

Higher, Adult, and Lifelong Education Dissertation Abstracts 2009

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CONNIE ROSE TINGSON-GATUZ, 2009

MENTORING THE LEADER: THE ROLE OF PEER MENTORING IN THE LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT OF STUDENTS-OF-COLOR IN HIGHER EDUCATION

ABSTRACT

The racial and ethnic demographic landscape of American society and postsecondary education is changing at an accelerated rate whereby people-of-color are becoming the numerical majority. Yet, little is known about the response to these changes particularly in the area of leadership. There is minimal evidence to suggest that members of racial and ethnic groups are assuming leadership roles in similar proportions to their population growth in society or in college. The intent of this study is to explore the ways in which peer mentoring contributes to how students-of-color develop as leaders.

Using qualitative methodology, seventeen students participated in semi-structured individual interviews which also involved hand drawings of their experiences. The study was conducted at a large research institution located in the Midwest. Purposeful selection was applied to select students-of-color serving as a student leader of an ALANA (African American, Latino, Asian Pacific American, and/or Native American) student organization on campus.

In the findings three themes emerged from data including Defining, Positioning, and Generativity. Peers mentors are defined in personal and organizational contexts. The setting and timing of interaction between peer mentors and participants affects the degree of their involvement in leadership. Leadership succession was evident among participants as a result of encouragement from their peer mentors. Connections between this study and theoretical models from three other research were identified including Kram's (1988) Developmental Relationships Model, Komives (2007) Generativity Model, and Sedlacek's (2004) Non-Cognitive Variable Model. Conclusions are drawn to provide insight on the benefits and outcomes of peer mentor models. Thus, institutions can utilize this information to enhance peer mentoring opportunities to increase leadership capacity among students-of-color.

ERIC R. JESSUP-ANGER, 2009

**IMPLEMENTING INNOVATIVE IDEAS: A MULTISITE CASE STUDY OF PUTTING
LEARNING RECONSIDERED INTO PRACTICE**

ABSTRACT

Leaders in colleges and universities across the United States are coming under increasing pressure to enhance the quality of programs and services on their campuses (Gensheimer, 2009; U.S. Department of Education, 2006). Although administrators and faculty have access to a growing body of scholarship to improve institutional quality (e.g., Kuh, Kinzie, Schuh, Whitt, & Associates, 2005; Pascarella and Terenzini, 2005), the majority of institutions continue to struggle to put innovative ideas into practice (Bok, 2006; Duderstadt, 2000). Furthermore, leaders and change agents have limited literature to consult to enhance their efforts because few studies have examined implementation in postsecondary organizations. To provide further guidance to administrators, this study used a multi-site case study approach and a backward mapping analytic strategy to examine three divisions of student affairs that implemented *Learning Reconsidered* (American College Personnel Association & National Association of Student Personnel Administrators, 2004), a national report calling for a series of innovative policies and practices. Data were collected via individual and small group interviews using a semi-structured protocol. A review of available documents was also conducted. The data are presented in three, in depth case studies. The study concludes with a cross-case analysis of the implementation process and forwards implications for theory and practice.

Three broad, overarching findings relating to implementation emerged across the three divisions of student affairs examined in this study. These include: 1) the influence of the initiation phase and adoption decision on implementation; 2) the multiple, cascading levels of adoption and implementation, and the shifting roles of senior student affairs officers and mid-level professionals; and, 3) the importance of technical and leadership capacity and how resources were employed to bolster professionals' capacity to implement. In addition, a river delta metaphor is presented that captures the iterative, complex, and relatively non-linear process by which innovative ideas are put into practice. The metaphor provides a framework for leaders and professionals throughout the organization to make sense of implementation and their role in the process.

