

Higher, Adult, and Lifelong Education Dissertation Abstracts 2010

TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXAMINING THE FUNDING REQUEST PROCESS BETWEEN PUBLIC HIGHER EDUCATION
AND THE STATE LEGISLATURE

Andrew Midgley

Advisor: Dr. Roger Baldwin

BRIDGING THE GAP BETWEEN COLLEGE AND HIGH SCHOOL WRITING IN AN ONLINE
ASSESSMENT COMMUNITY

Merilee Griffin

Advisor: Dr. Roger Baldwin

FACULTY AND COMMUNITY COLLABORATION IN SUSTAINED COMMUNITY-UNIVERSITY
ENGAGEMENT PARTNERSHIPS

Angela Danyell Allen

Advisor: Dr. Kristen Renn

TRIBAL COLLEGE TRANSFER STUDENT SUCCESS AT FOUR-YEAR PREDOMINANTLY
WHITE INSTITUTIONS

Matthew Van Alstine Makomenaw

Advisor: Dr. Matthew Wawrzynski

THE INFLUENCE OF ALTERNATIVE PEDAGOGICAL METHODS IN POSTSECONDARY
BIOLOGY EDUCATION: HOW DO STUDENTS EXPERIENCE A MULTIMEDIA CASE-STUDY
ENVIRONMENT?

Bjorn Hugo Karl Wolter

Advisor: Dr. John Dirkx

SUSTAINABILITY OF FOUNDATION-FUNDED GRANT PROGRAMS BEYOND INITIAL
FUNDING: A MULTICASE STUDY AT SELECTIVE LIBERAL ARTS COLLEGES

Debbie Chang Lechuga

Advisor: Dr. Roger Baldwin

AN ASSESSMENT OF THE INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE OF STUDENT AFFAIRS
ADMINISTRATORS

Amy Franklin-Craft

Advisor: Dr. Kristen Renn

MID-CAREER WOMEN STUDENT AFFAIRS ADMINISTRATORS WITH YOUNG CHILDREN:
NEGOTIATING LIFE, LIKE CLOCKWORK

Monica Marcelis Fochtman

Advisor: Dr. Matthew Wawrzynski

AN ORGANIZATIONAL THEORY APPROACH TO TRANSITION: THE WHEATON COLLEGE
MOVE TO COEDUCATION

Amanda G. Idema

Advisor: Dr. Kristen Renn

HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT PERCEPTIONS OF COMMUNITY COLLEGES: THE ROLE OF PERSONAL, INSTITUTIONAL, AND ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS IN THE COLLEGE CHOICE PROCESS

Jean F. Morciglio

Advisor: Dr. Mary Lee Davis

COMMUNITY COLLEGE TRUSTEES IN MICHIGAN: THE EXPERIENCES OF FOUR WOMEN

Denise Newman

Advisor: Dr. Marilyn Amey

ANDREW MIDGLEY, 2010

**EXAMINING THE FUNDING REQUEST PROCESS BETWEEN PUBLIC HIGHER
EDUCATION AND THE STATE LEGISLATURE**

ABSTRACT

This research examined the funding request process whereby higher education institutions seek financial support from state government. The study tested whether a model based on state goals and priorities for higher education could distinguish a funded request from an unfunded request. The research was qualitative and followed a comparative case design examining two instances where Michigan State University submitted a funding request for a project through the state of Michigan's capital outlay process. One of the requests received funding while the other funding request did not. Information on each case was collected through interviews with people involved in the design and implementation of each funding request, and through an analysis of relevant documentation on each request. A conceptual framework based on perceived state goals and priorities for higher education and lobbying methods was used to analyze the cases.

The research findings revealed that the case that received funding aligned more closely with the components of the study's conceptual framework than did the case that did not receive funding. However, the interview process revealed that closely aligning with the conceptual framework was not the primary reason for the final outcome of each case. Factors outside the control of the institutions, specifically the economic conditions in Michigan, contributed to whether funding for both cases was granted. Although the model tested was beneficial in distinguishing the unfunded from the funded case, the findings indicated that model itself needed to be modified to account for variables outside the control of the institution in all stages of development of the funding requests. The environment that influences state higher education funding is very dynamic, and institutions need to adjust each funding request accordingly throughout the design and implementation process.

