universities, Xavier operates under tight fiscal constraints. One of the keys to the success of this endeavor was the support from the Provost/Chief Academic Officer in not only working with the task force to create improved job stability through longer contract lengths, but also through the work done to secure funding for monetary compensation that would accompany promotions.

As with any major change of this nature, modifications may be needed arising from unforeseen circumstances. Ongoing considerations and discussions include; university and academic committee requirements, maintenance of a robust hiring commitment to tenure track faculty as needed and the need to renew contracts for NTTF in a timely manner. For example, the By-Laws of all University and Academic Committees are being reviewed for NTTF eligibility to be elected or appointed to them. Teaching Professor's contracts must be disseminated in the early spring so that they know if they will be renewed in a timely manner. It provides respect to a faculty member so they might have time to look for a new position if not rehired.

The leaders of this initiative and task force members were very pleased to have worked on this project and see it through. Through the work of the task force, several issues were successfully addressed. NTTF now have respectful job titles, improved job security, and a promotion and reward structure. There has been a positive shift in the culture of the University, although more work is needed. It is hoped that the University will continue to support NTTF and address any further issues with morale, belonging and campus culture.

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## Appendix – Timeline

### Fall 2015

- September*
- A special task force was formed to address NTTF issues. The task force included Tenure Track Faculty (TTF) and NTTF faculty members from each of the 3 colleges of the University.
- October*
- Notice was given to the Faculty Assembly that the task force would be exploring issues related to NTTF.
- November*
- Information was gathered from NTTF through interviews and a design thinking workshop. This provided a good summary of the issues to be addressed.
  - Father Graham, President of Xavier University, wrote a letter to the XU community stating that Xavier's Administration or Board of Trustees would not seek to undermine tenure or reconsider the benefits guaranteed to faculty in the current Faculty Handbook.
- December*
- Research into titles began.

### Spring 2016

- January*
- Options for potential titles were presented to and discussed at the Faculty Assembly. A survey was conducted to determine the Faculty's top preferences for the proposed titles.
- February*
- The Faculty Assembly informally voted that the new titles for NTTF would be "Teaching Professor" and "Senior Teaching Professor".
- March*
- The first draft of the proposal was written. This draft was reviewed by 9 department chairs from all 3 colleges. Revisions were made based on their input.
  - The proposal was presented to the University Planning and Resource Council which acts as the University budget approval committee.

*April*

- An updated draft of the proposal was completed and presented to the Faculty Assembly.
- Feedback from the Faculty Assembly was gathered.

**Summer 2016**

- A new draft of the proposal was completed.

**Fall 2016**

*August -  
November*

- The new draft was sent to the members of the Faculty Assembly.
- More discussions and revisions occurred.

*December*

- Members of the Faculty Assembly officially voted on the titles.

**Spring 2017**

*January*

- Chairs of the Task Force meet with each college Dean.

*February -  
March*

- The Faculty Assembly voted to approve the proposal.

*March-April*

- Chairs of the Task Force collaborated with Xavier's General Counsel for finalizing the new language in the handbook.
- Work was conducted with the Provost's office to outline guidelines for implementation.

*May*

- The Xavier Board of Trustees approved the proposal.

**Summer 2017**

- Chairs of the Task Force collaborated with the Provost's office to create promotion documents, templates, fact sheets, etc.

**Fall 2017**

*September*

- Presentations were given to faculty and department chairs on the promotion process and application requirements.

*October -  
November*

- Eligible NTTF applied for promotion

**Spring 2018**

- The new category of Teaching Professor was implemented and eligible NTTF applicants were promoted to the rank of Senior Teaching Professor with a reward structure also determined by Xavier.

# The Implicit Costs of Regulatory Compliance in Higher Education: A Case Study

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It has been proposed that higher education is the most highly regulated sector in America (Lee, 2010). Broadly speaking, institutions are regulated by government at the federal, state, and local levels, as well as other implied sources. While sharing commonalities with other sectors, higher education institutions are differentiated by their educational mission.

There is no indication that regulations or compliance requirements are created to increase the size of bureaucracies at educational institutions; rather, they are put in place to direct institutions toward desired behaviors and ensure that institutions are obeying. Well-designed regulations for appropriately desirable behaviors should create positive impacts, such as non-discrimination, protection of the environment, safety, and privacy (Dunham, 2010). Hearn and McLendon (2012) questioned the likelihood that, without such regulation, institutions would have adequately addressed ethical issues. One requirement stipulated by Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972 was to ban institutions from sex-based discrimination, and the most visible manifestation is in the equal number of male and female sports teams, which is widely regarded as successful. In its report to the U.S. Senate, the Task Force on Federal Regulation of Higher Education (2015), here after designed as the “Task Force,” noted that institutional accountability is an appropriate goal, but it can be accomplished without the costliness and difficulty associated with the current palate of regulatory requirements on higher education.

Small liberal arts colleges (SLACs) are stretched to meet the same or similar compliance requirements as large institutions, although their funding and staffing may be far less. Though larger institutions may be burdened, they can usually benefit from an economy of scale in staffing and have a flow of appropriations and research grants. Bok (2013) juxtaposed the multi-billion dollar endowments at a major research university against the struggle for survival at many SLACs.

The purpose of this case study was to understand the impacts of regulatory compliance on labor at a SLAC in the Midwest through the lens of implicit cost. Opportunity cost occurs when a decision is made where one must forego “the next best thing. That sacrifice is the opportunity cost of the choice” (McConnell, Brue, & Flynn, 2012, p. 4). Underneath that umbrella, explicit cost is the more well-known facet as “the direct cost...independent of the attributes of any alternative” (Stone, 2015, p. 22), while implicit cost is the “opportunity cost of an action that does not directly involve monetary payment...forgoing the benefits of an action that could have been chosen” (Black, Hashimzade, & Myles, 2017, “Implicit Cost,” para. 1). For the purposes of this study, I included governmental regulators as well as implied regulators—institutional accreditation and the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA)—because they are generally seen as indispensable to those institutions who participate in them. I conducted the research at a SLAC, which was defined as a higher education institution with less than 1,000 students that is characterized by “an undistracted and undiffused intensity of focus on a broadly based education in the arts and sciences..., as well as the firm and

unswerving commitment to bring to the education of undergraduates the full resources appropriate to a small university” (Oakley, 2005, p. 3).

### Theoretical Framework

Personnel in higher education who have regulatory compliance as secondary duties are faced with making decisions between the oft-competing priorities of regulatory compliance activities and their primary responsibilities. Ariely (2016) noted that governments impose regulations generally to motivate individuals and organizations to choose their desired behaviors through both positive and negative incentives. Government and implied regulation hardly represent an open choice. Personal and institutional motivations must be set aside, as the decision is preordained by fiat. This does not, however, eliminate the reality of opportunity cost, a foundational concept of microeconomics.

Opportunity cost has been defined as the sacrifice of the next-best thing when a decision is made (McConnell et al., 2012), while Black et al. (2017) portrayed it as the benefits forgone in such a decision. This sacrifice could be measured in explicit cost, as the lost usage of funds used toward the direct expense associated with the decision, and implicit cost, as the best alternative or foregone benefit that was given up in the decision. In the context of higher education then, regulatory compliance may cost both financially and “in terms of the talents and energies expended; that they divert higher education from its primary mission of teaching and scholarship; and that they erode the integrity of campus decision making” (Kaplin & Lee, 2014, p. 15).

### Literature Review

Two concepts in the literature served as a backdrop for this study: liberal arts colleges and regulation in higher education.

**Liberal Arts Colleges.** While liberal arts colleges (LACs) have widely been viewed as an ideal of American higher education (Thelin, 2011), the missions and operations at specific LACs are highly variable, as the sector values independence and uniqueness. To create well-rounded graduates, LACs are often intentionally small to facilitate mentoring through close relationships (Bonvillian & Murphy, 1996; Hawkins, 2000). Though there are some extremely wealthy LACs, most tend to have very limited financial resources, leaving little room for bureaucracy, duplication of roles, or excess (Lang, 2000). The small size of SLACs limits the professional support staff but allows them to be operationally agile and have cross-functional employees (Bonvillian & Murphy, 1996; Labaree, 2017). It has long been predicted that LACs would disappear completely or leave only the most prestigious or wealthy institutions, and research does indicate that the number of LACs and their enrollments are in decline (Astin & Lee, 1972; Breneman, 1990; Tarrant, Bray, & Katsinas, 2017).

Regulation has a particularly sharp impact on LACs, as budgets are often balanced with little room for additional spending on compliance (Bonvillian & Murphy, 1996). Ekman (2014) noted that, “The significant costs of compliance are felt most acutely at small institutions, where the benefits of scale are less readily available” (p. 26).

**Regulation in Higher Education.** If accountability is being held responsible for one’s actions, regulation is the primary tool to achieve that in higher education. Institutions are subject to regulation from the federal, state, and local governments (Ewell, 2011; Kaplin & Lee, 2014). Flowing from the accountability movement, the 2000s and 2010s have seen a rapid increase of regulations for higher education, inflaming tensions and imposing a growing cost of compliance (Bok, 2013). Since

policymakers often utilize regulation to incentivize desired behaviors (Ariely, 2016), regulations are often now attached to funding to ensure it is used as intended (Mumper & Freeman, 2011). Higher education generally has not welcomed such specific regulation, seeing compliance requirements as unfunded mandates that push cost along to students (Mumper, Gladieux, King, & Corrigan, 2016). There are also several implied regulatory sources for higher education separate from the government but tied to its authority, most notably institutional accreditation and the NCAA. Institutional accreditation provides access to federal student aid funds and grants. Anctil (2009) noted that the perception of an institution's athletic programs in major sports has become influential upon recruiting donors and prospective students.

The regulatory state. The significant regulation of higher education is a relatively modern phenomenon, with the period of the 1970s through the 1990s representing a significant turn in the relationship between government and higher education. Whereas institutions had generally been trusted to behave appropriately before, the government now targeted the sector for increased scrutiny, which was accompanied with an explosion of regulations (Thelin, 2011). While the No Child Left Behind Act of 2002 focused on primary and secondary education, its impacts were profound in pushing the accountability culture into the higher education sector (Eaton, 2010). During the 2010s, a new degree of pushback arose from inside higher education against regulations that were perceived as useless or burdensome. In their joint statement, the Association of American Universities, Association of Public and Land-grant Universities, and Council on Government Relations (2011) recommended the elimination of excessively burdensome regulation and extending compliance flexibility to small institutions.

The expansion of regulation has become so profound that governance of higher education has been described as a regulatory state (Austin & Jones, 2016; King, 2007) that shows no sign of decline (Turner & Angulo, 2018). Despite the divide in American politics becoming increasingly large, the regulatory environment associated with accountability has been equally embraced by the political left and right (St. John, Duan-Barnett, & Moronski-Chapman, 2013). Klick and Mitchell (2016) likened the regulatory state to over-protective parents, ultimately stunting the maturity of their children. Vance (2012) described it as simultaneously oppressive in volume and ambiguity, while Casper (2014) derided the growing burden placed on institutions by government regulation and the bureaucratic accreditation process. Facing this growing body of regulatory compliance, institutions turn their focus to “ensure survival” against legal sanction (Turner and Angulo 2018, 56).

Concerns. Concern about the impacts of regulatory compliance in higher education continue to rise, and, as administrators advocate for regulatory relief (Mumper et al., 2016), Casper (2014) noted that,

It might be assumed that they [universities] can absorb increasing political demands and regulation, and the accompanying increase in operating costs, while remaining unaffected in their quality, their vitality, and their ability to contribute to society as they have so magnificently done. If I had only one message to leave with you, it would be that you not permit that profound misconception to gain currency. (p. 123)

Research has indicated that regulatory compliance may have numerous negative consequences on higher education, but chief among those concerns has been financial cost. Regulatory compliance requirements have generally been unfunded mandates from government (Dougherty & Reddy, 2013). In one previous case study, the cost of federal regulatory compliance at one institution was found to be 6.5% of the annual operating budget (Hunter & Gehring, 2005). The impacts of compliance costs are, however, most acutely felt at small institutions with relatively small budgets and little ability to distribute workload (Ekman, 2014).

While administrative costs associated with compliance take away funds from teaching and scholarship, Dunham (2010) noted other deleterious impacts as negating autonomy to make decisions on the front lines, driving toward standardization and away from a diversity of institutions to meet the differing needs to students and society, and interfering with the ability of institutions to make their own decisions to compete in the marketplace of ideas. The drive for performance-based accountability in higher education has been described as conflicting with expansive regulation, which prescribes uniformity and undermines the ability of institutions to adapt successfully (Shin, 2010). Certain types of regulation, such as the Affordable Care Act of 2010, have made full-time employees significantly more expensive, pushing greater use of adjunct faculty to fulfill instructional needs (Boerner, 2013).

Margaret Drugovich, president of Hartwick College and member of the Task Force, directed an institutional study to be done in 2011-2012 to account for regulatory compliance (Zack-Decker, 2012). The Task Force (2015) then presented its findings on the relationship between regulation and higher education to the US Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee ahead of a reauthorization of the Higher Education Act. Flowing from his involvement in that, Nicholas Zeppos, co-chair of the Task Force and president of Vanderbilt University, commissioned studies on the cost of compliance there (Vanderbilt University, 2015a) and the costs at 12 other institutions (Vanderbilt University, 2015b). Though received with a degree of skepticism in the higher education media (Blumenstyk, 2015; Woodhouse, 2015), these studies comprise the bulk of what is known about the costs of compliance in modern universities, representing calls for reforming regulation rather than deregulation.

Klick and Mitchell (2016) described the problem best, noting that, “Perhaps the gains from [government] intervention will be sufficient to justify the opportunity cost, but those costs should be included in the cost-benefit analysis. Too often only the predicted benefits are considered, while the attendant long-term costs go unseen” (p. 37).

## Methods

I conducted a single instrumental case study (Stake, 1995) at a private SLAC to research the implicit costs of regulatory compliance. A case study “investigates a contemporary phenomenon (the ‘case’) in its real-world context” (Yin, 2014, p. 2) to “catch the complexity of a single case” (Stake, 1995, p. xi). An instrumental case study approach was selected to investigate the broader issue of implicit costs from the regulatory compliance activities at higher education institutions (Stake, 1995). Because so little is known about this problem, it was studied within its natural, real world context, for which a single case study design is ideally suited (Stake, 1995; Yin, 2014). The bounded system for this study consisted of administrators, faculty members, and staff who performed regulatory compliance as a secondary duty at Town College during the spring semester of 2018.

**Research Site and Participants.** To protect confidentiality, identifiable information was obscured by using pseudonyms.

Site. Town College was selected as a typical case of a SLAC, enrolling between 500-999 students, making teaching and community the core of its mission, operating as a private institution, not being characterized as wealthy with massive endowments, and being regionally accredited. Matea, the Vice President for Academic Affairs, noted that the ethos of the campus lay in the “lived experience” based on the “quality of interaction” between students and college employees. It is located in a small town in the rural Midwest, employing 57 tenured or tenure-track faculty members and 102 full-time staff members. The institution also employed between 45-50% of the student population during the academic year.

Participants. During an interview, Matea and I identified nine participants who were key to this study, and all agreed to participate. Participants are identified with pseudonyms in Table 1, including their primary position and significant compliance responsibilities.

Table 1 – **Participants**

| Participant Pseudonym | Position                            | Significant Areas of Compliance Duties  |
|-----------------------|-------------------------------------|---|
| Chloe                 | Registrar                           | Title IX, NCAA, Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, Financial Aid, Immigration, Data Collection and Reporting for all Compliance   |
| Darnell               | Director of Financial Aid           | Federal and State Financial Aid   |
| Emily                 | Science Lab Manager                 | Hazardous Materials, Chemical Hygiene Officer, Occupational Health and Safety Administration (OSHA), State Department of Natural Resources  |
| Joshua                | Vice President of Finance           | Financial Management, Financial Aid, Non-Profit Status, Endowment   |
| Matea                 | Vice President for Academic Affairs | Accreditation, Faculty, Broad Oversight   |
| Melissa               | Vice President for Student Affairs  | Food Service Health Codes, Building and Fire Codes, Substance Abuse, Counseling, Title IX, TRiO   |
| Robert                | Human Resources Director            | Affordable Care Act, Internal Revenue Service, Federal and State Department of Labor, Americans with Disabilities Act, Civil Rights, Title IX, and Data Collection and Reporting for all Compliance |
| Samuel                | Athletic Director                   | NCAA, Title IX  |
| Sydney                | Director of Teacher Education       | State Department of Education, Title II of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act   |

**Data Collection.** I conducted semi-structured interviews with individuals, performed document analysis, and analyzed archival records. The use of multiple data sources provided robust data for the study and increased the credibility of the study through triangulation (Creswell, 2013; Stake, 1995; Yin, 2014). I first interviewed the vice president for academic affairs as the gatekeeper to understand Town College, its orientation toward regulatory compliance, and identify further participants. I then interviewed the other eight participants and began to gather documents and archival records. The documents were provided by the participants, consisting of department manuals, documentation of compliance work, and compliance workflows. Many departments did not, however, have operations manuals or compliance plans written out as the variety and volume of work limited the ability of departments to take the time to write out such manuals. I gathered the archival records from publicly available data provided online by the NCAA and the U.S. Department of Education’s Integrated

Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), Information for Financial Aid Professionals (IFAP), and College Scorecard.

**Data Analysis.** Qualitative data analysis should not be thought of as a completely discrete process, rather best begun concurrently with data collection (Creswell, 2013; Stake, 1995); thus, I began my own analysis from the beginning of data collection by writing of reflective notes, transcribing, and in vivo coding. Yin (2014) suggested utilizing theory and spending a significant time with the data as tools for data analysis. Peering through the lens afforded by microeconomic theory, I looked for the alternatives not able to be chosen—implicit cost—when faced with regulatory compliance. Then, I spent a significant amount of time with the data to see the themes and concepts emerge. Such thematic analysis was accomplished through one round of in vivo coding followed by a round of pattern coding (Saldaña, 2016).

**Credibility Measures.** Wolcott (2005) noted that the nature of qualitative research does not align well with the concepts of validity or reliability, but rather qualitative researchers should increase establish credibility. One strategy I employed to increase the credibility of the study was data triangulation by collecting interview, documents, and archival data (Stake, 1995; Yin, 2014). I also used member checking for transcripts and the final report (Creswell, 2013; Stake, 1995). As a final approach to addressing the credibility of my study, I provided rich, thick description to give the reader the best possible understanding of the situation at Town College (Stake, 1995; Yin, 2014).

### Findings and Analysis

Through this study, I found that regulatory compliance significantly affected labor at the SLAC, resulting in implicit costs for individuals and the institution. The effects of regulatory compliance on labor were primarily that: 1) it had become overwhelming and overburdened those performing it, and 2) it had changed the institution in almost every facet.

**Overwhelming and Overburdened.** The most overt way in which regulatory compliance affected labor at Town College was compelling administrative staff members to manage a wide variety of roles. Most of the administrators and staff had more than one distinct role they filled for the institution. Though additional roles were rarely focused on compliance, each divergent responsibility came with its own associated regulatory compliance requirements.

Whereas the variety of responsibilities managed by few individuals could be easily observed, the situation underneath the surface was one of great stress for those individuals bearing that breadth. Joshua repeatedly used the term “onerous” to describe regulatory compliance, and indeed, that seemed to encapsulate how the participants felt about it. To maintain the student-facing mission at its highest level, regulatory compliance responsibilities were generally added as secondary work responsibilities upon their small cadre of staff members, who then become “even more burdened with work.” Thus, staff members consistently, rather than seasonally as is common in higher education, worked between 50 and 70 hours per week to meet the varied demands and student needs. Their strong commitment to the mission and ethos of the institution led them to sacrifice self over students.

**Perceived misalignment.** Most of the participants expressed that they perceived a spike of regulatory compliance during the 2010s, which became the primary driver behind their increasing workloads. The complexity of regulations, tight timelines, and overlapping requirements with multiple agencies all enhanced the stress. Samuel was clear this resulted from “being held more accountable [externally], and I think that's what's really produced more work... The amount of work has tripled, I would say.”

Those in higher education expect seasonally high workloads, such as in the admissions office leading up to the start of a new fall semester. However, as Darnell noted, “It’s kind of crazy—the seasonality, that’s pretty much disappeared.” What used to be recovery and improvement times were replaced with activities like audits, inventories, report filing, and mandatory training. Ultimately, this new reality led many to question whether such compliance really aligned with their institution or their role in it.

One major source of compliance-related stress was the perception that compliance work was not aligned with an employee’s primary work purpose. Melissa talked with conviction about her work in the SLAC environment—“I really do think there’s something special about a private liberal arts college and the degree of community that you’re able to develop. It’s something I treasure and would not want to give up.” However, Samuel described feeling guilty “when I meet with the student athletes at the beginning of the year, telling them how many forms they have to fill out...It’s just like, ‘Okay, at what point are we gonna get to what we’re really here for?’” He further explained that their purpose was “to spend time with the student athletes” not “sit in front of a computer and look at all the paperwork that each student athlete fills out.”

