Using Strategic Planning to Create the Public Good for Higher Education in Volatile Times

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Abstract
The purpose of this study is to assess how public higher education institutions are serving the public good at time when economic, social and environmental conditions are increasingly becoming more volatile. While by no means the only issues of concern, Zizek (2009) argues that impending ecological threats, the growing divide between the rich and the poor, the growing instances of social turmoil and political instability and the threats associated with technology are the most serious issues facing the world today. This paper employs a "gap method" to determine how higher education institutions are serving the public good. The gap method utilizes a researcher created conceptual framework to represent the more volatile factors which have the potential to impact any notion of the public (the four listed above). The framework is used to critically evaluate three strategic plans of higher education institutions in a state on the east coast of the United States.

Key words: Using Strategic, Public Good, Higher Education, Volatile Times

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Introduction

The public good is a notion that will be increasingly critical for higher education scholars to examine and understand. While interpretations vary, the public good can be thought of as the amount of social cohesion between citizens and the presence and access to democratic institutions in a given society as well as the access to healthcare, education and financial opportunity (Calhoun, 1998; Mansbridge, 1998; Marginson, 2007; Putnam, 2000). Public institutions of higher education traditionally have had a special role in promoting the public good because they promote cultural tolerance, social criticism, civic activity and economic equality among other things (Bowen, 1996; Marginson, 2007; Pusser, 2006).

The public good is not a static notion however; rather it is fluid and changes as social conditions and environmental contexts shift (Calhoun, 1998; Mansbridge, 1998). The early years of the twenty first century have already proven to be replete with new and different challenges than societies have faced in the past. Specifically, four related issues which increasingly threaten any vision of the public good and social stability for localities and nations around the world are the widening income gap, increasing social conflicts, the biogenetics revolution and ecological disaster (Zizek 2009). Of course, there is no universal consensus on these threats and many critics argue that these threats are over exaggerated. Nonetheless, they are still issues which will most likely need to be seriously addressed in some manner in the near future. As mentioned previously, the purpose of public institutions, and especially higher education institutions, is to serve society and the public good (Byson, 2004; Pusser, 2006). Thus, higher education institutions should begin to grapple with the threats enumerated above if higher education institutions are to continue in their missions to serve the public good.

The purpose of this study is to assess how public higher education institutions are serving the public good at time when economic, social and environmental conditions are increasingly becoming more volatile. In order to achieve this however, the notion of the public good cannot remain as an abstraction. Instead, the public good must become something empirically measurable. Of course, no research could ever measure the public good in its entirety, but researchers can begin to understand empirical aspects of the public good. One way to empirically measure the public good is to examine a higher education institution's strategic plan.

Ultimately, a strategic plan is a process meant to guide an organization to create public value (Bryson, 2004). Yet, while strategic plans undoubtedly demonstrate how higher education institutions are creating the public good, they may not go far enough in dealing with the four threats outlined above. A new empirical vision of the public good can begin to emerge by examining what current strategic plans call for, where they may fall short and how these gaps can be filled. This paper employs this "gap method."

This paper employs an deductive, a priori coding procedure (Allan, 2008). After reading literature on the public good, especially recent works dealing with the above threats, I have generated a list of terms and ideas which are more representative of this new, more volatile vision which currently impacts the notion of the public good that strategic planners at public institutions increasingly face. I then selected strategic plans from three universities in a state on the east coast of the United states. The purpose of selecting plans from these universities was to give a representative sample of the different types of institutions, at least for the state. The language in the strategic plans was examined to see if it referenced the ideas present in the a priori list. The intent was to examine any gaps between the a priori list and the language of the strategic plan. These gaps can begin to point for new directions for institutions to pursue in order to help shape a new vision of the public good in these increasingly unstable times. This new vision does not exist in a vacuum however; it must be realized through existing structures and capabilities of the institutions, which can be determined through the strategic plan. Further, the new vision is not a static goal to be reached, but rather an

evolving framework to guide higher education institutions in their creation of public value in a volatile era.

Literature Review

This section presents the relevant literature on strategic planning and the public good, and from this literature offers a conceptual model of the a priori list which will be used to examine the strategic plans. I have dealt with the themes addressed in this paper in other places as well, see Letizia (2013; 2015; 2016).

Strategic Planning

Strategic planning has become a necessary tool for both private and public institutions. It essentially is the creation of a map which helps to guide organizational and institutional behavior. While all strategic plans vary, there are some essential components to all plans. Perhaps the most essential, and the starting point, is a definition of an institution's mission (Bryson, 2004). An institution's mission is its reason for existing. In the case of a public institution, this mission is always tied to creating public worth or enhancing the public good. Next are typically goals and vision. The planners decide what goals the institution should strive for. What goals related to the mission are feasible and desirable for the institution? The vision is where an organization hopes to be, of who it hopes to serve, in the future. While a discussion of vision and goals is crucial, they must be approached realistically. Thus, an examination of the current resources of an institution is crucial as well. Relatedly, the question of who the institution serves must be examined. Who are the stakeholders? How can the various groups of stakeholders be served with the resources at the organizations disposal? (Bryson, 2004).

Perhaps the centerpiece of strategic planning, at least according to Bryson (2004) is an exploration of an institution's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and challenges (SWOC). The SWOC analysis looks to internal strengths and weaknesses of the organization stemming from a variety of sources, such as resources, funding and/or staffing. Next the opportunities and challenges that an institution may face are then realistically examined. Finally, strategic plans should examine how the plan will be implemented and evaluated to see if it is effective. All strategic planning processes vary. Yet, the above components are present in many strategic plans not just in education but across the public and private spheres. In a sense, these components, mission, goals, resources, stakeholders and SWOC analysis are integral pieces to establishing public value (Bryson, 2004). Yet, these components may need to be viewed in the light of a rapidly changing, and much more volatile environment that is increasingly facing public institutions (Malott, Hill & Banefield, 2013).

Bryson (2004) argues that planners must consider a multitude of radical and revolutionary strategies, not simple or minor fixes for their organization, if strategic planning is to be truly effective. This framework is an example of a radical new strategy to reframe organizations in volatile times. While neoliberalism will be examined in more detail in the next section, neoliberalism is basically a theory which holds that public institutions operate more efficiently when they are structured like private, market based institutions (Harvey, 2005). This push to make public institutions resemble the private sector almost always entails reductions in state support, performance funding for results as well as market based goals such as producing patentable products and an educated workforce (Giroux, 2011).

In their 2013 study, Ramachandran, Chong and Wong surveyed institutions in the Malaysian higher education network to determine their use of the ideas of knowledge mobilization. They found that while knowledge mobilization was important to planners, it was not utilized often. The purpose of their study was to identify gaps in the use and implementation of knowledge mobilization techniques and then provide new strategic directions for planners. My study draws off the methods of this study, specifically the notion of employing a gap analysis. Instead of a survey however, I have created an a priori framework to create a qualitative gap analysis. While an imperfect measure, understanding the gap between the a priori framework and the actual strategic plan, as well as the possibilities for achieving this new vision of the public good represented in the framework and present in the plan, can

begin to hint at an empirical measure and strategic directions for higher education institutions to shape the public good in these volatile times. Now, we turn to the actual substance of this new public good and neoliberalism (Allan, 2008).