The study concludes with implications for theory and practice. Theoretical implications include: 1) a changing conceptualization of the role of senior leaders and mid-level professionals as the implementation process unfolds; 2) how and when levers are employed is more influential than what levers are used; and, 3) the availability of sufficient time and space are the most influential levers. Recommendations for practice include: 1) the process should ideally stem from a period of organizational reflection; 2) organizational culture should be viewed as a road map, not a barrier; 3) the process should be inclusive of professionals throughout the organization; 4) change leaders should embrace their symbolic and behind the scenes role in the effort; 5) because of their central role in implementation, mid-level professionals must be adequately prepared to put innovative ideas into practice at the department level; 6) creativity and reasonable risk-taking should be promoted from the outset; and, 7) the pace and process by which technical and leadership capacity is bolstered needs ongoing attention from senior leaders and change agents.

JODY E. JESSUP-ANGER, 2009

INSPIRING THE LIFE OF THE MIND: AN EXAMINATION OF THE ROLES OF RESIDENTIAL COLLEGE ENVIRONMENTS AND MOTIVATIONAL ATTRIBUTES IN PROMOTING UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS' INCLINATION TO INQUIRE AND CAPACITY FOR LIFELONG LEARNING

ABSTRACT

As postsecondary education is promoted as a necessity for participation in the 21st century knowledge economy, academics, policymakers, and the public have all voiced concerns about the quality and coherence of undergraduate education (AAC & U, 2007; Barr and Tagg, 1995; U. S. Department of Education, 2006). Critics point to the size, scope, and multiple missions of large, public research universities as contributing to students' feelings of anonymity, lack of engagement, and disconnection from faculty (Astin, 1993; Boyer, 1987; Gaff, 1970; Gamson, 2000; Guskin, 1994; Hawkins, 1999; Jerome, 2000).

University administrators increasingly turn to residential colleges and other types of living-learning programs to address the size and scale conundrum facing large research universities. By creating smaller enclaves of students living together initially, taking part in a shared educational endeavor, and using resources within their environment that stress academics (Inkelas, Zeller, Murphy, & Hummel, 2006), administrators and faculty purport to create the atmosphere of a small liberal arts college while still offering students the resources of a large university (Magolda, 1994; Schuman, 2005). Despite this claim, virtually no attention has been paid to whether and how these environments promote values associated with a liberal arts education, including whether they deepen students' inclination to inquire and capacity for lifelong learning. Identified by the Center of Inquiry in the Liberal Arts at Wabash College as one distinctive outcome of a liberal arts education, having a deep inclination to inquire would suggest that a student has a strong desire to learn and continues to pursue intellectual growth. Closely connected to students' inclination to inquire is their capacity for lifelong learning, which is defined by Hayek and Kuh (1999) as students' ability to —_learn to learn_ and interact effectively with others in a complex, information-based society (p. 4).

In the current study, I used Moos' social-ecological framework, which accounts for environmental context and individual characteristics (Moos, 1976, 1979, 1986), to examine how students' attributes (including their motivation and other sociodemographic characteristics) and residential college environments were associated with students' inclination to inquire and capacity for lifelong learning. With data collected from over 1800 undergraduate students in 24 residential colleges at 10 research universities across the United States, I used hierarchical linear modeling techniques to ascertain the statistically significant individual, contextual, and cross-level associations of variables with students' inclination to inquire and capacity for lifelong learning. I found that a statistically significant amount of variation students' inclination to inquire and capacity for lifelong learning was attributable to students' residential college environment and that much of the variation was explained by the liberal arts emphasis of the residential college environment. Specifically, an ethos marked by academic challenge and high expectations was associated with a deepened inclination to inquire and an ethos marked by out-of-class interactions with faculty was associated with a deepened capacity for lifelong learning. Furthermore, students' motivational attributes and desire to obtain more than a bachelor's degree were also associated both outcome variables. Implications for theory, research, practice, and policy are discussed.

MARGARET SAMPSON EDGELL, 2009

HIGHER EDUCATION FINANCE POLICY: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF TWO DYNAMICS OF SOCIAL CONTRACT IN THREE BOLOGNA PROCESS COUNTRIES

ABSTRACT

This first detailed map of the topography of social contract in comparative higher education finance policy laid out a research design and methodology that proved viable for comparative case study analysis. Its research design, based on Qualitative Comparative Analysis, addressed three initial challenges to the study of a macro level social phenomenon: the inherent subjectivity of study of a social construct; a lack of definition of social contract terms; and the multiplicity of social contracts.