However, the student-focused work often had to be set aside for compliance work, which Melissa described as doing “burdensome, tedious things that truly in the life of a student or in impact upon them is pretty negligible.”

While the purpose expressed by the employees was profoundly people-focused, often their work tasks seemed to be “just more paperwork,” as Robert put it. While he spent a great deal of time on compliance reports, Robert expressed a suspicion that often such paperwork “gets filed into a warehouse and nobody ever looks at,” because they commonly did not receive feedback from regulatory agencies. Melissa approximated how she and her staff would “spend half of [their time on regulated tasks] just doing the paperwork on it to prove to somebody they’re doing it.” Such paperwork was, as Emily described it, “dry” and “boring.” In this mission- and ethos-driven workplace, the participants often lived in frustration due to spending significant amounts of their time with electronic and physical paperwork rather than with people.

**Sacrificing self.** At Town College, the employees generally placed the institution and mission as a very high personal priority, often imposing a great toll on themselves. As Melissa put it, “the cost [of the extra compliance work] is on you.” Regardless of whether they wanted to sacrifice themselves for regulatory compliance, Melissa affirmed that “you have no choice but to just spend more time.” The entire system at Town College was predicated upon everyone getting done what must be done when it had to be done. Questioning that system was a foreign concept; it was just the way things were. The primary difference between regulatory compliance and other duties at Town College was that the removal of choice, as regulatory compliance came from the outside rather than arising from local need.

Giving up a work-life balance. My questions about a work-life balance most frequently drew a snort or laugh as the first response. Chloe described how regulatory compliance often breached her tipping point, eliminating balance from her life:

It is exactly the extra hours that the stuff that I would've been doing during the day, but I can't because I have to set up the Title IX stuff or talk to the attorney or sit in the interviews or whatever the case might be. Then, I'm doing [my primary responsibilities] in the evening or on the weekends.

Such investments of time in the evenings and on the weekends, however, came at a cost that amounted to more than just a tally of hours.

Human buffers. A buffer absorbs impact, and in many ways at Town College, those doing

compliance work served that role for the institution. Samuel believed that “[regulatory compliance is] a necessary burden, but we don't have the resources to keep up with the pace that they're asking us to with it.” The concept he expressed, along with several other participants, was that the regulatory compliance responsibilities increased consistently while resources remained the same or shrank slightly.

Chloe described the workload consequence for such requirements with limited resources as coming “off my hide and out the hide of my colleagues.” At the busiest times, she described how “there's probably a toll on my health, a toll on personal relationships, a toll on relationships on campus, if we're under siege...So, yeah, we are overextended, sometimes in a very negative way.” The sacrifices of self then had impacts on those with whom they were in relationships. As a mother of young children, Emily was quick to describe what she would do with her time if her compliance duties went away—“I would reduce my hours, and I would spend that time with my family.”

**Changing the Institution.** Regulatory compliance at Town College did not just affect labor at the individual level, as it also caused institutional challenges to the focus on people and the quality of the services being provided. The core mission of each of the departments was people-focused; however, despite the best efforts of employees to sustain those services at the highest level, there were times when competing priorities of compliance interfered. Most of the participants described compliance as a situation where they had “no choice.” It did not matter what else was going on for the campus or students, NCAA questions had to be answered immediately or Title IX investigations had to proceed ahead. Work functions generally had no personnel overlap, thus, many times, student services—no matter how pressing—were required to be set aside until the compliance process was satisfied within the mandatory timeline. The participants, especially those with long ties to Town College, saw the impacts of regulatory compliance as significant and building over time. Matea listed the two things that differentiated Town College as being superior in “the quality of the interaction from faculty to student [and] the thoroughness of the residential community.” As no-choice regulatory compliance had crept in, it had tarnished their full ability to maintain and enhance these two distinctives.

**Time utilization.** Town College was people-focused, at least when it could be so. “I think one has to really be careful,” Melissa cautioned, “[with] how much time you spend on that [compliance] and when you're behind a closed door, while other things on the campus were going on and you weren't being able to attend to.” The demands of compliance could easily overwhelm the people-focused mission of Town College, undermining its niche and ultimately harming the students. However, regulatory compliance often limited the ability of employees focus on “things on the campus” that Melissa felt they needed “to attend to.”

*Tough decisions.* The employees at Town College were often confronted with challenging decisions about how they would spend their time. Regulatory compliance work required a large amount of time, because one had to learn the regulations, remain current on regulatory changes, learn the compliance procedures, do the required compliance activities, and then report the compliance activities that were done. They frequently spoke of their student-facing responsibilities as those that *should* be done, whereas their regulatory compliance responsibilities were those that *had to* be done. In that equation, the answer to the decision was always doing the regulatory compliance work.

Samuel described the compliance work of the athletics department as extremely “time-consuming.” Within recent years, “the amount of [regulatory compliance] work has tripled” for the athletics department. In a previous semester, they had tracked their work hours in small time segments, and he was disheartened when he realized how much of that time was devoted to compliance work. He continued to describe a long list of “other things that you shortchange because of [regulatory

compliance work],” such as more time mentoring student-athletes and coaching activities. He believed those sacrificed things “would improve the whole athletic department environment, the student athlete experience” more than what they were doing with regulatory compliance in the NCAA.

Joshua discussed that 45-50% of the student body was employed on campus. Though he wanted to devote more time to using that student employment as a developmental opportunity, his time was limited due to compliance work. If that compliance work disappeared, he noted that “I would like to devote much more effort to developing very regulatory-like structures for training them [student employees] ...It would become a part of their portfolio when they leave the institution.” Such an endeavor would certainly align with the ethos of the institution, though it had instead become an implicit cost of regulatory compliance.

Roadblocks and interruptions. Town College employees wanted to interact with students—to teach, mentor, and help them. However, the workflow related to regulatory compliance often preempted that. Sometimes, regulatory compliance did push interaction with students, though not always ways associated with an employee’s primary work responsibility. Such interruptions to primary workflow had become the norm for Chloe, as she described how,

I've come now to expect it. It makes my life very difficult, because sometimes we've had [a] major Title IX investigation going on at the end of the spring semester or the end of the fall semester. It does demand my attention.

Without diminishing the importance of serving the students with a thorough Title IX investigation, the registrar needed to be spending the end of each semester working on graduating students, facilitating efficient grade submissions, making sure transcripts were accurate and issued promptly, and so on. When a Title IX investigation was going on at Town College, Chloe said that it “dominates” her workflow.

Further, Chloe described what was given up with work “in the trenches” of a student-service department for the sake of regulatory compliance. “Even though we try to add hours to the day,” she noted, they were just unable to get everything done as well or as quickly as they really needed to. She continued that,

We know at the end of every semester we're gonna be swamped in certain ways, and so we make adjustments. We make it clear that we're not gonna be able to do transcript fulfillment as quickly, or we do some things like that to try to create the slack in the system. But when some of these compliance issues come up and they take priority, that just throws the wrench in the monkey works.

Unfortunately, in the eyes of those facing these tough decisions, it was just not possible to do as well with the students as they wanted to. Self-sacrifice could only go so far, and at a point, the quality and timeliness of student-facing work were sacrificed as well.

**Personnel decisions.** All the participants noted that they would prefer their responsibilities be more people-focused; however, regulatory compliance limited the ability of many to do so. Matea estimated that Town College had the equivalent workload of two full-time employees doing compliance. These two full-time equivalents then had taken the place of other personnel additions.

Rare additions. Of the divisions represented in this study, only the athletics and financial aid departments reported getting increased staffing to address the growing compliance burdens. Samuel noted that the institution had responded to increased compliance work with the NCAA by transforming

several part-time coaching positions into full-time. This afforded Samuel the “benefit of spreading the hats around” in the athletics department. In the financial aid office, Darnell was concerned about how regulation had expanded to the point “where institutions of higher education have to spend hundreds of thousands of dollars just to keep up with the regulations.” As that burden has increased, the financial aid office had come to rely upon several student workers to fill the gaps that the two full-time staff members could not meet.

Justifying jobs. In reflecting about what would happen at Town College if regulatory compliance requirements completely disappeared, Joshua assumed that “some people would lose their jobs, that some people could be reallocated for other jobs and other effort within the institution.” This was an important indicator that the institution had already reallocated its labor force, though subtly and not necessarily with intention, to meet the requirements of regulatory compliance. He noted that these changes were “not always commensurate with where we would like to see the institution go.” Town College, for better or for worse, could not escape the reality that they were not entirely in control of the substance or direction of their operations.

**Restrained excellence.** The desire for excellence was clear at Town College. However, regulatory compliance seemed rarely, if ever, focused on excellence, rather enforcing a relatively low minimum standard. Whereas excellence implied continued improvement, compliance implied just meeting a standard.

Interference with professional discretion. A sentiment commonly expressed by the participants was that they had lost a great deal of professional discretion over the recent decades due to regulatory compliance. This was accompanied by a feeling that the regulatory requirements were often set by distant bureaucrats in government, rather than trained experts dealing with the realities of their situations. While regulation could ensure a minimum standard was held, that standardization also cut into the ability of professionals to determine what was appropriate or best in specific situations.

Giving up local success. During the interviews, I spoke with all four members of the institution who worked with Title IX. Each had a unique perspective on compliance, but one common theme came up repeatedly—the institution previously had a system that protected students as well or better but more comfortably fit within the institutional operations. They saw Title IX as a nationwide initiative to bring those below expectations up to a minimum standard, but it tended to be somewhat less effective than what Town College had been doing before. Melissa commended that she was “not sure the outcomes have been terribly different than what we did before” but resulted in huge expenditures “to increase the likelihood that someone doesn’t file a complaint.” Thus, there was the implicit cost of a system that worked well for the students and Town College in favor of a more expensive system that questionably brought any improvement.

Maintenance mentality. Robert reflected upon how his time would be used differently if there were not regulatory compliance:

I think that there is some compliance paperwork that does interfere with being able to do things that have more effect on the college...I would probably work on other things that I don't get to do, like looking at policies or efficiencies.

As result of the small human resources staff, he had just begun “revising the handbook, for the second time, in the nine years that I've been here.” Without time to step out of the grind to think about the bigger picture, the institution had sacrificed improving efficiency and communicating up-to-date expectations to employees in favor of maintenance of what they were doing and how they were doing it.

Sacrificing quality. Quality often proved difficult to do within time constraints. When asked how he would reallocate the time that would be made available if he were not performing compliance activities, Joshua stated that, “I'd like to say finding more creative ways to serve the institution with respect to developing new programs, developing different ways for allocating budget. Providing even more support to the various units that require some sort of vigilance.”

Many of the participants indicated that, when an individual took pride in the quality of their work, it showed outwardly in the quality of the product. Melissa reflected upon the converse—no-choice compliance—in different light: “with some of these things that are imposed, you do something to say you did it.” The quality, then, of the product was restrained by the removal of personal ownership and pride. Innovation simply could not be done at scale in competition with no-choice regulatory compliance.

**Benefits of external authority.** Despite the various challenges brought by regulatory compliance, such external authority could also be wielded as a force for good. Sydney's explained how outside assessment and the state Department of Education helped them know “that we're on the right track with a number of those things.” Joshua found that compliance requirements “do provide us with benchmarks and with procedural clarifications that allow us perhaps to move forward in more measured ways than if there were no compliance requirements.” Thus, external regulation could provide helpful feedback and guidance.

Managing superiors. Emily served in an awkward role, where she both worked under the science faculty but was above them on issues of safety and compliance. She described how, “It makes my role so much easier as well, as both a subordinate and an overseer,” as she could simply say “It's because it says right here, and it's got to be in compliance.” Without the force of external regulators, it likely would have been difficult for Emily to assert her role in chemical and environmental safety over faculty members who outranked her.

Catalyst for change. As a small college where faculty members taught a breadth of courses, it could have been easy to settle into a comfortable system or deviate outside of disciplinary norms. However, external inputs from the state Department of Education helped promote curricular changes. Sydney described how state requirements for teacher education degrees changed frequently, necessitating the regular review of curricula.

## Discussion

“The whole regulatory piece permeates the campus,” Darnell told me. This pithy statement forced me to consider how well this was aligned with Birnbaum's (1998) collegial institution, which was epitomized in SLAC culture and the Town College desire for an intimate learning community based on relationships. Though valuable in ensuring minimal expectations were met as an accountability measure to society, the pervasive nature and impact of regulatory compliance seemed to eat away at the spirit of what this SLAC embodied.

**Interpretation Through Implicit Cost.** I used the concept of implicit cost as the theoretical framework for analyzing the results of this study. Opportunity cost suggests that, when faced with a choice, people and organizations will always choose their preferred option, thus leaving behind the implicit cost of the next-best option. However, as discovered in this study, higher education institutions practically have no choice with external regulation, being compelled against the backdrop of severe consequences. The forced choice then becomes the best choice based on the severity of punishment; however, it is not the best choice outside that lens as determined by the institutions. Thus, the substance

of the functions chosen under compliance may, in fact, be inferior to the opportunity cost, forcing the institutions to leave behind what they would otherwise perceive as the best choice.

**Implicit cost for employees.** The implicit cost for the participants at Town College was self—relationships, personal well-being, and balance. The complications and mandatory timelines of regulatory compliance had drastically expanded the responsibilities held by individuals. Though a full-time work week in the United States is considered to be 40 hours, it is widely understood that employees paid a salary and classified as exempt are expected to not have a clock-punching mentality, wherein they would reach 40 hours of work in a week and check out from their responsibilities. However, the participants felt the weight of ongoing 50- to 70-hour weeks on their personal lives. If the time demands of regulatory compliance were lightened, most participants indicated they would spend that time on their personal well-being.

**Implicit costs for the institution.** Town College experienced its own implicit costs from regulatory compliance. This next-best alternatives were complex, with varied costs for each job position and division. Taken in aggregate, however, the implicit costs were concentrated around four concepts—time for students, hiring choices, employee specialization, and innovation.

Time for students. Town College sought to be a tightknit learning community focused on caring relationships. With so many duties and associated compliance activities condensed into a small administrative staff, the institution had sacrificed a part of that ethos, when comparing what Town College was doing against what it *could have* been doing.

Students may not get the services they need in the timeline they desire as the employees who would provide them are instead filing paperwork on mandatory timelines, attending compliance training, or doing compliance work. Melissa described the situation this way—

When I come to work, I feel like my main goal is to try to have influence and impact on students. I understand the need for compliance. I understand the need for documentation on things, but I think it can get really excessive...I think [those who report to me] could probably see and do about twice as much as they actually do, because they have to spend half of that just doing the paperwork on it to prove to somebody they're doing it.

Hiring choices. In the athletics and financial aid departments, personnel additions were created in response to needs for regulatory compliance work, leaving an implicit cost of other positions. Based on the responses from the three vice president participants in this study—Joshua, Matea, and Melissa—there were implicit costs to those compliance additions in athletics and financial aid: tenure-track faculty members, counselors, and development officers.

Specialization. Related to opportunity cost, economic models propose the concept of specialization in the division of labor, wherein individuals “specialize on types of work at which they have a comparative advantage” and “acquire specialized skills” (Black et al., 2017, “Division of Labour,” para. 1).

In a system where the few administrative staff members of Town College managed an increasingly complex regulatory state, specialization was impossible. Certainly, there was a sense of specialization, since each participant had a primary responsibility and there was no duplication of duties among those at a level where compliance was managed. However, this was only a degree of comparative specialization related to others inside the organization. This not only suggests that these employees are doing their secondary duties less efficiently, but it also means they are not able to reap the benefits of

specialization in their primary duties.

Innovation toward excellence. Another implicit cost to the institution was the freedom to innovate. Before Title IX practice came into its current form, Town College had a robust system for investigating sexual harassment and assault. Both Chloe and Melissa looked back with pride upon the system they had helped design and operate for decades. Their unique approach met the needs of their campus very well; however, they had to set that aside in order “to change and morph into meeting the standards” of policy guidance from the U.S. Department of Education. Rather than meeting both policy goals and institutional culture, they followed policy written with a broad-brush stroke that was not designed to best meet their local needs.

### Limitations

The primary limitations of this study derived from what was being investigated and the methodology. Implicit cost is subjective and seemingly defies quantification. Thus, I attempted to describe the implicit costs of regulatory compliance in a way that faithfully represented the views of the participants. Further, a single case study is focused on just one setting, though this is intentional with the methodology and not a limitation in the conventional sense. While the purpose of qualitative research is not to produce generalizable results, these two factors—looking for implicit costs and using a single case study—limit the direct applicability of results elsewhere. However, the responsibility for generalization in qualitative research lies on the reader, and I believe that readers across all settings can find insight into how the regulatory compliance affects institutions and their employees who work with compliance.

### Recommendations

Muller (2018) tied much of the current societal fixation with measuring compliance in higher education back to the desire for the accountability of those receiving public funding. This has resulted in a variety of publicized metrics based on compliance, from the reporting of crimes on campus to employment of graduates. In his chapter entitled “Unintended but Predictable Negative Consequences,” Muller explained the lessons to be learned from a broad review of national policies regarding data and reporting, which align closely with this study. He identified the following realities that have emerged from such a national fixation: goal displacement through diversion of effort to what gets measured, promoting short-termism, costs in employee time, diminishing utility, rule cascades, discouraging risk-taking, discouraging innovation, discouraging cooperation and common purpose, degradation of work, and costs to productivity (pp. 169-173). Against this backdrop of Muller’s work, I make the following recommendations to policy and research.

**Recommendations for practice.** I do not believe this study is suggestive that higher education become unregulated; rather, both the policymakers and those who implement policy need to become more aware of the practical impacts that regulatory compliance has on institutions. I believe this case study illustrated that the existing regulations need to be improved to accomplish the policy goals without punishing effective institutions or causing unnecessary burdens from compliance. St. John et al. (2013) acknowledged implicit costs in higher education policy, writing that, “If we assume that any specific set of policies will result in equalizing opportunities, we will miss the opportunity to craft new strategies that may work better” (p. 14). The goal for policymakers, then, should be to identify and regulate policy goals while reducing the “onerous” nature of compliance, as Joshua so aptly put it. The goal for those managing compliance at institutions should be to identify gaps in compliance management, account for

the financial and other costs of compliance, and advocate for more effective regulation.

**Recommendations for further research.** Kaplin and Lee (2014) noted that, in addition to questions of values and addressing real issues on campuses, research is needed on all facets of regulatory cost to understand whether the laws that regulate higher education are “more a beacon or a blanket of ground fog” (p. 15). Unfortunately, there is a significant gap in the research related to the costs, impacts, and unintended consequences of regulations on higher education. Because that gap in the literature is so profound, this study attempted to provide some initial insight through one institution in the beleaguered SLAC sector. Further research is needed to evaluate regulatory compliance management and its effects at other types of institutions. Though ties between regulation and affordability have been suggested and could be logically inferred, research is needed to directly examine the degree to which regulatory compliance affects the cost of attendance for students.

### Conclusion

Regulatory compliance in higher education is in the midst of an unprecedented expansion. However, there is no indication that this expansion is done just to create more paperwork or expense for educational institutions. It is vital that, at every level of the policymaking and regulatory process, key policy goals are clearly expressed and supported with strong regulation. However, it must also be acknowledged that there are always opportunity costs. All stakeholders in higher education then must consider the opportunity costs as new policies are developed and institutions attempt to comply.

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# Adding a New Football Program: The Impact on Socioeconomic and Geographic Diversity at Small, Private Institutions

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The addition of a new college football program is an important, comprehensive decision for a small, private institution. College decision makers are adopting football programs to promote enrollment goals. College boards of trustees, presidents, and athletic directors along with the input of faculty, staff, and students strategically decide if starting football is the right decision. The decision to add football student-athletes to the campus life and culture is a decision that presents a plethora of ramifications for the institution. However, these ramifications are rarely the focus of administrative decision making. This research study examined how the addition of new football programs affected the economic and geographic diversity of student enrollment at small, private institutions.

The addition of a new college football program may increase total student enrollment and also the enrollment of underrepresented student populations (Dalton & Somers, 2015). Stern (2015) suggests that African American males, Latino males, and males in general lag behind the enrollment of other student groups in all colleges and universities. Stern suggests that many minority male students may not view college as an option because they are supporting a new family or living at home supporting their parents. The addition of new football programs on small, private college campuses provides an opportunity to grow male student enrollment by as much as 5% (Beaver, 2014). Blackhurst and Auger (2008) suggest that young minority male students identify with the culture of athletics, thus making college athletics an attractive aspect of college. Young minority males see the wealth and notoriety associated with professional sports and view college athletics as a way to reach professional sports (Blackhurst and Auger, 2008). Beamon (2010) suggests that young African American males often grow up with family members that push them to focus on athletics over academics. Thomas and Nasir (2013) propose that many African American males grow up in extreme poverty and feel pressure to excel in athletics to improve their social situation. Sage and Eitzen (2016) acknowledge that using athletics as a way to get out poverty is unlikely and a common myth within the African American community. Sage and Eitzen also note that the percentage of athletes making a professional career is very small and should not be the focus of college athletics. The current research, in part, examined if the addition of new small, private college football programs increases the diversity of enrollment on campus and provides opportunities for underrepresented minority students to earn a college degree.

