The Death of Socrates

Managerialism, metrics and bureaucratisation in universities

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Neoliberalism exults the ability of unregulated markets to optimise human relations. Yet, as David Graeber has recently illustrated, it is paradoxically built on rigorous systems of rules, metrics and managers. The potential transition to a market-based tuition and research-funding model for higher education in Australia has, not surprisingly, been preceded by managerialism, metrics and bureaucratisation (rendered hereafter as 'MMB') in the internal functioning of universities in the last decade. This article explores the effects of MMB on the lives of academics, the education of students, and the culture and functioning of universities. By examining some of the labour activities of academics, work scheduling and time use, we demonstrate that MMB reduces the efficiency and quality of academic teaching, research and administration. Even more worrying, by qualitatively assessing the language, values and logic increasingly present in the academic culture of higher education in Australia, we show that MMB does not simply fail to improve universities or accurately assess academic achievement, it replaces the core values of education with hollow bureaucratic instrumentalism.

Keywords: bureaucratisation, managerialism, metrics, transvaluation of values

Then raising the cup to his lips, quite readily and cheerfully he [Socrates] drank off the poison. And hitherto most of us had been able to control our sorrow; but now when we saw him drinking, and saw too that he had finished the draught, we could no longer forbear, and in spite of myself my own tears were flowing fast; so that I covered my face and wept, not for him, but at the thought of my own calamity in having to part from such a friend.– Plato, Phaedo

The importance of measurement and standardisation for contemporary systems of control is an enduring theme associated with modernity (Weber, 1978 [1922]; Foucault, 1990 [1976]; Scott, 1998). The rise of such regimes and mentalities has not only been understood as altering structures of power but also contributing to a loss of heterogeneous forms of value, community and imagination (Alexander, 2013; Graeber, 2001; Graeber, 2015). Perhaps most famously, Weber, writing of changes in both global spirituality (2001 [1905]) and university systems (1946 [1919]) of his own day, described the effects of such processes as 'disenchantment' (Entzauberung). The ethnological studies tracing systems of control and subsequent disenchantment in the context of religion (Eliade, 1987), economy (Polanyi, 2001 [1944]), the family (Lasch, 1995) and sex (see Robinson, 2014 on Weber) remain seminal works in 20th Century social sciences. Such transformations are no longer research questions only to be explored in the field. The rationalisation triumvirate of metrics, managerialism and bureaucratisation (MMB) now organise the educational, professional and intellectual terrain of many universities, their academics and students.

Reflecting this general trend in humanism's response to modernity, we offer a small study within the context of the academy that explores such systems of control and the subsequent disenchantment of secular society's once sacred place.

This article presents a series of examples of what MMB can do to education, thereby providing feedback for academic administrators as well as analytical techniques for understanding MMB's effects for academic staff, with their responsibility as stewards of the university, apart from simply 'employees' of it. To these ends, our examination of MMB in the academy is divided into two sections. The first addresses labour inefficiencies through how, by its own desire to make universities more productive and legible workplaces through centralised control, MMB creates a remarkably inefficient and unclear system through excessive management. To do this, we compare the labour (defined in time, attention and personnel) to perform common tasks in what we define as managerial and non-managerial universities. The second section explores the effects of MMB. In particular, we describe the values, behaviours and mentalities now emerging within the MMB system as an illustration of what might be described as the disenchantment of academic life. We base this comparative method from our experiences in North American and Australian universities which, for the authors; represent examples of non-MMB and MMB educational institutions, respectively. Within the context of this paper, we focus our analysis on those clear accounts of the differences between these systems, in the hope of bringing greater empirical accuracy and thus more pointed criticism of such a fundamental transformation occurring in higher education.

The thematic division of this article addresses two common positions supporting MMB in the academy. To proponents of this type of broad rationalisation, such changes in the university could appear to improve the efficiency and quality of the institution. It must first be pointed out that the managerialism found in current MMB institutions is not the traditional form of administration within a university of deans, provosts, and vice-chancellors / presidents (Ginsberg 2011). In the MMB model we refer to in this paper, managerialism extends beyond the use of business managers in administrative roles. Decisions about teaching techniques, research projects, university educational philosophies and the daily activities of academics are increasingly micromanaged. In such a system, even when administrators are academics, they make decisions based on metrics rather than human judgment. Yet, this contemporary brand of MMB in education does not reflect all types of managerialism in the private sector. The type of management philosophy that academics now often face in universities that focuses on workflows and metrics is a type of Taylorism. Associated with Fredrick Taylor (1856-1915), such a philosophy reduced labour into a series of discrete elements, each regulated by a management structure. By controlling the technical aspects of production rather than the culture or satisfaction of workers, management asserts that output is increased. Coming into fashion in the early 20th century, Taylorism has, since the 1930s, been viewed as severely flawed for industries that lack easily measured and agreed-upon tasks or outputs (Akerlof & Kranton, 2005). Academic work is not readily measurable in the context of other industries, such as the fast-food industry, that still use Taylorist management techniques. The examples highlighting the inefficiencies of MMB in the first part of this article are to address supporters of this new system on technocratic grounds.

