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ABSTRACT

A qualitative study was conducted of the contributions that institutional leaders make to fostering conditions that encourage high-quality out-of-class experiences for college students. A nine-member research team conducted the study. A process of nominations, recommendations and review yielded the selection of 14 institutions for the study. Site visits of 3-4 days were conducted by teams of two to four investigators; second visits were made to six institutions. Data collection and analysis were conducted concurrently; data collection methods consisted of interviews (individuals and focus groups), observations and document analysis. Interviews were conducted with 1,076 individuals at 14 institutions: 138 faculty, 76 academic administrators (including presidents, chief academic officers and registrars), 300 student affairs staff, 487 students, and 75 others. Specific results are discussed for each group. The following conclusions are also discussed: (1) the continuity and consistency of philosophy across academic affairs and student affairs is a characteristic of involving colleges; (2) faculty members seem to be less influential today than two decades ago in shaping the quality of out-of-class experiences of students; (3) student affairs staff have become the de facto caretakers of the undergraduate experience; and (4) the whole of the contributions of institutional agents is greater than the sum of their individual contributions. A list of the types of materials collected for institutional profiles is appended. Contains 61 references. (KM)

The Contributions of Institutional Agents to High Quality Out-Of-Class Experiences For College Students

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The Contributions of Institutional Agents to High Quality Out-Of-Class Experiences For College Students

> [T]he search for higher quality commonly brings little gain. The making of a first rank...college appears clothed in difficulty... The insistent questions remain: How is it done? How has it been done? (Clark, 1970, p. 4)

Interest in educational reform, particularly at the K-12 level, has characterized the 1980s. More recently, attention has been given to assessing the outcomes of college (Adelman, 1987; Ewell, 1985). Some form of assessment has been mandated by state agencies or institutional governing boards in New Jersey, Colorado, Tennessee, and South Dakota (Marchese, 1987). Most assessments emphasize the effectiveness of formal teaching-learning processes in classrooms or laboratories and essentially ignore what students do out of class. According to Marchese (personal communication, February 12, 1988), few efforts are underway to assess the contributions of out-of-class life of students to the overall quality of the undergraduate experience.

Only about 48 hours of a typical college student's week are devoted to attending class and studying (Boyer, 1987). About two-thirds of the time in a given week is spent on other activities. If as much as 50 hours are devoted to sleeping, at least 70 hours in a student s week remain. What do students do when they are not in class or the laboratory? Of those who work, most are employed part-time, about 10-12 hours per week. Some devote considerable time to children and spouses. Traditional age students (18-23 year olds), however, continue to spend a substantial portion of their time in extracurricular activities.

The out-of-class experience is taken for granted or lightly regarded as a positive educational force on many campuses (Boyer, 1987).

Faculty pay little attention or give minimal support to extracurricular activities. On most campuses, few efforts are made to connect extracurricular events to classroom goals, a state of affairs which the Association of American Colleges recently described as "unfortunate" (Heller, 1988).

Students actively involved in both academic and out-of-class activities seem to gain more from the college experience than those who are not involved. Students who expend a reasonable amount of effort participating in extracurricular activities become better integrated in the academic and social life of the institution (Chapman & Pascarella, 1983; Tinto, 1975, 1986); thus, they tend to be happier, are more likely to persist to graduation, and exhibit higher levels of achievement and personal development (Astin, 1977; Pascarella, 1980; Tinto, 1987). Extracurricular activities also provide opportunities for development of leadership skills which are increasingly important for effective participation in civic and community affairs (Gardner, 1987; Schuh & Laverty, 1983).

The college experience is potent to the degree that desirable changes occur in students' values, intellectual capacities, and aesthetic sensibilities (Bowen, 1977; Clark, Heist, McConnell & Yonge, 1972). Potency is increased when students are more actively engaged in various aspects of college life. In Astin's (1985) words:

> "True excellence lies in the institution's ability to affect its students and faculty favorably, to enhance their intellectual and scholarly development, and to make a positive difference in their lives. The most excellent institutions are, in this view, those that have the greatest impact--'add the most value,' as economists would say--on the student's knowledge and personal development..." (pp. 60-61)

Boyer (1987) concluded that "the effectiveness of the undergraduate experience relates to the quality of campus life and is directly linked

to the time students spend on campus and the quality of their involvement in activities" (p. 180).

Conceptual Framework

In this study, a high quality out-of-class experience is defined as students' active participation in out-of-class activities which complement the academic purposes of the institution. Quality is a multidimensional construct influenced by: (a) institutional resources (e.g., administrative leadership, faculty credentials, expenditures per student); (b) students' characteristics (e.g., ability, socioeconomic background, academic and career aspirations); (c) the degree to which students take advantage of opportunities for involvement in academic and extracurricular activities; and (d) outcomes such as student satisfaction, student academic achievement, and alumni attainments (Astin, 1984; Kuh, 1981).

Kuh (1981) identified several factors that contributed to the quality of the undergraduate experience: (a) degree of effort expended by students; (b) institutional size (i.e., number of FTE undergraduates) and organizational complexity; (c) generativity (i.e., the capacity and willingness of institutional agents such as faculty and staff to care for the next generation of students); and (d) degree of distinctiveness of the institutional culture. The weight of research suggests that the degree to which students expend effort in participating in academic as well as out-of-class activities is the most important factor related to quality (Astin, 1977; Pace, 1980; Pace & Friedlander, 1979). That is, quality is more a function of what students do with an institution's resources (e.g., faculty, facilities) than of the resources themselves (Kuh, 1981; Pace, 1980).

When compared with their counterparts at large universities, students at small colleges are more likely to participate in activities such as student government, social organizations, work-study programs, volunteer programs, and athletic clubs. Small colleges are also "undermanned [sic] environments" (Barker, 1968) where "an inverse relationship exists between the number of people on the campus and the frequency and intensity of opportunities" (Hawley & Kuh, 1986, p. 13). In environments that offer numerous opportunities for participation and leadership (Astin, 1984; Barker & Gump, 1964; Chickering, 1969), "people tend to be busier, more vigorous, more versatile, and more involved" (Walsh, 1978, p. 7). Such environments also tend to instill loyalty among students, ostensibly because they are more involved (Heath, 1968; Clark & Trow, 1966).

Institutional size may not be the most important factor, however, in encouraging students to become involved during college. The psychological size of many large universities can be reduced by developing a strong sense of community in living units (e.g., residence hall floors, fraternity and sorority houses), by intentionally creating opportunities for participation in social and academic organizations (Hawley & Kuh, 1986), and by encouraging informal, out-of-class interactions between faculty and students (Clark & Trow, 1966; Feldman & Newcomb, 1969; Pascarella, 1980). The role of the president and the "personnel core" (senior faculty) in creating and maintaining a distinctive institutional culture is well documented (Clark, 1970). Thus, involvement seems to be enhanced by a generative learning community (Kuh, 1981) which is characterized by supportive caring persons who mix freely with one another in an environment marked by shared ideals, principles, and a coherent, pervasive institutional ethos

(Heath, 1968, 1981; Keeton, 1971).

Objectives

A guiding assumption of this study is that at some colleges and universities How students spend their time out of class complements, and is integrated with, the academic purposes of the institution and students' personal and academic goals. Astin (1977, 1985), Boyer (1987), and others (e.g., NASPA, 1987) have identified some elements of out-of-class experiences that support the academic program (e.g., residential honors programs, cooperative education-work programs, opportunities for students to participate in and influence institutional governing processes). The research on which the findings reported in this paper are based was designed to extend the work of Astin, Boyer and the Carnegie Foundation, and Pace (1980, 1982, 1984), and takes into account institutional history, campus traditions, student participation in different out-of-class activities, and other factors. This paper, however, focuses primarily on the contributions institutional leaders make to fostering conditions that encourage high quality out-of-class experiences for students.

More specifically, the following questions will be addressed: (a) What is the relative importance of out-of-class life of students to attaining the academic purposes of the institution? (b) How does the president, as the symbolic leader of the institution (Dill, 1982), articulate the relationship between out-of-class life of students and the institutional mission? (c) How do the chief academic officer, the chief student affairs officer, and faculty members contribute to, communicate, and support the importance of the out-of-class experience?

To avoid the "believing is seeing" trap (Weick, 1979), a priori

hypotheses about faculty and administrator attitudes and behavior associated with high quality experiences were not generated. That is, we consciously (and conscientiously) avoided focusing on information that might either confirm or refute our hypotheses. Rather the goal was to remain open to information that informants believed was important to understanding how high quality out-of-class experiences were fostered.