Feezell (2009) suggests that the addition of football on small, private college campuses shifts the balance of power toward athletics because in many cases the student population is predominately athletes. This study is important because it explores football's cultural impact on small, private college campuses. This study makes a unique contribution to sports literature because it adds to the existing knowledge regarding the addition of new football programs, in general, as an enrollment management tool on small, private college campuses. More importantly, this study contributes new research that

examines how adding a new football program impacted the diversity of student enrollment at small, private collegiate institutions.

### Research Questions

Small, private colleges and universities continue to add new athletic teams to grow student enrollment. In particular, institutions are adding new football programs to increase total enrollment, male enrollment, and enrollment of underrepresented student populations (Dalton & Somers, 2015). Small, private colleges and universities are taking advantage of the fact that students often choose small colleges to continue their playing career (Bandre, 2011; Beaver, 2014). It is the opinion of the authors that college decision makers are starting football programs without considering how the addition of football will affect the diversity of student enrollment on campus. The purpose of this quantitative study was to explore if the addition of a new college football program resulted in an increase in the socioeconomic and geographical diversity of student enrollment at small, private institutions. The following research questions and hypotheses guided the study:

Research Question 1: To what extent does the addition of a football program result in increased enrollment of students receiving Pell Grants at small, private institutions compared to institutions that did not initiate a football program?

Research Question 2: To what extent does the addition of a football program result in increased enrollment of out-of-state students at small, private institutions compared to institutions that did not initiate a football program?

### Literature Review

**Socioeconomic Diversity.** Socioeconomic diversity is an aspect of diversity that is important for university and sports leaders to understand. Research indicates that interactions with people of all socioeconomic backgrounds are important for learning (Goodman & Bowman, 2014). Also, having a socioeconomically diverse institution is good for campus climate and the overall diversity of an institution (Park & Denson, 2013). The challenge for colleges and universities is how to get low-income students on campus. Policymakers are calling for colleges and universities to open up access to higher education for low-income families that lack representation in higher education (Hillman, 2012). A report by Rine and Eliason (2015) of the Council of Independent Colleges found that lack of representation of low-income families in higher education prevents them from moving to middle-class status. Low-income students also have significant obstacles in accessing education and are less likely to enroll in college (Hoxby & Avery, 2013; Rine & Eliason, 2015). Research indicates that low-income students tend to be first generation students and are more likely to be ethnic minorities (Messer, 2016). In addition, low-income students are less likely to receive financial support from their parents and more likely to drop out of college (Gilbert, 2015; Hoxby & Avery, 2013).

The Pell Grant program is a large need-based financial aid program designed to provide low-income students with access to higher education (Ehrenberg, Zhang, & Levin, 2006). Student Pell Grant participation is also a common measure of low-income student access to higher education (Chetty et al., 2017). Higher education institutions report the percentage of students attending their institution receiving Pell Grants each year along with other educational data. In an effort to improve low-income student access to higher education, the Obama administration mandated that the government double investments in the Pell Grant program (The Executive Office of the President, 2014).

A less understood aspect of diversity is the relationship between college athletics and the socioeconomic diversity of higher education institutions. Research indicates that low-income students

that attend small, private institutions are more likely to participate in extracurricular activities such as athletics (Rine & Eliason, 2015). Davis' (2011) study of small religious institutions with football programs found that university and athletic leaders believed that football programs added to the socioeconomic diversity of their institutions by enrolling more low-socioeconomic students at their colleges and universities. However, Shulman and Bowen (2003) noted that college athletics did little to improve socioeconomic diversity on college campuses and that there were better ways to recruit and enroll minority students (as cited in Fried, 2007). There are insufficient results on the effect that college athletics has on improving socioeconomic diversity on college campuses. Hence, the current study provides empirical evidence on how the addition of new football programs on small, private college campuses affects the socioeconomic diversity of the institution.

**Geographic Diversity.** Out-of-state and international students are valuable to all colleges and universities. In many cases, these students pay higher tuition, which benefits the finances of the institution. A study by Burd (2015) of Newamerica.org found that large universities are suffering from in-state budget cuts and in some cases shrinking in-state high school graduation rates that are forcing them to pursue affluent out-of-state students that pay a higher tuition. Burd (2015) suggested that the practice of recruiting more out-of-state students is hurting low-income in-state students. Large public universities like the University of Alabama are capitalizing on their success in high profile sports such as football to recruit more out-of-state athletes and general students (Burd, 2015). Smith (2011) reported that Texas Christian University experienced a substantial increase in out-of-state student applications following its Rose Bowl appearance in football. Smith's (2012) research on the relationship between college athletic success and tuition rates found that institutions were able to charge higher tuition for out-of-state students based on success in football. Hardwick-Day's (2008) NCAA Values Study found that the ability for institutions to offer athletic scholarships attracted a large number of students from further than 300 miles from the institution, thus increasing the geographic diversity of the school.

Limited research exists, however, on the relationship between athletics, football in particular, and the geographic diversity of small, private institutions. Pope and Pope (2009) posited that success in athletics is more beneficial to private colleges than public colleges. Jones (2009) suggested that private colleges could see an increase in out-of-state applications resulting from athletic success. Davis' (2011) study of private religious colleges with football programs found that university and sports leaders, as well as university students, believed that the football program contributed to the geographic diversity of the campus by bringing students from all over the country to campus. Yet, there is limited research on the impact that adding a new football program has on the geographic diversity of small, private college campuses, thus the need for the current study.

**Diversity and Leadership.** Diversity is a competitive advantage for organizations (Bolman & Deal, 2008). A successful organization with a good working environment places a focus on diversity (Bolman & Deal, 2008). Leadership is a key aspect to the continued advancement of any initiative within an organization, including diversity. Leaders must understand and value different cultures and promote diversity within their organizations. On college and university campuses, leaders at all levels must embrace diversity and decide how to make diversity a key aspect of campus culture (Wilson, 2015). The college president should be the driving force for developing, promoting, and instituting a diversity policy (Wilson, 2015). Because college athletics contribute so heavily to the total enrollment of many institutions and because athletics is a prominent part of college culture, sports leaders have an important role in the diversity initiatives on college campuses. Sports leaders within university athletic departments must work in conjunction with coaches, faculty, university administration, and staff to

promote a diverse learning and working environment for students and employees (Bernhard, 2015; Davis, 2011). In particular, university and sports leaders must assess how their institutions recruit and hire minority employees, recruit and enroll minority students, and how they accommodate minority students once they come to campus (Njororai Simiyu, 2012).

Research suggests that minority students, particularly African American males, struggle to adjust to college and desire to see more African American role models in leadership positions (Singer, 2009). The data pertaining to minorities in higher education leadership positions are grim. According to Lapchick, Agusta, Kinkopf, and McPhee's (2012) racial and gender report card, whites occupied 85% of all college coaching jobs, more than 89% of all athletic director jobs, and 90% of college president positions. College athletic departments must be on the forefront of the push toward campus diversity by developing a culture that promotes multiculturalism and a diverse work environment (Bernhard, 2015). Sadberry (2010) recommended that athletic departments internally review how they serve minority student-athletes. The NCAA's (2017) best practices through diversity and inclusion recommended that athletic departments have a diversity action plan, promote diversity training, and employ a diversity officer within the athletic department. Bopp et al. (2014) suggested that university athletic departments publicize their commitment to diversity and foster a culture that shows their commitment to diversity.

Research suggests that university and sports leaders can promote campus diversity initiatives by connecting minority students with faculty and staff mentors (Barker & Avery, 2012; Beamon, 2014; Clopton, 2011; Comeaux, 2011; Sadberry, 2010). Comeaux (2011) and Sadberry (2010) posited that university athletic departments can help African American student-athletes adjust to college life by providing programming that connects them with faculty and staff. Beamon (2014) recommended instituting a bridge program that helps connect minority student-athletes to campus life. Clopton (2011) suggested involving student affairs leadership in programming that brings all facets of the university together. Clopton found this type of programming was beneficial to African American student-athletes. Finally, Barker and Avery's (2012) research centered on the use of an African American male leadership initiative as a way to improve the success of these students in all aspects of college life. The BMLI provided black male students with access to black faculty, university leaders, and alumni in hopes of developing relationships and finding role models.

For an organization to have diversity as a key component of its culture, it must recruit and employ diverse employees and have diverse leadership (Bolman & Deal, 2008). If a goal of higher education institutions is to improve the diversity of their student body, they must have diverse faculty and staff ready to serve minority students. Research demonstrates that colleges and universities lack minority faculty, athletic coaches, and athletic administrators (Beamon, 2014). Furthermore, colleges and universities should recruit and hire more diverse faculty, staff, and administrators (Beamon, 2014; Bernhard, 2015; Lapchick et al., 2012; NCAA, 2017; Njororai Simiyu, 2012). The NCAA's (2017) best practices through diversity and inclusion provided specific recommendation that university and athletic leaders can follow to promote diversity. The NCAA recommends recruiting and hiring minority head and assistant coaches, athletic administrators, and management level positions. In addition, the NCAA recommends hiring minority recruiters in order to attract minority students. The addition of minority employees on campus coupled with a diversity plan provides higher education institutions and their leaders with a solid foundation toward making diversity an integral part of the university mission and culture.

**Summary of Existing Literature.** Colleges and universities are feeling pressure from policy makers to make college more accessible for low-income students (Hillman, 2012). The Pell Grant program provides financial aid to low-income students and is a common measure of low-income student access

to education (Chetty et al., 2017; Ehrenberg et al., 2006). Research suggests that low-income students are more likely to participate in extracurricular activities like athletics (Rine & Eliason, 2015). Davis' (2011) research suggests that university and athletic leaders at small religious colleges believe that having a football team added to the socioeconomic diversity of the campus. However, little or no research exists that explores the relationship between the addition or presence of athletics and an increase in students receiving Pell Grants. The current research examines whether the addition of a new football program on a small, college campus lead to an increase in enrolled students receiving Pell Grants, thus adding to the socioeconomic diversity of campus.

Colleges and universities struggling with finances and low in-state enrollment are turning to out-of-state enrollment to fill the tuition revenue gap (Burd, 2015). Large, high profile, universities are capitalizing on their success in football to attract out-of-state students (Burd, 2015; Smith, 2011). Research shows that small, private universities can use success in athletics to attract more out-of-state students (Jones, 2009; Pope & Pope, 2009). Davis' (2011) research suggests that university and sports leaders at small, religious institutions believe that their football team made their campus more geographically diverse, but no data exists showing a relationship between the presence or addition of football and an increase in out-of-state students. This research examines if the addition of a new football program on a small, private college campus increased the number of out-of-state students, thus increasing the geographic diversity of campus.

The final section of this literature review discussed the literature pertaining to diversity and leadership. A diverse organization has an advantage and organizational leaders must understand, promote, and value diversity (Bolman & Deal, 2008). In higher education, the college president must be the driving force for promoting diversity on campus (Wilson, 2015). In the university setting, sports leaders must work within their athletic department and in conjunction with other aspects of campus to create a diverse environment that supports a diverse student body (Bernhard, 2015; Davis, 2011). University and sport leaders must understand the needs of a diverse student body and take the necessary steps to hire and train employees that can recruit, mentor, and serve a diverse university (Barker & Avery, 2012; Beamon, 2014; Comeaux, 2011; Lapchick et al., 2012; NCAA, 2017). Although our study does not address diversity in leadership, the results could be valuable to university and sports leaders considering the addition of a new football program on a small, private college campus.

### **Conceptual Framework**

To remain fiscally stable in an environment of economic uncertainty and increasing competition, many small, private institutions utilize a tuition-driven enrollment model (Dalton & Somers, 2015). Small, private colleges and universities must meet their enrollment goals by recruiting students, enrolling and retaining them. In the tuition-driven enrollment model, the most critical resource for the university is the student. Resource dependency theory best explains why small, private colleges choose to start new collegiate football programs as part of their student enrollment strategy. In their 1978 (reprinted in 2003) seminal work *The External Control of Organizations: A Resource Dependence Perspective*, Pfeffer and Salancik (2003) formalized the resource dependency theory. Pfeffer and Salancik (2003) proposed that organizations need resources to function effectively and efficiently. To acquire resources, organizations must depend on their external environment, which may be unclear and challenging (Pfeffer & Salancik, 2003). Furthermore, most organizations are not self-sufficient and must acquire external resources to survive (Black, 2001). The resource dependency theory explains how organizations address shortages in resources through innovations and explorations into alternative resources (Schulz & Lucido, 2011; Pfeffer & Salancik, 2003). In the context of higher education, the resource dependency theory explains how colleges and university enrollment managers respond to the

changing environment of higher education (Black, 2001; Pfeffer & Salancik, 2003). As stated previously, small private colleges must meet enrollment needs to stay fiscally solvent and relatively affordable. In the quest to meet enrollment goals, institutional leaders must identify unrepresented or untapped student populations. Resource dependency theory accounts for the fact that small, private institutions are highly dependent on tuition revenue and that revenue derived from student enrollment is an important resource for small institutions (Black, 2001). The addition of new athletic teams has the potential to add new student enrollment and additional tuition revenue, thus helping institutions acquire a must needed resource.

Institutional leaders of small private institutions are turning to athletic programs, football, in particular, to help meet enrollment goals and to tap into a scarce resource on many small private college campuses - the male student (Dalton & Sommers, 2015). The resource dependency theory implies that college enrollment managers must examine what resources are scarce on a particular campus (Black, 2001). Starting a new football program can potentially help small, private colleges add more male students to the campus and improve their enrollment gender distribution (Getz & Siegfried, 2012; Lammers, 2010; Gardiner, 2010; McCloskey Jr., 2016; Pennington, 2006). Lammers (2010) found that the addition of football and other athletic programs at Lake Erie College helped bring the male/female enrollment percentage in line with national averages. Like Lammers, Getz and Siegfried (2012) found that Shenandoah University revived its football program to attract more males to campus.

Small college leaders utilize the resource dependency theory to analyze the underrepresented students on their campuses. Breneman (1994) suggested the resource dependency theory helps college leaders identify if their campus lacks enrollment diversity. Stern (2011) suggested that African American males are a scarce resource on small college campuses. The addition of a football program aligns with the resource dependency theory because it explains how colleges can recruit more racially diverse students to campus using innovative tactics to tap into that particular resource. This research examined if adding a new football program to an athletic department increased the diversity of enrollment on small, private college campuses. The existing research highlights both positive and negative enrollment trends on small college campuses that start new football programs. The current research aims to contribute to the existing literature regarding the relationship between starting a new football program and student enrollment. However, the larger goal of the research was to explore in a broader context how starting a new football program on a college campus affected the diversity of student enrollment. The resource dependency theory helps explain why college leaders may choose to add new football programs to athletic departments.

## **Methods**

The current study utilized a non-experimental quantitative research design that was explanatory and retrospective in nature. According to Belli (2009), non-experimental research involves the study of variables as they exist instead of manipulating the variables (p.60). The current study is also explanatory because its focus is on explaining how a phenomenon, the addition of football on a small, private college campus, worked and because hypotheses were present to test a theory about the phenomenon (Belli, 2009). This study is also classified as retrospective because it looks back in time using existing data to explain or explore a phenomenon (Belli, 2009). An explanatory retrospective research design was appropriate for the current study because past data were available to explain and test the research hypotheses.

**Study Population and Sample Selection.** The impetus for conducting the current research came from the authors' observation that between the years 1990-2013 many small, private colleges and universities added new football programs. Data from numerous sources validated the claim that between the years 1990-2013 many small, private universities added new football programs (D3 Football, 2017; Dalton, 2011; NAIA, 2017; National Football Foundation, 2015; NCAA, 2017; NCAA Football, 2014). The available data suggested that approximately 65 small, private institutions added football during the defined timeframe (D3 Football, 2017; Dalton, 2011; NAIA, 2017; National Football Foundation, 2015; NCAA, 2017; NCAA Football, 2014). For inclusion into this study, institutions had to meet three criteria: be classified as private, enroll less than 2,500 students at the time of the addition of football, and belong to the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Division III or National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) at the time of the addition of football. The comparison groups were selected randomly from a list of institutions that were classified as private, enrolled less than 2500 students, and belonged to NCAA division III or NAIA. Data from NCAA division III and NAIA member directories and the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System were used in the identification and selection of qualifying schools for each research group (NAIA, 2017; National Center for Educational Statistics, 2017; NCAA, 2017).

**Instrumentation.** The current study utilized data from the National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES) (2017) Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS). The NCES uses the IPEDS surveys to collect data annually from higher education institutions to describe the state of higher education (National Center for Educational Statistics, 2017). The study utilized IPEDS fall enrollment data and student financial aid data for the years 1990-2013.

#### **Independent Variables.**

*Presence or Absence of a Football Program (1990-2013).* The researchers divided the institutions examined into three research groups: institutions that started football programs during the specified period, institutions with existing football programs, and institutions without football programs. It should be noted that the year the football program was launched varied across institutions.

#### **Dependent Variables.**

*Percentage of Students Receiving Pell Grants (1990-2013).* Percentage of Students receiving Pell Grants based on the Annual Student Financial Aid Survey from IPEDS.

*Percentage of Out-of-State Student Enrollment (1990-2013).* Percentage of Out-of-State Student Enrollment based on Annual Fall Enrollment Survey totals from IPEDS.

**Validity and Reliability.** IPEDS collects higher education institutional data from postsecondary institutions throughout the United States and in other U.S. jurisdictions (Ginder, Kelly-Reid, & Mann, 2016, pg. 1). Because the Higher Education Act of 1965 and other higher education amendments require colleges and universities to submit data to IPEDS to receive federal financial aid, the response rate is nearly 100% (Ginder et al., 2016). During each year of IPEDS data submission, a representative from each institution enters data into the IPEDS system (Ginder et al., 2016). IPEDS compares each year's data against the previous year's data for consistency, and the IPEDS system automatically checks entries for missing data or values that are outside the expected range based on the previous year's submissions (Ginder et al., 2016). Institutions have the ability to explain abnormal data and IPEDS staff follow up with institutions about abnormal data (Ginder et al., 2016).

**Data Collection Procedures.** This study utilized a multi-step process to collect data. Step one involved

mining the IPEDS database. For the current study, the selection criteria for the institutions in the sample included the following institutional characteristics: U.S. only, private not-for-profit four year and above, primarily baccalaureate or above, and enrollment of 2,500 students or less. IPEDS produced a list of institutions that fit the search criteria starting with the year 2015. Upon the creation of the list of appropriate institutions, the researchers extracted data on enrollment by race/ethnicity and gender, which constitute the dependent variables for this study.

IPEDS allows users to add subsequent years of data using the same selection criteria for institutions. By starting at 2015 and working backward, IPEDS kept the list of institutions consistent from year to year, thus making data mining easier. The result of step one was the creation of 13-18 years of institutional data with each year's data in a separate spreadsheet.

Step two in the data collection process involved consolidating data and creating new variables. All annual data spreadsheets were combined into one spreadsheet that follows each institution longitudinally. Because IPEDS did not create the exact variables needed for the study, we used formulas to create percentage of non-Caucasian students and percentage of male students. In addition, a new variable was created to measure the percentage change in each variable before and after the addition of a new football program.

Step three in data collection involved identifying the institutions needed for each of the three research groups:

- Group 1 - the football addition group comprising institutions that had existing football programs between the years 1990-2013 (comparison group);
- Group 2 comprised of institutions that did not have football programs during the years 1990-2013 (comparison group);
- Group 3 - the football addition group comprising institutions that introduced football programs between the years 1990-2013.

Existing data from several sources identified institutions that added football between the years 1990-2013 and the year that they added football (D3 Football, 2017; Dalton, 2011; NAIA, 2017; National Football Foundation, 2015; NCAA, 2017; NCAA Football, 2014). A key aspect of the current study involved identifying the exact year that institutions enrolled new football student-athletes. For some institutions, the first football student-athletes arrived the same year that the institution played its first game. For other institutions, the first football student-athletes arrived a year before the first football contest. The identification of the correct year that the first football student-athletes arrived was critical in producing the most accurate data.

Step four involved assembling the data for the two comparison groups. The first comparison group comprised the same number of schools as the football addition group and comprised institutions that had existing football programs between the years 1990-2013. Group 2 comprised institutions that did not have football programs during the years 1990-2013 and had the same number of schools as the football addition group and group one. Existing data from the multiple sources were used to form a master list of schools for each group and random sampling was utilized to obtain a representative number of schools for each group (D3 Football, 2017; Dalton, 2011; NAIA, 2017; National Football Foundation, 2015; NCAA, 2017; NCAA Football, 2014).

