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ABSTRACT

This study sought to understand the roles and characteristics of individuals identified as effective academic deans at public research universities. The study used an inductive grounded theory approach guided by a broad conceptual framework and was guided by the broad constructs of quality/culture, teamwork/governance, and analysis/knowledge. In particular the study conducted five case studies of effective academic deans through interviewing key informants, acquiring supportive documentation, and identifying patterns, themes, and categories. Each dean was from a different university and represented a different discipline area (education; engineering; science, mathematics, engineering and technology; social sciences and the related professions; and music and the performing arts). The deans were selected by asking the vice president, provost, chancellor, or president on five campuses to nominate an effective academic dean in a school or college that offered both undergraduate and graduate programs. Data collection involved 1-week site visits and 16 to 22 interviews for each case in an open ended format. The case studies indicated that effective leaders are defined by five areas of expertise. First, they are cultural representatives of their colleges and universities. Second, as communicators they are continually striving for more efficient and more inclusive communication structure, networks and processes. Third, the successful dean is a skilled manager and, fourth, he/she is a planner/analyst. Finally, successful deans are advocates for the institution and cultivate relationships with various groups and individuals on campus. (Contains 60 references.) (JB)

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Academic Deans: An analysis of effective academic leadership at research universities

by

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Salt Lake City, Utah

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Introduction

The expanding responsibilities of research universities and the pressures for accountability, have forced college and university presidents to spend most of their time representing the university to external constituents. They must rely on provosts, deans, and others to provide internal leadership (Bok, 1986).

Birnbaum's (1992) study of academic leadership asked interviewees to name important leaders on their campuses. Forty-four percent of the respondents named the dean. In large, decentralized universities, deans were mentioned more frequently than anyone else, including the president (Birnbaum, 1992). Unfortunately, the position of the academic dean has not been adequately studied. While research on presidents (Kauffman, 1980; Bensimon, Neumann & Birnbaum, 1989) and chairpersons (Creswell, Wheeler, Seagren, Egly & Beyer, 1990) has been growing steadily over the years, the academic dean has been largely ignored. Besides the need to delegate tasks previously executed by the president, why should we be concerned about the work of the academic dean? I think there are two important reasons.

First, the academic dean, as a member of the president's cabinet, is in a unique position to share leadership responsibility for the institution as a whole. The dean acquires a broad understanding of university concerns while remaining involved in the teaching and learning process of the institution. In addition, he or she has resources that can be used to guide and direct the work of the faculty.

Second, we need to be concerned with what March (1986) calls the "density of administrative competence," which means that managers and leaders collectively affect the success of an organization. That is, they succeed as a group and not just as individuals. A strong, effective president will not necessarily affect the quality of institutional programs unless he or she has competent administrators at other levels of the organization.

Thus, we need to understand the nature of quality leadership at all levels of higher education, including the level of academic dean.

Selected Literature Review

Research on the deanship is difficult because there is "no such thing as a standardized dean" (Miller, 1974). Deans have a range of roles and responsibilities that vary by institutional size, sponsorship, geographic location, university mission and goals, or presidential preferences. Different levels and types of deans also exist -- for example, associate deans, assistant deans, deans of students, graduate deans, academic deans, and deans of admission. Because these positions vary, research in this area is cumbersome, not easily generalizable, and scarce. Most research remains highly descriptive, frequently anecdotal and narrowly focused.

The core of the research on academic deans has centered on: (a) roles and responsibilities (Dupont, 1956; Morris, 1981; Rosovsky, 1990); (b) traits and backgrounds (Cyphert & Zimpher, 1976; Moore, Salimbene, Marlier & Braff, 1983); (c) perceptions of their roles as reported by others (Lasley & Haberman, 1987); (d) governance and decision making styles (McCarty & Reyes, 1987) and, more recently, (e) the need for deans to understand institutional subcultures (Bernier, 1987). This research provides some initial ideas for understanding the role of the academic dean.

The earliest research on academic deans tried to discover the roles and responsibilities of the academic dean at various institutions (Dupont, 1974). This research generated lengthy lists and clearly showed that the duties of the position varied from institution to institution, depending upon size, mission, and leadership expectations.

More recent work on the roles and responsibilities of academic deans has tried to generalize these unpatterned lists. W. Dill (1980), using Barnard (1938) and Simon's (1947) framework on the roles of a manager, describes three major roles of the

dean: 1) integrate the interests of constituencies into a common sense of purpose which may include goal setting and institutional planning; 2) to create incentives to stimulate new and continuing contributions and commitments to the institutions; 3) to maximize efficiency in transforming contributions and commitments into educational products and services.

Another format for determining the responsibilities for the dean is first-person accounts of what it is like to be a dean. For example, Coldarci (1980) and Morris (1981) discuss their work and give some advice to incoming deans based on their years as deans of education, and more recently, Rosovsky (1990) describes his world as the dean of Harvard College for 11 years. These first-person accounts include confessions that these individuals knew little about what they were supposed to do as the dean or how they was supposed to do it. Crippled by the lack of research to guide them they learned most everything on the job.

Some studies have found various role conflicts created by the dean's position as middle manager. Proactive deans may be seen as initiators of conflict, defendants of conflict situations, or conciliators in conflicts between other campus groups (Feltner & Goodsell, 1972). Or this middle management position may be as W. Dill (1980) suggests, drifting toward an "ill-defined 'middle' of academic administration" in which deans are "sometimes little more than spectators in the campus power game." These studies do not, however, identify behaviors that enhance the effectiveness of these roles.

Trait and background studies have addressed career paths and summarized the personal characteristics of academic deans (Moore et al., 1983; Cyphert & Zimpher, 1976; Anderson & King, 1987; Lynch, Bowker, & McFerron, 1986). Since there is no formal training for deans, Moore and her colleagues (1983) tried to project a career path that might explain how an individual rises to the position. They described a normative career trajectory for deans and found that a hierarchical, linear model of moving

through the ranks did not adequately describe the career experiences of academic deans. The analysis of career histories of 653 deans found that while most deans had been faculty members and/or chairs, some had risen to the deanship without faculty experience. While some career tracks were more evident for particular types of academic deans, no particular career path led directly to the dean's office.