Other supporters of MMB in education hold the ostensibly reasonable view that universities, as part of society, change within society. In a world increasingly beset by MMB, should not universities mirror this transformation? Is 'institutional isomorphism' (see DiMaggio & Powell, 1983) undesired in the 21st Century? To this seemingly reasonable position, we have addressed the second part of this article. It shows how such transformations alter the search for knowledge, the integrity of educators and the experiences of students. It does so through altering the values, discourse and behaviour associated with the academy. We demonstrate that the resulting culture of the university is antithetical to the venerable tradition of the advancement and dissemination of knowledge.

Before turning to our analysis, we, given the limited space within this article, will offer parsimonious definitions of the key terms to be used. We operationally define MMB as constituted from a combination of these three concepts:

Bureaucratisation: The prevalence within an institution for decisions to be made by a codified set of regulations rather than the judgments of individuals.

Metrics: The use of formal quantitative analytics rather than human judgment in evaluating the worth of individuals and actions.

Managerialism: Through the use of bureaucratic procedures and metrics, the activities of individuals and groups should be controlled by individuals not performing such activities. This is often believed to increase efficiency.

Labour inefficiencies

In a managerial institution, bureaucratic systems seek to create rules, metrics and uniform outputs. This is one part of a trend of replacing human judgment with the impersonal rules and regulations in both the uptake of information and the control of actions. In such a system, education becomes increasingly interconnected with formal processes and procedures and thus administrative sectors. Therefore the autonomy, and, it seems, efficiency of the educator is lost within a series of relationships with administrators, support staff and policies. In this context, administrators not only tell academics what to do, but more accurately, how to interpret baroque regulation schemes and a set of operational procedures. In short, administrators can be seen as gatekeepers to an inaccessible world.

The major manifestation of this interconnectedness is the management of academic personnel's tasks through the medium of email. To illustrate MMB's increasing presence in academic work, we compared the number of emails in a single semester received by one of the authors (Y. Orr) at the University of Alberta in 2013, a non-managerial Canadian university with the number of emails he received at the University of Queensland in 2014, an Australian managerial institution. We have culled the data so that the comparison only counts the following type of emails relating to: teaching undergraduates, general employee information that must be attended to by academics (grades, employee mandatory training, scheduling of meetings, etc.). Emails that could be summarily ignored (closing of a parking structure due to inclement weather, arrival of a diplomat on campus, etc.) were not counted. Emails relating to graduate or research for a higher degree (RHD) student training and service were also not included as the number of these students and service responsibilities varied between universities.

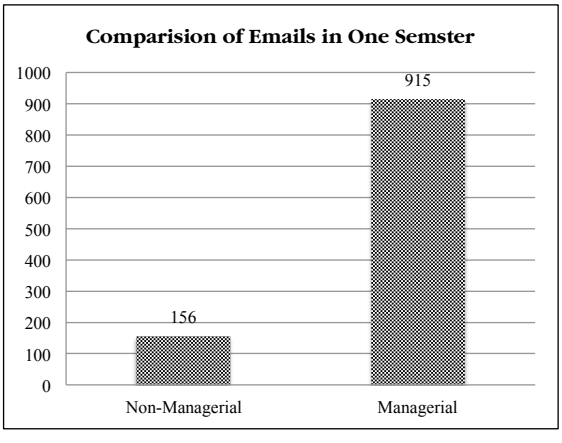

Figure 1: Number of emails in a semester between an 'efficient' managerial educational (915) and a traditional educational institution (156).

An important question emerges from this comparison in Figure 1: why are there six-times as many emails in a managerial as in a non-managerial educational institution? The answer to this question may in part be found in the over-administration of academic life in managerial institutions. The volume of emails may also indicate a problem of informational clarity, whereby anything short of explicitness is distrusted, a perceived legitimate source of concern and clarification. The managerial system demonstrates a trend whereby professionalisation and trust is replaced by bureaucracy and suspicion, and a high standard of explicitness is demanded due to the suspicion of falling outside of a policy.

We posit that the greater volume of email around teaching originates from the complex administrative procedures in place in the MMB system. Based on an examination of our own emails throughout a single semester, a comparative glimpse of the managerial model (i.e. MMB) against the non-managerial model follows. The university that was labelled as 'managerial' considered itself a streamlined and efficient institution modelled and operated in accordance with contemporary business practices. This is demonstrated in its frequent use of language in emails that tout control, clarity, a series of checks and oversight. In contrast, the 'Non-Managerial' institution made little claims to efficiency of its operations.

In this case-by-case comparison we looked at five procedures common to university operations: 1) creation of a syllabus / electronic course profile; 2) creation of an exam; 3) student failure process due to extenuating circumstances; 4) travel authorisation; and 5) hiring of a teaching assistant / tutor. Each arrow indicates an email sent as part of an academic or professional task and is numbered in the sequence of the overall task. The key in the top describes its corresponding purpose.

So what do the integration of academic life with administrative control, the redundancies of observations, metrics, training and standardisation accomplish for an educational institution? How does this affect the education of students, the research for the academics and the efficiency and quality of the institution? The improvements for the university, education or research are minimal. Meanwhile, the negative effects for the quality of education are substantial. Before we turn to the negative consequences, let us examine the actual improvement to the education of students by looking at the example of exam creation and implementation.

