Overcoming Obstacles to Progress

A Collection of Insights for Addressing Enterprise-Level Challenges in Higher Education

Volume II: 2022

UT EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE

THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE SYSTEM

Introduction: Addressing Strategic Enterprise Issues in Higher Education

More than a professional development program, the University of Tennessee Executive Leadership Institute strives to be a resource for addressing important challenges enterprise leaders face in directing their campuses, institutes, and the System to achieve the highest standards of excellence. This compendium of original articles written by the Executive Leadership Institute Class of 2022 presents their observations and insights on a wide array of issues important to leaders across the University of Tennessee System and higher education.

Each author selected their topic based on their interest in a problem or opportunity they felt important to enterprise level leaders. The Executive Leadership Institute specifically focuses on leadership at the enterprise level, the administrative level where the success of the entire institution is decided. Ideally, these are the people who balance the overall University interests aligned with their unit's interests.   The Executive Leadership Institute believes enterprise leaders must think differently from traditional line leaders. They must show a comprehensive understanding of the University, its various components, and the environment within which it operates. Experts in enterprise-level research and analysis universally stress that the greatest success necessary at this level results from leaders who appreciate and can leverage *interdependent* or collective work.

The Executive Leadership Institute attempts to focus not only on the pragmatics of executing enterprise leadership but tackling the most troubling problems facing enterprise leaders, often referred in the literature as *wicked problems*. One profound difference between traditional leadership development programs and the Executive Leadership Institute is the importance of developing leaders capable of tackling wicked problems. Wicked problems are almost always "big picture" problems. They are difficult or sometimes impossible to solve because of incomplete, contradictory, and changing requirements often difficult to recognize.

Solutions to wicked problems are neither right nor wrong. They are either better or worse. Typically, an action that helps one aspect of the problem has unintentional consequences for others. Higher education is replete with wicked problems: Problems that emerge when the institution faces constant change or unprecedented challenges either externally or internally. They occur in a social context that aggravates competing results and disagreement among stakeholders because they cross boundaries and span the work of the enterprise. The less clarity of a singular solution, the more wicked the problem.

The articles in this collection endeavor to identify and respond to wicked problems. Not all the topics addressed in these articles are specifically wicked, but they are obstacles to progress for enterprise leaders and efforts to overcome them would improve the organization.

About the University of Tennessee Executive Leadership Institute:

The objective of the Executive Leadership Institute is to provide a trained cadre of enterprise leaders, those who hold positions of responsibility for the overall institution's performance and sustainability. The Executive Leadership Institute desires to create capable enterprise leaders who successfully tackle the growing number of challenges or "wicked problems" facing higher education.

The Executive Leadership Institute is built on a substantive body of behavioral and cognitive science as well as contemporary leadership theory. This body is informed by evidenced-based practices expressly focused at the executive level. The theoretical foundation is constructed around four Enterprise Imperatives that are the substance of the curriculum supported by six Common Core Competencies that are the specific skills and mindsets desirable to be an exceptional leader for the University. All participants complete a ten-month program of study based on the four Enterprise Imperatives through a variety of means including six formal academy sessions, personalized executive coaching as well as personalized consulting, targeted mentorships, and focused readings and textbooks. Each participant develops an individualized development plan as a tool for focusing and prioritizing the specific work they wish to pursue to become an effective enterprise leader.

The Executive Leadership Institute operates on an annual cohort basis. Each year, candidates are selected to participate from across the University of Tennessee System. Selection for participation in the institute is made from nominees in concert with the nominee's senior leader of their campus, institute, or division. The program was initiated in 2018 and the 2022 Class is the third cohort to complete the program. More about the design and execution of the Executive Leadership Institute can be found at: https://president.tennessee.edu/executive-leadership-institute/

Overcoming Obstacles to Progress

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Generating Revenue in an Ever-Changing Higher Education World

Mr. Evan Beech, Interim Vice Chancellor for Advancement, University of Tennessee Southern.

Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic has taught the higher education world many things. Throughout the pandemic, campuses were deserted, refunds were given to students, employees were sick, and alternative revenue streams became important. Many institutions did all this while trying to keep tuition at a manageable level as to not add to the student debt problem.

Auxiliary services including housing for students and food services assist institutions of higher learning with additional revenue. With many places of higher education requiring freshman to live on campus, housing and meal plans can provide extra funding for the institution to improve current facilities, build new ones, or a combination of both to attract the best students to attend the institution. In a 2015 article, by the Washington Post, housing costs increased 58% on average across colleges and universities[1]. The all-around experience plays a factor in a student's choice of where they will attend school, so up-to-date facilities and options are a must.

Along with auxiliary enterprises, these institutions can also enter partnerships with corporations, governments, and other entities for revenue. An example is the University of Tennessee's Lone Oaks Farm partnering with the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency to build a world-class facility for educating people about the outdoors. With The Clays at Lone Oaks Farm, people may purchase branded material as well as use the shooting ranges for a cost. So, not only was the facility built at virtually no cost to the University, but the University can also gain revenue from people paying to use the facility[2].

Many alumni and friends may also choose to assist by investing their financial resources. In fiscal year 21, giving to higher education grew to $52.9 billion from $49.5 billion in fiscal year 20[3]. These funds can be used to contribute to the overall institution's endowment (allowing for interest earnings), current funding to promote programs, and they can be used to offset budget cuts and other needs.

Problem Statement

With federal and state funding continuing to decrease in public higher education and the need to slow tuition increases; public colleges and universities need other revenue streams to continue growth and advance in rankings. Potential students look at costs of attendance at higher education institutions. From 2015-2020, the Tennessee Higher Education Commission has kept tuition rates between 0%-2%

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[1] https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/education/freshman-residency-rules-sometimes-force-students-to-pay-prohibitive-costs/2015/09/29/4693aed6-63b5-11e5-b38e-06883aacba64_story.html
[2] https://loneoaksclays.com/about-us/our-story/
[3] Giving to colleges grew by 7 percent in fiscal 2021 (insidehighered.com)

increases[4]. With record low tuition increases, higher education leaders must continue to work to provide other sources of revenue.

Suggested Solutions
Students no longer accept mediocre forms of housing. Universities are building bigger and better forms of housing and charging for that level of accommodation with the cheapest form of housing at the University of Tennessee being $3,025 per semester[5]. With approximately 8,300 students living on campus, the University stands to gain over $25 million per semester on housing alone. Since those students are living on campus, they have to eat. The cheapest meal plan at the University of Tennessee is $2,174 for freshman students[6]. These meal plans often allow for faculty and staff to participate as well as those living off campus. Of course, during COVID-19, these sources of revenue dried up quickly and unexpectedly. However, on a return to a more normal campus, this revenue will return to normal levels. This will allow the University to continue to invest in improvements to facilities and the lives of students.

Opportunities with outside partners such as corporations and other entities provide other funding for colleges and universities. With so much extra space, Purdue University decided to partner with Carr Workplaces to offer the public space to work in their business park[7]. The University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh is in the cell service business by renting space for cell towers[8] The University of Central Florida decided to partner with Hospital Corporation of America to build a teaching and learning hospital, thus saving the University much expense in building it as well as opening doors for students to perform their residencies and practice other skills[9]. Being in partnerships does have its advantages and disadvantages. Some advantages may be cost savings as well as rental income or other forms of revenue. Possible disadvantages may be the failure of the partnership or the loss of revenue in a bad economic climate. Therefore, a college or university must study the pros and cons of the partnership and perform due diligence before entering into such an agreement.

Institutional advancement ties into the first two forms of alternate revenue streams as well as the next, which is the need for individuals, corporations, and foundations to invest in the institution. Even with the COVID-19 pandemic, charitable giving increased to colleges and universities by 5.1% in fiscal year 21[10]. With the loss of many of the auxiliary revenue streams, philanthropy helped mitigate the substantial loss in revenue seen by many colleges and universities. Alumni and friends were willing to invest in capital projects, scholarship funds, and student emergency funds thanks in part to a strong stock market and government stimulus. Some of those funds were used to build up endowments for the institutions allowing for perpetual funding that could be used in a plethora of ways such as research, teaching, experiential learning opportunities and general support of the institution[11]. Administrators can depend on these funds on a more regular basis as the investment returns usually provides a steady payout

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[4] finalmp.pdf (tn.gov)
[5] 2021-2022 Fall and Spring Semester Rates - University Housing (utk.edu)
[6] First Year Freshman Living On-Campus - The University of Tennessee (campusdish.com)
[7] https://www.globest.com/2021/07/14/universities-tap-into-new-revenue-streams-with-co-working-partnerships/?slreturn=20220125230819
[8] https://www.aascu.org/WorkArea/DownloadAsset.aspx?id=5569
[9] https://insights.hanoverresearch.com/hubfs/Alternative-Revenue-Generation-Strategies.pdf
[10] https://www.highereddive.com/news/colleges-saw-an-increase-in-2021-charitable-contributions/619248/
[11] https://www.aau.edu/issues/endowments-and-charitable-giving

stream as funds are invested in perpetuity and governed by investment strategies[12]. On the other side of that, the institution can capture gains in the market and grow the endowment thus providing even more revenue for the support of the mission.

Recommended Implementation
Depending on the wants and needs of the institution, looking at ways to offer nice, affordable housing to students is a way the institution could garner more revenue. Work should be done on looking at cost of construction, interest rate on borrowed funds for construction, as well as the potential revenue that could be attained from leasing rooms to students. This recommendation should be viewed in a holistic manner in that if the institution wants to grow enrollment and gain top-quality students, the services offered must also be top-quality. Colleges and universities are not just selling an education anymore, but also an experience.

Exploration of partnerships can be beneficial in many ways, but especially in revenue generation, if that is a want for the partnership. Institutions should look at properties that may not be used as well as office spaces to see if there is room for lease agreements between partners to be executed. Higher education institutions could work with public an private organizations to secure funding for facilities, programs, and other areas of need.

Finally, higher education institutions should look at their advancement/development operations. The institution should seek to capitalize on the expertise of advancement offers to grow partnerships and raise philanthropic dollars to support the college or university. While it may cost to have these individuals on staff, the return on investment is around 943% according to a study done by the Council for the Advancement and Support of Higher Education
Investing in advancement/development operations to increase philanthropy for the college or university will grow the endowment for the institution and allow for the market to grow the endowment and capture investment growth and returns to sustain the endowment payout and hopefully, grow the payouts[13].

Conclusion
In order to keep costs affordable for students, colleges and universities must continue seeking other forms of revenue for sustainability. Depending on the type of alternate revenue, there may be risks associated. Before construction of facilities, an institution should do its homework to ensure debt can be serviced and the student population can sustain the new construction. Before entering into a contract for a partnership, attorneys and participants should review the terms of the agreements and get questions answered on the front end and not after the partnership is formed. The institution should also see the advancement staff is not only hired to fundraise, but can be a partner in securing partnerships, funding, and advocating for these revenue streams and can play a critical role in advancing these efforts.

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[12] https://treasurer.tennessee.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/8/2021/07/PDF-for-Website-CY-2020.pdf
[13] https://www.case.org/system/files/media/file/CASE%20VSE%202019%20Res.%20Brief%20%234--Advance.%20Invest.%20and%20Fndrsng--screen.pdf

At the end of the day, the institution should seek input from stakeholders, including faculty, staff, students, investors, and supporters to understand the wants, needs, and possibilities of what could and would work on the campus.

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Evan has been employed with UT since receiving his undergraduate degree from the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. Since that time, he has also received his master's degree from the Herbert College of Agriculture.

Beech is a member of the Alpha Kappa Chapter of Alpha Gamma Rho Fraternity. He currently serves on the Board of Directors of the Alumni Corporation. He is also a member of Gamma Sigma Delta, the Honor Society of Agriculture; and is on the Board of Directors of the National Agricultural Alumni and Development Association.

Increasing the Utilization and Effectiveness of Succession Planning in Higher Education

Mr. Doug Bohner, Human Resource Officer, University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture

We have heard it all before. Succession planning simply will not work in higher education. Succession planning is an industry tool and not relevant in academic environments defined by career path progression and tenure. And succession planning is arbitrary and enables favoritism.

Yet for those of us listening, we have also heard how higher education needs to ensure we have the talent to engage an increasingly diverse student population and statewide constituency with changing needs and expectations. How effective leadership has been a critical element in the success of near and long-term strategic planning and execution. And how when broadly applied, succession planning increases employee engagement and retention. According to a recent Aberdeen report, the top reason employees stay with an employer is feeling challenged by their work. Thirty-four percent reported that they remain with their current employer because they foresee an opportunity to be part of future growth. When a succession plan showcases growth opportunities and challenges employees to do more, they have a more positive outlook on their future, which increases the likelihood that they will remain long-term.[1]

From the perspective of an industry professional who has made the transition to higher education, while the jargon may differ, the organizational imperative to identify and develop the leaders of tomorrow is identical. This is not unique to staff roles. Administrative leaders and faculty turnover can be forecasted in the same way as employee turn and churn in industry. The typical duration of a university presidency spans just five years. For chancellors, it increases to only seven years. And this phenomenon extends throughout the ranks of leadership. Yet despite this well-known cycle, very few university systems have actively engaged in meaningful succession planning in which leaders are expected to not only identify potential successors, but develop strategies to ensure those individuals are assigned to developmental roles and tasks that will increase their readiness to be effective in more senior level positions.

Instead, universities continue to chase their proverbial tails when vital positions become vacant. "In higher education the most common method of replacing institutional leaders continues to be an open search."[2] Internal candidates may be encouraged to apply but frequently choose not to do so based their own experiences, or those of peers, in previous open searches. Some highly qualified candidates are asked not to apply or withdraw their applications. Even when based on good reason, such a request from leadership typically generates feelings of self-doubt, resentment and disenfranchisement that are not easily overcome. Then there are those who decide to pursue an internal candidacy only to find themselves frowned upon because they are a known entity and deemed imperfect, with the search

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[1] Insperity HR (2015) How Succession Planning Can Improve Employee Retention. *HR Advisor*.

[2] The Hanover Research Council (2010) Effective Practices for Succession Planning in Higher Education. *Academy Administration Practice.*

committee ultimately recommending external candidates with bold new ideas but little, if any, institutional knowledge. Certainly there are advantages to bringing in new blood at times, but a better balance is desperately needed in higher education.

"Administrative staff in higher education take a lower priority than faculty and students, which leads to the kind of underfunding and inattention to staff development that makes it difficult to develop a 'bench' of talented underlings ready to assume top positions."[3] This results in countless missed opportunities when internal candidates are not selected, or even advanced to the interview phase, only to depart to a peer institution often assuming a role more senior to the one for which they were applying internally. These missed opportunities vary but are sometimes as simple as unstated developmental feedback that if acted upon, could have made the candidate more desirable. In other situations, the miss may have been not more thoroughly considering the candidate. In any case, a culture of intentional succession planning may have been key in retaining a valuable member of the leadership team.

It would appear within the University of Tennessee (UT), this issue is more a matter of prioritization and leadership philosophy than a lack of resources. For years, broad leadership development cohort programs have existed for leaders as well as executives. These programs are quite valuable and excel at increasing system-wide knowledge, encouraging thinking beyond one's own scope, and offering participants the opportunity to develop critical cross-functional relationships. However, development does not equate to targeted succession planning. To assist here, UT offers a full suite of succession planning resources. These offerings provide templates and guidance covering everything from assessing organizational readiness, identifying critical roles and competencies, predicting near-term vacancies, selecting the most qualified potential candidates and clarifying their existing skills and developmental needs, to providing relevant learning opportunities and experiences to best prepare candidates for growth into larger roles. However, the mere existence of resources is not adequate if they are not viewed as relevant, if leaders are not held accountable for application, and if the tools are not regularly updated and widely communicated.

"The challenges, particularly time, the entrenched culture in higher education, lack of human and financial resources, and the inability to prioritize succession planning above other pressing needs and initiatives keep institutions from committing to the very efforts that would help them overcome these challenges in the long-term."[4] But like any tool, the more use it receives, the more value it provides. Ultimately, the question is not if to engage in succession planning but how. Recognizing that resources are scarce and only applied to areas of perceived value, we must first identify the barriers within our own culture and consider potential mechanisms to overcome them while also demonstrating the benefits of succession planning throughout the organization.

Within higher education, barriers to effective succession planning, whether real or perceived, generally revolve around excessive costs, a desire not to reflect industry, overly bureaucratic shared governance structures, poor performance management systems, competing priorities and misaligned initiatives,

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[3] The Hanover Research Council (2010) Effective Practices for Succession Planning in Higher Education. *Academy Administration Practice.*

[4] Keller, K. (2018) Building the Case for Succession Planning in Higher Education: A Study of Succession Planning Pilots within the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities System [PhD thesis, St. Cloud State University]. The Repository at St. Cloud State.

leadership behaviors and lack of trust. Often, it is a combination of these factors that derails this important work despite the fact that some barriers have been proven false time and time again. "The cost of replacing an individual employee can range from one-half to two times the employee's annual salary -- and that's a conservative estimate."[5] While this may be an industry statistic, we must consider that industry does not typically appoint a search committee or engage in the extensive multi-panel interview process common in higher education; costly endeavors in both time and money. Even on the conservative end, the costs associated with succession planning efforts would seldom, if ever, approach even one-half the salary of the retained employee.

So how can we move beyond the other barriers? Let's examine four specific shifts that need to occur in order to promote a culture of lasting succession planning including:
- putting individual and organizational ego aside,
- determining future-state organizational goals,
- identifying and developing internal talent that aligns with future-state goals, and
- holding leaders accountable to apply succession planning within their scope.

Moving beyond ego is certainly not an easy task as it requires examination of organizational practices and shifts in long standing processes that must be applied consistently by all leaders. To start, there is no need to mirror industry in this practice. "Organizational founders and CEOs shape culture. They make decisions to perpetuate the organizational culture. Therefore, the process of succession planning is not likely to be understood without an insider's point of view."[6] While the goal of retaining and developing capable leaders is consistent, the most effective succession planning efforts align with the culture of the specific organization and when they make it their own. As higher education is forced to modernize and trustees are expecting administrators to be increasingly nimble in decision making, faculty governance and the seemingly antiquated by-laws will need to be examined and adapted to ensure this antiquated practice does not become a hindrance to progress.

Further, performance management tools must be designed and applied in a manner that allows for differentiation among employees. Because compensation in higher education generally does not match that in industry, leaders have come to rely on elevated annual performance ratings as a reward. Unfortunately, this creates an expectation among employees that anything below a top tier rating equates to failure. When all employees receive artificially high ratings, it makes it more challenging to seek out the true top performers. Although individual leaders may recognize the top talent within their team, there needs to be a process in place for leaders to calibrate and discuss their high potential employees collectively. Once this is in place, we need to instill a level of trust among the leaders to accurately represent their people and move past any reluctance to expose them to opportunities, particularly when that results in the employee transitioning to a different department. Additionally, we need to be aware of leaders who downplay the talent within their organization out of fear that a direct report may one day surpass them in the organizational hierarchy. Unlike industry where leaders are encouraged to surround themselves with direct reports who have strengths that complement and perhaps exceed their own, in higher education it is more prevalent to have supervisors who believe that

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[5] McFeely, S. and Ben Wigert, B. (2019) This Fixable Problem Costs U.S. Businesses $1 Trillion. *Gallup Workplace.* https://www.gallup.com/workplace/247391/fixable-problem-costs-businesses-trillion.aspx

[6] Fancher, L. (2009) The Link between Culture and Succession Planning. *The Cultural Context of Human Resource Development.* 233-247.

doing so will only expose their own weaknesses and undermine their authority. These supervisors, likely promoted because they were reliable tacticians or productive faculty members, focus too heavily on intellectual competitiveness rather than developing the talent on their team. This behavior personifies the need for succession planning as simply being a top-notch individual contributor does not prepare one for leadership.

Organizational goals are typically far too numerous to ensure effective completion before moving on to the next, but for purposes of succession planning, senior leaders must be mindful of the future direction of the organization and determine the leadership skills and knowledge critical to achieve the desired state. Assessing competency gaps sets the stage to begin identifying potential candidates for succession planning. This is also the time to reconcile initiatives that may have misaligned or competing goals. Perhaps the timeliest example of this phenomenon is the increased focus on diversity, equity, and inclusion. "Many institutions do not have a diverse work force from which to attract diverse leaders, so the open search is their opportunity to attract diverse leaders. Otherwise, the institution just ends up cloning itself."[7] As our tendency as humans is to unconsciously surround ourselves with those we believe reflect us, effective use of succession planning can serve to combat this internal bias and help ensure a process that intentionally identifies high potential diverse candidates for developmental opportunities. Should a diverse slate of potential candidates not be apparent, this highlights the need for continued sourcing of diverse external talent while at the same time, enhancing efforts to provide additional preliminary development of the existing workforce.

Identifying potential succession planning candidates is where the value of such programs truly takes hold. "Higher education requires administrators who effectively balance unity and integrate business and academic priorities; respond creatively to demand for increased market competitiveness in ways that support long term academic objectives; and connect the strategies for improvement of institutional infrastructure and fiscal resources with the requirements for strengthening the ingredients of academic progress. Higher education cannot import that kind of leadership, they must produce it."[8] Doing so not only results in a high standard of capability within the organization, but also creates a benchmark against which to measure the qualities of external candidates.

At the same time, it is important to acknowledge the risks of succession planning and the impact on those selected for participation. Setting clear expectations from the start that promotion is not a guarantee is critical. However, development alone will not necessarily retain strong leaders. Participants will want opportunities to apply newly learned skills whether that be project leadership, ownership of broad initiatives, or participation in workstreams beyond the scope of their day-to-day work. Organizations will also be best served by honoring the efforts put forth by participants and seeking ways to apply the developmental learning in ways that benefit the institution.

Of course, there is always a chance that succession planning participants may depart to pursue promotional opportunities elsewhere. "Viable internal candidates for senior leadership positions may be easily lured away by other offers because the institution is incapable of making any type of forward

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[7] Witt/Kieffer. (2008) Succession Planning Takes Hold in Higher Education: Witt/Kieffer Survey of Presidents/Trustees. *Leaders Connecting Leaders.* www.witkieffer.com

[8] Rich, D. (2006). Academic Leadership and the Restructuring of Higher Education. *New Directions for Higher Education,* (134). 37-48

commitment or even giving someone a reasonable assessment of their chances in a full search."[9] Although this is a non-preferred outcome, this too will ultimately enhance the organization's reputation as one that develops top talent.

Lastly, for long term success, it is critical to ingrain a culture of paying it forward. All leaders should be expected to seek development opportunities for their direct reports, identify potential successors for their own role, and advocate for the participation of high potential employees in targeted succession planning as appropriate. Those who have previously benefited from succession planning however, have an inherent obligation to continue growing this culture of development by mentoring others and proactively speaking to the individual and organizational benefits of succession planning.

Whether it be industry or higher education, exploring any list of employee drivers will result in three that apply universally; the need to feel valued and appreciated, the desire to make a meaningful contribution, and the opportunity to grow both personally and professionally. In an increasingly competitive labor market, positioning UT as an employer of choice will certainly be impacted by our ability to identify, develop, and retain capable leaders. Most importantly, the institutional advantages of having a strong bench of prepared internal candidates for senior level leadership positions is not only prudent from an economic perspective, but also enhances the overall reputation of the University of Tennessee.

Doug Bohner serves as the Human Resources Officer for the University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture, a role he has held since joining UT in 2018. Bringing twenty years of HR experience in Fortune 100 companies including The Walt Disney Company and Express Scripts, Doug provides strategic guidance to the Institute's leadership team while collaborating system-wide to drive broad scope HR initiatives. Leading UTIA's HR function, Doug and his team provide full-service HR solutions both on campus and in Extension offices and AgResearch Centers in all 95 counties across the state.

Doug holds a Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice from West Chester University and a Master of Human Resources from Rollins College. He is a certified Senior Professional in Human Resources (SPHR). In addition to experience as an HR Generalist, Doug has functional expertise in Organization Development, HR Compliance Investigations and Employee Relations.

Originally from Pennsylvania, Doug enjoys woodworking, home improvement and collecting as many tools as possible. He met his wife Laura while both were working at Walt Disney World's Magic Kingdom Park™ and, along with their three children, returned to Laura's hometown of Knoxville just a few years ago.

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[9] Witt/Kieffer. (2008) Succession Planning Takes Hold in Higher Education: Witt/Kieffer Survey of Presidents/Trustees. *Leaders Connecting Leaders*. www.witkieffer.com

Innovative University Cultures: What We Can Accomplish By Modifying The Traditional Academic Structure In Public Universities

Dr. Nancy Buschhaus, Chair, Department of Biological Sciences, University of Tennessee at Martin

Introduction

Universities from their earliest roots to their modern-day mission statements have been centered around the core values of teaching students, serving as a hub for research and creative innovation, and providing service to the communities in which they are located. The earliest universities in Europe were conglomerations of faculty and students, with faculty charging fees of students, and the earliest universities being funded by religious entities. That focus gave way in the early 19th century to a more modern secular examination of religion, philosophy, and science. Eventually with the advent of the land grant institutions, their principles of academic freedom and student accessibility become the framework of the modern public institutions of higher education.[1]

In the United States, federal and state funds served as the source for establishing the majority of the initial 19th century colleges and universities, a pattern repeated in the expansion of junior colleges and universities in the 20th century. With those ties to state and federal funds and open access to education, the hallmark of accessibility in higher education in the United States was begun. Hand in hand with the expectation of accessibility is that public institutions of higher education are responsible for demonstrating their efficacy to the taxpayers who provide some proportion of the funds for their mission.

Enter into this framework, the administration portion of the university, the sector responsible for managing the operations of the university and making sure that the mission of the university is met for all stakeholders. However, unlike many management-level entities in today's companies, universities have shared governance[2] where the faculty have input and direct impact on the structure and management of the university as a whole. In 1966, in the middle of an expansion of the number of universities in the U.S., shared governance was a welcome measure to protect academic freedom and to develop a cohesive response to external forces, such as political pressures, that endangered the university mission. Conversely, in today's multi-billion-dollar university entities, I argue that this 1966 model of shared governance is tattered, at best, and an impediment, at worst, to the mission of our universities, where the ever-evolving menace of political extreme landscapes and monocultural social media focus, threaten the very foundation of the idea for the need for shared governance: the accessibility of education and the creative space for innovative basic and applied research.

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[1] Feingold, M., and V. Navarro-Brotóns (eds), "Introduction" in, *Universities and Science in the Early Modern Period*, (2006) 1-7; https://doi.org/10.1007/1-4020-3975-1_1

[2] American Council on Education and the Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges, "1966 Statement on Government of Colleges and Universities". https://www.aaup.org/report/statement-government-colleges-and-universities

Shared governance has contributed to the "modern" structure of universities. Most public universities have an organizational framework with a chancellor or president as the representative of the university as a whole, under whom exists vice chancellors of academic affairs, finance, administration, student affairs, university advancement, and/or several other entities, depending on the university. Within Academic Affairs, the realm that includes the faculty, additional layers exist in deans and directors, department chairs, and faculty before arriving at the student level, arguably for whom at least a large proportion of the university's mission functions. In the mid 20th century, prior to the advent of email and the internet, these layers of complexity under a shared governance model may have functioned more cohesively than today. In that model, faculty and administration could both be knowledgeable about the threats to the university's mission and be knowledgeable enough about the "parts" needed to make the entire enterprise function. In such a framework, the umbrella of administration was there to directly support the faculty, which allowed the faculty to have direct impact on the functions of the administration to provide a cohesive front to external and internal threats.

In the 21st century, management of such large entities as universities with very large employee bases serving large numbers of customers necessitates best practices derived from the largest business models. However, straddling the successful business model and the traditional shared governance model of universities is no longer working.[3]

The shared governance model can impede organizational best practices and can place undue burden on the faculty. For example, having the faculty deciding the strategies associated with their own persistence introduces conflict of interest regarding best business practices for effective employees. Similarly, when faculty share governance and responsibility for all factors of the university, the expectations for their participation in activities outside of their educational and scholarly work can place undue burden on their time. Conversely, best business practices can dampen university culture and collaboration, with a fear that budget concerns would override those of academic concerns.

The university of today is much more complex than in the past. Immediate responses to external requests and threats are required on a daily, moment-by-moment basis in this lightning-fast internet-based society in which we live. Mastering and understanding the needs of the various levels of administration is no longer a simple task, specialists are now needed for media responses, financial nimbleness, budget management, accreditation concerns, government and legal issues, human resources, information technology, marketing, etc. Expecting faculty to have the time to master and grasp all of those needs in a way that makes shared governance timely and effective is not feasible. Even with clear communication between administration and faculty, the complexities of running the multi-billion-dollar industry takes teams of administrators working on tasks and ever at the ready for a response. Faculty do not have time to master or participate in those tasks. Likewise, the expectations by the administration for faculty to complete requirements for information to fulfill the administration's needs as a part of "university service" has been occurring in ever widening ripples that limit the time that faculty can expend on producing excellence in the academic and research pursuits within the mission for which they were directly hired.

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[3] Gallos, Joan V. "Reframing shared governance: Rediscovering the soul of campus collaboration." *Journal of Management Inquiry* 18.2 (2009): 136-138.

I propose that we remodel the "typical" model of shared governance (and thus, shared responsibility) that was outlined in the 1966 document[4] for both the faculty and administrative structure to successfully meet the values and mission of the university structure of today.

Proposed Renovations To The Traditional Model
I. Revitalize and revise the shared governance faculty model.

First, I propose we replace the outdated 1966 shared governance model with a shared governance model that is restricted to shared governance of curriculum, degree requirements, and research, scholarly and creative endeavors.

Faculty would still share governance as it pertains to the curriculum and the requirements of the degrees offered by the university, as well as making decisions about how scholarly and creative work is encouraged and rewarded. Unlike in the 1966 model, faculty would have no service responsibilities associated with any items independent of curriculum, degrees, and research/scholarship/creative endeavors. In this way, both the faculty and the administration can win in the ways that they each participate in the collaborative goal of educating students and producing innovative research and creative endeavors.

As a part of this first revision, I propose that the promotion and tenure framework is restructured such that faculty are eligible to earn significant merit-based incremental salary increases every two years in residence independent of promotion that are based directly on student learning outcomes and scholarly or creative endeavors. In this model, the tenure clock is expanded to eight years with faculty serving until that time on back-to-back contracts lasting four years each in which both parties (the university or the faculty member) can choose to terminate between the first and second contracts. Promotion-based salary increases will only happen associated with promotion to full professor and only after a minimum of 10 years of service. This model is based on the assumption that faculty salaries will begin at market value and will have regular cost-of-living updates[5] independent from merit awards.

Also, as a part of this first revision, every university would support faculty whose role was either teaching only, research/scholarly/creative only, or a more traditional combination of the two. The traditional university model with its roots in an apprenticeship framework with the knowledgeable scholarly faculty teaching the apprentice student does not always match faculty skills with student learning outcomes. Not all faculty have the skills necessary for being exemplary educators, and not all faculty have the skills necessary to be engaged in innovative research/scholarship/creative activities. Likewise, not all faculty are effective at engaging the community.   By allowing the hire of faculty that are 100% academic, 100% research, or some combination of the two (or three with community service), allows faculty to bring their best to the table and the university to put its best foot forward.

Again, as a part of the first revision, universities will transition into the four-quarter system, and faculty will be able to gain 12-month contracts. This revision requires that the university actively support the academic and research mission in all 12 months, not setting aside summer as different than the other months. Faculty would have the opportunity to be active on 9- or 12-month contracts, but the university would hire enough faculty to provide courses in all four quarters and hire faculty with online and distance

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[4] American Council on Education and the Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges, "1966 Statement on Government of Colleges and Universities". https://www.aaup.org/report/statement-government-colleges-and-universities
[5] Wolston, C. "Job losses and falling salaries batter U.S. academia", *Nature*, April 2021. https://doi.org/10.1038/d41586-021-01183-9

learning delivery expertise to meet the flexibility of the educational needs and evolving wants of traditional and non-traditional students.[6]

Finally, the decrease in the aspects of shared governance that faculty would lose from this modification of the 1966 shared governance model, such as the power over decisions of economic importance that impact faculty, should be offset by the opportunity for faculty to be represented by faculty labor unions. In this way, faculty interests that are not curriculum or degree oriented, can be represented by professional negotiators.[7] While adding a faculty union for universities using the 1966 shared governance model can tip the balance of power to the faculty, when shared governance is limited to curricular, degrees, and research/scholarship creative activities, then faculty may fear that their personnel needs are not protected. The availability of collective bargaining could help to alleviate some of those concerns.