Moreover, studies of specific types of deans did not yield a common set of factors that would describe an effective academic dean. Cyphert and Zimpher (1976) conducted the first comprehensive survey on the personal, professional and job-related characteristics of education deans; among some of the characteristics they found a profile of predominantly protestant, married, middle-aged, white, native-born, men from predominantly non-college educated, lower middle class, non-professional, and multi-child families. Most came from the professorate, held tenure in the school of education, and stayed an average of 6 years. Others found similar personal and professional characteristics in education and liberal arts deans but the number of years in the position declined (Anderson & King, 1987; Lynch, Bowker & McFerron, 1986). While these studies provide a profile of characteristics and career paths of deans they provide no indication of what makes an academic dean successful.

Some research on the perceived roles of deans has focused on the decision-making styles of academic deans (McCarty & Reyes, 1987) and how they should be evaluated, according to chairpersons, academic vice presidents, and deans themselves (Lasley & Haberman, 1987).

McCarty and Reyes (1987) interviewed chairs at a large research university to discover which of four decision models -- collegial, political, bureaucratic and anarchical -- the deans employed in his or her school or college; 72% of chairs said that their dean used a collegial model and that collegiality was part of the ethos of the institution regardless of the

personality, college, or predisposition of the dean.

The role of the academic dean in building and understanding academic cultures has been observed but not thoroughly explored (Bernier, 1987; D. Dill, 1982). Examining the management of meaning and social integration in academic cultures, Dill (1982) contends that it is the "selection and heightening of critical values which [are] at the heart of the creative dimension of leadership" and it is the responsibility of academic managers to nurture the symbolic life of academic organizations. His work reminds us that we assume a common academic culture but we do not systematically nurture and manage it, thus enabling organizational members to commit themselves to a common set of institutional beliefs. Conceptual work by Bernier (1987) emphasizes that, to be effective, deans need to be participant observers in their work to analyze and better understand institutional subcultures. This study of effective academic deans will further explore the idea of the academic dean as a manager and analyzer of academic cultures.

The main limitation in much of the previous research is that it does not tell us how to identify effective deans; however, studies of effective leaders in other contexts can help us identify relevant criteria.

The search for an explanatory or predictive model of effective leadership for business, industry and schools has been conducted throughout this century. The initial approach was to identify traits of leaders. In Stogdill's review of this research, he notes that the early studies were useless in identifying what traits could predict successful leadership (Stodgill, 1968). His later review (1974) of more recent trait studies concludes that certain traits increase the likelihood of a leader's effectiveness but these do not, in and of themselves, guarantee effectiveness.

The roles and responsibilities of leaders have been dominated by role theory and behavioral models that focus on what the leader does and the impact of context on the behavior of leaders and

managers. This body of literature ranges from the broad responsibilities and roles articulated by Barnard (1938) to the specifics of actual behaviors of managers documented by Mintzberg (1973). Barnard's work focused on three major functions of the executive: (a) to provide a system of communication, (b) to promote and secure essential services from individuals, and (c) to formulate and define organizational purpose. Mintzberg took a more microscopic, systematic and observational approach to studying managers and identified 10 roles that managers engage in regularly: figurehead, leader, liaison, monitor, disseminator, spokesperson, entrepreneur, disturbance-handler, resource allocator, and negotiator.

Research on roles and responsibilities of managers and leaders criticized trait theories that focused on the individual. Instead these studies advocated transactional leadership approaches.

Transactional approaches define leadership as a set of roles and functions that develop because of the interactions of two or more people (Yukl, 1987). Studies of this type often focus on the context in which leadership takes place. Here we include such studies of leadership style as the Michigan and Ohio State studies (Ott, 1990) that identify styles of leader behaviors that predict effective group performance. Contingency approaches to transactional leadership stress the importance of the situation in determining the choice of style that is used (Bensimon et al., 1989).

Contingency theories of leadership are common in studies of industrial managers and school principals. Fiedler's (1967) early work on contingency models suggests that the orientation of the leadership style is conditioned by the relationship between leaders and members, the structure of the task, and the positional power of the leader (Bensimon et al., 1989). His recent work with Garcia (Feidler & Garcia, 1987) adds two additional constructs to this contingency model: leader's intelligence and competence or

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experience. The key to these contingency approaches, to leadership, is that the leader must analyze the situation to decide which style or combination of styles is appropriate, given the situation and the actors involved. Also included in transactional approaches to leadership are the issues of power and influence used by leaders in the decision-making process.

At this point the similarities in the research on leadership in industry and schools diverge from the research on academic deans. While the number of studies on academic deans has been small, they represent broad areas of leadership and management research. Unfortunately, the more recent approaches to leadership - transformational leadership, leadership and organizational cultures, and leadership effectiveness - have not been addressed in ways that relate to academic deans. However, I argue that parts, if not all, of each theory should be applied to studies of academic deans.

Burns (1978) defined transformation leadership as follows:

> *Transforming leadership*, while more complex, is more potent. The transforming leader recognizes and exploits an existing need or demand of a potential follower. But, beyond that, the transforming leaders looks for potential motives in followers, seeks to satisfy higher needs and engages the full person of the follower. The result of transforming leadership is a relationship of mutual stimulation and elevation that converts followers into leaders and may convert leaders into moral agents. (p.4)

They seek to "create something new out of something old" (Tichy & Ulrich, 1984). And, as Bennis and Nanus (1985) contend, transformational leaders "do the right thing" as opposed to managers who "do things right."

The transformational leadership literature has been enhanced by the research on leadership and organizational cultures. Theories of organizational culture have proliferated in the past decade, and the research spans many types of organizations,

including business, industry, schools, and universities.

Schein's (1985) work on organizational culture and leadership defines culture as:

> a pattern of basic assumptions--invented, discovered, or developed by a given group as it learns to cope with its problems of external adaptation and internal integration--that has worked well enough to be considered valid and, therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think and feel in relation to those problems (p. 9).

This culture represents the norms, values, beliefs, and assumptions imbedded in the organizational social structure. While the primary focus of this theory is the culture of the entire organization, these ideas are not new to the study of leadership and management in organizations. Selznick (1957), in Leadership in Administration, noted the necessity of leadership to "infuse with value" beyond the tasks at hand, toward an "institutional embodiment of purpose." Purpose, vision and value-directed leadership have been consistent ideas that surface in the study of leadership. Organizational leaders should be masters of understanding and directing the vision of an institution that embodies the cultural beliefs, values, and assumptions of its members (Schein, 1985).