The final step in the data collection involved finalizing the three groups of institutions for comparison. Fifty small, private institutions with existing football programs between the years of 1990-2013, and 50 institutions without football programs between the years of 1990-2013 served as comparison groups (see Table 1). The comparison groups were necessary to determine if any observed changes in minority enrollment resulting from the addition of a new football program were statistically

different from changes in minority enrollment observed in institutions with existing football programs and institutions without football programs.

Table 1 – **Final Research Groups**

| Group 1  | Group 2   | Group 3   |
|--|---|---|
| 50 small, private institutions that added new football programs between the years of 1990-2013 | 50 small, private institutions with existing football programs between the years of 1990-2013 | 50 small, private institutions without football programs between the years of 1990-2013 |

### Results

**Characteristics of the Sample.** The institutions included in the research sample were 150 small, private institutions with student enrollments of 2,500 students or less. All sampled institutions belonged to the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Division III or National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) at some point during the years of 1990-2013 (see Table 2). In addition, they represented all regions of the U.S., as defined by Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) (see Table 2). Because the study encompasses institutions from all regions of the country, the data were representative of small, private institutions throughout the U.S.

Table 2 – **Distribution of Colleges by Governing Body Association and Region**

|                   | Number | Percent |
|-------------------|--------|---------|
| Governing Body    |        |         |
| NAIA              | 58     | 38.7    |
| NCAA Division III | 92     | 61.3    |
| Region            |        |         |
| Far West          | 6      | 4.0     |
| Great Lakes       | 26     | 17.3    |
| Mid-East          | 27     | 18.0    |
| Mew England       | 11     | 7.3     |
| Plains            | 24     | 16.0    |
| Rocky Mountains   | 2      | 1.3     |
| Southeast         | 46     | 30.7    |
| Southwest         | 8      | 5.3     |

**Research Timeframe.** Table 3 shows the research timeframe utilized for each of the three research groups. Group one consisted of the schools that added new football programs. For group one, enrollment was measured as an average of the three years prior to the introduction of a new football program and as an average for the three years following the introduction of a new football program (see Table 3). The difference was measured in the change in enrollment between the pre and post football years and coded accordingly. For groups two and three, the institutions with existing football

programs and without football programs, the pre-football three-year average enrollment was measured in the year (2006) with the most frequent additions of new football programs (see Table 3).

Table 3 – Research Timeframe

| Group 1   | Group 2   | Group 3   |
|---|---|---|
| Three-year average pre-football and three-year average post-football.<br>Benchmark Year: Varies | Three-year pre-average and three-year post-average.<br>Benchmark Year: 2006 | Three-year pre-average and three-year post-average.<br>Benchmark Year: 2006 |

Figure 1 shows that the years of 1999, 2000, 2006, 2008, 2011, and 2012 were the most frequent years for adding a new football program. For the purpose of this research, 2006 was chosen as the benchmark year for research groups two and three (see Table 3).

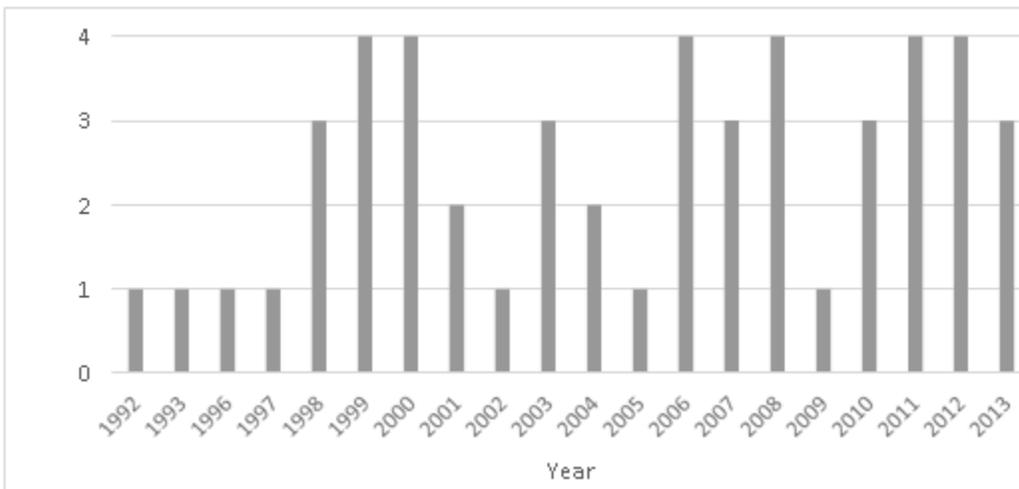


Figure 1 – Number of Higher Education Institutions by Year of Football Addition

**Pell Grant Enrollment.** A review of the Integrated Postsecondary Education System (IPEDS) database on Pell Grant enrollment yielded a slight modification of the research sample. Table 4 summarizes the changes to the research sample. Starting in 2008, institutions were required to submit Pell Grant data. From 1999-2007, institutions reported Pell Grant data as federal grant aid. Prior to 1999, Pell Grant data were reported as dollars awarded. Based on these findings, the Pell Grant research sample was modified.

Table 4 – Modified Pell Grant Research Groups

| Group 1  | Group 2   | Group 3   |
|--|---|---|
| 38 small, private institutions that added new football programs between the years of 1990-2013 | 49 small, private institutions with existing football programs between the years of 1990-2013 | 50 small, private institutions without football programs between the years of 1990-2013 |

Table 5 presents the descriptive statistics for the enrollment of students receiving Pell Grants at small, private institutions that added new football programs between the years of 1990-2013. These institutions constitute the primary research group in the study. Enrollment of Pell Grant students was measured as an average percentage for the three years prior to the addition of a new football program and three years following the introduction of a new football program. The data were represented as the percentage of the institution's total student enrollment that received Pell Grants. Table 5 indicates that the 38 small, private institutions that added new football programs had an average enrollment of students receiving Pell Grants of 35.2% ( $M = 35.2$ ) for the three years prior to the introduction of a new football program. The same institutions had an average enrollment of students receiving Pell Grants of 38.4% ( $M = 38.4$ ) for the three years following the introduction of a new football program. This group experienced an average change in enrollment of students receiving Pell Grants between the three years before adding football and the three years after adding football of 3.1% ( $M = 3.1$ ).

**Table 5 – Descriptive Statistics for % Enrollment of Pell Grant Students - Group 1  
(Institutions that added new football programs)**

|  | N  | Mean | SD   |
|--|----|------|------|
| Post – Football Average Enrollment of Pell Grants Students | 38 | 38.4 | 16.5 |
| Pre – Football Average Enrollment of Pell Grant Students   | 38 | 35.2 | 14.0 |
| Pre/Post Change in Enrollment of Pell Grant Students       | 38 | +3.1 | 10.1 |

Table 6 presents the descriptive data for the enrollment of students receiving Pell Grants for the two comparison groups. The comparison groups were formed because these institutions did not experience the introduction of a new football program, and because they provide data which allows for a comparison to the primary research group for the study, institutions that added new football programs. Groups two and three were 49 small, private institutions with existing football programs between the years of 1990-2013, and 50 small, private institutions without existing football programs between 1990-2013, respectively. For the comparison groups, 2006 was chosen as the benchmark year for data collection and analysis. Enrollment of students receiving Pell Grants was measured as an average of the three years prior to the benchmark year of 2006 and three years following the benchmark year of 2006. The data were represented as the percentage of the institution's total student enrollment that received Pell Grants. Table 6 shows that the 99 small, private institutions with existing football programs as well as the institutions without football programs experienced an average enrollment of students receiving Pell Grants of 32.3% ( $M = 32.3$ ) for the three years prior to the benchmark year of 2006. The same institutions had an average enrollment of students receiving Pell Grants of 29.2% ( $M = 29.2$ ) for the three-year years following the benchmark year of 2006. The small, private institutions with existing football programs and without football programs experienced an average decline in the enrollment of students receiving Pell Grants between the three years before the benchmark year of 2006 and the three years after the benchmark year 2006 of  $-3.1\%$  ( $M = -3.1$ ).

**Table 6 – Descriptive Statistics for % Enrollment of Pell Grant Students - Groups 2 and 3 (Institutions with existing football programs and institutions without football programs)**

|   | N  | Mean  | SD   |
|---|----|-------|------|
| Post – 2006 Average Enrollment of Pell Grant Students     | 99 | 29.2  | 14.4 |
| Pre – 2006 Average Enrollment of Pell Grant Students      | 99 | 32.3  | 14.4 |
| Pre/Post 2006 Change in Enrollment of Pell Grant Students | 99 | - 3.1 | 6.3  |

Table 7 shows the cross-tabulation scores from the chi-square test of independence for enrollment of students receiving Pell Grants. The information in Table 7 is organized according to research groups and magnitude of change in the enrollment of students receiving Pell Grants. The research group labeled “add” were small, private institutions that added new football programs between the years of 1990-2013. The research group labeled “no” were small, private institutions that did not have a football program between the years of 1990-2013. The research group labeled “yes” were small, private institutions that had existing football programs between the years of 1990-2013. The research groups labeled “no” and “yes” were also the previously mentioned comparison groups. The Pell Grants codes of 1, 2, and 3 represent changes in the enrollment of students receiving Pell Grants. Code 1 includes institutions that experienced a 5% or more positive change in enrollment of students receiving Pell Grants. Code 2 indicates that institutions experienced no significant change in the enrollment of students receiving Pell Grants. Code 3 indicates that institutions experienced a 5% or more negative change in enrollment of students receiving Pell Grants.

Table 7 shows that 34.2% of institutions that added new football programs experienced a significant growth (5% or more) in enrollment of students receiving Pell Grants while only 4.1% of institutions with existing football programs and 8% of institutions without football programs experienced similar growth in the enrollment of students receiving Pell Grants.

**Table 7 – Change in % Pell Grant Recipients by Group of Institutions**  
Change in % Pell Grant Recipients

|                   | 1. +5% or higher | 2. -4.99% to +4.99% | 3. -5% or lower | N  |
|-------------------|------------------|---------------------|-----------------|----|
| Added Football    | 34.2%            | 52.6%               | 13.2%           | 38 |
| Np Football       | 8.0%             | 58.0%               | 34.0%           | 60 |
| Existing Football | 4.1%             | 59.2%               | 36.7%           | 49 |

$\chi^2 (4, N = 137) = 20.38, p < .001, \text{Cramer's } V = .28$

A chi square test of independence was performed and found a significant relationship between institutions that added new football programs and an increase in enrollment of Pell Grant students compared to institutions with existing football programs and institutions without a football program,  $\chi^2 (4, N = 138) = 20.83, p < .001, \text{Cramer's } V = .27$  (see tables 24 and 25). The Cramer’s V score of .27 indicates a medium effect size and moderate association between the addition of a new football program and the increase in enrollment of students receiving Pell Grants.

**Out-of-state Enrollment.** A review of the Integrated Postsecondary Education System (IPEDS) database for out-of-state enrollment required a slight modification to the out-of-state enrollment measurement. Institutions were only required to submit out-of-state enrollment figures on even numbered years. Institutions were allowed to submit out-of-state enrollment every year if the institutions chose to do so. To stay consistent with the research methodology, only out-of-state enrollment data from even years were utilized for analysis. Table 8 shows the new out-of-state enrollment timeframe.

**Table 8 – Modified Out-of-State Research Date Timeframe**

| Group 1   | Group 2  | Group 3  |
|---|--|--|
| Three-year average pre-football and three-year average post-football (even years) | Three-year pre-average and three-year post-average (2006) (even years) | Three-year pre-average and three-year post-average (2006) (even years) |

Table 9 presents the descriptive statistics for the enrollment of out-of-state students for small, private institutions that added new football programs between the years of 1990-2013. These institutions were the primary research group in the study. Enrollment of out-of-state students was measured as an average of the three years prior to the addition of a new football program and three years following the introduction of a new football program. The data were represented as the percentage of the institution’s total student enrollment that were out-of-state students. Table 9 shows that the 50 small, private institutions that added new football programs had an average out-of-state enrollment of 32.3% ( $M = 32.3$ ) for the three years prior to the introduction of a new football program. The same institutions had an average out-of-state enrollment of 31.3% ( $M = 31.3$ ) for the three-year years following the introduction of a new football program. The small, private institutions that added new football programs experienced an average change in enrollment of out-of-state students between the three years before adding football and the three years after adding football of  $-.97\%$  ( $M = -.97$ ).

**Table 9 – Descriptive Statistics for % of Out-of-State Enrollment – Group 1 (Institutions that added new football programs)**

|   | N  | Mean | SD   |
|---|----|------|------|
| Pre-Football Average Out-of-state Enrollment        | 50 | 32.3 | 20.7 |
| Post-Football Average Out-of-state Enrollment       | 50 | 31.3 | 18.1 |
| Pre/Post Football Change in Out-of-state Enrollment | 50 | -.97 | 11.1 |

Table 10 presents the descriptive statistics for the enrollment of out-of-state students for the two comparison groups. Groups two and three were 49 small, private institutions with existing football programs between the years of 1990-2013, and 50 small, private institutions without existing football programs between 1990-2013. For the comparison groups, 2006 was chosen as the benchmark year for data collection and analysis. Out-of-state enrollment was measured as an average of the three years prior to the benchmark year of 2006 and three years following the in the benchmark year of 2006. The data were represented as the percentage of the institution’s total student enrollment that was out-of-state students. Table 10 shows that the 99 small, private institutions with existing football programs

and without existing football program had an average out-of-state enrollment of 39.7% ( $M = 39.7$ ) for the three years prior to the benchmark year of 2006. The same institutions had an average out-of-state enrollment of 39.2% ( $M = 39.2$ ) for the three years following the benchmark year of 2006. The small, private institutions with existing football programs and without existing football programs experienced an average change in out-of-state enrollment between the three years before the benchmark year of 2006 and the three years after the benchmark year 2006 of  $-.40\%$  ( $M = -.40$ ).

**Table 10 – Descriptive Statistics for % Enrollment of Out-of-State Students - Groups 2 and 3 (Institutions with existing football programs and institutions without football programs)**

|   | N  | Mean | SD   |
|---|----|------|------|
| Pre – 2006 Average Out-of-state Enrollment      | 99 | 39.7 | 22.4 |
| Post – 2006 Average Out-of-state Enrollment     | 99 | 39.2 | 22.9 |
| Pre/Post 2006 Change in Out-of-state Enrollment | 99 | -.40 | 6.4  |

Table 11 shows the cross-tabulation scores from the chi-square test of independence for out-of-state enrollment. The information in Table 11 is organized according to groups of institutions and codes representing change in out-of-state enrollment. The group labeled “add” were small, private institutions that added new football programs between the years of 1990-2013. The group labeled “no” were small, private institutions that did not have a football program between the years of 1990-2013. The group labeled “yes” were small, private institutions that had existing football programs between the years of 1990-2013. The groups labeled “no” and “yes” were also the previously mentioned comparison groups. The out-of-state codes of 1, 2, and 3 represent changes in the enrollment of out-

**Table 11 – Change in % Pell Grant Recipients by Group of Institutions**

|                   | Change in % Pell Grant Recipients |                     |                 | N  |
|-------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------|----|
|                   | 1. +5% or higher                  | 2. -4.99% to +4.99% | 3. -5% or lower |    |
| Added Football    | 28.0%                             | 38.0%               | 34.0%           | 50 |
| Np Football       | 12.0%                             | 52.0%               | 36.0%           | 50 |
| Existing Football | 34.7%                             | 51.0%               | 14.3%           | 49 |

$$\chi^2 (4, N = 149) = 11.77, p < .05.$$

of-state students. Code 1 indicates that institutions experienced a 5% or more positive change in out-of-state enrollment. Code 2 indicates that institutions experienced no significant change in out-of-state enrollment. Code 3 indicates that institutions experienced a 5% or more negative change in out-of-state enrollment.

Table 11 indicates that 28% of institutions that added new football program experienced significant growth (5% or more) in enrollment of out-of-state students. The table also shows that 34.7% of institutions with existing football programs and 12% of institutions without football programs experienced significant growth in enrollment of out-of-state students.

A chi-square test of independence was performed and found no significant relationship between institutions that added new football programs and an increase in enrollment of out-of-state students

compared to institutions with existing football programs and institutions without a football program,  $\chi^2(4, N = 149) = 11.775, p = .019$ .

### Discussion of Findings

**Pell Grant Enrollment.** The current study found that small, private institutions that added new football programs experienced significant increases in the enrollment of students receiving Pell Grants compared to small, private institutions with existing football programs and small, private institutions without football programs. University and sport leaders are under continuous pressure from policymakers to increase access to higher education for low-income students (Hillman, 2012). The completion of a college degree is critical to low-income students trying to escape poverty (Rine & Eliason, 2015). College campuses benefit from having a socioeconomically diverse student body and having interactions with people of all socioeconomic backgrounds is important to the learning process (Goodman & Bowman, 2014; Park & Denson, 2013).

College and universities must measure their success in providing access to higher education of low-income students. The most common method utilized by higher education institutions and the federal government to track the enrollment low-income students is through the percentage of students receiving Pell Grants (Chetty, Friedman, Saez, Turner, & Yagan, 2017; Ehrenberg, Zhang, & Levin, 2006). There is limited research addressing the relationship between college athletics and socioeconomic diversity in higher education. Davis' (2011) study found that university and sport leaders at small faith-based institutions believed that the presence of a football program on their campus contributed to the socioeconomic diversity of their campus by helping enroll low-income students. The current research found that small, private universities that started new football programs experienced on average a 3% increase in students receiving Pell Grants with 34.2% of institutions experiencing a 5% increase or more in students receiving Pell Grants. These results support Davis' findings that football programs on small, private college campuses increase the socioeconomic diversity of the student body.

Shulman and Bowen (2003) noted that colleges and universities could find better ways than college athletics to promote access to higher education for low-income students. Furthermore, they believed that athletics did little to increase socioeconomic diversity on college campuses. The results of the current study both contradicted and confirmed Shulman and Bowen's beliefs. On one hand, the current study's findings contradicted Shulman and Bowen and that adding a new football program resulted in a significant increase in the enrollment of students receiving Pell Grants compared to institutions with existing football programs or institutions without football programs. On the other hand, the current study found that that 59.2 % of institutions with existing football programs experienced no change in the enrollment of students receiving Pell Grants and 36.7 % of institutions with existing football programs lost 5% more in the enrollment of student receiving Pell Grants. This finding suggests that after the initial increase in students receiving Pell Grants from football, universities received little benefit in socioeconomic diversity from having a football program, thus supporting Shulman and Bowen's views. While the findings from the current study showed that adding a new football program on a small, private college campus will lead to an increase socioeconomic diversity on campus, university and sport leaders must find additional methods for providing access to a college education for low-income and socioeconomically diverse students.

**Out-of-State Enrollment.** The current study found that the addition of a new football program on small, private college campuses resulted in no significant increase in the enrollment of out-of-state students. In fact, small, private institutions that added new football programs experienced lower

enrollment of out-state students than institutions with existing football programs or institutions without football programs. A substantial portion of the literature pertaining to football and out-of-state enrollment centers on the ability for large NCAA division I institutions' ability to capitalize of their success in football to attract students from outside of their state. Research suggests that universities will experience growth in enrollment and applications following successful years in collegiate football (Burd, 2015; Smith, 2011). Jones (2009) suggested that small, private colleges could experience an increase in out-of-state enrollment if they have successful athletic programs. Since the current study did not factor the degree of athletic success into enrollment, it cannot contribute to the discussion on the relationship between football success and out-of-state enrollment.

The NCAA Values Study found that institutions that offered athletic scholarships attracted a large portion of students from over 300 miles from the institution (Hardwick-Day, 2008). The current study included a large portion of NCAA division III institutions that do not offer athletic scholarships, thus making it difficult to compare it to the Hardwick-Day study. Davis' (2011) study of faith-based institutions with football programs concluded that university and sport leaders, as well as university students, believed that football brought students to campus from all parts of the country thus improving the geographic diversity of campus. The current study both confirms and contradicts Davis' findings. On one hand, the current study did find that institutions with existing football programs experienced an increase in out-of-state enrollment at the time of the measurement. On the other hand, the current study found that adding a new football program did nothing to increase out-of-state enrollment. The recruitment of out-of-state students does cost more money and may be difficult for small, private colleges that have limited resources. The current study's contradictory findings regarding the relationship between the addition of a new football program and an increase in out-of-state enrollment should provide university and sport leaders with some information from which to make decisions. University and sport leaders must understand that the addition of a new football program may not provide an instant increase in out-of-state enrollment at the time of creation. However, as a new football program becomes established over a longer period of time (more than three years), the institutions could see increases in out-of-state enrollment.

