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DETERMINING FACULTY CLIMATE AND RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FACULTY AND ADMINISTRATION

ABSTRACT: Currently, 800,000 faculty work off the tenure track with poor working conditions that have remained unaddressed for over 20 years (Kezar & Sam, 2014). Even though some leaders and policymakers recognize that poor working conditions affect performance, there have been few intentional changes on individual campuses to foster positive working conditions for contingent faculty (Kezar & Sam, 2014). The purpose of this study is to determine the current faculty climate and the relationship between faculty and administration? Moreover, what encompasses a healthy collegial academic environment? A qualitative case study method was employed to interview five faculty within one college within a university in the Northwest region of the United States. Results of this study are beneficial to both university faculty and administrators.

Introduction

Shared governance is the set of practices under which college faculty and staff participate in significant decisions concerning the operation of their institutions (AFT, n.d.). Shared governance is not a simple matter of committee consensus, or the faculty's engaging administrators to take on the dirty work, or any number of other common misconceptions (Olson, 2003). Shared governance is much more complex; it is a delicate balance between faculty and staff participation in planning and decision-making processes, on the one hand, and administrative accountability on the other (Olson, 2003).

It is widely understood that broad participation in decision-making increases the level of employee investment in the institution's success (AFT, n.d.). Birnbaum (1988, 1991) argued that faculty governance is much more than a decision-making body and that faculty governance has served to foster collegiality, relationship-building, social capital, trust, cooperation and collaboration, and other important functions that help create institutional well-being. Kezar (2004) also identified that governance can serve a broader purpose by instilling trust and building relationships that can be instrumental for other campus processes to change. However, increased workloads, restrictive tenure standards, pressures to incorporate new technologies in teaching and demoralization resulting from top-level assertions of power have had the predictable, if perverse, effect of decreasing the willingness of faculty and staff to participate in the shared governance of their institutions (AFT, n.d.).

Purpose

Currently, there are gaps in the literature accurately depicting the faculty climate concerning shared governance and the relationship between faculty and administration. Therefore, the purpose of this research study was to identify the current faculty climate and the relationship between faculty and administration. Moreover, what encompasses a healthy collegial academic environment? A qualitative case study method was employed to interview five faculty within the college of law within a university in the Northwest region of the United States. Results of this study are beneficial to both university faculty and administrators. This study is important in its contribution to the

understanding of shared governance from the perspectives and experiences of faculty of the college of law within a university in the Northwest region of the United States.

Literature Review

This manuscript offers a review of literature on shared governance in higher education in one college in a university in the Northwest region of the United States. The following topics will be discussed: 1) Overview of shared governance, 2) faculty climate, and 3) participation in shared governance.

The purpose of this qualitative study is to explore the experiences and perceptions of shared governance among faculty. Moreover, this study focuses on faculty climate and views and perceptions of shared governance.

Overview of Shared Governance

Shared governance has been variously defined as "academic democracy" (Miller & Pope, 2003), "collaborative decision making" (Crellin, 2010, p.71), a "collaborative approach to achieving common goals" (Bowen & Tobin, 2015, p. 6), faculty "join[ing] with administrators to provide institutional leadership" (Del Favero, 2003, p. 902), faculty participation in decision-making processes (Bucklew, Houghton, & Ellison, 2012), "participation governance" (Gallos, 2009, p. 136), or "a social system of self government wherin decision-making responsibility is shared among those affected by decisions" (Schuetz, 1999, para. 5). "Governance" is the term we give to the structures and processes that academic institutions invent to achieve an effective balance between the claims of two different, but equally valid, systems for organizational control and influence (Birnbaum, 2003). One system, based on legal authority, is the basis for the role of trustees and administration; the other system, based on professional authority, justifies the role of the faculty (Birnbaum, 2003). How boards, presidents, and faculty contribute to and engage one another in institutional governance speaks to the health of a particular college or university as well as to the broader principles of autonomy, self-regulation, and accountability of higher education (Schwartz, Skinner & Bowen, 2009). However, barriers to successful board-faculty interaction include insufficient time, lack of mutual understanding and respect, governance policies and practices that are unclear and out-of-date, the complexities of higher education, and a general lack of interest (Schwartz, Skinner & Bowen, 2009).