A basic characteristic of managerial or administrative work is that it is not standardized (Hannaway, 1988). Yet there is a growing consensus on what constitutes effective management. Effective managers focus on vision and purpose, view management as an active, interactive role (Sayles, 1989), initiate action (Boyatzis, 1982), set an example or model desired action (Krouzes & Posner, 1987), encourage risk-taking and autonomy (Kanter, 1982), stay close to the customer and the process (Peters & Waterman, 1982; Deming, 1986), encourage and enable teamwork and collegial decision making (Bennis & Nanus, 1985; Kanter, 1982) and continually attend to, challenge, and improve the process (Deming,

1986; Peters & Waterman, 1982; Kanter, 1982; Krouzes & Posner, 1987).

The history of research on leadership and management in industry, schools, and universities must be considered when attempting to understand leadership and management in other contexts. Thus, the model must be specific enough to identify key ideas, yet general enough to encompass possible additional explanations for leadership effectiveness among academic deans.

Conceptual Framework

Useful suggestions on where to initiate the inquiry on effective academic deans stems from several sources, including research on effective managers and leaders in industry and schools. A broad theory of leadership and organizational management emerges from the quality and productivity movement (Deming, 1986). This approach advocates the development of process-centered management cultures that assign a leader's responsibility for continuously improving systems so that it is possible for everyone to work effectively (Gabor, 1990). Joiner (Scholtes & Associates, 1988) discusses these ideas in terms of interactions among three areas of activity that affect the quality of leadership in an organization: quality/culture, teamwork, and analysis. Each of these areas is a prominent topic in research on management and leadership; and this study builds on these previously laid foundations by adding insights from what is known about leadership and management in industry, schools, and universities.

Specifically, this study views these three areas of activity as the initial springboard for conducting five case studies of effective academic deans at research institutions. Adapting these constructs to parallel language in higher education, the broad constructs of quality/culture, teamwork/governance, and analysis/knowledge guided the inquiry, but they did not over structure the study, thus allowing me to ask respondents about other important areas as they became evident.

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Universities and their leadership are particularly suited for studies using this guiding framework. Although often criticized for not serving all customers equally well, universities are, nevertheless value-driven institutions that continually compete to produce research that meets discipline-defined standards of high quality. Their reputations are also, to a considerable extent, based on the perceived quality of their students. In other words, the issue of quality is deeply embedded in university cultures.

Early studies on college and university "sagas" (Clark, 1972) and recent research on the symbolic and cultural leadership of presidents in higher education (Chaffee & Tierney, 1988; Kuh & Whitt, 1988) also encourage explorations of the leadership of deans in creating and maintaining college culture. Studies show the increasing responsibility of institutional leaders to cultivate shared values and beliefs, reinforcing them through actions (D. Dill, 1982; W. Dill, 1980). Perhaps effective deans accomplish this purpose in the same way that effective managers and principals do--by focusing on collegial decision-making processes.

Collegial models of governance have been a tradition in higher education, especially in areas concerning substantive autonomy or the the academic core of the institution--who is admitted, who teaches, what is taught and how it is evaluated. Leaders in a collegium are considered *primus inter pares*, first among equals. That is, all members of the faculty community have equal standing in the decision-making process that relies on thorough deliberations aimed at reaching a consensus. In the ideal, administrators are subordinate to the collegium and act as facilitators and initiators for the group (Birnbaum, 1988). McCarty and Reyes (1987) found that collegiality was part of the institutional ethos at the research institution in their study, and that most academic deans exercised a collegial form of governance and decision-making. Decisions are also based on data about the institution, its students, its faculty, and its external

constituencies.

Data collection in higher educational institutions is an on-going activity but the question for deans is how to get and interpret data that will lead to decisions promoting continuous improvement. Numbers usually provide only part of the picture of what is going on in an organization. Rosovsky (1987) suggests "that people believe what they wish, and empirical evidence does not lead to quick altering of cherished positions." (p. 40). In addition to empirical data, the dean perhaps needs to be an ethnographer in his or her own organization (Bernier, 1987). As previously noted Bernier encourages academic deans to collect information on various subcultures in the organization to aid in the decision-making process. Both quantitative and qualitative data collection may enhance the dean's decision-making effectiveness.

Quality is deeply embedded in the culture of higher education institutions and studies of leadership in higher education should clarify a leader's impact on strengthening, and encouraging commitment to this value. The second cluster, teamwork/governance, addresses how academic deans exercise governance in the institution. While teamwork, or collegial decision making, is a strong value in higher education, a dean may practice other forms of governance as well. Finally, the third cluster, analysis/knowledge broadens the traditional definitions of data collection and analysis. In this section I probe how the dean learns what is going on in the college to make informed decisions. His or her methods of gathering information and interpreting information may consist of traditional analysis or invent new ways of knowing to enable better decision making.

Purpose

The purpose of this study is to determine:

- The characteristics of effective academic deans at public research universities in the U.S.
- What makes them effective?

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Such an explanation requires an appropriate entry point. Many who have studied academic deans or leadership in general (Yukl, 1987; Bensimon, et. al., 1989; Griffiths, 1980) have called for a more comprehensive approach to studying academic deans. Since most of the research on the deanship is narrowly focused on deans of specific disciplines, specific roles and responsibilities of the deanship, the types of people who hold these positions, styles of leadership, or career tracks, this study sought an inductive and more comprehensive approach for studying academic deans.

This study used an inductive grounded theory approach, initially guided by a broad conceptual framework (Glasser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss & Corbin, 1990). The goal was to develop propositions that may contribute to effective leadership at the level of the academic dean.

Methodology and Sample

As noted in the previous chapter, little is known about academic deans as effective leaders, although other researchers have urged more investigation of the work of academic deans (Griffiths & McCarty, 1980). This study seeks to more fully understand those individuals identified as effective academic deans at public research institutions.

Grounded theory is a type of qualitative method that allows the investigator to systematically collect information about a particular phenomenon and to inductively arrive at a substantive or a formal theory to explain it (Glasser & Strauss, 1967). Conrad (1982) suggests that this approach to studying higher education allows a redirection towards theory development and away from strict verification. He interprets grounded theory as "theory generated from data systematically obtained through the constant comparative method" (p. 241). The constant comparative method "combines systematic data collection, coding, and analysis with theoretical sampling in order to generate theory that is integrated, close to the data, and expressed in a form clear enough for further testing" (Conrad, 1982, p. 241).