The Public Good

Scholars can reconceive of the public good as a constellation (Adorno, 1966/2004) built with a number of ideas, and which can enhance the quality of life of citizens. More than just material comfort however, this constellation must provide citizens opportunities for democratic participation in their polity, as well as access to essentials such as education and healthcare. The constellation is nebulous, it grows with new ideas, knowledge and discoveries. Higher education institutions have a special role to play in how this constellation evolves because higher education institutions are centers of knowledge creation (Bowen, 1996; Lattuca & Stark, 2009). Knowledge created in higher education institutions augments the public good constellation, it allows people to think different thoughts and envision new possibilities.

The awesome potential for higher education institutions sketched above however faces many obstacles. Perhaps the greatest obstacle is the dominance of neoliberalism, which is a political and economic theory espoused by many policymakers in the United States and around the world (Malott, Hill & Banefield, 2013; Peet, 2009). Drawing its inspiration from 18th century liberals, neoliberals believe that an unencumbered free market and *lassiare faire* economic system leads to the maximum amount of social harmony (Harvey, 2005; Plant, 2010). Generally, neoliberals view all types of state intervention, and especially state supported institutions such as schools and government agencies, as disturbing the equilibrium of the market. Of course the great paradox of neoliberalism is that many policymakers have no qualms about resorting to state intervention in the form of protective measures and mandates (and in some cases even military use) to establish and protect markets (Chomsky, 1999; Klein, 2007).

Neoliberalism (ironically backed with state power), has helped policymakers in the US and many other countries eviscerate public institutions in their own countries as well as in the developing countries and restructure these state institutions to be more in line with the market. Many devoted neoliberal reformers argue that their methods are meant to make the public sector more efficient. Higher education has been subject to neoliberal reforms for the last four decades. These reforms have included drastically diminished state funding and the imposition of performance based funding mandates to name a few. The call is for efficiency, but many critics of the neoliberalism have pointed to efficiency as a façade for profit accumulation at the expense of the public sector and the middle class (Anwaruddin, 2014). As a tool of profit accumulation, neoliberalism and its evisceration of the public sector may not just aggrandize the already rich. Rather, this pathological drive toward profit accumulation may have more dire effects on the world at large because usual barriers, such as massive impoverishment, ecological destruction and social turmoil are no longer considered barriers, but either knowingly ignored or mediated with paltry remedies.

Radical leftist/Marxist philosopher Slajov Zizek identifies the main threats of pathological neoliberalism as threats to the shared commons of humanity. He describes three types of shared commons, the commons of culture, or humanities shared language, education, infrastructure and public institutions in general, the commons of external nature and the commons of internal nature which deals with the issues of genetic and technological manipulation of the body and society. The notion of a shared commons is antipathy to neoliberals because public space is to be enclosed and secured for private benefit and profit (Zizek, 2009). Neoliberalism, if left unchecked, may have the potential to annihilate this public space.

Zizek (2009) specifically identifies the threats to the commons as impending ecological disaster, increasing wealth disparities and inequality, increased questions of intellectual property rights and the threats associated with the biogenetic revolution (Zizek, 2009). He argues these four threats are eminent, yet he is by no means the only one to argue this (Anwaruddin, 2014; Fuentes-Nieva & Galasso, 2014; Giroux, 2011; Malott, Hill & Banefield, 2013; Pogge & Horton, 2008;

Singer, 2004). Of course, there is not a universal consensus. Many critics maintain the threat of environmental destruction and global warming are at best overblown and at worst downright false. Similarly, some also argue that rising levels of inequality are beneficial to the global economy and compatible with democracy. This paper argues that environmental destruction and rising levels of inequality are serious threats which must be contended with. These threats are also not limited to one country. Yet, to understand global inequality, certain factors must be considered. There are two ways to evaluate global wealth inequality. The first consideration is: are we looking strictly at wealth inequality between the world's richest and poorest residents, which is a situation where high levels of inequality can exist while poorer people still have more than enough, just not in proportion to the richer citizens (Singer, 2004). This is in contrast to the actual welfare of the world's poor. How hard is the life of people who are classified as poor? This paper looks at both, inequality and the state of the poor because both are rising. While the distance between the rich and the poor is growing, the lot of the poor and even middle class, even in so called advanced countries is becoming more difficult. Billions of children, including millions in the United States suffer from starvation and malnutrition.

Perhaps the most telling statistic is the fact that the richest 85 people in the world own as much wealth as the bottom three billion, or half of the world's population (Fuentes-Nieva & Galasso, 2014). This trend, whether we consider inequality as the distance between the rich and the poor, or the actual state of the poor and middle and lower classes, are both getting worse. Further, neoliberal policies such as tax breaks for the wealthy, business friendly policymakers and the gutting of public institutions (specifically public education) are the main culprits (Giroux, 2011).

As Peter Singer (2004) argued over a decade ago, the world population may need to stop imagining itself divided into artificial boundaries called nation states. Rather, it makes sense for the world population to begin to see itself as just that, a world population which faces a number of complex issues that can only be solved in a global framework, not by divisive nation states (Singer, 2004). Of course, it is not desirable or feasible for citizens to just forget their local communities. Instead, Marginson and Rhoades (2002) global-national-local or glo-na-cal heuristic is of use here. Instead of seeing local context, the national context and the global context as separate spheres, Marginson and Rhoades (2002) argue that all of these spheres are related. An apt metaphor is a circuit. Local happenings can inform national conversations (unfortunately, the events of Ferguson and Staten Island are examples of this), and these events usually feed into global conversations. The glo-na-cal is a continuous circuit, the events of which constantly inform each other. If the public good is understood as a circuit where all events are connected, then one does not have to give up their communal or national affections for some distant global citizenship. Rather, one's global citizenship is intimately connected to one's national and local affections. So, when Singer (2004) calls for citizens in countries (especially western countries) to take a more global view, Marginson and Rhoades (2002) heuristic may be a way to accomplish this global understanding without losing one's local and national identity. In fact, a glo-na-cal conception of the public good can simultaneously strengthen ones global, national and local identity.

Also, when referencing the public good, it is important to understand that there is no one single public good. Rather, different groups of citizens will have different visions of the public good (Calhoun, 1998; Mansbridge, 1998). A classic example here would be the opposed visions of the public good between businessmen and environmentalists. We need ways to recognize differences but cogently speak of the public good for a variety of different groups in any polity (Calhoun, 1998; Mansbridge, 1998). The framework created in this paper can act as such a method to facilitate dialogue aboutbetween different visions of the public good by employing a glo-na-cal heuristic when proposing strategic directions for future strategic planners to consider.