Methods

The inquiry methods used in this study were qualitative, producing data in the form of words and analyzing data by means of the use of human instruments (i.e., the inquirers) (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Qualitative methods are superior to other approaches for identifying values, assumptions, expectations and behavior--such as those of faculty and administrators that may influence the out-of-class experiences of students (Goetz & LeCompte, 1984)

The Research Team

The ambitious scope of the project required multiple investigators. One or two individuals could not conduct the number of interviews required to provide a rich, cumulative description of "involving colleges." Field research using qualitative methods requires that the inquirers be familiar not only with appropriate inquiry techniques, but also with the phenomena under study. With these qualifications in mind, the research team was composed of nine members: four faculty, including a former college president and university provost, a former academic dean and department chair, the head of a preparation program in college student affairs administration, and a former dean of students; three student life administrators, including one chief student affairs officer with 25 years experience at private institutions of higher education (IHEs), one associate vice president at an urban institution who also

has extensive residence life experience, and one dean of students who has served at both commuter and residential universities; and two graduate students, one of whom had experience in student affairs administration at a women's college and at large public universities.

Data Sources

In May and June, 1988, a modified Delphi technique was used to identify a small number of IHEs reputed to provide high quality out-of-class experiences for undergraduates. Fifty eight experts were identified to represent a variety of constituencies and viewpoints in higher education. The experts included directors of regional accreditation associations (n=6); representatives of associations or agencies with special interest in higher education and the undergraduate experience (e.g., American Council of Education, American Association of Higher Education, Education Commission of the States, National Association of Student Personnel Administrators, Campus COMPACT) (n=14); higher education scholars with a long-standing interest in the college student experience (e.g., Astin, Gamson, Pace, Riesman) (n=20); college and university presidents, including representatives of single-sex, historically Black, and urban institutions (n=7); and chief student life officers, several of whom were current or former presidents of the American College Personnel Association or the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (n=11). Of the 58 originally identified, six indicated they could not participate (e.g., due to lack of knowledge about out-of-class experiences, due to illness). Therefore, 47 of the expert panel members participated in one or both rounds of the nomination process.

The experts were asked to identify IHEs noted for the high quality

out-of-class experiences they provided for undergraduates. They were to choose up to five institutions in each of the following categories: (a) residential colleges with fewer than 5000 students, (b) residential colleges/universities with 5000 or more students, (c) urban institutions--those with high proportions of commuting and part-time students, (d) single-sex colleges, and (e) historically Black colleges. A total of 252 institutions was nominated: 78 small residential institutions, 67 large residential institutio s, 49 urban institutions, 33 single-sex colleges (some of which were subsequently removed because they were no longer single sex--e.g., Haverford), and 25 historically Black colleges.

A list of those institutions receiving two or more nominations (27 small residential, 29 large residential, 21 urban, 16 single-sex, 14 Black) was sent to the panel of experts. They were asked to identify those that they believed provided high quality out-of-class experiences for undergraduates. In the second round, 85 institutions were nominated by four or more experts: 20 small residential, 23 large residential, 16 urban, 15 single-sex, and 11 Black.

After the nominating process was completed, approximately one-fourth (n=12) of the experts was interviewed by phone about the criteria they had used in making nominations. This information was used by the research team in making decisions about institutions to be visited.

No scientific sampling process is claimed. However, through the polling and interviewing of experts, and the development and review of the final list of nominations by the research team, we were satisfied that this set of colleges and universities could offer useful information about high quality out-of-class experiences for undergraduate students.

The research team met for three days in August 1988 in order to select, from among those institutions nominated by the expert panel members, the colleges and universities to be included in the study. Focusing primarily on the results of the second round of nominations and expert interviews, the team engaged in a series of discussions to identify institutions to visit. Three decision rules emerged during the discussions. First, the team decided that, because some publications have focused on some of the institutions that received many nominations (e.g., Haverford--Heath, 1968; Swarthmore--Clark, 1970), the study would be more likely to expand knowledge about higher education and the undergraduate experience by including some colleges and universities about which less had been written. Second, an effort was made to include institutions from different geographical regions of the United States; we assumed that the regional context influences, in some ways, both the student body and the institution and, hence, the student experience (Kuh & Whitt, 1988). Finally, we attempted to achieve a balance between public and private institutions, assuming that form of control affects student experiences (Astin, 1977).

Fourteen institutions were selected for inclusion in the study: four small residential colleges (Berea, Earlham, Evergreen State, Grinnell), four large residential institutions (University of California at Davis, Iowa State University, Miami University of Ohio, Stanford), four urban institutions (University of Alabama at Birmingham, University of Louisville, University of North Carolina at Charlotte, Wichita State University), a single-sex college (Mount Holyoke), and a historically Black institution (Xavier Univesity of New Orleans).

In late August and early September, the chief student affairs

officer at each institution was contacted to describe the study and the process by which the 14 institutions were selected, and to seek permission to include their institution in the study. All of the institutions agreed to participate. The oral agreement was confirmed with a letter and a request for information about the institution (e.g., institutional histories, catalog, admissions information, descriptions of student characteristics (see Appendix A)); these materials would be reviewed prior to the campus visit. Also a list of persons to be interviewed (e.g., president, chief academic affairs officer, chief student affairs officer, faculty, students (see Appendix B)) was provided.

The first round of site visits was conducted by teams of two to four investigators from September through early December, 1988; the teams typically spent three or four days at each institution. After the first visits, the research team met to decide if there were institutions that needed a second visit in order to learn all we thought we needed to know. Second visits were made to six institutions during January and February, 1989.

Data Collection

Data collection and analysis were conducted concurrently. In this way, we were able to use existing data to inform collection and interpretation of additional data (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Miles & Huberman, 1984).

Traditional social science survey methods, such as questionnaires and checklists, were judged inappropriate for our purposes--for example, for discovering how institutional agents influence students to take advantage of institutional resources and participate in high quality out-of-class activities. Therefore, qualitative methods of data

collection were used, including interviews, observations, and document analysis.

Respondents. The institutional contact person was asked to schedule the initial round of interviews. The selection of interview respondents was based on the technique of status sampling (Dobbert, 1984). In this instance, status sampling required that interviews be conducted with the president, chief academic and student affairs officers and their principal assistants, faculty members, professional staff who work directly with students, student leaders, and other student representatives.

The principle of inclusion was emphasized to the contact person; that is, we needed to gather information from as many perspectives as possible (Miles & Huberman, 1984). For example, we wanted to be certain that we talked with students who held informal leadership roles as well as some who were not well-integrated into the social system. We also wanted to talk with faculty who may not have had a lot of contact with students outside of class.

We employed a variant of "snowball sampling" (Dobbert, 1984). At the conclusion of interviews, respondents were asked to identify others whose opinions and out-of-class activities and experiences differed from their own (i.e., students who seemed to be less involved in campus life). In addition, we did some impromptu interviews in cafeterias, library foyers, student centers, residence halls, and other living units (e.g., fraternity and sorority houses).

All respondents were asked to sign a consent form giving their permission to use information obtained from them in the study. Respondents were told that their participation was voluntary, and that

they could withdraw from the study at any time (Dobbert, 1984).

Interviews. Individual interviews and focus groups (Merton, Fisk, & Kendall, 1956) were the primary methods of data collection. Focus groups are discussion groups that meet only once and concentrate on a specific topic (e.g., factors related to students' out-of-class experiences). Interviews were conducted to obtain respondents' constructions, as well as to confirm and expand information already obtained (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Although the degree of structure imposed on the interviews varied from less to more as the investigation proceeded, a set of questions was developed for each category of respondent (i.e., president, students, etc.). Initial questions were developed from the research questions and purposes. The interview protocols were used by all investigators at all of the sites. Questions were added as interviewing progressed and additional questions were necessary for clarification or to obtain additional information (e.g., about differences across institutional types). Thus, the respondents generated additional questions for the study.

Interviews were recorded by means of a tape recorder so that all information obtained could be retrieved. Transcripts were made of interviews that were deemed to be especially useful (e.g., student leaders, faculty members). Interview data were compiled by the investigators on interview summary forms (Miles & Huberman, 1984) in order to identify themes, questions, and reactions generated by each interview. This information was used to develop additional questions and during data analysis.

Observations. A secondary source of data was observations of programs, events, and activities that took place during the campus visits. Observations were considered to be secondary because they were

typically used to generate topics for interviews (Barley, 1983). Observations fell roughly into three categories: (a) regularly-scheduled events (e.g., convocations, concerts), (b) spontaneous events (e.g., frisbee matches), and (c) events conducted for the purpose of the visit (e.g., residence hall tours).