A review of the literature on social contract included literature in politics of education, educational policy, educational equity, educational finance, educational trends, and educational change, but the review resulted in no generally accepted definition or conceptualization. The current study was designed to clarify at its outset a generalizable definition of social contract based on historical interpretation, as the expected roles of stakeholders in higher education (Neave, 2006). The literature on social contract indicated that social contract is a phenomenon that can exist at national, supranational, or global levels. It also suggested that there may exist three universal types of social contract (Kezar, 2004; Neave, 2006; Zumeta, 1996). Neave's (2006) typology may best describe social contract using terms grounded in political theory as follow: Hobbes type (government-oriented), Smith type (market-oriented, also referred to as marketization or privatization), or Locke type (intentional mixtures of the other two types).

The current study applied definitions, conceptualizations, or methodologies from political theory, comparative research (of foreign countries), economics of education, finance policy analysis, and content analysis in the field of higher (or postsecondary) education. Three countries were chosen as case studies due to their classification as welfare states with strong government orientations: Finland, Norway, and Sweden.

Described as a supranational initiative, the Bologna Process in Europe afforded an opportunity to study the social contract implicit within it, along with the social contracts implicit in national policies. Along these lines, two research questions were explored: First, is there a relationship between a supranational social contract regarding academic research and the allocation of funds to research projects at national levels? Analysis of the first research question was primarily analysis of resource allocation toward economic development via research and development (R & D) with industry. Second, is there a relationship between a supranational social contract regarding student financial support and the allocation of funds to student financial support at national levels? This second question, in the cases of the three welfare states studied, was an analysis of state financial support in payment of the net costs to students for higher education.

Conclusions based on the results were, first, for student financial support policy, that, absent supranational social contract, the national social contract was a stronger determinant of funding in the three countries studied than the shifts in social contracts in other European countries. For academic research funding, national social contract was the driving factor, over supranational social contract.

MARIA VILLALOBOS-BUEHNER, 2009

STUDY ABROAD PROGRAMS AND THEIR EFFECT ON POSSIBLE LANGUAGE 2 SELVES DEVELOPMENT AND LANGUAGE LEARNING STRATEGIES

ABSTRACT

Each year numerous language learners decide to travel abroad in order to improve their language skills. Many studies have investigated the linguistic and cultural gains that those students acquired during their study abroad. However, little is known about how these experiences influence the students' learning motivation, development of learning strategies, and future perceptions of themselves as language learners. The following study explored the role of study abroad programs in the development of possible second or foreign language selves and the effect of moving from a second language to a foreign language context in the development of possible L2 selves. Twenty subjects took part in the individual interviews and focus groups. This study employed qualitative data techniques such as color-coding to analyze it. The results show that most of the subjects held future images of themselves as language learners. Subjects with salient possible language selves after their abroad experience were more motivated, and were able to use multifarious language learning strategies in order to keep their language gains once they were back from their abroad sojourn. These students were also able to overcome obstacles easily by creating alternative approaches that helped them move towards the achievement of their possible L2 selves. On the other hand, students with less salient possible L2 selves after their abroad experience encountered difficulties maintaining their possible L2 selves salient. Some students' PL2Ss disappeared from their working self-concept. This study contributes to the development of a more holistic view of language learning motivation. It also presents language educators with possibilities to enhance language learning. Furthermore, universities and adult education institutions could benefit from the results of this study in order to create mechanisms to promote student achievement and student retention.

MARY COLLEEN BELKNAP, 2009

COMMUNITY COLLEGE TEACHER EDUCATION PATHWAY: A STUDY OF MICHIGAN TEACHER EDUCATION COMPONENTS

ABSTRACT

This study explored the components of six Michigan community college teacher education programs that were members of Michigan Association of Community Colleges in Educator Preparation (MACCEP) in 2006-2007. Data were collected from face to face interviews and institutional resources. Each interviewee was an identified —champion of their respective teacher education program. Interview analysis and document data form the detailed description of MACCEP teacher education program components.