As the threats to the various shared commons progresses, higher education institutions find themselves in a precarious position. Formerly, higher education institutions, at least in the United States, were entrusted with a large share of the state's tax dollars in exchange for liberally educating state citizens as well as providing service to the state. This was the traditional social contract that public higher education institutions had with their state legislatures and taxpayers. This social

contract has now broken down (Lewis & Hearn, 2003). State funding for higher education institutions across the United States has been slashed dramatically due to neoliberalism. So, a new social contract between institution and state may be needed (Kallison & Cohen, 2009). The strategic directions posed in this paper can help inform a new vision of the social contract.

Higher education institutions, rooted in nation states, cannot obviously solve all these threats. Yet, while they find themselves in a precarious situation, there may be an opportunity here. Higher education institutions can create knowledge, engage in research, service and teaching to stop the enclosure of the various commons and in the widest sense, help to forge a new vision of what it means to be public in the 21st century. They can forge a new social contract not just with their state but with their community, their state, nation and the world. These four threats are by no means the only threats will impact the creation of a new vision of the public good. Nonetheless, these four threats do offer a framework for researchers to use to analyze different pieces of information. This paper will use these four threats as a starting point to examine the strategic plans of certain institutions because it is the strategic plan which outlines how an institution sees itself creating public value (Bryson, 2004). I have also added a fifth threat specific to public institutions, that of diminished state funding. From these five points, a framework was created to analyze the selected strategic plans. The purpose is to identify the gaps between the glo-na-cal vision of the public good elucidated in this paper with how the plans actually produce the public good. Again, the examination of this gap is not meant to point out a deficiency, but rather, to point to the way forward.

Methods

The first task is to determine exactly how the strategic plans of the selected higher education institutions portray the public good. This will be accomplished by using Bryson's (2004) essential elements of a strategic plan (mission, goals, resources, stakeholders, SWOC, implementation and evaluation) to identify what map the plan creates for the institution, what direction the institution is heading toward. These essential elements give a basic illustration of how the institution produces public value. Below is the framework that will be used to examine the essential components of the strategic plans.

Strategic Plan Components	**Description in strategic plan**	**Summary**
Mission		
Vision		
Goals		
Resources		
Stakeholders		
Strengths		
Weaknesses		
Opportunities		
Challenges		
Implementation		
Evaluation		

From the summary of the above chart, I created a composite analysis. The composite analysis is indicative of how the institutions see themselves creating public value or the public good. From the composite analysis, I then applied the following framework which draws on the ideas in Zizek (2009):

Threat	**Is threat referenced? If so how?**	**Possible Strategic Direction**
Ecological Threat		
Growing Inequality		
Social Turmoil		

Biogenetics		
Diminished State Funding		

The results of this analysis are the heart of the gap procedure. This gap can be an empirical measure of how the institutions in question are promoting the public good and how these institutions are meeting emerging threats to the public good in this volatile age. This gap, while by no means quantitative, can give scholars a strategic direction to pursue in crafting new plans and policies for universities.

Site Selection

The three universities selected were Colonial University (CU), Land Grant University (LGU) and Fighting Father University (FFU). (All names are pseudonymous. The reason for choosing these three universities was to give a representative sample of different institutions across a state). All universities are public. CU, located in a state on the east coast of the United States, is a considered a most selective university. LGU is a large, research university, located on state's western boundary. FFU is located in the northern part of the state. While this analysis is only for one state, an analysis of the strategic plans of these institutions, taken together, can offer a bigger picture of how certain public institutions are addressing the increasing challenges of neoliberalism. The hope is that other institutional planners can begin to perform gap analyses on their own strategic plans and look to the results of this study to guide their thinking.

Results

For each university's strategic plan, the composite analysis will first be presented. There is a disclaimer here. Strategic plans are constantly changing. They are updated, modified and in some cases scrapped. My analysis is a snapshot of a point in time. In addition, the plan is only words, people may or may not choose to follow it, and ideas not mentioned in the plan may be mentioned or carried out in other parts of the university (for instance, environmental concerns are a focus on the CU website, I just did not see them in the plan). Further, my analysis is my interpretation, and I may have missed specific institutional nuances, or I may have been wrong (Thank you to Pam Eddy for these ideas). Next the results of the framework and the possible strategic directions will be examined for each university's plan.

CU Composite Sketch

The mission of the CU centers on its over 300 year liberal arts heritage and providing a liberal education in conjunction with its graduate/professional programs. Teaching and research are core parts of the mission; they are given the same status (as opposed to just research). Service to the community, state and international sphere are also a part of the mission. The planners at CU desire that the college be recognized as an international leader in undergraduate education. Further, they want CU to be recognized as one the best liberal arts schools in the world. The planners emphasize that CU must foster our global presence to truly become one of the best liberal arts universities. Further, as part of the vision, the planners sought to build an academic community that creates new linkages between faculty and students, as blends learning and living. Below is a list of all the goals that were elucidated in the plan. In some cases, I have copied goals verbatim, in others, I have paraphrased. This was done for all plans.

1. Broaden international reach (mentioned twice).
2. Improve diversity.
3. Encourage interdisciplinary (mentioned twice).
4. Expand need and merit aid.
5. Provide access to all students.
6. Affordability for low and middle income students.
7. Use technology appropriately.
8. Promote engaged learning.

9. Bring faculty and students staff together.
10. Develop critical thinking.
11. Rebuild financial foundation.
12. Recognize all aspects of faculty work.
13. Integrate non-tenured faculty into university channels.
14. Develop policies that respect dual role of faculty as researchers and teachers.
15. Promote lifelong learning.
16. Encourage efficiency.
17. Promote CU through a public relations campaign.
18. Promote a common CU identity.

The resources indicated in the plan were: state support (which is dwindling), growing philanthropy and a new tuition model. The stakeholder are: faculty, students, alumni, parents, state council of higher education in the state, the state's General Assembly, the citizens of the state, in state students, out of state students, the nation and the world.

The strengths of CU indicated by the planners were: the new business model to secure a financial future, the CU tuition promise, engaged learning which is mentioned three times and consists of small classes, faculty-student interaction, intense research and service which leads to discovery. Other strengths identified were student focused education, students learning to ask questions, students learning empathy, curiosity, and ultimately students wanting to make difference in the world. Low student/faculty ratio and the storied heritage/reputation were also cited as strengths. The one weaknesses elucidated was the low faculty and staff salaries. The planners identified four opportunities for CU to build a new and enduring financial foundation on: available public support, growing philanthropy, productivity (efficiency) and performance. The major challenges identified by the planners were the financial challenges facing the university, specifically dwindling state support. A Planning Steering Committee (PSC) was created to help implement the strategic plan from 2015-2019 at CU. The PSC identifies challenges and sets numerical and monetary targets to be reached. So, these targets can serve as an evaluation of the effectiveness of the plan.