Schwartz and colleagues (2009) reported that the climate for interaction among faculty, administrators, and trustees appears generally good. Moreover, Cox (2000) indicated that the various systems for consultation and decision making created by individual institutions to operationalize the "shared" aspects of governance appear today to be working well, and are generally supported by both faculty and administrators. Nevertheless, there are increasing criticisms about the effectiveness of shared governance, and proposals for radical change (Birnbaum, 2003).

How trustees, presidents, administrators, and faculty develop their understanding of shared governance is important and may define how they view their own and others' roles and responsibilities (Schwartz, Skinner & Bowen, 2009). Most colleges and universities (90%) have an institution-wide faculty governing body and describe it as "policy-influencing" (59%); less common is a role that is "advisory" (29%) or "policy-making" (13%) (Schwartz, Skinner & Bowen, 2009). However, in higher education, due to the high turnover rate of top administrators, the faculty and staff are often in the best position to provide the institutional history so valuable to institutional planning (AFT, n.d.).

Schwartz and colleagues (2009) found that shared governance may be understood as the principle that final institutional authority resides ultimately in the governing board, and that the board entrusts day-to-day administration to the president who then delegates specific decision-making power to the faculty in their areas of expertise, namely "curriculum, subject matter and methods of instruction, research, faculty status, and those aspects of student life which relate to the educational process." However, there is a feeling among political leaders, boards of governors (regents or trustees) and top administers (chancellors, presidents and the like) that any sharing of authority impedes their "right" to make the big decisions; they believe that they know what is best and that faculty and staff should step aside and let the managers take charge (AFT, n.d.).

Participation in faculty governance may or may not include nontenure track faculty. Nontenure track faculty are no longer granted many of the privileges typically retained for academic professionals such as tenure, autonomy, or the ability to create working conditions (Kezar & Sam, 2014). The American Federation of Teachers believes that all college employees – top tenured faculty, junior faculty, temporary or part-time/adjunct faculty, graduate teaching and research assistance, professional staff with or without faculty rank, the classified and support staff that keep the

educational enterprise going – should have a guaranteed voice in decision-making, a role in shaping policy in the areas of the expertise (AFT, n.d.).

The principle of shared governance is inextricably linked to the promise and premise of academic freedom (Gerber, 2014). Whether in the national political system or in the political system of a college or university, freedom of expression and inquiry are key tenets of effective governance (Kerr, 2001; Gerber, 2014; Metzger, 1955; Scott, 2002). Mallory (2010) stated that the shared governance is grounded in continuing, open, and reciprocal dialogue. Moreover, academic freedom is a fundamental prerequisite for consultation and communication in any effective construct of shared governance (Mallory, 2010). Gerber (2014), Mitchell (2007), and Scott (2002) argued that the common good within a college or university can only be achieved through a guarantee of shared governance predicated on academic freedom. Scott (2015) concludes that if the free exchange of ideas is essential to the common good, and if the concept of the institution as collegium is the traditional model by which that free expression is recognized, then shared governance is the tool for implementation of academic freedom.

Faculty Climate

Faculty involvement in governance has historically taken many forms, and has caused a great deal of anxiety and stress for both faculty and administrators alike (Miller, McCormack, & Pope, 2000). Faculty participation in the governance process has been viewed as essential to effective administration, dependent upon several factors, including the administrative leadership styles of those who have the ability to involve faculty, the culture of the institution which may or may not solicit or encourage faculty participation, the beliefs and values of trustees and those serving on governing boards which relate to the sharing authority by administrators (Birnbaum, 1992). Birnbaum (1991) suggested that faculty participation in governance may largely be a result, or alternatively a defining criterion, of institutional mission, culture, and the perceived role of faculty by administrators. Conversely, Baldridge (1982) argued that such an ideal setting where faculty meet in friendly environments to debate academic standards, policy, and administrative operations has never existed in the realm of higher education. Baldridge (1982) went on to refer to an ideal setting of true shared authority as a "fable" and "kingdom" which has been advocated by many but successfully implemented by few.