MERILEE GRIFFIN, 2010

BRIDGING THE GAP BETWEEN COLLEGE AND HIGH SCHOOL WRITING IN AN ONLINE ASSESSMENT COMMUNITY

ABSTRACT

An interactive Web site was developed and investigated to determine whether interaction on the site among college and high school teachers of writing could result in the formation of an interpretative community. An interpretative community is one in which meanings are stable (Fish, 1980), and which adjudicates student writing with a high degree of reliability. Interaction on this Web site produced movement toward reliable scores, increasingly shared perceptions of student writing, and development of common perspectives in talking and thinking about writing. Several recommendations for future uses of a such a Web site are provided.

ANGELA DANYELL ALLEN, 2010

FACULTY AND COMMUNITY COLLABORATION IN SUSTAINED COMMUNITY-UNIVERSITY ENGAGEMENT PARTNERSHIPS

ABSTRACT

This dissertation is a qualitative case study of the factors of collaboration between faculty and community partners in sustained community-university engagement partnerships at a public research university in the Midwest. Based on secondary data from an annual, online, mixed-method survey of faculty-reported engagement activity, parallel yet tailored interviews were conducted with ten faculty and nine community partners, corresponding to nine full partnerships. The research conceptual framework implied that as faculty and community partners sustained their partnerships, partnership policies, resources and commitments influenced their ability to align both the academic and civic organizational contexts.

This study's findings assert that the community-university engagement model of mutual exchange between partners is working in practice, especially in relationship to co-creation of knowledge, into transfer, application and preservation. The collaborative process necessitated simultaneous organizational and community policies, resources, and commitments that were strongly influenced by the characteristics of fit between faculty and their community partners. The fit between both partners was based on a commitment to co-create scholarly work useful to the community. Moreover, the leadership relationship was supported by the factors of establishing common goals, networks, experience, and knowledge sharing across both academic and civic organizational contexts. As both partners came together to develop and implement the partnerships in this study, their example of mutual respect and trust expanded throughout both of their respective institutions' networks. Thus, the actual leadership relationship was modeled into a community-placed network of relationships that sustained the partnership, in spite of institutional challenges.

The scholarship of engagement centers on campus and community processes and products of community-campus engagement. The purpose of the scholarship of engagement is to assess reciprocity for both communities and campuses that undertake these collaborations. Although there is an emerging body of community-university engagement literature in higher education, little is known about reciprocal impacts on *communities* involved in community-university engagement – including institutional policies, resources, and commitments. Further, even less has been published within higher education detailing the community's perspective in these partnerships. The factors of organizational alignment that are in common between faculty and community partners demonstrate the synchronicity between organizational challenges and opportunities across these sectors. Understanding these collaborations addresses implications for social change and the idea of the academic institution as societal citizen.

MATTHEW VAN ALSTINE MAKOMENAW, 2010

TRIBAL COLLEGE TRANSFER STUDENT SUCCESS AT FOUR-YEAR PREDOMINANTLY WHITE INSTITUTIONS

ABSTRACT

Tribal colleges, which are often community colleges, have been successful in helping American Indian students achieve academic success. The current study was designed to understand what happens to American Indian tribal college students when they transfer to four-year Predominantly White Institutions (PWIs). The research question that guides the current study is what are the experiences of American Indian tribal college graduates who transferred from tribal colleges and succeeded at four-year PWIs?

A qualitative study, specifically phenomenology, was chosen to draw out the experiences of eight American Indian tribal college students who transferred and succeeded at PWIs. Multiple interviews were conducted and analyzed with all eight participants, which resulted in six themes related to their successful experience at PWIs. The six themes were: personal goals and dreams; family matters; being a community member of an American Indian community; various levels of engagement with the campus; overcoming ignorance and stereotypes; and adjusting to differences in non-native and native academic worlds. The current study is significant and has implications for tribal colleges, PWIs, and anyone concerned about the success of American Indian college students.

BJORN HUGO KARL WOLTER, 2010

THE INFLUENCE OF ALTERNATIVE PEDAGOGICAL METHODS IN POSTSECONDARY BIOLOGY EDUCATION: HOW DO STUDENTS EXPERIENCE A MULTIMEDIA CASE-STUDY ENVIRONMENT?

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to better understand how an online, multimedia case study method influenced students' motivation, performance, and perceptions of science in collegiate level biology classes. It utilized a mix-methods design including data from pre- and post-test, student surveys, and focus group interviews to answer one primary question, did participation in the affect student performance? Two sub-questions were: (a) did participation affect persistence? and (b) did students believe it to be a good learning experience?