CU Analysis

The ecological threat is not mentioned in the CU strategic plan. This may indicate a gap between the strategic plan's conception of the public good and the actual conditions where a public good will be forged in the coming years. There are mentions of increasing CU's global reach and influence however which could be a way to handle the environmental threat. In addition, one of the core tenets of the CU mission is service to the community, the state and the world. Also, one of the goals is to recognize all aspects of faculty. The plan's attention to global reach, service and recognition of different faculty research pursuits could be a foundation for later faculty, administrators, staff and students to build on in regards to the ecological pressures facing the world today. This foundation could include a promotion of faculty teaching and research of various aspects of the ecological pressures and threats we face as a civilization. Of course, the university may deal with political pressure from groups who do not see the ecological threats as threats. Nonetheless, the goals and the vision elaborated on in the strategic plan may be a way to promote a new ecological consciousness at the university. The gap between the impending pressures which will impact the public good and the how the strategic planners perceive CU contributing to the public good is not a deficiency however. Rather, the gap is a space for action. But this cannot just be action, but action informed by theory or praxis (Freire, 2000). This notion of praxis used to fill the gap will be undergird the following examinations of the three strategic plans.

There is no direct mention of global inequality or the condition of the poor, either at home or globally. However, there is mention of assisting low and middle income students who are finding it harder to pay for tuition. There is also much space dedicated to the new tuition policies, mainly keeping tuition reasonable. Affordability is one of the major goals of the plan. Of course, there is no mention of why there are increasing numbers of low and middle income students. So, there is a gap between the plan and reality, but the gap can be narrowed by certain ideas present in the strategic

plan. For one, the broad (and admittedly vague) goal of inspiring critical thinking can be and should be stretched to include thinking about such volatile topics as rising global inequality. When millions cannot read, when millions are starving or living in near poverty, even in the so called rich countries, any institution that claims a desire to have a global reach as CU does must grapple with these serious issues that impact the fostering of a public good. Students must be taught to critically think about these issues and more importantly, change them. Again, the strategic plan does reference that CU students and faculty desire to change the world, and that they usually do. Here, a glo-na-cal perspective could be invoked by faculty, administrators, staff and students. What effect can students in the locality of CU have on global inequality? Their position in in their locality must be situated in the much larger frames of the nation and the world, without ever losing sight of the local. Research in the social sciences, natural sciences and business, outreach to entities such as amnesty international and volunteering may be useful tactics and could all qualify as critical thinking, expanding global outreach and promoting engaged learning as well as service to the community and the world.

While there is no direct mention of the growing social turmoil in the United States or globally, one of the goals of the plan is to continue to increase diversity which can be a start. This is admittedly a tenuous connection, but increasing diversity, especially increasing the number of minorities and lower class students and faculty involved in the institution, may be one way to reduce social turmoil. Diversity in many respects is a buzzword, or a word which many institutions evoke but do not truly participate in. If CU is serious about fostering diversity, then this could be an avenue to deal with the growing social turmoil that is present not only in the United States but across the globe. How can the college empower disenfranchised and underrepresented minorities? This does not only refer to race but to all types of under representation, from race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation and class to any other conceivable situation where a certain group is disenfranchised or does not enjoy the same privileges as the "dominant" groups. The goals of access and affordability are crucial here. One of the surest ways of empowerment is through education. Yet, this must be an education which again is critical and which teaches students to grapple with the volatile issues that are present the world around them. The planners have also dedicated themselves to securing more need based aid. Need based aid, as opposed to merit based aid, helps the underrepresented students who have a more difficult time attending and staying enrolled in college (Gross, Hossler, Ziskin, & Berry, 2015).

There is direct mention of technology and integrating technology meaningfully. The plan reads: "appropriately integrate technology into our model of engaged learning, and to keep innovating to stay relevant and efficient." Technology is crucial to any understanding of the public good. Yet, technology is now entwined with domination (Kellner, 1992; Marcuse, 1992). The CU strategic plan uses the word appropriately. What does it mean to appropriately apply technology as the plan intends? In light of the biotechnological threat that Zizek (2009) and others have elucidated, appropriately applying technology may entail an ethical dimension. For instance, many times, universities view technology primarily as a means to profit (Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004). The most lucrative patents are usually sought, patents for commercially valuable but socially suspect uses, such as cosmetics (Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004; Washburn, 2005). Singer (2004) tells of how Western pharmaceutical companies tried to charge exorbitant prices for the HIV/AIDS treatment which would have priced out virtually all poor Africans, while HIV/AIDS had been effectively contained in the West. This is one example of an inappropriate use of technology.

Technology and its uses are determined by the market, not by human need and suffering. The strategic planners have expressed the vision that they want CU to be known as "The Liberal Arts University" in the world. One way to accomplish this could be to recast the use of technology from something distributed by the market to who can pay, to something distributed by human need and suffering. Here, the planners' goal of promoting interdisciplinary studies could be exploited. The creation and promotion of new technology may need to proceed hand in hand with more advanced understandings which can come from the humanities and the social sciences in order to ensure that technology remains ethical and in the service of humanity, not the market. The tenets of engaged learning which are promoted by the planners could also be of use here. Engaged learning calls for close faculty student interaction and intense research and service which leads to discovery. Engaged

learning could be used in the service of this interdisciplinary quest to humanize science and truly recast the role of liberal arts universities.

The planners bluntly state that one of the major goals of the plan is to "rebuild our financial foundation, taking into account the decline in state support." They cite this again by referencing CU's financial rankings "we ranked 32d in quality among the leading national universities but 114th in financial resources to sustain the mission." One of the key areas affected by diminished state funding is flagging faculty salaries. Faculty salaries in FY13 were at the 14th percentile of CU's peer institutions. Without the steps taken in the Promise, they were projected to be in the 9th percentile by the 2015/16 academic year. The planners go on to note that "over the last generation, taxpayer support for [CU] has declined from 43% of our operating budget to 13% this fiscal year. The remedy proposed by the planners is forward thinking and necessary. The planners take a four pronged approach centered on capitalizing on philanthropy, being more efficient with existing resources, capitalizing on existing public support and increasing the universities performance in order to demonstrate to stakeholders that money is spent efficiently. The performance piece however is fraught with some difficulties, particularly the fact that singular adherence to performance metrics can blind the institution and its stakeholder to more complex metrics of progress, such as civic action and personal growth. Nonetheless, CU will have to meet performance metrics and go well beyond them to satisfy taxpayers while simultaneously crafting a new measure of success by which to be judged.