I developed five case studies of effective academic deans. Through a process of interviewing key informants, acquiring supportive documentation, identifying patterns, themes, and categories, I developed a theory of effectiveness among academic deans. To strengthen the results of the study, this project on academic deans studies five deans at five different public research universities (Greene & David, 1981; Yin, 1989). Though not by design, the five deans represent five different colleges (discipline areas), thereby, increasing the work's generalizability in explaining the position of the academic dean at a research institution.

Using a grounded theory approach within and between cases, I developed a preliminary substantive theory of effective academic deans. Each case was examined separately and is reported in another paper (Martin, 1993), but the findings from one case provided material for exploration in subsequent cases. The conceptual framework thus broadened and evolved as the study progressed. This paper will report the analysis of the findings from all five case studies.

Definitions

Effective Academic Dean: A dean at a public Research I institution, identified as an effective leader of a school or college, that offers both graduate and undergraduate programs.

Public Research I Institution: A specific classification of higher education institutions according to A Classification of Institutions of Higher Education disseminated by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching (1987).

The Sample

I asked the vice president, provost, chancellor, or president on five campuses to nominate an effective academic dean of a school or college that offered both undergraduate and graduate programs. I instructed the nominator to use his or her own definition of "effective" because limiting that definition would

potentially negate the influence of context on specific characteristics of academic leadership. I then telephoned the nominee and nominator to arrange for a week-long site visit and interviews.

The five deans represent five different colleges: education; engineering; science, mathematics, engineering and technology; social sciences and the related professions; and music and the performing arts. These differences, though not intended, strengthen the findings and conclusions of the study. However, the five deans are male, again this was also not by design but suggests a weakness in generalizing this data. These two issues are explored in the discussion on limitations.

Operating under the premise that leadership is a social construction, I interviewed members of the college community to determine their understanding of the deans' leadership. These individuals included administrators, chairs, heads, assistant deans, associate deans, directors, central administration personnel, the dean, and others noted in the university directory as part of the hierarchy of the dean's school or college. Using the process of theoretical sampling, I gathered referrals to additional administrators and faculty members during the first few days of interviewing. I made every effort to balance the faculty interviewees by seeking those who may have different perspectives on administration or the particular person under study. I sought faculty representation from as many departments under the dean's jurisdiction as possible.

On-site Data Collection

Each site visit lasted at least one week; data collection extended from April 1990 to January 1991. I conducted 16 to 22 interviews on-site for each case, for a total of 89 interviews, ranging from forty-five minutes to three hours in length and averaging approximately an hour and fifteen minutes. I transcribed all interviews verbatim.

Interviews were open ended, guided by but not limited to the

broad conceptual framework of quality/culture, teamwork/governance, and analysis/knowledge. As permitted by theoretical sampling techniques, not all of the same questions were asked at each interview. I often asked different questions as I moved within and between each case depending on emerging themes, patterns, and categories offered by informants. I deliberately timed the dean's interview near the end of the campus visit to decrease the possibility of unconsciously shaping data collection according to values, agenda, or emphases communicated by the dean. I routinely scheduled a few interviews after the dean's to follow up on any issues identified during the interview with the dean or another respondent.

I also collected and reviewed documents at each institution, including the dean's vitae, catalogs, planning documents, reports, evaluations, governance by-laws and other materials. These documents provided by a number of interviewees throughout the study, clarified and confirmed interview data.

I conducted and transcribed all of the interviews thereby strengthening the comparability of data between cases (Green & David, 1981). In the early stages of the process, I spent a considerable amount of time refining the interview techniques. During transcription, I could hear how the interview was conducted, identify possible leading questions, appraise the answers more objectively, and determine information gaps to be remedied during follow-up work.

Analysis

As suggested by the constant comparative method, I began data analysis early in the process. After each interview I logged brief notes about ideas that had surfaced during the interview and began identifying similar patterns from other interviews. Using the three broad clusters of ideas as a guide, I analyzed in depth the first 10 interviews in Case One, seeking patterns and concepts that apparently contributed to that dean's effectiveness. Categories began to emerge which I sought to

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confirm or disprove in subsequent interviews within the case and between cases (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Categories were expanded, modified, and deleted as the study progressed and as the data suggested stronger concepts and patterns relevant to the effectiveness of the academic dean (Greene & David, 1981).

During transcribing sessions, I continued to log notes as relevant concepts emerged, strengthening or modifying my perceptions of previously perceived categories. The written transcriptions, log entries and supporting documents were the major data sources used during the final data analysis when I developed categories and ultimately propositions for each case study.

I sorted the data in the final analysis primarily by using open coding. This procedure names and categorizes the data to explain the phenomena under study (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). First, I compared interview notes, asking questions to help develop a label for a particular phenomenon. Next I used these labels or concepts to form categories of related phenomenon. By exploring properties or characteristics of the categories, I defined the range of dimensions to develop subcategories which further explained the category.

As part of the final analysis of the individual case data, I coded and sorted interviews and notes from each case into over twenty categories, analyzed these ideas, and identified five or six broad characteristics for each case. I made a final collective analysis of all five cases identifying resemblances and differences in patterns. This paper reports the analysis of the case studies together.

Limitations

This study has several limitations: First, generalization is limited by the fact that only five deans at public Research I institutions were included in the study. Differences in institutional type, size, and mission can have a significant impact on leadership.

Second, this study did not include ineffective deans. Thus, we cannot be certain that the characteristics of effective deans identified in this study are, in fact, unique to them. A comparative study of effective and ineffective deans might further specify the unique qualities of effective academic deans. Third, this sample, though not by design, includes only white males. Studies of women and people of color who hold these positions might also alter the results.

And finally, each participating dean was selected solely on the nomination by one person whom I asked to name an effective dean in each participating institution. I made strenuous attempts to ask for this nomination from someone who knew all the deans and could therefore compare them. The results clearly indicate both the faculty and the administration see four of the five deans as effective leaders. Still, this limitation must be kept in mind.

Findings

The deans in this study collectively exhibited five discrete areas of expertise. An effective academic dean at a public research university is a cultural representative, communicator, manager, planner/analyst, and advocate. While these specific roles are not new in the study of leadership and management, how they are defined and exercised at the level of the deanship has not been well understood. In addition, these roles are not static and do not operate according to a script which one can easily follow. Rather they are an integral part of personal character and congruent with the values of the colleges they lead.