Managerial ***Non-Managerial***

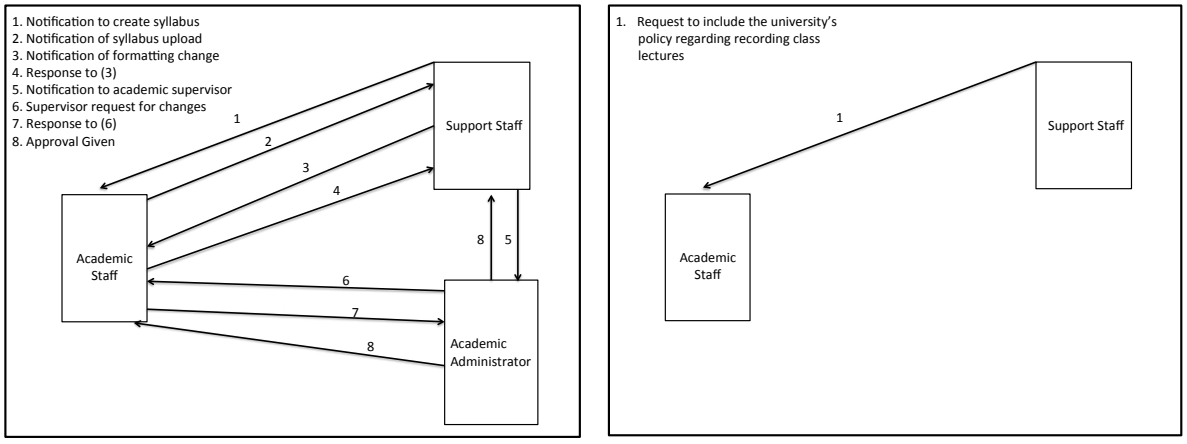

Figure 2: Creation of Course Profile / Syllabus*

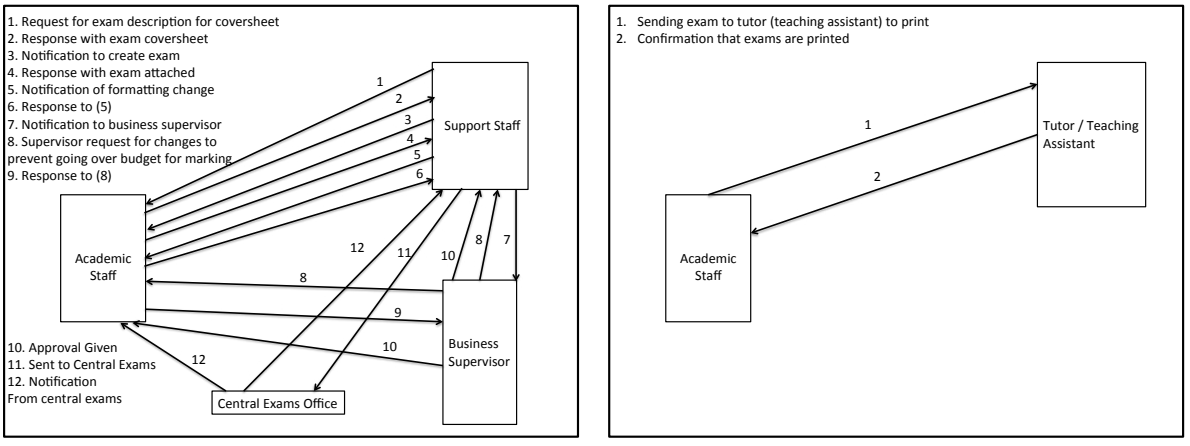

Figure 3: Creation of Exam

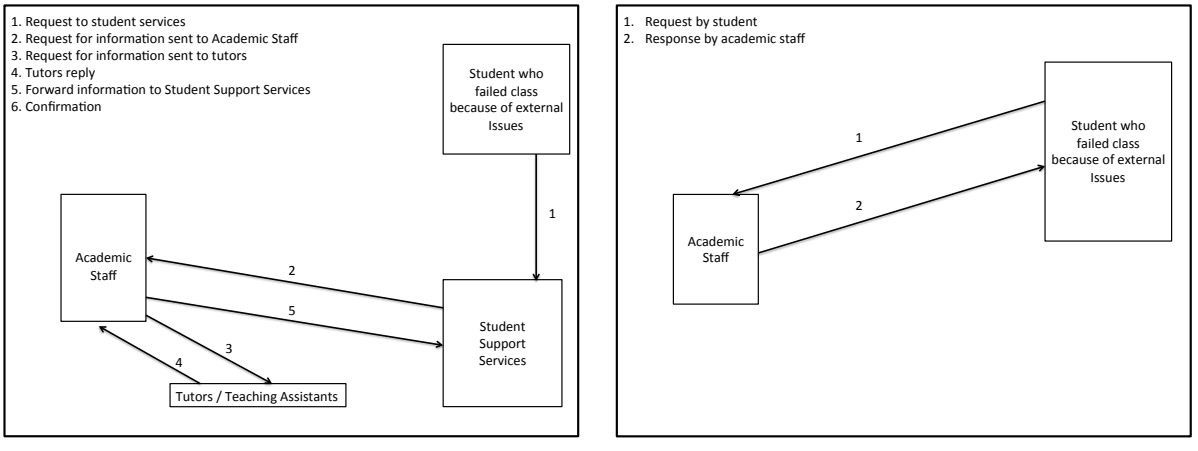

Figure 4: The process of addressing a student who failed because of mitigating external circumstances