We did not actively participate in the events observed; rather, we recorded notes and impressions (Dobbert, 1984). Points for clarification and questions were addressed later to appropriate individuals. Data from observations were recorded on observation summary sheets (Miles & Huberman, 1984) in order to facilitate the process of identifying further questions and emergent themes.

Documents. Documents were another secondary source of information and, like observations, provided topics and questions for interviews. Documents were also used to describe and understand the institutional context (Dobbert, 1984). Investigators obtained documents in advance of the visits. The following documents were found to be particularly useful: handbooks (e.g., policy, procedure, student, faculty, and staff), promotional pamphlets (e.g., admissions viewbooks, student organization recruitment brochures), institutional mission and goal statements, institutional histories, and other documents that referred to the integration of students' out-of-class experiences with the academic mission of the institution. In addition to printed documents, we reviewed other media designed to communicate with constituents, including video tapes used for institutional advancement or recruitment purposes.

Relevant documents also became apparent during the campus visit. These included student publications and records of student participation

in the extracurriculum (e.g., student development transcripts (Brown & DeCoster, 1982).

Data from obtained from document analysis were recorded on document summary forms (Miles & Huberman, 1984). Information from the forms was used to generate questions for respondents at the institution as well as to develop constructions of the institutional context.

Data Analysis

Data analysis was conducted throughout data collection and focused simultaneously on analysis of data within the individual sites and across sites. A description of each of these processes follows.

Within-site analysis. A coding scheme was developed to identify categories for the purpose of organizing and retrieving data (Miles & Huberman, 1984). Categories encompass a single theme, containing those units of data that relate to the same content (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). A preliminary list of category codes was formulated by the research team from the conceptual framework, objectives, and questions of the study. These categories were: (a) the role of institutional agents regarding out-of-class experiences, (b) description and role of student subcultures, (c) description and role of institutional history and traditions, (d) description and role of institutional policies and practices, (e) description and role of institutional mission, (f) characteristics of student involvement in out-of-class life, (g) tentative explanations, speculations, and hypotheses, and (h) other (creating additional categories as necessary). Each of the categories was discussed by the team in order that all could understand and agree upon the category definitions (Miles & Huberman, 1984).

After each site visit, each investigator recorded his or her interview and field notes on interview summary forms (Miles & Huberman,

1984). In addition, each investigator completed a case analysis form, in which data from interviews, observations, and documents were placed in the categories developed by the group.

These forms, as well as tapes and interview notes, were forwarded to the investigator designated as the site coordinator. The first task of the site coordinator was to compile all of the site data, including notes from team meetings on-site. The coordinator then clustered the data into categories; case analysis forms from the other investigators were used as a means to assess the completeness of these categories. If necessary, additonal categories were developed in order to include all of the site data (Miles & Huberman, 1984). Categorization at this point in the analysis process served two purposes. First, having the site data in categories enabled the development of a case report, summarizing findings and conclusions for the first visit. Second, categorization of site data provided a basis for analysis of data across sites, a process which is described below.

The case report of the first visit served as an "interim site summary" (Miles & Huberman, 1984, p. 75), synthesizing what was known about the site and identifying remaining questions to be explored. The case report was then circulated among all members of the research team in order to inform data gathering at other sites. The report was also sent to respondents at the site in order to allow them to confirm or deny the investigators' constructions of their words and feelings through the debriefing process. Debriefing will be discussed later in the section on trustworthiness.

Cross-site analysis. Data from all of the first-round campus visits were compiled and analyzed at a meeting of all project staff in

December, 1988. For the purposes of cross-site data analysis, data from the individual sites were "standardized" (Miles & Huberman, 1984, p. 152) by means of common categories and common reporting formats (e.g., forms, reports). Analysis of the standardized data took place in four stages: (a) development of a meta-matrix, (b) clustering of data, (c) identification of patterns, and (d) development of propositions (Miles & Huberman, 1984).

In developing meta-matrices, "the basic principle is the inclusion of all relevant data" (Miles & Huberman, 1984, p. 152). For the purposes of this study, a meta-matrix was developed from summaries of within-site analyses. Data from each institution were described by categories: (a) the role of institutional agents regarding out-of-class experiences, (b) description and role of student subcultures, (c) description and role of institutional history and traditions, (d) description and role of institutional policies and practices, (e) description and role of institutional mission, (f) characteristics of student involvement in out-of-class life, and (g) tentative explanations, speculations, and hypotheses. Institution-specific categories were, in most cases, subsumable into the original set of categories.

Once the meta-matrix was prepared, research team members proceeded to cluster data in order to identify commonalities and differences in categories across sites (Miles & Huberman, 1984). In addition, commonalities and differences were described according to the five types of institutions (i.e., small residential, large residential, urban/commuter, single-sex, and historically Black). Thus, we were able to discover that, except in the case of urban/commuter institutions, the various institutional types had many more commonalities than

differences.

The cluster of "things in common" was then examined in order to identify patterns or themes emerging in each category. From those themes, a set of propositions was developed to describe and explain (however tentatively) factors and conditions associated with high quality out-of-class experiences for undergraduates. Those propositions, then, were discussed in debriefing sessions with respondents and evaluated by the research team throughout the second round of site visits.

Establishing Trustworthiness

Lincoln and Guba (1985) offer the standard of trustworthiness to answer the question, "how can an inquirer persuade his or her audiences (including self) that the findings of an inquiry are worth paying attention to, worth taking account of?" (p. 290). Criteria for trustworthiness include credibility (i.e., the constructions arrived at are credible to the respondents), transferability (i.e., the study may be useful in another context), dependability (i.e., the reporting of results considers possible changes over time), and confirmability (i.e., the data can be confirmed by someone other than the inquirer). Mechanisms for meeting the criteria for trustworthiness are described below.

Credibility. Three of the mechanisms cited by Lincoln and Guba (1985) for establishing credibility (triangulation, peer debriefing, and member checks) were used in this study. Triangulation is a technique for judging the accuracy of data, and requires the use of multiple data sources and/or multiple methods of data collection. Multiple sources of data may include multiple "copies" of one kind of source (e.g.,

respondents) and different sources of the same information (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In this study, data were obtained from five different types of institutions of higher education. In addition, at every institution, respondents in nine general categories (i.e., students, presidents, chief academic affairs officers, chief student affairs officers, faculty, student affairs staff, institutional historians, alumni, and trustees) were interviewed. All nine types of respondents at all five types of institutions were asked to provide information about the out-of-class experiences of undergraduates, the role of institutional agents in those experiences, and the connections, if any, between out-of-class experiences and the academic mission of the institution.

Debriefing of the inquirer by a peer is used: (a) to ensure that the inquirer is aware of her or his personal perspectives and perceptions and the impact they have on the study; (b) to develop and test next steps to be taken; and (c) to test hypotheses which are emerging from the data. Debriefing sessions were particularly critical for the credibility of this study as nine "human instruments" were involved. First, visits to Grinnell and Wichita State were conducted by two teams of investigators in late September. All nine members of the research team then met by conference call in order to debrief the first visits, make adjustments to interview protocols and other data-gathering techniques, and to identify other sources of information that were found to be beneficial.

Throughout the study, team members at each site met at the end of each day of interviews to discuss findings, plan for additional questions and respondents, and discuss tentative (and temporary) conclusions. Follow-up phone conferences were conducted in order to

further discuss data and impressions.

Debriefings were also conducted at project staff meetings, held four times during the course of the study. These debriefings were used to test ideas, obtain feedback on methods (e.g., interview techniques, identification of units of data), and discuss next steps.

Member checks are, in effect, debriefing sessions with respondents for the purposes of testing the data, analytical categories, interpretations, and conclusions; in short, for judging the overall credibility of the findings of the study (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Member checks occurred throughout the study and were informal as well as formal. At the end of most interviews, the investigators reviewed what they had heard the respondents say, seeking immediate feedback and clarification of the interview. Also, after the first round of site visits, we began to "re-cycle" data among the respondents at each institution. Respondents from each category received both a case report about their institution developed by the site team and a list of tentative constructions about factors relevant to high quality out-of-class experiences. Conversations were held with respondents, either by phone or in person, in order to obtain reactions to the questions, comments, concerns, and experiences described by other respondents. This process served to focus later interviews and reinforce the constructions that were emerging during data analysis.

Finally, copies of our preliminary propositions regarding factors and conditions associated with high quality out-of-class experiences of undergraduates were sent to respondents at all 14 sites. Their reactions to the propositions were used in the process of developing conclusions to the study as well as to inform the second round of site

visits.