### **Implications for University and Sports Leaders**

The current study's findings are valuable to practitioners in higher education and college athletics. For practitioners in higher education such as enrollment officers and college administrators responsible for enrollment, the current study provides insights into how enrollment will change after starting a new football program. Because the addition of a new football program will increase economic diversity, and minority diversity in particular, higher education administrators must become more aware of the need to hire diverse faculty and staff that can better relate and serve a diverse study body. For practitioners in college athletics, the current study's findings provide valuable information for athletic directors considering adding a new football program at their institution. Athletic leaders can approach college and university decision makers with information related to how the addition of a new football program will affect the diversity of student enrollment which will allow for better decisions regarding the addition of a new football program. The addition of a new football program will instantly add a significant number of male and low-income students on campus, thus potentially altering the current campus culture. University and sport leaders must be ready to cope with and address the expected changes from bringing such a large group of students to campus at one time.

## **Recommendations for Future Research**

The findings from the current study contribute to the knowledge of how adding a new football program affects a small, private university. The current study also exposes gaps in the knowledge surrounding the topic and provides some unique opportunities for future studies.

While the current study supported the fact that adding a new football program helps small, private college diversify their campuses, the study did not account for the long-term diversification of small, private college campuses. Additional research should be conducted to determine if the addition a new football program, or any college sport, has lasting effects on the diversity of small, private college campuses.

The current study only examined small, private college with enrollments of 2,500 students or less. To make a more definitive statement on the impact of adding a new football program on college campuses, research must also examine private college campuses with enrollment of more than 2,500 students and at large public universities.

There is a great need for a qualitative study on the impact of a college football program on the diversity of a campus. The quantitative data provides evidence that starting a new a football program on a small, college campus will increase the diversity enrollment. However, there is a need to hear the stories of various stakeholders on the campuses that have started new football programs. A qualitative study will provide a narrative on how administrators, students, staff, and community members viewed the addition of a new football program. Interviews and focus groups can describe the impacts felt by those living and working on a campus that added a new football program.

Small, private universities, like all higher education institutions, are spending considerable time and effort trying to improve student retention and graduation rates. The addition of new athletic programs, football in particular, will have an impact on the retention and graduation rates at a small, private institution. Future studies are needed that examine how the addition of a new football program on a small, private campus affects the retention and graduation rates of the institution. A further step in advancing this line of research is to acquire qualitative data on the lived experiences of stakeholders on small, private college campuses that have added new football programs.

## **Limitations**

A limitation of the current study is the time frame used for the analysis. The 50 institutions that served as the main research group started new football programs during the 1990-2013 timeframe. However, the comparison groups, institutions that had existing football programs and institutions without football programs, were only analyzed in reference to the 2006 benchmark year. Therefore, the data used for these groups were only representative of the years 2003-2008, thus leaving out a large portion of the 1990-2013 timeframe. While the results of the study are credible for the 2006 benchmark, the study could be improved by analyzing data from multiple years within the study timeframe. A second weakness of the study is that it does not account for other factors that could affect enrollment at small, private institutions. While the literature is very clear that university and sport leaders at small, private institutions believed that adding a new football program could have the greatest potential impact of student enrollment, it is possible other factors influenced some of the changes in the diversity of student enrollment.

## Conclusion

The purpose of the current study was to examine the impact that the addition of a new football program at small, private college campuses has on the economic and geographic diversity of student enrollment. This study found that the addition of a new football program on small, private college campuses resulted in a statistically significant increase in the enrollment of students receiving Pell Grants. This finding is important because it shows that by adding a new football program, small private institutions can provide low-income students with an opportunity to earn a college education. While the addition of a new football program can help small, private institutions address some of their enrollment shortcomings, higher education and sport leaders must do everything in their power to ensure the success of the new college students brought to campus through the addition of a football program. The current study's findings add to the existing knowledge base on how the addition of a new football program affects a small, private college campus and provides unique data that is valuable to university and sport leaders.

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# Faculty Club: Innovation in Improving Collegiality, Climate, and Collaboration at a Research University

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Faculty development programming includes a wide range of activities that institutions develop to support faculty members' roles and needs (Diaz et al., 2009). The goals of faculty development programming can vary based on the needs of the faculty at the institution, institutional goals, strategic plans, innovations in education, and other factors, with the primary goal being to engage faculty in activities that will enhance their experience at the institution (Austin & Sorcinelli, 2013). In the current study the focus is on a faculty development program (FDP) to enhance campus climate, collegiality, and collaboration (C3) through informal professional networks. Informal professional networks (IPN) can include work-related and/or social relationships which involve more discretionary patterns of interactions than those in formal networks, such as supervisors and subordinates (Xu & Martin, 2011). The Faculty Club provides a space and loose structure for faculty members to develop and enhance their IPN. With limited research on informal professional network development through FDPs, the current research endeavor will fill this gap and add to the current body of knowledge as it relates to outcomes of FDPs with an IPN and C3 goals.

## **Faculty Development Programs and Informal Professional Networks**

Faculty development programs (FDPs) have long been conceptualized in higher education as activities that help faculty improve their teaching skills, design curricula, and enhance the culture and climate of the academic institution (Chism et al., 2010; Gaff, 1975). Since the early conceptualizations, the role of FDPs has expanded to include professional development which emphasizes an individual's professional responsibilities as an educator, researcher, and/or administrator. These responsibilities include: organizational development, which emphasizes the requirements, and the main concerns of the institution; career development, which emphasizes faculty preparation for a career in academia and advancement; and personal development which emphasizes life planning, interpersonal and communication skills of faculty (Lee, 2010; Lieff et al., 2012; Riegle, 1987). The expansion of the conceptualization of FDPs contributed to the growth in programming related to interpersonal challenges, such as wellbeing, work-life balance, culture and climate, collegiality, and collaboration (Lee, 2010; Palmer et al., 2011). These programs, utilizing the traditional structure of FDPs, have been successful in educating faculty about interpersonal challenges, although they often fall short of providing experiences for faculty to practice the skills or develop relationships (Sorcinelli et al., 2006).

FDPs, with goals that include interpersonal skill development and relationship building, amongst other topics, can benefit from developing programmatic goals that incorporate Informal Professional Network (IPN) development. IPNs contribute to networked learning, which describes how faculty learn through communication, exchange, and connections (De Laat, 2012). The scope of what you learn is often dictated by a person's network and connections. In academia, being connected to expert level

researchers, teachers, and colleagues outside of your unit can be mutually beneficial, increase professional learning, and benefit the institution (i.e. creativity in solving institutional challenges or increasing faculty retention) (Cross, 2007; De Laat, 2012; Pugh & Prusak, 2013). However, not all faculty have access to social faculty networks, higher level faculty networks, or the social capital to develop them, hence one of the benefits of a FDP which can provide an opportunity for faculty to engage with new networks.

Additionally, research has shown that faculty thrive and want an opportunity to engage in IPN development in less rigid environments that allow for more free expression (Xu & Martin, 2011). Thus, the traditional structure of FDPs held in centralized faculty development centers, in classrooms with an expert, or heavily managed by leadership could minimize faculty autonomy, lower motivation to engage, and stunt IPN growth amongst faculty (Tynjala, 2013). Other options, which research has shown that faculty respond well to, are opportunities off-campus, flexible, non-evaluative, technology-enhanced, egalitarian, and opportunities that promote autonomy (Clus, 2011; Cross, 2007; Niehaus & O'Meara, 2015). FDPs that provide opportunities for faculty to develop informal professional networks are important and aid in increasing equitable access to diverse senior level faculty and administrators, increase collaboration, climate, and foster collegiality.

**Climate** – Climate is a measure of the real or perceived quality of interpersonal, academic, and professional interactions on a campus and consists of the current attitudes, behaviors, and standards of faculty, staff, administrators and students concerning the level of respect for individual needs and abilities (Hurtado, 1992; Rankin, 2001). A healthy climate is characterized by faculty who have respect for others, communicate, and engage in civil interactions with other faculty, students, and staff (Peters & King, 2017). Faculty members, administrators, and staff are all significantly impacted by campus climate (Maranto & Griffin, 2011; Pedersen & Minnotte, 2017). As an example, faculty members who rate their campus climate as healthy and inclusive are more likely to feel personally and professionally supported (Cipriano & Buller, 2012). This feeling of support is related to positive outcomes, such as increased productivity, positive career attitudes, and collaboration (Diggs et al., 2009; Harde et al., 2011). Improving campus climate is a central goal of administration that is often reflected in faculty development programs (Austin & Sorcinelli, 2013; Bauman et al., 2014), because of the positive influence on faculty productivity, engagement, retention, and collegiality (Diggs et al., 2009; Harde et al., 2011; Trower, 2012).

**Collegiality** – Collegiality is the amicable interaction and coexistence between members in an organizational setting, which is a central component of a healthy climate and culture in academia (Trower, 2012). For faculty, the lack of collegiality has been linked to diminished work quality, low workplace satisfaction, poor morale, climate issues, limited collaboration, and low retention (Cipriano & Buller, 2012; Clark et al., 2013). In a study of collegial interactions and instructional development with 30 faculty members, participants who identified as experienced expert teachers had larger, stronger, and more diverse networks as compared with experienced non-experts which provides evidence for the role of collegial interactions throughout a faculty career (Waes et al., 2015). Large strong networks extend a faculty's abilities in many areas key to success in the academy such as teaching and research; making these collegial relationships important to professional development (Cross & Thomas, 2008; Waes et al., 2015). In addition, some scholars suggest that enhanced networks through developed collegial relationships should be an important goal or outcome of all training programs because of the benefits listed above (Van den Bossche, & Segers, 2013). Dually important is the role collegial relationships have in faculty collaboration.

**Collaboration** – Collaboration among faculty and across disciplines fosters creativity, innovation, and productivity, making it a central component of most university strategic plans. However, physical separations by discipline, varying guidelines for promotion and tenure, and minimal incentives for collaboration, leave little opportunity to build relationships with colleagues in other departments or at other higher education institutions (Bensimon et al., 2000; Johnson & Freeman, 2014). While deep knowledge of one’s discipline has long been a hallmark of academic work, faculty members increasingly will be asked to work collaboratively in their research (Johnson, 2015) and teaching to solve complex issues facing society that require collaboration (i.e. poverty, environmental challenges, etc.). However, faculty are traditionally trained in silos, and often enter the university maintaining the same siloed approach to research and teaching, which is one barrier to innovation (Trust et al., 2017; Vanasupa et al., 2012). FDPs can provide opportunities for faculty to learn, grow, and collaborate outside of their academic silos (Devlin & Sardone, 2013). The FDP described below, named “Faculty Club”, focuses on campus climate, collegiality, and collaboration through supporting the growth of informal professional networks within the structure of an FDP.

### **Faculty Development Program: The Faculty Club**

**Context** – The university is a large urban public research institution in a mid-Atlantic state in the United States of America. There are about 31,000 students enrolled at the university, 2,500 full time faculty members, and it is an emerging minority serving institution. U.S. News and World Report ranked the university in the top 40 in campus ethnic diversity. Due to the fact that the university serves such a large ethnic population, there has been a commitment by the administration to have faculty diversity align or match similar levels of student diversity. About six years ago, the Provost developed a new office to develop programs and initiatives to strengthen faculty recruitment and retention, with focused attention on underrepresented minority (URM) faculty. Along with the efforts to recruit and retain URM faculty are innovative efforts to combat some of the reasons why URM faculty do not stay at the university, such as isolation, lack of collegiality, and other factors. The faculty club is for all faculty but there are additional outreach efforts to affinity faculty groups, to encourage and increase the engagement of these faculties.

**Program** – In 2012, as the new office for recruitment and retention opened, the inaugural vice provost conducted a listening tour with over 100 senior leaders across campus to gather information around needs, hopes, and ideas regarding the best strategies to get and keep the best faculty. Creating a climate that is collegial and collaborative was a consistent theme that emerged from these meetings. It became evident that developing an environment that allowed faculty outside of their own units to interact with one another was a priority. One meeting in particular with the Associate Vice President in the Office of Research was instrumental as their office was looking for a way to initiate interdisciplinary conversations with faculty working in similar research areas, but had little to no interactions beforehand.

The Faculty Club idea emerged as a result of the Office of the Provost and the Office of Research agreeing to collaborate together to develop a program to engage faculty on a regular basis. Unlike some universities where there is a physical structure called The Faculty Club, and events are held and food/drinks are available, this large mid-Atlantic university had no such facility. So instead, the idea was to create a monthly event, provide some food/drinks and to encourage interactions and conversations with faculty from around campus, which could possibly lead to collaborations. A small planning committee was established to discuss logistics and after considering multiple time/place options, it was finally decided to host the first Faculty Club on the first Friday of the month with the

event being held in a popular campus site that had historically hosted reception-like events. At the first event in September 2014 over 200 faculty attended (approximately 10% of the faculty). As a result of its success it was decided to continue to host the event every first Friday from 4-6pm and for the first year, the event would be held four times in the fall semester and three times in the spring.

Faculty Club provides a unique opportunity for faculty members from both the main campus and the medical campus to connect in an informal setting. The Faculty Club, hosted by the Office of the Provost in collaboration with the Office of Research, is more than a social gathering. This monthly event provides new possibilities for professional collaborations and the opportunity for faculty members to expand their network of colleagues at the university. Participants receive a name tag and have access to free appetizers and complimentary beer, wine, or soft drinks. There is no set agenda and typically there is no “interruption” or even a brief welcome. Faculty check-in and then are encouraged to wander around the space engaging with other faculty. For the last two years, the event has been from 4pm until 5:30pm, although many faculty stay at the institute, as evening programming begins there at 6pm. In 2018, the Faculty Club added pre-session interest research groups from 3pm -to-4pm for faculty members who wanted to discuss research possibilities over a shared research interest. Two weeks prior to a Faculty Club meeting, an email with the topic for the pre-session is sent out and faculty can sign up to attend and discuss the shared research interest; some research discussions have centered around the opioid epidemic and climate change, which usually brings together an interdisciplinary group of faculty.

The program is sponsored by the provost's office and coordinated by the Office for Faculty Recruitment and Retention. Funding for the event comes from the provost's office, with special support from the museum space which allows us to rent the space in-kind. The program is marketed directly to faculty through mass email, on the provost's website, social media, and email reminders from the provost's office, affinity faculty groups, and leadership.

## **The Study**

**Purpose and Research Questions** – The purpose of the current study is to understand the experiences of faculty members who participate in an FDP to enhance campus climate, collegiality, and collaboration (C3). Taking into consideration the need to modify and be innovative in the delivery of FDPs to enhance C3, an underpinning of the FDP was supporting the growth of informal professional networks (IPN) within the program. As a standalone, IPN tend to be ad hoc structures that may not be inclusive because they develop serendipitously based on your social network and capital (De Laat, 2012). To address this issue, the structure of an FDP is utilized to increase equity and access to a broad range of diverse faculty. To that end, researchers are interested in what type of experiences this structure leads to for faculty members, with one research question steering the study: What is the experience of faculty members who attend the Faculty Club program?

**Procedures** – Data for the study were from the 2018-2019 Faculty Club season. After a Faculty Club meeting, faculty members who were in attendance receive a link from the provost's office requesting feedback about their experience at the Faculty Club. The survey includes demographic questions and four open-ended questions. No questions are mandatory response and faculty members can opt out of the survey. The link to the survey is included in the body of the email, contained in a secure link, and the survey takes between 6-10 minutes to complete. Access to the data was granted by the vice provost for recruitment and retention and data was ethically analyzed and used in aggregate with no identifying information.

**Sample** – Data collection began and continued throughout the fall 2018 and spring 2019 semesters. There were 98 faculty members who completed the survey. In terms of rank, all ranks were represented, including adjuncts and instructors; specifically, Full Professor accounted for 14.9% of attendees; associate 20.2%, assistant professor 35.1% instructor 9.6%, department chair 8.5%, assistant associate dean 3.2%, university administration 6.4%, and 2.1% other. Questions related to age, sex, and race were omitted for risk of identifying the participant respondent. In terms of satisfaction with Faculty Club, respondents were asked if they were planning to attend another Faculty Club in the future (89% yes and 11% undecided) and how many Faculty Club events have they attended in the past (47% attending 4-6 events, 47% between 1-3 events, and 2% other), with both questions thought to be good proxy questions related to their satisfaction with Faculty Club. To gauge what marketing strategy worked best for enhancing awareness about Faculty Club, the participants were asked, how did you learn about Faculty Club, to which they answered 40% university telegram (i.e. a weekly digest sent university wide), 57% email from leadership, 45% word of mouth, 9% provost's website, 2% social media, and 70% direct email reminder.

**Data Analysis** – Thematic Analysis (TA; Braun & Clarke, 2006) was utilized to analyze the qualitative data collected through open-ended responses on the survey. TA is a methodology which allows researchers to identify and analyze patterns of meaning within a dataset (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Open-ended responses to questionnaires have been identified as an appropriate data source for TA methodology (Joffe, 2012). There are several useful guides on how to do TA, and Joffe (2012) synthesizes these and provides the following steps. The first step is to examine the full dataset prior to developing a coding frame. In the current study, the researcher read over all participant responses to develop code names and definitions. The second step entails checking the reliability of the code frame. The researcher had a second coder read 20% of the responses, use the codebook as a guide to coding the responses, and then the results of coding were compared to gauge agreement (Joffe, 2012). As there was more than 75% agreement between the two independent coders, the codebook was maintained (Joffe, 2012). Next, in the final step, the researcher analyzed the data for interconnectedness, developing meaningful themes and sub-themes.

**Findings** – The findings are presented below in a summary table and presented in text with example quotes from participants in order of frequency by participants. The themes that were cited the most are first in text and in the table. The thematic analysis resulted in three themes and nine sub-themes.

**THEME 1: COLLABORATION** – Collaboration was cited most frequently by participants. The theme of collaboration emerged within the results, as the majority of the participants affirmed the Faculty Club provides an opportunity to develop collaborations in varying types of projects. Sub-themes related to collaboration included: research and grant collaboration, presentations and teaching, and possibilities.

**Research and Grant Collaboration** – Participants shared quotes that focused on the Faculty Club's facilitation of a budding relationship to co-author or co-work on research and grant projects with colleagues. For instance, one participant shared, "I've met colleagues from both campuses, and one of them even offered to work together on a research/teaching project." Another praised a colleague they had met at the Faculty Club, and noted since meeting they have been applying for grants: "We have been working together on some big data projects we hope to get funded." The opportunity to meet other faculty to collaborate on research and grants was valued by participants.

**Presentations and Teaching** – This sub-theme was defined by quotes that focused on collaboration in the areas of teaching and scholarly presentations. When faculty met colleagues who held similar interests, they partnered to enhance their projects in these areas. One participant shared future plans with another member of the Faculty Club: “We have pitched a few ideas which I’m hoping to materialize into an actual project in the fall, and we’re also thinking of co-teaching and other forms of teaching-related collaborations.” Another specific example of collaboration in this sub-theme was a joint effort to enhance a program being given for postdoctoral scholars.

**Possibilities** – Participants shared their hopes for the possibilities offered through collaboration due to the Faculty Club. Several participants specifically mentioned how helpful Faculty Club has been for them to meet potential collaborators across the campuses of the university, which offers potential collaborations they might not have had otherwise. This is highlighted by a participant sharing that “connections have led to some potential research collaborations across campuses.” This sub-theme may be succinctly explained through one participant sharing that even though they do not have a concrete collaboration set yet, they are hopeful. The participant said, “[It’s] still too early to tell, but I have gotten to know several people better who may be collaborators.”

**THEME 2: STRENGTHENING CONNECTEDNESS AND COMMUNITY** – The second goal of the Faculty Club is to improve the institutional climate and feelings of connectedness for faculty, and the second theme is directly related to this goal. Socializing and building community enhances positive institutional climate and creates connections, which supports faculty retention efforts. The faculty participants shared their experiences feeling an enhanced sense of connectedness and the feeling of being a part of a community. Within this theme, three sub-themes emerged: opportunity to socialize informally, interprofessional interaction, and developing a sense of community.

**Opportunity to Socialize Informally** – The first sub-theme was defined by quotes that focused on the participants’ perceived benefits of a casual atmosphere which allows the opportunity to make connections naturally. One participant said the Faculty Club allows “time for friendly conversation and relaxed atmosphere to mingle.” The word “relax” was consistently emphasized by participants, suggesting the Faculty Club provides a reprieve for its members. Beyond the benefit of relaxing and chatting with colleagues, it provides a space for faculty members to feel appreciated. For instance, one participant shared, “This makes me feel valued as a faculty member, and it is also a low stress situation to socialize and reconnect.”