Schwartz and colleagues (2009) reported that the climate for interaction among faculty, administrators, and trustees appears generally good. Moreover, Cox (2000) indicated that the various systems for consultation and decision-making created by individual institutions to operationalize the "shared" aspects of governance appear today to be working well, and are generally supported by both faculty and administrators. However, Miles (1987) indicated faculty have been greatly restricted in the amount of involvement they have, and afforded involvement only through the willingness of administrators to allow for the sharing of authority. Miles (1987) indicated that the Knight v. Minnesota decision and the Connick v. Meyer decision both dictate that faculty have no legal right to involvement, and in fact, have a much more limited scope of "academic freedom" than many faculty believe to be the case.

Miller, McCormack & Pope (2000) conducted a study on faculty involvement in governance to better portray the current state of faculty involvement and to suggest methods and techniques for developing an environment and policy framework directed at the greater sharing of decision-making in higher education. Data were collected for two years from three comprehensive community colleges, two comprehensive universities, and three research-oriented universities. A survey instrument including a section on the roles of faculty in the governance process, and a section on characteristics of an ideal governance process (Miller, McCormack & Pope, 2000) were used to collect data. 713 faculty responded including full-time, tenured or tenure-earning. Researchers found that for the current roles of faculty in governance, faculty believe that they must encourage, support, and allow faculty to take responsibility for their actions, they must encourage the acceptance of faculty decisions and discussion to be taken seriously, and faculty must work hard to clarify their specific roles, actions, and authority in decision-making (Miller, McCormack & Pope, 2000). In a similar mindset, all faculty seemed supportive of the empowering of faculty to question and fight policy decisions, and for the right to be involved early in the decision-making process (Miller, McCormack & Pope, 2000). Overall, researchers found faculty were supportive of sharing authority.

Participation in Shared Governance

Participation in faculty governance may or may not include nontenure track faculty. Part-time/adjunct faculty used to be literally adjunct to the central instructional function, but they have become indispensable and ubiquitous, though overused and exploited, in many colleges (AFT, n.d.). Nontenure track faculty are no longer granted many of the

privileges typically retained for academic professionals such as tenure, autonomy, or the ability to create favorable working conditions (Kezar & Sam, 2014). Faculty are likely better able to make certain decisions on various issues: those who enter the profession and their socialization to positions, teaching and learning, and curriculum delivery, and control over their intellectual property (Kezar & Sam, 2014). The faculty are more likely to make better decisions related to these issues because they are closer to the situation and know how to design an environment that will work for students (Gappa et al., 2007; Sullivan, 2004).

Currently, 800,000 faculty work off the tenure track with poor working conditions that have remained unaddressed for over 20 years (Kezar & Sam, 2014). Even though some leaders and policymakers recognize that poor working conditions affect performance, there have been few intentional changes on individual campuses to foster positive working conditions for contingent faculty (Kezar & Sam, 2014). Fundamental changes within the academy have been taking place over the last 20 years, moving from a largely tenured faculty to full-time and part-time nontenured faculty (University of Southern California, n.d.). Some policymakers express concern regarding the poor working conditions that many contingents experience, and they are concerned that it affects the academy and its mission of teaching (Jacoby, 2006; Jaegar & Eagan, 2011; Umbach, 2007). Studies demonstrate that nontenure track faculty working conditions are generally marginal: limited or no input to department decisions, no job security, notification within days of teaching, limited or no benefits, significantly lower salary, limited or no clear guidelines about their work, no promotion or career track, lack of respect from colleagues, limited or no professional development, and the list goes on (Baldwin & Chronister, 2001; Gappa & Leslie, 1993).