Transferability. To address the issue of transferability, the inquirer must demonstrate the degree of similarity between the sending (i.e., the setting of the study) and receiving (i.e., a setting to which the study may be applied) contexts (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Therefore, he or she must provide a thick description of the sending context so that someone in a potential receiving context may assess the similarity between them and, hence, the transferability of the study. Thick description entails the broadest and most thorough information possible. In reporting the findings and conclusions of the study, we will provide as accurate a description of the setting and respondents as concern for confidentiality will allow, as well as an extensive discussion of themes, including statements from which they were derived.

Dependability and Confirmability. In order to meet criteria for dependability, the inquirer must provide evidence of the appropriateness of the inquiry decisions made throughout the study (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Confirmability of the data is demonstrated by showing that the findings are based on the data and that the inferences drawn from the data are logical (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Dependability and confirmability can be established by means of an audit, in which an external auditor examines both the processes and the products of the study. During the course of the study, we have developed an audit trail (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) comprised of: (a) raw data, including tapes, interview notes, and documents; (b) products of data reduction and analysis, including field notes, interview and document summary forms, and case analysis forms; (c) products of data reconstruction and synthesis, including category descriptions, case reports, and ongoing reports of findings and conclusions; (d) process notes, including notes

on methodological decisions and trustworthiness criteria; and (e) materials relating to the intention and disposition of the research team, including notes of debriefings, staff meeting minutes, and staff correspondence.

Results

A total of 1076 individuals was interviewed at the 14 institutions: 138 faculty, 76 academic administrators including presidents, chief academic officers and registrars, 300 student affairs staff, 487 students, and 75 others (e.g., trustees, librarians, campus ministers, alumni, support staff).

In reporting the results we have elected to use the real names of institutions and individuals, rather than create pseudonyms. Identifying the institutions promotes two helpful outcomes:

> First, the reader is able to recall any other previous information he or she may have learned about the same case--from previous research or other sources--in reading and interpreting the case report ... Second, the entire case can be reviewed more readily, so that footnotes and citations can be checked, if necessary, and appropriate criticisms can be raised about the published case. (Yin, 1984, p. 136)

The institutions were selected because of perceptions of an unusally high level of involvement on the part of students. Thus, most of the information we gathered was not controversial but rather was affirming and complimentary to the institution.

To respond to the questions posed at the beginning of the paper, the results are presented in four categories of institutional agents: president, academic administrators, faculty, and student affairs staff. In each section, the major themes related to each group are listed. Examples are provided to illustrate these themes in various institutional contexts.

The President

The role of the president in setting the tone for out-of-class life is mediated by nomothetic features, such as institutional size (e.g., small college presidents might be expected to be more knowledgeable about the out-of-class life of students), and by idiographic features (i.e., the incumbent's previous experience, interests, and personality). That presidents of colleges and universities have assumed the role of chief executive officer is no longer debatable (Green, 1988; Kerr, 1984; Kerr & Gade, 1986); presidents devote considerable time to external consitutencies (e.g., alumni, state legislators, governing boards, accreditation officials, corporations). Yet the institutions participating in this study were included because they were perceived by experts to be doing extraordinary things with regard to out-of-class experiences of students. What role did presidents play in underscoring the importance of such experiences? Does the president articulate a relationship between out-of-class experiences and the institutional mission and, if so, in what ways?

In "involving colleges":

(a) The president provides symbolic leadership by communicating the institutional mission, priorities, and a vision for the institution to different constituents, including students. The role of the out-of-class life of students is often emphasized through speeches, during orientation events, and in literature distributed to students, parents, alumni and others. In some instances (e.g., Berea, Earlham, Grinnell, Stanford), presidents model involvement with students for faculty and the importance of involvement to students;

(b) The president is able to articulate how institutional history and traditions underscore and emphasize the importance of students'

participation in out-of-class activities;

(c) The relationship between the president and the chief student affairs officer is characterized by loyalty, support for decisions, and adequate resources, and is based on mutual respect and trust; this mutual respect is obvious to faculty and students; and

(d) Presidents may or may not encourage faculty involvement with students out of class, and may or may not be able to talk authoritatively about out-of-class experiences of various kinds (i.e., what, why, how). Whether she or he could or could not had no apparent impact--positive or negative--on student participation in out-of-class activities.

Analysis of speeches and other public statements reveal much about a president's attitude toward, and commitment to, high quality out-of-class experiences, particularly when messages about out-of-class life are consistently communicated in addresses or forums. In his 1988 State of the University Address, Paul Pearson, President of Miami University, challenged faculty and students to strive toward "vibrancy" in campus life. What does vibrancy mean at Miami?

> [Q]uality teaching that gives shape and direction to the undergraduate experience...a strong sense of community between faculty and students ... opportunities for students to pursue research and other projects with faculty. Students are truly caught up in the excitement of learning." (1988, p. 11)

Pearson emphasized that vibrancy should not be confined to the classroom or laboratory:

> "**Faculty and students ...realize that student learning extends beyond the classroom and into the larger community ...**" [emphasis added]
>
> "We must also look beyond the walls of the traditional classroom and explore ways to get students to work in a variety of different environments ... We need to stimulate ... linkages between students and external publics

(e.g., businesses, schools, and governmental agencies) through community service projects, internships, and collaborative research projects; student participation in off-campus professional and career-related activities; employment programs that allow students to serve the University and assist their peers in academic support, career guidance, job searches, and educational activities ... (1988, pp. 11-12)

In our interview with Pearson, he asserted the importance of out-of-class experiences for the quality of student life. Students not only learn leadership in those settings, but also have fun, which is very important for a balanced collegiate experience, satisfaction, and retention. In addition, out-of-class experiences encourage bonding to the institution which forms the basis for alumni loyalty and support.

A highlight of Frosh Orientation Week at Stanford is Donald Kennedy's annual speech to the new students. His comments during 1988 fall orientation are powerful; unfortunately, space limitations preculude reproducing them in toto. A few paragraphs must suffice:

> [I]n this community, we care for one another's welfare. The orientation volunteers you have seen, the RAs, the faculty members who commit themselves to residential life, we advisers, and our student advising associates--all represent one form of that commitment ... In a different but no less important way, the emphasis on voluntary and public service evident in the work of the Public Service Center ... is another signal of the value we attach to helping one another.
>
> In residential education and elsewhere, racial understanding has properly become a powerful theme. It is important for you to acknowledge that theme, and to recognize it as an integral part of the education you will receive here rather than as some extracurricular sideshow. I hope you will start this process by taking advantage of the programming provided by the ethnic orientation committees.
>
> We have assembled an extraordinary faculty ... We will try to challenge you in the classroom, not just to learn but to think for yourselves and to apply your knowledge to new situations ... We will give you every incentive we can think of to extend your intellectual commitment beyond the classroom.
>
> You have come to a community that has worked hard to open itself to you, and that will try to make you feel at home. It

will grant you opportunities for friendships, for service to others, and for joy. But most of all it will supply you with a chance at new ideas, new possibilities, and new challenges. Whether you take them up is a decision that the creators of circumstance cannot make for you. But we will be watching, hoping, cheering--and waiting for the call to come. (1988, pp. 3-5, 9, 12)

President Kennedy is simply "Don" to the Stanford faculty and administrators. One of the Stanford traditions is that the President is the students' President, as well as the President of the faculty and other staff. Kennedy is also the president of two Stanfords. One Stanford is the research university which encompasses and in some ways, dominates the second Stanford, the undergraduate college. To outside observers and to many Stanford faculty, Stanford is primarily a research university that values entrepreneurial behavior on the part of faculty and students. Indeed, the notion of entrepreneurship is fed by the expectation that students will take initiative to get to know faculty, create organizations, and so forth.

Kennedy spoke passionately and articulately about the important role of the residential experience to the "other Stanford", undergraduate college:

> "I'm a college president and a university president. In spite of our best efforts there is still a gap between what faculty think ought to happen in the residential education component and what does happen. Another problem is that some members of the Dean of Student Affairs staff don't understand the academic enterprise well enough and faculty don't understand the high degree of professionalism and the quality of support given [by student affairs staff] to the out-of-class experience of students. Unlike experiments in a laboratory, we don't understand clearly what happens in residential education or how it happens. We know good things happen, but it is not under our control; that is we can't create positive outcomes every time we take risks or present challenges."
>
> "This place has a tradition of students helping students. Peer relationships and pride in taking care of our own community are cornerstones of the Stanford way ... How do you bring together teachers and students? Who are the best role

models? Faculty are not always comfortable or competent for that matter in sitting down with an 18 or 20 year old."