While the planner's recognize the severely diminished state funding, they do not recognize one of the main causes of it. It is true that other state priorities need more money. The irony is that some of the benefits of a more highly educated populace is better overall health and lower incarceration rates (McMahon, 2009). So putting money into K-12 and higher education would most likely reduce the need for prisons and healthcare costs. Perhaps the biggest omission of the planners is that the drastically reduced state funding is deliberate. Neoliberal advocates and policymakers have starved higher education (and K-12 education) of funds as a way of disciplining these public entities. By starving public institutions, neoliberal policymakers hope to make public entities function more in line with the market. The real reason however may be that the public sector, and especially public education, represents an opportunity for businesses to make a profit. So, cut public funding and allow businesses to step in a "save" the failing public entities (Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004; Klein, 2007). While it may draw the political ire of some, strategic planners at public institutions may have to recognize that public institutions, especially public institutions of higher education which have traditionally been labeled as liberal breeding grounds, are targets for many legislators (Lambert, 2014; Newfield, 2008). Building off of the four point foundation, of philanthropy, productivity (efficiency), performance and public support, the college can create a new vision of what it means to be a public institution. This is an unprecedented opportunity.

LGU Composite Sketch

The mission of LGU can be summarized as: address science, technological, economic and social issues, as well as be a military college. In addition, the land grant history of the university implies service to community, state and nation. Another component of the mission of LGU is interdisciplinary research, service between arts, humanities, business, social sciences as well as encouraging research in industry, policy, health, sustainability and security. The vision of LGU is for the university to become a national and international model for interdisciplinary studies and research and to develop an intellectual environment and encourage the contribution of students in a wide variety of areas. The goals of the strategic plan are as follows:

1. Create dynamic pedagogical methods (mentioned four times).
2. Develop team driven approaches within and beyond university.
3. Be responsive to new discoveries.
4. Create global networks.
5. Promote local, regional, national security, resilience, health and sustainability.
6. Increase undergraduate populations.
7. Increase graduate enrollment, completion and post docs, especially STEM-H and business.

8. Develop learning communities.
9. Increase internationally recognized programs.
10. Develop core competencies in computational thinking, information literacy.
11. Research geared toward practical application (translational).
12. Build upon strengths in basic research.
13. Pursue creation of new units with public, nonprofit and for profit entities that can diversify sources of revenue, mentioned four times.
14. Review and revise current business practices to optimize efficiency and flexibility.
15. Provide support for collaboration between academic units.
16. Provide time and freedom to create and apply new knowledge.
17. Recruit, support and reward outstanding faculty with strong disciplinary expertise and innovation.
18. Allow intra and interdisciplinary teams to work without unnecessary barriers.
19. Maintain growth expenditures toward target of $680 million.
20. Build on research capacity in national capital region for security and resiliency.
21. Create new "faculties" and new grad programs in informational sciences.
22. Develop research programs in energy and critical technologies with India partnerships.
23. Students will be able to interpret information.
24. Students will be able to gain a global perspective and see diverse perspectives.
25. Expand ability to attract high quality graduate students.
26. Continual improvement of graduate stipends.
27. All majors are responsible for diversity and globalism.
28. Students must learn aspects of other disciplines.
29. Students must have opportunities to interact meaningfully with technology.
30. Involve undergraduates in meaningful, practical research.
31. Continue to use technologies to enhance pedagogy.
32. Increase international experience and utilize classroom space to enhance distance learning.
33. Develop alternate pathways for general education students.
34. Integrate computational science/informatics and digital fluency into other disciplines.
35. Enhance academic advising.
36. Enhance opportunities for nontraditional students and veterans.
37. Enhance health and well-being, cultural awareness, and lifelong learning.
38. Ensure that LGU graduates are poised to succeed in the labor market so they can contribute back to the university as alumni.
39. Help faculty maintain work life balance.
40. Improve campus sustainability.
41. Support academic initiative of the Inter-institutional Academic Collaborative for the ACC.
42. Establish university think-tank.

The resources identified by the planners were state support, increased philanthropy as well as new streams of revenue resulting from institutional partnerships with public, private and for-profit entities. The stakeholders identified in the LGU strategic plan were students (including nontraditional and veteran students), faculty (with emphasis on STEM-H faculty and faculty in new areas such as informatics), philanthropic sources, alumni (including future alumni with potential and willingness to donate), the global community, and other public, private and for-profit organizations, the university president and the implantation panel.

The strengths outlined by the strategic planners are LGU's abilities to build on local-global connections, their focus on security research as well as the notion of resilience. Resilience, as defined by the planners is the key element in understanding stability in communities of all sizes from atoms, to ecosystems to populations. Another strength is LGU's research in the area of brain, cognitive and behavioral sciences. Specifically in the field of medicine, a strength the planners cited is the success of the Pseudonym school of health and medicine. Other areas of strength were in food science, water,

ecosystems and communications research. The planners cited the disciplinary foundation of all disciplines as a major strength. The planners also cite that continued commitment of the university to access and affordability through the methods of online education. Finally, the planners cite the continued effort of the university to provide professional development so that faculty can use technology to enhance pedagogy as another strength.

The weaknesses are not necessarily weaknesses, but they do illustrate issues that LGU planners deem important or in need of review for the university. For one, the planners urged that the university must examine the efficiency of shared governance and see if other models are relevant and useful while maintaining the values of shared governance. They also call for the university to reexamine effectiveness of general education program. The planners call for the university to comprehensively evaluate and modify the current curriculum for liberal education. The planners also call for the university "to embrace alternate pathways to a general education and to incorporate computational thinking and informatics/digital fluency as basic skills for all students, thereby enabling students to be engaged citizens and life-long learners." In addition, the planners call for a review of the administrative leadership structure of the institution, as well as its resource allocation.

Opportunities are areas which the institutional planners want the institution to capitalize on. Some opportunities the planners cited are to capitalize on existing state funding, philanthropy and institute new business practices to sustain revenue streams. The planners also want the university to spearhead the creation of new units and collaborations with public, private and for-profit institutions to channel resources to the university. Perhaps the greatest opportunity that the planners call for is to build on the "One health" paradigm. The one-health paradigm is a holistic view of human, animal and environmental health. Opportunities are also due to the changing technological landscape. LGU planners plan to "enhance classroom and online education by expanding the range of essential skills that students must acquire in order to excel in complex and rapidly changing digital and networked environments." Perhaps the greatest opportunity in the present and one that LGU planners increasingly mention in some fashion is that of creating strategic global connections with a variety of entities. Along with this, the planners also want to capitalize on and foster radical and innovative research opportunities for students as well as to continue to provide increased e-learning opportunities to take advantage of technology and increase access.

Some challenges that the planners identify due to globalization are "security issues, resource scarcities, political instability and social turmoil." Along with these challenges, the planners mentioned on three separate occasions that graduates will need new technological and analytical skills in global economy. In addition, the planners argue that international engagement is a necessity for higher education especially as the world experiences major economic, demographic and technical shifts. In this atmosphere, institutions will be "challenged to continue to meet demands for increased productivity and efficiency without sacrificing quality." To implement the strategic plan, the planners have created an implementation panel to oversee the process. The planners have also called for the creation of new metrics to ensure accountability. Finally, in 2015 which is halfway through the plan, the president and the implementation panel will review the progress of the plan and how its goals are being implemented and achieved.