Kezar & Sam (2014) examined campuses that have made significant progress to provide support for nontenure track faculty (NTTF) and identified governance as a critical to changing policies to support NTTF. Researchers conducted document analysis of contracts and faculty handbooks in order to understand the rationale for and some of the existing strategies and approaches for involving NTTF in governance that were then followed up in interviews (Kezar & Sam, 2014). 424 contracts were reviewed and interviews were conducted with 45 faculty leaders at 30 different institutions that had made significant progress on making changes for NTTFs. Findings were organized by two questions: 1) What is the role of governance in creating institutional change for nontenure track faculty? And, 2) What policies and practices maximize and facilitate their role in changing the institution through governance? One overall finding was that contingent faculty leaders stressed that many faculty think that governance is a luxury – a goal only secondary to multiyear contracts, rehire rights, health benefits, promotion schedules, and salary raises (Kezar & Sam, 2014). Interviews conducted with faculty leaders noted the issue of proportionality – contingent faculty are typically 50-70% of the faculty on many campuses, yet 3 to 5 individuals in governance are meant to represent over 1,000 contingent faculty members overall (Kezar & Sam, 2014). One faculty leader described this dilemma: "When you are the only one representing the part-time faculty in a group of 50 people, you know your voice is not being heard in the same way."

Theoretical Framework

In his book, *How Colleges Work*, Birnbaum (1979) presents four models of organization that describe types of college administration cultures. The four organizational models are: (a) collegial institutions; (b) bureaucratic institutions; (c) political institutions; and (d) anarchical institutions (Birnbaum, 1979). In the collegial institution there is an emphasis on consensus and shared power (Birnbaum, 1979). A bureaucratic institution is referred to as a hierarchical control system where decisions are made through divisions of labor, rights, and responsibilities according to rules and regulations (Williams, 2015). Political institutions are systems of coalitions and interest groups where major decisions are based on whichever group is in power according to the timing and type of issues (Williams, 2015). Lastly, an anarchical institution pertains that colleges and universities as organized anarchy where decisions tend to be a result of the system rather than clearly controlled structure (Birnbaum, 1979).

Methodology

A interpretive case study approach (Savin-Badin & Howell Major, 2013) was employed to carry out this study. Interpretive case studies move past description to the translation of key concepts and the development of theories about the subject under investigation (Savin-Baden & Major, 2013). Moreover, Savin-Baden & Major (2013) state that the case study approach emphasizes detailed contextual analysis of a limited number of events or conditions and their relationships. This makes them particularistic, meaning that they focus on a particular phenomenon (Merriam, 1988). In Anthony & Jack's (2009) case study exploring the phenomenon of nurse educators' experience with

interprofessional education in the real-life context (Yin, 2009) of academia, a multiple case design was chosen in order to enhance the robustness of the study findings. Similarly, in the current study it was decided that multiple cases would be utilized in order to offer the opportunity to replicate the study and offer stronger evidence in support of the findings (Savin-Baden & Major, 2013). Therefore, five faculty within the college of law within a university in the Northwest region of the United States were interviewed.

All participating faculty signed and returned a consent form. Faculty were interviewed via recorded telephone interviews lasting anywhere from 12 – 22 minutes. Faculty were asked four questions including, (1) Do you believe that trust is an important aspect in the relationship between faculty and administration and why?; (2) What are things that can build trust between faculty and administrators?; (3) What are the things that help retain faculty outside of salaries?; (4) Describe your ideal workplace and institutional fit.

Population and Sample Selection

The population includes faculty members within the college of law at a university in the Northwest region of the United States. The sample will consist of five faculty members who have received and responded to an email asking for volunteers. Although many faculty members may respond to this email, the first five to schedule an interview time will be included in the study. While the sample may seem small, data will be combined from other proposals of studies regarding faculty governance conducted across other colleges within the university. Therefore, a more accurate representation of the population will be reflected.

Data Collection

Data were collected via recorded phone interviews lasting anywhere from 12 – 22 minutes. Following the interview, each participant was assigned a pseudonym in order to ensure anonymity. Each interview was then transcribed, verified by the participant, and recorded materials destroyed. After all interviews were transcribed, several observations and reflections seen in the responses were recorded. The initial notes were then used to develop emerging themes.