One hundred and eight students in 5 classes from 4 campuses in the United States and Puerto Rico participated in this study during spring semester 2009. After receiving instruction on HIV, students took a 6 questions pre-test to measure their initial knowledge of both HIV and lab procedures. Participants then engaged in the Case It! learning environment, where they watched case-studies on HIV, used virtual lab tools, created an online poster of their findings, and role-played as both family members and physicians about their case. A post-test identical to the pre-test was given to students upon completion. Both were then scored using rubrics and analyzed via paired *t*-Tests and ANOVA. The researcher visited all 4 study sites to conduct both the focus group interviews and student surveys. Student surveys were quantified and descriptive statistic generated. Focus group interviews were video recorded, transcribed, and inductively and deductively coded.

Student knowledge increased because of participation, and the majority of students said they found the Case It! project to be both a good learning experience (95%) and one that would help with future classes or careers (87%). Based on student interviews, the Case It! project did have a beneficial impact on students' intentions to persist as science majors. Many students noted that the learning environment created an overall context in which they could apply knowledge from multiple classes that allowed students to fit all the pieces of their previous academic instruction together into a single, comprehensive picture—and to place themselves within that picture. Students enjoyed the autonomy and personal connections that using case studies and multimedia content offered, and found the material more engaging and relevant. By involving students in real-world situations, Case It! demonstrated the application and effect of theoretical knowledge and stimulated students' curiosity. Case It! appears to be a learning environment that motivates students by making material relevant and personal, thus creating enduring links between students and content which can result in better performance and higher retention rates. It is an effective pedagogical tool that, unlike many other such tools, is *not instructor dependent*, and is adaptable to fit various learner types, settings, and levels.

DEBBIE CHANG LECHUGA, 2010

SUSTAINABILITY OF FOUNDATION-FUNDED GRANT PROGRAMS BEYOND INITIAL FUNDING: A MULTICASE STUDY AT SELECTIVE LIBERAL ARTS COLLEGES

ABSTRACT

College and university leaders must remain responsive to their environments by promoting institutional innovation and change. External grant-funders, such as foundations, view themselves as initiators of change. Foundations can provide the necessary tools to jump start innovation within colleges and universities. However, despite the best intentions, not all colleges are able to sustain their programs or initiatives beyond the foundation's initial funding.

The central research question of the study was: How do liberal arts colleges sustain foundation-funded programs beyond the initial grant period? Grounded in the literature on organizational change (Clark, 2004; Kezar, 2001; Luddeke, 1999), and program institutionalization and sustainability (Huberman & Miles, 1984; Levine, 1980; Levison, 1994; Steckler & Goodman, 1989), this study examined how foundation-funded programs are sustained at liberal arts colleges. The guiding conceptual framework, based upon Shediac Rizkallah and Bone (1998), proposed that three primary factors contribute to the sustainability of a program past initial funding: 1) program level factors, 2) institutional level factors, and 3) environmental level factors. Utilizing this framework, the current study utilized a multi-case study design. Four selective liberal arts colleges were selected to examine the sustainability of faculty career enhancement programs funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.

The results of this study revealed that eight factors, surrounded by environmental influences, contribute to the sustainability process: 1) meets an institutional need, 2) breadth of impact, 3) program effectiveness, 4) institutional context, 5) integration into campus, 6) planning to sustain, 7) committed leader or champion, and 8) applied organizational learning. A conceptual model based upon the guiding conceptual framework and the findings from this study are presented along with implications for research and practice.

AMY FRANKLIN-CRAFT, 2010

AN ASSESSMENT OF THE INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE OF STUDENT AFFAIRS ADMINISTRATORS

ABSTRACT

The educational benefits of a diverse student body are clear. However, in order to reap the benefits associated with a diverse student body, campus leaders must create a campus environment that is welcoming and affirming, and fosters cross-cultural interactions. Student affairs professionals are uniquely positioned within the university to be instrumental to this process. To be effective however, practitioners must be capable of understanding and interacting competently with diverse groups of students.

Regrettably, while the importance of intercultural competence among student affairs professionals is well documented, few scholars have endeavored to define what it means to be interculturally competent and fewer have developed methods for assessing efforts toward its development among professionals. Accordingly, the purpose of this study is two-fold. This study introduces to the field of student affairs, a new theoretical construct (Cultural Intelligence or CQ) and assessment instrument (Cultural Intelligence Survey) designed to assess intercultural competency. Second, this newer construct and instrumentation are used to address a series of research questions designed to be better understand the intercultural competency of a sample of student affairs administrators.