"And students have a responsibility here too. The number of undergraduates who lay claim to the resources of faculty is relatively small ... [My job, and that of students affairs] is to be more active in arousing students' interests; arousal produces opportunism. That is, how can we get students' attention and have them think, ponder, and agonize about what constitutes punishable racism and protected speech? We will do a lot of teaching around that issue here in the near future."

This is not a detached (or perhaps typical) president as far as the collegiate experience is concerned. He makes 20 to 25 appearances in the "dorms" each year! (At Stanford, the term "dorm" is used in an affectionate way. The student affairs profession has discouraged use of the term "dorm" because it historically connoted a place where students slept and underemphasized the educational functions of a living community. "Residence hall" is the preferred term among student affairs professionals, but not at Stanford where the "dorms" are readily acknowledged to be an important educational component of the collegiate experience.) While recognizing the many challenges to integrating the research university with the collegiate experience, and while attempting to attract the best and brightest faculty (not necessarily people who have a keen interest in lives of undergraduate students), Kennedy always keeps one eye on the quality of student life.

The contributions of some presidents (or chancellors on campuses which are part of a multi-campus system such as the University of California) take on almost heroic proportions in the shaping of appropriate ways for students to spend time out of class. The second Chancellor of the University of California at Davis, Emil Mrak, was instrumental in establishing a participatory tone for the Davis campus. His philosophy--"students helping each other succeed"--is evidenced in a

number of administrative mechanisms such as advising committees and a nationally recognized peer advising program. Many current staff and administrators, although they never met Mrak, are able to describe what he stood for. His legacy is consistently communicated from one generation of faculty, staff and students to the next. The degree to which Mrak's vision and values have persisted is be described by a faculty member:

> Students maintain the continuity of events which are not structured by staff or faculty. Mrak's influence and his guiding theme--students helping each other--has kept the, psychological size of Davis small, even though it is close to 20,000 students today. Faculty and staff still think of the place as more of a small college than a large research university.

The first President of Evergreen State College (TESC), Charles McCann, continues to serve on the faculty. McCann was a powerful advocate of individualized education and fashioned many of the qualities and structures that continue today.

> My ideas for Evergreen were composed of a list of negatives: no departments, no ranks, no requirements, no grades. A vaguer list of positives was also offered. We should have cooperative education (internship) options for students, we should be more interdisciplinary, there should be as little red tape as possible among the faculty members and students and what's there to be learned, freshman--everyone--should have the opportunities and obligations presented by seminars, evaluation in narrative form, library and computing services, and so forth."1

Minimizing administration, and the visibility of administrators, were two of McCann's founding ideals of the college that have persisted. The administration, for example, seems to be more the keeper--rather than the leader of--the community. The TESC community, including students, more or less leads itself. Faculty are "senior learners"; students are "junior learners." The academic Vice President and Deans do not make their administrative roles a career; rather they are "taking

time away from their faculty duties" to take their turn at administration and do their share to organize and keep the complex academic system running. All expect to return to the faculty after a three to five-year administrative appointment. Committees are called "Disappearing Task Forces," and actually disband after their work is completed. Although there are committees for nearly everything, the institutional ethos discourages establishment of permanent committees that will outlast their usefulness and take time away from the more important business of teaching and learning. The importance of calling every committee a DTF? Students, and teaching and learning, are acknowledged to be the primary business of TESC. Energies are devoted primarily to these tasks; people are not to be distracted from the basic purposes of the enterprise.

TESC is an unusual place. A seamlessness characterizes the relationship between the academic and out-of-class experiences. Indeed, some people were surprised at our questions about the character of the out-of-class experience. All activities are perceived to be connected. This is accomplished largely by the unusual nature of the curriculum, which is interdisciplinary in nature and focused on a problem or issue that is best illuminated through frameworks provided by different disciplines (e.g., ecology).

According to faculty and student life staff, Mount Holyoke College President Elizabeth Kennan demonstrated the value placed on out-of-class life and the contributions of student affairs professionals to the institutional mission by investing additional resources in student affairs. Because of Kennan's commitment to recruiting high quality faculty with scholarly interests, many of whom may not have a lot of time to spend with students in out-of-class activities, student life

staff promise to become even more important at Mount Holyoke in the future, a point to which we will return shortly.

Consistent with the traditions of The Society of Friends (Quakers), the Earlham College community has been successful in discouraging many status differences. One manifestation, and an important shaping influence, is the President's preference, as with Don Kennedy at Stanford, to be addressed by his first name. An alphabetical picture directory of all faculty and staff is provided to each student; at first glance the directory does not appear remarkable until one realizes that all names are alphabetized without regard to title, position, or role. This diminution of status differences is, in addition to being an egalitarian aspiration, absolutely critical to ensuring the viability of decisionmaking by consensus (i.e., for consensus to work, all members of the community must be free to speak and to have their opinions taken seriously and valued by others in the community).

Grinnell College demands that students make intelligent choices about what to do with their time out-of-class. Students are ultimately held responsible for the success of their educational experience. The Grinnell mission--focused on human rights and human dignity--is clearly articulated and actively modeled by the president, George Drake. President Drake often takes meals in the campus residence halls and will query students about their involvement outside the classroom.

At some institutions (e.g., University of California-Davis, Miami, Mount Holyoke, Iowa State), symbolic gestures and statements on the part of the president encourage involvement; the student culture does the rest. But at other institutions that attract students less autonomous, discriminating, self-assured, and self-directed, more structure and

mechanisms are needed. For example, the president of Xavier University believes that "students need to be brought around as they are less sure how to get involved." He is responsible for helping faculty show students how they can make a contribution to society--through tutoring elementary and high school children; helping in special schools; working with the elderly, voter registration, and leadership development; and working with Black professionals in the University neighborhood and beyond.

At Berea College, 80% of the students come from Appalachia; relatively few are well-prepared for college-level work. Indeed, few Berea students would have attended college were it not for Berea. Out-of-class activities are described by President John Stephenson and others (e.g., Vice President for Labor and Student Life, Director of Student Activities) as "service," consistent with the clearly articulated, long-standing mission of the institution. In Stephenson's words, "there are enough centrifugal forces that drive people apart even at a place the size of Berea that we must do everything we can to hold them together." Out-of-class activities, particularly those associated with the Labor Program (in which all students participate), are a source of self-esteem; self-sufficiency, responsibility, and feelings of mutual dependence are fostered through these activities.

It is no surprise that out-of-class experiences are viewed as important by presidents of predominately residential institutions. But even at urban institutions with a high proportion of commuter students, the out-of-class experience is perceived not only as a desirable adjunct or diversion, but as an integral part of the undergraduate collegiate experience.

Chancellor E. K. Fretwell, of the University of North Carolina-

Charlotte, is a dynamic, visionary leader and is responsible for much of the development of UNCC. His desire is that campus life be so interesting and rich for adult learners and part-time and commuter students that they would never want to leave the campus.

Donald Swain is the self-described "action-oriented Chief Executive Officer" of the University of Louisville. His vision is that the University take seriously its designated mission as the urban institution in Kentucky and become the boldest, most innovative school in the state. Swain is an articulate spokesperson for the importance of out-of-class life in realizing the urban university's mission. He recognizes that the more students are involved in out-of-class activites, the happier and more satisfied they will be and the greater the likelihood that students will persist to graduation. Nevertheless, the President has made it clear that the institution must become responsive to the needs and interests of non-traditional students. One manifestation of this is the hundreds of people who now participate in commencement events on campus. Because involvement is a major challenge at the University of Louisville, as at other urban institutions, Swain--and the Board of Trustees (who are also very interested in the quality of student life)--have presided over the development of several innovative programs.

Chief Academic Officer

Because presidents spend much of their time involved with external constituencies, the portfolio of the provost or chief academic officer (CAO) has expanded beyond academic program development and faculty matters. Where do the out-of-class experiences of undergraduate students fall on the CAO's agenda?

(a) In general, the chief academic officer is detached from student life, although many are able to talk about the importance of a mutually enhancing relationship between out-of-class life and the curricular goals of the institution; and

(b) The degree to which out-of-class experiences are considered important by the CAO is influenced by the ability of the chief student affairs officer (CSAO) to articulate the contributions of student life to the academic mission of the institution and by the personal relationship between the CAO and the CSAO.

Some CAOs were more articulate about out-of-class experiences than others. Some were more actively involved in and sensitive to the symbolic power of their role in this regard, particularly those at residential institutions. The Provost at Stanford, James Rosse, acknowledged the importance of investing money in residential education and providing good "safety nets" for students:

> It is the case that many faculty simply do not acknowledge or recognize that there is a second half of a student's life which is, in some ways, more important. Many faculty have a romanticized recollection of the quality of the intellectual experience they had as undergraduates. Not all students will have the same level of intensity as far as their intellectual experience is concerned. However, it is Stanford's responsibility to give all students an opportunity; the out-of-class experience--particularly through residential education--can enhance the possibilities that students will be challenged intellectually at various places and times throughout the undergraduate collegiate experience.