Data Analysis

The ecological threat is referenced on multiple occasions. The planners do recognize that the ecosystems of this planet, and subsequently our fate as human beings in those ecosystems and the overall environment is under duress. However, the LGU planners are silent on one of the main causes environmental degradation has been global capitalism and rampant consumerism. (But they do however mention demographic shifts which is another likely cause). So the gap between the framework and the plan is smaller in comparison to the CU planners who do not even mention anything related to the environment. Yet, there still may be some room for action because the planners do not address some of the main causes of the ecological threat. The planners placed high emphasis on making student research innovative and allowing students to participate in the process of research and knowledge creation. If this knowledge creation via research is not hampered or confined by

practicality or profitability, it can be the vehicle for creating a dynamic and fluid vision of the public good rooted in in a glo-na-cal context, a public good which connects various groups of diverse social actors and gives them me tools to pursue solutions to pressing problems and to ask new questions regarding the environment. The planners pioneer a bold direction to approach the ecological threat; the notion of "one health." This strategy calls for recognizing health concerns as holistic instead of fragmented into spheres of animal, human and environment. So, instead of seeing the ecological threat as qualitatively different from the global health concerns, the one health paradigm integrates these concerns. Essentially, all spheres must be seen in conjunction with each other. This approach allows hitherto connections between man, animal and environment that may have gone unnoticed to inform research The call for this new paradigm in healthcare can be further augmented by the repeated calls in the plan for the creation of global partnerships as well as the commitment to the various health programs and disciplines.

There were some reasons for concern however. The planner's repeated calls for global partner ships with for-profit entities could impact the call for the one health paradigm and overall ecological viability. The mission of for profit entities are vastly different and in some sense opposed to the mission of LGU, especially in light of its land grant status. While the mission of for-profit entities may entail service and the promotion of health and wellbeing, their ultimate mission is to profit. When partnerships with for-profits are created, there must always be an examination of how their missions to make profit may come in conflict with the mission, goals and vision of LGU especially in regards to the proposed "one health" paradigm.

There is no direct reference to the threat of growing inequality. While there was no direct mention, the planners did call for a continued commitment to increasing access and affordability through on-line education. While this is undoubtedly a necessity, the planners should be cautious. Two decades ago, with the emergence of the first online capabilities, many in higher education predicted the end of brick and mortar buildings, while many administrators saw online education as potentially lucrative (Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004). The current fad is that of MOOCs, and many for-profit entities are jumping on that bandwagon. Of course, there are those who see the awesome pedagogical possibilities of online education and MOOCs and not just their potential cash value. Nevertheless Rhoades et al. (2015) argue that MOOCs, despite potential to democratize education, are really just methods for neoliberals to de-skill professors and students

The planners do recognize some possible symptoms of growing inequality when they state that LGU "graduates will have to face uncertainties that range from security issues and resource scarcities to political instability and social turmoil." Yet, like growing inequality, and the ecological threat, the driving causes of the growing social turmoil are not mentioned. So, the gap is partially opened. There is recognition of growing social and political turmoil, but with no recognition of the causes. This lack of recognition of the causes of social turmoil may be more troubling in light of the fact that the strategic planners showed concern regarding the liberal arts and general education curriculum. The planners sought to integrate information literacy, informatics and data analysis into the general education program which in itself is not a bad thing. However, the concern over the liberal arts curriculum cannot turn into devaluation or a lessening of liberal arts offerings. The planners expressed a desire for research to be practical and have practical capability. One familiar critique of the liberal arts and general education classes is that they are not practical. Yet, this seeming lack of practicality cannot be seen as a deficiency. Rather, it must be seen as a benefit. The purpose of the liberal arts is to see *past* practicality, is to see the wider picture and how events connect to each and the past. One of the main purposes of the liberal arts is to be tools to convey the human condition in all its beauty, truth and suffering. This wider and deeper understanding that goes past the day to day is crucial to understanding the increasing social and political turmoil around the globe. History, philosophy, ethics and a host of other disciplines that are not deemed practical or profitable will be absolutely necessary for LGU to elaborate and contribute to the public good. The planners placed high emphasis on making student research innovative and allowing students to participate in the process of research and knowledge creation. If this knowledge creation via research is not hampered or confined by practicality or profitability, it can be the vehicle for creating a dynamic and fluid vision of the

public good rooted in a glo-na-cal context, a public good which connects various groups of diverse social actors and gives them tools to pursue solutions to pressing problems and to ask new questions.

There were multiple references to the challenges and opportunities that technology offers to higher education. One telling reference on the part of the planners was their reference to the appropriate use technology regarding pedagogy. So, the planners do recognize that technology can pose a challenge and it can be used inappropriately, although they do not specify how. Nonetheless, the planners do recognize that there can be negative impacts of technology, so the gap between the notion of a vibrant public good posited by the framework in this paper and what the planners are arguing for is partially closed, but there is room for movement. The movement here is toward elucidating the dangers of technology. As referenced above, the liberal arts and the general curriculum can be invaluable here.

Yet, the LGU planners also showed concern over the efficiency of shared governance. The planners should be wary not to streamline or lessen the power of shared governance. While shared governance can be time consuming and messy, and while it can be fraught with obstacles, it is democratic and allows different faculty (and hopefully) staff voices to be heard (Ramalay, 2006). If shared governance, along with the liberal arts and general curriculum are streamlined for efficiency, power vehicles of democratic and humanistic expression which can inform more vibrant visions of the public can be silenced and diminished. Like CU, LGU planners are obviously astute to the diminished state funds. Also like CU planners, the LGU planners sought philanthropy and new sources of revenue through institutional and public, private and for-profit partnerships. So, the gap is small on this issue, which is not surprising considering the dramatic decreases. Obviously, new sources of funding are needed to replace the rapidly diminishing state funds. Philanthropy and public-private partnerships are common methods to replace this funding. And while these two methods will be crucial, there are some major drawbacks which must be considered by LGU planners. There is the notion of advocacy philanthropy (Hall & Thomas, 2012). Organizations such as the Lumina Foundation and the Bill and Melinda Gates foundation have a blatant neoliberal agenda. Their philanthropy comes with strings, namely, institutions that accept funding must restructure their policies and practices in ways favorable to the funders, such as instituting more monetary performance indicators (Hall & Thomas, 2012). If institutions rely more on philanthropy which most likely will become necessary, they must take care that the "strings" do not conflict with the public mission of the university. The dangers of public and for-profit mergers and linkages were outlined above.

FFU Composite Sketch

The mission of FFUis the creation of a "more just, free and prosperous world." This is done through social criticism emanating from a diverse student body and varied research interests. As for their vision, FFUseeks to be not "the best university in the world, but the best university *for* the world." The planners do not seek rankings, but knowledge that is necessary and useful for social progress. The goals are listed as follows:

1. Learning innovation, use new methods, reward pedagogical innovation.
2. Create useful, targeted and interdisciplinary research for all sectors of society.
3. Expand research across all disciplines.
4. Act as an economic and cultural catalyst.
5. Prepare students for living and working in global world.
6. Deliver on investment, increase graduates.
7. Recruit and retain talented and diverse faculty.
8. Create diverse academic community.
9. Seek new sources of funding through philanthropy, commercialization, alumni and new tuition model.
10. Create accessible pathways for all students.
11. Contribute to the community.
12. Become a model well-being university where all faculty, staff and graduate assistants thrive.