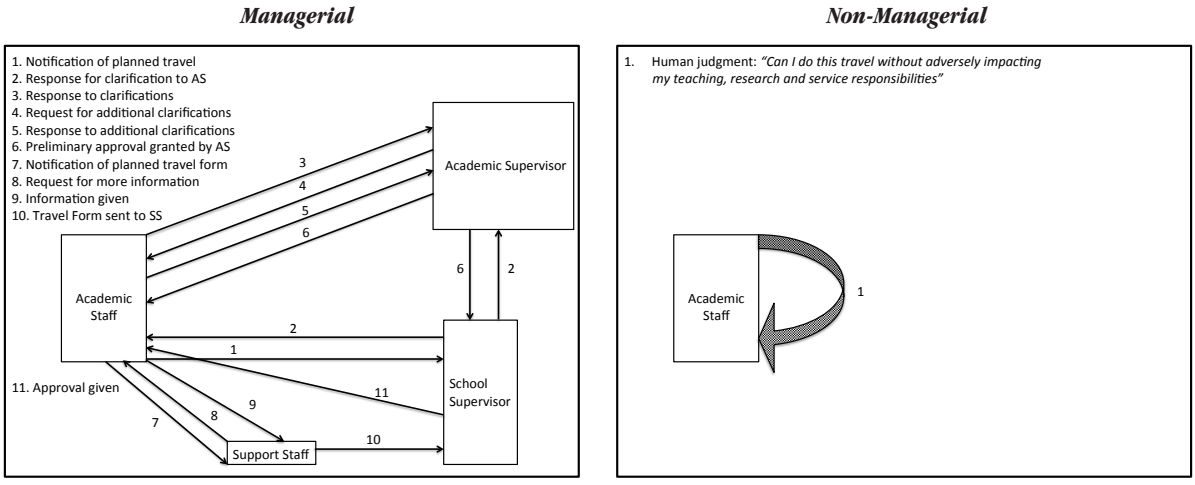

Figure 5: Travel Authorisation for travel outside of the semester*

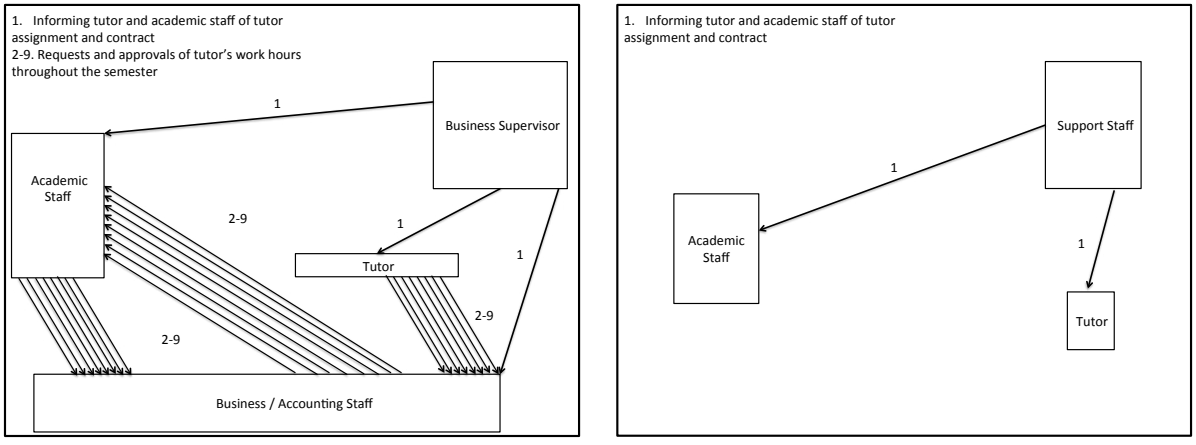

Figure 6: Tutor / Teaching Assistant Contracts Per-Tutor, Per-Class*

Note: These diagrams do not take into account the electronic forms common in managerial systems that are often part of email exchanges.
** These processes also involve completing time-consuming online forms in MMB institutions.*

Exam Creation

Exams in a Taylorist managerial system must be run through a central exam service. It is unclear what the rationale for this is, but one explicit reason given is to ensure uniformity in exam formats and the administrative procedures that govern them. What this actually means is that exams are to have a uniform appearance across classes and disciplines. Each is to have a university logo atop the exam, with a certain assemblage of information giving the date, name and class of the exam. Standardising the formatting of the exam is also a significant part of this process. This may seem to be critical for writing an exam, but we would argue it is actually quite trivial. For instance, multiple-choice exams have the possible answers written in an exam as:

According to Ricardo, who ate Martin's apple pie on Saturday?

a) James
b) Gina
c) Trudy
d) Stan

The format of the 'a),b),c),d)' is supposed to be uniform throughout the exam, and ideally it should be. However, when writing an exam, an academic staff member will, occasionally, for one or two questions, write something like:

(a) James		A) James
(b) Gina	or...	B) Gina
(c) Trudy		C) Trudy
(d) Stan		D) Stan

The standard of 'a), b), c), d)' has been replaced by a slightly different format for a number of questions. That such superficial regulation is the realised difference that

centralised uniform exam systems make defies generous notions of efficiency. Such an absurdity becomes a tragedy through its substantive effects on exams. In particular, a centralised platform, using standardised exams, takes weeks to order and print. Academics, therefore, must submit exams a month before the class is over, meaning that they have to create exams based on content that they have not yet taught, circumstances which are arguably far more critical for the efficacy of assessment than the formalities of the text.