Cultural Representative: Embody Research Ideals

The deans represent the culture of their colleges and universities. They believe in and work for "the cause" of large research institutions and, support the values of the disciplines that compose their colleges. They also represent the qualities of hard work, trust, and honesty--values grounded in the pursuit of truth that forms the foundation of a traditional research institution's mission. Faculty and administrators believe that

their deans work hard for the college, they trust them to do what is best for their college, and see the deans as honest and open to members of the college community. While deans may benefit personally from being successful, personal motives were not the dominant reasons for working hard. Rather, they seemed motivated by the good of the college, the university, and higher education in general. The job is an integral part of who they are.

The culture of a research university may condition the types of individuals who succeed as deans. Hard work, honesty, trust, and high-quality research are embedded in and rewarded by research universities. If the dean holds these values and exercises them in fulfilling his or her position, perhaps he or she is able to be more successful.

In all cases, interviewees consistently praised the dean's energy, hard work and dedication to the college and university. For example, Dean Morris was described as "enthusiastic," "dynamic," "a swirl of activity," and a person who "thrives on the demands of his job;" Dean Collins was "active," "constantly in overdrive," and a "tireless worker" for the college and the university he so clearly loved; and Dean Larson was "energetic," a man with a "passion" for his work who "lives his commitment" to the college and the university. These deans were not passive in their approach to leadership but active, even hyperactive. They worked hard and were committed and loyal to the college and the institution.

All of these deans considered research the most important function of their colleges. They believed that a strong research mission would improve their college's competitive position compared to other colleges. Although teaching performance was also important, they understood that the mission of the institution and hence its reward structure depends on generating high quality research. For example, Dean Morris, was instrumental in changing the primary identity of the College of Engineering from a teaching college to a highly regarded research enterprise

that brings in large grants, attracts high quality faculty members and consistently ranks as one of the top engineering colleges in the country. During Dean Larson's 18 months, his attention to quality research and his willingness to differentiate rewards accordingly gained him strong support from the faculty.

These deans do not just support research but, with the exception of one, are also well known researchers in their respective fields. For example, Dean Morris still oversees a small research grant. Dean Andrews is an accomplished musician who occasionally performs at university functions, and Dean Larson's ability to continue research, which takes him out of the country several times a year, was made a condition of his contract. These deans believe in research, and actively pursue projects in their disciplines and thereby make it a centerpiece of their college leadership.

The harmony between personal and organizational values make it easier for them to lead. If a research university's culture includes openness to new ideas and challenges, creating forums for discovering truth, honesty in academic pursuits, enabling others to trust your conclusions, then these deans also seem to personally espouse the same ideals. Most interviewees showered them with praise as being "fair," "direct," "trustworthy," "honest," and commended them for their openness. Despite some variation the interviewees saw openness as important to their dean's success as a leader.

Total loyalty to the institution was most clearly seen in Deans Morris, Collins, and Andrews. These three "home grown" deans had spent all or most of their careers at their respective universities. Dean Morris received his Ph.D. at University A and, except for a couple of short sabbaticals, had a long research and teaching career in the college before moving to the deanship. Similarly, Deans Collins and Andrews began their careers at Universities C and D and, though courted by other colleges, remained loyal to their universities. They have grown up in the

culture of their colleges; yet they recognize that changes need to be made and they facilitate those changes.

In short, effective deans in this study apparently have personal values that closely match the ideals of the research university. The university is their life. They believe in its research mission and dedicate their energy, drive, enthusiasm, and hard work to the advancement of the mission within their colleges. They find ways to enhance the productivity of the faculty. Most stay involved in research and teaching to keep in touch with the university's primary work. Their devotion to the university and its mission, evident in how they approach the deanship, contributes to the effectiveness of their leadership.

Communicator: Listen and Share

Each of these five deans exhibited a strong commitment to, and consistently worked on, internal communication structures, networks, and processes. A major priority is helping members of the community understand their position on issues and, in turn, being open to ideas from others within the college. It is clear that each dean has a different focus and gives varying degrees of attention to communication systems, but they all recognize the need for effective dialogue and efficient linkages with other members of the college.

To achieve these ends the deans set up or redesigned formal structures in the college. For example, Dean Morris restructured the college administration when he became dean by adding more associate deans and moving their offices closer to his. Dean Thomas was in the process of setting up an advisory committee of respected faculty with visible reputations to provide an added voice in the decision process. Dean Larson organized meetings with his chairs and directors to be more efficient and effective. He also initiated alumni and women advisory committees to provide new avenues for communication.

Part of each deans' formal structures is a primary advisory group. In four of the five cases, this group rarely takes formal

votes but rather acts as a sounding board, a place where the deans can introduce new ideas to appraise their feasibility and acceptance by the college community. In these four cases, the groups are convened by the dean who sets the agenda for discussion. In the fifth case, the committee is the college governing structure. It has decision-making power but the dean directs it, sets the agenda, and sometimes "packages" issues for the committee, thus allowing his voice to be heard even though he does not officially vote on many issues. These advisory groups seem to be the single most important means for the deans to convey their concerns, ideas, and activities to members of the college community.

The formal structures are important to all the deans because they allow the college to function in the dean's absence. All of the deans spend significant amounts of time off campus, which necessitates smoothly operating mechanisms to ensure effective day-to-day operations. Communicating through formal groups on a regular basis allows the college community to keep abreast of the dean's goals and expectations, thus creating an environment where decisions can be made in his absence.

Formal mechanisms also coexist with significant informal networks. Aside from the familiar use of written memos and electronic mail, all of these deans have an "open door" policy that facilitate individual conversations with faculty, administrators, students, parents, and alumni. My interviewees felt that their dean consistently encouraged free discussion of concerns and no one reported any hesitation in bringing up matters with him. In these one-on-one conversations, the dean not only addressed the issues brought up by his visitor but usually had an agenda of his own.

The significance of informal networks lies not so much in the deans' availability or visibility but rather in their deliberate and conscious use of a wide range of communication opportunities. These deans symbolically and instrumentally target people to

ERIC

convey their own ideas and to encourage the others to express expectations and concerns. When the dean initiates these discussions it signals to others what he considers important. For instance, Dean Larson hosted social events in his home where he mixed people from a variety of disciplines and administrative offices to encourage networking with those in other parts of the college and university. Dean Andrews instituted faculty lunches to provide smaller, more intimate gatherings in which faculty could voice their concerns and ask questions. Most of these deans are masters of informal communication and their personal ease with such situations is part of who they are.