II. Revitalize and revise the shared governance administration model.

Secondly, I propose that the administration takes over the responsibility currently listed as "service" from the faculty, and the administration provides trained professionals to address the student services typically provided as a part of faculty service. For example, each academic unit, at either the departmental or college level depending on size, should have the following administrative-paid professionals to support the academic mission: a student academic scheduler, a student success coordinator, an assessment coordinator, a research coordinator, a student financial aid coordinator, a program resource specialist to deal with salary and budget, administrative assistant(s), and a department or college level media/marketing coordinator. Students should have to reach out no further than their local department or college to obtain the services that they directly need to be successful in their program. Finally, as a part of the focus on student success, the administration will be required to provide intervention for both students and faculty who are struggling with meeting student learning outcomes.

For these revisions to become reality, in addition to the faculty having more support, the administration must have more autotomy from the 1966 shared governance model. Although the concept is painful, when you consider the actuality of the current state of shared governance, many universities are already in a situation where faculty and administration view each other as the impediment to university success.[8] In this case, neither wins and the university mission can suffer. Instead, having the administration focused on providing the support necessary to keep the entire entity of the university functioning while providing the smoothest pathway for students to have access to the programs that they wish to complete, provides the smoothest pathway to success for the university as a whole.

In addition, the administration umbrella needs to be restructured to reflect the focus on academic outcomes and faculty research and creative scholarship. To meet these needs, the academic program needs to have priority over the other aspects of the university. As such the president or chancellor of the university retains her/his current role as the public face of the university in all of its various roles and as the direct report for all university employees. However, directly under the chancellor would be the Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs/Provost/Chief Academic Officer who serves as the public face to faculty

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[6] Navarro, Mercedes M., Iglesias, Marta M., Torres, Pilar R., "A new management element for universities: satisfaction with the offered courses." *International Journal of Educational Management* Vol. 19 (2005) 505-526.

[7] Wickens, C.M."The organizational impact of university labor unions", *High Educ* vol 56**,** (2008) 545–564. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10734-008-9110-z

[8] Kater, Susan T. "Community college faculty conceptualizations of shared governance: shared understandings of a sociopolitical reality." *Community College Review*, vol. 45 (2017) pp. 234–257, doi:10.1177/0091552117700490.

and directs the administrative side of the programs, degrees, and students plus manages the overall budgeting of the university with the assistance of the additional vice chancellors under her/his umbrella of Academic Affairs.

In this way, what are independent entities at some universities are tied into assisting the university. This model of administrative structure reflects the interconnectedness much the same way that branches of a tree assist the main trunk, with Academic Affairs serving as the main trunk, and finance, administration, student affairs, etc. serving as the branches of the tree.

Conclusions

Remodeling the shared governance model to separate the responsibilities of innovation and education from that of the general administration of the university would provide the real-time flexibility necessary for universities to deal with the rapidly changing landscape of higher education. To date, the ideal of shared governance based on the 1966 model, requires ever-expanding service responsibilities of faculty and narrowing modalities of change for administration. By providing paid professionals to accomplish the aspects of student and program support to free faculty to concentrate on curriculum, degree programs, and innovative research, creative and scholarly endeavors, and by providing administration the room to successfully maneuver in today's academic market, the 21st century institutions of higher education can hope to succeed.

Dr. Nancy Buschhaus is Professor and Chair of the Department of Biological Sciences at the University of Tennessee at Martin. She has been with UT Martin for 25 years pursing her passion of enabling undergraduates to succeed in their academic pathways in biology both in the classroom and as a part of the experiential learning endeavors offered by engagement in undergraduate research. Prior to being appointed as Interim Chair in 2020, Nancy has been Undergraduate Council Chair of UT Martin's Faculty Senate, Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee Chair, and was involved in committee work such as that associated with strategic enrollment initiatives and faculty evaluation.

Nancy is a first-generation college student who strongly feels that higher education enlightens, inspires, and empowers future generations of students to improve the lives of, and provide parity to, people of all backgrounds and all ethnicities. She earned her bachelor's and master's degrees in Zoology from Miami University of Ohio and her doctorate at The Ohio State University.

While Nancy's students like to call her Batwoman due to her love of educating everyone about the wonder of her furry flying research subjects, she denies any knowledge of capes, batarangs, or secret caves.

Optimizing Audit, Risk, Compliance, and Privacy Functions in Higher Education

Mr. Brian Daniels, Chief Audit & Compliance Officer, University of Tennessee System Administration

How do Audit, Risk, Compliance, and Privacy go together and why should enterprise leaders care?

Whether there are formal offices assigned to the role at any particular higher education institution, all institutions have responsibilities associated with areas of identifying, managing, and mitigating areas of risk facing their particular institution. Among the ways these efforts are coordinated in higher education are through centralized offices with some combination of these responsibilities. Regardless of the construction, colleges and universities failing to prioritize these functions are doing so at a tremendous increase in the risk landscape faced.

- **Internal Audit** responsibilities include reviewing processes to enhance internal controls and streamline practices, serving as a strong, objective voice during tough decision-making processes, liaising between groups to illuminate and facilitate change, and using an inclusive audit planning process, including regular risk assessments and consideration of emerging issues and trends.[1]

- **Enterprise Risk Management** enables management to effectively deal with uncertainty and associated risk and opportunity, enhancing the capacity to build value. Value is maximized when management sets strategy and objectives to strike an optimal balance between growth and return goals and related risks, and efficiently and effectively deploys resources in pursuit of the entity's objectives.[2]

- At the University of Tennessee, **Institutional Compliance** provides independent oversight of the University's compliance programs to assure that the University is compliant with all federal, state, and local laws and regulations as well as University policies. The office was established in 2008 to continue the University's commitment to meeting the highest standards of ethics, integrity, and responsibility.[3]

- **Information security** focuses on the prevention and recovery of data breaches; Privacy deals more with the applications of personal information, and laws or institutional ethical standards that govern how it is used.[4] In a 2019 EDUCAUSE study, higher education leaders identified privacy as the third most critical IT issue facing the industry, with related concerns around information security and student success coming in at numbers one and two, respectively. Data is the lifeblood of any higher education institution's strategic planning activities, providing both evidence of success and justification for new initiatives. And colleges and universities are leveraging this information to make improvements in nearly every area of the institution, including classroom and online learning, recruitment, retention, donor engagement, physical building controls and much more. But this wealth

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[1] https://www.bakertilly.com/insights/leveraging-internal-audit-for-higher-education-organizations
[2] https://www.coso.org/Documents/COSO-ERM-Executive-Summary.pdf
[3] https://audit.tennessee.edu/compliance/
[4] https://www.huronconsultinggroup.com/insights/evolution-of-data-privacy-standards-higher-education

of data is a double-edged sword: on one side, the virtuous applications of data that improve the student experience; on the other, the potential for unethical, ill-advised or unlawful use of personally identifiable information (PII).

Why has the Higher Education Industry struggled to agree on a model and approach?
Like a lot of things in higher education, there is a wide variety of models that have been implemented, and also like a lot of things in higher education, there is no single consensus on the best way to approach things. An easy example of legitimate reasons to change your approach doesn't have to extend beyond the institutional profile of the universities within the University of Tennessee System, where UT Knoxville has a widely disparate model from UT Southern in terms of the constituents served and the strategic objectives being pursued. Given that, why would a single model for any administrative oversight functions be any different?

What are potential benefits of aligning the work of these functions?
Three of the primary benefits of establishing a cohesive function are related to:
- *Risk Assessment and Mitigation*
- *Operating Effectiveness*
- *Engaging the Board at the Right Altitude*

Risk Assessment and Mitigation
As previously noted, each institution must assess their own risk landscape in order to best establish their risk tolerance and inform mitigative strategies. Having this function sitting in a centralized function, independent of line management and with a reporting line as high as possible (optimally to the governing board and CEO jointly), will reduce the potential for competitive infighting that will adversely impact the risk assessment process.

As part of this assessment, all of these functions should be cross-collaborative to maximize efficiency and consistency in process and shared understanding of the results. Initial assessment could be conducted individually or jointly. Risk assessments will include quantitative and qualitative components. Quantitatively, measures such as revenues and expenditures, research activity, fines for noncompliance, and capital assets are commonly included. Qualitatively, it is common to go on a listening tour involving senior leadership. The goal is to listen to concerns that are held, and potential risks on the horizon in the opinion of the subject mater experts. Additionally, a strong lean towards reputational risk will be a part of these conversation, because whatever will get you on the front page of the newspaper the fastest, is almost always bad. Of course, the one exception may be athletics, but that cuts both ways as well.

Operational Effectiveness
Dwight D. Eisenhower, the Supreme Commander of the Allied Expeditionary Forces in Europe during the Second World War and later the US President, emphasized that his war experience taught him that "plans are worthless, but planning is everything"[5] This frame of mind is a carryover from the previous section and it leads to pursuit of operational effectiveness. As eventual president Eisenhower noted, a plan may not survive the dynamic environment ahead of which it is constructed, the exercise of pulling the right individuals together to discuss coming challenges is an indispensable part of strategic leadership. As such, as the university emerges from a risk assessment, a new chance to explore the risk landscape and operational opportunities emerges. Senior leadership now has a documented opportunity to

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[5] https://scholarworks.utep.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=2111&context=cs_techrep

identify specific areas needing urgent attention, areas that need to be addressed in support of larger strategic goals, and those areas where the stakes are high related to meeting compliance or privacy standards.

Engaging the Board at the Right Altitude
The governing board serves a critical role in holding senior leadership accountable and helping form and pursue the strategic direction of the university. The temptation is always there to pursue conversations down at the operational level, or "in the weeds." Without structured risk assessment, in pursuit of identifying adverse and positive outcomes, the board may have no choice but to pursue operational matters to engage with university leadership.
A commitment to a unified, centralized, and detailed risk assessment will afford management and the board to keep the conversation at the right altitude, where that level of oversight and wisdom can be most effective.

Things to consider in evaluating your structure

One key item to keep in mind is the differing operations layers that the audit, risk, compliance, and privacy functions occupy in the university environment. The Institute of Internal Auditors has long promoted a Three Lines of Defense model (recently transitioned to Three Lines Model) to articulate where these related functions operate.

The Three Lines Model helps organizations identify structures and processes that best assist the achievement of objectives and facilitate strong governance and risk management. The model applies to all organizations and is optimized by...Clearly understanding the roles and responsibilities represented in the model and the relationships among them.

More specifically, "first line roles are most directly aligned with the delivery of products and/or services to clients of the organization, and include the roles of support functions. Second line roles provide assistance with managing risk. First and second line roles may be blended or separated. Some second line roles may be assigned to specialists to provide complementary expertise, support, monitoring, and challenge to those with first line roles. Second line roles can focus on specific objectives of risk management, such as: compliance with laws, regulations, and acceptable ethical behavior; internal control; information and technology security; sustainability; and quality assurance. Alternatively, second line roles may span a broader responsibility for risk management, such as enterprise risk management (ERM). However, responsibility for managing risk remains a part of first line roles and within the scope of management."[6]

Internal Audit is a third line function that "provides independent and objective assurance and advice on the adequacy and effectiveness of governance and risk management. It achieves this through the competent application of systematic and disciplined processes, expertise, and insight. It reports its findings to management and the governing body to promote and facilitate continuous improvement. In doing so, it may consider assurance from other internal and external providers."[6]

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[6] https://www.theiia.org/globalassets/site/about-us/advocacy/three-lines-model-updated.pdf

Summary

To reiterate, audit, risk, compliance, and privacy functions all serve critical roles in a higher education setting in the 2020s, but the best approach remains in the eye of the beholder. That is to say, regardless of the university's culture and structure, the main thing is to lean in to assessing and pursuing the. Optimal structure for their environment. All models can work, but the main thing to pursue is the appropriate model for each university individually.

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Brian began serving as the Chief Audit and Compliance Officer at The University of Tennessee System in 2019. Previously, he served 15 years in higher education in the Commonwealth of Virginia, primarily at the University of Virginia and Virginia Tech where he last served as the Director of Internal Audit. With an early career focus on IT Audit, his undergraduate degree was from Virginia Tech, and he received an MBA from James Madison University.

Under Brian's leadership, Audit and Compliance, with more than 20 professionals, is a systemwide resource for the University of Tennessee, reporting directly to the Audit and Compliance Committee of the UT Board of Trustees. Offices are located on the Knoxville, Memphis, Chattanooga, and Martin campuses. The audit team prioritizes audit projects focused on high-risk topical areas, as well as efficiency, compliance, information technology, and fraud investigations. The compliance function includes the institutional compliance program as well as system-wide coordination and oversight for Title IX and the Clery Act. Institutional Compliance monitors more than 350 regulations.

Welcome to the Family: A Branding Framework for Mergers and Acquisitions in Higher Education

Ms. Ellie Dougherty, Director of Marketing, University of Tennessee System Administration

INTRODUCTION

N'dea Hardy was a junior studying nursing at Wesley College in Dover, Delaware, when she learned of Delaware State University's plan to acquire her soon-to-be alma mater. Among her feelings and concerns was the question of how 147-year-old traditions could end so abruptly. [1]

Similarly, faculty and alumni of Wesley College, a small institution established in 1873 as a Methodist prep school, recalled a range of emotions felt during final graduation ceremonies and sporting events, knowing the next academic year would bring sweeping changes. [2]

Delaware State officially completed its acquisition of Wesley College on July 1, 2021—making history as the first historically Black college and university (HBCU) in the country to acquire a private institution, especially one with a predominantly white student body.[3]

Problem Statement and Research Aim

Mergers and acquisitions are becoming more and more common in higher education, especially amid the global COVID-19 pandemic that began in winter 2020.

A study conducted a few months into the pandemic by Edmit, a Boston-based college advising company, reported that approximately 345 colleges and universities nationwide were in danger of closing as a result of the financial impact of the virus. [4] Statistics reported by *Inside Higher Ed* approximately 18 months into the pandemic showed "the number of public four-year universities declined by 2.3% from 2019-20 to 2020-21, and the number of community colleges dropped by 2.7%—in part because of mergers and acquisitions."[5]

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[1] Hardy, N. (2021, June 28). Commentary: 'Wolverine for life' reflects on her time at Wesley. Bay to Bay News. https://baytobaynews.com/stories/commentary-wolverine-for-life-reflects-on-her-time-at-wesley,51767

[2] Herder, L. (2022, February 15). Life after the acquisition: Delaware State and Wesley College. Diverse Issues in Higher Education. https://www.diverseeducation.com/institutions/hbcus/article/15286539/after-the-acquisition-delaware-state-and-wesley-college

[3] Herder, L. (2022, February 15). Life after the acquisition: Delaware State and Wesley College. Diverse Issues in Higher Education. https://www.diverseeducation.com/institutions/hbcus/article/15286539/after-the-acquisition-delaware-state-and-wesley-college

[4] Fernandes, D. (2020, May 8). Amid coronavirus pandemic, a growing list of colleges in financial peril. Boston Globe. https://www.bostonglobe.com/2020/05/08/metro/amid-pandemic-growing-list-colleges-financial-peril/

[5] Lederman, D. (2021, August 2). Number of colleges shrinks again, including publics and private nonprofits. Inside Higher Ed. https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2021/08/02/number-colleges-shrinks-again-including-publics-and-private-nonprofits

Many factors contribute to the success or failure of mergers and acquisitions—one important factor being branding. A study published in *MIT Sloan Management Review* noted that of all the critical decisions senior executives make before and during a merger or acquisition, branding is rarely one that receives adequate attention.[6] In fact, the study noted that in most cases branding was part of a post-acquisition cleanup effort to organize a mismatch of names and logos and by then, employee morale and customer satisfaction had plummeted.[7]

Ideally, however, marketing considerations should drive branding decisions to signal a new strategic focus to the organizations' stakeholders and to leverage the strengths of the entities involved.[8] Deloitte's guide to brand management in mergers and acquisitions echoed this guidance, stating that the consideration of brand strategy early in the integration process is essential to ensure optimal value is gained from the deal.[9]

This paper aims to provide a research-based framework for branding decisions during higher education mergers and acquisitions to help institutions ensure successful transitions that allow for the continuity of mission-critical work.

Before beginning, it's worth noting the terms "merger" and "acquisition" are often used interchangeably yet describe two distinct types of transactions. A special report on the growing role of mergers and acquisitions published by *Inside Higher Ed* stated a merger is the combination of two entities, whereas in an acquisition, one institution takes ownership of another.[10] While this framework offers guidance for both types of deals, it is important that senior administration recognize the difference to determine the best brand strategy.

Suggested Solutions
A literature review on the topic of brand strategy during mergers and acquisitions highlighted numerous best practices. Three of the most-referenced practices and most-applicable to higher education include:

Do Your Homework: Gain a Deep Understanding of Each Brand Involved
The decision-making process should always begin with research. It is imperative to gain a deep understanding of the institutional brands involved in the merger or acquisition, including the markets

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[6] Ettenson, R. & Knowles, J. (2006). Merging the brands and branding the merger. MIT Sloan Management Review, 47(4), 39-49.

[7] Ettenson, R. & Knowles, J. (2006). Merging the brands and branding the merger. MIT Sloan Management Review, 47(4), 39-49.

[8] Lambkin, M. C. & Muzellec, L. (2010). Leveraging brand equity in business-to-business mergers and acquisitions. Industrial Marketing Management, 39(8), 1234-1239.

[9] Williams, P., Dunn, P., & Farrell, K. (2021). Integrating brands: A guide to brand management in M&A [White paper]. Deloitte. https://www2.deloitte.com/content/dam/Deloitte/uk/Documents/corporate-finance/deloitte-uk-integrating-brands-m&a.pdf

[10] Seltzer, R. (2018, June 21). The growing role of mergers in higher ed. Inside Higher Ed. https://www.insidehighered.com/sites/default/server_files/media/Excerpt_IHESpecialReport_Growing-Role-of-Mergers-in-Higher-Ed.pdf

and stakeholders served, and to assess the brand equity each institution brings to the table.[11] There is a large body of research focused on brand equity and the methods for measuring it within different industries. Among the most cited is Keller's Customer-Based Brand Equity Model, which includes level of awareness of the brand and favorability toward the brand.[12] To measure brand equity, communications and marketing leadership must identify stakeholders and assess their opinions, attitudes and beliefs about each brand involved in the deal. There are several methods of collecting brand awareness and public opinion data, such as listening sessions, open forums, focus groups and surveys.

Craft a Clear and Well-Defined Brand Strategy Early in the Process

Armed with findings from the above-mentioned assessments of each institution's brand equity, decision makers are equipped to determine the best brand strategy going forward. According to Deloitte's guide to brand management in mergers and acquisitions, a well-developed narrative on the future brand strategy should be incorporated in initial announcements and built upon in all subsequent communications to stakeholders.[13] Deloitte's guide outlines seven brand strategies worth considering based on a study of approximately 700 mergers and acquisitions:

Brand Strategy	Description
Acquirer's Brand	The acquirer's brand is adopted for the combined entity. This is perhaps the most common approach seen in higher education, including Delaware State University's acquisition of Wesley College in which the Wesley brand was transitioned out and extensive attention was paid to ensuring the legacy of Wesley was integrated in other ways. Another example is the University of Tennessee System's acquisition of Martin Methodist College in 2021. Public opinion research conducted in 2018 by the UT System revealed that 89.5% of Tennesseans have a positive overall opinion of UT as a statewide system of higher education—making a compelling argument for Martin Methodist College to assume the UT brand.
Retain Both	In instances where both brands have considerable brand equity, both the acquirer and target brands are retained in their original form. For instance, a bill was proposed by New Hampshire lawmakers in March 2022 to move ahead with a plan to merge Granite State College with the University of New Hampshire while preserving Granite State's name in the process.
Combine	The acquirer and target brands merge to form a new brand where the identity of the original parties remains visible in the brand name. One

[11] Firstbrook, C. (2007). Transnational mergers and acquisitions: How to beat the odds of disaster. Journal of Business Strategy, 28(1), 53-56.

[12] Lambkin, M. C. & Muzellec, L. (2010). Leveraging brand equity in business-to-business mergers and acquisitions. Industrial Marketing Management, 39(8), 1234-1239.

[13] Williams, P., Dunn, P., & Farrell, K. (2021). Integrating brands: A guide to brand management in M&A [White paper]. Deloitte. https://www2.deloitte.com/content/dam/Deloitte/uk/Documents/corporate-finance/deloitte-uk-integrating-brands-m&a.pdf

	way to think of this is a blending of the brands, such as Carson-Newman University that resulted from the 1889 merger of Carson College and Newman College for Women.
New Brand	An entirely new brand is created. For instance, the 2000 merger of Shelby State Community College and the State Technical Institute at Memphis to form Southwest Tennessee Community College.
New Corporate Brand	A new overarching or umbrella brand is created to encompass the existing brands. Typically, both the target and acquirer brands are retained to maintain an identity for the existing businesses now folded under the new overarching brand. For instance, creation in March 2022 of the Commonwealth University of Pennsylvania that if finalized will bring Bloomsburg, Lock Haven and Mansfield universities together as one consolidated entity while allowing the universities to maintain their names and logos.
Associated Branding	A reference to the target brand is added to the acquired brand, such as the 2021 merger of Northeastern University and Mills College that established Mills College at Northeastern University.
Target's Brand	The target's brand is adopted for the combined entity. This might be an approach chosen if the brand equity of the target entity is greater than that of the acquiring brand.

Once a brand strategy is determined, a comprehensive guide should be developed that defines the core and complex elements of the new brand. Central to plans should be the name and logo. A logo is a graphic design used to build and evoke recognizability, brand equity, customer commitment and competitive distinctiveness.[14] Additional elements of the new brand include institutional values, mission, vision, voice, tone, typography and color, among others. The combination of these elements tells the story of the new brand and gives a nod to the past while painting a picture of the future.[15]

Commit to Consistent and Clear Communication Regarding Brand Strategy Throughout All Phases of the Process
The importance of frequent and transparent communication cannot be underscored. Internal and external announcements should be made early and routinely, stakeholders should be invited to ask questions and share ideas regarding branding proposals and decisions, and leadership should be visible and accessible throughout all phases of integration.[16]

Aspects of these practices were evidenced during Delaware State University's acquisition of Wesley College. Following initial announcements, surveys were sent to Wesley students, faculty and staff to solicit their questions and concerns. Deliberate communications outlined to all stakeholders what they could expect and what opportunities would exist post-acquisition. Weekly forums engaged both campuses as

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[14] Erjansola, A., Lipponen, J., Vehkalahti, K., Aula, H. & Pirttilä-Backman, A. (2021). From the brand logo to brand associations and the corporate identity: Visual and identity-based logo associations in a university merger. Journal of Brand Management, 28, 241-253.

[15] 5 common mistakes in M&A branding. Finch Brands. https://blog.finchbrands.com/5-common-mistakes-in-ma-branding

[16] Vú, D.A. & Moisescu, O. I. (2013). Brand integration practices in mergers and acquisitions. Management and Marketing Challenges for the Knowledge Society, 8(3), 403-428.

one new community. However, despite carefully crafted plans, confusion remained among pockets of stakeholders. Faculty recall feeling ill-equipped to answer questions, students were quoted as not knowing what to believe and various stakeholders reported feeling betrayed when finding out information from the media.[17]

One common mistake by leadership is assuming the momentum surrounding the effective date will continue to build organically.[18] The excitement around the ceremonial "flipping of the switch" should be palpable, as was the case at midnight on June 30, 2021, when Martin Methodist College officially became UT Southern during a packed block party on the downtown streets of Pulaski, Tennessee. Yet, the effective date of a merger or acquisition is just the beginning of years of dedicated work to blend cultures, build stakeholder trust and cultivate brand loyalty.[19]

Recommended Implementation
Following is a list of 10 actionable steps offered for quick reference by decision makers when implementing these brand strategy best practices:

1. Identify all internal and external stakeholders of the institutions involved, including, but not limited to:
   - Faculty and staff
   - Board members
   - Alumni and donors
   - Students and parents (current and prospective)
   - High school counselors and principals
   - Elected officials (local, state and federal)
   - Media (local, state and national)
   - State departments and agencies
   - Government funding agencies
   - Community leaders
   - Business leaders
   - Partners
   - Higher education leaders at peer institutions
   - Accrediting bodies
   - General public
   - Etc.

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[17] Herder, L. (2022, February 15). Life after the acquisition: Delaware State and Wesley College. Diverse Issues in Higher Education. https://www.diverseeducation.com/institutions/hbcus/article/15286539/after-the-acquisition-delaware-state-and-wesley-college

[18] 5 common mistakes in M&A branding. Finch Brands. https://blog.finchbrands.com/5-common-mistakes-in-ma-branding

[19] 5 common mistakes in M&A branding. Finch Brands. https://blog.finchbrands.com/5-common-mistakes-in-ma-branding

2. Review or conduct research on public opinion and brand awareness to measure brand equity.
3. Determine and propose desired brand strategy based on research findings.
4. Ensure brand strategy is included in contractual agreements.
5. Ensure plans regarding brand strategy are incorporated in initial announcements to all stakeholders.
6. Engage stakeholders early and often—seeking ideas, input and feedback on branding decisions every step of the way.
7. Make decisions quickly, but not too quickly—establishing reasonable timeframes and sticking to them.
8. Account for the fact that branding goes beyond the logo—name and logo are among the most visible elements of a brand but must be accompanied by a comprehensive branding initiative that encompasses institutional values, mission, vision, voice, tone, key messaging, etc.
9. Create a long-range brand introduction plan that goes beyond the effective date of the merger or acquisition.
10. Continue gathering feedback post-merger or acquisition—routinely assessing stakeholder needs and perceptions of the new brand.

CONCLUSION

Navigating a merger or acquisition is difficult, especially in higher education where the institutions involved have decades-long legacies and traditions, unique missions and a universal opposition to swift decision making and institutional change. Nonetheless, mergers and acquisitions have the potential to revive struggling institutions, introduce new strategic visions, inspire generations of college-going students and spark transformational initiatives. Each deal requires due diligence and careful planning and there is no one-size-fits-all approach to brand strategy. However, much can be gleaned from the existing body of research and case studies within and outside of higher education.

This guide is intended to serve as a starting point for considerations related to branding. Additional examples of higher education mergers and acquisitions worth studying include the:
- 2017 acquisition of Wheelock College by Boston University and formation of the Wheelock College of Education and Human Development;
- 2017 acquisition of Mount Ida College by the University of Massachusetts System and divvying up of students and buildings by UMass Dartmouth, UMass Amherst and UMass Boston;
- 2018 acquisition of Kaplan University by Purdue University and introduction of Purdue University Global;
- 2020 acquisition of Ashford University by the University of Arizona and formation of the University of Arizona Global; and
- 2021 merger of Northeastern University and Mills College and establishment of Mills College at Northeastern University.

As the director of marketing for the University of Tennessee System, Ellie Dougherty's favorite part of her job is being part of a team that takes an idea, makes it better and brings it to life. Her focus since joining the University in 2007 has been telling UT's story of statewide impact in strategic and creative ways that inform, engage and call to action Tennesseans and audiences across the country. In her role as director of marketing, she is responsible for coordinating marketing and branding activities for the UT System, including development and execution of the "Everywhere You Look, UT" marketing campaign that includes painting 95 murals across Tennessee. Additional areas of responsibility include public opinion research, advertising and special event support. She also oversees team members responsible for web development and graphic design. Prior to joining UT, she held positions in marketing at Baptist Health System and Aramark.

Ellie earned bachelor's and master's degrees in communications from UT Knoxville. She is a lecturer in the UT Knoxville College of Communications and is committed to preparing her students to succeed in the workplace. She was recognized by Knoxbiz.com as a member of the 40 Under 40 Class of 2020 and has received numerous professional awards, including the Volunteer Chapter PRSA Award of Excellence in Mentorship in 2016. She is a graduate of the UT Leadership Institute and serves as a UT Promise mentor. As a breast cancer survivor, Ellie is passionate about healthcare advocacy and served as a 2020 BigWig Fundraising Champion for The Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation.

Ellie and her husband, Andrew, enjoy cheering on the Vols, spending time on Fort Loudon Lake and pouring their energy into raising her 8-year-old daughter, Emery.

Web3.0 – The Next Generation for Online

Ms. Vicki Farnsworth, Chief Information Officer, University of Tennessee at Chattanooga

Higher education is an industry that prides itself on being both aged and ageless. The brick walls of most institutions of higher learning are as steeped in tradition as they are in believing that their mortar is impenetrable. However, there are those that believe that reinventing the architecture of education is essential to maintaining relevancy in an ever-changing, disruptive world. One of the most wicked problems facing learning today is balancing the rigidity of proven structures with adaptability driven by innovation. In other words, the relevancy of higher education will be measured by its ability to flex to some current technical trends driven from real world. This research paper will cover several of those technical trends and potential opportunities to find pliability.

One of the most prevalent and ambiguous innovation trends has been in existence for years but has not made a huge impact in higher education. The easiest way to refer to this broad category and its latest rendition is Web3.0. This Web3.0 discussion will cover the past, present and future opportunities for technologies like crypto/bitcoin, blockchain, NFTs, metaverse, and the overall gamification of learning. Past failures in adoption of this tech wholly, might lead university leadership to doubt that Web3.0 will have an impact on the current and future student base. However, I think that COVID-driven modality shifts, current political winds and an increase in options available are causing our students to be tired of giving up innovation at home to come to campus to be lectured to with PowerPoint slides.

The first innovation to dig into is the use of cryptocurrency (virtual currency) and types of crypto (BitCoin, Ethereum, etc.) within the higher education financial landscape. A handful of universities are now taking different forms of crypto as payments for tuition.[1] Even though that seems like a no brainer to consider, a 2019 Gartner poll of higher education Chief Information Officers, showed that 47% were still waiting before jumping into the crypto market on their campus.[1] The volatility of the crypto markets and treatment of crypto as property make crypto a better fit in the donor/giving space. In fact, gifts of crypto to colleges and universities are becoming increasingly common and present all new challenges on how to get the return. Recently, Penn received an anonymous gift of $5M in BitCoin that seemed coincidentally timed with offering a Blockchain certification course that could be paid for in crypto.[2]

Crypto philanthropy has led to some very entrepreneurial individuals to start a business focused on helping nonprofits be able to make use of the crypto they are given ([2]). The current short-term opportunity for UT and other universities is to be flexible in payment types for philanthropy and beyond. Current innovations in a more stable crypto, stablecoin,[3] might make this even more attractive all around.

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[1] https://techwireasia.com/2021/04/heres-how-blockchain-could-transform-higher-education/
[2] Crypto Philanthropy Becoming Mainstream in Higher Education | BestColleges 2021
[3] What is a Stablecoin | Stablecoins Explained (learncrypto.com)

The longer-term opportunity is to create a cycle that supports cryptocurrency and its validity in the higher education churn. Universities as individual entities spend an immense amount of effort processing financial aid and payments to students in support of their education. Imagine a world where a foundation is built in crypto directly between the student and the providers of those education funds without the institution having to be involved. The enhanced records and tracking of blockchain based technology could allow the university to stay out of direct student finances and just deal with tracking payments made to the institution regardless of the payment mechanism. Building on the Penn example, universities will evolve to teaching students how to mine crypto and support the industry from a workforce perspective using less expensive power, cooling and compute. They will take payment for those competencies in crypto and be able to support student scholarships with that same crypto. While this seems like a far-fetched delusion the innovations to support this are not far off.

The next set of innovations involve the same technology but a separate function of the university – records. Many universities have recently played with the idea of providing degrees, certificates and transcripts in the blockchain, the same distributed ledger technology that supports cryptocurrency. The reason why this hasn't been widely adopted in higher education is akin to the conversation about Blu-ray vs. DVD in movies. There hasn't been a clear winner or standard in how to track things from K-12 to higher ed to applying in the workforce.[4] That disagreement becomes less valid as nonfungible tokens (NFTs) enter the innovation space. NFTs are currently used to certify the authenticity of works of art and likenesses. What if in the future they were used to certify a skillset or competency that a student can take with them?[5] One that a company would recognize as valuable and impactful to their bottom line? The longer-term opportunity would look very similar to the financial example – universities stop being the archive of transcripts and curriculum. The student becomes the owner and will be the holder of their own competencies. While this offloading of more university services seems impossible, post COVID student behavior shows that students want more flexibility. Being able to build a modular, skills-based degree from multiple institutions and many expert faculty all while still experiencing college might just be what students are looking for. Towards this goal, a group of Chinese universities have come together as nodes of a distributed autonomous organization (DAO) to let the organization be the certifying body for skills in the Blockchain, rather than each university. The decentralization of that function will lead to each university being more efficient and make education more affordable and accessible.[6] This will challenge higher education institutions to invest in their most popular programs and those that are driven by the market. Faculty will in turn develop their own brand for teaching a specialty that equates to value.

The next technical Web 3.0 trend that is worth mentioning has been around for over 30 years – the metaverse. It was first described in a novel called *Snow Crash* by Neal Stephenson but recently has gotten a new life as Mark Zuckerberg has morphed Facebook into Meta. Microsoft has quickly followed suit with its Mesh platform.[6] The metaverse is a concept of mixed-reality experiences supported by immersive technologies and shared presence. Early iterations of the metaverse had universities creating a virtual presence and selling swag in games like Second Life. While higher education flocked to this immersive world in the early 2000s and attempted to drive avatar-based learning, the reputation of Linden Labs, (the company that owns the environment) along with explicit content and security scares led to

[4] Crypto Education Sector - Can It Replace Traditional Education? (nftscryptoguide.com)
[5] Tech Trends in Higher Ed: Metaverse, NFT and DAO - UPCEA.