Limitations of the Method and Concerns for Generalizability

The findings are not generalizable due to the qualitative research method used. Furthermore, the small sample size limits the application of the results to a limited population. More specifically, these findings are pertinent to the College of Law and should not be generalized across other colleges such as that of Education or Agriculture. Even so, the knowledge and insight gained is beneficial to faculty, administrators, and research area.

Validity and Reliability

This study was both valid and reliable. Validity was established by crafting effective open-ended questions. These questions allowed all faculty to respond at their leisure without time limitations or fear of being reprimanded due to total confidentiality. Therefore, faculty were able to think fully about their responses and express all thoughts, opinions, and ideas freely. Musslwhite et al (2007) states that the telephone interviewer can improve the quality of data by giving his or her subjects to time respond and understand the questions and correlate with better response rates and accurate data when sharing private information. Even though in-person interviews allows the interviewer to gain the respect and trust of the interviewee rather quickly, this leads to increased data values that support socially acceptable behaviors that may not reflect the actual thoughts of the respondent (Colombotos, 1969).

Recordings were transcribed into written form so that they could be studied in detail and coded (ten Have, 1999). Representing audible talk as written words requires reduction, interpretation and representation to make the written text readable and meaningful (Roberts, 2004; Green, 1997). Therefore, all interviews were transcribed, coded, and emergent themes were identified. Ensuring that faculty concurred with their transcribed responses confirmed their responses were both repeatable and reliable.

Findings

Interviewed faculty provided a number of insightful responses to all questions asked. Faculty were asked the following questions: (1) Do you believe that trust is an important aspect in the relationship between faculty and administration and why?; (2) What are things that can build trust between faculty and administration?; (3) What are things that help faculty retainment outside of salaries?; and (4) What is your ideal workplace, or best institutional fit? Two main themes were identified while determining the current faculty climate and the relationship between faculty and administration: Trust and Collegiality. Components that faculty felt signified trust in the relationship between faculty and administration included Freedom in Scholarship, Freedom in Teaching, and Transparency of Communication.

Trust

Faculty described the items listed below as fundamental components for establishing trust with administration, preserving faculty retainment, and ideal for the best-fit workplace. Participant 5 elaborates on the importance of trust in this relationship:

> I think its important because if there's a relationship with trust I think people are more willing to consciously do in terms if you're faculty you are more willing to carry out the instructions and go with the programs and participate and cooperate in the programs that are outlined in the administration.

Participant 3 discusses the necessity of establishing trust between faculty and administration:

> I think trust is absolutely necessary between faculty and administration. If the faculty perceives administration as not being trustworthy, there's going to be tension in faculty meetings, there is going to be less investment by the faculty and initiatives that the administration brings forward. There will also be a sense that key administrators may not reflect the overall vision of the unit or the department, and this may lead to a no-confidence vote in the worst-case scenario.

The responses provided by Participants 5 and 3 indicate the gravity of established trust between faculty and administration. A lack of this trust, as can be perceived throughout the entirety of the findings, may be due to a feeling among political leaders, boards of governors and top administers that any sharing of authority impedes their "right" to make the big decisions; they believe that they know what is best and that faculty and staff should step aside and let the managers take charge (AFT, n.d.). On the contrary, the American Federation of Teachers believes that all college employees…should have a guaranteed voice in decision-making, a role in shaping policy in the areas of expertise (AFT, n.d.). These findings suggest this college does not currently function as a collegial institution organization (Birmbaum, 1979) with regards to the theme of trust.

Freedom in Scholarship

Several faculty indicated that having freedom in what they write about is important to them, and likewise, receiving respect from the administration that will allow them that freedom. Here are examples of their responses by Participant 1:

> I think it's important that the administration be relatively hands-off about the techniques that are used in the classroom, and to some degree the topics that are covered.

Participant 5 suggests that freedom of scholarship can be limited or may not exist:

> …if people had a more open-minded attitude towards scholarship, I think that would help. Sometimes your scholarship starts to go in a direction that maybe you didn't anticipate when you first signed onto a job, and suddenly it's like, that's not what we do here. I think if [they] had a more liberal attitude towards scholarship and a more flexible attitude towards it, especially towards interdisciplinary work, I think it would help.