Communication processes varied with each dean. Annual reports, program reviews, retreats, strategic planning, promotions and tenure processes all functioned to communicate the dean's priorities to the faculty. Planning is a prominent part of the communication systems and leadership style of Deans Morris and Larson. Many interviewees commented on their success in clarifying direction and guiding decisions. While other deans periodically worked with faculty to develop plans, such planning episodes did not appear to function as means of communication because they were not ongoing.

Each dean used the tenure and promotion process to convey his ideas and expectations to the faculty. In every case, interviewees could remember at least one tenure or promotion situation where the dean disagreed with a faculty or departmental recommendation. Since each dean voted before recommendations were passed to the provost or vice president, his review was deemed very influential not only on a case by case basis but also for influencing the whole process. For example, Dean Morris proposed increasing the pay for new assistant professors to better compete in the national market even though new appointees would thereby be paid more than long-tenured faculty. Dean Larson standardized the tenure and promotion process across departments and instituted the controversial component of outside peer review.

These changes communicated to the faculty what each dean felt was important and influenced how faculty recruited and promoted people in their departments.

To summarize, communication structures, networks, and processes figured prominently in how these deans conveyed their ideas to members of the college community and how they received information from the faculty at large. This systematic attention to communication contributed to their success as academic deans.

Manager: Offer Ideas and Know How Implement

Effective deans are skilled managers, which helps them to be successful leaders of their colleges. Each of the five deans in this study could articulate ideas regarding new directions for the college and had the skills to successfully implement the resulting proposals. With impressive ease they accomplished or delegated managerial tasks, freeing them to work on broader or more philosophical issues within the college. The deans did not all come to their position with these skills but worked hard to learn them, and now know how to let go of the details and focus on larger issues. Specific skills include organizing, delegating, hiring expertise, planning, budgeting, and decision making. They were also sensitive to, and expert at understanding the narrow range of power and authority granted to them by their positions. They were not day-to-day managers; rather, they have managerial skills and know how to execute or delegate those duties with ease, concentrating instead on the larger issues of the college.

In all cases, the deans organizational skills were reflected in the structures they developed, the meetings they conducted, and how they delegated tasks. The deans use their staffs to keep the college organized. Interviewees reported that Deans Morris, Andrews, and Larson, were especially skilled at chairing well-organized, achievement-focused meetings. Frequent comments noted the priority these deans placed on having specific agendas.

The deans' planning expertise included group process, analysis, and listening skills. Two were highly methodical

strategic planners who were quite successful at working with the faculty to establish an agreed-upon direction for the college. Although planning skills are in the domain of managerial expertise, they are so important to the deans' success as a leader, that these will be illustrated more fully in the next section.

All of these deans are masters at budgeting. Although they have staff members to deal with the actual figures they understand how everything fits together and how one expenditure may impact other issues. In all cases, interviewees praised the dean's ability to analyze and synthesize budget information, to present the college financial situation in understandable terms to faculty and others, and to use their budget expertise in lobbying with the central administration. Not only was this skill important for acquiring and defending resources, but it was also one of the most powerful tools for directing the college.

Knowing the boundaries of power and authority seemed to be another imp rtant skill for these deans, especially in colleges with strong norms of shared governance. The deans seemed to have a firm grasp of when and where they could/should make independent decisions, collective and/or consultative decisions, or no decisions. Obviously these decision areas varied within each college, depending on the college and university cultures, but determining which issues fell into which category was a skill at which the dean must excel.

To summarize, effective deans exercised expert managerial skills with ease which enabled them to focus on the college's broad, philosophical goals. They had an agenda of ideas and the skills to implement them and a clear understanding of the limits of their power and authority.

Planner/Analyst: Engage in Collective Vision-Building and Chart a Course

Consistent planning for the future and strong analytical

skills further characterized the successful academic deans. Each had been able to engage the collective vision of the faculty in planning the long-term future of the college. While two deans were staunch believers in organized strategic planning, all five had made specific and successful decisions about the long-term survival and direction of the college. They all had strong analytical skills which allowed them to see connections between a variety of ideas, programs, and issues that, in turn, led to successful long term decisions. They could look at the college holistically, recognizing connections among units and programs and visualizing how they could work collectively instead of as isolated entities.

Deans Morris and Larson used strategic planning techniques with the faculty to work toward achieving agreed upon goals. This is not to suggest that the other deans had no plans, but their written plans were often shelved and rarely referred to. Although the other three deans did not use the planning process as an integral part of their leadership, in all but one case faculty and administrators could articulate clearly where the dean was moving the college.

All five deans were praised for their ability to see relationships among seemingly unconnected ideas, issues, and units. These deans possessed large amounts of information which they freely shared to facilitate cooperative ventures in research and equipment use. Deans Thomas and Andrews were consistently praised as master problem solvers with superb analytic skills, for their extensive knowledge, limitless memories, expertise in assessing situations quickly, and the ability to see interconnections among events, ideas, and programs. These deans were especially gifted in sorting out what was important in meeting agreed-upon goals establishing consistency in decision making.

Planning and analysis seemed to be important skills. All the deans did not exercise these skills in the same way, but all

succeeded in articulating and working towards a collective vision. Those with the greatest faculty and administration support used a clear, methodical, planning process which involved the college community's participation in molding its direction. These deans all had the necessary skills to analyze and plan but seemed most effective when they engaged the collective vision of the faculty and clearly articulated and supported the vision in their words and actions.

Advocate: Build Linkages Outside the College

All five deans strengthened their advocacy role through a variety of connections with stakeholders outside the college. A central component to their leadership success was their ability to provide a forum for other important voices to express views about the college's needs and directions. Maintaining a global, holistic view of the college and its interdependence with others outside the college drew on the deans' advocacy skills in many arenas. While they had different methods of bringing people into the fold, they all recognized that advocacy was an important part of their jobs.

Advocacy manifested itself in maintaining strong relationships with other colleges and groups on the university campus, in the high profile they maintained in professional organizations, in their relationships with state legislators, local leaders and alumni, and, most importantly, in their work as fund raisers for the college. All of the deans saw building these relationships as important, which sometimes absorbed more than 50% of their time.