This study examines: 1) the relationships between demographic characteristics (including gender identification, age, race, and ethnicity) and intercultural competency of student affairs practitioners; 2) which and to what degree variables including: (a) years of professional service in student affairs, (b) frequency of on-going training regarding intercultural issues, (c) amount of time spent outside the US, and (d) direct experience with diverse others impact the outcome of assessment of intercultural cultural competency among student affairs practitioners; and 3) whether or not there are relationships between student affairs practitioner self and peer-assessments of intercultural competency.

In spring 2009, 465 student affairs practitioners completed three web-based instruments, the Cultural Intelligence Survey (CQS), developed by Ang, Van Dyne, Koh, and Ng (2004), the Multicultural Competence in Student Affairs-Preliminary 2 Scale (MCSA-P2) (Pope & Mueller, 2000), and a researcher developed Personal Data Form. Of this group, 52 practitioners also submitted the names and contact information of peers and students they believed could assess their intercultural competence. One hundred, eighty-eight individuals completed observer assessments.

Selected study findings: 1) Race and identification with a socially marginalized group were not be related to intercultural competence as assessed by the CQS; 2) Five experience variables, including international travel or living, training and workshop attendance, work place interactions with individuals from identity groups dissimilar to one's own, and workplace conversations about cultural difference accounted for 20% of the variance in intercultural competency; 3) Of the four factors that comprise cultural intelligence, practitioners rated themselves highest in meta-cognitive ability (higher order thought processes) and lowest in cognitive ability (procedural or crystallized knowledge). Finally, practitioner self-assessed intercultural competence was not related to peer assessed intercultural competence. The implications of and recommendations resulting from this research are discussed in detail.

MONICA MARCELIS FOCHTMAN, 2010

MID-CAREER WOMEN STUDENT AFFAIRS ADMINISTRATORS WITH YOUNG CHILDREN: NEGOTIATING LIFE, LIKE CLOCKWORK

ABSTRACT

In the existing student affairs literature about career development and work-life balance, women administrators of all professional levels and women with children of all ages have been studied together. As a result, little is known about the unique rewards and challenges that result from simultaneously negotiating the different stages of motherhood and a career in student affairs administration. The purpose of the current study was to better understand the tools and strategies mid-career women used to negotiate their multiple roles and the mechanisms they used to make meaning of their experiences. The study specifically focused on mid-career professionals because the mid-career stage is a time of personal and professional convergence, especially for women. Using a qualitative research approach, multiple in-depth interviews were conducted with 10 mid-career women student affairs administrators who were also mothers to young children, infant to age five. Mid-career was defined as more than five years of professional experience, but less than 15 years.

Data analyses revealed three main themes related to how women negotiated their lives as mid-career mothers. Those themes included: (1) like clockwork- the timing and alignment of multiple roles; (2) make it count- tools and strategies participants used to maximize their time; and (3) scaffolding- the support structures participants utilized to help them negotiate their multiple realities. Two themes related to why the participants chose motherhood and student affairs also emerged from the data. The women were (1) agents of their own experiences and (2) actively chose to maximize their mid-career time to help them achieve various personal and professional goals. I referred to these choices as —mid-career agency.‡ The women were motivated to persist in student affairs administration because they saw themselves as part of a larger collective of mothers and student affairs professionals. As a result, they blazed a path for themselves, their children, their students and institutions, and for the next generation of professionals.

The lived experiences of mid-career women with young children suggest that a dichotomous rendering of work-life balance is no longer useful and the national conversation about work-life balance should be re-conceptualized. Participants did not experience work-life balance; rather, they negotiated their various realities in purposeful and meaningful ways. It was the convergence of motherhood and work that made their lives challenging and rewarding. In addition, findings from the current study diverge from previous renderings of mid-career as a stagnant time. The participants were not stuck at mid-career and they were not victims; they were the creators of their own experiences who chose to make the most of their mid-career positions.

Findings from the study have implications for student affairs professionals at all career levels, as well as those who are parents and non-parents. Policies such as parental leave, flexible time, and compensatory time should be widely available to student affairs administrators. By example, mid-career and upper-level administrators should create an office culture where staffs are actively encouraged to utilize these policies.