[6] Tech Trends in Higher Ed: Metaverse, NFT and DAO - UPCEA

universities abandoning their virtual click-and-mortar environments almost as quickly as they were formed. There is also suspicion that easier to use immersive environments and the lack of an end goal or gaming like aspect led to the drastic plummet in popularity of this once lucrative platform. [7]

While Second Life offered a virtual platform experience driven by avatars, the latest web technologies take immersion to a new level. Many universities are investing in virtual reality at a small scale with hope of expanding. For example, Morehead University used the pandemic as a driver to enhance learning by using Oculus Quest VR headsets to teach concepts in health, history, chemistry and other interdisciplinary courses. The students were able immerse themselves in a learning environment with their peers and remain socially distanced.[8] This rich, interactive experience begins to mold higher learning to the gamification that is becoming prevalent in pre-college lives. Higher ed will have to hurry to catch up as major gaming companies like Roblox and Minecraft are investing millions in programs at K-12 levels to create immersive games to teach robotics, space exploration and STEM.[9] College students will be coming to universities expecting to be immersed in an environment where they can explore and interact. Web3.0 will be an enabler for this experience.

As the world is turning it is also a sure bet that technology is evolving and disrupting business models everywhere. Web3.0 technologies are at the cusp of disrupting even higher education. That has not been more evident than when universities were forced to move online and quickly learned that transformation could permeate even their brick walls. The tide of this transformation left behind learners that are looking for a different experience. They are looking for flexibility and adaptability at the very least. The are looking for learning outcomes that are alive and richer than even the real thing. They want online access to data and information – everywhere and any time. They want an education that is tailored to their needs and has a reciprocal value agreement. As university leadership, there should be no surprises here. This is expected and delivered in other aspects of their life, so why should higher education be different?

Vicki is the Vice Chancellor of Information Technology and Chief Information Officer at the University of Tennessee Chattanooga. She arrived in Tennessee in January of 2019. She comes to UTC from Purdue University in Indiana, where she had a 25-year career in a variety of campus roles. Notably, she spent 5 years as the Managing Director for an NSF-funded Nanotechnology research grant that provided modeling and simulation capability to students, researchers, and instructors via nanohub.org.

Her final role at Purdue was the executive director of enterprise solutions, where she led a team and was responsible for setting the technology direction for students, faculty and administrative areas of Purdue through a broad application portfolio.

Beyond being a longtime employee, she also earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Computer Information Systems and a Master of Science degree in Information Technology Leadership from Purdue.

Vicki is excited to be a part of the class of 2021 Executive Leadership Institute. She knows that the networking opportunities will help her be more impactful in her current role and beyond.

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[7] The Rise and Fall of Second Life | Why did Second Life Fail (What happened to Second Life) – VIRTUALITY
[8] Leading Higher Education in the Metaverse: A Framework for Excellent Engagement - Enterprise Viewpoint
[9] Roblox, Building Out the Metaverse, Looks to Bring Educational Videogames to Schools - WSJ

When Compliance Affects the Bottom Line: Adding Value

Ms. Edie Gibson, Senior Advisor to the Chancellor, University of Tennessee at Martin

Institutional reputation serves as a key success indicator for any enterprise. Protection of an organization's reputation resides heavily with the leadership at all levels and requires a deep commitment to business and economic compliance standards. The wisdom of investing in and a commitment to compliance extends beyond reputation to benefits that impact the bottom line, Benefits include prevention of violation and costly litigations, protection from resource waste and fraud, improvement on employee morale, and enhancement of new talent recruitment.[1]

A statement by Edson W. Spenser, former Chair of Honeywell, Inc., sums up this sentiment: "It takes years to build a good business reputation, but one false move can destroy it overnight."
Colleges and universities, like other industries, can fall victim to wrongdoing or misconduct. Over the past decade, media have covered several high-profile incidents of systemic misconduct in higher education. These compliance failures have consequences that linger beyond the administrative penalties or lawsuits, often extending to an institution's financial risk profile. Last year, the *Chronicle of Higher Education* reported an average increase of 10-35% in insurance premiums of higher education institutions, directly linked to increased risk profiles.[2]

The impact of inadequate compliance and weak ethical governance also leads to consequences that linger beyond financial losses – students suffer, institutions close, and reputations are tarnished. Higher education may face more risks than most corporations, when considering requirements and risks associated with Title IX, Clery Act, research and grant compliance, Greek life oversight, student-athlete recruitment, campus and student security, privacy, export controls, along with campus policing, foreign funding of higher education institutions, safety, Foreign Corruption Practices Act, and cyberattacks with malware and ransomware.[3]

Lessons learned from the mistakes of others and guidance from the U.S. Department of Justice can provide the basis for establishing an effective compliance program. Given that inadequate governance fosters programmatic compliance weaknesses, ignoring compliance just does not pay.[4] Elements of an

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[1] Murphy, Joe, A cost-benefit analysis for your ethics program? Ethikos, July/August 2015; https://assets.corporatecompliance.org/Portals/1/PDF/Resources/ethikos/past-issues/2015/2015-04-july-aug-ethikos-murphy%20(4).pdf.

[2] Hersi, Mustafa, Why Boards at Colleges and Universities Should be Proactively Engaged with Compliance – Wrongdoing in Academia Usually Occurs Without the School's Knowledge, Corporate Compliance Insights, March 18, 2021, in Compliance, Featured. https://www.corporatecomplianceinsights.com/boards-colleges-universities-engage-compliance/.

[3] Biegelman, Martin T., LinkedIn - The New Normal in Higher Education Risk: Why Institutions Need Compliance Program Assessments, https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/new-normal-higher-education-risk-why-institutions-need-biegelman.

[4] Hersi, Engaged with Compliance.

effective compliance program are defined in the Federal Sentencing Guidelines as having basic controls in place, including: 1) written standards of conduct with policies and procedure, 2) a chief compliance officer and other appropriate bodies, 3) effective education and training, 4) audits and evaluation techniques to monitor compliance, 5) reporting processes and procedures for complaints, 6) appropriate disciplinary mechanisms, 7) investigation and remediation of system problems, and 8) an on-going risk assessment process as well as a process to mitigate risks identified risks.[5]

In 2020, the Association of Certified Fraud Examiners (ACFE) compiled their eleventh global examination of occupational fraud and abuse. The findings, published in *Report to the Nations*, stated that occupational fraud is the costliest form of financial crime in existence and that no organization is immune from the abuse. Occupational fraudsters range from C-suite executives to entry-level employees affecting businesses, government organizations, and nonprofits throughout the world. Frequently undetected or often not reported, the actual monetary cost is difficult to calculate.[6]

ACFE 2020 findings represent more than 2,500 cases from 125 countries reporting losses of more than $3.6 billion. The average loss calculates at $1,509,000 per case. Obviously, the financial loss to fraud is only one aspect of damage to an organization; the ripple effect in an organization can trigger an erosion of trust within the institution and potential loss of confidence in the marketplace.[7] A typical fraud scheme lasts 14 months; many cases were exposed from a tip, and employees reported half of those tips. Anonymous hotlines and employee training offer the greatest opportunity for detection, which is believed to serve as a further deterrent to future misconduct.

Admittedly, anti-fraud control measures alone do not ensure all fraud will be prevented. Returning to the ACFE 2020 Report to the Nations, a proactive management commitment to investing in targeted preventions and detection measures sends a clear message in support of an ethical culture to employees, vendors, customers, and others. Advancing the benefits of an ethical culture in an organization can additionally affect the financial bottom line by impacting employee productivity, employee morale, risk reduction, professional reputation, and business relationships.[8]

External audits of financial statements are ranked as the most employed anti-fraud control measure internally.   Interestingly, the United States and Canada are exceptions and ranked the use of a Code of Conduct as the most common anti-fraud control, ahead of an external audit of financial statements. Assigning such a premium value on the use of a Code of Conduct as an anti-fraud control practice increases the necessity for strong ethical leadership and modeling an ethical culture.

Ethics is vital to a successful organization; "reputation is everything." Although, organizations often embrace ethical practices and behaviors to increase productivity and uphold integrity, ethical leadership

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[5] U.S. Department of Justice, Criminal Division, Evaluation of Corporate Compliance Programs (updated June 2020). https://www.justice.gov/criminal-fraud/page/file/937501/download.

[6] ACFE Report to the Nations - 2020 Global Study on Occupational Fraud and Abuse. https://acfepublic.s3-us-west-2.amazonaws.com/2020-Report-to-the-Nations.pdf.

[7] Gallup, Inc., Building a High-Development Culture Through Your Employee Engagement Strategy (February 21, 2020). https://www.gallup.com/workplace/285800/development-culture-engagement-paper-2019.aspx.

[8] Formplus Blog (Last Updated October 20) 23 Ethical & Unethical Behavior Examples in Workplace. https://www.formpl.us/blog/workplace-ethics.

should be centered around appropriate conduct with respect for ethics and values and the rights and dignity of others.[9] Fostering employee-employee relationships and employee-customer relationships benefits every level of the enterprise – individual, team and organization.[10]

What is meant by creating an "ethical work culture?"   A workplace governed by fair and clearly articulated rules and expectations, which allow employees to understand and buy into the culture. An environment where employees are aware of the cultural foundation of their leadership and where leaders model ethical principles that are articulated from the top. In turn, employees are empowered and will become more proactive about communicating when things go wrong.[11]

Unfortunately, many leaders may not consider how closely employees watch what they do and learn from it. By definition, leaders are role models; thus employees assume what they do is acceptable behavior. Ethical leaders should model the way, lead by example, cultivate external awareness, put the needs of others first, hold themselves accountable, and let their values be their guide.[12]

Workplace ethics are the set of values, morale principles, and standards that need to be followed by employers and employees. In today's uncertain and evolving workplace, freelancers, business owners, and now, growing number of remote workers need to imbibe workplace ethics for themselves. Workplace ethics is required to build a successful career.[13]

Whether the ethical guidance is written or not, the guidance is meant to be followed. Ethical work behaviors include obeying company rules, communicating effectively, taking responsibility, and establishing accountability, professionalism, trust, and mutual respect for a diverse team of colleagues. Ethical behaviors contribute to the bottom line and ensure maximum productivity.[14]

Understanding the difference between ethics and compliance is pivotal in developing the corporate culture. Where ethics are "the decisions, choices, and actions (behaviors), we make that reflect and enact our values," compliance is "confirming or adapting one's actions to another's wishes, to a rule or to necessity."[15] Said another way, ethics takes a proactive approach, guiding moral thinking and behavior based on internal motivation of the individual's character, values, and principles. Compliance takes a

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[9] Indeed Editorial Team, September 8, 2021. How to Improve Ethical Leadership Skills (With Examples). https://www.indeed.com/career-advice/career-development/ethical-leadership.
[10] Formplus Blog (Last Updated October 20) 23 Ethical & Unethical Behavior Examples in Workplace. https://www.formpl.us/blog/workplace-ethics.
[11] Indeed Editorial Team, September 8, 2021. How to Improve Ethical Leadership Skills (With Examples)..
[12] Richmond, Jason, Forbes (Posted January 9, 2020) Five Ways to Be an Ethical Leader. https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbesbusinesscouncil/2020/01/09/five-ways-to-be-an-ethical-leader/?sh=afcbed61f8dc.
[13] Formplus Blog, Ethical & Unethical Behavior Examples in Workplace.
[14] Formplus Blog, Ethical & Unethical Behavior.
[15] PowerDMS, Role of Ethics and Compliance in Corporate Culture, (December 29, 2020). https://www.powerdms.com/policy-learning-center/role-of-ethics-and-compliance-in-corporate-culture#:~:text=Hold%20employees%20accountable&text=By%20clearly%20defining%20the%20company's,creating%20an%20ethical%20compliance%20culture.

more reactive approach, forcing a mindful decision following a rule or law that someone else created. To sum it up: "compliance is letter of the law and ethics is spirit of the law."[16]

Setting an ethical tone with consistency and transparency communicates to employees and other stakeholders the importance of ethics and compliance in the corporate culture.[17] Fostering an ethical compliance culture boosts morale because employees want to work for a boss they can trust and work in an environment where they feel safe, secure, encouraged, valued, and respected.

Taking a step forward, by establishing a code of conduct that outlines expectations of fair treatment and ethical behavior, employees have standards of behavior. Productivity increases when the code of conduct aligns with the employee's personal values. Building a culture of ethical compliance conveys what the organization values, reinforces those values to others, provides training that reflects those values, and holds everyone accountable, thereby decreasing risks and increasing compliance.[18]

Department of Justice recommendations stress that compliance professionals be empowered to bring critical compliance concerns to the most senior level of an organization or board. To be clear, an effective compliance program should have leadership empowered to lead, driven by data, informed by regular risk assessments, and respond to lessons learned from identified misconduct. Institutions or boards can no longer passively monitor compliance obligations and ethical concerns but should engage outside advisers to support critical institutional compliance concerns.[19]

Creating a formal compliance program is a vital step, but ultimately institutions need to periodically assess the effectiveness of the program as well as modify and enhance the process, as appropriate, based on the assessment. Emerging risks facing an institution must be included as part of the periodic program assessments. Successful compliance plans include training and awareness programming, compliance assessments, system-wide audits, and investigative protocols, tracking, and monitoring.

Businesses, including higher education institutions, must be vigilant in developing a comprehensive understanding of their regulatory compliance requirements. By promoting values, ethics, and a commitment to a culture of compliance, and by communicating the understanding that compliance risks and mistakes impact an organization's bottom line, we acknowledge and share the responsibility that compliance is everyone's business.[20]
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[16] PowerDMS, Corporate Culture.

[17] Butcher, Daniel, Contribute to An Ethical Culture, Strategic Finance (January 1, 2022). https://sfmagazine.com/post-entry/january-2022-contribute-to-an-ethical-culture/.

[18] PowerDMS, Corporate Culture.

[19] Hersi, Engaged with Compliance.

[20] Smith, Chris, Compliance in Higher Education: Unique challenges and best practices for GCS, Taking stock of some common challenges, and implementing the best practices to combat them, can help higher education meet its legal obligations. KnowTechie – Tech November 24, 2020. https://knowtechie.com/compliance-in-higher-education-unique-challenges-and-best-practices-for-gcs/

Edie Gibson serves as Senior Advisor to the Chancellor, a role that she has held under the past six UT Martin Chancellors. In addition to her duties in support of the Chancellor, she serves as Secretary to the UT Martin Advisory Board, Institutional Compliance chair for the campus, and in an oversight role with a campus-wide team for Clery Act reporting. During a 32-year career at Martin, she has held leadership roles with Institutional Research and Athletics as Senior Woman Administrators, among other special university-wide projects.

After graduating from Auburn University with a bachelor's degree in Public Relations/Journalism, she began her higher education journey working in University Relations at Auburn University and Walters State Community College and in Financial Aid at Carson Newman College. She is married to Michael, a UT Martin Professor of Geology, and they have a daughter, Kesley, (UTM '12), with her doctorate in marine biology and a son, Brandt, (UTM '15), with his doctorate in Earth and Environmental Sciences. In her spare time, Edie enjoys visiting her grand pups (along with their children and spouses), reading British mysteries, and walking beaches.

COVID-19: The Impact on Higher Education

Mr. Mike Gregory, Director of Special Events & Emergency Management Services, University of Tennessee System Administration

INTRODUCTION

COVID-19's impact on the United States began in January of 2020 and still impacts our way of life to this day. All aspects of business changed, arguably none more than institutions of higher education. It has changed the way we work, the way we learn, and certainly the way we think. While many institutions had already come to the conclusion that online education was a more viable option for some, many four-year institutions were slow to adapt to that model in favor of the "traditional" college experience. COVID-19 threw those adaptions into high gear as close knit on-campus living posed a major threat to the spread of the virus as did in-person learning in labs and classrooms. The pandemic significantly altered nearly every aspect of college life, from admissions and enrollment to intercollegiate athletics. Those concerns extend to the financial future of higher education both in the form of unexpected costs and potential reductions in revenue. Leaders are still faced with many questions: Will the traditional experience remain even as we move from pandemic to endemic? What strategic plans must be made in the event that variants of the virus or perhaps another pandemic occur in the near future?

Problem Statement
How do higher education institutions move from pandemic to endemic?

Jeff Selinger of *Inside Higher Ed* noted that COVID-19 has forced colleges and universities to rethink educational and business models that hinge on "students learning, living, eating, and being entertained in a physical location" and interacting in person.[1]

Jannette Ballard of the University of Denver notes that many students fell behind during remote learning and they may not be ready to move on to the next level while also noting that unique challenges have emerged such as faculty shortages that have resulted from budget cuts or the unwillingness of some faculty to return to in-person classes. [2]

A recent poll conducted by *TimelyMD* revealed that 88% of college students felt that the mental health of students was now more challenging than the actual pandemic itself [3]which leads to a larger issue of who is serving both students and faculty during a mental health crisis? If we have no one serving students, who can they trust?

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[1] Selinger, Inside Higher Ed, February 2022 https://www.insidehighered.com/blogs/higher-ed-gamma/pandemic-endemic

[2] Ballard, University of Denver, January 2022 https://www.du.edu/news/pandemic-endemic-emerging-educational-issues

[3] Burt, University Business, February 2022 https://universitybusiness.com/should-colleges-to-shift-to-endemic-mode-massachusetts-leaders-say-yes/

Some states and education leaders are already pushing for a return to normal. In Massachusetts state health and education leaders said in a letter to the presidents of Massachusetts colleges and universities that they should start returning to "near normal" with the goal "to transition the COVID-19 pandemic to endemic." [4]

While this is a noble goal it has been the political landscape that has handcuffed most institutions in their response to COVID-19.

For example, legislators in Tennessee passed a bill at the end of 2021 that prohibited business, including those in higher education to enact preventative measures towards COVID-19. [5]This leads to a further problem as to how leaders in the higher education community can plan for the future. Their jobs seem to be growing more and more frustrating as elected officials enforce regulations that limit what these campus leaders may do to protect their campus communities. How can we learn from the past when politics become involved? This hinders our actions moving forward even as we return to normal, we must be able to plan for the future to help ensure our campuses safe or else we lose all credibility with our customers which are our students.

"I think we are in a period of transition, hopefully to an endemic phase," said Martha Pollack, president of Cornell University said. "I say hopefully because with this pandemic, we don't know what's coming next." [6]President Pollack provides us with a sobering reminder that, in fact, we do not know what's coming next. Therefore, it is imperative to plan now and obtain a whole university approach and understanding to endemic planning moving forward.

Many states such as Colorado and Wisconsin have announced plans to shift to an endemic response though it still needs to be clearly defined what that term means. As Tara Smith, a professor at the College of Public Health at Kent State University stated "I think many of them (politicians/health experts) are not clear what they mean when they use the term (endemic)." [7]

In many cases in higher education the process can be more difficult than reacting to the initial outbreak of the pandemic. Though there are many examples of the way forward, a number of higher education and health officials are asking themselves "how"? Many are leaning on their emergency management teams who helped guide campus operations though the pandemic. A lot can be learned from previous plans and actions as well as operational tactics that were put into place in response to the pandemic and it would be worth the effort to list all of the tools that were utilized in response to learn what went well and what eventually failed.

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[4] CBS Boston, January 2022, https://boston.cbslocal.com/2022/01/31/massachusetts-colleges-universities-covid-endemic/

[5] Associated Press, December 202, https://www.usnews.com/news/best-states/tennessee/articles/2021-12-01/tennessee-halts-exemptions-to-covid-law-after-court-rulings

[6] Pollack, New York Times, January 2021, https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/16/us/politics/colleges-covid-coronavirus.html

[7] Hou, The Hill, February 2022, https://thehill.com/changing-america/well-being/prevention-cures/594259-we-need-to-define-when-a-pandemic-becomes

As Dr. Elizabeth Halloran, epidemiologist at Fred Hutchinson Research Center in Seattle stated:" Everyone has stopped talking about getting rid of COVID, it is not going away and that means it's going to be an endemic."[8]

Suggested Solutions
Each university must develop their own plan based on their campus populations and expectations locally. Leadership should work with both local and state politicians to limit their regulations on public schools across the country as they have built road blocks to campus leaders in their decision-making ability as it relates to campus safety.

David Wippman and Glenn Altschuler from *Inside Higher Education* opined in December of 2021 that there were eight steps to prepare for pandemic to endemic response. Those eight suggestions were to...
1.) Vaccinate all students and employees.
2.) Ask students to present proof of a negative COVID-19 test, if possible, within a 24-hour period of returning to campus.
3.) Periodic surveillance testing, once or twice per week.
4.) Different thinking on what constitutes an outbreak which would determine justification of lockdowns or remote learning/work.
5.) Mask requirements when community transmission rates are high.
6.) Consider allowing students and employees who are sick to isolate for less than the recommended ten days providing symptoms improve.
7.) Re-evaluate approaches if/when new variants develop.
8.) Do not lost sight of the mental and emotional well-being of students, faculty, and staff. [9]

The article above is an example of how quickly solutions can change given the rapid change that we have experienced during the pandemic. One could argue that maybe one or two suggestions from their list could make a final cut on endemic solutions. Certainly, the mental and emotional health of university communities is of the utmost importance. At the end of the day ensuring that your community is safe should be the number one priority for all higher education leaders no matter what the situation is, pandemic or not.

This spring the University of Tennessee-Knoxville[10] along with the campuses within the UT System have drafted a set of endemic guidelines that could be scalable to any size campus. Those include the following:
Create the condition where behavior helps limit spread and improve response;
- These include maintaining self-reporting mechanisms and notify faculty through a dashboard
- Human Resources should take a deep look at remote work policies
- Include authority for UT to require residents to plan for temporary housing in case of illness as part of normal housing contracts

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[8] Bush, NBC News, December 202, https://www.nbcnews.com/science/science-news/is-covid-here-to-stay-endemic-rcna9559
[9] Wippman, Inside Higher Ed, December 2021, https://www.insidehighered.com/views/2021/12/20/how-colleges-can-prepare-spring-during-ongoing-pandemic-opinion
[10] Gard, UT Knoxville Report, February 2021.

- Incorporate guidance into new building designs for classroom and lab spaces. This includes all HVAC upgrades to improve air turnover.
- Transition community health infrastructure capacity built for COVID response to a small community health and resilience team in the student health clinic.
- Maintain a robust capacity to test and/or vaccinate on site.

Conclusion

The future of many higher education institutions could be dependent on how leaders plan for the future with this virus continuing to live among us. The important lessons that we have learned is that we can't panic. The brick-and-mortar life of the traditional four-year institution is not going away. Students want the in-person experience. While remote learning does work in some instances and can be a viable solution financially, it doesn't replace the college experience. We have to be adaptable, caring, and most of all safety focused. Universities cannot afford another 2020-like completely remote semester. An adaptable endemic plan is needed. What goes in it is up to each individual institution but it must be flexible in order for campus operations to continue to move forward despite any obstacles that this virus or any other infectious disease presents.

Mike Gregory brings 20 years of event planning experience and emergency preparedness planning to the Communications and Marketing department. Prior to working for UT, he was the vice president for the Nashville Sports Council and Music City Bowl. In that position, he was a part of the team that successfully recruited the Women's Final Four to Nashville.

Mike graduated from UT Knoxville with a bachelor's in communications and a Master of Business Administration. His passion for the University and the surrounding community is undeniable. In his free time, he volunteers for United Way of Greater Knoxville and enjoys watching the Vols.

A little-known fact about Mike is that he once was the stadium DJ for Tennessee Smokies and Nashville Sounds.

Mike describes himself as carefree, fun and a straight shooter. He is a Nashville native who currently lives in Knoxville. He is married to Sarah and has three daughters, Anna, Katherine and Nadia, a dog, Ward, and two cats, Popcorn and Chewbacca.

Revenue Sources in Academic Medicine: Challenges and Opportunities

Dr. Teresa Hartnett, Senior Associate Dean for Finance & Administration, College of Medicine, University of Tennessee Health Science Center

In 2020, total revenues supporting the 142 fully accredited U.S. medical schools were $155 billion, with $97 billion, or 63% of the total, provided by funds from faculty clinical practices and hospitals. As detailed in the table below, the relative significance of support from the clinical enterprise tripled over the last five decades as reimbursements from payers (insurance companies, Medicare, etc.) grew, the cost of the physician enterprise increased and other revenue sources were maximized.

For reasons that will be described below, given the critical importance of clinical revenues to medical schools and its three primary missions of education, research and clinical care, a refreshed look at how those revenues are assessed and allocated is warranted. Absent this kind of response, the sustainability of the educational and research missions are at risk. Before reviewing what medical schools are doing or are beginning to do to mitigate this risk, some of the challenges associated with traditional revenue sources in academic medicine will be summarized.

U.S. Medical School Revenue Sources (percent of total revenue)

	1977	1990	2000	2010	2020
Tuition & fees	5%	4%	4%	4%	4%
Government & parent organizations	30%	17%	11%	7%	5%
Federal, including research	32%	25%	21%	23%	16%
Other, including gifts & endowments	13%	14%	16%	14%	12%
Faculty clinical practices and hospitals	21%	39%	48%	53%	63%

Source: AAMC, date from LCME Part 1-A Annual Medical School Financial Questionnaire. Retrieved from https://www.aamc.org/data-reports/faculty-institutions/report/us-medical-school-revenues

Revenue Sources in Academic Medicine

Tuition. As has been the case in higher education more broadly in the United States, tuition to attend medical school has increased significantly over the last five decades. At the same time, given the increasing costs of the medical school enterprise, the relative share of tuition in total medical school revenues has remained stable at 4% (see Table). Concomitant to the increase in tuition charged to students, debt levels for indebted medical school graduates have increased, and the median debt in 2019 was $200,000.[1] This escalation in tuition and debt has spurred attempts to understand the true cost of medical student education, with limited success.[2] The complicated reality of medical school financing is such that it is unclear how much it costs to educate a medical student; without such data, "increases in

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[1] AAMC. "Physician Education Debt and the Cost to Attend Medical School: 2020 Update." Available from http://aamc.org
[2] Jones, R.F & Korn, D. (1997). "On the Cost of Educating a Medical Student." Academic Medicine, 72(3), 200-210.

tuition often lack transparency or accountability for students."[3] Given the already high levels of tuition and debt and a lack of transparency in how tuition is being used, there remains limited opportunity to grow revenues from tuition and fees.

Government and parent organizations. Revenue from state and local governments and parent organizations (typically the university system that the medical school is a part of) declined from 30% of total revenues in 1977 to just 5% in 2020 as changes in state support did not keep pace with growth in clinical revenues. Given that the majority of U.S. accredited medical schools are public (87 of 142), this is in line with trends across public higher education as the state support for public higher education that saw declines during several recessions has not recovered. Despite increases in the 2010s, funding per full-time student in 2020 was still 6 percent below 2008 levels and 15 percent below 2001. [4]

Federal, including research. In 1977, 32% of total medical school revenue came from federal sources, the great majority from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) to fund research. By 2020, however, federal funding represented just 16% of revenue as changes in federal funding did not keep pace with growth in clinical revenues. In addition, these federal grant dollars do not fund the full direct cost of research, with an estimated investment of 53 cents required for every dollar of extramural funding received.[5] Finally, federal support for research is increasingly concentrated in certain institutions, with just 2% of NIH-supported institutions receiving more than 50% of all research dollars.[6]

Faculty clinical practices and hospitals. Clinical revenues as a share of total medical school revenues tripled from 1977 to 2020, from 21% in 1977 to 63% in 2020. Approximately two-thirds of this revenue line is provided by faculty clinical practice groups. Historically, faculty clinical practices provide financial support to medical schools through a "dean's tax." The tax is an assessment applied to the professional revenue generated by clinical faculty; the proceeds are used by the medical school to fund overhead and/or invest in the educational or research missions. While this methodology made sense when developed in the 1970s/1980s when Medicare and Medicaid were first established, faculty practice groups no longer cover the costs of faculty salaries as professional reimbursements have declined and ancillary revenues have shifted to health systems. The assessments, however, increase the deficits of the practice groups, increasing the need for investment by the health systems, leading to separate backstop arrangements. This is increasingly irrational given today's market forces, and a less circular and more rationale and transparent mechanism is needed[7].

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[3] Greysen, S.R., Chen, C. & Mullan, F. (2011). "A History of Medical Student Debt: Observations and Implications for the Future of Medical Education." Academic Medicine, 86(7), 840-845.

[4] Chronicle of Higher Education. "State Funding for Higher Ed Increased in 2020 for the 8th Straight Year. It won't Make Up for Past Cuts." May 28, 2021. https://www.chronicle.com/article/state-funding-for-higher-ed-increased-in-2020-for-the-8th-straight-year-it-wont-make-up-for-past-cuts

[5] AAMC. (2015). "Academic Medicine Investment in Medical Research: Summary and Technical Reports." https://store.aamc.org/academic-medicine-investment-in-medical-research-summary-and-technical-reports.html

[6] Wahls, W.P. (2019). "Opinion: The National Institutes of Health needs to better balance funding distributions among US institutions." Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences. 116(27), 13150-13154.

[7] ECG. "Is It Time to Abolish the Dean's Tax?" May 1, 2019. https://www.ecgmc.com/thought-leadership/blog/is-it-time-to-abolish-the-deans-tax

Alternative Financing Approaches
Given these challenges to the traditional revenue sources in academic medicine, and the importance of the clinical enterprise's investment in the missions of education and research, a refreshed approach to how clinical revenues are assessed and allocated is needed. Two models that may prove effective are discussed below; additional discussion by the relevant stakeholders is certainly warranted.

Revenue sharing mechanisms. As described above, moving away from the traditional Dean's Tax as a mechanism to transfer significant funding from the clinical to the educational and research missions is critical. What should replace it? With their relevant health systems, some academic medical centers are implementing strategic, enterprise-level methods of investing clinical revenues into the missions of medical schools. These models are seen to have one or several of these major components[8]:

- A baseline level of support, typically to provide predictability for the funding of academic programming.
- Performance incentives, designed to align the work of the clinical faculty with the larger goals of the enterprise, such as quality targets, margin goals, improvements in the patient experience, among others. Often these approaches are intended to create a shared risk/shared reward culture of collaboration.
- Academic investment, with a particular focus on leveraging the clinical enterprise in the development of a research and development portfolio.
- Faculty compensation models, based on common principles and shared incentives that recognize contributions to research and education.

Mission based budgeting. The financing of academic medicine has been described as a 'black box,' with a myriad of unclear cross subsidies from the clinical to other missions and, within the clinical mission, from one specialty to another.[9] Further, existing approaches to resource allocation within medical schools are often historical and do not optimally support the financing of academic activities, leading to misalignment between resources and priorities.

To combat this, several medical schools have developed and implemented mission-based budgeting processes to facilitate accountability and, ultimately, to ensure that resource allocation supports core mission-related activities. To do so effectively, best practice suggests that clinical faculty leaders, typically department chairs, lead the process, and that all key stakeholders are consulted during the design process and upon implementation. Important parts of a new funds flow model would include funding categories or 'buckets' (e.g., teaching, both undergraduate and graduate medical education), funding levels (e.g., per student dollar amounts), and key performance indicators.[10] When fully implemented,

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[8] AAMC. "Next-Generation Funds Flow Models: Enhancing Academic Health System Alignment." October, 2018. https://store.aamc.org/next-generation-funds-flow-models-enhancing-academic-health-system-alignment-future-of-academic-medicine-series.html

[9] Barzansky, B. (2002). "United States Medical School Financing: Beyond the Black Box." Journal of the International Association of Medical Science Educators, 12(1), 5-8).

[10] Deloitte. "Funds flow in academic medical centers: Moving toward a transparent and equitable funding model." 2016. https://www2.deloitte.com/us/en/pages/risk/articles/funds-flow-model-academic-medical-center.html

these processes reset the funding from the health system to the medical school based upon these categories or 'buckets,' minimum funding levels, and performance on a key set of indicators.

CONCLUSION

Refreshed revenue-sharing mechanisms and mission-based budgeting models are two approaches medical schools can consider when contemplating changes to their funds flow. In reality, it may be that a combination of the two approaches is required. In addition, there are other options, such as focusing on alignment with health systems that share the educational mission, such as hospitals administered by the Veteran's Administration.