The resources that that the planners plan to draw on are: state aid, philanthropy, commercialization and patents, alumni donations and partnerships with industry. The stakeholders the planners identified were FFU graduates (which become engaged citizens and scholars), as well as students, community, faculty, staff, the world, alumni, governments and industry.

The strengths identified by the planners were that FFU is innovative, diverse, entrepreneurial (the university puts ideas in action) and accessible (the university is open to new ideas and methods of doing things). In addition, the planners also identified as strengths the fact that at FFU, students come first; there is an honoring of freedom of thought and expression, that George FFU is a careful steward of public money, and that the university always acts with integrity by being transparent with stakeholders and the public. Another strength the planners identified was George FFU Universities' ongoing support for small business and new entrepreneurial endeavors in the capital region, especially through the FFU Economic Center which assists small businesses in the area. The one weakness that the planners identified was that there was a lack of diversity in FFU's faculty and staff.

The planners identified a number of opportunities for FFU to capitalize one. The first was to support and expand online education as the number of students across the country taking online classes has increased dramatically (this includes synchronous, asynchronous and hybrid classes). The planners also stated that FFU was in the ideal position for economic innovation in the capital region. Further, the planners argued that FFU must build on its existing relationship with the community by becoming an economic and cultural attraction. Specifically, FFU must take advantage of the economy in the southern part of the state and be able to supply social and intellectual capital. Finally, the planners call for FFU to build on the current "pseudonyms consortium' and create a network of universities to provide global learning opportunities for students and global outreach for faculty.

The planners also identified a number of challenges facing FFU. Perhaps the biggest challenge is the drastic decreases in federal and state funding coupled with restraints on tuition increases and concerns over affordability. Further, the burden of paying for higher education which used to be largely assumed by the state is now largely assumed by students and families. Colleges must also demonstrate the benefit they provide to taxpayers. Moreover, college is no longer an option; it is now fast becoming a necessity in the technology driven globalized world. There are also pedagogical challenges. For one, "learners are demanding new physical spaces where they can interact with" faculty, and learn socially. The planners further argued that the "flipped classroom" changes the role of learner and instructor and changes expectations about learning spaces. Along with this, there is an "increased pressure to educate more diverse students, deliver better outcomes and reduce costs" of college going. Another challenge is the fact that the vast majority of college students in the United States are nontraditional in some sense so they have different needs. Many are community college students; others attend two and four year universities on a part time basis, and usually have work or familial obligations which hinder them from completing their studies. The planners also point to the fact that the US has lagged in college participation rates. All of these challenges must be grappled with if FFU is to reach its vision.

FFU laid out an implementation plan. First, each individual school works on their own strategic plan. Individual schools provide their own response to general framework provided by the university. The planners then stated that to achieve the goals and vision of the plan, the university must strengthen resources, specifically technological and financial resources, social capital and brand value. This will be detailed in another strategic plan. The planners also obtain feedback from local governments and businesses to help them implement the visions and goals. A technology plan will also be created to support the strategic goals. Finally, the planners argued that the university must create new budgeting systems. Finally, the planners identify metrics to evaluate if the plan is being correctly implemented. The FFU planners provided the most thorough evaluation metrics out of the three plans. To evaluate diversity and accessibility, the number of programs with alternative pathways will increase as will students coming in from them. To measure return on investment, more than 80% of FFU graduates will be employed six months after they graduate. Increase graduates in high demand

fields. The planners also have said that over 100 enterprises will be created and supported. As for the new funding sources, the planners call for revenues from intellectual property and executive education programs and the number of alumni donors will increase.

In order to create a more diverse academic community, the planners believe that more students should study abroad. The planners also want to double the number of students in cultural, athletic and learning activities. To remedy the lack of diversity regarding faculty and staff, the planners call for more diversity of faculty and staff will increase by 50 percent in underrepresented groups. Another metric to measure faculty pay is the university will reach/exceed the median for its peer group regarding faculty salaries. As for engagement with community, the planners call for the number of community partnerships to increase. Finally, for community engagement, the planners call for career, social, financial, physical, and community measures of well-being to be developed.

Pursuing meaningful research was another goal set by the planners. In order to measure this, the planners state that faculty receiving national recognition will increase, the college will aim to reach the classification of "Very High Research" classification, increase sponsored research funding and increase in citations and policy transfer from research.

Data Analysis

The planners never state that there is an ecological threat. However, one of the goals was community engagement and the planners see research on environmental issues as a major component of community engagement. The planners see environmental issues as a major component of building a better community. In order to meet the increasing environmental threat, faculty and staff can link the environmental issues to the mission of FFU. Examining and rectifying environmental threats (and admitting there is one) may be one necessary method to create a freer and more just society. The planners put a high emphasis on creating research of value. In addition, the vision of the planners and the basis of the whole plan is to be the best university for the world. Again, one method to be the best university for the world is to begin to identify, and create research to rectify, looming environmental threats.

There is no direct mention of growing inequality. There are indirect references to the growth of nontraditional students (but never the reason for this). One major reason for the growth of community college students and nontraditional students is due to the widening income gap. The planners also recognize that due to decrease federal and state funding, the burden of payment for a university education is falling on students and families. Again, as wages stay stagnant or fall, individuals and families have a harder time paying for climbing tuition. This situation can be tied back to the mission- to create a freer, more prosperous and just world. How can prosperity, individual liberty and justice be achieved as long as the vast majority of the world's population, including not only those in developing countries but the growing number of impoverished people in so called developed countries balloons? Furthermore, this drastic increase in poverty and near poverty levels is not due solely (or even largely) to individual initiative or personal motivation when people who work over forty hours are still in poverty. Under the goal of innovative teaching, the planners mention service learning. Service learning can be another method by which students actually engage with the growing disposed populations and other social justice issues. Service learning can be an excellent method to take the knowledge out of the ivory tower and make it useful and make it go toward creating a more vibrant public good.

If the FFU planners truly want to create a freer and more just world, if they want to enhance the life of the community, the nation and the world in a variety of ways, then they must tackle the issue of growing inequality. Fortunately, the goals, mission and vision point in that direction and can be exploited for these purposes. However, the economic goals of the planners may conflict with this. This is not to say that economic goals, such as fostering and supporting small business are incompatible with fostering the public good. In fact, economic innovation and prosperity are central to the public good. The conflict arises when economic opportunity and prosperity only enrich the already wealthy. The planners seek to increase the commercialization of research and patentable products

derived from university research as well as give businesses and industry a larger role in implementing the plan. The creating of wealth, for the university or society in general must always be tempered with a sense of justice and the public good. The purpose of wealth should never be private gain but public good. Again, this aligns with the mission of creating a freer and more just world.