Syllabus approval

The need for control over the academic process has led to the upending of one of the more robust forms of communication in history. The ability to communicate with another can be divided into: bodily forms of communication that predate homo sapiens, verbal communication using symbolic language believed to have begun around 40,000 years ago, and written communication starting around 5,000 years before present. From the beginning of the modern university, syllabi which utilise the 5,000-year-old written form of communication, have been the method for explaining to a class what they will be learning and doing during the semester. This involves writing a schedule and listing the materials, reading and tasks with the same form of narrative found in traditional prose. Since the 1980s, this has been accomplished with the use of a word processor.

The drive to make the syllabus comply with standard formats has merged with technological advancements to produce something quite monstrous. Although, like the devil, it has many names, a syllabus in which content is input onto a website and converted into a formatted document, can be found in almost all managerial Australian universities. We will refer to it as a 'course profile'. The time to create, update, change and produce is different between the two. For instance, we timed how long it took to change a date on a syllabus compared to a course profile. Updating a traditional syllabus takes around 17 seconds, while the use of the online matrix, the number of clicks of the mouse and overall disorientation of the web-based course profile format takes 2 minutes and 40 seconds (approximately 10 times longer). This is compounded at every task for each semester. Whether or not this actually aids students in understanding the dimensions and expectations of the class is unclear, we did not find any research supporting the use of the course profile for enhanced learning. We showed students examples of a traditional syllabus and an electronic course profile and asked them which one they thought was more helpful in understanding what would happen in the class. Students preferred the clear prose and spatial orientation of the syllabus, even though almost none had seen one before.

Little captures the futility of a standardised syllabus in which the nuance of narrative prose is lost more so than the 'learning activities' section of a course profile. In this section, a set of learning skills, outlined by the instructor, are chosen based on the events in the class by date. This is intended to let the student know what type of educational activity will take place in a given class period and the types of skills or cognitive activity that they will draw on to perform these tasks. For instance, will the student be listening to an instructor or working on a project using what they had previously learned in class? This attempt to create a measurable unit, standardise it, and convey it to a student seems like a beneficial process for students to understand what happens in a class. However, because all learning is comprised of multiple forms of experience and requires innumerable forms of action and contemplation, these units do not capture many of the meaningful forms of learning that actually take place. Moreover, students surely know from reading the description of the activity in the schedule, such as 'Lecture: Plant Physiology' or 'Laboratory: Dissection of Toads,' what the activity entails. These activities are turned into a long matrix in which they are plotted out in one area following the sequence during the semester (see Figure 7). The students often express their bewilderment about these plots or 'learning activities' and none have described them as helpful.

Learning Objectives

After successfully completing this course you should be able to:

1. Learn the main issues in the class
2. Critically use main topics in class
3. Combine main topics in class to solve a problem
4. Apply questions to new context of material
5. Express what you have learned about class in written and verbal format

Assessment & Learning Activities

	Learning Objectives				
	1	2	3	4	5
Learning Activities					
Week 1: Introduction (Lecture)	●				
Week 2: Tutorial Signup (Tutorial)		●			
Week 2: The Early Media (Lecture)			●	●	
Week 3: Field trip to TV Station (Tutorial)	●	●	●	●	●
Week 3: Radio in Media (Lecture)		●		●	
Week 4: Early TV (Lecture)		●	●		●
Week 4: Tutorial (Tutorial)	●	●	●	●	●

Figure 7: Example of 'learning activities matrix'

Perhaps the most significant critique of formalising a syllabus into a new standardised document is the questions this raises about the competency the university identifies in its own academic staff. If there is an actual need to format syllabi into a uniform document through the use of a rigid software, then questions arise as to whether the university is admitting that its academics cannot do the following tasks: (a) write in clear prose; (b) write in clear prose about a class they will teach; (c) write about a subject in which they are presumed to have expertise; and (d) write in a manner that is comprehendible to the students they teach. One must conclude that if such a system is needed, then universities have chronically hired academics who cannot perform the basic duties in their profession. Will universities admit to this? If not, then they must confess that such formatting of syllabi are not for the needs of students, teachers or education but instead for exogenous institutional rituals.

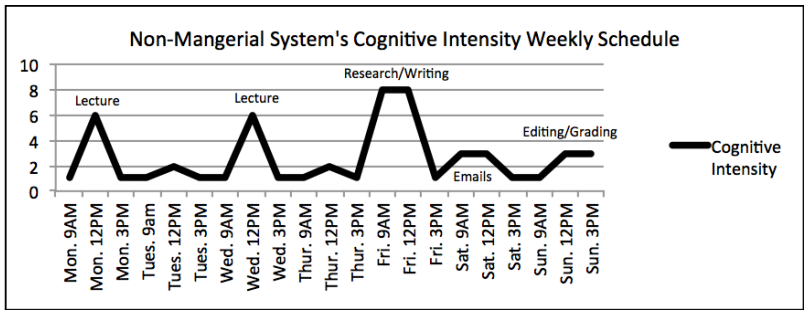

Figure 8: Impressions of cognitive intensity and activities in a traditional educational institution throughout the week

This graph is based on the authors' experiences in the following non-managerial institutions: University of California at Berkeley, the University of Arizona, Yale University & University of Alberta.