Whatever methods are selected, it is incumbent upon enterprise leaders in academic medicine to continue the discussion with their clinical leaders and health system partners. Absent some changes, the financial risk to our medical schools is a real threat to the future of the physician workforce and healthcare in the United States.[11]

As the Senior Associate Dean of Finance & Administration in the College of Medicine, Teresa Hartnett serves as the chief financial and administrative officer for the College, overseeing a state-funded budget of more than $72 million. She provides leadership in college-wide budgeting, staffing and resource utilization analyses, with a focus on identifying the most efficient and effective use of fiscal and human resources. Before joining UTHSC, Teresa served in several administrative leadership roles at the University of Memphis, where she led the institutional administrative process improvement initiative and directed the implementation of an institutional pilot Shared Services Center, both designed to capture efficiency and effectiveness gains and drive sustainable change. Prior to that time, she worked for the World Bank for five years, researching educational issues in Sub Saharan Africa.

She earned her doctorate in higher education from the University of Memphis; a Master's in Public Finance from New York University; and a bachelor's degree in International Economics from George Washington University.

Teresa is currently active nationally in the AAMC's Group on Business Affairs, and previously served various leadership roles with the Network for Change and Continuous Innovation (NCCI), including a two-year term as President.

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[11] Ubel, P. "It Should Scare Us that Tuition is a Tiny Amount of Medical School Revenue." Forbes, June 29, 2020. https://www.forbes.com/sites/peterubel/2020/06/29/it-should-scare-us-that-tuition-is-a-tiny-amount-of-medical-school-revenue/?sh=4a05425b4acb

Will The Bucks Stop? If A Global Pandemic Doesn't Curb The Intercollegiate Athletic Spending Addiction Among Power 5 Membership Schools, Will Anything?

Mr. Adam Heller Chief Financial Officer & Treasurer, University of Tennessee Foundation, Inc.

INTRODUCTION

Brian Kelly and Lincoln Riley recently stunned the collegiate athletic world by departing Notre Dame and Oklahoma to join Louisiana State University (LSU) and University of Southern California (USC), respectively in November 2021 as their head football coaches. While the departures from two premier football traditions shocked the athletics world, the contracts for Kelly and Riley astonished collegiate athletic stakeholders and fans. According to Sports Illustrated, Kelly's contract at LSU will pay him $95 million over ten years plus incentives making him the highest compensated coach at a public university.[1] While not released publicly by USC as a private institution, Riley's reported $110 million contract will make him the highest compensated college football coach.[2] For good measure both contracts offer additional "fringe benefits" including interest free home loans, vehicle allowances and reported personal use of the university jet.

According to Sportico's real time database of results submitted through the NCAA Membership Financial Report System (MFRS), total operating expenses for schools with membership in the Power Five conferences totaled $6.4 billion in academic year 2019-20, which represents an increase of $85 million for the same schools in academic year 2017-18.[3] (Complete reporting for academic year 2020-21 is not currently available). Perhaps, the overall enterprise $6.4 billion size does not create the scrutiny. Since student athletes only receive 11% of the operating expense total in aid, the wicked problem may result from inequitable distributions between all stakeholders. This research will examine the current economic structure of Power Five Conference athletics enabling the limitless appetite for expenses, discuss the current distribution inequities, glimpse into the model's future and offer suggestions for solutions.

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[1] Coleman, Madeline (2021, December 1). *Brian Kelly's Salary, Bonuses Makes Him Highest-Paid Coach At a Public University*. SI. https://www.si.com/college/2021/12/01/brian-kelly-contract-makes-him-highest-paid-coach-public-university

[2] Dator, James (2021, November 30). *Lincoln Riley's USC contract might be the greatest in sports history*. SB Nation. https://www.sbnation.com/college-football/2021/11/30/22809357/lincoln-riley-usc-contract-breakdown

[3] *Sportico's Intercollegiate Finance Database.* (2021, November 10). Sportico. Retrived March 15, 2022 from https://www.sportico.com/business/commerce/2021/college-sports-finances-database-intercollegiate-1234646029/

Problem Statement

To a large degree the incentive to overspend and distribute revenue according to an inequitable formula result from the non-profit and zero-sum industry structure. Dr. Kevin Blue, former UC Davis Athletic Director, argues these structural reasons limit the ability to control expenses, especially for salaries and facilities in current economic conditions.[4] The structure of Power Five athletics differentiates its financial decision-making process from other professional sport and non-profit sectors.

In contrast to a for-profit business, which maximizes income for shareholders, a non-profit organization exists solely to execute and promote its mission. Without expectation of ownership return, typically increases in revenue for non-profit organizations result in corresponding expense growth. The expense pressure mounts when Power Five schools compete in a zero-sum competition. Meaning, for one institution to succeed competitively another must fail. Most importantly, collegiate athletes don't share in revenue increases where paid professional athletes participate through collective bargaining agreements. The intersection of non-profit organizations, zero-sum competition, uncompensated athletes and historical revenue growth create an uncontrollable appetite to increase investment (expenses) in institutions' competitive and educational athletic missions, which instills values of sportsmanship, teamwork and cooperation. The significant criticism levied by critical fans and influential benefactors for struggling athletic programs incentivize large expenditure increases in coaching salaries and facilities. In the current structure, since athlete compensation remains impermissible, the only primary investments available for competitive differentiation are coaching and facilities. The mission responsibility to offer a comprehensive program of competitive Olympic sports, many non-revenue generating, serves as the only limiting factor on expense growth.

Expense growth creates strong perceptions of inequity for student-athletes. Student athletes don't profit from the expense explosion and a new working paper from the National Bureau of Economic Research finds the current economic structure "effectively transfers resources away from students who are more likely to be black and more likely to come from poor neighborhoods towards students who are more likely to be white and come from higher-income neighborhoods."[5] Power Five intuitions utilize revenue from football and men's basketball whose players were approximately half black to fund Olympic sports with about 11% of black players. A 2015 analysis by the Washington Post determined Power Five athletic departments built baseball stadiums, volleyball courts, soccer fields, golf practice facilities and ice hockey arenas with revenue generated by football and men's basketball teams. [6]

In addition to perceptual problems, the current model creates intensified financial pressure and potential unfunded long-term obligations. A recent Supreme Court ruling begins to lay the legal ground work for

[4] Blue, Kevin (n.d.). Rising Expenses in College Athletics And the Non-Profit Paradox. Athletic Director U. https://www.athleticdirectoru.com/articles/kevin-blue-rising-expenses-in-college-athletics-and-the-non-profit-paradox/

[5] Ordway, Denise-Marie (2020, September 10). Power Five Colleges spend football, basketball revenue on money-losing sports: Research. The Journalist's Resource. https://journalistsresource.org/economics/college-sports-power-five-revenue/

[6] Ordway, Denise-Marie (2020, September 10). Power Five Colleges spend football, basketball revenue on money-losing sports: Research. The Journalist's Resource. https://journalistsresource.org/economics/college-sports-power-five-revenue/

athletes to receive compensation. In the concurring opinion, Justice Brett Kavanaugh wrote "sports traditions cannot justify the NCAA's decision to build a massive money-raising enterprise on the backs of student athletes who are not fairly compensated. Nowhere else in America can businesses get away with agreeing not to pay their workers a fair market rate. The NCAA is not above the law."[7] How can Power Five athletic departments fund a significant new student-athlete compensation expense when operating revenue is fully utilized? Professional men's basketball and football players receive approximately 50% of revenue generated by their activities. According to estimates, this equates to annual compensation of $360k per Power Five football player and $500k per men's basketball player.[8] Since saving is not incentivized, few departments, if any, maintain sufficient reserves to fund unexpected expenses.

Concepts for Solution
If structure enables the problem, a structural change should offer a solution. However, given the large number of institutions, divergent perspectives and decentralized governance, structural enhancements to the current Power Five athletic economic model face arduous opposition.
Conventional solutions involve concepts from professional sports. Similar to salary caps perhaps Power Five schools could subscribe to expense caps or spending limits for coaches. These ideas may present legal challenges or raise questions of antitrust requiring a degree of regulatory involvement. Given the diversity of the Power Five institutions, political challenges for some campus leaders with local constituencies offer obstacles difficult to overcome.

However, without intervention or solution the problem will only be exacerbated with potential significant revenue increases as part of the expected future expansion of the College Football Playoff. While a vote to expand the playoffs recently failed, many believe expansion will occur when the broadcast media rights expire in four years. When expansion occurs, experts estimate the growth in distribution revenues available to intuitions for media rights and tournament participation to grow between 25% and 30%. Without solutions, incremental revenue will be spent in the same coaching and facility structures.

The first step to advance progress towards a solution requires a group of influencers to recognize the expense growth in Power Five athletics is a structural problem, which threatens to undermine the educational mission of athletics; not flawed institutional leadership. In limited area of agreement, 96% of Football Bowl Subdivision athletics directors favored a model to change the focus from revenue and expense increases to educational, health and safety concerns of athletes.[9] Directors also widely agree the current NCAA, Power Five Conference and campus governance fail to develop structures promoting financial responsibility, requiring-regulatory intervention.

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[7] Totenberg, Nina (2021, June 21). The Supreme Court Sides with NCAA Athletes in a Narrow Ruling. NPR. https://www.npr.org/2021/06/21/1000310043/the-supreme-court-sides-with-ncaa-athletes-in-a-narrow-ruling

[8] Knight Commission on Intercollegiate Athletics. (2021, November 1). *Connecting Athletics Revenues with the Educational (C.A.R.E) Model of College Sports; Requirements to Alther the Distribution and Spending of NCAA Division I Revenues.* https://www.knightcommission.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/CAREModel.pdf

[9] Knight Commission on Intercollegiate Athletics. (2021, November 1). *Connecting Athletics Revenues with the Educational (C.A.R.E) Model of College Sports; Requirements to Alther the Distribution and Spending of NCAA Division I Revenues.* https://www.knightcommission.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/CAREModel.pdf

The Knight Commission on Intercollegiate Athletics recently offered recommendations to modify the current financial structure. The C.A.R.E (Connecting Athletics Revenues with the Educational Model of College Sports) model stipulates "shared athletics revenues" must be spent more directly on the educational mission of collegiate athletics.[9] Shared athletics revenues represent income distributed by the major revenue generation entities; the NCAA, College Football Playoff and conference payouts. Specifically, the model implements distribution and spending requirements for shared revenue by prioritizing college athletes' education, health, safety and well-being, schools that provide broad-based opportunities, racial and gender equity and university academics. The study also recognizes its recommended systemic financial changes will require adoption in legal, regulatory and conference governance bodies.

Similar to the funding formula to allocate higher education appropriations, the Commission offers a distribution model built on principles of transparency, independent oversight, gender equity, broad based sports opportunities and financial responsibility for athlete education, health and safety. As suggested, transparency would require public disclosure of allocated revenue and its uses by institutions and independent oversight (independent of NCAA, Conference or Playoff affiliation) to approve all revenue distribution plans. Distributions policies should be equitable with regard to gender and institutions who offer more teams than the required Division I membership minimums should experience a reward. The Commission recommends a mandate to direct Power Five Conferences to provide incentives and penalties to encourage spending on the educational mission of athletics while capping coach/staff compensation and facility expenses. Each Conference would submit its financial responsibility plan to the independent oversight body.[10]

As part of NCAA membership requirements, intuitions must complete a financial audit and report activity in a standardized format. One possibility of a plan to ensure financial priority of athletes could measure athlete support expenses compared to revenue. The reporting audit and standardized reporting format (similar to an IRS return form) already exist to determine compliance. For example, a conference financial plan could require expenses in athlete support categories to equate to at least 50% of shared revenue. Based on three year averages the Commission found Power Five institutions missed the 50% threshold by an average of $5.6 million per year.[10] Models could implement luxury tax penalties for overspending in coaching salaries or severance payments. Structural changes to require minimum expense allocations ensure equitable distribution of revenue between athletes, coaches, facilities and while maintaining commitment to the educational athlete mission.

Recommended Implementation
The biggest challenge for implementation of the recommended financial structural change where formulas require equitable distribution of expenses, including athlete support, with financial consequences for non-compliance remains the ability for all intuitions to agree on transformation. The legal and federal regulatory authorities may compel the member institutions towards structural changes especially in the area of athlete compensation. Any implementation to address inequities in spending

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[10] Knight Commission on Intercollegiate Athletics. (2021, November 1). Connecting Athletics Revenues with the Educational (C.A.R.E) Model of College Sports; Requirements to Alther the Distribution and Spending of NCAA Division I Revenues. https://www.knightcommission.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/CAREModel.pdf

distributions will require a significant overall expense increase. The majority of the expenses in the current financial model are fixed for personnel or facilities and, without incentives for saving, the operating margins are minimal for most institutions. For example, many Power Five athletic departments leveraged recent revenue increases to finance facility improvements resulting in significant new debt and debt service expenses. According to Sportico, specifically for the Big Ten Conference median accumulated athletic debt rose from $133.3 million in 2014 to $164.5 million in 2019.[11] To avoid potential economic hardship, transformation to an improved financial model requires a gradual implementation to avoid problematic financial exposures. "If you owe the bank $100 that's your problem. If you owe the bank $100 million that's the bank's problem." – J Paul Getty. Since many of the Power Five Conference schools are public institutions, the implementation needs to avoid an economic collapse for the industry at the hands of taxpayers, students and other stakeholders.

CONCLUSION

Structured as a non-profits in a zero-sum competition the overall financial size of the industry is determined by market forces. The Power Five Conference athletic product is ultimately widely consumed and the overall revenue is set by the market. However, the current economic structure which incentivizes disproportionate spending on coaching salaries and facilities requires enhancement and transformation. Financial controls, penalties and incentives need implemented with appropriate independent financial oversight to ensure revenue distribution and investments are executed equitably and advance the educational and competitive missions of all student athletes. The non-profit, zero-sum and incremental revenue generating economic structure is unique in the American business landscape and requires new innovation and oversight to ensure the long-term health of collegiate athletics.

Adam Heller serves as the Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer for the UT Foundation where he directs the strategy and oversight of all financial and talent management activities for an organization with over $500 million in assets. Originally from West Virginia, Adam came to the UT Foundation after serving as the Director of Finance for the WVU Foundation in Morgantown. He has over a decade of experience in higher education strategic financial management and in his current role directs the Foundation's business office operations, asset & treasury management, budget administration and HR practices. Since arriving in Tennessee, Adam implemented a new investment strategy for the Foundation, which doubled the long-term earnings expectations and lead the installation of an enhanced strategic total rewards compensation philosophy.

Heller earned Bachelor's and Master's degrees in business management and industrial relations from West Virginia University. Adam is a Certified Public Accountant (CPA) and a member of the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants.

By joining the Leadership Institute, Adam is eager to build a strong network with other effective leaders and grow his leadership capabilities to meet the needs of UT.

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[11] Leroy, Michael (2022, January 5). College Athletic Debt Soars as Power Five Programs Resist Scrutiny. Sportico. https://www.sportico.com/leagues/college-sports/2022/college-athletic-debt-soars-1234651231/

Tackling Employee Turnover Post-Pandemic

Ms. Pam Jeffreys, Risk Management Director, University of Tennessee System
Administration

D uring the pandemic, the University of Tennessee sent non-essential personnel home to work remotely to keep them safe and healthy. The sudden change from in-office to remote work resulted in employees encountering multiple challenges, including technology, childcare, and feelings of isolation. Employees adapted and overcame those challenges and realized the many benefits to working remotely. Each person's situation was unique, but many employees found working remotely improved their work/life balance and reduced their out-of-pocket expenditure costs due to less travel, switching from business to casual clothing, and reduced food costs due to eating meals at home. When the pandemic restrictions eased, the University required employees to return to the office and employee resignations and retirements increased. The University of Tennessee voluntary and involuntary employee turnover rate increased from 13.1% to 16.2% from Fiscal Year 2020 to Fiscal Year 2021. UT determined that the top five reasons for separation in 2021 were: personal reasons, retirement, employment at another college or University, employment in industry or other category, and moving out of the area.

In 2021, UT implemented an Annual Employee Engagement Survey from McLean & Company which gave employees an opportunity to "share insights on program and practices critical to making UT a great place to work," to get an accurate measurement of UT's employee engagement. The survey asked employees substantial questions such as, "How likely are you to leave your job in the next year?" and "How likely would you recommend the University to a friend or a family member?" The McLean data "captures the employee's voice providing the necessary information to diagnose, prescribe, remedy and increase retention[1]." While the survey revealed that respondents scored the University high in coworker relationships, working environment, and culture, the survey results indicated that there is a need for improvement in compensation, learning and development, work-life balance, senior management relationships, rewards, and recognition. As a result of this, the University has an opportunity to train leadership to optimize employee engagement. This survey provides the responses to employee disengagement, and the University should execute a strategy to provide leadership with the training and tools to engage their teams to achieve the goals of becoming the "employer of choice," as well as establishing this decade as the greatest decade in the history of UT[2].

Compensation received a low score of 40% employee satisfaction in the McLean UT Engagement Report[3]. The state's recent standard 2 to 4% raise is not nearly enough for employees to keep up with the cost of living, especially since the New York Times recently reported that the Consumer Price Index rose by 7.9%, the fastest pace of annual inflation in 40 years[4]. A fulfilled employee is less likely to move to another

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[1] McLean & Company, University of Tennessee Engagement Report, 2021, September 14.
[2] System HR, The University of Tennessee System, 2021, October 4,
https://hr.tennessee.edu/posts/2021/10/04/fall2021-fyb-letter/
[3] McLean & Company, University of Tennessee Engagement Report, 2021, September 14.
[4] Smialek, Jeanna. "Surging U.S. Inflation Raises Stakes as War Pushes Up Prices." NY Times, 10 Mar. 2022,

organization for a slight increase, but a substantial salary increase might entice them, especially if the benefits are similar. The University of Tennessee, Knoxville raised its minimum wage to $15 per hour effective January 1, 2022, which includes adjustments to existing wages[5]. UT completed a systemwide compensation project and the University Executive Leadership is working on ways to correct the compensation deficiencies, including "setting the direction and strategy for phase 2 of the compensation project, moving an estimated 6500 temporary positions into the new comp structure, and completing updates to more than 12 job families to go live in 2022" [6]

"Learning and development" scored in the average-performing range on the McLean Survey. The University has a robust training program for exempt and non-exempt staff and offers an Educational Assistance benefit payment for undergraduate and graduate level tuition. UT also offers statewide programs including the Conference for Women in Leadership, Virtual Supervisors Summit, and Employee and Organizational Development Certificate Programs. To stay competitive in the current job market, UT should strive to do more and provide additional opportunities to increase learning and development to provide all employees an opportunity for advancement. The University should invest in all employees' futures to advance their careers. One option to consider is offering 100% free education including covering the cost of books and access fees at the University. To the extent possible, UT could offer flexible work schedules for employees that want to further their education, especially when the program they want requires them to attend day classes during work hours. In addition to college classes, they could create a program to fund professional certifications for all employees if those certifications are in the employee's job field. Professional certifications can be personally expensive and offering this benefit would help employees prepare for future promotions. To deter employees from getting these certifications and getting other jobs outside the University, HR could put stipulations on this benefit, such as staying at the University for 5 years, or reimbursing the University if they resign in the designation period.

Post-pandemic, many employees are particularly concerned with work/life balance and are demanding flexible work schedules and remote work options. KPMG Tax completed an employee survey and stated that 80% of U.S. workers would turn down a job that did not offer flexible working. The survey also indicated 25% to 30% of the workforce would be working from home by 2022.[7] To stay competitive, the University must be open-minded and continue to offer hybrid remote work schedules. If the University is not willing to offer remote work and this benefit is important to the employee, they are more likely to look for open positions that offer remote work options. Many employers have switched to allowing employees to work 100% remotely, which has created job advancement opportunities for skilled employees to go after those high demand jobs across the country and still live locally. This newfound

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[5] Wright, Becca. "University of Tennessee at Knoxville will raise minimum wage to $15 per hour.", Knoxville News Sentinel, 21 October 2021. https://www.knoxnews.com/story/news/education/2021/10/21/university-tennessee-raise-minimum-wage-campus-workers-january-2022/6011382001/

[6] "2021 Report of Accomplishments." System Human Resources, The University of Tennessee System.

[7] Work anywhere, together; Framework to support the workforce of the future", KPMG Tax, https://tax.kpmg.us/insights/insights-on-global-mobility/work-anywhere-together.html?utm_source=google&utm_medium=cpc&utm_campaign=7014W000001G0xGQAS&cid=7014W000001G0xGQAS&gclid=CjwKCAjwo8-SBhAlEiwAopc9W41ufM34ZhYQWJ7irkuQ3IlXJvn3CbwlfvMVoaw9MMIFF5O1cKZpoRoCW74QAvD_BwE

flexibility has increased employees' influence over employers, and the current job market is one where the employees have more power than employers. Adapting to the current environment is critical to The University of Tennessee's long-term financial health. UT should rapidly adapt to the current labor market and increase employee engagement to improve its employee turnover rates.

Senior management relationships revealed slight deficiencies on the McLean Report. Senior leadership should show compassion and utilize effective communication skills to convey appreciation to employees. System employees at the UT Tower are taking notice when executive leadership visits their floors and walks by and greet them. The welcome bags and unexpected free breakfasts and lunches provided by senior management are nice gestures, also. All members of the executive leadership should take every opportunity to be more visible and accessible to all employees.

The University often has silos across different departments where there is little or no collaboration between departments, and employees do not understand what different departments do. The University of Tennessee System has made a huge move forward by placing all System employees in the UT Tower. This move will make a significant impact on engagement between departments. What else can the UT System do to resolve this issue and create more collaboration across departments to break down those silos? Other departments could offer training courses to other departments to provide an overview of what services their department provides. Another recommendation would be cross training or job shadowing across departments. This may help employees think more holistically and remove the blinders so they can see how their job decisions affect other campuses and departments.

"Rewards and Recognition" scored 49% employee satisfaction which is right above the lowest score of compensation on the Mclean Engagement Survey.[8] The University of Tennessee does offer reward and recognition programs including the annual Presidents Awards, coaching to leaders for staff recognition, and a HR website link for tips on how to effectively recognize team members' work anniversaries. The University recognizes employees with 5 years of service and has rewards for each additional 5 years of service. Since employees scored rewards and recognition low in the McLean Engagement Survey, University leadership should be creative and develop a strategy for recognizing employee achievements to reward employees for their dedication and hard work. This should improve the scoring of recognition and rewards programs on future surveys. Employee recognition programs boosts employee performance and happiness, enhances a culture of engagement, and leads to overall improved employee retention[9]. Leadership could reach out to Human Resources for additional training or ideas, or they could be innovative and create reward programs specific for their team members.

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[8] Work anywhere, together; Framework to support the workforce of the future", KPMG Tax, https://tax.kpmg.us/insights/insights-on-global-mobility/work-anywhere-together.html?utm_source=google&utm_medium=cpc&utm_campaign=7014W000001G0xGQAS&cid=7014W000001G0xGQAS&gclid=CjwKCAjwo8-SBhAlEiwAopc9W41ufM34ZhYQWJ7irkuQ3llXJvn3CbwlfvMVoaw9MMIFF5O1cKZpoRoCW74QAvD_BwE

[9] "7 Examples of Employee Recognition Programs to Try", Indeed for Employers, Indeed, https://www.indeed.com/hire/c/info/employee-recognition-examples?gclid=CjwKCAjwo8-SBhAlEiwAopc9W129V_q_G3G-g-CmDC6X0TWc11F6LrQoMB-xwCF_upUTu2YUThzkpRoCfvYQAvD_BwE&aceid=

The University is continuing to track retention drivers for compensation, learning and development, work life balance, senior management relationships, rewards, and recognition and execute the retention strategies to continue to improve the lag measures of overall engagement and employee retention. The University of Tennessee cannot be an employer that provides the "Hail Mary" approach of "What can we do to keep them?" only at the point the employee turns in their resignation.   Employee Retention is a systemic issue, and all campuses and departments should take ownership of this wicked problem and do what they can to show improvement.   By following the "Be One UT" mission and the UT Strategic Plan Pillar of Workforce & Administrative Excellence, the University is shaping a new culture across the System by promoting engagement, diversity, inclusion, shared values, cohesion, and commitment in the workplace, which is the surefire employee retention strategy. Under the current leadership, The University of Tennessee is well on its way to becoming the "Employer of Choice" and striving for excellence to make this the greatest decade in the history of UT[10].

Pamela Jeffreys has been the Director of Risk Management for the University of Tennessee System since 2016. In her role, she oversees commercial insurance, claims, and other risk management services.

Pam received her Bachelor of Arts in Political Science from the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. She holds the Chartered Property and Casualty Underwriter (CPCU), Associate of Risk Management (ARM), Certified Risk Manager (CRM), Certified Insurance Counselor (CIC) and Associate of Insurance (AINS) designations.

Pam is a member of URMIA and held a position on their Board of Directors, the National Alliance for Insurance Education and Research, The Institutes Risk and Insurance Knowledge Group and the Chartered Property Casualty Underwriters (CPCU) Society and serves on the Great Smoky Mountains CPCU Board. She serves on several committees at the University of Tennessee, including the Safety Committee, Institutional Compliance Committee, Student Health Advisory Committee, and the Emergency Operations Center Committee.

By participating in the ELI program, Pam endeavors to - broaden her scope and understanding of other areas of higher education, - prepare her for additional roles and responsibilities within the UT System and fine tune her leadership skills. She is looking forward to collaborating with diverse, like-minded individuals across the University system and engage with renowned mentors. She is married and has two children and one grandson.

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[10] System HR, The University of Tennessee System, 2021, October 4, https://hr.tennessee.edu/posts/2021/10/04/fall2021-fyb-letter/

Diverse Hiring Practices for Division I Athletics Directors

Dr. Mónica Lebrón, Deputy Athletics Director for Championship Resources, University of Tennessee Knoxville

I n 2019, I published my dissertation titled, "Ethnic Minorities and/or Female Athletics Directors at the Division I Level: The Art of Reaching the Chair." While the dissertation was written to encourage ethnic minorities and/or females to pursue the athletics director position, it also extensively researched the many reasons and pitfalls ethnic minorities and/or females have been denied the opportunity to reach the athletics director position. My dissertation provides anonymous accounts of (10) existing ethnic minority and/or female athletics directors at the Division I level. Once I collected their accounts through a qualitative interview process I then determined (12) themes existed throughout the data of which I delivered within the dissertation, as well. The final results and ultimate conclusion of the research was to indicate that while the numbers for ethnic minorities and/or females at the Division I level are staggeringly low they are not zero and therefore can provide encouragement to ethnic minorities and/or females wanting to pursue the position of Division I athletics director[1]. Yet, three years later, when it is reported that a Division I institution is down to its (4) finalists for the athletics director position and all (4) finalists are white males, one cannot help but wonder if our collegiate athletics industry has made any strides at all in the area of diverse hiring practices.

In 2019, as my dissertation was published, 11.2% of Division I athletics directors were female and only 13.9% were non-white[2]. Three years later, 10% of Division I athletics directors are female and 17.7% are non-white[3]. Three years later, we have seen a decrease in the number of female athletics directors at the Division I level, but we have seen an increase in the number of non-white athletics directors at the Division I level. Regardless, we have a Division I institution in 2022 that had a 0% probability of hiring either an ethnic minority and/or a female once it was publicized that neither category was represented in their final (4) candidates.   Thus, I believe it is of great value to review some of the obstacles and barriers that the literature claims exist for ethnic minority and/or female candidates to reach the Division I athletics director chair.

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[1] Lebrón, M. (2019). *Ethnic minority and/or female athletics directors at the Division I level: The art of reaching the chair.* (Publication No. ED604868). [Doctoral dissertation, Tulane University]. ProQuest Dissertations Publishing.

[2] Lapchick, R. (2018). The 2017 racial and gender report card: College sport. *The Institute for Diversity and Ethics in Sport.* Retrieved from http://www.tidesport.org/college-sport.html

[3] Lapchick, R. (2021). The 2020 racial and gender report card: College sport. *The Institute for Diversity and Ethics in Sport.* Retrieved from http://www.tidesport.org/college-sport.html

Within the literature review of my 2019 dissertation, I provide 26 pages of examples found in the literature pertaining to the obstacles and barriers that exist for ethnic minorities and/or females not only in collegiate athletics administration, but within leadership positions in general. For the sake of this shorter paper, I have selected a few to reflect upon.

Some of the literature claims ethnic minorities and/or females are pigeonholed early in their collegiate athletics careers in areas within collegiate athletics that do not traditionally lead to the athletics director position. The literature touches upon athletics directors often being hired from revenue generating positions, such as fundraising, or positions in which finances are handled, such as the business office. Yet, when collegiate athletics positions are surveyed, it is noticeable that ethnic minorities and/or females are placed in more internal roles such as compliance, academics, or student-athlete development. Whether this leads to ethnic minorities and/or females thinking they belong in these spaces and therefore cannot aspire to positions within the external units or does not allow for them to be exposed to the decision makers who could elevate them to athletics director positions the end result remains the aforementioned figures that leave very few ethnic minorities and/or females in the athletics director position[4].

Another area documented through the literature was that of human capital investment. The research of Wright, Geurin-Eagleman, and Pedersen focused on the personal investment leaders put into pupils and if the majority of the leaders are white male then there is a higher likelihood that they will nurture those who resemble them[5]. Thus, a lower percentage of ethnic minorities and/or females are being invested in for the purpose of professional growth which leads to another explanation for the low figures cited earlier in this paper.

That leads to another area of the literature which covered unconscious bias. No different than selecting those with similar features to nurture, so too do people select leaders that resemble them, as well. With the majority of presidents and chancellors falling in the category of white male and presidents and chancellors making the ultimate hiring decision on the athletics director it is no wonder that the majority of athletics directors fall in the category of white male, also. The athletics director image that most presidents and chancellors have seen is that of white males, so in order to avoid said bias when making the final hiring decision a chancellor or president must be intentional in an attempt to come to the decision-making table with no preconceived notions. This is easier said than done, but with intentionality and accountability one has a stronger chance of making an unbiased decision on any hire[6].

Lastly, Cheung and Halpern touch upon work and family integration. They claim women do not want to be absentee family members, so they often decline opportunities in leadership positions which would include ascending to the athletics director role. Their article discusses the higher probability of women ascending to leadership positions when they can incorporate their families into their work life. They

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[4] Hoffman, J. (2010). The dilemma of the senior woman administrator role in intercollegiate athletics. Journal of Issues in Intercollegiate Athletics, 2010(3), 53-75.
[5] Wright, C., Geurin-Eagleman, A., & Pedersen, P. (2011). Examining leadership in intercollegiate athletics: A content analysis of NCAA Division I athletic directors. Choregia: Sport Management International Journal, 7(2), 35-52.
[6] McDowell, J., & Carter-Francique, A. (2017). An intersectional analysis of the workplace experiences of African American female athletic directors. Sex Roles, 77, 393-408.

claim when families are involved in work life women will not feel as though they are abandoning their home lives. Thus, their confidence is higher to do so[7].

As mentioned, 26 pages worth of literature reviews provided an abundance of reasons why ethnic minorities and/or females are not more prevalent in the Division I athletics director position. For the purpose of this short excerpt, however, I chose to highlight the aforementioned four: pigeon-holed positions, human capital investment (or lack thereof), unconscious bias, and work and family integration.

As I stated earlier, my dissertation approach was to determine how even the low number of ethnic minority and/or female athletics directors reached the athletics director position. I interviewed each anonymous subject for one hour asking each subject the same series of questions. Once I collected their responses I coded the data to determine what, if any, overlapping themes existed. Upon coding, it was determined there were twelve reoccurring themes which I propose aspiring ethnic minority and/or female athletics directors attempt to adopt. While I will not list all twelve themes here, I do encourage any and all aspiring ethnic minority and/or female athletics directors to read my dissertation, study the themes, and try to incorporate as many as possible in order to increase your chances of ascending to the athletics director chair. The belief is that if the ten anonymous subjects reached the Division I athletics director position and they are all either ethnic minority and/or female then they are proof it is possible. Thus, I do not know how an ethnic minority and/or female would not want to adopt as many of the themes as possible if it could mean increasing the chances of becoming a Division I athletics director (see Footnote 1).

Lastly, while one of the themes dissects the concept of mentors, I recommend ethnic minority and/or female Division I athletics director candidates take it a step further and recommend that they be intentional in their efforts to network with presidents and chancellors. As mentioned earlier, the default when selecting leaders to fill positions is to hire leaders that resemble the hiring manager. An attempt to squelch this tendency would be to allow for more "hiring managers" to familiarize themselves with people in the minority, ethnic or gender. People also like hiring who they know, so by encouraging ethnic minorities and/or females to know more presidents and chancellors, this could increase the likelihood that more ethnic minorities and/or females are hired in the role of Division I athletics director.

In conclusion, while I cannot explain how a Division I institution in 2022 can have zero ethnic minorities and/or zero females in their (4) finalists for their athletics director position, I can certainly encourage both the president at this anonymous institution and the search firm the institution paid to help in the search to read this paper and my dissertation in hopes that the next time they are afforded the opportunity to fill a leadership role they will be more inclined to be inclusive in those they consider.

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[7] Cheung, F., & Halpern, D. F. (2010). Women at the top: Powerful leaders define success as work + family in a culture of gender. American Psychologist, 65, 182-193.