The opinions of these participants suggest they are not currently receiving the freedom and trust they desire in regards to scholarship. Mallory (2010) advises that academic freedom is a fundamental prerequisite for consultation and communication in any effective construct of shared governance. Furthermore, Gerber (2014), Mitchell (2007), and Scott (2002) argued that the common good within a college or university can only be achieved through a guarantee of shared governance predicated on academic freedom. Perhaps increased academic freedom at the current

college would improve the overall common good. Moreover, faculty ideas of what scholarship should look like align with Birnbaum's (1979) collegial institution.

Freedom in Teaching

In conjunction with freedom and respect in terms of scholarship, faculty expressed the importance of those same attributes being in place for teaching. Several faculty suggested that freedom in how they teach and what they teach signifies respect from the administration. Here are examples of their responses by Participant 2:

> I think it's important that administration be relatively hands off about the techniques that are used in the classroom, and to some degree the topics that are covered. I think they need to not make them all be cookie-cutter, all identical because I think teaching works best if it comes from the heart and sort of where the teacher is right then…Teachers need more freedom. I think the more the administration tries to micro-manage the more they are conveying that they don't trust the teachers.

Participant 5 highlights freedom in teaching in regards to an ideal workplace:

> There would be flexibility in terms of teaching. Where there was flexibility in terms of subjects and packages. Where you weren't locked in to teaching the same thing every year if you didn't want to.

It is clear that faculty prefer the administration remain hands-off in regards to the content presented and teaching methods used in the classroom. Miles (1987) indicated that the Knight v. Minnesota decision and the Connick v. Meyer decision both dictate that faculty have no legal right to involvement, and in fact, have a much more limited scope of "academic freedom" than many faculty believe to be the case. Although "academic freedom" seems to be a prerequisite for an ideal workplace, there may be legal stipulations surrounding the scope of this freedom. Moreover, based on these responses, faculty appear to long for a collegial institution of organization when it comes to freedom in teaching.

Transparency of Communication

80% (4 out of 5) faculty members mentioned transparency of communication as an important aspect in the relationship between faculty and administration, as something that can build trust between these groups, increase retainment, and fit their idea of an ideal workplace. Here are examples of their responses by Participant 1:

> Mostly I think its just open communication. It's a two way street. The administration needs to be very transparent with faculty about what is expected of the faculty, about where the institution is headed, what the goals and plans are of the administration for the institution, how the administration believes faculty input factors into establishing those kinds of priorities…

Participant 3 discusses the importance of processes for faculty to voice their concerns:

> There always needs to be processes for faculty to voice their concerns. If there's not, it will happen in the back hallways. Administration always has to be aware of what are the processes and do they allow transparency.

Participant 104 elaborates on the importance of communication:

> Communication is really important. Getting to know each other and having contact, having an opportunity to voice concerns or ask questions.

Participant 5 explicates the role of voicing concerns as a means for being involved in the decision-making process:

> I think participation… Meaning if the faculty is actually seriously brought into the decision-making process, and I think that if people feel they are being listened to even if the decision doesn't go their way.

Transparency of communication was quite possibly the most important component for establishing trust, as described by faculty members. Schwartz, Skinner & Bowen (2009) suggested that barriers to successful board-faculty interaction include insufficient time, lack of mutual understanding and respect, governance policies and practices that are unclear and out-of-date, the complexities of higher education, and a general lack of interest. When examining the responses provided by faculty with regards to transparency of communication it seems as though at least one of the suggested barriers may be in place. As Birnbaum (1979) describes, in the collegial institution there is an emphasis on

consensus and shared power. In order for a consensus to be met, open discussion must be present between faculty and administration. It appears the current standing of this college is not of a collegial institution organization.

Collegiality

Several faculty members referenced collegiality as ideal for a best-fit workplace. It's important to note that this collegiality was not limited to faculty members but included that with the administration as well. Faculty illuminated on the current presence/absence of collegiality.