There is no mention of social turmoil. However, there is an entire goal dedicated to enhancing community relations. The planners seek to do this in a number of ways, by creating a more vibrant cultural life and by enhancing art, theater and athletics. While entertainment cannot be panacea for social issues, creating a truly vibrant culture, which allows citizens a vehicle of expression, can be a beneficial thing and a possible check on growing social turmoil. Of course, even the most vibrant culture cannot be a substitute for a truly engaged politics. Another method to stem social turmoil is embedded in the planners' goal of enabling all graduates to pursue meaningful lives and successful careers. Meaningful lives and successful careers, with a vibrant culture and community life, may be a very effective antidote to social turmoil.

The planners do recognize that technology does pose challenges, especially to the transmission of knowledge, but planners generally view technology as a positive occurrence which can enhance teaching and learning, as well as accessibility (though online learning). The planners start, but do not develop a very important issue related to the public good and their overall mission of university, that of technology and knowledge transmission. While technology has made information accessible, this comes with a price. If technology is usurped by corporations and moneyed interests, such as internet broadband, airwaves and media outlets, the information that the public receives may be partisan, biased or manipulative. Information can be restricted and tailored to suit certain parties. Or, entities with power and money can influence the transmission of knowledge. In this case, knowledge represents power and not truth, curiosity or creation. One of the implementation strategies is to create a separate technology plan. Again, in line with the ideas of freedom and justice from this mission, this technology plan and future ones must recognize the ethical issues associated with technology.

As with the other two plans, the FFU planners recognize the diminished levels of state funding. A large part of the strategic plan is dedicated to meeting this challenge. Methods to meet this challenge include increased philanthropy, partnerships with industry, alumni donations and increase commercialization/patents. As mentioned earlier, when a public, not-for profit entity such as a university engages in for-profit endeavors to gain revenue, this can conflict with its public mission. The FFU planners specifically mentioned the commercialization of research. As Slaughter and Rhoades (2004) and Washburn (2005) point out, patenting and commercialization can actually conflict with the aims of science, which are curiosity and the sharing of information. The drive to profit may force some companies to suppress negative data, patents and copyrights can inhibit access to knowledge and information (Slaughter & Rhaodes, 2004; Washburn, 2005). Further, if a discovery is made in a public university, subsidized with direct state aid and federal loans, Slaughter and Rhoades (2004) ask if it is ethically correct to be able to patent that discovery or rather if that knowledge belongs to the public because it was financed with public dollars. Part of the mission is to advance society through research and one of the goals to accomplish this is to forge better ties with the community. However, commercialization and patents of research can hinder the flow and access of information and research. Knowledge, research and information should be a public good which enhances (Stiglitiz, 1999; Sy, 1999). So, the planners may need to revisit their commitment to commercialization or at least recognize some of the other inherent conflicts between it and fostering the public good, which is their primary good.

Another issue associated with the commercialization of products and the reliance on for-profit partnerships is that the market becomes the tool of distribution of resources. Again this is an example of how information, research and its products should be public goods accessible by all, not private goods determined by the market (Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004). This is an unnecessary restriction of the public good, especially in a so called civilized world. Universities may need to heed this situation.

Concluding Thoughts

Rorty (2008) argued that the future is not a predication; rather, it is a project that must be collectively built. While he did not specifically reference higher education institutions, his remark may be the most appropriate advice for higher education institutions. Higher education institutions have a unique role in building the project that is the future (Pusser, 2006; Marginson, 2010). The role of higher education institutions may be that of truth creators. Truth creation is fundamental to any societal movement because truth must be the guide. Further, truth cannot be influenced by power, money or ideology. Truth must reflect the conditions of the world and society as they are experienced by the vast majority of citizens. Higher education institutions, as knowledge creators, have the ability to create truth. Yet the truth that is created is not static, the truth is never a finished product. Truth is not any one item, idea or framework, rather, truth is the movement between ideas, people and framework.

This study illustrated "gaps" between a researcher created framework which represented some of the pressing issues that global society is contending with, and the capabilities and willingness of institutions of public higher education to meet these challenges. The gap in the CU plan is quite large. There is no mention of the growing ecological threat, growing inequality or social turmoil. There is some mention of integrating technology, but not of the threat that technology poses. As to be expected, there is the most recognition of the issue of diminished state funding. Despite the lack of acknowledgement of the majority of threats, the planners do offer some possible directions for scholars, administrators and researchers to follow in order to enrich the constellation that is the public good, especially the desire to draw off the liberal arts strength and heritage of the university. The planners at LGU perhaps come the closest to realizing some of the major challenges that lie ahead in regards to creating and enhancing this constellation of the public good. For one, the planners directly mentioned the ecological threat and the increasing social turmoil. While they did not examine the causes of these threats, they built in methods in their plan to remedy them, especially the environmental threat. The LGU planners also noted that technology must be used appropriately but did not elaborate on its inappropriate uses. They also pointed to the diminished state funds. While the LGU planners came the closest to closing this gap, some of their methods for doing this could raise new issues. For instance, relying of business and industry partnerships could conflict with the universities public mission. Likewise, the FFU planners also narrow the gap, but not as much as LGU, but moreso than CU. The FFU planners are at least cognizant of the necessity of the environmental research and creating pathways for disadvantaged students, but the FFU planners do not specifically acknowledge all of the threats facing public institutions and impacting the public good. In addition, the planners rely on some methods to create revenue streams which could imperil the public mission of the university, in particular, the goals of commercialization of university research.

Thus, we can say that in all three universities a gap exists but there is no quantitative measurement of this gap, only a quasi, vague understanding. The gaps are not deficiencies; they are opportunities for the institutions to enrich the public good for their communities, their regions, the state and the world. The frameworks created in this study, the capabilities and willingness of the universities and the gap between are *all* components of truth creation. The gaps I have illustrated with this study are meant to point not only future strategic planners, but faculty research and university activity in possible strategic directions to enrich glo-na-cal connections and the glo-na-cal conception of the public good. It is my hope that these strategic directions, while specific to the universities in question, can also be used as a guide for other universities. Because, as Zizek emphatically points out, there is no savior, there is no messiah who can deliver humanity. There are only people and people must act. I would further add that the truth is nothing more than human centered movement toward something deemed collectively better, toward a vision of the public good which will empower and not further impoverish the vast majority of the world's population. This vision of the public good is fluid and active, circulating though communities, regions, states and the world. Individuals working together will circulate ideas, research and activity through glo-na-cal networks. This paper has tried to establish a crude but useable map and direction for this movement for the universities in question. There is no stopping point however; there is never a point of satiety when creating truth. There will

always be new questions to ask, new problems to solve. Truth making entails never being satisfied and constantly moving forward, and strategic planning and should be an integral facet of truth creation for universities.

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