Dr. Mónica Lebrón joined Tennessee's executive leadership team in February 2021 as Deputy AD for Championship Resources.

Prior to her hiring at Tennessee, Lebrón oversaw all internal and external day-to-day operations for Tulane athletics as deputy AD/chief operating officer dating to 2016. She also served as chief diversity officer for the Green Wave.

A native of San Jose, California, Lebrón was Tulane's sport administrator for football, women's basketball, beach volleyball and sailing. She also directed revenue-generation efforts for Tulane's comprehensive athletics program.

Lebrón's time at Tulane was preceded by four years of senior-level experience in the Southeastern Conference. She worked as an assistant AD for development at Ole Miss in 2012 before being elevated to associate AD in 2014. She then transitioned to Georgia, where she served as associate AD for development. Under her direction, the UGA athletics development team raised a then-record $56.96 million for the 2016 fiscal year.

In addition to her time at Georgia and Ole Miss, Lebrón served in major gift fundraising at Cal, where she fostered a portfolio of more than 500 donors. She also worked in various capacities at Florida with Gator Boosters, Inc. working closely with UF's athletics alumni base.

A 2001 Yale graduate, Lebrón was a four-year letterwinner and starter on the Bulldogs' softball team. She then earned her master of Sports Administration and MBA from Ohio University in 2003.

Most recently, in the spring of 2019, she earned her Ph.D. in Interdisciplinary Studies from Tulane.

The Challenges Advancing DEI in Higher Education: Why It Matters and What Is Getting in the Way

Ms. Stacy Lightfoot, Vice Chancellor for Diversity & Engagement, University of Tennessee at Chattanooga

INTRODUCTION:

Diversity has been a focus of higher education institutions for decades. In the mid-nineties, we used the term "multicultural," referring to people from different cultures. When I was in high school, I participated in a multicultural recruitment event at DePauw University that targeted students from diverse backgrounds across the country. Nearly 15% of us who participated in DePauw's *Multicultural Weekend* enrolled in the small, liberal arts institution in rural Indiana: almost all graduated within four years. DePauw was ahead of its time in the nineties. Leaders knew that students from diverse backgrounds enriched the campus environment. They understood a diverse campus, along with an environment that promoted equity and inclusion, was at the core of education. Thirty years ago, "multicultural" efforts concentrated on respecting and supporting "diverse" students and improving their outcomes. Today, multicultural has morphed into diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI). DEI ensures institutions become a safe and welcoming place for students, staff, and faculty so they feel valued, respected, and able to reach their full potential. My potential was realized at DePauw, and I can identify the diverse experiences, people, and perspectives that challenged and changed me for the better. DePauw was not a perfect place, but in the eighties and nineties its bold vision to build a diverse community was widely shared and embraced.

What is Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion? Why should it matter?

To understand DEI in higher education, one must first understand the significance of each term: diversity, equity, and inclusion. *Diversity* is the presence of differences. Examples of these differences include race, gender, religion, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, intellectual diversity, language, sexual orientation, nationality, (dis)ability, age, diversity of thought, and political perspectives[1]. Respecting and valuing diverse perspectives and differences allows the needs of broader groups to be addressed; thus, creating an open and supportive environment for all[2]. *Equity* is the process of fairness. Equity ensures that resources, access and opportunities are provided for all to succeed, especially those who have been historically disadvantaged[3]. **For systems to become more equitable, it is critical to recognize the challenges students, faculty and staff face and be cognizant of the root causes of those barriers.** Equity is achieved when resources are shared based on what each person needs in order to adequately

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[1] Defining DEI. (2022). *eXtension Collaborative*. www.dei.extension.org.

[2] Carleton, S. (2021, February 23). The importance of diversity in higher education. *Northeastern Graduate Blog.* www.northeastern.edu/graduate/blog/importance-diversity-higher-education/

[3] Defining DEI. (2022). *eXtension Collaborative*. www.dei.extension.org.

level the playing field[4]. *Inclusion* is an outcome to ensure everyone feels welcomed, valued, respected, and able to reach their full potential[5]. The goal of inclusion is to make everyone feel accepted and comfortable, ready to contribute their opinions and thoughts without hesitation.

Challenges of DEI:
DEI is imperative to the success of an institution and its people. However, the challenges achieving DEI in higher education are many from recruitment and retention of diverse student populations, faculty, and staff to lack of diversity in campus leadership to having limited support for, and unrealistic expectations of, DEI leaders on college campuses. Institutions are prioritizing diversity without putting equitable and inclusive systems in place to support and sustain transformational change.

- **Awareness:** Working definitions for DEI are evolving, and having varying interpretations poses impediments towards achieving common goals. The lack of awareness of what DEI means creates a barrier and makes it more difficult to have productive conversations with those who could play a role in advancing the work.
- **Unclear goals and metrics:** DEI initiatives are fruitless when institutions do not know what problems they are trying to solve. Without an understanding of the DEI challenges and opportunities on which to focus and an understanding which metrics will be measured, institutions will not make progress towards DEI goals. Without clearly formulated goals and shared accountability, DEI cannot not prosper.
- **Inadequate supports and structures:** There are unrealistic expectations of DEI leaders on college campuses. They are tasked with unrealistic goals and often seen as the lone contributors of this work[6]. DEI leaders often lack the power to change processes at their institutions and lack the adequate staff and resources to fulfill their responsibilities.
- **Silos in Higher Ed:** Universities tend to operate in silos making collaboration difficult and limiting opportunities to be innovative and see other perspectives[7]. Silo mentality perpetuates an isolated culture and is disadvantageous to DEI.

Solutions and Recommendations:
Building Awareness
Institutions must ground its students, faculty, and staff on a shared set of definitions of DEI, articulate why their campuses are focusing on DEI, and the benefits the institution will gain from this focus. Simply put, before telling people what is being done, they should understand why it is being done. The University of Michigan launched a campus-wide strategic plan that includes a communication and

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[4] Mlaba, K. (2021, March 19). Equity vs. equality: What's the difference? *Global Citizen.* www.globalcitizen.org/en/content/equity-equality-whats-the-difference-global-goals
[5] Defining DEI. (2022). *eXtension Collaborative*. www.dei.extension.org.
[6] Loutfi, E. (2020, October 14). Who leads your DEI function, and how do you support them from an organizational perspective? *Chief Learning Officer.* www.chieflearningofficer.com/2020/10/14/who-leads-your-dei-function-and-how-do-you-support-them-from-an-organizational-perspective/
[7] Hoopes, L. (2021, September 9). Silos are everywhere in higher ed. *Education Insights Blog.* https://www.ruffalonl.com/blog/enrollment/silos-are-everywhere-in-higher-education/

implementation toolkit that can be found at www.diversity.umich.edu/strategic-plan/dei-strategic-planning-toolkit/.

Collecting Data

The first step to solving a problem is naming it, determining who it affects, understanding its root causes, and agreeing on who can resolve it. Institutions can enlist the help of their research offices to gather and analyze data and/or work with outside consultants to identify the problems they want to solve on their campuses. Examples of data points common to universities can include lack of representation of minoritized faculty and students; compensation disparities; retention of minoritized students and faculty; promotion patterns by race and gender; race and gender gaps in hiring, to name a few. Data should be presented in digestible ways and can be used to empower the right people to act, create accountability and shift norms around DEI[8]. The University of California-Davis outlines DEI goals with benchmark indicators in their most recent DEI strategic plan found here: https://diversity.ucdavis.edu/about/strategic-plan/goals-and-objectives.

Accountability

While data expose problems, having goals helps drive behavioral changes, and "when goals are made public, they provide an accountability mechanism that research shows makes us more likely to achieve our aims"[9]. Communicating a vision and goals for DEI will increase accountability and follow-through. However, having a well-written DEI statement or plan with stated goals, objectives, and strategies is not enough. Everyone must know about it, be invested in it, and responsible for this work. If no one is accountable for results, there is not an incentive to do the work. Identifying metrics, creating dashboards or scorecards for visualizing progress, and holding leadership accountable builds a foundation for institutional and transformational change. An information PowerPoint presentation on how colleges can develop scorecards can be found here: https://tinyurl.com/DEIscorecard. The University of Southern California Center for Urban Education produced an equity scorecard that leads to equitable results for students of color (www.cue.usc.edu/tools/the-equity-scorecard/). Other campuses are adopting similar scorecards and dashboards.

Collaboration

Silos must be broken down and campus stakeholders should be involved and engaged in DEI conversations, plans, and activities[10]. Building excitement around a vision that campus stakeholders understand is key to getting more people invested around a shared agenda[11]. Some colleges are establishing DEI collaboratives, like the University of Iowa (www.diversity.uiowa.edu/campus/diversity-equity-and-inclusion-success-collaborative), that consist of individuals and departments that exist to lead DEI initiatives on their campuses. The efforts at the University of Wisconsin-Madison include the creation

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[8] Chilazi, S. and Bohnet, I. (2020, December 3). How to best use data to meet your DE&I goals. *Harvard Business Review.* https://hbr.org/2020/12/how-to-best-use-data-to-meet-your-dei-goals

[9] Chilazi, S. and Bohnet, I. (2020, December 3). How to best use data to meet your DE&I goals. *Harvard Business Review.* https://hbr.org/2020/12/how-to-best-use-data-to-meet-your-dei-goals

[10] Hunt, J. (2021, March 18). Death to silos. *Inside Higher Ed.* www.insidehighered.com/blogs/call-action-marketing-and-communications-higher-education/death-silos

[11] Nunes, L. (2021, January 6). New directions for diversity, equity, and inclusion in higher www.psychologicalscience.org/observer/words-to-action.

of dozens of small work groups aimed at addressing specific issues, ranging from internal departmental communications and curricula to accountability in DEI efforts and connections to off-campus communities. Each work group includes faculty members, department staff, graduate students, undergraduate students, alumni no longer on campus, and an expert in the area from outside the department[12].

Structure and Resources
DEI cannot rest inside of a unit with limited staff and resources. While DEI leaders may have the support of leadership, progress is impossible when DEI is deemed as an "add-on" or "check-the-box" strategy and not baked into the mission of the institution. Even companies who hire chief diversity officers assume that hiring a new DEI leader is enough to shift the organizational culture, but those leaders often end up burned out or disillusioned within just a few years if the whole organization is not truly on board with the commitment to DEI[13]. DEI leaders are often plagued with little to no staff and need adequate resources to hire those that can implement DEI programming. Where DEI leaders are positioned in the organization matters, as well. They should be cabinet-level leaders who have full support of all their peers. The chief diversity officer should not carry the weight of this work.

CONCLUSION

When DEI is central to the institution's mission, more people take ownership of the journey towards inclusive excellence. DEI requires institutions to identify and overcome explicit and implicit barriers and uphold structures that sustain DEI progress. DEI exists to create more inclusive campus cultures that recognize the diverse needs of students, faculty and staff, and provide opportunities and resources that enable success. This work is about helping those on campus feel welcome, respected, celebrated, and included. A focus on DEI, when executed properly, creates a sense of belonging that make students what to stay (and graduate) and make faculty and staff want to work. As I reflect on my time as a college student, DePauw University worked hard to build the kind of community where all students could thrive without barriers. Institutions do not have to be perfect to start this work, but they must be committed and courageous to start it.

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[12] Nunes, L. (2021, January 6). New directions for diversity, equity, and inclusion in higher www.psychologicalscience.org/observer/words-to-action.
[13] Cutter, C. (2020, July 13). Demand for chief diversity officers is high. So is turnover. *The Wall Street Journal.* https://www.wsj.com/articles/demand-for-chief-diversity-officers-is-high-so-is-turnover-11594638000.

Stacy Lightfoot joined the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga this year as the institution's first Vice Chancellor for Diversity and Engagement. In this role, she serves as a catalyst to foster a more inclusive campus community and provides strategic leadership for diversity and inclusion initiatives. Prior to UTC, Stacy was the Executive Vice President at PEF where she worked for twelve years facilitating partnerships with regional and national constituencies to achieve parity in student educational outcomes.

In 2015, Stacy testified before the US Senate regarding what families need to know to make informed decisions about college. In 2017, she was invited back to D.C. to speak to congressional staff about simplifying the federal financial aid form. She has received numerous awards throughout her 22-year career in college access and success, including the 2016 National Excellence in Education Award. Previous recipients include former First Lady Michelle Obama and Dr. Ben Carson.

Stacy participated in Leadership Tennessee in 2019 and Harvard Business School's Young American Leaders Program in 2017. She earned a BA degree in Communications from DePauw University and MA degree in International Service from the University of Roehampton in London, England.

What Are The Challenges Of Educating The New Generation Of Professional Students With A Majority Of Baby-Boomer Faculty?

Dr. Paul Luepke Interim Associate Dean of Clinical and Extramural Affairs; and Chair Department of Periodontology; College of Dentistry, University of Tennessee Health Science Center

INTRODUCTION

Imagine giving a traditional PowerPoint lecture to a group of third year dental students, and only seven students attend out of 100. This describes an experience I had last semester that took me by surprise. After I finished the seminar, I asked the students attending, "How do you learn best?" The response was "on my own time." At that moment, I realized that I needed to find a better way to reach this new generation of students that values their time. What I once called "death by lecture" was now coined "death by PowerPoint."

Problem Statement

In dental education today, many faculty members are at the end of their careers as baby boomers. Baby boomers were born between 1946 and 1964[1]. Most attended dental school between 1968 and 1986. This group's educational experience was lecture-based. Therefore, the teaching style of instructors from this period is often lecture-based. One of the challenges of the recent pandemic was for them to move learning environments from face-to-face to virtual. They needed to narrate presentations and upload them to learning management systems for students to access on their own time. Many of the students found this new learning environment better. They could learn on their own time, go over the material repeatedly, and break it down into smaller pieces if needed. Many students adapted, with one student even conducting a research project and presenting it on a research day.

Malcolm Knowle's theory of andragogy, or adult education, identified six principles of adult learning[2]. Three of these principles related to motivation were analyzed by Holyoke and Larson[3] in a study examining the learning preferences of three generations of adult learners. The three principles included 1) adults learn in response to the need to know, 2) adults are internally motivated, and 3) adults want learning to be relevant to their lives. Holyoke and Larson surveyed sixty graduate students multiple times throughout two courses, one online and one hybrid. Half of the students were from Generation X, thirty

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[1]Dimock, M. (2019). *Defining generations: Where Millennials end, and Generation Z begins.* Pew Research Center. https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2019/01/17/where-millennials-end-and-generation-z-begins/

[2] Knowles, M. S., Holton III, E. F., & Swanson, R. A. (2005). *The adult learner: The definitive classic in adult education and human resource development (6th ed.).* Elsevier.

[3] Holyoke, L. & Larson, E. (2009) Engaging the adult learner generational mix. *Journal of Adult Education, 38*(1), 12-21. https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ891074.pdf

percent were baby boomers, and twenty percent were millennials. Only the millennials, born from 1981-1996[1], were found to conform to one of the principles examined. They became disengaged when the learning material was not relevant to them. The millennials' responses also indicated that motivation did not come from within as they looked at external sources of motivation such as their instructor or their classmates. Pew Research Center has recently determined the cutoff point between millennials and next generation to be 1996; anyone born from 1997 onward will be the new generation or Generation Z[1]. Our current dental students primarily fall into the end of the millennials and were born in 1996, if they went right from undergraduate college to dental school.

There is evidence that millennials, including those who are in dental school presently, approach learning differently. Pedro[4] reported that millennials perform several tasks at the same time, have limited ability to pay attention to any task for an extended period of time, prefer multimedia to text, and gather information discontinuously and non-linearly. For example, millennials commonly follow hyperlinks on a website. Traditionally, education has
been presented linearly: reading a book from the beginning to end, watching a film start to finish, or learning a sequence by following steps in order.

Individuals raised with computers, the net generation, which now is considered both Generation X and Z, deal with information differently compared to those who were not. Net gens are exposed to multiple types of media from an early age. Prensky[5] estimates that by the time these individuals reach age 21, they will have spent twice as many hours playing video games as reading (10,000 versus 5,000). These experiences contribute to their visual literacy and ability to express themselves with images, such as emoticons and avatars. They engage in web-based courses that include images rather than text only. Since net gens spend so much of their time online, it seems reasonable to expect that they would have a strong preference for web-based courses; however, it is not the technology that engages them but the learning activities.

So how can dental schools help instructors better reach today's learners given that learning is different for a student due to changes in motivation, approaches to learning, and technology? Professional development for faculty members based on input from student surveys may help address the changes.

Suggested Solutions and Recommended Implementation

Faculty Development
One of the first solutions to this problem is to provide faculty development to identify the type of delivery that will be most beneficial to today's students. Most instructors were not trained as educators before joining the faculty. They are not onboarded with a training module on teaching or using the technology. There is a very robust Teaching and Learning Center (TLC) at the UTHSC campus that has programs for

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[4] Pedro, F. (2006). The new millennium learners: Challenging our views on ICT and learning. Inter-American Development Bank https://publications.iadb.org/publications/english/document/The-New-Millennium-Learners-Challenging-our-Views-on-ICT-and-Learning.pdf

[5] Prensky, M. (2001). Digital natives, digital immigrants' part 2: Do they really think differently?
On the Horizon, 9(6), 1-6. https://doi.org/10.1108/10748120110424843

teaching with technology and how to utilize the learning management system (Blackboard/Blackboard Ultra). One of my first steps is to utilize their programs, potentially making it part of the onboarding process. The TLC currently has a teaching medallion program that is elective. Another TLS Teaching Excellence Institute Track is that of Course Design for instructors interested in learning an evidence-based method for designing effective courses. This program crafts learning outcomes aligned with big picture goals. Participants create assessments, content, and choose appropriate teaching strategies aligned with learning objectives. Reward mechanisms and monetary teaching awards could be used as incentives for teacher engagement in TLC programs. We have these awards already; however, better descriptions are needed to identify participants that have produced change and measured outcomes.

Surveys

A survey study was already conducted by a dental student and presented at the 2021 Hinman Scientific symposium[6]. It illustrated some impressive results with regards to best learning practices. The study found that that 97.7% of the students learned from their mistakes, 96% prepared better for exams and patient care, 94.3% understood, reviewed, and reflected on taught material, 91.9% practiced critical thinking, and 90.8% facilitated self-motivated learning[6]. We have quantitative data on how our students learn best.

Surveys of net generation students suggest that their learning experiences reflect mixed technology usage at best, and at worst, they may experience ineffective or inappropriate uses of technology in their academic programs[7]. When reviewing course surveys of dental students after the course, many times the comments would suggest that the power points were too long and just rambling along with some materials copied out of the textbook. In courses which had a lab exercise associated with them, the comments were much more positive. This was due to the fact there were more applications to the information. This course also had extra handouts, extra videos, and many more reviews. This is another illustration that technology, as well as hands-on learning, is a much more effective delivery of instruction.

Approaches to Learning

The focus of course design and pedagogy has shifted from teaching to learning, with teachers also becoming learners in the process of professional development and engagement with their students. Rather than transferring information through the passive teacher-centered approach, the active learner-centered approach should be used so that engagement takes place[8]. Teaching practices have shifted in K-12 education, and higher education also needs to shift from the delivery of instruction to the

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[6] Schultz, J., Haynes, A. & Karydis, A. (2021 October 29-31). *Student perceptions of virtual educational methodologies and self-instructional tools in a periodontal course*. [Poster and oral presentation]. Hinman Student Research Symposium, Memphis.

[7] Kvavik, R.B., Caruso, J.B., & Morgan, G. (2004). *ECAR study of students and information technology, 2004: Convenience, connection, and control*. Educause. https://library.educause.edu/resources/2004/10/ecar-study-of-students-and- information-technology-2004-convenience-connection-and-control

[8] Rovai, A.P. (2004). A constructivist approach to online college learning. *The Internet and Higher Education, 7*(2), 79-93. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.iheduc.2003.10.002

production of learning. According to Nagel and Kotze[9], when students take responsibility for the quality of the interaction, they have a superior learning experience.

"Tell me and I forget, teach me and I remember, involve me and I learn." It was thought this quote was from Benjamin Franklin, however, a fact check says false. No matter who gets credit for this saying, the premise is true. We have to evolve or involve our students in the process if we want them to become learners. This semester I helped a resident with a surgical procedure and remarked that now you know how to do this next time. The student responded, "I hope I can remember it tomorrow." At that point I realized learning was different for this generation.

I am going to chair a new ad-hoc committee called Innovative Didactic and Clinical Pedagogy Committee. The committee includes faculty leaders from each field and class officers from each dental school class. The goal will be to improve teaching methods (pedagogy) to connect and create a better teaching outcome.

Motivation

Jason Frand[10] reinforced the need for faculty to work thoughtfully and creatively with net generation students' changing mindsets. Today's multitasking, Nintendo-born-and-bred students do not view computers as technology. They have a range of attributes that distinguish them for the older generations. Boomers and Gen-Xers populate higher education's existing faculty ranks: they have different mindsets. For higher education to ensure that productive teaching and learning exchanges occur across generations of learners, the different mindsets may need to be reconciled. I realized this at a dinner party when my more seasoned faculty blamed the new generation for not responding to the traditional way of teaching even though they could not see that method may not be that effective today. What may be missing or what we may need to try to create is intrinsic motivation. Psychologists consider intrinsic motivation in humans to be the drive to perform and activity for inherent satisfaction or just for the fun or challenge in it. It is rare to find dental student do anything without getting a credit or reward. When it does happen, you take notice. What once was the standard of care is now considered going above and beyond.

Technology

A 2014 study of U.S. dental hygiene programs to determine the usage, perceptions, and barriers of educational technology also adds insight into how students learn[11]. Students preferred a hybrid class (54%) to an online class (8%), or a face-to-face class (38%). Interestingly, the faculty preferred a hybrid class (82%) to an online class (0%), or a face-to-face class (18%). When asked what barriers existed to implement educational technology both groups (faculty and students) cited technical difficulties at 74%.

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[9] Nagel, L. & Kotze, T.G. (2010). Supersizing e-learning: What a col survey reveals about teaching presence in a large online class. *The Internet and Higher Education*, *13*(1), 45-51. http://0-dx-doi-org.libus.csd.mu.edu/10.1016/j.iheduc.2009.12.001

[10] Frand, J. (2000). The information-age mindset: changes in students and implications for higher education. *Educause Review, 35*(5), 15-24. https://er.educause.edu/-/media/files/article-downloads/erm0051.pdf

[11] Beebe C., Gurenlian J., & Rogo E. (2014). Educational technology for millennial dental hygiene students: A survey of U.S. dental hygiene programs. *Journal of Dental Education, 78*(6), 838-849.

The most frequently reported advantage by both students 81% and faculty 87% was that technology increased flexibility by allowing anytime access to course materials. Faculty members tended to rank the effectiveness of technology higher than students. The only tool the students ranked higher in effectiveness than faculty members was social sharing sites. This was welcoming news since I was beginning to wonder if faculty still had value.

Conclusion

The problem of a disconnect of faculty perception of learning and the actual best learning style of our current dental students will be identified and confirmed via more surveys, measured outcomes of course work, clinical critical thinking, and national and licensing boards. The change will occur via a new onboarding model to include faculty development with modules to be competent with the learning management system (Blackboard) and the use of multimedia (Mediasite) to perform hybrid learning. I have been successful in leading a group of motivated faculty members in a reflective learning model (ePortfolio) in the pre-doctoral periodontal program. Now it is time to translate this enthusiasm to more of the dental school faculty and departments. We have a major resource available with the Teaching and Learning Center that we need to utilize more globally. It has been elective with regards to participation. I would propose monetary rewards to create leaders within the dental school to become mentors to our faculty. We already have faculty awards system set up, and better definition of these awards would create enthusiasm for change.

Dr. Paul Luepke is currently Interim Associate Dean of Clinical and Extramural Affairs and Associate Professor and Chair of the Department of Periodontics at the University of Tennessee Health Science Center College of Dentistry. He was also the chair of the infection control committee which became vital during the COVID-19 pandemic, the re-opening of the dental school, and continued safe operations.

Dr. Luepke's academic career began after serving 21 years in the United States Navy at seven different duty stations. He retired as the director of Naval Station Great Lakes USS Osborne recruit dental facility in 2008. There he led 105 dentists and 250 support staff in delivering care to 40,000 recruits annually. Prior to that, he was in Iraq with the First Marine Division dental platoon officer in charge during Operation Iraqi Freedom. His academic career began at Marquette School of Dentistry. There he served as the Chair of Surgical Sciences, supporting the departments of endodontics, oral pathology, oral surgery, and periodontics. Dr. Luepke initiated and built a periodontics specialty program at the school with a $1.8 million dollar clinic build-out and successful accreditation.

Dr. Luepke is currently a Director of the American Board of Periodontology. This specialty board examines and certifies with diplomate (board status) the highest achievers in the profession. He is also a member of the review committee of the Commission of Dental Accreditation for the periodontal specialties. Dr. Luepke lectures on periodontal and dental implant dentistry at the national and international level. His research interest is Peri-Implant Disease.

The Role of Internships in Student Success of Underrepresented Student Populations

Dr. Mark McCloud, Chief Diversity & Inclusion Officer, University of Tennessee at Martin

INTRODUCTION

Student Success is measured in numerous ways in higher education. It is a mix of retention rates, graduation rates, academic performance, attainment, and time to degree completion.

When students take an active role in the learning process and they are engaged both inside and outside the classroom, they have larger gains in their personal and professional growth and development. Student success for students also involved in high impact educational practices is marked by higher grades, increased retention, and more timely graduation. Not only do students in the majority benefit from these practices, but minorities, disadvantaged students, and members of underrepresented groups reap greater benefits when they can participate in these practices. Information for this paper focused on internships, research [1] has documented ten high impact educational practices: First-Year Seminars and Experiences, Learning Communities, Common Intellectual Experiences, Collaborative Assignments and Projects, Writing-Intensive Courses, Undergraduate Research, Diverse/Global Learning, Internships, Service Learning/Community Based Learning, and Capstone Courses/Projects.

Colleges and universities across the United States are seeking new and effective ways to enhance student engagement as tools to increase retention. Retention is a major problem for the entire student population but is an even greater problem for underrepresented students. The selection of a career and establishment in a profession are major challenges for colleges students.[2] Internships help students clarify a major or career path, and they can also gain valuable work experience and on-the-job training for their career while still a student. In many cases, students realize after an internship that a career is not for them, and they can make the academic change to find a career path for which they are better suited. In other cases, after an internship many students are more motived to complete their education because they feel they have made a good prospective career choice. Given this situation, understanding the circumstances under which interns thrive is critical if universities are to fulfill their obligation of better serving historically underserved students.

Problem Statement

As institutions of higher learning, it is our responsibility to produce citizens that are equipped to engage and be prepared for a global market. Research has shown that a highly educated workforce can lead a

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[1] Wawrznski, M., & Baldwin, R. (2014, Spring). Promoting high-impact student learning: Connecting key components of the college experience. *New Directions for Higher Education*, *165*, 51-64.

[2] Grier-Reed, T., Arcinue, F., & Inman, E. (2016). The African American student network: an intervention for retention. *Journal of College Student Retention*, *18*, 183-193.

more productive and fruitful life, with greater societal contributions. We know there is a connection internship experiences and career success. The problem remains that underrepresented student populations are less likely to complete an internship than their majority counterparts.

To address this problem, there are three questions that higher education professionals need to ask?
     A. What barriers exist for underrepresented student populations in completing internships?
     B. What goals are we striving to meet for underrepresented student populations regarding internships?
     C. Are the any programs that can assist underrepresented student populations in completing internships?

What barriers exist for underrepresented student populations in completing internships?
Students often struggle in acquiring an internship. Many students are not sure of how to go through the search and application process. Many have trouble with their internship searching skills, their resumes and cover letters, and their interviewing skills are not adequate. Many students also, struggle with basic living expense: transportation, housing, and clothing. Transitioning to a professional work environment presents a challenge for many students as well. Long hours, technical jargon, and being able to relate to diverse groups present some barriers also.[3]

What goals are we striving to meet for underrepresented student populations regarding internships?
Ideally each student from an underrepresented student group should be able to complete and internship before graduation if they desire to, with institutional support. According to NACE, https://www.naceweb.org/research/, National Association of Colleges and Employers in 2021, 55% of students surveyed completed an internship before graduation.[4]

Are there any programs that can assist underrepresented student populations in completing internships?
A review of research several sources, such as National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) and National Survey of College Internships (NSCI),(https://ccwt.wceruw.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/CCWT_NSCI-2021-Report.pdf), as well as interviews with Career Service professionals at various institutions indicated that there are numerous programs to assist underrepresented students in completing internships.

Suggested Solutions and Findings
From most people interviewed and sources reviewed, internships played a vital role in employment attainment and career development.

Acquiring internships. Statements from participants' interviews indicated that they acquired internships with the assistance of faculty and staff, through on-line resources, by attending Career and Internship Fairs sponsored by the university, through utilizing the Career Center, by reaching out directly to agencies, and networking with professional organizations. Specifically, 80% of participants indicated

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[3] Johnson, Terry, State Farm Insurance, Vice President
[4] NACE, National Association of Colleges and Employers, "Exploring the Implications of Internships 2021"

that they worked with a university faculty or staff member whose job had a function to assist students with acquiring internships.[5]

Challenges students faced during the internship process. Participants indicated that they experienced challenges it three areas: acquiring an internship, living expenses, and work environment. Even with the assistance of faculty and staff, it was difficult for many students to acquire an internship. Many students found challenges in the application process. They had to navigate company websites and make sure that job search correspondence was adequate. Many indicated that they had to complete multiple applications and received few interviews. Some students found it very difficult to find affordable housing, especially during short summer months in major cities. For many participants (90%), the work environment presented the greatest challenge. Being able to communicate effectively with colleagues from very diverse backgrounds left many students afraid and intimated. Learning technical jargon and terminology in the workplace created anxiety and nervousness for many students as well.[6]

Benefits from the internship experience. Evidence from student interview responses and observations demonstrated that students received great benefits from their internship experiences. The most prevalent recorded benefit was gaining the understanding of what it meant to be a professional and gaining professional skillsets. Data suggests that students were able to learn professionalism from having it modeled to them by full-time employees and being able to learn and apply new skills in a real work environment.

Professional Impact of Internships. During the interviews, there were many instances where the participants state that they grew as professionals during the internships. Data indicated that students were motivated to complete college to get into the workforce. During one interview, one student discussed her internship experience and how it impacted her desire to complete college, "It was just motivation. I was ready to work, and I knew I need to get on out and get my degree to start working". Another student made a similar comment on how the internship process motivated her to complete her degree, "A long four years. I was just ready to get through it. I'm just ready to get my diploma". This student seemed to express a sincere desire to get through college.[7]

Advice to future students entering internships. To understand the importance of support, I explored the importance of the role of current underrepresented students that have completed internships offering guidance and suggestions to future students who aspired to complete internships. During the interviews, participants were asked what advice they would give to other students planning to go through the internship process. Their responses indicate that their role was important in preparing future students to go through the process and they could provide useful information.[8]

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[5] Harrington, Johnathon, Associate Director of Employer Services, University of Mississippi
[6] Johnson, Terry, State Farm Insurance, Vice President
[7] Echols, Kameron, Assistant Director of Employer Services, University of Tennessee at Martin
[8] Miles, D. Renard, Director Employer Engagement & Programing, William & Mary

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

My analysis of the data suggests that (a) underrepresented student groups attain a higher level of professional growth from the internship experiences, (b) underrepresented student groups' internship experiences increase their desire to complete college, (c) underrepresented student groups who completed internships could serve as mentors and provide advice to other underrepresented student groups desiring to complete internships.

Institutions should consider the follow to assist underrepresented students in the internship process:

1. Faculty and Career Center staff may be able to help underrepresented students understand the internship search process more clearly by offering an orientation that walks student through the process.
2. Create a Peer Education Program (PEP) comprised of students would had completed an internship serving as educational ambassadors to other students who were considering their options.
3. Create travel or housing stipends for students who need assistance with internship expense with limited award amounts, to aid serval students.

Dr. Mark McCloud has over 26 years of experience which includes financial services, K-12 schools, mental health, non-profits, and higher education. Mark's greatest strengths are his creativity, drive, and leadership. He thrives on challenges, particularly those that develop organizations and people to reach their greatest potential. Currently, McCloud serves as the Chief Diversity and Inclusion officer at the University of Tennessee at Martin where he provides oversight to the Chancellor's Cabinet and university community on issues concerning diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Dr. McCloud holds a bachelor's degree in Business Administration from the University of Tennessee at Martin and earned a master's degree in Higher Education with an emphasis in Student Personnel Services as well as doctoral degree in Higher Education for the University of Mississippi.