**Interprofessional Interaction** – This was defined by quotes that focused on faculty sharing their experiences with the chance to interact with professionals from other departments and campuses within the university. The Faculty Club provides a rare chance for participants to do so in an informal, regular setting, and they highlighted the importance of this opportunity. One participant shared how they found this enjoyable:

It is such a great time to interact with others whom I typically do not see regularly. Sometimes I meet people through serving on a university-level committee and would never see them again if it weren’t for the Faculty Club. It provides me a chance to strengthen these connections.

Beyond interacting with faculty outside of their department on a more regular basis than other university programs allow, some faculty shared they would not even have met these colleagues without

the Faculty Club. For example a participant noted, “many of us do not actually get many chances to meet faculty from other departments; this allows us to do so.” This point was emphasized again through a faculty member saying, “I have met several colleagues I would not have met otherwise!” For some participants, this was noted as their main reason for attending the Faculty Club. Participants shared why interprofessional interaction specifically was worthwhile, for instance, “I’ve met many colleagues I would otherwise have had no opportunity to meet, many of whom became important connections across the campus for me for various reasons.”

**Developing a Sense of Community** – This was defined by quotes that focused specifically on the sense of community which can develop from participation in the Faculty Club. The term “building community” was used by one participant as a benefit of the Faculty Club. Others shared specific examples of community building as a result of the program. A participant shared, “I’ve met professors from other schools (or re-met them) and we’ve even decided to meet up at non-Faculty Club happy hours.” The faculty members shared how meetings during Faculty Club led to other meetings centered around community over lunch or drinks on later dates. This sense of community is important to current faculty and potential faculty alike, as one person shared how the Faculty Club “creates a good sense of community and camaraderie. We took a job candidate to one and he was impressed.”

**THEME 3. CHALLENGES AND IMPROVEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS** – The third theme is centered on the participants’ perceived challenges of attending Faculty Club, and suggestions they have for improving the Faculty Club in the future. The challenges were logistical in nature and focused on the timing and length of the event, resulting in one sub-theme, timing. Improvement recommendations varied, but were organized into three sub-themes: location, facilitating opportunities for networking, and difficult for introverts.

**Timing** – This was defined by quotes that focused on different aspects of the timing of the Faculty Club. Participants noted that sometimes the time of the event makes it difficult for them to attend, or just that they simply wished the timing was different. They offered concrete suggestions for the organizers to take into account, with some participants noting the event was not long enough for their liking. For example, one participant shared, “I think it could be a little longer than 90 minutes. It seems like once people get there, it is time for it to end. Maybe two hours?” Variety of timing (e.g., “switch up the days”) was also suggested by the faculty, because the Faculty Club only being offered on Fridays was a barrier to some attending. One participant said, “My only regret is that I often have conflicts at the time of the Faculty Club.” Another said it would be beneficial for the organizers to “offer on multiple days. Fridays just don’t work for me on a regular basis.” Personal reasons were also a barrier to the timing of the Faculty Club on Fridays, as shown by this quote: “The timing of the event on a late Friday afternoon is not really welcoming to those of us who have young children and quite frankly possibly not to my single colleagues who want to go out on Fridays.”

**Location** – Participants shared a recommendation to vary the location of the event. Whether it was worded as alternate venues, different locations, or simply just, “move it around,” the faculty club members wanted to try out different places in the university’s surrounding area. This recommendation may also increase attendance, as one participant noted, “Perhaps you also want to consider moving it around, as I know some people might be more likely to try if it were close to them.”

**Facilitating Opportunities for Networking** – The second sub-theme related to improvement recommendations that included any participant quotes which referred to facilitating the opportunities for networking. One faculty suggested doing this at the beginning of faculty club meetings:

Perhaps if there's an organized way of getting everyone to interact with new folks at the beginning, then people can feel less awkward about trying to interact with new people. If they want to retreat to their "known" corners after that then that would work too after an initial ice breaker.

The term "icebreaker" was also mentioned multiple times. Others thought the facilitated opportunities for networking could be infused throughout the entire Faculty Club meeting. For example one faculty member noted, "It would be nice if the events had different themes or table topics." Another said, "Consider adding table topics cards or even having a monthly question that people can answer to be printed on name tags." Ultimately, some participants thought Faculty Club could benefit from more structure even if just in a small way such as the Faculty Club choosing to "provide conversation starters".

**Difficult for Introverts** – The final sub-theme related to challenges and improvement recommendations refers to the perceived difficulty of the Faculty Club experience for introverted individuals. One participant said, "I am not comfortable in social settings so striking up conversation with strangers is not something I enjoy." Some introverted faculty members had conflicting feelings around this topic, as one participant reflected, "I enjoy the unstructured nature of it, although it can be pretty intense sometimes lots of people to say "hi" to; it's a lot for introverts to handle." Facilitating opportunities for networking and difficulty for introverts sub-themes both seem to be related to some participants being uncomfortable with the prospect of a completely unstructured event in which there is a lot of conversation with strangers.

## Discussion

The purpose of the current study was to understand the experiences of faculty members who participate in an FDP to enhance campus climate, collegiality, and collaboration (C3). This particular FDP was unique in that it utilized the tenets of faculty development programming to increase the likelihood of the development of IPN. Participant experiences were overwhelmingly positive, with the majority of participants discussing the collaboration opportunities they gained from participating or the exposure they had to others outside of their discipline. With the loose structure of the faculty club, participants seem to really thrive and enjoy the flexibility, although some noted that it may be difficult for faculty who are introverted to navigate and fully use the faculty club. Specifically, three themes emerged that help answer the research question and provide clarity about faculty members' experiences who participate in the faculty club.

The primary response from faculty in relation to their experiences participating in the Faculty Club was that opportunities for collaboration were built, nurtured, and supported through Faculty Club attendance. Faculty found this opportunity unique and particularly important for many reasons that came out in subthemes. The subthemes noted research and grant collaboration, presentations and teaching, and the potential collaboration opportunities. Collaboration and specifically interprofessional collaboration, which was noted by several Faculty Club participants, is a major aspiration for many universities (Austin & Sorcinelli, 2013; Pinto & Huizinga, 2018). The benefits of collaboration and in particular, interprofessional collaboration, is related to increased research productivity (Huenneke et

al., 2017; Johnson, 2015), it drives creativity and innovation, and leads to collaborations that could solve complex issues and problems faced by society (Johnson & Freeman, 2014; Rossi et al., 2012; Siebert et al., 2019). Many universities have engaged in program development to focus on building collaboration amongst their faculty, utilizing faculty learning communities or developing partnership programs between university research centers and faculty (Furco & Moely, 2012; Ponomariov & Boardman, 2010) these are heavily structured and managed initiatives that require lots of administration power. The current research found that loose structure, a focus on building informal professional networks, and freedom to socialize in a non-formal setting, also supported university goals to develop more collaborative partnerships across units.

**Strengthening Connectedness and Community** – The Faculty Club was successful in providing a designated space and time where faculty members could de-stress, relax, and socialize without any expectations. This level of freedom appeared to be the catalyst for a large percentage of the success of the Faculty Club. There are several opportunities to engage with other faculty members around campus at professional development opportunities, workshops, events, and trainings. However, the uniqueness of the Faculty Club, and not having an underlying agenda, seemed to build connectedness among faculty. The Faculty Club incorporated IPN development within the program and similar to other studies, the inclusion and consideration for IPN development was successful in building connectedness through communication, exchanges and authentic connections (De Laat, 2012). Repeated in the transcripts were faculty members discussing the ability to socialize informally as a benefit. Prior research alludes to the importance of loosely structured activities so people can flourish and direct conversations about their interest, ideas, and even personal life, which helps them feel a part of the school community (Fredericks et al., 2018; Small et al., 2017).

However, our study is unique because prior to the current study, Informal Professional Network (IPN), socializing informally, and interprofessional interaction to strengthen community and connectedness amongst faculty, had not been addressed in the research literature. This is an important finding because the Faculty Club is a replicable program that is low in cost and administration needs, making it more accessible to different types of universities around the country (Beach et al., 2016). There are many FDPs that strive for these outcomes, through heavily administered programs or fellowships, structured activities, university policy changes, and other activities that may incur a cost and require a heavy lift from administration, making these activities out of reach for low resourced universities (Hong, 2019; Nishimi & Street, 2019; Smith, 2019).

**Challenges and Improvement Recommendations** – With all faculty development experiences there are ways to improve the program and participants of the Faculty Club noted suggestions related to the timing, location, facilitating opportunities for networking, and the difficulty for introverts. In terms of time and location, it is noted in the literature that increasing flexibility of FDPs is important to increase access (Smith, 2019). In addition, having a virtual component can extend accessibility to people who cannot physically be on location (Beach et al., 2016). As a result of COVID-19, we have had an opportunity to move the Faculty Club online, creating a virtual experience for our faculty. In the literature, online FDPs have focused on structured learning or development of a skill (Chen et al., 2017; Mohr & Shelton, 2017) although less is known about unstructured FDPs online to build collaboration. However, an online environment can provide additional flexibility and address a noted challenge for faculty members attending.

The other challenge noted by some faculty was related to the difficulty posed for introverts having to engage informally within a large faculty gathering. Introversions is one of the primary personality types and therefore lots of people identify as an introvert, typically characterized by a preference for

solitude and a unique individual identity (Seger-Guttmann & Medler-liraz, 2016). Being aware that the informal program could be a difficult setting for faculty who identify as introverts is a new finding in the literature but closely related to other studies that focus on how to make faculty who are introverts more comfortable in the work environment (Santo et al., 2015) and potential emotional stressors related to work environments (Kaczmarczyk, 2013; Seger-Guttmann et al., 2016). From that scant area of research, one main recommendation is clear, and that is to create intentional opportunities for communication (Santo et al., 2015). With this in mind another recommendation by faculty is to create opportunities for networking that can minimize the barriers for communication, such as ice breakers. Creating icebreakers and opportunities for small groups to meet prior to the big faculty club group are currently being beta tested.

### **Limitations**

In light of the new contributions to the literature on innovations in faculty development there are a few limitations that should be acknowledged. The inability to determine if the Faculty Club was reaching underrepresented minority faculty members is a limitation. Racial-ethnic data was not collected on the surveys to protect the identity of attendees. The goal was to understand who was attending in terms of rank and what benefit they received. Faculty appointment type is a valid and reliable indicator of perceived support, which encompasses many of the goals of the current study (Culver et al., 2020) and with this in mind the goal was met. However, in light of the data and the results it would further inform program development if we could identify groups that were not attending Faculty Club. Anecdotally, the Faculty Club attendees appear to be racially-ethnically diverse. As an example, one of the affinity groups on campus use the Faculty Club as a meet-up for the diverse faculty to talk and catch up, within the environment of the Faculty Club. Moving forward, key diversity indicators such as race will be included on the Faculty Club surveys. Lastly, generalizability of findings is a concern. The purpose of the research was to highlight an innovative FDP that could be easily replicable at other universities. The goal was not to generalize these findings to all programs that take a similar approach or to insist that all programs should take this approach (Maxwell & Chmiel, 2014). The sample size was 98 which is large for a qualitative study, however it is the unique experience, perceptions, and thoughts of participants who attended the Faculty Club at this particular university, therefore results may be different at other universities.

### **Implications and Future Research**

Future research should connect the activities related to faculty development to outcomes, specifically, asking faculty about outcomes from the collaborative relationships built at the Faculty Club. Researchers, administrators, and stakeholders who invest in the Faculty Club are interested in what grant, research, or teaching innovation outcomes have come from these collaborations. Future research should consider conducting a focus group or individual interviews with Faculty Club attendees to get more in-depth explanations about their experiences participating in the Faculty Club. A program evaluation could be the next research step to ensure the program is running as planned and reaching the intended audience. A comprehensive program evaluation of Faculty Club and similar programs is needed to determine if these programs are successful by other metrics, such as scholarship outcomes. And finally, now that the Faculty Club has gone virtual, evaluating the difference between a face-to-face experience and an online experience will be helpful in determining future planning.

In terms of implications, our research highlights a unique combination of an FDP along with the tenants of an IPN which incorporates more flexibility into FDPs and is a strong recommendation after

reviewing the results of the current study. Higher education administrators should be aware of the value faculty place on social time. Incorporating more opportunities for social activities and bonding is as important as programs that focus on technique or skill building. Lastly, being mindful of the time an event occurs is important because of people with young families and teaching schedules. If developing a similar program perhaps on alternating days, including weekends, or online environments, might add to the flexibility and allow different groups of people to attend. Being mindful of structural barriers that limit access to programming is important for diversity and inclusion programming.

### Conclusion

From the results we can make a couple of inferences: 1) The Faculty Club was successful in increasing collaboration opportunities and interactions, and 2) The Faculty Club was enjoyed by faculty because of the informal setting and opportunity to engage personally and professionally. Overall the goals of the Faculty Club were met.

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# The Community College Choice Process: Why New Hampshire Students Decide to Attend an Out-of-State Community College

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As a result of declining state and federal support for higher education, there is growing competition among all sectors of higher education for students (Rudgers and Peterson, 2017). One factor driving this competition is shifting demographics: many regions of the U.S. face a decline in the number of high school graduates. Between the 2009-2010 academic year and the 2022-2023 academic year, the United States will see an overall decline of two percent in the total number of high school graduates, disproportionately found in the private school side (Bidwell, 2014). The situation is even bleaker in the Northeast states, where Delaware, Pennsylvania, New York, New Jersey, and all six New England States will experience at least a five percent decrease in the total number of high school graduates during this period. In fact, New Hampshire and Vermont will both experience declines in the number of public high school graduates of over twenty percent. These are the only two states in the U.S. projected to experience such a magnitude of decline (Hussar & Bailey, 2014).

One of the 15 institutions in the Massachusetts community college system, Eastern Community College (ECC) is in close geographic proximity to New Hampshire-one of the states with the largest projected decline in high school graduates. Over the past three years, the number of New Hampshire residents that have decided to enroll at ECC has declined. The purpose of this study was to gain an understanding of how this institution might address this trend by learning from the smaller numbers of students from New Hampshire who have decided to enroll at ECC. Specifically, why did these students from New Hampshire decide to apply and enroll at ECC?

## **Purpose of the Study**

With fewer high school graduates across the region, an improving economy that is creating more job opportunities, and an abundance of higher education options for prospective students, there are significant enrollment challenges facing many colleges and universities in the Northeast. This study was based on a problem of practice: there is a recent decline in the number of New Hampshire residents attending ECC. This institution has traditionally, and understandably, drawn most of their students from Massachusetts. Given the close proximity of the institution to the state line, though, it has also had significant numbers of New Hampshire students applying and enrolling. Table 1 presents the most recent enrollment information.

The number of New Hampshire students that have applied to ECC has dropped by 219 students (-35.55%); the decrease is even more drastic when looking at the enrollment and registration figures, where there has been a -47.50% decline. It is essential for ECC to understand the specific factors that are attracting New Hampshire students to apply and enroll at ECC in order to develop recruitment and marketing strategies to address the recent declines in applications and enrollment, and thus maintain healthy overall admission and enrollment numbers.

Table 1 – ECC Admission Information

|                          | Fall<br>2013 | Fall<br>2014 | Fall<br>2015 | Fall<br>2016 | Fall<br>2017 |
|--------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| Total Applications       | 3826         | 3638         | 3594         | 3427         | 3385         |
| Registered               | 2133         | 1895         | 1794         | 1637         | 1574         |
| Yield                    | 55.75%       | 52.09%       | 49.92%       | 47.77%       | 46.50%       |
| Total MA<br>Applications | 3068         | 3005         | 3001         | 2909         | 2930         |
| Registered (MA)          | 1681         | 1516         | 1474         | 1358         | 1368         |
| Yield (MA)               | 54.79%       | 50.45%       | 49.12%       | 46.68%       | 46.69%       |
| Total NH<br>Applications | 616          | 530          | 490          | 442          | 397          |
| Registered (NH)          | 381          | 329          | 289          | 251          | 200          |
| Yield (NH)               | 61.85%       | 62.08%       | 58.98%       | 56.79%       | 50.38%       |

The outlook for institutions that rely heavily on New Hampshire students is bleak; the population of the state is aging and will continue to have a declining number of high school aged students. The population of residents under the age of 15 is projected to decline significantly between 2010 and 2040, while the demographics for residents over 65 and over 85 will both be increasing (USA, 2016). The National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES) showed a 4.7 percent decrease in PK-12 enrollment in New Hampshire public schools between 2002 and 2008, and projects a 2.7 percent decrease between 2008 and 2020. The 9-12 population in 2002 was approximately 64,000 students, reached a high of approximately 67,000 in 2005 and 2006, and steadily declines to 55,000 in 2020 (Hussar & Bailey, 2011). Colleges and universities that draw a significant portion of their student body from New Hampshire, including ECC, will have to recruit differently to ensure their enrollment will be stable. Toutkoushian’s (2008) projection of public high school graduates through 2017 continues to look bleak for prospective students, and addresses some of the changing demographics; the trend of few high school graduates is across all six New England states, though only Connecticut rivals New Hampshire in the severity; both states have a 20 percent decline by 2032 (Williams, 2017).

### Theoretical/Conceptual Framework

The model of college choice used in this study as a conceptual framework was Hossler and Gallagher (1987), who developed a simple, straightforward model that presents three stages: Predisposition, Search, and Choice. It synthesized previous college choice models to the most salient points and presents them in a straightforward, simplified manner. Predisposition is defined as the decision to pursue higher education over other options, including the military, trades, or other employment. The Search phase is the process of learning about institutions and aligns with Chapman’s (1981) External Influences stage, specifically the fixed college characteristics and the colleges’ efforts to communicate with students. The final stage, Choice, occurs after applications have been submitted, the colleges have mailed their decision letters, and the student determines where they will enroll.

## Research Questions

The guiding question for this study was why have New Hampshire residents applied to and enrolled at Eastern Community College? This research study explains the factors that affect the college choice process for traditional age, first-time, full-time New Hampshire residents that enroll at Eastern Community College. A traditional age student is one who is age 19 or younger when they enroll, and a first-time status is defined as a student who has never enrolled in a degree program in college; a student may have taken college courses, as part of a dual enrollment or early college program while in high school or registered in a college course as an elective, but never enrolled in a degree program. A full-time student is defined as a student who is enrolled in 12 or more credits. The research questions guiding this study are:

### Predisposition:

- 1) How did these New Hampshire residents choose higher education rather than employment, military service, or other options?

### Search:

- 2) How did these students first learn about ECC?
- 3) How did these students come to consider ECC as an option for higher education?

### Choice:

- 4) What personal factors do New Hampshire students enrolled at ECC perceive to be influential in their college choice?
- 5) What institutional factors do New Hampshire residents enrolled at ECC perceive to be influential in their college choice?

The answers to these questions have potential implications for the admission office in terms of recruitment efforts, academic affairs and programmatic or degree/certificate offerings, and student engagement and retention/persistence efforts.

## Methodology

While there is existing research on college choice and community colleges, none have examined the college choice of New Hampshire students enrolling at a Massachusetts community college. This study was exploratory in nature and a qualitative approach helped understand why New Hampshire students left their home state for a community college in Massachusetts. Because of the nature of the research questions-seeking to determine the “why” aspect of choosing ECC-as well as the sample size of the population, a qualitative approach was preferable to quantitative for this particular study to better understand why New Hampshire students do choose to enroll at ECC in order to influence future recruitment decisions to improve this negative trend.

The ECC reporting software (ZogoTech) has provided statistical data through reports about the number of New Hampshire residents that have enrolled over the past five years. The following tables show the total number of first-time enrolled New Hampshire students and then the number of those students enrolled full-time:

Overall NH numbers (full- and part-time):

**Table 2 – Overall NH Numbers (full- and part-time)**

| Year | Total First-Time NH Students |
|------|------------------------------|
| 2013 | 164                          |
| 2014 | 144                          |
| 2015 | 109                          |
| 2016 | 93                           |
| 2017 | 89                           |

**Table 3 – Number of First-Time, Full-Time (12 or more credits) Students from New Hampshire**

| Year | First-Time, Full-Time New Students |
|------|------------------------------------|
| 2013 | 100                                |
| 2014 | 83                                 |
| 2015 | 71                                 |
| 2016 | 54                                 |
| 2017 | 59                                 |

## Results

Results are organized around the five research questions, based on the Hossler and Gallagher (1987) model of the college choice process. Nine students participated in this study, each completing a face-to-face interview focused on a series of 18 questions covering the three stages of the model: Predisposition, Search, and Choice. All of the participants began their studies in 2017 and were enrolled in higher education for the first time.