Participant 1 references collegiality as a "working environment":

> It's a working environment, and that relates both the administration as well as my other colleagues. My other colleagues are predominately of one political persuasion that with which I don't fully agree. I understand, but maybe not fully agree. And, yet, my feeling is that if I were to voice my political views, my colleagues would use that against me. This is particularly important when you are yet to be tenured.

Participant 2 expands on changes seen in collegiality over the years:

> Collegiality is really important. I mean I often say I've got close to the perfect job, but I think collegiality has gone down in recent years. I think giving each other the benefit of the doubt can be helpful among colleagues.

Participant 4 expounds on what working in a collegial environment looks like:

> Feeling as though I am part of a team. I like an environment that has a social community feel to it, where we can talk to each other about what we are trying to accomplish.

Participants 1 and 2 suggest a lack of collegiality in the current college. While Participant 1 is reluctant to voice opinions around colleagues for fear of being chastised, Participant 2 has seen collegiality decline in recent years. As discussed by Baldwin & Chronister (2001) and Gappa & Leslie (1993), studies demonstrate that nontenure track faculty working conditions are generally marginal: limited or no input to department decisions, no job security, notification with days of teaching, limited or no benefits, significantly lower salary, limited or no clear guidelines about their work, no promotion or career track, lack of respect from colleagues, limited or no professional development, and the list goes on. Only 20% of participating faculty were nontenure track which raises even greater concern for the current low standing of collegiality within this college. Therefore, the current collegiality standing does not appear to align with Birnbaum's (1979) college institution organization and may be best described as a bureaucratic institution.

Discussion

Birnbaum's (1979) organization models describe each institution with regards to its community, characteristics, loops of interaction, coupling and leadership. An understanding of which model the current college parallels can help facilitate the development of the ideal method of interaction (such as governance). Birnbaum (1979) describes the collegial institution as representing a community of administrators, faculty, and students in which all groups work together to create a quality educational environment. Permeating this community is a milieu of mutual respect among scholars, good discourse, and discretion by consensus (Ponton, 1996). Class distinctions based on academic discipline or administrative position are de-emphasized to allow interaction among members as that between equals (Ponton, 1996). The current research study revealed the importance of trust and collegiality and further irradiated the roles of freedom in scholarship, freedom in teaching, and transparency of communication. Data collected indicates these elements may be lacking or have room for improvement.

Characteristics of a collegial institution as described by Birnbaum (1979), suggests that decisions are discussed and members of each group are afforded the opportunity. Therefore, decision-making, especially on important topics, may be time-consuming in order to allow the expression of all opinions (Birnbaum, 1988). Furthermore, the role of administrators is similar to that of any other institution in that it has the responsibility of providing student services and representing the interest of the college to the public (Birnbaum, 1988). A major difference seen within the collegial institution is that administrators are not placed above the faculty or the collegium as a whole but rather the administration is understood to be subordinate to the collegium and carries out the collegium's will (Birnbaum, 1988). Responses of faculty within the college of law researched suggest that the administration may actually be the

foremost or superior group in reference to decision-making. This arrangement appears to affect or possibly hinder the established element of trust for building the relationship between faculty and administration. The characteristics of the institution as described by interviewed faculty imply that a bureaucratic organization model may align best with the college researched. The bureaucratic structure's authority flows downward from a centralized point. In this case, the administration seems to satisfy the role of a centralized point of authority. Faculty expressed a lack of freedom in teaching and scholarship, and transparency of communication extending down from the administration.