McCloud, a nationally recognized educator, change agent, and motivational speaker has appeared in regional and national media outlets, most notably Forbes. He is the co-host of Two Sisters and The Doc Podcast, a podcast focusing on race, relationships, boundaries, and careers.   Mark is also the Director of Diversity and Inclusion for the Southern Association for College and Employers, the Past-President of the Martin, TN Rotary Club, and the 2020 recipient of the Mosaic Award from SoACE for work in diversity and inclusion. His philanthropic interests include St. Jude, the Komen foundation and the Boy and Girls Club.

Mark and his wife Candice resident in Martin, TN. Their daughter Brayden is a freshman at the University of Mississippi. When not working he enjoys jazz, chess, and spending time with his family.

Assessing Faculty Productivity Effectively: Are Faculty Activity Reporting Systems the Solution?

Ms. Holly Mercer, Senior Associate Dean of Libraries, University of Tennessee Knoxville

INTRODUCTION

How does one academic department or program compare to those at peer institutions? Who *are* an institution's peers? Which faculty would make good collaborators for a large-scale grant opportunity? How does one empirically identify areas of institutional strength? Which faculty are ready to be nominated for honorifics or awards? Where are doctoral program graduates employed post-graduation?

These are some of the questions academic administrators might ask or be asked. Answering them requires data to be gathered and structured such that it can be queried, and ideally, presented visually. It can require having access to the same data from a multitude of institutions for benchmarking. And, it requires the data to the individual faculty member level to be kept up to date. With access to data about a faculty member's teaching, research, service, and funding, institutions can engage in talent development, collaborations assessment, develop grant funding strategies, track progress on strategic faculty initiatives, assess research outcomes, and more.

While many universities employ bibliometricians and data scientists capable of this work, the aggregate data are not readily available. Faculty activity reporting, research information management, and faculty benchmarking and analytics tools are ideal for outsourcing because they can focus resources on collecting the data from multiple institutions. It is generally more cost-effective to rely on a third-party tool than to build one from scratch.

In the age of big data,[1] enter companies that aim to help universities by providing "data and solutions."[2] An entire industry has grown largely from bibliometric citation databases to develop metrics for faculty productivity. These systems can be placed along a continuum, from solely data-gathering and presentation of promotion and tenure and other forms of faculty evaluation, to analysis and research intelligence. In this paper, they are all referred to as FARs.

Faculty Activity Reporting systems (FARs) and Research Information Management systems (RIMs) are used interchangeably for systems that collect and store information on faculty activities and research outputs such as such as courses taught; publications, datasets, and patents; grants and projects;

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[1] "Big Data's Coming of Age in Higher Education," Forbes, 29 January 2016. https://www.forbes.com/sites/schoolboard/2016/01/29/big-datas-coming-of-age-in-higher-education/?sh=e86110f1c417.

[2] https://academicanalytics.com/

academic service and honors; media reports; and statements of impact.[3] In Europe, they are referred to as Current Research Information Systems (CRIS). In fact, most commercial FARs were developed for use in Europe, to collect and share data about research activities.

Problem Statement

In 2011, Texas A&M administration distributed an "Academic Financial Data Compilation" that attempted to reduce faculty value to a benefit or deficit. The 260-page report replaced a single spreadsheet that presented a financial evaluation for all faculty: they either generated revenue through teaching high-enrollment courses, or they created a deficit by not generating enough tuition dollars.[4] The analysis did not consider the different types of courses taught, the presence of graduate as well as undergraduate programs, research and service demands on faculty time, or even the financial benefits of sponsored research. The following year, Texas A&M acquired a more sophisticated tool called Academic Analytics. Academic Analytics is one of several companies and tools that aim to help institutions with benchmarking, research intelligence, and assessment of faculty productivity.

The *Chronicle of Higher Education* has published numerous reports on this topic since 2011,[5,6,7] with most focused on negative faculty reactions to the quantification of productivity. However, the number of universities adopting faculty activity reporting systems continues to grow.

Faculty assessment is an accepted part of being an academic. Department heads, tenure committees, and peer reviewers regularly assess the quality and impact of instruction, scholarship, and service. University administrators, boards of trustees, and in the case of public institutions, elected officials and the taxpayers all require measures of productivity for accountability. But what constitutes productivity at a research extensive university? Faculty workloads have traditionally been expressed as tripartite percentages representing research, teaching, and service. Yet workloads equate to effort and not outcomes. Epistemic communities have traditionally defined their own metrics for research and scholarship. FARs attempt to gather and present a standardized view of faculty productivity.

University libraries subscribe to commercial bibliographic databases such as Web of Science,[8] Scopus,[9] and Dimensions.[10] Universities have benchmarking and institutional comparisons; examples are SciVal,[11]

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[3] Bryant, Rebecca, Anna Clements, Carol Feltes, David Groenewegen, Simon Huggard, Holly Mercer, Roxanne Missingham, Maliaca Oxnam, Anne Rauh and John Wright. 2017. Research Information Management: Defining RIM and the Library's Role. Dublin, OH: OCLC Research (6). https://doi.org/10.25333/C3NK88.

[4] "A&M re-releases controversial financial data," The Eagle. 06 May 2011. https://theeagle.com/news/a_m/a-m-re-releases-controversial-financial-data/article_a2b9104d-c4e2-5d07-b837-c5b100e6d0be.html.

[5] Hughes, David A. "Academic Analytics: Buyer Beware." Chronicle of Higher Education. 04 March 2016, 62:25 (B20-B21).

[6] June, Audrey Williams. "Can Faculty Workload Be Captured in a Database?" Chronicle of Higher Education. 20 July 2018, 64:38 (11).

[7] Patel, Vilma. "Productivity Metrics." Chronicle of Higher Education. 04 March 2016. 62:25 (B18-B19).

[8] https://clarivate.com/webofsciencegroup/solutions/web-of-science-core-collection/

[9] https://www.elsevier.com/solutions/scopus

[10] https://www.digital-science.com/product/dimensions/

[11] https://www.elsevier.com/solutions/scival

Incites,[12] and Academic Analytics. FARs examples include Watermark Faculty Success (formerly Digital Measures),[13] Interfolio,[14] PURE,[15] and Symplectic.[16] Universities outsource the repositories for grey literature and open access research. Examples are Digital Commons,[17] SSRN,[18] and figshare.[19] And, they outsource faculty profiles pages, such as SelectedWorks (part of Digital Commons), Symplectic Discovery Module, and Clarivate Research Portal Service.[20] Because a handful vendors control large portions of the scholarly or scientific record, they have information about the latest research and author affiliations, what research is funded, and who is citing and even Tweeting about it. Examples include Essential Science Indicators,[21] Newsflo,[22] and Altmetric.[23] All these products are offered by just six vendors: Academic Analytics, Clarivate (Web of Science, InCites, Research Portal Service), Digital Science (Dimensions, Elements, figshare, Symplectic Discovery), Elsevier (Scopus, SciVal, PURE, Digital Commons, SSRN, SelectedWorks), Interfolio, and Watermark. On April 21, 2022, Elsevier announced its intention to acquire Interfolio,[24] which would reduce competition in this market. Publishing companies have become "knowledge analytics" corporations to meet the growing demand for gathering, analyzing, archiving, and selling faculty productivity data.

Universities frequently rely on third-party commercial enterprises. The problem arises when the evaluation, publication, assessment, and even forecasting of where to make future investments in research are all controlled by for-profit entities. Faculty give away their intellectual property (their publications) in exchange for publication. Then, university libraries buy back the research in the form of journal subscriptions and monograph purchases. These same for-profit companies tell universities how to evaluate the research, and sell universities products to aid in that assessment. Because the cost of these different products is distributed across the institution (office of the provost, office of research, library, system, etc.) the total cost is often hidden. If information about these products and services is not shared across an institution, it can lead to duplication of services. In some instances, universities rely on proprietary data and trust vendors have collected, calculated, and reported accurately. Different vendors have different data sources, so benchmarking data are only valid within a given system. The more highly curated the data, the more institutions will pay for their FAR.

Suggested Solutions
To mitigate over-reliance on these products, universities should consider FARs as one of several ways to measure productivity. Below are suggestions to contextualize the value of faculty research.

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[12] https://clarivate.com/webofsciencegroup/solutions/incites/
[13] https://www.watermarkinsights.com/digital-measures/
[14] https://www.interfolio.com/products/faculty-activity-reporting/
[15] https://www.elsevier.com/solutions/pure
[16] https://www.digital-science.com/product/symplectic/
[17] https://www.elsevier.com/solutions/digital-commons
[18] https://www.elsevier.com/solutions/ssrn
[19] https://www.digital-science.com/product/figshare/
[20] https://clarivate.com/products/vivo/
[21] https://clarivate.com/webofsciencegroup/solutions/essential-science-indicators/
[22] https://www.elsevier.com/solutions/newsflo
[23] https://www.digital-science.com/product/altmetric/
[24] https://www.elsevier.com/about/press-releases/corporate/elsevier-announces-its-intention-to-acquire-interfolio.

◊ Explore alt-metrics, or alternative measures of impact, which include more expansive measures such as media mentions, news interviews and features, social media mentions, et cetera. Discoveries and innovations are more likely to generate news and social media interest before they generate citations.

◊ Include scholarship intended for a non-scholarly audience. Blogs, podcasts, and lectures by faculty members can engage and inform the public and raise the profile of the institution.

◊ Focus on broader impacts. Broader impacts are the positive effects of research on society.[25] Some examples include development of new therapies; research that informs public policy, improves national security, or allows full participation of underrepresented populations in a profession. The National Science Foundation uses broader impacts as one criterion when reviewing grant proposals. However, it is useful to consider how scholarship from any discipline might have societal benefits. Broader impacts can help those outside academe understand the value of engaging in research, scholarship, and creative activity. Broader impacts might not be realized until long after the research is conducted and disseminated.

◊ Measure and value engaged scholarship and community engagement. Engaged research is like broader impacts in that there is a societal benefit. However, the engagement emphasizes a "two-way partnership framework,"[26] where the university and the community co-create solutions.

◊ Consider what metrics make sense for performing arts and humanities faculty, and involve them in discussions of how to measure quality and impact.

◊ Reward open source and open access projects as an innovative way to express a commitment to the public good. Public and land-grant universities have a commitment to serve the citizens of the state, and freely sharing the results of publicly-funded research can further that commitment.

◊ Reward patents and development of intellectual property.

◊ Include holistic assessments of teaching and give credit for mentoring of students, postdoctoral fellows, and tenure-track faculty.[27] Institutions should never overlook their missions to educate, and the data FARs collect should reflect a commitment to effective instruction and learning.

Recommended Implementation

Before an institution selects one or more systems, or even issues a Request for Proposals, the need should be clearly communicated to campus stakeholders. For example, the University of Vermont communicated how faculty productivity data would strengthen programs, but also "place Vermont in the context of peer institutions."[28] The provost held campus-wide discussions about what data could be measured and how it would be used. He allowed the faculty themselves determine what metrics were appropriate to their disciplines, thus engendering trust in the exercise.[29]

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[25] https://researchinsociety.org/broader-impacts/

[26] https://communityengagement.utk.edu/what-is-community-engagement/

[27] O'Meara, KerryAnn. Enabling Possibility: Reform of Faculty Appointments and Evaluation. March 2022. New York: TIAA Institute (7). https://www.tiaainstitute.org/publication/enabling-possibility-reform-faculty-appointments-and-evaluation.

[28] Patel, Vilma. "How One University Measured Faculty Productivity—and Nobody Got Hurt." Chronicle of Higher Education. 04 March 2016. 62:25 (B20).

[29] Ibid.

While vertical integration may make implementation easier, as all products are delivered by the same vendor, it could also create a mismatch between what the institution wants and what the vendor can provide. Clarity from the outset about what a FAR can and cannot provide will help establish reasonable expectations.

Previously referenced news stories from the *Chronicle of Higher Education* reflect the unease some faculty feel because FARs could be used punitively. However, FARs can bring increased recognition to faculty by analyzing author networks to highlight collaborations. They can help faculty gain recognition by identifying faculty to nominate for prestigious awards. Considering all the data in the proper context is critical. Less knowledgeable readers or consumers might need context to understand how research, scholarship, and creative activity is evaluated, and how it enhances teaching and learning. The academic financial data spreadsheet from Texas A&M was accurate, but misleading.

CONCLUSION

Accurate data about faculty productivity is critical in the current data-intensive and highly competitive higher education environment. By collecting data about research, teaching, and service activities, institutions have more insights about faculty accomplishments, can make more informed decisions, and can identify strengths and potential gaps in academic programs and research expertise. Faculty activity reporting systems gather, analyze, and present information about faculty productivity, thus helping address these needs.

FARs, however, are proprietary systems, so the data sources and analyses are not always readily available. Institutions effectively purchase from a vendor data they already possess, but may lack the skills or resources to analyze, report, and visualize themselves.

Universities have many tools to use to evaluate and reward faculty productivity, including evaluating the societal impact of faculty teaching, scholarship, and service. The FAR can be an effective documentation and evaluation tool, especially when institutions are transparent and inclusive in how it is developed and deployed.

Holly Mercer joined the University of Tennessee, Knoxville in 2012 and currently is senior associate dean and professor in the UT Libraries. Her work history includes positions at Stanford, University of Kansas, and Texas A&M. Holly is globally recognized for her work in scholarly communication and publishing, digital repositories, and research information management. Holly believes libraries are central to learning and innovation, that research libraries can accomplish more through collaboration, and that openness and integrity in the research process are keys to future breakthroughs and discoveries. She received an award for Extraordinary Collaborations in Research Compliance and Safety at UT. For many years, Holly served on the Open Repositories steering committee and organized an annual international conference. She currently serves as chair of the Board of Governors for HathiTrust, a not-for-profit collaborative of academic and research libraries preserving 17+ million digitized items. Holly holds a bachelor's degree in Classical Studies from Duke and a Master's in Library and Information Science from the University of South Carolina.

Digital Proficiency: Higher Education at the Nexus of the Digital Divide

Dr. Jorge Pérez, Associate Vice President for Institutional Effectiveness, University of Tennessee System Administration
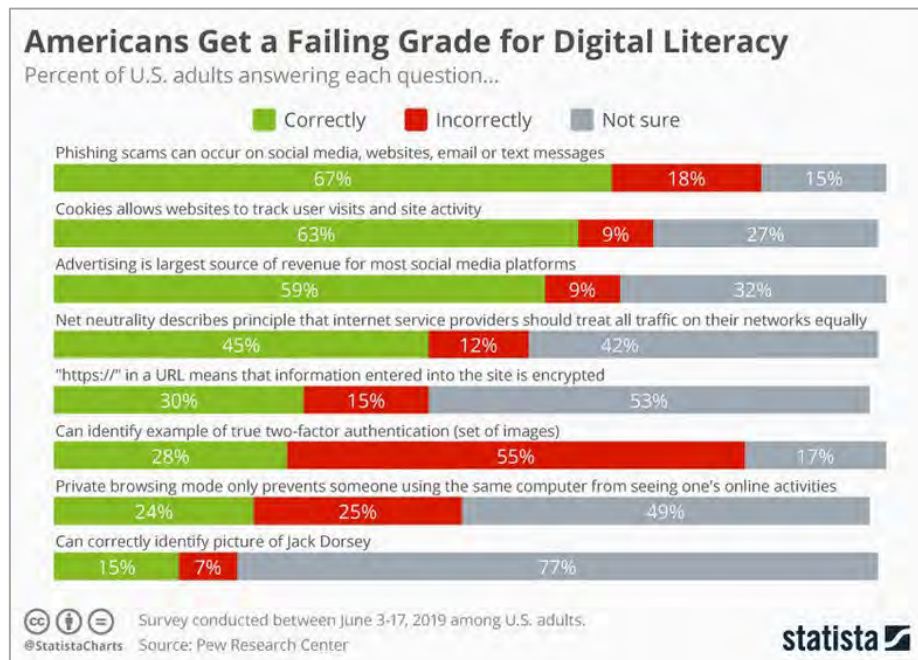
INTRODUCTION

Bits and bytes are transforming the world in ways once unimaginable. Ubiquitous and accelerating digitization has obliterated existing industries, spawned myriad others, and reshaped banking, travel, retail, media, health care, and higher education, leaving no sector untouched. Disruption that was well underway and quickening was magnified by a COVID-19 pandemic that drove astonishingly rapid diffusion of telehealth, telework, and remote learning. This paper explores the role of higher education in assessing and amplifying digital proficiency – a key element of digital equity – and closing the digital divide. Are universities doing enough?

The pandemic widened the digital divide by amplifying both the need for broadband access and inequities in the ability to use digital technologies. While governments are driven to expand broadband access by investing in digital infrastructure, the education sector is uniquely positioned to advance digital

proficiency. Access without proficiency would be akin to giving a book to someone who cannot read, a situation faced by many in the digital realm. Interestingly, even during these times of pervasive digital disruption, institutions of higher education in the United States have been relatively slow to both assess and amplify digital proficiency.[1]

Subsequent sections of this paper explore the dimensionality of the digital divide construct, address efforts to expand broadband access in Tennessee and nationwide, and define digital proficiency and the state of digital literacy in the U.S.
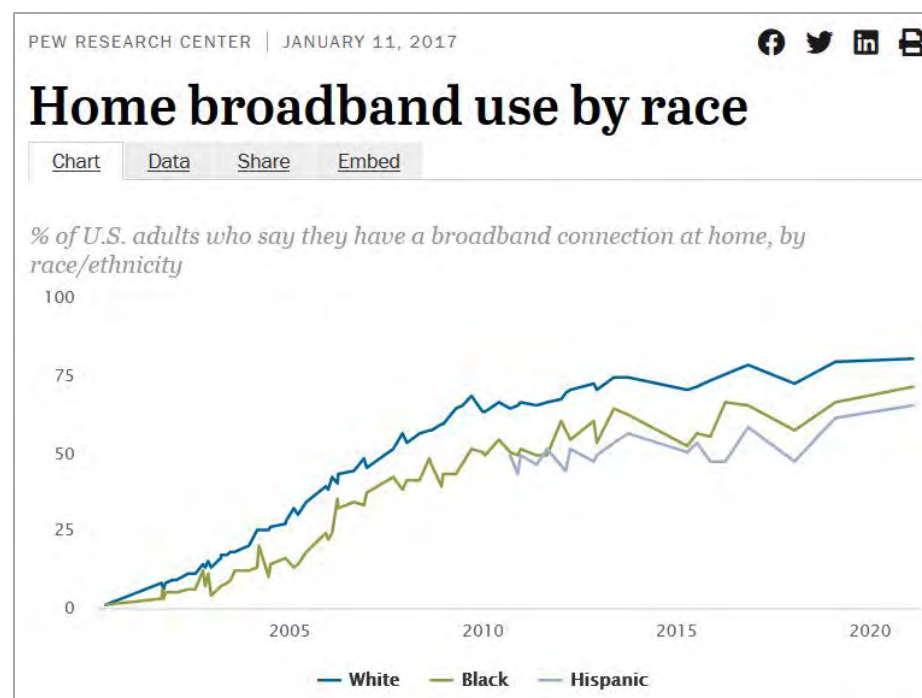
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[1] Murray, M. C., & Pérez, J. (2014). Unraveling the digital literacy paradox: How higher education fails at the fourth literacy. *Issues in Informing Science and Information Technology*, 11, 85-100. Retrieved from http://iisit.org/Vol11/IISITv11p085-100Murray0507.pdf

The Digital Divide

The digital divide is often oversimplified as referring to the gap between those who have access to high-speed Internet service and those who do not. Chakravorti examined the digital divide along four dimensions, ranking the 50 states on infrastructure, inclusivity, institutions, and digital proficiency. Tennessee ranks 31st in infrastructure ("Internet speeds, broadband coverage, and smartphone usage"), 27th in inclusivity ("broadband affordability, equity of access, and adult usage"), 31st in institutions ("government broadband strategy, technology for public services, and local broadband solutions like municipal networks"), and 37th in digital proficiency ("how demographic profiles, education levels, and more, shape how people navigate the digital world"). [2]

The digital divide can also be traced along fault lines such as race, economic status, urban v. rural, and educational attainment. Tennessee is becoming less rural in nature, as the population growth of urban communities outpaces growth of rural counties.[3] Nonetheless, efforts like President Biden's $1 trillion Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, which earmarks $65 million for expanding broadband access to rural areas, would be impactful to the many rural communities in Tennessee. The Tennessee Broadband Accessibility Act of 2017 focused the state's efforts to expand broadband around three main components: investment, deregulation, and education. In the area of education, the focus of this paper, TBAA "provides grant funding opportunities to the state's local libraries to help residents improve their digital literacy skills and maximize the benefits of broadband."[4] What is and should be the role of institutions of higher education in augmenting digital literacy? Can one assume that students not only enter but also graduate college with requisite digital proficiency? Again, are universities doing enough?

PEW RESEARCH CENTER | JANUARY 11, 2017

Home broadband use by race

Chart Data Share Embed

% of U.S. adults who say they have a broadband connection at home, by race/ethnicity

— White — Black — Hispanic

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[2] Chakravorti, B. (2021). How to Close the Digital Divide in the U.S. *Harvard Business Review*. Retrieved from https://hbr.org/2021/07/how-to-close-the-digital-divide-in-the-u-s

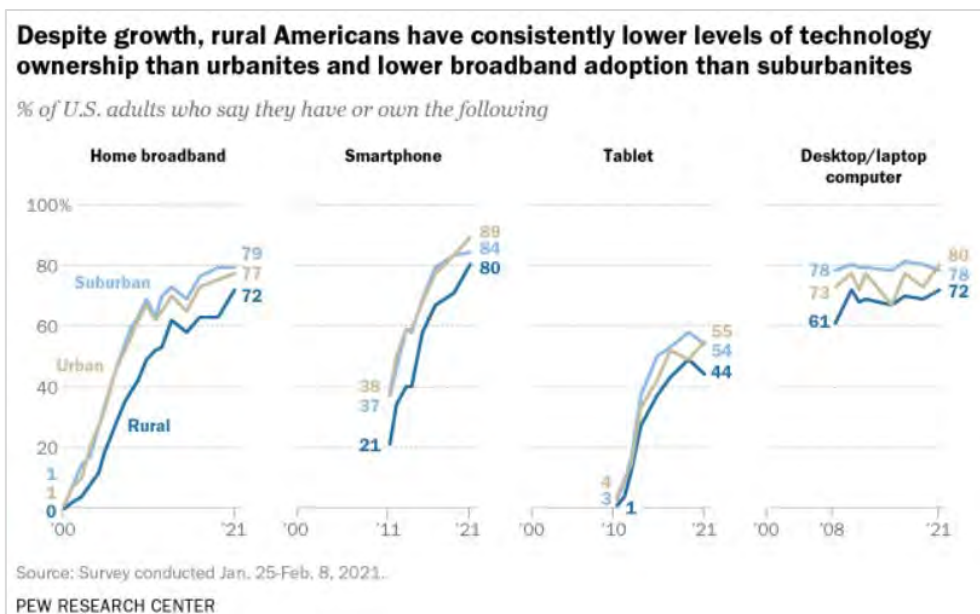[3] Kessler, L.M., Fox, W.F., Hagaden, E.P., Harris, M.C., & Kuhn, T. 2021. Economic Report to the Governor of the State of Tennessee. Retrieved from https://haslam.utk.edu/?haslam_whitepaper=economic-report-to-the-governor-2022While

[4] Tennessee Broadband Accessibility Act. Retrieved from https://www.tn.gov/ecd/rural-development/tennessee-broadband-grant-initiative/tennessee-broadband-accessibility-act-article.html

Digital Proficiency

The myriad extant definitions of digital proficiency unify around the concept of the ability to use digital technologies to solve real-world problems. A complex construct, digital proficiency comprises skills, knowledge, and attitudes.[5] Digitally proficient people can use technology to find and assess information, connect and collaborate with others, and solve real-world problems at home and work. Perhaps counterintuitively, many US universities do not assess the digital proficiency of incoming students. A study that examined the presence of digital proficiency courses in core curricula of top US universities found that while 17 of 26 implement a digital literacy initiative of some sort peripheral to the core, none *required* a core computer literacy course as reported in the Common Data Set.[6] Moreover, while K-12 computer literacy initiatives have spawned nationwide, assessment of the digital proficiency of university-bound high school graduates remains the exception and a standardized digital literacy assessment has not emerged. Of particular note is that neither the ACT nor the SAT assesses digital proficiency, although the latter standardized test will go completely digital by 2024. The pandemic-induced surge in remote learning coupled with enrollment growth at predominantly online universities[7] combine for a vexing juxtaposition with the relative dearth of digital proficiency assessment and amplification in higher education.

Conclusion

The pandemic exacerbated the consequences of being on the wrong side of the digital divide. Disparities in digital access and proficiency unequally disadvantaged rural communities, minorities, the less educated, and the poor.[8] Digitization was already accelerating pre-COVID; post-pandemic, educational

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[5] Cummins, M., Becker, S.A., & Alexander, B. 2016. NMC Horizon Project Strategic Brief on Digital Literacy (pp. 1-16). The New Media Consortium. https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED593900.pdf

[6] Murray, M., Perez, J. & Fluker, J. (Forthcoming). Digital literacy in the core: The emerging higher education landscape. In M. Jones (ed.), Proceedings of InSITE 2022: Informing Science and Information Technology Education Conference. *Informing Science Institute*.

[7] Sedmak, T. 2020. Fall 2020 Undergraduate Enrollment Down 4.4%; Graduate Enrollment Up 2.9%. National Student Clearinghouse. https://www.studentclearinghouse.org/blog/fall-2020-undergraduate-enrollment-down-4-4-graduate-enrollment-up-2-9/

[8] Collis, V. and Vegas, E. (2020). Unequally disconnected: Access to online learning in the US. *The Brookings Institute.* Retrieved from: https://www.brookings.edu/blog/education-plus-development/2020/06/22/unequally-disconnected-access-to-online-learning-in-the-us/

institutions and government at all levels must continue to invest in closing digital gaps along all dimensions. At stake is equity of access to basic needs such as healthcare, education, and government services, as well as the ability to participate in a gig economy characterized by remote work, telehealth, and online learning. To address directly the question threaded throughout this paper, institutions of higher education are not doing enough to assess and amplify digital proficiency. Most students today are immersed in social media and adept at using mobile devices. However, educators and the institutions they inhabit often confuse exposure to digital technologies with digital proficiency. Assessment of reading, writing, and arithmetic are foundational in American education, as is remediation of insufficiencies identified. However, both assessment and amplification of digital proficiency – often referred to as the fourth literacy – remain relatively scarce. Potential solutions include developing standardized digital literacy assessments, evaluating the digital proficiency of students entering college, adding more required digital literacy courses to core curricula, and expanding efforts to assess the digital proficiency of students as they progress toward graduation. It is time for institutions of higher education to undertake more intentional, focused efforts to ensure a digitally proficient populace.

Dr. Jorge Pérez joined the UT System in 2018 after twenty years in Georgia, where he was vice provost for institutional effectiveness, SACSCOC accreditation liaison, and professor of information systems at Kennesaw State University. He holds a bachelor's degree in English, an MBA, and a Ph.D. in information systems from Florida State University. Digital literacy is the focus of his current research.

The recipient of a prestigious American Council on Education (ACE) Fellowship, Jorge spent the 2013 academic year in Boston analyzing the strategic plans of constituents of the Massachusetts Department of Higher Education. He serves on the Board of Governors of the Informing Science Institute and the Advisory Board of the Atlanta Council on International Relations; he has served on the boards of the Latin American Association and the Atlanta Electronic Commerce Forum. Jorge has industry experience as a systems analyst, web developer, and consultant. He was inducted into the PhD Project Hall of Fame in 2019.

Jorge is an Ironman Lake Placid finisher who enjoys running, cycling, teaching spin classes, and hiking with his pit bull, Murphy.

Moving from Success to Significance- Promoting Intentional and Systemic DEI Change Within Higher Education

Craig Pickett, Jr., Director, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture

INTRODUCTION

For the past few decades, diversity has remained a hot topic within higher education. Researchers, educators, and practitioners have sought strategies to diversify their classrooms, office personnel, and institutional measures, with the hopes of creating a more impactful, welcoming, supportive, and respectful campus climate for students, faculty, staff, and community members. Unfortunately, the level and intentionality behind these efforts continue to vary from institution to institution. While many colleges employ strategic tactics to promote inclusion and equity from all aspects (enrollment statistics, the classroom, unit personnel, community outreach endeavors, etc.), others place minimal effort within this realm. More specifically, some institutions focus on achieving quotas and numbers, rather than true systemic change. As a result, their diversity efforts mirror the actions of one placing a band-aid over major infection – rather than getting to the root of the issue and identifying the necessary recommendations for true, long-term, and effective change, they settle for short-term and surface level programmatic measures. Institutional leaders have an opportunity to initiate true and systemic on their college campuses – but to do this, leaders must be thoughtful, intentional, consistent, and accountable. The tone, from the top-down, can set both a workplace culture and institutional culture that highlights expectations, role models, proper behavior, and the institutional values committed towards diversity, equity, and inclusion.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

In today's climate of higher education, diversity is considered a transformative tool that aligns with the mission of most postsecondary institutions. Higher education has the potential to contribute to the betterment of society by empowering citizens with the proper tools, training, and confidence for short-term and long-term success.[1] However, many stakeholders within higher education view diversity, equity, and inclusion as one-time endeavors and quota-based metrics, rather than an ongoing process with buy-in of all institutional stakeholders. As such, many institutions are falling through the cracks regarding creating systemic change that promotes cultural awareness, respect, and a greater sense of belonging for

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[1] Chen, A. (2017). Addressing Diversity on College Campuses: Changing Expectations and Practices in Instructional Leadership. Higher Education Studies; Vol. 7, No. 2; 2017

all stakeholders.[2] Many institutions are falling further behind in their diversity efforts, and their progress is neither linear nor uniform across institutions. [3]

A lack of diversity within the university community limits the educational experiences available for students. Furthermore, a lack of strategic and intentional inclusion efforts within higher education compromises the ability of the institution to fulfill its mission of educating, equipping, and empowering the next generation of scholars, leaders, thinkers, and change agents.[4] To make matters worse, many institutions hold diversity-related policies that have been contested on the legal ground that they discriminate against White students. Such legal cases have made it all the way to the Supreme Court, and these Court decisions shape what those in positions of professional leadership can do on their campuses. [5]

Beyond those issues, the successful recruitment of diverse faculty and staff within higher education continues to plague many institutions.[6] Simply increasing the number of underrepresented faculty on campus is not sufficient to result in systemic change. Of significance is the identification by underrepresented faculty and staff of hostile campus climates and their impact on professional and personal lives. More specifically, underrepresented faculty expressed concerns about how their service to their university community was formally evaluated and believed that the lack of recognition they received for their academic and personal work ultimately compromised their ability to progress through the tenure process.[7] In addition, the feeling of being tokenized contributed to a hostile work climate and was not conducive to the recruitment or retention of faculty of color. [8]

SUGGESTED SOLUTIONS AND RECOMMENDED IMPLEMENTATION:
As senior administrators, we must understand the importance of cultural competence, cultural humility, inclusion efforts, and equitable mechanisms within the realms of higher education. We can transform the educational experiences of college students from all walks of life, while simultaneously cultivating opportunities for scholarly research and community engagement, in alignment with the land-grant mission. To effectively improve the lives of all Tennesseans, we must ensure that our academic, personal, and professional work environments mirror the growing diversity within our state, and that we adequately develop initiatives that engender cultural awareness and respect. To accomplish this feat, I

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[2] Moreu, G., Isenberg, N., & Brauer, M. (2021). How to Promote Diversity and Inclusion in Educational Settings: Behavior Change, Climate Surveys, and Effective Pro-Diversity Initiatives. Frontiers in Education.
[3] Chen, A. (2017). Addressing Diversity on College Campuses: Changing Expectations and Practices in Instructional Leadership. Higher Education Studies; Vol. 7, No. 2; 2017
[4] Chen, A. (2017). Addressing Diversity on College Campuses: Changing Expectations
and Practices in Instructional Leadership. Higher Education Studies; Vol. 7, No. 2; 2017. Moreu, G., Isenberg, N., & Brauer, M. (2021). How to Promote Diversity and Inclusion in Educational Settings: Behavior Change, Climate Surveys, and Effective Pro-Diversity Initiatives. Frontiers in Education. Chen, A. (2017). Addressing Diversity on College Campuses: Changing Expectations.
[5] Chen, A. (2017). Addressing Diversity on College Campuses: Changing Expectations
and Practices in Instructional Leadership. Higher Education Studies; Vol. 7, No. 2; 2017
[6] Isaac, K. (2021). Doing DEI Better. Inside Higher Ed.
[7] Isaac, K. (2021). Doing DEI Better. Inside Higher Ed.
[8] Isaac, K. (2021). Doing DEI Better. Inside Higher Ed.

have outlined a list of potential recommendations for administrative implementation based on research and best practices from institutional case studies and analysis.