### Participant Pool and Participant Demographics

Nine students participated in an on-campus interview for this study. The specific population of students was limited to traditional-aged students from New Hampshire who enrolled as first-time, full-time students in the 2017-2018 academic year. In order to solicit participation, a roster of students enrolled in the 2017-2018 academic year was created in Argos (the reporting software used at the institution) and exported to a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet, where students fitting this study's criteria were identified by filtering the appropriate categories. Solicitation to participate in this study was done through email, direct mail, text message, and phone calling. Pseudonyms have been given to the participants in order to protect and sensitive or identifiable characteristics, allowing them to speak freely and openly without any reservations; these are the students that agreed to participate:

Table 4 – Participants

| First Name | Last Name | Active Degree | City       | Major           | Gender | High School        | Starting Term at ECC | Age |
|------------|-----------|---------------|------------|-----------------|--------|--------------------|----------------------|-----|
| Karina     | Hayes     | A.S.          | Hartville  | Social Science  | Female | Bayside HS         | Spring 2017          | 19  |
| Steven     | Forter    | A.S.          | Norton     | Social Science  | Male   | Norton HS          | Fall 2017            | 19  |
| Gloria     | Williams  | A.S.          | Norton     | Social Science  | Female | Norton HS          | Fall 2017            | 19  |
| Natalie    | Jamestown | A.A.          | Plainview  | General Studies | Female | Plainview HS       | Fall 2017            | 19  |
| Joshua     | Peters    | A.A.          | Plainview  | General Studies | Male   | North Plainview HS | Fall 2017            | 18  |
| Bethany    | Watters   | A.A.          | Smallville | General Studies | Female | Smallville HS      | Fall 2017            | 19  |
| Rebecca    | Adams     | A.S.          | Smallville | Science         | Female | Smallville HS      | Fall 2017            | 18  |
| Summer     | Norman    | A.A.          | Smallville | General Studies | Female | Smallville HS      | Fall 2017            | 19  |
| Heather    | Whitman   | A.A.          | Oceanside  | General Studies | Female | Oceanside HS       | Fall 2017            | 19  |

Separate descriptions of the participants in this study have deliberately not been included, principally to ensure participant anonymity. The pool of nine participants share many similarities; they are all from the same state, with some attending the same high school while others are the only one from their high school. There is no racial or ethnic diversity, as all participants have self-identified as white and non-Hispanic; additionally, women make up the majority of participants in this study (seven of nine).

It is important to include information about how this pool of participants reflects the overall population of New Hampshire students enrolled at ECC; in the Fall 2017 semester there were a total of 709 New Hampshire students taking courses; the racial composition was overwhelmingly white (615, or 86.7%), with only 54 students (7.6%) identifying as Hispanic or Latinx. Most of these students graduated in 2016 (126) or 2017 (98), though there were 28 high school students taking courses. The oldest high school graduation year represented was 1969, with one student enrolled in the Fall 2017 semester. There were the highest number of 20 year-old students with 113, followed by 83 that were 19. There was one 16 year-old and two that were 65. More females were enrolled (418, or 58.9%) than males (291, or 41.0%).

## Discussion of the Findings

**Research Question 1:** How did these New Hampshire residents choose higher education rather than employment, military service, or other options?

There is not a single path to choose from, as traditional age students are presented with a variety of post-high school options; college, gap year programs, military service, and work are all things that can be considered. Though none are included in this study, previous research shows that African-American college attendance over alternatives is predetermined by aptitude and also family (Freeman, 2005; Smith, 2008); in regards to the family backgrounds of the participants in this study, they fell into three categories: true first generation students (three), one parent with a college degree (two), and both parents with a college degree (four). The family background is an important factor, especially because so many of the participants mentioned family members who graduated specifically from ECC. This study supports the existing research about how influential families can be in the college choice process; Ceja (2006) found that siblings and parents both influence prospective students, and this study further supports this point.

Although higher education was not the exclusive post-secondary plan for all of the participants, as Gloria Williams did consider the military and Heather Whitman did take a gap year, one of the major findings that emerged from these interviews was the idea that college is an expectation in our society. Some were able to identify specific people that were influential in their Predisposition, though six of the nine referenced a much broader influence that comes from our culture (Expectations) rather than an individual. This sociological or societal expectation was not found in the review of existing literature, and leads to a series of questions about the current societal climate, job market and economy, role of technology in the search but also the type of information available, and overall communication (what is being communicated and who is communicating and receiving the information).

**Research Question 2:** How did these students first learn about ECC?

The participants in this study relied heavily on their academic interests during their respective Search stages; seven of the nine mention that academic interest and the availability of a specific academic program were important factors, with online research emerging as a common thread. Past research shows that technology can present a “digital divide” between higher- and lower-socioeconomic students (Daun-Barnett & Das, 2013), though participant socioeconomic status was not a criteria or aspect in this study. Regardless of parental level of education, choice of major, or other factors, the participants did rely on technology to gain information. There was not necessarily a pattern to how they collected, saved, or analyzed the information collected, other than one who discussed the importance of a spreadsheet. What was more apparent in the search stage was influential people, especially family members, high school staff, and peers for the participants; this supports previous research that has showed that these individuals have influence (Espinoza, Bradshaw, & Hausman, 2002; Smith & Fleming, 2006; Corwin, Venegas, Oliverea, & Colyar, 2004; Gonzalez, Stoner, & Jovel, 2003; Smith, 2008; Alvarado & Turley, 2012). This is significant and opens up potential for varying ways to communicate or market the institution; letters, brochures, and content could be developed to do specific outreach to parents, for example.

Academic program availability was an important college choice factor that emerged from the literature (Grimes & David, 1999; Pope, 2002; and Santos, 2004). This study reinforces the literature, as it has nine participants with each of them talked about the importance of the academic program of their interest.

**Research Question 3:** How did these students come to consider ECC as an option for higher education?

One of the biggest reasons why these participants considered ECC as an option was because of the relative ease of the application and enrollment process. There is literature that says that the ease of admission policies and procedures is important (Wood & Harrison, 2004), supporting the data revealed in this study. While many institutions have substantial and time-consuming applications, including essays, letters of recommendations, short answers, interviews, and application fees, ECC has a more streamlined process: submit an online or paper application, take the assessment test called ACCUPLACER that measures a student's college readiness, and meet with an academic advisor to register. Many students will also include the financial aid form, the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), as a step and while it is encouraged and recommended, it is not technically a requirement to become a student at ECC. Several participants echoed sentiments of intimidating applications and an overwhelming process, and the relative ease of the steps at ECC were important in their decision to consider this institution. Because the institution does not have a deadline, applications were submitted at various and varied times of year: participants applied during the winter, spring, summer, and even late summer before the upcoming Fall semester. There was not substantial literature reviewed that discussed the timing of when applications were submitted. This is a gap in the literature that should be explored in future research.

**Research Question 4:** What personal factors do New Hampshire students enrolled at ECC perceive to be influential in their college choice?

There were several examples of personal relationships these participants had with ECC faculty and staff that greatly contributed to their decision to enroll there. The literature showed that having staff of color is a way to recruit and enroll AHANA (Asian-, Hispanic-, African-, Native-American) students (Opp, 2001), and this research study found that a personal connection was important. While it could be influential at earlier stages in the Hossler and Gallagher model, it certainly affected some especially in the Choice stage. The significance of this has tremendous implications on recruitment and especially yield of future students. ECC should consider exploring the network available through the family and friends of its faculty and staff.

One of the more frequent personal qualities that emerged in the participants' Choice stage was their preference to reside at home with immediate family. The literature does show that for students that enroll in community colleges, proximity and closeness to home is important (Wood & Harrison, 2014; Townsend, 2007); this study furthers this point by showing its importance to another student group (first-time, full-time New Hampshire students enrolling in a community college out of state).

This study does stand in contrast to the work of Bers and Smith (1989); while their research showed that parents' influence had a lesser role for community college students, the participants in this study did say that parents were influential people in the college search process. While Inman and Mayes (1999) and McConnell (2000) both showed that students who are first-generation college students are more likely to attend a community college, most of the community college students in this study are not first generation, yet enrolled in at a two-year institution.

**Research Question 5:** What institutional factors do New Hampshire residents enrolled at ECC perceive to be influential in their college choice?

The participants of this study indicated that cost and affordability was the most important consideration in their choice to attend ECC. Every participant in this study mentioned the institution's low, or lower, cost as a factor in his or her enrollment. One potential marketing tool could be to create a financial piece that would include total cost, average cost a student pays, average financial aid and scholarship packages, average student loan debt, and comparative figures for residential schools, both two- and four-year.

The location of the institution, with two campuses in close proximity to the New Hampshire border, is significant and related to the residential component mentioned earlier. It is wise for ECC to saturate the closest towns along the state line in order to be most efficient. ECC has three different tuition rates, with in-state residents being charged \$13.00 less per credit than residents of the five other New England states (Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Rhode Island, and Connecticut). The tuition for international students and students living in the United States but outside of New England is substantially more (tuition rates are \$25 for Massachusetts residents, \$38 for New England residents, and \$266 for international and non-New England residents). Recruiting in parts of New Hampshire are less likely to be successful as it poses commuting and travel considerations and problems, as well as added costs in fuel and auto maintenance. This study also aligns with research from Townsend (2007) on the importance of cost and location or proximity; Herren, Cartmell, and Robertson (2011) showed the importance of the campus visit and the role of parents in particular. The close proximity of the campus to the student homes more readily provides opportunities to visit campus; there is also a regional tuition rate that aligns the tuition close significantly closer to in-state tuition than the full out-of-state on nonresident cost.

### **Unexpected Results**

There were two ideas or explanations in the data that the researcher did not expect to see. The first was the impact of Legacy on the college choice process. Previous research (Bowen & Bok, 1998; Hurwitz, 2011; Kahlenberg, 2010) shows that legacy status does influence admission decisions, but there is a lack of research found on the relationship between legacy status and college choice. Additionally, the research related to legacy focuses on selective institutions and not on community colleges with open, or nearly open, enrollment. The researcher did not expect legacy to surface as often as it did. The second aspect that the researcher found surprising was that the inability to live on-campus because there are no residence halls was attractive to some participants. While there is research devoted to the impact residence life has on the student experience (Schroeder & Mable, 1994), and to some extent the role amenities, including residence halls, have on students (Jacob, McCall, & Stange, 2018), there is a lack of research specifically devoted to the role it has in the college choice process for students enrolled at a community college.

Given that ECC is an HSI, it could be surprising that the participants did not mention anything about race, ethnicity, or diversity; because much of the literature reviewed included these factors and because these students have gone from a much less diverse state to a very diverse institution, it is somewhat surprising that it was not mentioned at all. This could perhaps be a path for future research.

### **Issues that Might Invalidate Findings**

This study employed a qualitative methodology and included nine participants; the findings and data are limited to the experiences of the students that agreed to participate. Where a quantitative study would allow for a larger sample and broader scope, it would not produce the depth in the responses that this pool provided. Additionally, with more limited criteria for participation, the pool of possible participants was small from the outset. The intended demographic was limited to first-time, full-time traditional-aged students enrolled at Eastern Community College and who are from the state of New Hampshire; responses and data that would have been collected from students outside this scope (part-time, from other states, adult learners, etc.) would have changed the specific focus of this study.

The declared major was not a criterion that was used in determining the participant pool; there were five students enrolled in an Associate in Arts (A.A.) degree and four in an Associate in Science

(A.S.). ECC does offer approximately 60 different programs in 15 areas, with both two-year associate degrees and one-year certificate programs. One potential limitation is that these participants do not reflect the variety of academic offerings at the institution.

There were some biodemographic limitations in the participant pool that should be mentioned; there were more women that chose to participate in this study than men, seven to two. There are more women enrolled at ECC than men, but the ratio of this study (80 percent women to 20 percent men) does not match the institution overall (60.1 percent women to 39.9 percent men). Additionally, while ECC is considered a Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI), all participants in this study self-identify as “White, Non-Hispanic”; the discrepancy between the composition of the institution and that of the participants is likely because of the limitation of their home state. The U.S. Census reports that the state of New Hampshire is 93.6 percent white, with only 3.7 percent of residents self-identifying as Hispanic or Latino (<https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/nh>).

### **Recommendations for Practice**

The research revealed that proximity appeared throughout the Hossler and Gallagher College Choice stages; being physically close to the campus influenced the Predisposition, Search, and Choice of these students. With this in mind, it is critical that the admission office and recruiters concentrate heavily on the New Hampshire communities within a 15-minute driving radius of the campus. Students in this area are likely to have familiarity with the institution and are also likely to visit; it is worth considering how financial resources are allocated, and as the campus facilities were impactful as well, offering campus visit opportunities is essential in the Search and Choice stages. Funding to provide transportation to and from campus, as well as providing lunch options, would address multiple points from the data collected. For example, the campus visit was a significant factor in the Search stage and in how these students learned about ECC; bringing more students to campus could result in more applications to the college. Additionally, increasing the number of visits will expose prospective students to unique institutional facilities and characteristics, like the ambulance, presence of a strong athletic department, and showcase the availability of majors on campus.

Because ECC is a financially attractive option for higher education, and was mentioned by all participants, it is worth considering how this should and will influence the work in the admission office. It will be advantageous to implement cost and value more, and more effectively, in marketing and promotional material. While cost is always discussed in information sessions and recruitment events, more robust and intentional work in promoting the lower cost of ECC is advisable. This could include creating a cost and finances-related information sheet, better promotion through electronic and texting communication, and perhaps even a deeper examination of how the subject of cost and finances are described.

The campus visit programming can also be modified to better attract full-time, first-time New Hampshire students. Creating campus visit opportunities for specific high schools and utilizing current ECC students that graduated from that high school would be impactful; given the composition of the participants, it makes sense to focus on Norton High School, Smallville High School, and Plainview High School. Increasing collaboration with the high schools serves multiple purposes that the data support from this study: the importance of showing prospective students the campus and facilities, connecting prospective students with current ECC students, and furthering the relationship between ECC and the high school guidance/college counselors. This study revealed that counselors are important for prospective students, and are particularly influential during the Search and Choice stages; increasing their knowledge of ECC and familiarity with the campuses, programs, an opportunity

available could affect the number of students considering this institution as an option for higher education.

The marketing and promotional literature created and distributed by ECC could be altered based on the student responses in this study. As relationships have been noteworthy at the various college choice stages, utilizing current student profiles could be very effective; ideally, this would be customized for each town, school, or district so that the prospective students can see about an ECC student that went to the same high school. This could be expanded and applied to the campus visit opportunities, where ECC students could speak to prospective students who attend the same high school in a panel format.

Further, and more intentional, collaboration between the admission office and alumni/ae office is worth exploring. Six of the nine participants had a relative-parent, sibling, aunt, or uncle-that attended ECC. The admission office should consider joint admission/alumni events, utilizing more alumni/ae in on- and off-campus recruitment events, and adding legacy-specific literature to the admission portfolio.

The New Hampshire demographic is a substantial portion of the ECC enrollment, both in terms of percentage and actual headcount. It is worthwhile to revisit this population and this topic frequently, particularly as the above initiatives are implemented. A regular and deliberate process to gather data, assess usefulness and effectiveness of initiatives, and continue to collect data to better understand the college choice process is an important protocol to establish into the work of the admission office. This could be in the form of targeted questions about specific events and focus groups of like New Hampshire students (like the full-time, first-time, traditional age students in this study) are worthy of consideration.

## Conclusions

The purpose of this study was to learn more about the college choice of a specific group of students: traditional age, first-time, full-time students from New Hampshire who enrolled in a community college outside of their home state system. This qualitative study sought to better understand the “why” and “how” of this decision and used not only a specific, narrow population of nine but also one unique institution. While this can be limiting for other institutions and populations, it speaks to the worth and value of understanding the student experience. As the landscape of higher education in the United States and in particular in New England shifts and changes, and as the demographics and population experiences its’ own changes, understanding more about the how and why of student college choice will allow the institution to become more efficient, more deliberate, and ultimately better at attracting, recruiting, and retaining the students they want.

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# Women's Participation in Management in the University for Development Studies: The Role of Mentorship

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## Introduction

Women participation in decision making position has generally lagged behind. Thus, the low level of women in management positions in higher education institutions, is a recurrent theme in related studies globally. This phenomenon of women's underrepresentation cuts across decision-making systems such as committees, boards and recruitment panels, among others (Bagilhole and White, 2011; Morley, 2013). Findings from Black and Islam (2014) revealed that, though women constitute 45% of all academics, only 20% hold professorial status and 15.3% of such positions, are held in Cambridge; a world ranking university. These women also enter adjunct roles but do not attain most senior positions in organizations, hence, are far from participating on equal footing with men (Morley, 2013). Okorie, Agabi and Uche (2007) in a study noted that, few females, compared to male academics, are professors, associate professors and senior lecturers. This low representation of women in professorial and decision-making ranks reduces their chances of professional advancement into management positions such as Vice-Chancellors, Pro-Vice Chancellors, Provosts, Deans and Directors. Similarly, Morley (2013) posits that, the few women who are employed in African Universities often occupy junior untenured positions i.e. clerical and secretarial positions and the few who are in academia, tend to publish less and are marginally represented in managerial positions. Furthermore, women are seriously under-represented at the faculty level in higher institution management: it was only in South Africa that records indicated that 8% of women held leadership positions in 1999. Again, between 2004 and 2010, the percentage increased from 8% to 42.35%, but Ghana, Uganda, Tanzania and Nigeria could not record any percentage increase of women in leadership positions in their institutions. The difference is attributable to supportive policies and programs which promote women's advancement in South African (Morley, 2013).

In Ghana, women are important human resources since they constitute 51.2% of the total population (Ghana Statistical Service, 2012). However, research has revealed that they are underrepresented in senior management position in higher institutions of learning (Adu-Opong, 2015). Though, the story is changing and women are beginning to gain strides in African universities, the pace at which the gap is being bridged is slow. Available statistics from Ghana's premier university (University of Ghana) indicates that, with respect to faculty and research staffs, approximately 73% are males and 27%, females. Also, with a total of about 80 Professors and 150 Associate Professors, only 7 and 38 are females respectively. The numbers are also low for the senior lecturer category as females constitute 85 of a total of 420 senior lecturers (Boateng, 2018). These statistics reflect the situation in

Ghanaian universities. Statistics from the University for Development Studies shows that out of 8 professors, only 1 is a woman. Also, out of 25 Associate Professor, no woman holds such a position while for senior lectures, 12 are women out of a total of 185 (University for Development Studies, 2018). This under-representation of women in the University constitutes only 6.5 percent of management, considering the fact that only faculty members at the rank of senior lecturer and above qualify to be appointed or elected to hold management position. At the administrative middle management level, the disparities exist greatly as women constitute only 10% of the total number of 102 (University for Development Studies, 2018).

A cursory view of the literature reviewed points to the fact that women are the minority in institutions of higher learning, hence, their under-representation in higher management. This confirms Adu-Oppong and Arthur, C. (2015) study in Ghana which revealed that the percentage of women in both teaching and administrative management positions was increasingly low as they moved up the career ladder. Boateng (2018) observed that child care and managing the home are the major challenges to women career progression. It is therefore, because of this backdrop that this paper intends to find answers to the following research questions: a). What is the level of professional progression of women? b). How are women involved in the management of the university? and c). Which challenges impeded the progress of women and the role mentorship could play in mitigating these challenges in the University for Development Studies? This research will unearth women professional progression, participation in management, challenges and whether mentoring could be used as a tool for women career and professional development.

### **Mentoring**

Mentoring has been regarded as one of the learning methods used to enhance individual learning and development in all spheres of life (Klasen and Clutterbuck, 2002). There are different meanings to the term mentoring, but in this context, “it is a process whereby an experienced senior faculty member helps to develop a less experienced junior faculty” (Dawn and Palmer, 2009).

Mentorship is an adoptable tool that could be used for different purposes such as to orient students and staffs or for management development. It can also be used to encourage the development of women who are minority in institutions to ladder into management positions (Sheal, 1999). Management of higher institutions of learning could improve the situation of the minority by encouraging and supporting both formal and informal mentoring among faculties and staff. This will be beneficial both to individuals and institutions since it promotes institutional development. The effectiveness of any mentoring relationship would depend on; assessing the mentoring needs of the institution and for that matter the minority group, identifying the challenges of the institution; i.e. commitment of management and staff, availability of mentors and resources for implementation as well as finding solutions to address challenges. Matching mentors and mentees appropriately, is also important. Matching people who share similar jobs in mentoring also contributes to its effectiveness. There are many forms of mentorship, however, in this context, situational mentoring whereby a mentor provides guidance and advice to the mentee usually within a short term addressing an immediate problem is the focus.

### **Mechanism for Career Development**

Professional development is the engine that keeps universities true to their mandate as centres of ideas and innovation, without efforts in this direction, intellectual capital can stagnate and the relevance of universities to society may diminish. Therefore, universities should make resources available in supporting faculty and staff development (Fourie, 1999).

Higher Educational Institutions of learning use various mechanisms to develop their human resource; including sponsorships for further studies, conferences and workshops, seminars, etc.