Components of the community college teacher education studied are categorized by: 1) Commitment; 2) Curriculum; and 3) Connections. Components in the categories include: faculty; administration; students; courses; field experience; MACRAO agreement; alignment to standards; state testing and credentialing preparation; student support; transfer and articulation; formal and informal partnerships; local, state and federal governing organizations; and credentialing agencies. Identified as the Belknap Model, a figure and table depict the interrelationship of categories and components.

This foundational study offers community colleges descriptive information for teacher education programs. There is a range in program development from informal, early developing programs with few components, to established formalized teacher education programs with many components.

Every public higher education institution in Michigan is autonomous. It is within this complex and open postsecondary environment that the results of this study may be used to benefit faculty and administrators committed to improving the teacher education pathway in Michigan specifically, and in other states more generally. The findings have implications useful to the following objectives: 1. Help to design strong curricula and courses of study; 2. Increase communication among colleges and universities, which, in turn will benefit programs and students; 3. Increase respect and understanding of community college teacher education programs due to the analysis of program components; 4. Broaden potential transfer options among teacher education programs especially in Michigan; 5. Help ensure a high quality teacher education workforce that may lessen the impact of teacher retirements in the next decade in Michigan; 6. Strengthen instruction at all levels to maintain a strong educational foundation for all schools as the state recovers from the present situation of economic instability (Duderstadt, 2005). The Belknap Model serves as a starting point for further research or action in any or all of the specific areas related to the improvement of teacher education practice, especially with community colleges. This study and the Belknap model illuminate Michigan community college teacher education programs.

CAROLYN K. OZAKI, 2009

**STUDENTS' RETURN TO COMMUNITY COLLEGE: A MIXED METHODS
EXPLORATION OF POSTSECONDARY EDUCATIONAL PATHS THAT INCLUDE AND
INTERRUPTION IN ATTENDANCE**

ABSTRACT

This mixed methods study was designed to contribute to exploration of the reasons students returned to college, stopout, and the factors that influenced that decision. In the study's first part I conducted a quantitative analysis of the relationship between factors associated with a high risk for departure and community college students who returned to school after departure. The second part of the study was a qualitative inquiry into the educational paths of community college students who stopped out, but were currently enrolled. The third article was an exploration of the intersection between the quantitative and qualitative results. The research questions addressed across all three articles were: (a) Why do community college students return after a period of nonenrollment?; (b) Which factors influence the decision to return?; (c) What is the influence of these factors on the decision to return to return?

In the first part, I used correlations and logistic regression to examine data from the Beginning Postsecondary Survey 96/01, focusing on community college students who departed college between 1996 and 2001 (n=779). The final model had four significant variables associated with who stays out and who returns to school. Students with mixed enrollment were more likely to return to college, while students who were divorced/widowed/separated marital status, job skill development as a reason for initial enrollment, and minimal student disadvantage were less likely to return.

The purpose of the second part of the study was to explore the external and internal reasons and factors involved in students' decisions to return to college after an extended absence. This study specifically sought to explore the role of students' concepts of who they might be (or want to avoid becoming) in the college and career domains of their lives (possible selves). Analysis of the interviews revealed two different educational paths that were partially shaped by students' college possible selves as they initially entered college. The different educational paths and influence of possible selves and other important factors came to light as students discussed critical decision-making points along their journeys. Changes in students' possible selves also resulted in different attitudes and approaches toward school, resulting in more academic success and persistence.

The purpose of the third article was to present the results of the quantitative and qualitative studies and analyze the intersection of the data. While the results reported for the quantitative portion of the study remain unchanged, the data from the qualitative study were reanalyzed and coded to better understand and expand on the ways that the significant risk factors in the quantitative model appeared in and influenced decision-making about college departure and reentry among the participants in the qualitative study. In general the qualitative data supported or partially mirrored the quantitative results and expanded upon the results to demonstrate how these risk factors manifest and influence students personal and academic lives in relationship to their educational persistence decisions.