Develop Opportunities for Institutional Engagement

Educational practitioners, teachers, researchers, and senior-level administrators must understand that diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts go beyond your Chief Diversity Officer. To ensure true, authentic, effective, and systemic implementation, buy-in must occur from academic departments, student life units, and campus stakeholders across the university. This can be accomplished through the development of DEI committees. These committees can and should encompass the views and perspectives of students, faculty, and staff. They should reflect a myriad of academic and co-curricular units. They should reflect the diversity of academic interests, cultural backgrounds, and scholarly research. The campus needs a collective focus on DEI efforts, and the best way to do that is through the creation of various DEI Committees. Through collaborative efforts and the implementation of best practices, these essential groups can discuss campus issues, propose solutions, pass ideas among each other and to their colleagues not on the committee, and ensure that programming and training efforts are collaborative and not siloed and less effective.[9] They can also become great sounding boards for institutional leaders who are charged with confronting and resolving issues of discrimination, bias, and institutionalized privilege, as well as problems in enrollment, employee recruitment, and retention resulting from the failure to ensure that BIPOC campus members feel a sense of belonging early and often.[10]

Engage the Executives

Many institutions believe that their diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts will be fulfilled with the hiring of a Chief Diversity Officer, and laying the duties, responsibilities, and blame on their shoulders. However, having a Chief Diversity Officer sit at the senior leadership table is not enough.[11] Giving a Chief Diversity Officer a budget and a team of professionals to work with their colleagues and to encourage them to take DEI seriously is not enough. Having multiple BIPOC people in senior leadership positions is not enough. Senior administrators throughout the entire institution need to be personally invested in the DEI plan and initiatives, and one of the best ways to ensure people are personally invested is to hold everyone accountable. [12] The President needs to require that every senior leader has at least one annual goal geared toward improving DEI within their division – and preferably multiple goals – whether centered on hiring more people, recruiting more students, delivering intentional programming, reducing the number of bias-related complaints, improving retention or GPA outcomes, or any number of other initiatives. The President must then hold these leaders accountable for meeting and exceeding their goals. When leaders are held accountable for outcomes, they are more likely to work harder and push their direct reports to

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[9] United States. Department of Education. Office of Planning, Evaluation, and Policy Development. (2016). Advancing diversity and inclusion in higher education: key data highlights focusing on race and ethnicity and promising practices.

[10] Vector Solutions (2020). 5 Steps to Demonstrate Your DEI Commitment on Campus.

[11] Vector Solutions (2020). 5 Steps to Demonstrate Your DEI Commitment on Campus

[12] United States. Department of Education. Office of Planning, Evaluation, and Policy Development. (2016). Advancing diversity and inclusion in higher education: key data highlights focusing on race and ethnicity and promising practices.

do more regarding DEI efforts across their institution. As a result, positive change is virtually guaranteed to happen.[13]

Engage Your Board of Trustees

Beyond the office of the Chancellor or President, institutional Board members should truly understand and value the importance of diversity, equity, and inclusion.[14] A campus community should value the contributions of everyone, regardless of their age, race, sex, sexual orientation, religious background, physical limitations, or any other immutable characteristic that tends to drive segments of our campus to mistreat other people rather than embrace their differences.[15] An institution's board of trustees can help ensure that policies, guidelines, fundraising mechanisms, and institutional visibility promote cultural awareness, respect, and a greater sense of belonging for all stakeholders.[16] In addition, the board should have a designated committee of members exclusively dedicated to DEI, or the executive committee of the board should have a subcommittee that evaluates institutional efforts in this regard and recommends changes to effectuate improved results. Higher education thrives in a world of shared governance. By sharing the responsibility for DEI outcomes among the entire campus, including senior leadership, the President, and the board of trustees, we can promote effective and systemic change. [17]

Go Beyond a DEI Commitment Statement

To promote systemic change, senior leaders must go beyond words and focus on measurable actions and evaluated behavior. [18] While it may be easy for institutional Presidents and Chancellors to provide rousing speeches about the importance of diversity within higher education, they can set expectations beyond the podium. They must serve as role model, and demonstrate diversity, equity, and inclusion through their practices from the board room to the classroom.[19] Messaging and modeling from leadership needs to be reinforced by the institutionalized actions and investments needed to truly drive impact. Adequate funding and staffing levels are critical. Hiring a Chief Diversity Officer who is not adequately empowered to implement structural changes across the institution and/or lacks a dedicated team to implement system-wide diversity, equity, and inclusion strategic initiatives creates the risk of commitment being seen as tokenistic and performative. Inclusive excellence must be integrated into the mission and vision statements of an institution, prioritized, and represented at the cabinet and board level, and supported by appropriate budget and personnel.[20]

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[13] Isaac, K. (2021). Doing DEI Better. Inside Higher Ed.

[14] Isaac, K. (2021). Doing DEI Better. Inside Higher Ed.

[15] Isaac, K. (2021). Doing DEI Better. Inside Higher Ed.

[16] Isaac, K. (2021). Doing DEI Better. Inside Higher Ed.

[17] Isaac, K. (2021). Doing DEI Better. Inside Higher Ed.

[18] United States. Department of Education. Office of Planning, Evaluation, and Policy Development. (2016). Advancing diversity and inclusion in higher education: key data highlights focusing on race and ethnicity and promising practices.

[19] United States. Department of Education. Office of Planning, Evaluation, and Policy Development. (2016). Advancing diversity and inclusion in higher education: key data highlights focusing on race and ethnicity and promising practices.

[20] Vector Solutions (2020). 5 Steps to Demonstrate Your DEI Commitment on Campus

Focus on Assessment

Campus leaders must enact strategic procedures to ensure equity in the student experience, both inside and outside the classroom. This starts with collecting and disaggregating a broad spectrum of data to better understand unique needs and strengths across your campus population, and the climate of the campus.[21] These insights should inform the development of specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time-bound (SMART) goals that connect to both individual and institutional outcomes.[22] They should also extend to informing initiatives to ensure equitable faculty and staff representation, culturally competent campus services, and understanding town and gown relationships. The work of examining the impact of identity and fostering inclusive excellence across all facets of the campus culture and experience requires rigorous intentionality, robust collaboration, and an ongoing institutional commitment to transparency, accountability, and action.[23]

Foster Accountability

Strong DEI policies or initiatives are more than just a mechanism for defining and enforcing expectations.[24] They are the backbone of your institution's values. As such, policies must be developed hand in hand with stakeholders of all levels and identities. Every member of your campus must see themselves in the college community you are seeking to build and feel a personal responsibility to uphold the collective values of equity, respect, and inclusion that undergird your policies.[25] Active proliferation and appreciation of diversity go beyond "safe spaces" — your policies must ensure all people and places foster physical and psychological safety. A campus culture of inclusive excellence clearly establishes and consistently upholds expectations that all students, staff, and faculty are welcome at your institution and experience the conditions that enable them to truly thrive.[26]

Engage Your Community On- and Off-Campus

Preventing bias, discrimination, and injustice is more than just a program – it's an ongoing, intentional process.[27] Skills-based education that is universally implemented, regularly built upon, and reinforced is a critical component of demonstrating your commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion. Like bystander intervention programs to address issues like sexual violence or substance misuse, a pre-requisite to teaching concepts like anti-racism, inclusive leadership, microaggression disruption, cultural humility, and the foundational aspects of DEI can ensure that your campus community is part of the solution – not the problem. Inclusive excellence requires campus-wide programming that is tailored for your unique and diverse community, building both awareness and skills that will benefit your campus culture, your institutional brand, and the success of your students in the classroom, the workforce, and beyond.[28]

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[21] Vector Solutions (2020). 5 Steps to Demonstrate Your DEI Commitment on Campus
[22] Vector Solutions (2020). 5 Steps to Demonstrate Your DEI Commitment on Campus
[23] Vector Solutions (2020). 5 Steps to Demonstrate Your DEI Commitment on Campus
[24] Vector Solutions (2020). 5 Steps to Demonstrate Your DEI Commitment on Campus
[25] Moreu, G., Isenberg, N., & Brauer, M. (2021). How to Promote Diversity and Inclusion in Educational Settings: Behavior Change, Climate Surveys, and Effective Pro-Diversity Initiatives. Frontiers in Education.
[26] Vector Solutions (2020). 5 Steps to Demonstrate Your DEI Commitment on Campus
[27] Vector Solutions (2020). 5 Steps to Demonstrate Your DEI Commitment on Campus
[28] Vector Solutions (2020). 5 Steps to Demonstrate Your DEI Commitment on Campus

CONCLUSION/TAKE-AWAYS

As higher education professionals, it is imperative that we identify opportunities to go beyond the grain, break traditional customs, and implement strategic plans that lead to true and systemic change. Considering the ever-changing landscape of higher education, it is imperative that enterprise leaders identify ways to promote cultural humility, belonging, inclusion, and equity in all aspects of campus life, including student affairs, academic affairs, human resources, funding mechanisms, and community outreach. As we aim to be the catalyst for scholarship, engagement, and student success, we must identify essential aspects to welcome the ideas, perspectives, and experiences of those from all walks of life. In doing so, we'll ensure the best for our students, faculty, staff, and community partners.

Craig Pickett, Jr. serves as the inaugural Director for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion for the University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture. Craig is extremely passionate about student success, higher education management, and DEI efforts, with extensive experience working on college campuses and non-profits across the nation. In his spare time, Craig is an active member of his community. He serves as Board Member for Girl Talk, Inc., a non-profit focusing on the academic, personal, and professional development for young girls throughout Knoxville. He also serves as an Advisory Council Member for the Knoxville Area Urban League, National Achievers Society, a scholastic organization empowering underrepresented high school scholars. Furthermore, he serves as a Mentor for Emerald Youth Foundation. Lastly, he serves as the Board Co-Chair for the United Way of Greater Knoxville's Young Leaders Collective. Craig earned his bachelor's in political science (Davidson College) in 2008 and a master's in student affairs in higher education (Indiana University of Pennsylvania) in 2010. He is currently completing his PhD in higher education administration from the University of Tennessee Knoxville (2022).

Making College Affordable to Avoid Student Debt

Ms. Susan Robertson, University of Tennessee Institute for Public Service

INTRODUCTION

Data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics show that median weekly earnings increase and unemployment decreases as educational levels rise. The 2019 statistics show that the median weekly earnings for someone with a doctoral degree are $1,883 while someone with a high school diploma have median weekly earnings of $746.[1]

For years, students and families realized this and considered entering colleges as the next step after graduating high school. However, as of November 2021, student loan debt in the United States totaled $1.75 trillion and was growing six times faster than the nation's economy; about 42.9 million Americans with federal student loan debt each owe an average of $37,105 for their student loans.[2]

Problem Statement

Samantha Roberts, a University of Tennessee Knoxville graduate and a meteorologist with WOIO in Cleveland, Ohio, is familiar with student debt. After graduating in four years from UTK in 2010 and studying for a meteorology certificate at Mississippi State University for three additional years, she started her TV career with $160,000 in debt. She took out both private and federal government loans to pay for her education, not taking into consideration how she would repay those loans on the salary of a small-market weather forecaster.

"It became clear to me when I called one of the companies I had a federal loan with," Roberts said. "As I was asking the customer service rep questions, one of her comments was, 'Well, you have to understand, these loans aren't really meant to be paid back.' It was after that when I made the decision to rid myself of that debt." With budgeting support from her husband and having moved up to a large-market television salary, she's been able to nearly pay off her student loan debt.
Roberts said if she'd graduated high school knowing what she knows now, she would have stayed in her home state of Virginia to attend college and would have lived at home throughout her college years.
With students graduating each year with hundreds of thousands of dollars in student loan debt, it begs the question – when did attending college become so expensive?

John Thelin, a professor at the University of Kentucky and author of *A History of American Higher Education*, said in a 2014 story on National Public Radio (NPR) that the turning point for higher education costs came in the early 1970s. He points to double-digit inflation, the oil embargo, and a hurting economy as the impetus to sky-rocketing university costs. States' investments in higher education dwindled, driving up

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[1] Learn More, Earn More: Education Leads to Higher Wages, Lower Unemployment (May 2020). Retrieved December 20, 2021 from https://www.bls.gov/careeroutlook/2020/data-on-display/education-pays.html
[2] 2Hanson, Melanie (January 9, 2022). Average Cost of College by Year EducationData.org. Retrieved February 2022 from https://educationdata.org/average-cost-of-college-by-year

tuition costs; and family income declined, forcing families and students to take out loans to pay for college, which was the beginning of the student loan debt tsunami.[3]

Sandy Baum, a fellow at the Urban Institute, said in the same NPR story, "So it's not that colleges are spending more money to educate students. It's that they have to get the money from someplace to replace their lost state funding – and that's from tuition and fees from students and families."
 The problem this paper will address is: How do college and universities become more affordable, and what is the solution to reducing the amount of student debt in this country?

Suggested Solutions
A chart of tuition history for a full-time, undergraduate student at the University of Tennessee Knoxville shows that in-state tuition in 1987-1988 per semester was $733.[4] This was the first year UTK switched from quarters to semesters, and students were not yet being assessed for such fees as technology and facilities. The per semester cost for the 2021-2022 year for a student carrying 12 credit hours tallies up to $6,622 – a total increase of 803 percent.

The website Educationdata.org is the result of an initiative to collect data and statistics about the U.S. education system and make them available for the general public. Looking at the cost of college in the 20th century, data shows that in the year 1900, undergraduates at the University of Pennsylvania paid $150 per year. In 1999, undergraduates at Penn paid $14,890 a year to attend. Adjusting for inflation, the cost of undergraduate tuition at Penn increased 491 percent between 1913 and 1999.[5]

As mentioned earlier, colleges and universities in many states have experienced a decrease in support from their state government. Richard Vedder, an author and professor of economics emeritus at Ohio University, agreed with that fact and adds that "the number of students seeking an education, the expansion of financial-aid programs, the need to increase budgets for faculty and staff and the need to fund expanded student services are also factors."[6]

"The demand for higher education has risen dramatically since 1985," Vedder said. "Once demand goes up and nothing else happens, that will raise prices." Vedder said, "The more students who want to attend college, the more the cost of college increases and more students take out loans to pay for it." Some researchers theorize, and Vedder agrees, that the increase in available financial aid options has caused tuition to rise. According to the Business Insider article, in 1978, U.S. Congress passed a bill known as the

[3] How the Cost of College Went from Affordable to Sky High (March 2014). Retrieved January 31, 2022 from https://www.npr.org/2014/03/18/29   0868013/how-the-cost-of-college-went-from-affordable-to-sky-high
[4] University of Tennessee, Knoxville Tuition Fees History. Retrieved February 1, 2022 from https://budget.utk.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/36/2018/06/FeesAndTuitionHistory2018-19web.pdf
[5] Hanson, Melanie (November 2017). Student Loan Debt Statistics. Retrieved December 20, 2021 from EducationData.org, https://educationdata.org/student-loan-debt-statistics
[6] Hoffower, Hillary (June 26, 2019). College is More Expensive Than it's Ever Been, and the 5 Reasons Why Suggest It's Only Going to Get Worse. Retrieved January 31, 2022 from https://www.businessinsider.com/why-is-college-so-expensive-2018-4

Middle-Income Student Assistance Act. This increased the number of students who became eligible for student loans and the number of middle-class students eligible for Pell Grants.[7]

U.S. Congress created a way in the 1990s for families to borrow to send their kids to college. It has a dollar limit for undergraduate students, but not for graduate students. The Parent Plus and Grad Plus programs have become the fastest growing portion of student loans.[8] The Ballhaus, Fuller article found that the Plus loans made up about 12 percent of the $1.6 trillion in existing federal student loans in June 2021, and made up about 26 percent of the $78 billion in new loans. While some in Congress have tried to introduce legislation to cap the programs or reduce interest rates, nothing has been successful. Ballhaus and Fuller wrote: "Among the reasons: resistance to restricting disadvantaged students' access to funds, fear of angering universities, and the fact that the programs—on paper—have historically made money for the government."

Recommendations

With student loans readily available and the cost of tuition continuing to rise, what role can colleges and universities play in reducing student debt? The National Association of System Heads, an organization for the chief executives of public colleges and universities, announced in late 2021 the formation of The Power of Systems initiative.[9] These higher education systems, including The University of Tennessee, have pledged to hold themselves accountable on three metrics identified through the initiative – credential completion, social mobility and student loan reduction. The Power of Systems hopes to "design a framework for transformation that would ultimately extend to campus heads, faculty, students and staff,".[10] This phase of the initiative will launch in 2022.

Mark Kantrowitz, in a 2021 *Forbes* magazine article, listed several tips for students to pay less for college.[11] He suggests:

- Earn college credit while still in high school by enrolling in Advanced Placement classes or participating in such high school programs as International Baccalaureate.
- Apply to less expensive colleges and use the net price calculator, a tool of the U.S. Department of Education, to get an estimate for college. [12]
- Attend community college to earn an associate's degree or to earn college credit before transferring to a four-year university.

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[7] Ibid.

[8] Ballhaus, Rebecca and Fuller, Andrea (Dec. 8, 2021). Why Washington Won't Fix Student Debt Plans that Overload Families. Retrieved February 2022 from https://www.wsj.com/articles/college-university-student-debt-parent-grad-plus-loans-congress-school-borrowing-11638930489?mod=article_inline

[9] Higher Education Leaders Across the National Pledge to End Student Inequities Through the Power of Systems (December 2021). Retrieved December 10 from https://powerofsystems.org/2021/12/08/higher-education-leaders-across-the-nation-pledge-to-end-student-inequities-through-the-power-of-systems/

[10] Higher Education Leaders Across the National Pledge to End Student Inequities Through the Power of Systems (December 2021). Retrieved December 10 from https://powerofsystems.org/2021/12/08/higher-education-leaders-across-the-nation-pledge-to-end-student-inequities-through-the-power-of-systems/

[11] Kantrowitz, Mark (December 26, 2021). How to Cut College Costs. Retrieved January 2, 2022 from https://www.forbes.com/sites/markkantrowitz/2021/12/26/how-to-cut-college-costs/?sh=17dec74eddb4

[12] Net Price Calculator Center. Retrieved March 8, 2022 from https://collegecost.ed.gov/net-price

- Research and apply for scholarships.
- Choose colleges with generous no-loans financial aid packages. However, he points out that many of these colleges are very selective, making admission difficult.

In addition, some individual states and universities are creating programs to make higher education more affordable and more accessible for those who want to pursue a college degree. In Tennessee, the state offers Tennessee Promise, a scholarship and mentoring program to help increase the number of students attending college. It's a last-dollar scholarship that covers tuition and fees not covered under Pell grants, the HOPE (lottery) scholarship or the Tennessee Student Assistance Award.[13] Tennessee Promise, as a last-dollar scholarship, also allows eligible students to attend community college or a technical school tuition free. The University of Tennessee launched UT Promise, which is also a last-dollar scholarship, for students whose family household income is less than $60,000 a year.

A number of schools, including Purdue University, have robust online course offerings that are available at a fraction of the cost of on-campus courses. In 2018, Purdue University acquired Kaplan University and works in support of Kaplan Higher Education to offer Purdue Global. Purdue Global offers a tuition discount of 45 percent for in-state students and free tuition for Purdue University employees.[14]
Still, other universities are focusing on reducing the time it takes students to complete their degree. At Seton Hall University, students with a high school GPA of 3.0 or higher receive lower tuition rates for four years and four years only.[15]

Lowering tuition, offering generous financial aid packages or cutting costs on university campuses are great ideas to decrease the cost of higher education for students and families. To benefit students and families further, universities and states need to work together to continue to find ways to make a college education more affordable. High schools in each state should add a post-high school preparatory class for juniors to their curriculum. This type of class can address all of the options available to students after high school, and explain the cost of these options.

It's also time for the U.S. government to get out of the student loan business and for colleges and universities to be accountable for their students. Robert Wright with the James G. Martin Center for Academic Renewal suggests that universities fund student financial aid, in the form of loans, through their endowments, and once a student graduates and lands gainful employment, the school gets the interest and principal paid back according to the terms of the loan.[16] With that type of arrangement, universities will have a vested interest in the amount of time it takes students to graduate and the value of their own programs. As part of the financial aid package, students will work somewhere on campus

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[13] Tennessee Promise website. Retrieved Feb. 20, 2022 from https://www.tn.gov/tnpromise/about.html
[14] Transaction Complete for Purdue Global (March 2018). Retrieved January 2, 2022 from https://www.purdue.edu/newsroom/releases/2018/Q1/transaction-complete-for-purdue-global.html
[15] Robinson, Jenna and Keaveney, Stephanie (February 2016) Cutting Costs Is Possible. These Schools Did it. Retrieved February 1, 2022 from https://www.jamesgmartin.center/2016/02/cutting-costs-is-possible-these-schools-did-it/
[16] Wright, Robert (March 2019). Universities Should Invest in Their Students, Not Securities. Retrieved Feb. 1, 2022 from https://www.jamesgmartin.center/2019/03/universities-should-invest-in-their-students-not-securities/

where they can learn the types of soft skills (i.e. communication, office etiquette and teamwork) that will help prepare them for employment after graduation.

Berea College, a private institution in Berea, Kentucky, relies on gifts from alumni and friends as well as income from the college's endowment to help fund tuition for its students. Berea's No-Tuition Promise guarantees that no student will pay tuition. According to their website, students will pay an average of $1,000 for housing, meals and fees during their time at the college.[17] However, the school does offer aid for housing, meals and fees for students who need it.

CONCLUSIONS

Universities focus on recruiting students, increasing enrollment and on the students' success during their time on campus, but they turn a blind eye to how much debt these students accrue while obtaining their degree. As mentioned in the introduction, as of November 2021, student loan debt in this country totaled $1.75 trillion and was growing six times faster than the nation's economy!

Universities, including The University of Tennessee, publicize each year how they have the largest, the smartest, the most diverse, etc., freshman class in the school's history. It's time that colleges and universities start focusing on how these students pay for that coveted degree.

Maybe one of these days, university relations can issue a news release announcing that 100 percent of the graduating class is leaving without student debt.

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She came to UT after spending more than 20 years in the communications field with various private sector companies. Before coming to UT, she served as a manager in corporate communications with Scripps Networks in Knoxville.

A native of Roanoke, Va., she graduated from East Tennessee State University with a bachelor's degree in communication (journalism) in 1987. She started her career as a reporter with The Mountain Press newspaper in Sevierville. During her seven years with the newspaper, she worked as a sportswriter, features writer and general assignment reporter. She's also worked as an account executive with two Knoxville public relations agencies and as public relations director/assistant general manager with a minor league hockey team in the East Coast Hockey League.

She received her master's degree in strategic leadership from ETSU in 2015.

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[17] No Tuition, No Kidding. Retrieved March 8, 2022 from https://www.berea.edu/admissions/no-tuition/

The Rest of the Story on the Value of Higher Education

Mr. Robby Shelton, Vice Chancellor for Finance & Administration, University of Tennessee Southern

When I was growing up, my father loved listening to Paul Harvey on the radio and particularly his segments of "The Rest of the Story." I remember many of those stories today and how the additional information and facts were critical to understanding the full story. The "Wicked Problem" in higher education is that unfortunately when painting the full picture of the value of higher education, those of us in higher education do a poor job of telling the rest of the story. We hear all the time how higher education, at best, is too expensive and, at worst, not attainable, not important, and not useful for many in our society. Higher education in our nation, I would argue, is not overpriced and certainly not unattainable, but instead undervalued.

While we continue to not tell the rest of the story, we allow others to paint a false narrative, that higher education is too expensive, students are borrowing too much, and the end product, their degree, is not worth it. This misperception should concern all of us in higher education, particularly since the number of high school graduates will begin to decline during this decade according to the National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES). With this decline and the growing misperception about higher education, how will we continue to meet workforce development needs that require a college degree? We already have a critical shortage of nurses and teachers nationwide and that's just the tip of the iceberg if we don't start proactively addressing this "Wicked Problem."

In addition, in November 2021, a record number of citizens, 4.5 million, quit their jobs, according to the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics. This is a perfect storm that higher education institutions across the nation can no longer ignore. Higher education must address these issues now or risk not being able to meet its obligation of providing the educated workforce needed across the country.

There is no state in the country better positioned to lead on these issues than Tennessee. In Governor Bill Lee's budget just released in February, there is a one billion dollar increase in funding for education. Tennessee sees the value of education and the return on the investment not only for the individual but also for the state.

Affordable Cost of Education in Tennessee
Regarding cost, for example, and the perception that colleges and universities are too expensive, the data shows that colleges and universities have never been more affordable nationwide, particularly in our state. For years, Tennessee has led the way with affordable and accessible education. Below are the tuition and mandatory fees for the 2021-22 academic year for the University of Tennessee Knoxville, the University of Tennessee Chattanooga, the University of Tennessee Martin, and the University of Tennessee Southern:

	UTK	UTC	UTM	UTS
Tuition and Mandatory Fees	$13,244	$9,656	$9,912	$10,200

Availability of Financial Aid and Scholarships

These rates are affordable, which allows the most financially challenged students, as defined by the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), to attend these schools at no cost for tuition and mandatory fees. In addition, to affordable tuition, Tennessee is one of just a few states that offers both a need-based grant, the Tennessee Student Assistance Award (TSAA), and a merit-based grant, the Tennessee Educational Lottery Scholarship (TELS). In addition to these two programs, which have been transformational in making most colleges and universities much more affordable, Tennessee started a new program, Tennessee Promise, in the 2015-16 academic year. Tennessee Promise was started to help address both the college-going rates in Tennessee and help increase the percentage of Tennesseans with a postsecondary credential.

Tennessee Promise, as a last-dollar scholarship, pays for tuition and fees for the first two years for students who attend community or technical schools. It is easy for students to apply, online and find resources at https://www.tn.gov/tnpromise, for Tennessee Promise by completing the following guidelines during their senior year of high school:
- Complete the Tennessee Promise Application by November 1
- Complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) by March 1
- Attend two mandatory meetings, (one in the Fall and one in the Spring)
- Submit 8 hours of community service by July 1

This program has been successful on both fronts, particularly with helping students complete a postsecondary credential. According to the Tennessee Higher Education Commission (THEC), in 2013, only 36% of Tennesseans had a postsecondary credential and in 2021 that number increased to 47%. The goal is to reach 55% by 2025. It may be a little early to tell if the state will meet those goals, but the chances are it will. In any case, this has been a very successful initiative.

In addition to Tennessee Promise, the University of Tennessee began UT Promise in 2020. UT Promise covers the last-dollar amount of tuition and mandatory fees for families whose adjusted gross income is $60,000 or less per year. The requirements for UT Promise are similar to Tennessee Promise, though UT Promise recipients must be eligible for the Tennessee Educational Lottery Scholarship and be full-time and continuously enrolled.

Tennessee Reconnect is an opportunity for adults who are classified as independent by the FAFSA to enroll at a community college. The Tennessee Reconnect Grant is a last-dollar grant that pays the remaining balance of tuition and mandatory fees after other state and financial aid has been applied. The Reconnect Grant is available to eligible adults who want to pursue an associate degree, technical degree, or technical diploma at a community college or technical college. Some public and private colleges and universities are eligible to award associate degrees, but it is not a last-dollar grant at these schools.

The requirements to be eligible for Tennessee Reconnect according to https://www.tn.gov/nexttennessee/tennessee-reconnect/tennessee-reconnect-one-pager0.html, are:

- Be a Tennessee resident for at least one year
- Be a U.S. citizen or eligible non-citizen
- Qualify as an independent student on the FAFSA
- Comply with U.S. Selective Service requirements, if applicable
- Not be incarcerated
- Not have previously earned an associate or baccalaureate degree
- Not be in default on a student loan
- Not owe an outstanding balance to an institution
- Be admitted to and enroll in a Tennessee public community college at least part-time (minimum 6 hours) in courses leading to a certificate or associate degree

To receive and maintain this grant, an adult learner must:

- Enroll in at least six (6) semester hours in the fall and spring semesters
- Maintain a minimum 2.0 GPA
- Complete the renewal FAFSA each year
- Continue to participate in the Reconnect Success Plan by completing the Reconnect Grant application every year

The reason Tennessee Reconnect is so important for our state is, even if every 2022 Tennessee high school graduate enrolled in college and achieve a degree in the traditional four-year time frame, the state of Tennessee would still be short of its goal of 55% of Tennesseans having a bachelor, associate or technical degree by 2025, (THEC). Many of these students, once they complete their associate or technical degree, will enroll in four-year colleges and universities to continue their upward trajectory in their careers.

In addition to all of the assistance provided through the Tennessee-specific awards previously mentioned, in 2018-19, over 127,000 qualified Tennessee students received $510 million through the Federal Pell Grant program. Pell Grants are targeted to students who have the greatest financial need as derived from the FAFSA. Thanks to these programs, Tennessee's colleges and universities have kept annual tuition increases as low as 2-3% per year over the past five years.

The Misperception of Student Borrowing
The second misperception that most people have is that students are borrowing too much and going into too much debt to attain their degrees. We hear much too often how students are graduating college with hundreds of thousands of dollars in debt. This may be true in some instances, especially if students are receiving medical or law degrees, but it is far from the norm that society believes to be true. Again, Tennessee is leading the way in affordable education. For example, look at four of the University of Tennessee's campuses; the University of Tennessee Knoxville, the University of Tennessee Chattanooga, the University of Tennessee Martin, and the University of Tennessee Southern. The following data is provided by College Navigator-National Center for Education Statistics for the 2019-20 academic year.

	UTK	UTC	UTM	UTS
Avg. Loan Amount per year	$6,398	$6,068	$6,157	$6,368
Avg. Loan Amount over 4 years	$25,592	$24,272	$24,628	$25,472

The data above demonstrates that the average loan amount is approximately $25,000 for a student receiving a four-year degree from one of the four University of Tennessee campuses listed above. In addition, not all students who attend these institutions receive loans. Below is the 2019-20 information provided by College Navigator for the percentage of incoming freshmen who are receiving Federal Student Loans.

Percentage of First-Time Freshmen Receiving Federal Student Loans:

UTK	UTC	UTM	UTS
39%	48%	51%	59%

Indeed, the data tells us the rest of the story: only about half of the students attending these four-year universities are receiving student loans. There are two reasons for this; one we have mentioned several times-the tuition and fees across the four-year UT campuses are affordable, and the second is that there are numerous sources of financial aid available to students who qualify.

As an example, let's look at the financial situation of a student who has a 0 Expected Family Contribution (EFC):

> $6,495 Pell Grant
> $2,000 State Grant
> $3,500 Tennessee Educational Lottery Scholarship
> $1,500 Hope Supplemental Award
> $13,495 Total Award

Thus, students who are classified as the neediest according to their FAFSA are attending the University of Tennessee Knoxville, the University of Tennessee Chattanooga, the University of Tennessee Martin, and the University of Tennessee Southern tuition-free. How often do we hear that report? We have only mentioned, up to this point, the federal and state aid programs for which students may be eligible for. On top of these opportunities for students, all colleges and universities offer millions and millions of dollars in scholarship opportunities. These scholarships range from academics, athletics, fine arts, and many more opportunities for additional funds to make colleges and universities affordable.

Return on Investment
The last issue is the misperception, that once a student graduates from a college or university, the degree is not worth the investment of time and money. According to research completed in 2021 by CNBC, a person with a college degree will earn $2.8 million in their lifetime versus $1.6 million for those individuals with just a high school diploma. The college graduate, over a 30-year career, would earn $40,000 more per year. Therefore, if a graduate left college owing $25,000, that graduate would earn substantially more than what they borrowed in their first year of employment.

Think about how many people give very little thought to buying an automobile for $50,000. Once you drive that vehicle off the lot it starts depreciating. Your college degree only appreciates over time. I would also make the case that not only is the return on investment financially substantial, but the quality of life that one enjoys is also substantial. According to collegestats.org, college graduates tend to live longer, healthier lives. Think about where you are today and the career you are now enjoying. Think about the life you enjoy today. Would any of it be possible without your college degree? Is a college degree worth it? Of course, it is!

In closing, I'm a strong believer in the value of higher education. I paid close attention to the rest of the story and have made that story my life's work, having spent my entire 33-year career in higher education. The rest of my story is that I have seen first-hand how higher education changes and transforms lives. The majority of students with whom I have had the pleasure to work with were first-generation college students, and many came from low-income homes. These students wanted nothing more than an opportunity to better their lives and the lives of their families.

The greatest satisfaction in my career, as Vice President for Campus Life and Enrollment Management, was allowing them to achieve their dreams of a college degree, to see the pride they had when walking across the stage to receive their diplomas, to see the families' tears of happiness in attaining what they had thought was unattainable, to know that they had achieved something that no one else in their family had achieved, and to know for sure that they could move forward to provide a better future for themselves and others. Nothing, I can think of, can compare to that! Is higher education worth it? Absolutely!