The Grinnell Executive Vice President, Waldo Walker, clearly articulated his vision of how the open curriculum complements the out-of-class life of the institution by forcing students to be responsible for themselves. Students are encouraged to choose their own courses with care and to carefully build a coherent classroom and laboratory experience.

High on the adenda of the recently appointed Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs at the University of California-Davis is increased student contact with faculty out of class. Such contact is necessary so that students can learn more about the faculty role and lifestyle. Because of the shortfall of faculty expected around the turn of the next century, "we simply must do more to introduce undergraduates to the academic lifestyle. Only through developing personal relationships between faculty and students are students likely to view a faculty role as more attractive." As we shall see, this goal will be increasingly difficult to attain as the professional energies of faculty seem to be inexorably drawing away from activities that could result in close, personal relationships with students.

Faculty

The importance of meaningful interaction between undergraduate students and faculty to positive student outcomes was summarized at the beginning of this paper. While student expectations for the amount and kind of interaction with faculty vary (many students feel uncomfortable around faculty out of class while others yearn for more personal relationships), the folklore of higher education and research (Astin, 1977; Gaff & Gaff, 1981; Wilson, Gaff, Dienst, Wood & Bavry, 1975) indicate that student-faculty contact outside of class is desirable. What does this contact look like on campuses known to provide high quality out-of-class experiences for students?

(a) Student-faculty interaction out of class, when it occurs, usually is related to academic activities and concerns:

* contact is "after-class", through extending points made during class discussions; these contacts sometimes move to personal/career concerns and issues,

* during these contacts class material is often related to "real world" matters (e.g., cooperative education and internships),
* other contacts usually focus on major-field related activities or clubs, undergraduate research, or undergraduate teaching assistantships,
* a few contacts are initiated by faculty and sometimes evolve into a mentoring/sponsoring relationship with undergraduate scholars who have potential to become faculty members;

(b) Two faculty cultures exist as far as out-of-class life is concerned: those who are committed to involvement with undergraduates (loyalsits who tend to be older, tenured faculty) and those who are not (typically younger faculty or cosmopolitan scholars);

(c) Changes in the reward system and institutional expectations are altering faculty roles and priorities. However, institutions with special missions (e.g., Berea, Louisville. Mount Holyoke, Wichita State, Xavier) attract faculty who are willing to invest themselves in those students and missions;

(d) Students perceive faculty to be available and involved with them, particularly in the academic arena; those students who develop relationships with faculty out of class usually have taken the initiative to do so; and

(e) Faculty at involving colleges typically are satisfied with their work and their institution; they like the students with whom they work and some give their time and talents to undergraduates in extraordinary ways.

According to the Executive Vice Chancellor at the University of California-Davis, it may be a myth that faculty care more about students

at UC-D than at some other institutions. Nevertheless, faculty believe it, and students believe it also, underscoring the power of the myth in American society (Campbell, 1988). These strong beliefs may also prompt different behaviors on the part of both students and faculty. Thus powerful mutual shaping occurs as institutional history and traditions influence how students, faculty, and administrators perceive and relate to one another.

Most of the faculty with whom we spoke were "loyalists," people committed to the institution and to the welfare of students. These are the faculty who advise student organizations, who agree to serve on student life (and other campus) committees, and who attend (and sometimes participate in) athletic (e.g., intramurals) and social events (e.g., Homecoming dance) intended for students. At Iowa State, departmental clubs are very active; they "rush" new members with the same enthusiasm as fraternities and sororities. Every departmental club has one or more faculty advisors. One person observed: "We don't have to beg for faculty advisors" at Iowa State. The land-grant history of the institution is important in this regard.

Faculty "loyalists" articulately described the importance of the role of student life staff and maintaining a campus climate conducive to teaching and learning, both in and out of class. Contrast this group with junior faculty at most of the institutions in this study who have received mixed messages about how much--if any--time to spend with students. In the words of one Miami University department chairperson, "The ante has been upped considerably in the College of Arts and Sciences for promotion and tenure." When young faculty "hang out" with students, they often get negative feedback from colleagues and department chairs. Another department chairperson said, "[i]n my

department, we tell non-tenured faculty, 'You should be spending more time writing and publishing.' Others have heard the message and are cranking out publications." This tension between expectations for faculty has existed for some time, but has intensified in the past decade.

There are many faculty members who take time to help a student who faces debilitating personal experiences (e.g., parental or their own divorce, illness of a child or parent, a roommate stricken with AIDS, financial difficulties). Other faculty members, however, simply do not want to get involved. These responses reflect personality differences as well as assumptions about the ethical, fiduciary, legal, and educational relationships between faculty and students, and the appropriate role of institutional agents in the lives of students beyond the classroom. In some cases, the institutional mission provides a touchstone for determining how faculty are expected to behave. At Berea College, for example, where Cristian service is the institutional mission, it was estimated that as many as 70% of the students are dealing with difficult family problems (e.g., black lung disease afflicting parents and siblings). Berea faculty members are acutely aware of these and other problems that threaten the success of their students.

At some institutions, mechanisms have been developed to encourage faculty to spend time with students beyond the classroom. At Stanford, 31 of the 37 Resident Fellows (RFs) (i.e., professional staff in the dorms) are faculty. Resident Fellows reported that the RF experience has made them better teachers; they involve students in research projects and teaching assignments, and solicit student opinions about

classroom teaching strategies. As RFs invite their colleagues to their home (dorm) for dinner, more faculty meet and become involved with students out of class. Students become more interested in independent study options as a result of meeting with faculty in the dorms.

Most students at these institutions are very grateful for the time faculty members spend with them outside the classroom. In the words of a faculty member at Miami: "[w]hen students run into a faculty member in sweats or shopping at Kroger's, it changes the student's experience at the University." Another faculty member who exercises two large, playful dogs on the campus said that "the animals are a vehicle to discussions about something else--politics, whatever." Another said upon encountering students from her class at the art museum in a nearby city, "The students came bounding up like two labrador retrievers happy to see a familiar face." We also heard from faculty members at urban institutions that they are just as likely to encounter students in the shopping mall or downtown as between classes or elsewhere on campus.

As with any attractive, time-consuming activity, what goes on out of the classroom sometimes competes for students' time and energy with the purposes of the academic program. Understandably, faculty members have difficulty taking students seriously when a student explains missing an exam because of a "commitment to complete the homecoming float on time." However, student interaction with faculty out of class has a salutory effect. For example, when students encounter faculty after class (e.g., hear them make a presentation in one of the residence halls or learn of their work as the advisor to a club or organization), students see these people for the first time as real human beings and become interested in their areas of expertise and may be motivated to take one or more classes from them. After exposure in the class,

students wish to find out more about how faculty live, how they spend their free time, and what they enjoy the most abut their work--all the things the UC-Davis Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs believes are keys to attracting able undergraduates to the professoriate. As with other important lessons in life, there is no substitute for human contact in obtaining these insights.

Student Affairs Staff

As institutions of higher education have become more organizationally complex, and as students with more diverse backgrounds, abilities, and interests have matriculated, responding to student needs has become more challenging than ever (National Association of Student Personnel Administrators, 1987). Typically, student affairs professionals are the institutional agents expected to deal with students' out-of-class lives. What can be said about student affairs staff at involving colleges?

(a) Student affairs staff at involving colleges work unusually long and odd hours, are energetic and enthusiastic, and are sensitive and committed to the institutional mission and how that mission is best accomplished in student life;

(b) As faculty members spend less time with students outside of class and in non-academic areas of concern (e.g., career planning), student affairs staff increasingly are expected (e.g., by the president, by students) to bridge the gap between the academic program and out-of-class life (Cross, 1976; Kuh, Shedd & Whitt, 1987);

(c) Student affairs staff are the heart of the early warning system and safety nets that assist students in academic, social, emotional and physical difficulty--the support system that encourages students to take

responsibility, take risks, and learn about themselves in relationship to those different from themsleves. They also serve as the authoritative voice to the institution and other constituents about the attitudes and behavior of students; and

(d) Student affairs staff, in concert with a shrinking group of faculty "loyalists," enable and empower students through one-to-one interactions, develop mechanisms for student involvement through educational and social programs, and challenge students to examine their assumptions, responsibility and behavior in getting the most out of the college experience.