The most obvious lesson from an analysis of the emails and series of connections between educational and administrative staff is that this is a massive waste of time. Other institutions function with more competence without the regulations and structures of the Taylorist MMB model. It is unclear how to compare this unnecessary bureaucratic model with the actual labour that is invested in teaching and research. However, for those of us in a bureaucratic managerial institution, it feels as though it comprises the majority of our experience of our work and our relationship with institutions and colleagues. When we think of 'The University of So-and-so' our thoughts turn to administrative emails and not of what we learned in a recent seminar or conversation on campus. As wasteful as this system is, the effects of constant over-administration are perhaps more insidious to the quality of life and education as we will discuss next.

Disenchantment

In the first section, we have examined the inefficiencies of the managerial model. The enormous work that goes into such activities has little positive influence on the learning, research and quality of the educational institutions or the lives of those working in them. In this section, we will turn to how metrics, managerialism and bureaucratisation qualitatively change educational culture in Australian universities. An examination of subjective work experience of academics, the new values shared among colleagues and the emerging types of behaviour in MMB illustrates how little universities now look like educational institutions.

Work intensity and thoughts

Deep analysis, insight and creative production require periods of repose (Hegel 1995 [1816]; Ericsson 2006). The incessant emails stemming from numerous managerial relationships may constrain the ability for academics to achieve this intellectual space (Vostal 2016). Those entering an MMB system from a traditional academic culture often feel as though they have not only begun a new profession, but are in a entirely different industry (Ylijoki 2013). Recent studies have shown how 'fragmentation' within an academic's working day affects productivity and work satisfaction (Duncan et al 2015). To express the variance in the rhythm and quality of work, we have graphed, based on our subjective experience, the intensity of an academic's cognition throughout the week in a traditional and a managerial university. One might conclude that because an academic's job centres on the search for knowledge and its dissemination, cognitive intensity might be concentrated around these two activities. The relative importance of such punctuated episodes differs greatly in these two systems.

One notices in Figure 8 the high peaks of mental or energetic performance. Also, there are periods of 'down-time' within this schedule. Most intellectuals, artists, scientists and other members of creative fields recognise that this period of inactivity is necessary for high levels of creative output (Immordino-Yang *et al* 2012). It is even so for other occupations in which performance takes place in short intense bursts followed by recovery periods, such as in entertainment. This need is heightened when

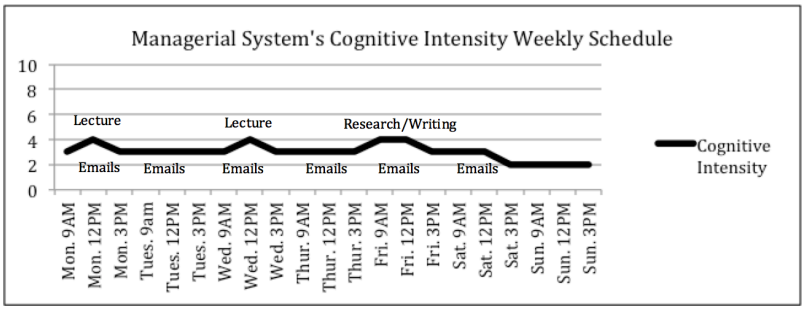

Figure 9: Impressions of cognitive intensity and activities in a MMB educational institution throughout the week

The graph is based on the authors' experiences at the following managerial institutions: the University of Melbourne and the University of Queensland.

one is asked not only to perform but also to create. In a Taylorist MMB model, these blank spaces could be viewed as wasted time or an inefficiency. Whether it is a waste or if MMB models seek to 'utilise' such time is irrelevant, because the model in Figure 8 does not exist in the new system. Instead, with the ubiquity of administrative and logistical emails, the intensity of work looks more like Figure 9.

There are several key differences between these two intensity schedules reflecting common changes experiences of academics (Ylijoki & Mäntylä 2003). Most strikingly, there is greater mental activity subsumed by emails in Figure 9. The aggregate data supporting this assertion and the rationale behind the importance of emails in the MMB system was outlined earlier. Constant emails affect the creative aspects of an academic's life in two ways (Menzies & Newsome 2007). First, there is relatively less energy and focus given to classes, research and writing. And, second, the necessary repose needed for developing meaningful ideas, classes and writing is no longer available. Very few of us can turn from responding to an email – for example demanding the font size be changed immediately on subheadings of an exam – to a new discovery or thought with the click of a mouse. The effects of this transition on the capacity for thought are difficult to overstate.

Perhaps external responsibilities that are not directly related to a primary function of a profession are part of any job. For instance, society finds it reasonable to ask a surgeon who is required to perform intricate high-stakes surgery with his hands to also teach students and administer facilities in-between surgeries. Yes, society does do this, but the analogy is subtly inaccurate. Academics are to thoughts as neurosurgeons are to mindful and controlled hand movements. It would more closely be the equivalent of asking a surgeon to work as a mason or stonebreaker in-between surgeries. The effects of such work activity would be debilitating to the central activity of the profession. To carry this a step further, to ask people whose profession is to have complicated and nuanced thoughts and then expect them to constantly respond to the minutia of administrative email, would be like asking Herbert von Karajan to fix the rickety audio systems of arcade pinball machines according to the fickle needs of tone-deaf adolescents in-between conducting performances at the Berlin Philharmonic.