Robby Shelton currently serves as the Vice Chancellor of Finance and Administration at the University of Tennessee Southern located in Pulaski, TN (formerly Martin Methodist College). He serves as the chief financial officer and supervises all budget and fiscal matters, personnel and operations, as well as facilities, admissions, campus life, and auxiliary services. Robby graduated Martin in 1985 and furthered his education at Middle Tennessee State University where he graduated with a Bachelor's Degree in Communications and a minor in English and Political Science in 1988. He has spent over 33 years in various roles at Martin Methodist College. He began his career in recruiting and soon became VP for Campus Life and Enrollment Management. In 2016, he became Interim President while a presidential search was conducted. After the search was completed, Robby served as the Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer. In 2017, he was awarded the Servant Leadership Alumni Award affirming his lifelong service to the college, his church, and his community. In 2019, Robby graduated from TICUA's Executive Leadership Institute.

Robby is married to Julie Shelton (Martin 2000) and they have five children.

Where the Sun Never Sets: Effectively Communicating with Elected Officials

Mr. Timothy Sigler, Assistant Vice President for Government Relations & Advocacy, University of Tennessee System Administration

Introduction

Being a public institution of higher education means helping the government address its grandest challenges, from education to epidemics and everything in between. We are partners in both our successes and our failures. If business and industry rejoice in a well-trained workforce, then our institutions are worthy of praise for a job well done. If our population's literacy rates are lower than average, then our institutions should bear some responsibility for that as well. Enterprise leaders in the realm of public education should keep this dynamic front of mind and give special recognition to the co-dependency of such a relationship. This level of cohesion means that elected officials exercise broad authority over an institution including the option to dissolve or "sunset" a public entity should it be found that expectations are not being met or that its goals are contrary to that of the governing body. Conversely, these officials also retain the authority to allow a public university to thrive through generous appropriations, favorable legislation, and impactful policies that have a profound effect on our students, faculty, staff, and the citizens of Tennessee.

At public institutions of higher education, it is imperative that a strategy be carefully crafted when communicating with elected officials to keep the partnership strong and productive for both parties. Proactive efforts are critical to ensure a clear and consistent message to elected officials to illustrate our contribution and effectively advocate for our needs. Additionally, timing outreach appropriately plays a vital role in how those communications are received. Lastly, tailoring communication efforts to specific individuals given a particular subject matter can serve to amplify and lend credence to a position.

Problem Statement

The challenge presents itself when institutions work against themselves. The lack of a comprehensive policy governing contact with elected officials leaves a public university without a consistent and unified voice. Ungoverned communications are an avenue for personal opinion to contradict the priorities of the institution as a whole. If an individual employed by a public university asserts a position on a legislative proposal using university resources, such as e-mail, then government officials may attribute that position to the University. This can impede clarity as to where an institution stands on a given matter.

Absent a purposeful policy, tactical timing surrounding outreach may also suffer as the institution can lose significant political capital prematurely or in a greater magnitude than desired. For example, if a legislative session includes multiple measures with a negative impact on the University it is important to pause and assess the landscape before reacting. This provides the opportunity to consider other stakeholders that may share the concern. Additionally, in Tennessee, state budgetary discussions occur during specific windows of time. Requesting funds outside of those windows may result in an overlooked proposal.

Finally, targeted communications efforts may become unnecessarily broad without a framework for advocacy efforts. Repeated requests of an elected official can result in fatigue and limit an institutional leader's ability to raise concerns with that official on a, potentially, higher priority. Whenever possible, it is best to avoid spending political capital unnecessarily.

Suggested Solution

One of our great rights as American citizens is to petition our government and communicate directly with those who represent us. As private citizens, we may communicate with elected officials on anything and as often as we choose. As public employees, however, it is important to consider how individual advocacy may impact the efforts of an institution. Comprehensive policies must be in place to address certain communications that, inadvertently or otherwise, serve to detract from the priorities of the institution. These policies should ensure that those who work to formulate the public policy and budgetary agenda for the University guide official communications with elected officials. Some may argue that such a policy is an overly burdensome restriction of an individual's free speech. While an effective policy is restrictive, it should not impede an individual's private right to communicate with elected officials. It should also allow an individual to qualify themselves as university faculty or staff, having professional expertise on a matter, so long as the request itself is not directly or inadvertently attributed to the institution.

A policy governing communication with elected officials should include a provision that prohibits personal advocacy using university resources. An individual who exercises their First Amendment right to advocate on a personal matter should refrain from using the official letterhead and e-mail provided through employment with a university. Additionally, such communications must not utilize university-owned hardware or occur while the institution is compensating an individual. This serves not as an attempt to silence an employee but to distinguish the priorities of the individual from that of the university.

Additionally, the policy needs to address official communications on behalf of the institution. There are many instances where it is appropriate for faculty and staff to communicate with elected officials in an official capacity. For instance, an economist employed by a public university may, on behalf of the institution, serve the state by presenting to a legislative committee on labor markets and population trends. Additionally, an elected official may have an interest in visiting a campus or institute of a public university requiring necessary communication with university employees. As our institutions are partners with governmental entities, policies should not place undue restrictions on this type of communication. However, it is important that the policy require coordination with units of the institution whose primary function is to interact with elected officials. This may prevent duplication of efforts and provide for strategic timing considerations given the multitude of issues considered or proposed by the official. Consider a legislator is interested in introducing a bill they believe would benefit an institution. In this case, it may be best for an in-person visit to occur before the legislative session begins to best illustrate

the immediate needs of the university. Pennsylvania State University[1], Northwestern University[2], and Indiana University[3] each have policies that can be used as a template for institutional leaders seeking to implement such provisions.

Recommended Implementation
It is critical for those impacted by a policy governing communication with elected officials to have representation in its implementation. Faculty and staff must have the opportunity to provide feedback on the proposed policy to provide insight into its practical application. Feedback is important not only to ensure the protection of the rights of those the policy impacts but also to strengthen its construction. Moreover, it may be difficult for such a measure to be successfully implemented and adhered to if all stakeholders do not have a seat at the table. Though this may be customary practice in public institutions of higher education its necessity cannot be overemphasized when seeking to make substantial policy changes that address speech.

Lastly, it is helpful for a separate 'living' guidance document to accompany the policy to illustrate examples of communications it seeks to govern. The document is living in the sense that it can be continuously updated, separate from the policy adoption process, to reflect specific scenarios in which policy applicability may be in question. I promote this recently adopted approach at the University of Tennessee as a best practice because it assists with ease of comprehension increasing the policy's effectiveness. It further provides an open door for inquiries from those impacted and serves to clarify inquiries in an expedited fashion. The previous practice of including guidance examples directly within the policy resulted in a cumbersome product that required multiple approvals to amend.

CONCLUSION
In closing, a thoughtful and purposeful strategy for communicating with elected officials is necessary to reach the desired goals of a public institution of higher education. Institutional leaders are best served to present such goals to align with those of the governmental entity with oversight authority. As such, carefully crafted policy governing contact with elected officials serves to keep an institution's message clear and consistent. It further protects the strategic timing and tailoring of official outreach efforts. Effective policies that protect institutional strategy include provisions to prohibit the use of university resources in personal advocacy, require coordination on official communications with elected officials, and safeguard an employee's right to privately advocate.

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[1] (2015, November 3). AD50 Contact with State and Federal Officials and Official Requests from Government Officials. The Pennsylvania State University Policies Website. https://policy.psu.edu/policies/ad50
[2] (2010, January 19). Lobbying and Communications by Faculty and Staff with Federal, State, and Local Government Officials. Northwestern University Government Relations. https://www.northwestern.edu/govrelations/resources/grass-roots-and-direct-lobbying.html
[3] (2016, June 15). Contact with State Officials, Federal Officials, and Political Campaigns, and Other Political Activities. Indiana University Policies GR-01. https://policies.iu.edu/policies/gr-01-contact-government-officials/index.html

A Nashville native, Tim Sigler is the Assistant Vice President for Government Relations & Advocacy for the UT System. For the past decade, he has served in varying roles in state government, particularly for the Tennessee State Senate. Most recently, he served as Senior Legislative Advisor to the Lt. Governor. In that role, he was appointed as a staff representative on the State Building Commission, a member of the Council of State Governments' Shared State Legislation Committee, and a member of the Legislative Sick Leave Bank Advisory Committee. Before that, Tim held the positions of Executive Assistant for Policy and Research to the Lt. Governor and Research Analyst for the Senate Finance, Ways, and Means Committee.

In his current role, Tim acts as a liaison between the UT System and state government where he advocates for the priorities of the University. During his first year, he was a part of the team that secured funding for the creation of UT Southern, the first new campus in the UT System in over 50 years. He looks forward to building upon the distinguished legacy of the University of Tennessee in the years to come.

Accelerating Staff Talent Searches in Higher Education

Mr. David Steele, Chief of Staff, University of Tennessee at Chattanooga

> "Acquiring the right talent is the most important key to growth.
> Hiring was – and still is – the most important thing we do."
> Marc Benioff, co-founder, chairman & co-CEO of Salesforce

Talent identification and development have always been central tasks of enterprise leadership, but they have rarely been more challenging. The nation's current unemployment rate is 3.6%, and Tennessee's unemployment rate is 3.2%.[1] Both datapoints are trending downward and approaching record lows. Not surprisingly, recruiting and retaining talent is a primary challenge for enterprise leaders.[2] The higher education sector has not been immune to this ongoing labor shortage,[3] but the talent acquisition, development, and retention methods used within colleges and universities have been essentially unchanged for decades.

Problem

This paper is specifically concerned with (non-instructional) staff hiring and advancement within the University of Tennessee system. Like the rest of higher education, our system is facing unprecedented challenges, including a looming "demographic cliff," increasing competition from alternate paradigms of workforce preparation, inflationary pressures, an aging workforce, globalization, changing models of performance and accountability, outdated infrastructure, rapidly evolving technology, and political interference,[4] as well as high rates of turnover,[5] pandemic-driven workplace disruptions, and a profound worker shortage that is affecting virtually every sector of the nation's economy.

Additionally, the employment of university administrators is forecast to grow by 8% this decade, driven in part by "the need to replace workers who transfer to different occupations or exit the labor force, such as to retire."[6] The UT system is committed to across-the-board growth in what we expect will become known

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[1] https://www.bls.gov/cps/ (March 2022)

[2] Maurer, R. (2021). "Recruiting is top HR concern in 2021." Society for Human Resource Management. (https://www.shrm.org/resourcesandtools/hr-topics/talent-acquisition/pages/recruiting-is-top-hr-concern-2021.aspx)

[3] McClure, K.R. (2021). "Colleges are hiring. But do people want to work there?" *Chronicle of Higher Education*, 68(8).

[4] Steele, D.F. (2022). "Resilience in university systems." *Comprehensive exam for Ph.D. in communication.* University of South Florida.

[5] Gandy, Harrison, P., & Gold, J. (2018). Talent management in higher education: is turnover relevant? *European Journal of Training and Development*, 42(9), 597–610.

[6] https://www.bls.gov/ooh/management/postsecondary-education-administrators.htm

as "our best decade ever,"[7] but while the world around us is reinventing its HR practices, we cling to tradition, retaining staff search and advancement processes that are slow, costly, and of irregular quality.

Against this backdrop, universities take as long as they ever have to fill positions. They have been reluctant to make substantial changes to policy and practice, despite these obvious dynamics of crisis.[8] While many of the salient human resource policies are consistent across the system's campuses and institutes, there is some variance at the policy level and significantly more variance when it comes to "local practice." So, for instance, at least one UT institute allows (and routinely executes) hires of non-exempt personnel without search committees, while at least once UT campus consistently uses search committees for such positions. Across all UT entities there seems to be an overwhelming bias against promotions; direct placement of internal candidates into new positions is rare and tends to stigmatize the promoted employee as well as the hiring manager.

The deliberate pace with which universities fill positions is the stuff of legend. We all have stories to tell. Upper-level administrative searches, like faculty searches, routinely take up to a year, and those of us who have been in this work for a long time have come to expect such timelines. "But in most industries, a timeline like that would -- rightly -- be considered insane."[9] Meanwhile, partly as a function of those timelines, the costs of our committee-driven searches are substantial. A three-person committee seeking to fill an entry-level administrative position can easily cost thousands of dollars, even if the search has been designated as internal. Searches with much larger search committees for more senior positions can cost in the tens of thousands of dollars, before factoring in advertising, travel, consulting, and other primary expenses. However, even these sort of calculations underestimate the true costs of these searches, which can include "lower morale, onboarding time and expense, overtime, time wasted by the Human Resources (HR) staff and the Search Teams, the hiring supervisor's time, lost productivity, negative internal and external customer impact..."[10]

And, of course, there is no evidence that filling every position by committee yields better outcomes. In fact, it is not unusual to have a senior-level search frustrated (if not entirely failed) by attrition within the pool as a search drags on. The longer a search takes, the less likely that the best candidates in the initial pool will be available as the search nears an intended conclusion – and the less appealing the institution appears to the preferred candidates. (As one recent finalist said to me: "This took so long that I wasn't sure if y'all really wanted me, and I started to wonder if I really wanted y'all!") We also know from studies within multiple contexts that search committees often undermine our institutional values, such as the pursuit of a more diverse workforce,[11] because they tend to self-replicate Implicit and explicit biases[12]

[7] Boyd, R. (2020). State of the University Address. https://tennessee.edu/2020-sout/

[8] See Walford-Wright, G. & Scott-Jackson, W. (2018). Talent Rising; people analytics and technology driving talent acquisition strategy. *Strategic HR Review*, 17(5), 226–233, for an example of how technology innovation could impact HR practices and outcomes.

[9] Reed, M. (2012). "Why searches take so long." *Inside Higher Ed*. December 9.

[10] Hewertson, R.B. (2020). *Hire right, fire right: A leader's guide to finding and keeping your best people*. Rowman & Littlefield.

[11] Sensoy, O. & DiAngelo, R. (2017). "'We are all for diversity, but . . .': How faculty hiring committees reproduce whiteness and practical suggestions for how they can change." *Harvard Educational Review*, 87(4), 557–580.

[12] Ross, A. (2022). "Why search committees struggle to diversify the faculty." *Chronicle of Higher Education*, 68(16).

("fit," for instance, can be a euphemism for whiteness[13]) and the inherent dysfunctions in all but the highest-performing committees[14] are consequential.

So why do we do it this way? Our reliance upon search committees has positive and negative rationales. Affirmatively, they "are often assembled to ensure procedural fairness, to provide different stakeholders with an opportunity to express their views, and to give a nod to shared governance…"[15] They are also enacted as a defense against litigation by unsuccessful candidates[16] or criticism from internal stakeholders. Because we have relied on search committees so much for so long, stakeholder perception of committee-less searches is highly and negatively biased. Our stakeholders have been conditioned to expect dysfunction.

Solution

NFL Hall of Fame coach Bill Parcells famously asserted "If they want you to cook the dinner, at least they ought to let you shop for some of the groceries." Conventional HR practice in higher education creates a cumbersome, often arbitrary, buffer between hiring managers and the talent for which they are directly responsible. Universities could dramatically reduce comprehensive hiring costs and improve outcomes by taking two steps: (1) radically reduce the current reliance on search committees for lower-level staff hires; and (2) implement a rational and transparent model for internal promotions. *Let the cook pick the groceries.*

Capelli's talent-on-demand model,[17] which seeks to ground HR practices in the principles that have been tested in the manufacturing sector, encourages us to more strategically balance internal talent development with external recruitment. This involves thoughtful forecasting and an agility that remains rare in the higher ed sector. Iconic university president Nat Hatch has recently urged enterprise leaders to embrace a variety of methods that fly in the face of UT orthodoxy, including personal recruitment of candidates by hiring managers (bypassing a committee); creating or at least tailoring a position with a single high-value candidate in mind; and disrupting searches. (As he puts it, "we place too much trust in the search process itself.")[18]

The University of Minnesota is one institution that clearly stipulates that "responsible administrators can be flexible in using search committees."[19] While some UT campuses and/or institutes waive search committee requirements for non-exempt staff, at least one UT campus has a very rigorous exemption process that has had the effect of stigmatizing searches that even appeal for an exemption.[20] A culture

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[13] Reece, Tran, V. T., DeVore, E. N., Porcaro, G., & Quaye, S. J. (2019). *Debunking the myth of job fit in higher education and student affairs*. Stylus Publishing, LLC.

[14] Leske, L. & Pendleton, C. (2020). "How a search committee can be the arbiter of diversity." *Chronicle of Higher Education*, 67(7).

[15] Vailancourt, A.M. (2013). "What search committees wish you knew." *Chronicle of Higher Education,*

[16] Reed, M. (2012). "Why searches take so long." *Inside Higher Ed*. December 9.

[17] Capelli, P. (2008). "Talent management for the 21st century." *Harvard Business Review*. March.

[18] Hatch, N.O. (2022). "How to hire leaders better than yourself: A former university president offers advice on the art of recruiting senior administrators." *The Chronicle of Higher Education*.

[19] https://humanresources.umn.edu/post-and-recruit/searchcommittees#anchor-should

[20] https://www.utc.edu/sites/default/files/2020-04/fillable-exemption-request-form-staff-exemptions.pdf

shift requires reversing this default: exemption requests – and the speed and efficacy they herald – should be deemed appropriate and approvable, barring compelling, adverse indications to the contrary.

Hatch also advocates for the strategic use of promotions, a tactic that is very rare at UT and, when utilized, accompanied by some measure of institutional shame. An intentional promotion, of course, is not the same thing as permitting someone to apply for an advancement through "the usual process."

UT system policy contemplates promotions within the context of succession planning,[21] but the institutional culture is such that these "plans" are framed as emergency-response techniques, rather than intentional and transparent upward mobility options for valued personnel. Thus, when an employee has been groomed in obvious ways for the next professional step, instead of being promoted, that employee is likely to be invited to join a competitive pool for a drawn-out, demoralizing, sometimes humiliating search process.

Purdue University policy allows for three types of promotions to take place: (1) a "career promotion," which elevates the employee's current position; (2) a "promotion within a job;" and (3) a "promotion with a new job."[22] Purdue further stipulates two times of year that such promotions can take place. The published policies describing these promotion types and the processes involved in each ensure the consistency and transparency necessary to maintain the institution's internal and external credibility.

CONCLUSION

Hiring managers should be required to be transparent but also trusted to know when they need a committee. And they should be empowered to identify and secure the best available talent for key roles at the institution, whether that is an external search, an internal search, or the promotion of a current employee.

"The secret of my success is that we have gone to exceptional lengths
to hire the best people in the world."
Steve Jobs, co-founder of Apple

David Steele serves as Chief of Staff in the Office of the Chancellor at the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga.

His prior positions have included service as vice president of policy and education at the Chattanooga Chamber of Commerce; deputy executive director and chief marketing officer at the Florida Department of Citrus; CMO/CCO for Polk State College; chief marketing, communications, and development officer at the University of South Florida's polytechnic campus; and executive director of Purdue University's Center for International Business Education and Research. He has also worked in economic and community development and the technology sector and taught undergraduate courses in political science, leadership communication, and design thinking.

Steele earned a bachelor's degree (history) from Ashland University and master's degree (political science) from the University of Notre Dame. He is currently completing a PhD (communication) at the University of South Florida.

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[21] https://hr.tennessee.edu/managers-toolkit/
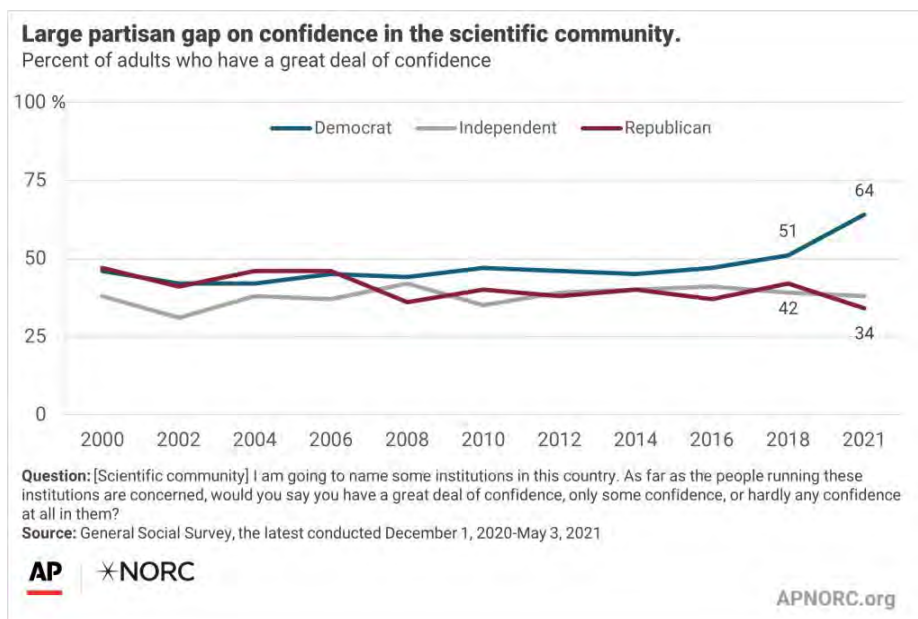[22] https://www.purdue.edu/hr/mngcareer/compguidelines/stproinc.php

How Universities Can Rebuild Trust in Science

Dr. David G. White, Associate Dean for Research, University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture

INTRODUCTION

In the age of COVID-19, do Americans trust science and scientists?

Science and technology are entrenched in virtually every aspect of our modern lives so one would easily think then that the answer is an irrefutable "of course"! However, as ESPN analyst Lee Corso likes to say "Not so fast my friends". More recently, increasingly polarized political environments and fundamental changes in how information is obtained by different audiences have led to a growing mistrust in science among the public. Worries about an underinformed or even misinformed public when it comes to understanding scientific issues are not new however. Disconnects between public opinion in the United States and the consensus of scientific experts on a myriad of topics such as evolution, climate change, genetically-modified foods and vaccine safety have existed for generations.[1]

Large partisan gap on confidence in the scientific community.
Percent of adults who have a great deal of confidence

Question: [Scientific community] I am going to name some institutions in this country. As far as the people running these institutions are concerned, would you say you have a great deal of confidence, only some confidence, or hardly any confidence at all in them?
Source: General Social Survey, the latest conducted December 1, 2020-May 3, 2021

AP | ✳NORC
APNORC.org

This has never been more evident than the misinformation crisis surrounding the many facets of the COVID-19 pandemic where much of the public has lost sense of how to tell the difference between actuality and an opinion. In fact, the recently released 2021 General Social Survey (GSS) from the AP-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research at the University of Chicago indicated that American's trust in science is deeply polarized by partisan divisions. Overall, 48% of Americans say they have "a great deal" of confidence in the scientific community. Interestingly, when broken down by party affiliation, 64% of Democrats say that, compared with roughly only half as many Republicans, 34%. The gap was much smaller in 2018, when 51% of Democrats and 42% of Republicans had high confidence.[2]

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[1] Scheufele, D.A., N.M. Krause. 2019. Science audiences, misinformation, and fake news. PNAS. 116:7662-7669.
[2] General Social Survey, AP-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research, University of Chicago. 2022. Amidst The Pandemic, Confidence In The Scientific Community Becomes Increasingly Polarized (apnorc.org).

How to Restore Trust in Science and Expertise?
President Biden attempted to tackle this issue head on when he published a Memorandum on Restoring Trust in Government Through Scientific Integrity and Evidence-Based Policymaking early in 2021.[3] He further stated it will be the policy of his administration to make evidence-based decisions guided by the best available science and data and that scientific findings should never be distorted or influenced by political considerations. This was a positive step forward for bolstering and restoring science advice across the federal government.

"Everybody is entitled to his own views, everybody is not entitled to his own facts." – James R. Schlesinger, Former U.S. Secretary of Defense

Can the same be said for beneficial impacts on higher education? From an academic perspective, it often feels that pursuit of knowledge is constantly under attack when it delivers a result or idea that a particular group doesn't like or agree with. I am sure many of us have asked the same question, how do we overcome the perfect storm of circumstances such as political polarization, cultural biases, uneven literacy, socioeconomic ladder and numerous on-line sources of inaccurate information to restore Americans confidence in science?

Perhaps one only needs to look at why land-grant universities came to be for an answer. Passage of the First Morrill Act in 1862 reflected a growing demand for agricultural and technical education in the United States and was intended to provide a broad segment of the population with a practical education that had direct relevance to their daily lives. Coupled with two subsequent acts of the U.S. Congress—the Hatch Act of 1877 and the Smith-Lever Act of 1914—land-grant universities were bestowed a tripartite mission by the federal government: to teach, conduct research, and provide service to their communities. Land-grant universities continue that mission today to provide equitable access to education and develop scientific innovations that shape the world. ***No better institution is in a stronger position to rebuild public trust in science than the modern land-grant university.***

To deal with the many complexities associated with scientific information, the general public has to trust in scientists and their findings. This trust reflects people's confidence in the classic scientific method including observation, hypothesis testing, data collection and analysis, deductions, and peer-review. Such confidence determines how citizens develop personal stances on science-based issues and in some cases adopting behavioral changes to promote healthier societal outcomes. Simply put, a scientific enterprise that is not trusted by the public cannot adequately contribute to society and will have diminishing returns over time.[4] In our context, successfully communicating research, academic activities, and service work that land-grant universities perform to advance the livelihoods of their respective citizens is therefore an indispensable piece to regaining public trust in science.

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[3]The White House. 2021. Memorandum on Restoring Trust in Government Through Scientific Integrity and Evidence-Based Policymaking | The White House.
[4]The PEW Charitable Trusts. 2021. Why We Must Rebuild Trust in Science, The Pew Charitable Trusts (pewtrusts.org).

Can Land-Grant Universities Reclaim the Trusted Advisor Role?

How do we then maneuver land-grant institutions to identify and capitalize on opportunities to educate the public about what science and research are and restore trust in the enterprise? As the old saying goes, trust is earned, not given and is a fragile thing. Saying "trust me" does not make people automatically trust each other. Building trust requires overcoming the cynicism that is often naturally present before people or groups have had a chance to get to interact with each other. Actions that build trust and influence usually start with openness and consistent, effective communications with subsequent follow-through. In other words, *a public land-grant university should actually engage with its public.*

"The struggle continues, trying to get the general public to embrace all of the science the way they unwittingly embrace the science in their smartphones." – Neil deGrasse Tyson, Astrophysicist

To successfully engage the public and gain their support, we must communicate our scientific work in more attractive and transparent ways than what we have in the past. That is to say, if we remain behind the historical walls of complex scientific data, devoid of empathy, we will fail to secure the public's trust. In fact, the COVID-19 pandemic has shown that the old-fashioned model of science communication does not necessarily translate into success in the modern world. Traditionally, new research findings are published in peer-reviewed academic journals limited to our immediate academic circles and are viewed as today's coin of the scientific realm. However, these science articles usually do not attract nor are accessible to non-scientists and are often times heavy on concepts (e.g. jargon) not easily understood by the general public.[5]

In our cycle of constant breaking news, there were (and continue to be) unfortunate instances during the pandemic where new research findings not vetted through peer-reviewed processes were immediately picked up and presented as gospel by politicians, media and then amplified over social media. While this certainly made results more accessible than ever before to the general public, it also often resulted in the miscommunication of inaccurate scientific information contributing to American's distrust in science and expertise. These events have demonstrated that both science and land-grant institutions will have to adapt to the demands of the 21st century's landscape of communication while simultaneously safeguarding their traditional pillars of credibility and pursuit of knowledge.[6]

The Need to Develop University Level Science Communication Programs

The skills to serve as science representatives to the general public will become increasingly fundamental for our future academic workforce in order to translate innovation and discovery into effective outreach and understanding. Reinforcing this idea is the notion that higher levels of familiarity with the work of scientific experts have been associated with greater positive and trusting views of scientists regarding

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[5]Scrimshaw, S.C. 2019. Science, health, and cultural literacy in a rapidly changing communications landscape. PNAS. 116:7650-7655.

[6]All European Academies (ALLEA). 2019. ALLEA Discussion Paper #3. Trust in science and changing landscapes of communication. Berlin, Germany. ALLEA_Trust_in_Science_and_Changing_Landscapes_of_Communication.pdf.

their competence, credibility and commitment to serving the public.[7] The Association of Public and Land-Grant Universities (APLU) reinforced this notion in 2019 when they published a report[8] on Public Impact Research (PIR) and defined this concept as "a broad label to describe how university research improves lives and serves society." One of the core findings of the report indicated that there is a critical need for public and land-grant universities to take communication more seriously with their stakeholders, including the development of innovative institutional communication training programs.

This has led to a growing comprehension across university leadership nationwide that achieving the land-grant mission in the future will require two kinds of communication: the traditional mechanism achieved via faculty/students publishing through the scientific peer process, and a newer approach focused on public engagement through a new generation of more visible scientists. There is much to gain from formally investing in the people and tools to effectively communicate to different audiences and university leadership should weave science communication programs into the fabric of their institution's DNA. Accordingly, we must develop new programs to incorporate communications training across the university system from graduate students, to post-doctoral fellows, from assistant professors to administrators if we are to successfully establish an 21st century ecosystem for science public engagement.[9]

Communication training programs for scientists at universities were few and far between until a relatively short time ago. Fortunately, a growing number of higher-education institutions are developing communications workshops, courses and academic programs aimed at training scientists from all career stages to engage with public audiences. A few programs that have received national attention for providing opportunities to faculty, post-doctoral fellows and graduate students to better engage audiences beyond the academic communities include the University of Minnesota Speaking Science annual conference, the University of Michigan Museum of Natural History Science Communications Program, and the University of Nebraska-Lincoln SciComm conference.[10][11][12] One must also recognize the outstanding efforts of two preeminent centers of excellence in particular who have international audiences: the Alan Alda Center for Communicating Science at Stony Brook University and the European Science Communication Institute in Oldenburg, Germany.[13][14]

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[7]National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. 2017. Communicating Science Effectively: A Research Agenda. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press. https://doi.org/10.17226/23674.

[8]Association of Public and Land-Grant Universities. 2019. Public impact research (PIR). file (aplu.org).

[9]Hotez, P.J. 2020. Combating antiscience: Are we preparing for the 2020s? PLoS Biol 18(3): e3000683.

[10] University of Minnesota Speaking Science. Speaking Science - Institute on the Environment (umn.edu).

[11]University of Michigan Museum of Natural History Science Communication Fellows. Science Communication Fellows | U-M LSA University of Michigan Museum of Natural History (umich.edu).

[12]University of Nebraska-Lincoln SciComm. SciComm – A Science Communication Conference (scicommcon.org).

[13]Alan Alda Center for Communicating Science, Stony Brook University. Home | Alan Alda Center for Communicating Science.

[14]European Science Communication Institute, Oldenburg, Germany. ESCI - Science Communication - Promoting your science.

CONCLUSIONS

It is critical that the general public have trustworthy sources of information to judge fact from fiction, especially in the age of Google where overwhelming amounts of confounding data are available at our fingertips. One only needs to browse the internet to see how difficult it can be to find reliable information considering the thousands of websites managed by numerous sources of varying credibility. It is now more important than ever that land-grant universities both reengage their core missions and develop new communication and outreach strategies to ensure they are the trusted sources of information to the nation and the world.

To many academics, this might seem an effort they have little time for and is unimportant in the big scheme of things or conflicts with traditional promotion and tenure deliverables. I would however make the case that the return on investment will be extraordinary! What university president or chancellor would not want their land-grant university to be recognized as a destination for world class faculty, staff and students who are continuously sought out for their expertise and are applauded for their abilities to communicate with diverse stakeholder groups. Fortifying the connection of land-grant institutions with the communities they serve must be part of our foundation to restore public trust and will require sustained commitment of resources and focus to develop the next generation of university science communicators.

Engaged universities will be the difference in the age of social media!

Dr. David White serves as the Associate Dean for Research and Associate Director of the Agricultural Experiment Station at the University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture. He is also a Professor of Food Science and acted as interim Department head in 2019.

Prior to joining UTIA, he served in several leadership positions in the U.S. Food and Drug Administration Office of Foods and Veterinary Medicine including Chief Science Officer /Research Director and Acting Director of the Office of Resource Planning and Strategic Management.

Dr. White is an editor of the book "Frontiers in Antibiotic Resistance", ASM Press, Washington D.C. and is on the editorial board of Foodborne Pathogens and Disease. He previously served as co-chair of the U.S. Interagency Task Force on Antimicrobial Resistance and as the U.S Delegate to the Codex *Ad Hoc* Intergovernmental Task Force on Antimicrobial Resistance. Most recently he was appointed to the Board of Directors for the Alliance for the Prudent Use of Antibiotics (APUA), the Presidential Advisory Council on Combating Antibiotic-Resistant Bacteria (PACCARB) and the WHO Advisory Group on Critically Important Antimicrobials for Human Medicine.

Dr. White received his bachelor's degree from the University of Vermont, his Master of Science from the University of Kentucky and his Ph.D. from the Pennsylvania State University. He also was a post-doctoral fellow in the Center for Adaptation Genetics and Drug Resistance at Tufts University School of Medicine and before joining FDA, an Assistant Professor in the Department of Veterinary and Microbiological Sciences at North Dakota State University.