The self-image of student affairs staff influences the degree to which they can make high quality contributions to the institutional mission and to the out-of-class experiences of students. At involving colleges, the student affairs division, particularly the CSAO, enjoys respect across cabinet-level administrators. This mutual respect seeps down, across, and through organizational lines and units. Faculty, student life staff and other administrators recoonize and value the contributions each makes to the enterprise. If student life staff feel they are estranged or alienated from faculty or academic administrators their ability to serve the integrating functions so critically needed to help students make connections between the academic program and other aspects of their life is impaired.

In general, student affairs staff at these institutions have a deep commitment to the institution's mission and purposes. They are dedicated to maintaining distinctive, precious community values. They are realistic dreamers; they have high expectations of students, colleagues, and themselves. At the same time, they are pragmatists; they recognize that they "must play the cards they have been dealt"

(i.e., in terms of student characteristics, the academic culture).

In many involving colleges, the Chief Student Affairs Officer (CSAO) has held that position for a decade or more. In several instances in which a new CSAO was recently appointed, the philosophy of the predecessor is being carried forward with renewed enthusiasm. In a few instances, however, a change in student affairs leadership coincided with a shift in direction in student life supported by faculty and administrators, including the president. Whether continuity of leadership or new directions, the student affairs unit is vibrant, forward-looking, and self-organizing. That is, the CSAO and his or her principal assistants are sensitive to needed changes in institutional policies and practices necessitated by changes in the external environment and in student characteristics. Through continuous monitoring of external and internal environments, they anticipate, and prepare their staff and students for, potential problems and challenges that may demand changes in institutional policies and practices.

The organizational behavior principle of self-organizing (Morgan, 1986) also suggests that institutional norms and policies be challenged, rather than routinely reiterated, by staff. Student affairs staff at these institutions are generally willing to support or encourage students to question institutional policies. They know that more than a quarter of the undergraduate students are new to the institution each year. This means that each generation of students must learn for itself how to live in a pluralistic community, to identify institutional values and commitments, and to understand how the community functions. Administrators rarely say in response to a student's question, "We've always done it this way." In this way, routine decisionmaking

opportunities can be transformed into "teachable moments."

To be sure, there are risks inherent in giving students this much responsibility, for treating them like adults. Some students, particularly traditional age students, lack the maturity to act responsibly in an unstructured environment. But by trusting and taking students seriously, student life staff, other administrators, and faculty members at involving colleges embrace the paradoxical notions of community and conflict; they do not shy away from creating institutional dissonance when learning is the outcome. The goal is to use creative hassling for educational benefit.

To encourage "educative hassles", Earlham refused to settle the divestiture question so that they could keep the question open and each year revisit the issues related to apartheid. At Stanford, the debate about Western core readings and racism is fueled by mechanisms (e.g., dorm programming) which encourage students to openly challenge and debate such matters. Students and faculty members at Mount Holyoke take advantage of post-dinner conversation to openly discuss and debate issues related to cultural pluralism, racism and heterosexism. Involving colleges are hotbeds of intellectual and social-emotional introspection! Student affairs staff at these institutions protect the freedom to doubt and question in the out-of-class domain.

Provosts and presidents readily admit that student life staff are the campus experts on students. To many faculty, however, student affairs is a black box. At all these institutions, however, faculty are proud of their student life colleagues and are quick to complement the quality of their work. Faculty at UC-Davis suggested that because of student life staff and programs, the unviersity has been able to maintain the image and "feel" of an institution smaller than it actually

is (26,000 students). In the words of a UC-Davis faculty member, "there is a wealth of student services and the people are great, simply outstanding." We share this comment to demonstrate that, on some campuses, the relationship between the academic and student life functions is complementary, even synergistic.

Summary and Conclusions

When presidents, provosts and other academic administrators meet with counterparts from other institutions, out-of-class experiences of students are rarely on the agenda. Yet many of the institutional leaders with whom we talked acknowledged the role out-of-class experiences play in students becoming responsible members of a community and learning to deal with the conflict inherent in building and maintaining community (Palmer, 1987). Creating a sense of community contributes to resonance between the institution and student and enhances the potency of the college experience. Student involvement in activities that integrate students into the culture of the institution is perceived to be critical. An assumption undergirding the importance of the out-of-class life is that it is the foundation of a developmentally powerful undergraduate experience, not faculty productivity or the number of external dollars raised.

The ability of institutional leaders to appreciate and interpret differences among student cultures seems to enhance their effectiveness in communicating desirable community standards. At involving colleges, faculty and administrators share a cognitive frame on how students can become responsible for their own lives. The attitudes and impact of the chief academic officer are either neutral toward or supportive of the learning potential of out-of-class experiences. Because presidents were

enthusiastic supporters of the importance of out-of-class experiences to the undergraduate collegiate experience, it was no surprise that the CAO would reflect at least a passing interest in and familiarity with how student life contributed to the academic goals of the institution. In no instance was a breach perceived between the role and functions of student life programs and services and the academic enterprise.

The role of faculty members in students' lives beyond classroom or laboratory-related activities is more difficult to characterize. At smaller institutions (e.g., Grinnell), engagement of students and faculty after class seems to be an important influence; at large, urban institutions, faculty interest and involvement with students--and thus the impact of faculty on students' attitudes and behavior--are attenuated.

Four conclusions are warranted about the role of institutional agents in fostering high quality out-of-class experiences of undergraduate students.

(1) **The continuity and consistency of philosophy across academic affairs and student affairs is a characteristic of involving colleges.**

Faculty and staff and involving colleges work together not to control or mold student behavior, but rather in an effort to remove obstacles to students' pursuit of their academic and personal goals. In the words of the president of Xavier University, "there is always someone willing to talk with you here." Xavier students echoed this observation: "Faculty care about us" (student newspaper editor); "Professors take time for us"; another student put it this way. "[Faculty] believe in you." One Dean of Students at a public institution made a point of describing how he purposefully emphasizes the pastoral functions of his role (e.g., caring for students in need)

over the executive functions (e.g., budget management).

Faculty members--particularly but not exclusively loyalists--and student affairs staff subscribe to an ethic of care which seems to permeate these institutions. Informal networks of faculty and staff have developed over time and work together in times of crisis to assist students in need. Institutional agents (i.e., faculty, student affairs staff, and others such as clerical and maintenance personnel) voice concern about the welfare of all students. Students sense the ethic of care and learn to care for one another.

(2) **Faculty members seem to be less influential today than two decades ago in shaping the quality of out-of-class experiences of students.**

At one time, faculty may have been a powerful influence in student life. As colleges evolved into universities or multiuniversities, the emulation phenomenon reflected by the upward drift of institutions in the Carnegie classification (Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 1987), the enhanced expectations for faculty research and scholarly productivity, and the changing roles of faculty are but three of the many factors which are inexorably separating faculty from the collegiate experience.

We expected to find a high level of out-of-class interaction between students and faculty at involving colleges, particularly the smaller, residential colleges. Although more faculty-student interaction probably occurs on these campuses than many others, contacts between faculty and students are more likely to be initiated by the students and be related to a class assignment or a faculty member's research program. Thus, faculty contributions to student life may best

be seen as occuring after class, emphasizing the temporal connection between discussions emanating from class or laboratory. This kind of interaction (i.e., connecting with students through academic experiences such as class assignments and seminars) is based on more realistic assumptions about what can be expected of faculty and is different from the Mr. Chips analogue in which faculty members actively participate in various aspects of student life that are removed from the academic arena.

The number of faculty who were actively involved in students' extracurricular lives was once quite large but is shrinking, and shrinking fast. They are being replaced by younger faculty[2] who have been socialized to a model of faculty behavior that emphasizes research and scholarship first, followed by good teaching. Junior faculty have read the institutional reward systems just right, for in most instances--even at the small liberal arts colleges--does faculty involvement with students in out-of-class activities have a major bearing on annual reviews or promotion and tenure. Even faculty at the urban institutions in this stud are being pushed to increase their research and grant-writing acitivities.

There are other factors affecting faculty involvement with the out-of-class lives of students. Many junior faculty are in dual-career relationships. This situation sometimes compells faculty, particularly those at colleges in small towns, to live some distance from the campus to increase job prospects for the other person and reduce commuting time for both. A junior faculty member's discretionary time is further reduced by children. One example will suffice; with some variations, the following description fits most of the colleges and universities in this study.