Values and discourses

Beyond email's effects on the subjective experience of work intensity and the quality of education, MMB has altered the shared values of academics. Taken at their own word, metrics were intended to reflect the values associated with the production and transmission of knowledge in research, publication and teaching as part of modernity's quest for quantification (Webster 2006). Instead, they have transformed the value system itself. More than simply substituting a set of values for a proxy whereby the original values are measured using different means, it builds a value system that is qualitatively different and actually antithetical to the growth that characterises learning (see Holmstrom & Milgrom 1991 for a formal model for such a process). Here, we illustrate several ways in which the quality of work can be communicated to a colleague as examples from which we construct a comparison between traditional and MMB systems. As an example, Figure 10 shows the various ways whereby one colleague can describe the quality of work to another about a Prof. Johnson.

One would expect that statement (a) would be the most likely and appropriate description about the quality of another colleague's work. It is our experience that under the quantitative metrics used in MMB systems, statements like (a) are nearly non-existent. Rarely do academics speak of the actual content of another's work, but instead use the MMB idioms to signal the content. In non-managerial systems, statements from (d)–(g) are likely considered extremely uncouth, while statements (f) and (g) might be considered against the spirit of the academy. Someone who would make such comments would be thought of as crass. The differences in these statements reflect

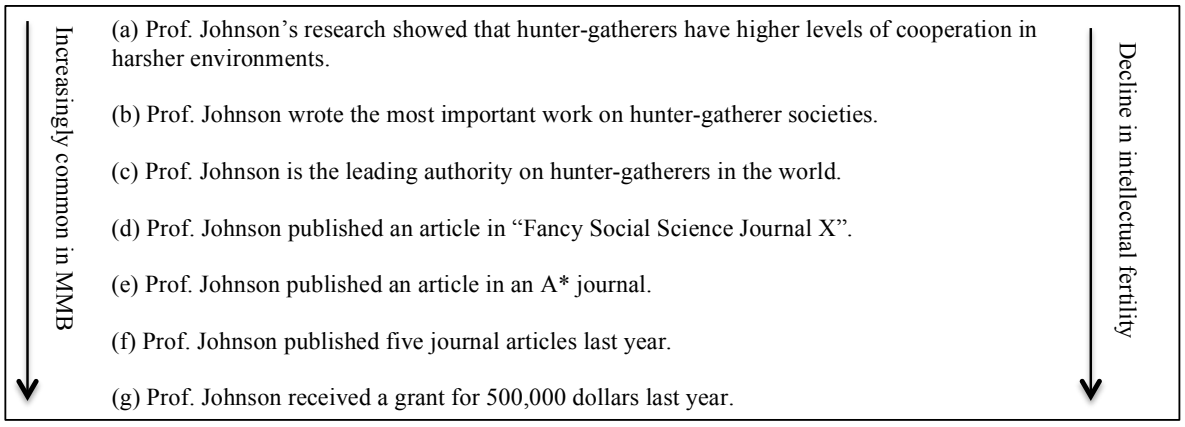

Figure 10: Types of descriptions used to attest to the quality of another's work

what is understood as work, quality and the point of the educational enterprise. The metrics meant to passively gauge the 'quality of work' actually alter the values of the systems in a way that reduces academic culture into an idiom of MMB.

That this is a spectrum of different types of descriptions may occlude an even deeper consequence between saying (a) and (d)–(g). In each description a colleague learns something. However, what they learn varies. The content of the information (hunter-gatherers, journals, publishing rates, finances, etc.) is of course dissimilar but the ways in which these differences emerge into types of environments is qualitatively distinct. That 'hunter-gatherer's have higher levels of cooperation in harsher environments' is a form of knowledge about the actual subject matter of a discipline. In this way the communication structure of a culture reflects the intended goal of that culture. More critically, this type of information can be integrated into the existing knowledge of a student or academic staff member and it might prompt this person to learn more about this subject matter. A living discourse about actual knowledge of the world is at the centre of education but the discourse in higher education no longer reflects this. Put ourselves in the shoes of a mother who asks her child what he learned at school that day and the response was: 'that Mr. Johnson had more A* publications than Mr. Thomas'. What should she think of her son's school? Should she continue to send him there to get such an education? This is essentially the type of quotidian 'learning' that takes place in MMB universities. What is supposed to be the highest level of academic culture now looks to be the most superficial.

Do these values that we have described in the terms of discourse actually become manifest in the behaviour of academics? Do people make educational decisions based on these new values or is this simply a form of meaningless academic parlance? What is no longer being said (i.e. that hunter-gatherers do certain things) is a powerful indication that at least one aspect of academic culture has been negated. The growth of an individual, discipline or the academy that is lost when someone does not learn something substantive about hunter-gatherers is replaced with another type of activity—bureaucratic gamesmanship. The explicitness of measuring academic value in a managerial system with metrics allows for the advancement of knowledge to become a type of 'game' in which achievement is conceptualised in superficial and packaged forms as 'beauty' is in a pageant. With what they are learning in a MMB culture in which statements (d)–(g) reflect values, academics now make measured and concerted efforts to publish in prescribed ways. They seek out journals that are unduly ranked high by universities that also have high acceptance rates over journals more fitting for the actual work or that are more common outlets in their fields. Perhaps most alarming, academics now carry MMB to its logical conclusion by petitioning their universities to change the ranking of journals to improve the perceived quality of their research.