All five deans were respected, actively participating, and consulting freely with other administrators in the university community. For example, Dean Morris worked energetically with other deans and had been seriously considered for the chancellor's position a few years earlier. Dean Collins was frequently referred to as a "team player" at the university level; university administrators consulted him regularly and expressed respect for

him. Dean Andrews chaired a number of universitywide committees, including a powerful and visible capital campaign committee. Consistent with Dean Larson's integrative philosophy of the university and its units, he actively sought out colleagues from other colleges and managed to develop significant respect from others during his short tenure. One interviewee noted of Dean Andrews: "I think the main thing is the support of the university as a whole." That support, directed both "to him and the [School of Music and the Performing Arts] is something that we mustn't underrate.[Dean Andrews] helps them and they help him"(C5).

The dean's positive relationships with related professional organizations and similar colleges gave each college visibility and kept it in touch with new directions. For example, interviewees reported Dean Thomas's connection with professional science and engineering organizations, most including his regular attendance at some professional meetings. Dean Collins not only attended educational research conferences but also, occasionally, educational practice conferences. In addition, he held a leadership position in a national organization on curriculum reform for Colleges of Education.

Four of the five deans had regular contact with legislators and some acted, when asked, as consultants to legislative committees. Dean Morris's legislative contacts helped move a College of Engineering building request nearer the top of a long list. Dean Thomas had addressed the state legislature on behalf of the university and the college and was frequently contacted by members of the house and senate for opinions, ideas, and clarifications about bills in committees. One interviewee commented, "Some legislators have been known to remark that he is the only person at the university that they trust" [C2]. Even in Dean Larson's short tenure, he had initiated relationships with the legislature and sought ways to assist them in their work. It is important to note that these deans were not formal lobbyists for their colleges, but rather voices for their field and links

between the state and the university.

Some of these deans were also very active in alumni groups. For example, Dean Morris regularly attended alumni functions in major cities across the country. Dean Larson established an alumni advisory board of prominent social scientists and orchestrated an alumni weekend that highlighted academic aspects of the college in addition to the usual alumni social events. Not all these deans were equally aggressive in their approach to alumni, but all recognized the importance of alumni as funding sources and in enhancing the college's visibility.

Fund raising was the most visible and perhaps the most important external function these deans fulfilled for their colleges. This relatively new function for deans has grown significantly over the past ten years, partially because of state cutbacks in higher education and a corresponding pressure on colleges to meet more of their own financial needs. Except for Dean Collins, fund raising had become one of the most important aspects of the dean's job at these large public research universities. Deans Morris, Collins, and Andrews recall that they were almost never involved in fund-raising during their early years as dean; still, most seemed to assume the function willingly and aggressively pursued relationships with the potential of significant financial rewards. The faculty often criticized their dean for spending "too much time" fund raising but they also understood its necessity during the current financial constraints. It was particularly important in the College of Music and the Performing Arts where alumni are frequently unable to contribute large sums. The dean's contacts in this were frequently friends of the arts not the alumni themselves.

Successful academic deans were advocates for their colleges, exercising this role by cultivating a variety of relationships with individuals and groups outside the college. Their belief in a holistic approach to leadership manifested itself in their

ability to garner the respect from colleagues throughout the university, their prominent role in professional organizations, their relationships with state legislators and alumni, and their successful fund raising. They were visible and respected leaders outside their colleges, thus contributing to their success as academic deans.

Summary

Based on the case studies of these five effective academic deans at public research universities, effective leadership is defined by five areas of expertise. First, they are cultural representatives of their colleges and their universities. Their beliefs and values match those of their research institution and manifest themselves in their actions and words. They embody the ideals of a research institution and work tirelessly for "the cause". Second, as communicators they are continually striving for more efficient and more inclusive communication structures, networks and processes. Communicating to the faculty and giving the faculty access and voice in the college decision-making process is important, and the deans' actions support this commitment.

Third, the successful dean is a skilled manager. Managerial expertise facilitates the dean's ability to introduce ideas and provide a feasible plan for implementation. It is not important that these deans regularly exercise these skills, but rather that they understand how the management process works, permitting them to focus on broader or more philosophical issues facing the college. Fourth, as planners and analysts, successful deans can harness the collective vision of the faculty, engage in organized planning, and prepare for the future. Their analytic talents enable them to readily see connections among ideas and programs, thus resulting in a holistic approach to planning.

Finally, effective academic deans at research institutions are advocates for their college. They cultivate relationships with various groups and individuals on campus, in professional

ERIC

organizations, in the legislature, with alumni, and through fund raising activities. These relationships provide financial, intellectual, and status rewards for the college.

Discussion

The findings in this study do not represent distinctly new ideas in the literature on leadership. What is new is how these elements of leadership are exercised and defined in the position of the dean. It is possible that the relative emphasis successful deans place on these different areas of responsibility may differentiate their leadership from that of other deans or leaders in other organizations. Thus, this work provides a scheme for understanding why these deans are successful leaders.

Connection to Previous Research

Previous studies on the role of the academic dean focused on faculty and administrators' views of what the dean should be doing to be effective, thus concentrating primarily on the dean as a manager and not a leader. This study focused on what effective deans do and why they are perceived as successful leaders. Additionally, many studies of roles focused on the "how to do" of deaning rather than the "how to think" about deaning. The cases in this study establish that there is no single method that will work for all deans; however, they suggest broad areas common to all deans who are effective leaders. The emphasis on these roles may vary, depending on context and the individual, but clearly all five areas are important.

Some earlier studies concentrated on particular governance and decision models in the deanship identified models already established in higher education literature and fit deans into them. For example, McCarty and Reyes (1987) interviewed chairs and identified them with one of four major governance models--collegial, bureaucratic, political, and anarchical. The effective deans in this study seem to view governance rather as a process;

they use a variety of models, and employ a combination of roles. This study matches better Bolman and Deal's (1990) discussion of organizational frames and the leader's ability to use situational decision-making approaches. My findings are also close to what Birnbaum (1988), in his work on university presidents, has called "leading" in a cybernetic organization. Presidential leadership in this context provides a method of integrating the bureaucratic, collegial, political, and symbolic models allowing a more fluid approach to governance and decision making. The deans in this study do not seem to rely exclusively on any specific model but approach their leadership responsibilities flexibly.