AMANDA G. IDEMA, 2010

AN ORGANIZATIONAL THEORY APPROACH TO TRANSITION: THE WHEATON COLLEGE MOVE TO COEDUCATION

ABSTRACT

The 21st century has been a time of major change for women's colleges (Calefati, 2009; Harwarth, et al, 1997; Powers, 2007). From an all time high of close to 300 in operation, now less than 100 exist (Calefati, 2009). The decade of the 1980s saw a convergence of a perfect storm of challenges: declining birth rates that produced fewer college-going young people, a decrease in young women interested in single-sex education, and an economic recession that left tuition driven campuses in crisis (Chamberlain, 1988; Reisberg, 2000). While some women's colleges chose to close, others made tough decisions to ensure survival (Salamone, 2007). One of these colleges, Wheaton College in Norton, Massachusetts, opted to admit men and pursue coeducation as a way to expand enrollment, improve the quality of the student body, and avoid certain closure.

The purpose of this study is to explore, from an organizational theory perspective, how decision making is made and communicated on a college campus within the context of a major organizational change. Recognizing that each organization is unique and has a very specific set of inherent challenges and restrictions, this study does not attempt to generalize, but rather uses the case of Wheaton's transition to coeducation as a way to identify challenges, outcomes, and lessons learned for future decision making.

Through a traditional case-study method (Creswell, 2007; Merriam, 1998; Stake, 1994; Yin, 1984) this study examined, in depth, the two year period of decision making and transition on the Wheaton College campus. Key administrators during this period were interviewed, as well as a full analysis of documents created during the same time frame. Four research questions guided this study: (1) what environmental and institutional factors prompted the move to coeducation at Wheaton College; (2) how were decisions made and communication handled to guide the transition; (3) what organizational strategies could be used to explain the transition to coeducation; and, (4) what lessons learned from the Wheaton College transition can be used by other institutions facing similar circumstances.

The data collected from interviews and document analysis was analyzed using a variety of organizational theories. The main framework employed was Quinn and Cameron's (1983) work on the four stages of organizational change and adaptation. Additional theories in the areas of population ecology, niche theory, and organizational communication provided additional points of analysis.

At the conclusion of this study, several areas of future research are presented, as not all aspects of the transition to coeducation could be included in this study. Additionally, implications for administrators, faculty, Boards of Trustees and alumnae/i are presented.

JEAN F. MORCIGLIO, 2010

HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT PERCEPTIONS OF COMMUNITY COLLEGES: THE ROLE OF PERSONAL, INSTITUTIONAL, AND ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS IN THE COLLEGE CHOICE PROCESS

ABSTRACT

This study sought to explain how high school seniors across the United States think about community colleges in the context of the college choice process. The study described what attributes are associated with the community college experience and what influences those attributes. Since a weak college choice process can contribute to later performance problems, a better understanding of the community college within the choice process should mean less talent lost, fewer college dropouts, and a more efficient use of resources by both individuals and institutions.

This study focused on perceptions about community colleges and the environmental, personal, and institutional factors that influence such perceptions. The study involved an analysis of closed- and open-ended questions from a survey of over 36,000 college-bound high school students, and addressed the question: —What attributes, values, and influences can help explain perceptions about expected experiences at community colleges within the context of the college choice process?

The study results indicated that geographic region, income, race, and academic preparation all had an impact on serious consideration of a community college as an option during the college choice process. In addition, different racial and income groups perceived community college attributes differently. For example, lower-middle income students had an unusual aversion to the community college, while higher income students indicated a high overall favorability of community colleges. A large number of respondents did not see the community college as a transition away from their home and high school, and for many this perception was tied to academic reputation. Emotional attachment, developmental growth, and social network appeared more important than affordability to respondents considering a community college. Environmental and personal factors played significant roles in influencing perceptions held about community colleges.

DENISE NEWMAN, 2010

COMMUNITY COLLEGE TRUSTEES IN MICHIGAN: THE EXPERIENCES OF FOUR WOMEN

ABSTRACT

Community colleges continue to employ more women and provide education to more women than men, and although women are becoming more prevalent than they used to be in many executive roles at these institutions, there are still fewer women who are board of trustee members than men. Trustees at community colleges in leadership positions in these institutions are unique in that they are elected or selected from the community which they serve. This study provides the experiences of four women who are trustees at community colleges in the State of Michigan, and their perception of their role as trustees. Each of the four women share how they were approached to either run for an open position, or apply to a term that was not fulfilled by someone else; share how they were oriented and trained for the trustee position; explain how they view their role on the board; describe their relationships with the other trustees and the president that serves them; and how the trustee role affects their personal and community relationships. Leadership and feminist theories are discussed, as are ways of knowing described by Belenky, et al. (2007) to interpret how these women view their role as a trustee.