Until a few years ago, new faculty members at Mount Holyoke College were encouraged to live in one of the many white frame houses bordering the campus. For some faculty, playing fields and classroom buildings were literally in their backyards. In the 1960s and 1970s, new faculty frequently encountered students walking from their home to class; they dined in student residences with little disruption to their daily routine; they found it convenient to take part in some campus and community social and cultural events. Today, few junior Mount Holyoke faculty live in those white houses. They live in Amherst or elsewhere in closer proximity to where their spouses are employed or where child care is available and public schools seem to be of higher quality. The scholarly productivity and national visibility of the faculty at Mount Holyoke, as with other institutions in this study, is increasing; yet they are good, even excellent teachers. The younger faculty are not unwilling to spend time with students outside of class. During our visit, we saw numerous groups students and faculty having coffee after class. And students reported their time with faculty to be of high quality and importance. At the same time, these contacts seem to be declining in frequency and variety. For example, faculty are no longer likely to dine in the residence halls during the week as "dinner is family time."

Is it possible that we have overstated the point that some years ago more faculty spent more time with more students outside the classroom or laboratory? We don't think so. The role of faculty in students' out of class life is changing. In some instances, the slack is being taken up by student life staff and by students themselves. There is much more to learn about this phenomenon and we are most

receptive to suggestions as to what this change will mean for the quality of the undergraduate experience.

(3) **Student affairs staff have become the de facto caretakers of the undergraduate experience.**

Along with a few other highly visible administrators and faculty loyalists, student affairs staff provide models for how students are to handle obligations, opportunities, and responsibilities in an academic community. They are more likely than faculty to be present during, and thus in a position to encourage students to take advantage of, teachable momerts.

As with most of the other institutions in this study, residence life staff at Earlham teach students how to take care of themselves and one another, rather than intervening when students encounter problems. By trusting students and taking them seriously, student life staff, other administrators, and faculty encourage students to cope with the consequences of community and conflict. The goal is to use creative dissonance for educational benefit.

At some of these institutions (e.g., Mount Holyoke, Grinnell, Stanford, UC-Davis), institutional agents have given up any pretense of controlli ; student behavior and instead rather require students to become responsible for their own behavior. This is not to say that student life staff do not attempt to intentionally influence students' behavior. They focus on teaching through explaining the need for policies, practices, appropriate behavior and so forth. At other institutions, however (e.g., Berea, Xavier), student life staff play a very active role in requiring that students make choices consistent with the institution's mission and the expectations of parents.

(4) **The whole of the contributions of institutional agents is greater than the sum of their individual parts.**

The mix of agents and their complementarity, commitment, and communication are critical for creating an involving college. The match between priorities of faculty and student affairs staff, the blending of academic and student life objectives, and the compatibility of both with the institutional mission help to create a culture conducive to high quality out-of-class experiences for students. At Earlham, this complementarity takes the form of, but is more than, decision-making through consensus, educative hassles, and student responsibility; at Wichita State the focus on the individual student, the pastoral approach by the CSAO, and the networks of support contribute to, but cannot fully explain, why the institution exceeds expectations for getting students involved; and "the whole" of the Mount Holyoke expereince is more than the sum of the mechanisms (e.g., traditions, rituals, governance structures) that challenge, support, and empower women combined with the enhanced role of professional student affairs staff on the campus.

Institutional leadership, while important, is only one of several factors that contribute to high quality out-of-class experiences. Campus traditions and former and current students are powerful influences. There are many other variables related to high quality out-of-class experiences (e.g., policies, practices, institutional culture). Clearly, however, the commitment on the part of institutional leaders influences how other faculty and staff view the degree to which out-of-class experiences are important to attaining the institutional mission and articulating the appropriate role of faculty and others in the out-of-class life of students. Moreover, students receive signals from faculty about the importance of taking advantage of opportunities in the

environment and using university resources appropriately.

A caveat is appropriate. Since the conception of this project, we have been gently admonished by colleagues that any distinctions made between the curriculum and out-of-class learning experiences is artificial. That is, a high quality undergraduate experience incorporates both. Indeed, many of the faculty and administrators who have shared their time and insights have talked about "blurred" or "fuzzy" lines between the curriculum and out-of-class learning experiences. In many instances, the relationships between formal mechanisms that some institutions have established to tie out-of-class activities to curricular goals have come about serendipitously, not intentionally. We are sensitive to this matter and recognize that the relationships between the formal curriculum and other learning experiences during college are more complex than we have described here. Nevertheless, our findings should stimulate different ways of thinking about the relationship between out-of-class experiences and involvement in learning--both in the academic and extracurricular domains. Chief academic officers and student life officers can use the results to design socialization activities for new faculty, staff, and students. Subsequent papers based on this research will offer additional insights into how administrators and faculty shape institutional cultures and how student cultures influence administrator and faculty behavior.

Although institutional assessment is becoming increasingly important (Ewell, 1985; Marchese, 87), empirically-derived frameworks have not been developed to guide institutional agents in assessing the quality of the out-of-class experience. The results from this study illuminate one important constellation of factors, the role of

institutional agents in encouraging a high level of student participation in the life of the institution and in their own education.

We do not propose that "one best model" exists for the role of institutional agents in fostering high quality out-of-class learning opportunities. Colleges and universities, adminstrators and faculty, and students are too diverse and complex for such simple, generalizable products to be useful. However, to varying degrees, the kinds of contributions made by institutional agents at institutions that provide high quality out-of-class experiences can be transported and adapted for use on other campuses.

Note

[1] The conditions established by McCann, the first president of The Evergreen State College, are an application of the principle of minimum critical specification, one of the features of a self-organizing system (Morgan, 1986). In brief, minimum critical specification is the establishment of only the few structures and procedures necessary to begin an activity, program, or--in this instance--a college. By articulating only a few value-based organizing principles, not an a priori organizational design characterized by a complex system of policies and rules, faculty, administrators, and students are able to create institutional policies and practices needed to meet current and future exigencies.

[2] Not all retiring faculty are being replaced by junior faculty members. Many institutions, particularly the urban universities in this study are employing increasing numbers of part-time faculty. This trend has been noted although the impact on the quality of student-faculty relations has not been specifically addressed. Space does not permit us to speculate about the role of part-time faculty to high quality out-of-class experiences of students. We will take up this topic in a subsequent paper.

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Appendix A

College Experiences Project Institutional Profile Materials

To make the best use of our time on your campus, it would be very helpful if we can receive the information listed below in Part I two weeks prior to our visit. Single copies are sufficient unless noted. We would like to review the materials in Part II when we are on campus.

Part I (to be received prior to the visit)

A. **Undergraduate catalog** (3-4 copies if possible).

B. **Organizational charts** (including position titles and names) for the institution and student affairs division.

C. **Mission statements for the institution and student affairs division.**

D. **Sample admissions material** viewbook, etc.). If a video is available, we would like to view it during our visit.

E. **Student demographic information** such as biographical data, ability, aspirations, attitudes (e.g., CIRP data) and any participation/ involvement data (e.g., Pace's Quality of Effort scales).

F. **List of student organizations** (formal and informal).

G. **Student handbook** (or alternatives).

H. **Public statements or policies that address the out-of-class experience** (e.g., President's inaugural address, recent news releases).

Part II (to be reviewed during the visit)

I. **Annual reports** prepared for various groups (e.g., trustees, alumni, parents) that describe student life or special programs.

J. **Sections of reports prepared for accreditation associations that describe the quality of student and campus life.**

K. **Reviews of student affairs units or other department that have responsibility for students' out-of-class experiences.**

L. **Student government annual reports.**

M. **Samples of student newspaper** including copies of pertinent articles.

N. **Institutional histories or anthologies.**

O. **Lists or descriptions of opportunities for student involvement.**

P. **Samples of alumni publications and participation rates** (e.g., annual giving campaigns).

Q. **Anything else that will help us become familiar with students' out-of-class experience** at your institution.

Appendix B

College Experiences Project
INDIANA UNIVERSITY

Persons and Groups To Be Interviewed

Individuals (one room)
President
Chief Academic Officer
Chief Student Affairs Officer
Student Affairs Principal Assistant (1 or 2 persons)
Historian (formal or informal)
Student Body President (or members of the student governance planning group)
Student Newspaper Editor

Focus Groups (one room)
Student Affairs Professionals (2 groups)
Residence Life Staff (para-professionals/RAs included)
Faculty (2 groups)
Student leaders
Other students
Minority students
Adult learners
Trustees (could be an individual interview if only one is available)
Recent alumni (if possible)

Each session is expected to last about 45 minutes. Please try to schedule the meetings on the hour. This will give us a few minutes to summarize our notes at the end of each meeting and prepare for the next session. If possible, please try to divide the interviews evenly across the two full days (Monday and Tuesday, November 28 & 29). Because at least two project staff will participate in the visit, 2 persons/groups can be scheduled concurrently. One or two evening meetings can be accommodated. If necessary, we can conduct one or two interviews late Sunday evening.