The dean's role as a cultural representative is clarified by some recent literature on the deanship and the research on leadership in general. Bernier(1987) and D. Dill(1982) suggest that an important task for deans may be understanding and building college cultures. My study underscores the importance, not just of understanding and building the culture, but also of constituents' perceptions that the dean is part of the culture. In other words, the dean must embody the ideals of the college and the university--in these cases, their research ideals. The dean's ability to work tirelessly for the college must be conspicuous and unquestioned. These five deans exhibited what Schein (1985) regarded as important elements in how leaders reinforce institutional cultures. They reinforced the college culture through: (a) what they paid attention to, measured and controlled; (b) how they reacted to critical incidents and organizational crises; (c) how they deliberately role-modeled, taught and coached people in the college; (d) how they allocated rewards and status and (e) the criteria by which they selected, promoted, retired and fired personnel. What seems to be different from the work of Schein (1985) and others (Bennis & Nanus, 1985; Krouzes and Posner, 1987) is that these successful deans did not determine the

vision of the college but rather articulated, conveyed and lived the collective vision of the college and university. This achievement was possible because these deans' beliefs and values were congruent with the culture of the college and institution and because they could communicate that congruence to the college community.

Communication has been noted as a critical component in leadership. Of Barnard's (1938) three major functions of the executive, one was to provide a system of communication. Of Mintzberg's (1973) 10 roles of the manager, one was to be a disseminator of information. One of the four transformational leadership strategies described by Bennis and Nanus' (1985) was communication that "creates meaning" for members of the organization. These works emphasized the leader as the communicator and the followers as recipients of the communication.

In Birnbaum's (1992) work on presidential leadership in colleges and universities, he reported that 71% of the presidents in his sample described their leadership as a process of one-way communication. The academic deans in this study seem to be part of the 29% who described their leadership as a system of two-way communication among the dean, the faculty, and others in the college community. This is not to say that all of these deans were uniformly successful in achieving two-way communication, but they all continually worked at creating a system that would facilitate sharing and hearing ideas and concerns among members of the college community. It was these deans' constant attention to developing better methods of communication through a system of structures, networks and processes that enhanced their success.

The importance of the role of manager, rather than leader, has been the guiding assumption in most studies of academic deans. W. Dill (1980) maintains that the "deanship remains, first and foremost, an academic-management role." However, he also called

for more academic leadership (as opposed to academic administration) and suggested that deans be, as Riesman advised, active leaders in reflection, analysis, proposal making, and actions. My study on effective deans supports the intuitive conclusion that one component of effective leadership is competence as a manager.

Bennis and Nanus (1985) describe managers as individuals who "do things right" as opposed to leaders who "do the right thing" (p. 21). My study suggests that successful academic deans must do both. While it is important to articulate new ideas on improving the college, it is also important to have the skills to implement these ideas.

The importance of planning and analysis is a familiar theme in the literature on leaders (Birnbaum, 1992; Cohen & March, 1974; Sayles, 1989; Yukl, 1987). These skills include the leader's ability to articulate a vision and purpose and to reinforce that vision through his or her activities. A vision or purpose agreed upon by the college enables the college community to participate in planning the future. But planning by a group of individuals is unlikely to occur without direction from someone. As the positional leader, the dean can direct these activities by consulting with the faculty either informally or formally. Once the direction has been articulated and agreed upon by a majority, then the leader's actions must be congruent with this direction. Most interviewees in this study could articulate the college's agreed-upon vision or goal and identify ways in which the dean was working systematically towards that goal. As successful problem solvers with impressive analytic skills, these deans were seen as key leaders in the planning processes.

This role of planner/analyst is closely connected to that of cultural representative. By engaging the collective vision of the faculty and charting a course, the dean can best understand

ERIC

and represent the college and its culture. The faculty interviewees usually agreed with the college's direction, which in turn reflected the research mission of the university. This role is also linked with the dean's role as advocate.

The role of advocate has received considerable attention in the literature on leadership and management (Birnbaum, 1992; Rosovsky, 1990; Sayles, 1989; Yukl, 1987). Few would argue that this role is unimportant for any leader, but the relative emphasis of these five deans on this activist role is particularly note worthy. Their relative new definition may well constitute the most significant recent change in the academic deanship.

These five successful deans are active in many external arenas traditionally considered arenas of the college president. They devote a great deal of time to building links with others on the campus, in professional organizations, with the state legislature, with community leaders and alumni, and, most importantly, with prospective donors. It may be that the fiscal constraints of the 1980's have necessitated this outreach by deans or it may be that the expanded tasks of presidents at large research universities make it impossible for them to be advocates for individual colleges in their external connections. The emphasis placed on relations with external constituencies varied with each dean but this component of deans' work is obviously increasing steadily. A dean's success in this area is clearly critical to his or her overall success.

Contributions to Research and Practice

My study, while limited by sample size and institutional type, offers a preliminary substantive theory for understanding the work of effective academic deans. An additional strength of this work is the diversity of the sample, enabling scholars to see beyond the deans of one specific disciplinary type to appraise the position of dean in the larger organization.

ERIC

These findings represent important roles and activities exhibited by effective academic deans at public research universities and suggest a framework for understanding, identifying, and recruiting new deans. While this study suggests that deans need to be successful in all five areas, a search committee may want to prioritize these roles.

In searching for a dean, perhaps the single most important role is that of the cultural representative. For example, does a prospective dean believe in and have a record of commitment to the values and concerns of the college and the university? Does he or she understand the disciplines well enough to facilitate connections between groups and make informed decisions? In the case of the research university, is he or she committed to continuous improvement of the research goals?

These suggestions move in the direction of practical applications of these findings. However, this research was less informed by the desire to produce a list of "how to's" for deans than a framework for "how to think about" the dean's work as the relationship among his or her most important roles. I hope that this study will generate useful discussions about the expectations for deans at public research universities.

But much research on the deanship remains to be done. It is important to study a larger sample of deans from more research institutions to determine whether these constructs hold true for others. It is also important to identify deans who are women and people of color to determine if their leadership is conditioned by any or all of the constructs identified in this sample of men. Third, an in-depth examination of deans in other types of institutions will appraise the importance of mission and size in effectiveness. And fourth, it will be very helpful to determine if ineffective deans also use some or all of these same roles. and yet are unsuccessful in leading their colleges. Such a research

agenda promises to greatly increase not only what is known about the roles of deans but add significant insights to our understanding of higher education leadership.

ERIC

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ERIC

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