However, if this is done on the same footing, then the question of bridging the gender disparity gap, might not be achieved. Dines (1993) and Morley (2013) point to the fact that women are minority and also, are faced with many challenges such as home keeping and childcare coupled with institutional and societal barriers to their career progression. A special window for women in terms of sponsorships for professional development programs, motivating mentors (men and women) and encouraging cross gender mentoring will mitigate the situation. Universities' management could also, appoint women to certain positions to either act or be substantive heads depending on their ranks as a form of mentoring them for higher management positions.

### **Theoretical framework**

This study is informed by the social capital theory (SCT). According to the theory, individuals accrue career benefits from relationships (Morley, 2013). The SCT is an extension of the human capital theory which emphasizes the level of education, experience, intelligence, knowledge and skills that individuals possess (Helmer, Hjälmner, and Stener, 2008) in (Tonkaboni, Yousefy, and Keshtiaray, 2013: 40). It stresses on the ability, skill and capability that individuals can achieve from society as attributed or acquired. Social capital is the actual and potential sum of the result of durable networking. A person's ability to interact in a network should be considered a valuable resource for that individual (Bourdieu, 2003). The question of network therefore, becomes very important because it enhances mentoring. Mentoring viewed within the context of STC, aids in fostering effective relationships. According to McCauley and Young (1993), Douglas (1997), managerial learning places emphasis on the critical role of on-the-job relationships in career development. These are often informal developmental relationships, which occur naturally at the workplace between less-experienced managers and senior managers, peers, and subordinates. The link between mentoring and career development has become increasingly important because of the advantages accrued by both organizations and individuals in such relationships (Young and Perrewe, 2000). However, the challenges for institutions are finding systematic ways to harness learning from pools of knowledge that exist within them and creating effective ways for such knowledge to be shared among faculties. For African universities, which remain largely masculine in terms of their representational structure, decision making procedures and its culture, mentoring faculties and staff becomes a strategic tool for effecting change (Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa, 2009).

### **Methodology**

#### **The Study Area: The University for Development Studies**

The University for Development Studies is one of the ten public universities in Ghana established in 1992 under the PNDC Law 279 with the mandate to blend academic work with community service. Following this, the vision of the University has been, to become the home for world-class pro-poor scholarship with the mission of "promoting *equitable* and *sustainable* socio-economic transformation of communities through practically-oriented, community-based, problem-solving, *exclusion-sensitive*, interactive research, teaching, learning and outreach programs (UDS, 2016). No doubt, equity, sustainability and transformation are core to the business of UDS. However, from the articulation above, this only applies to communities rather than the institution. This perhaps, exempts the institution from its own inequities, especially with regard to women's representation in management. Equally of interest, is the point on exclusion-sensitive, which appears to have been carefully chosen to depoliticize the commitment to equity?

The University commenced academic work in September, 1993, by admitting forty (40) students. Thirty-nine (39) males reported and academic work commenced at the Faculty of Agriculture, its

pioneer Faculty. As at 2017/2018 academic year, student's population had grown to 17,624 comprising 12,230 males and 5,394 females pursuing undergraduate and post-graduate programs (UDS, 2018). From less than 30 staff (26 male /1 female) in 1993, the University now has a staff strength of 1691 comprising of 735 senior members (43%), 378 senior staff (22%) and 578 junior staff (35%). Out of 1691 members of staff, 1304 were males and 387, female (UDS, 2018). A good number of these senior members fall between the age category 30-50 years and need guidance from the experienced ones to enhance their academic and professional progress for efficient job performance and succession. The University's top Management (the Vice-Chancellor, Pro-Vice Chancellor, Registrar, Librarian and Finance Director) has always been occupied by males since its inception.

### **Design and Methods**

The study adopted a mixed method approach. Quantitative data was collected using questionnaires. Ninety (90) staff in various management positions responded, 29 of these respondents, were women. Using interviews, qualitative data was collected from two women (a Dean of a Faculty and, a Director of a Directorate) and five male Deans (all at professorial level). The idea was to use an approach which would blend the two in order to have in-depth information where an interviewee could speak freely to questions on mentorship and professional progression whilst permitting flexibility and high responses from the interviewee's perception of reality (Burns, 2000). Primary data was supported by secondary data from academic sources and statistical profile data from the University's Quality Assurance Directorate. The respondents were sampled purposively from among management (deans, principals, directors, and heads of academic and non-academic departments). The main purpose was to gather information for in-depth analysis; therefore, the issue of representativeness was as important as participant characteristics (Bryan and Bell, 2007). Data from the survey was analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) using descriptive statistic and presented in tables. Data from interviews, are discussed alongside quantitation data in the form of narrative.

## **Results and Discussion**

### **Gender Situation in University for Development Studies (UDS)**

The UDS, like any other public higher educational institution of learning in Ghana, has categories of workers such as junior staff, senior staff and senior members. Within each category, there are channels leading to higher and managerial positions. The junior staff category includes workers whose educational qualifications ranges from Middle School Certificates, Basic Education Certificates to Senior High School Certificates, NVTI, City and Guilds or Ordinary Level certificates. The senior staff category comprises of administrative and other professional staff who require a first degree or professional certificate such as bachelor's degree equivalence, HND and post-graduate diplomas or masters by course work degrees. They tend to occupy the operational level of management as supporting staff. The senior member category includes teaching and non-teaching staff who hold MPhil and/or PhD degrees.

Statistics from the University presented in Table 1 shows that out of a total staff population of 1691, 387 are females with majority of this number, in the junior (128) and senior staff (147) categories. Senior members who have the opportunity to upgrade themselves and move up the ranks to the highest position in academia or administration are 43%; of which females constitute only 6.6%. This implies that women are not just under-represented in managerial positions but also, outnumbered. Therefore, conscious efforts in the form of policy direction by the University which will increase the interest of qualified women to join the university, might change the situation.

**Table 1 – Statistics of Staff by Category and Gender**

| Staff Category | Gender      |             |            |            |
|----------------|-------------|-------------|------------|------------|
|                | Male        | Female      | Total      | Percentage |
|                |             | 623 (36.4%) | 112 (6.6%) | 735        |
| Senior Staff   | 231 (13.4%) | 147 (8.6%)  | 378        | 22%        |
| Junior Staff   | 450 (27.4%) | 128 (7.6%)  | 578        | 35%        |
| Totals         | 1304        | 387         | 1691       |            |
| Percentage     | 77%         | 23%         |            | 100%       |

Source: Data collected from UDS.

Responses from the survey presented in Table 2a and 2b indicates the career progression of some senior members from one rank to the other. Six (6) out of a total of ten (10) female respondents mentioned that they joined the University as Assistant Lectures and Lectures and were promoted to the next level based on research and meeting the minimum waiting period. The remaining four who joined as Assistant Librarians are at the same rank even though; they had served the minimum waiting period of six years. They mentioned limited publications as a challenge and admitted that, with a push through mentoring in the form of joint publications, will help them meet the full requirement for promotion. This shows progression of female lecturers in the field than female librarians. Though they are few within the academic enclaves, gradually, they will rise to management positions.

**Table 2a – Progression of Women in Academia in UDS**

| Joined as           |     | Present Rank        |     | Remarks                                    |
|---------------------|-----|---------------------|-----|--|
| Rank                | No. | Rank                | No. |  |
| Lecturer            | 3   | Senior Lecturer     | 3   | All had promotions by research and service |
| Assistant Lecturer  | 3   | Lecturer            | 3   | All had promotions by research and service |
| Assistant Librarian | 4   | Assistant Librarian | 4   | Remained in same ranks                     |
|                     | 10  |                     | 10  |  |

Source: Field Data, 2018.

**Table 2b – Progression of Men in Academia in UDS**

| Joined as                 |     | Present Rank                |         | Remarks   |
|---------------------------|-----|-----------------------------|---------|---|
| Rank                      | No. | Rank                        | No.     |   |
| Assistant Lecturer        | 12  | Lecturer<br>Senior Lecturer | 4<br>8  | All have been promoted to ranks of lecturer and senior lecturer by research and service |
| Lecturer                  | 7   | Senior Lecturer<br>Lecturer | 4<br>3  | 4 have been promoted while 3 have remained in the same position                         |
| Assistant Librarian       | 1   | Librarian                   | 1       | Has been promoted   |
| Senior Research Assistant | 19  | Lecturer<br>Senior Lecturer | 10<br>9 | All have promotions by research and service   |
| Senior Research Assistant | 1   | Lecturer                    | 1       | Has been promoted through further education and service                                 |
| Total                     | 40  |                             | 40      |   |

Source: Field Data, 2018.

For male academics, all 40 respondents had been promoted to higher ranks above their starting grades based on research and serving the minimum waiting period of six years (Table 2b). They also mentioned that in one way or the other, they had mentors right at the time they were encouraged to join academia and indeed had several research publications with their mentors.

The picture is different for women in administration (Table 3a). For those who joined the University as Assistant Registrars, 2 have been promoted to Senior Assistant Registrars while 8 still hold same positions after serving the minimum waiting period of six years. The two, promoted to Assistant Registrar position, still hold the same position for the past eight to ten years. Same can be said for Accountants and other equivalent professional personnel. It is important to note that 6 of the female respondents did not provide complete information with regards to their current status and positions held when they were employed into the University. One may assume that, these respondents have not been able to upgrade themselves from their ranks of employment and are unwilling to disclose such information. This perhaps, accounts for the low representation of women in management since most management positions are limited to certain levels in one's career progression, for example, the minimum level is a senior lecture or its equivalent.

**Table 3a – Progression of Women in Administration**

| Joined as                   |     | Present Rank               |     | Remarks            |
|-----------------------------|-----|----------------------------|-----|--------------------|
| Rank                        | No. | Rank                       | No. |                    |
| Assistant Registrar         | 10  | Assistant Registrar        | 8   | Remain in ranks    |
|                             |     | Senior Assistant Registrar | 2   |                    |
| Junior Assistant Registrar  | 2   | Assistant Registrar        | 2   | Have been promoted |
| Senior Accounting Assistant | 1   | Senior Accountant          | 1   | Has been promoted  |
| Unknown                     | 6   |                            |     |                    |
| Total                       | 19  |                            | 13  |                    |

Source: Field Data, 2018.

Responses from male respondents in administration (Table 3b) indicate that a reasonable number (10) out of the 21 respondents got promoted to higher ranks above their starting grades. Comparatively, men in administration are performing better than their female counterparts.

**Table 3b – Progression of Men in Administration**

| Joined as                |     | Present Rank           |     | Remarks             |
|--------------------------|-----|------------------------|-----|---------------------|
| Rank                     | No. | Rank                   | No. |                     |
| Assistant Registrar      | 17  | Assistant Registrar    | 11  | 6 had been promoted |
|                          |     | Senior Asst. Registrar | 6   |                     |
| Accountant               | 1   | Senior Accountant      | 1   | Had been promoted   |
| Accounting Assistant     | 1   | Senior Accountant      | 1   | Had been promoted   |
| Internal Auditor         | 1   | Snr. Asst. Auditor     | 1   | Had been promoted   |
| Administrative Assistant | 1   | Asst. Registrar        | 1   | Had been promoted   |
| Total                    | 21  |                        | 21  |                     |

Source: Field Data, 2018.

## **The Role of Mentoring in Advancing Women Career Development**

Mentoring programs speak to institutional concerns, improve performance in performance culture, while dealing with gender inequalities (de Vries, 2011). Interviews with women in management on mentoring for career development revealed that interviewees had mentoring in one way or the other, the most common being informal mentoring from senior faculties complemented with informal mentoring instituted by the University. It was also revealed that formal mentoring relationship in predetermined locations, frequency with well-defined goals, tasks and assignments to accomplish and articulate expectations at the beginning of the relationship was more likely to be more beneficial. Whereas informal mentorship not guided by principles were likely to lead to jeopardy as they have the tendency of affecting interpersonal relationships of parties involved.

Further investigations on mentorship for professional advancement of women into management positions revealed that mentoring was an important tool. All respondents interviewed, answered in the affirmative. They mentioned enormous mentoring benefits spanning from development of skills on the job as administrators and lecturers to the field of teaching, research, publications and development of academic programs for departments and faculties; adding, that mentoring helps boost the confidence of both parties; as they share what they learn and ensure effective transition and career progression.

## **Challenges that Impede Women Advancement**

The grim statistics being discussed clearly indicate that women do not only constitute the minority of the University's staff population, but are also woefully underrepresented in management positions. Out of 199 staff in various management positions in the university, only 12 (6%) are women and 187 (94%), men (UDS, 2018).

Management positions in the University like any other public university are occupied based on one's qualification backed by election or appointment. All female respondents perceived that the inability of women to participate in management is partly as a result of women's inability to win elections in the University because of the socio-cultural background of most staff. The belief in the Ghanaian cultural setting is that, men are family heads and women, assistance; as such, many (both men and women) see women as subordinates who are supposed to assist men rather than compete with them for leadership position.

Regarding appointments to certain positions i.e. directors, principals and coordinators, which are guided by rank and experience, the findings revealed that, there were very few qualified women who already occupied certain positions. When asked why fewer women were employed and reasons why the few employed by the University are not upgrading themselves as do their male counterparts, respondents identified both institutional and socio-cultural factors as impediments. Institutional factors included recruitment imbalances and inability to meet promotion requirements. On socio-cultural factors, limiting factors identified include early marriage, low educational qualifications due to parents' preference to educate the male child over the female child, child care, school dropout as a result of teenage pregnancy and negative perceptions about women attaining higher educational qualification. Notwithstanding, *"there were still positions that the other few women could have been appointed to act or assist as a form of mentoring for higher management positions"* (Female interviewee).

Child bearing, keeping the home, social responsibilities and family life demands are some identified factors which affect women's ability to progress professionally, particularly progression from one rank to another. This goes to confirm Ogbogu's (2013) assertion that in a patriarchal society, female academics are likely to face work-family conflicts than their male colleagues because of the socio-cultural demands on women and lack of support and understanding of the impact of these family issues on women at the institutional level. Work load and limited time were also mentioned as hindering factors: thus, the combination of teaching, supervision of projects and theses as well as monitoring and

assessing students on Third Trimester Field Practical Programme sometimes, occupies the time they would have used for research and publications. Again, lack of access to high quality journals, delay in the processing of submitted documents for promotion were also identified as hindrances.

The perceptions of respondents on women in management positions in the University were also solicited. Almost all respondents who have been promoted said they prefer male bosses to females; reasons given were that women in management positions tend to be too principled, strict, and follow rules and regulations rigidly making work very difficult. It was also revealed that women in management positions, do not respect men. This goes to confirm the cultural orientation which is of the view that woman leaders should not challenge or try to defend a point in the midst of men. Insisting on the right thing to be done in an argument would be misconstrued as disrespecting male colleagues. Although, the two women in management faced challenges in their quest to achieve set goals, they admitted that, they were doing very well since they were perceived to be persevering, hardworking, determined, and level-headed. In short, these successful women who exhibited the 'can do' spirit had risen to the top by defying all odds. Again, it was also noted that, such women were from enlightened families who did not discriminate against the girl child; hence, they had the support and encouragement of their families regardless of the broader societal pressures. This suggests that in a supportive environment, women are able to push through difficulties achieving greater heights. These women also saw barriers as motivating factors, surmountable in their quest to achieve ultimate goals in life. One of the young female employees mentioned that she looks up to the few women in management for inspiration and support. Clearly, under these circumstances, mentoring is very crucial at the institutional level.

### **Making Mentoring Effective in the University**

Effectiveness of any mentoring relationship, depends on parties involved. Desired goals are achieved when mentees and mentors share views on mentoring be it formal or informal. Responding to how mentoring could be made effective in the institution, training, appraisal, personal attitude and implementation were mentioned. Thus, in the mentors' view, anyone from the rank of Senior Lecturer or Senior Research Fellow should undergo training to enable them acquire or strengthen their skills to mentor others. The training should prepare mentors to appreciate their status as seniors and their roles and responsibilities to others. Past experiences revealed that, mentees should be sensitized on the power dynamics in mentoring relationships and associated sensibilities and sensitivities. Above all, mentors should be trained on the mentoring process and ways to enhance effective mentoring through proper planning, execution and monitoring as well as relationship building in a mutually respecting manner (Interview with a male mentor)

In an interview with a Head of a Directorate, it was noted that for the institutionalization of mentoring to be effective, mentoring of junior staff should be part of the evaluation of senior employees for promotion. Thus, the evaluation should include the number of junior colleagues he/she has successfully mentored. Citing a personal experience of the number of junior colleagues (5) she had mentored right from first degree through to masters and PhD levels; some of whom are now Senior Lecturer and Associate Professor. Thus, "*a successful leader is one who is able to bring a qualified replacement at the time of retirement*".

Within the university context where publication is crucial for progression, working on joint publications is another important area raised by a respondent; publishing with a mentee is important and will make the programme effective, especially if it is the mentee's first publication. He however, opined that, the mentee should do much of the research work as the lead author whilst the mentor, provides guidance. He concluded by saying that all lecturers or administrators with masters' degrees have some level of research experience; however, some are more experienced and need to share their

expertise with others since not all can conduct research and publish as much as the experienced ones do.

Personal attitude, was also noted as a very important virtue for effective mentoring for career advancement. Thus, mentee's relationship with his/her mentor and other colleagues in the university system is very important for one's development. "*It is when you value others that your own values are recognized and respected*" (Male Respondent).

Furthermore, mentor's guidance, attitude and advice to the mentee goes a long way to make the relationship effective. Whether it is negative or positive, bad or good, useful or useless depends on the encouragement given by the mentor. The mentor is seen as a senior colleague who is well-experienced and well-placed to advise the mentee. However, such advice should be done with caution in order not to deflate the mentee. Even when a mentee is not pulling his/her weight, the onus is on the mentor to challenge him/her to do more. This is important most especially, at the beginning. Mentees need encouragement from mentors to enable them open up and build confidence. In cases where women tend to be more sensitive to criticism, extra caution is needed to boost their confidence. There is no doubt that, mentors can point out weaknesses and mistakes however, this has to be done in a way that challenges and motivates rather than demotivate the mentee.

Also, from interactions, it is worth noting that it is crucial for mentoring relationships to be voluntary rather than compelled. In the zeal to ensure that senior academics support their juniors, institutions should not set up schemes that appear to compel relationships that burden both mentors and mentees. When people enter into mentoring relationships voluntarily, they break the ice and make the choice to work together based on their own assessment and judgment of each other. They would have already determined what is doable, what is not doable and measures to address issues that may come up. They would also determine how to work around their differences to optimize desired outcomes. These measures when put in place, makes it easier for relationships to grow and blossom. In the case of women, it is important that they are comfortable and trust each other in the mentoring relationship (Interview with female mentor).

Furthermore, flexibility which allows enough room for actors to make changes when necessary, is important. Where mentors and mentees voluntarily agree to work together, they should be able to determine the process, possibilities, opportunities as well as goals and expectations. Both actors should be able to work together in shaping and reshaping their plans and terms of engagements in ways that accommodate their expectations.

Finally, it was noted that, men outnumber women in the university and senior positions; as such, cross-gender mentoring is most likely the way forward. However, it is important to mention that both mentors and mentees need to be clear on terms and modes of engagement. Above all, they should be sensitive to gender issues and measures put in place to manage relationships in a mutually supporting and reinforcing way. Although cross-gender mentoring has been noted as one of the forms of mentoring for capacity building, without caution and understanding, it may not yield desired results. It is important for those in such relationships, to have clear communication lines and terms which all agree to work with. Wright and Wright (1987) have asserted that sexual harassment is one of the barriers to cross-sex gender mentorship. Hence, caution must be exercised to prevent the possibility of harassment. Scheduling meetings during working days, meeting in places that discourage intimacy, meeting with office doors open and getting to know each other's families are five preventive measures which when adopted, stems incidence of harassment (Blake-Beard, 2002). Above all, keep the relationship focused on mentoring and only make accommodations that are mutually agreed on by both mentor and mentee.

## Conclusion and Recommendations

The foregoing analysis shows that in UDS, women constitute minority of the staff population and are under-represented in management. Institutional and socio-cultural factors affect women's recruitment and progression. Comparatively, men are able to meet the demands of the profession in terms of research and publication within the stipulated time frame for promotion than their female counterparts.

Clearly, mentorship is noted as a developmental tool which enhances the professional development of junior faculty in the institution. This was evident as mentors and mentees admitted that they had some forms of mentoring at the beginning of their career development. The study also revealed that mentoring could be used to develop women who are minority in higher institutions to advance professionally.

Based on the findings, the research recommends the following:

1. There is paucity of mentors among women and therefore, cross-gender mentoring should be encouraged.
2. Mentors should be trained to make them more efficient in the discharge of their duties.
3. Preventive mechanisms should be put in place to protect both mentors and mentees especially in cross-gender relationship by ensuring that there are clear guidelines, flexibility and voluntarism.
4. Mentoring should be included as a professional evaluation requirement for the promotion and appointment of senior faculty to encourage them mentor the young.
5. Provision of supportive incentives to women will enable them break the 'glass ceiling' and rise professionally.

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