Instrumentalism, careerism and student education

This new mentality extends beyond publication strategies. Conferences are planned not as opportunities to share and explore ideas, but may rather be used to signal that departments are central players in a field. This is not to suggest that all academic activity was quixotic before the managerial model, but the explosion of this type of mentality is only outshone by how unashamed it appears to be of itself. Individuals no longer attempt to hide what were once distastefully superficial motives guiding instrumental behaviour. Many academics now explicitly state that they are doing a certain activity for the benefit of their careers, without realising that this might be

considered antithetical to the academy. Pejorative terms such as 'careerist' are no longer applied because superficial work, ploys for advancement and instrumentalism are the new norms.

Perhaps most concerning, students, and more precisely their education, are now objectified resources in three ways: (a) student education is almost exclusively measured by the course evaluations of students; (b) student enrolment and not their education appears to be what is important for administrators; and, (c) student education is now viewed as raw material for impressing metrics and annual appraisals by academics. We will first examine the influence of course evaluations of students compared to traditional measurements. The oversight of courses and their quality is only measured within the managerial educational system through quantifiable and standardised metrics. This means through course evaluations. Literature shows a positive correlation between student grades and favourable course evaluations (Love & Kotchen, 2010). Additionally, studies now show that high grade averages in classes may actually mean that students are learning less as their performance in advanced classes is below that of peers who took prerequisite courses with lower grade averages (Carrell & West, 2010).

The problems associated with standardisation in metrics are magnified by the MMB culture that focuses on enrolment because of its link to finances (Slaughter & Leslie 1997). This extends to actual academic staff members who have remarked that they knew a course was poorly taught and the students learned little but that the teaching evaluations came back positive and the high enrolments meant that it should not be altered. This logic is being reproduced in some ways throughout the next generation of educators early in their careers. For instance, tutors have brought-up issues about the grades that they thought were unusually low in several courses. This is not remarkable in-itself, but how they framed such cases were. They worried that low grades would impact the future enrolments in advanced courses years later. It appeared their concern was not the student's education, nor even the equitable relationship between performance and grades, but its effect on departmental finances. Along these lines, tutors' responses to academic staff requests carry the MMB mentality. Reasonable expectations, such as their attendance in lectures in classes for which they have never tutored or taken, are rebuffed by citing that their contracts state that they are not paid for attending lectures and thus are not obligated to attend. Decisions regarding the tutor's own education, and that of the students, and the responsibility they are entrusted with as teachers, appears to be now overshadowed by a bureaucratic rationale.

If standardised and quantifiable means are not the sole means for evaluating the quality of an education, how would quality teaching and, as an extension, quality education be measured? That such a question has to be asked is telling as to how far universities have moved from being primarily educational institutions. In educational institutions, the quality of other classes taught at a university is evident in the students in higher division classes in that institution. By educating students, a teacher learns about their prior educational history, including where they learned various aspects of their current knowledge and conceptual abilities. It would be like asking craftsmen in a weaving guild to rate their mentors on a scale from 1 to 10 instead of assessing the quality of the protégés' tapestries. The reason why we must judge educational quality with metrics is because universities are no longer educational institutions (or at least not enough so to tell the difference between good and bad teaching or have confidence in their ability to do so).

Perhaps the harshest critique of MMB in education can be found in what academics inflict upon their students. The managerial control over teaching may incentivise a naked careerism at the expense of student education by those entrusted to teach them. The managerial system rewards 'innovative teaching' far more than quality teaching. Yet it seems to do so in a seemingly facile and benign way. Demonstrating this, one is only able to report quality teaching (or at least the problematic metric measuring it) with numbers such as 4.66 out of 5.00 in an annual appraisal. An innovative teaching experiment fills up, at the very least, a line on an appraisal document with descriptive text. In fact, many appraisal documents have a section asking for how one has been an innovative teacher. In such sections, considerable space can be filled by explaining how dramatically innovative one's teaching method was and 'spin' how successful it was in achieving its goals. Educators now may marginalise, exploit and even destabilise student education to demonstrate pedagogic innovation for an appraisal form without necessarily any interest in showing, or being expected to show, that it produces worthwhile results.

Next steps

Socrates was put on trial and executed in Athens for impiously questioning the existence of civic gods and corrupting the youth. A martyr to free inquiry, his legacy is twofold: knowledge is valuable enough to make

sacrifices for, and alternatives to communal norms are important for individual and social life. Universities have been the stewards of both legacies. We now watch these traditions end and share Plato's tears in losing such a friend in our own lives. The new hemlock is not made from a conscious effort to end the enriching aspects of the spirit of inquiry, intellectual growth and education. But as we have described, managerialism, metrics and bureaucratisation alter the lives of academics, the culture of the university and the mentalities of its academics to the point to which they no longer reflect Socratic values. Such a requiem should serve as a warning to others in the early stages of an MMB transformation.

So what should we do about the end of higher education? Many fatigued academic staff members say that they do their best to ignore the nuisances of managerialism and the superficiality of the new academic culture. They recommend focusing on one's own research as a strategy for surviving this system. This means that universities become dead places in which we are intellectually worse off for being a part of instead of locations of growth. In Plato we also can find how such an unresponsive approach may end. When brought his poison, Socrates asked the carrier: 'Well, my good man, you know about these things; what must I do?' The carrier replied, 'Nothing, except drink the poison and walk about till your legs feel heavy; then lie down, and the poison will take effect of itself.' Socrates's death, for something, was a beginning. Ours, because of nothing, portends an end.

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