Cox (2000) indicated that the various systems for consultation and decision-making created by individual institutions to operationalize the "shared" aspects of governance appear today to be working well, and are generally supported by both faculty and administrators. However, Miles (1987) indicated faculty have been greatly restricted in the amount of involvement they have, and afforded involvement only through the willingness of administrators to allow for the sharing of authority. It seems the current college of interest may align more with Miles' description of how shared governance works in many institutions today. To expound more on this concept, participant 5 proposes that, "junior faculty are seen not heard" and "faculty governance in the absence of tenure makes no sense." From faculty member's perception only those with tenure may feel secure enough in their current position to voice an opinion on various matters, whereas those who have yet to obtain tenure might be more fearful of termination. Participant 5 adds, "don't say anything controversial, keep your heads down, do your work, teach your courses, and just try to survive long enough." Participant 3 also discusses proposals of change made by junior faculty in how faculty governance is managed:

> I was recently at a proposal by junior faculty that instead of administration appointing people to committees that they actually send out a survey and ask what committee you would like to be on. And, that is a change in attitude, even in that small way – looking at what you are most interested in and then who should chair the committee rather than the administration kind of controlling how faculty governance works by appointing.

It is apparent that junior faculty are oftentimes ignored, disregarded, and marginalized in terms of faculty governance and decision-making. Birnbaum (1988) elucidates that in the collegial organization model, senior faculty do tend to carry greater influence than those of junior members, however, decisions are ultimately made by consensus. It appears that junior faculty in some colleges may be attempting to change this status quo in order to improve collegiality in terms of faculty governance and subsequently may be trying to modify a possibly bureaucratic organizational model.

Collegiality was identified as a main theme within the current research study. There seems to be conflicting responses from faculty in regards to the present state of collegiality within this college. All faculty members interviewed included collegiality as a characteristic of their ideal workplace. However, some faculty members suggested that collegiality may be lacking in the current college. Participant 1 expressed frustration and worry about the thought of voicing an opinion in regards to political affiliations:

> My other colleagues are predominately of one political persuasion, that with which I don't fully agree. I understand, but maybe not fully agree. And, yet, my feeling is that if I were to voice my political views, my colleagues would use that against me.

Alternatively, Birnbuam's (1979) organizational model suggests that a collegial institution is also built on interactions amongst colleagues not only in the professional setting but also in nonwork situations. Birnbaum, (1988) explains:

> People who like each other tend to spend more time together away from work whereby their activities and interests become homogenized. Values and beliefs are subsequently shared and reinforced.

Collegiality is an important factor for faculty retainment and appears to be a common descriptor for the ideal workplace. It is impractical to label collegiality as absentee in the current college, however, it is feasible for this college and colleges of the like to consider methods and strategies that may be integrated in order to improve collegiality among faculty as well as that with administration.

Implications for Policy & Practice

Two significant themes identified while determining the current faculty climate and the relationship between faculty and administration were trust and collegiality. It seems that faculty worry there is a lack of trust stemming from the administration, which precludes freedom in scholarship and teaching and open lines of communication. Furthermore,

there appears to be a lack of collegiality. Barriers to successful board-faculty interaction include insufficient time, lack of mutual understanding and respect, governance policies and practices that are unclear and out-of-date, the complexities of higher education, and a general lack of interest (Schwartz, Skinner & Bowen, 2009). Perhaps investing in best policies and practices could improve and correct the current level of trust between faculty and administration.

To begin, administration should consider creating a time where faculty and administration can interact. Baldridge (1982) argued that such an ideal setting where faculty meet in friendly environments to debate academic standards, policy, and administrative operations has never existed in the realm of higher education. Even so, providing such an opportunity for both faculty and administration could make great strides on the path to established trust.

Secondly, both administration and faculty should consider arranging meet and greets on a regular basis. This is imperative for new faculty (tenure and nontenure track) coming aboard in order to establish a sense of value within the college and to build collegiality amongst the faculty. Too often there is consistent turn-over within a college without employing best practices for longevity. Some of these faculty may choose to leave a college because their worth and collegiality amongst other faculty members was never established.

Thirdly, administration should consider developing anonymous and completely confidential surveys to distribute to faculty members, perhaps on an annual or bi-annual basis. The content of these surveys could include questions pertaining to the current faculty climate and the relationship between faculty and administration. For instance, questions regarding trust and respect, policies and practices, and collegiality could be included. Faculty are more likely to be transparent voicing their concerns knowing their responses cannot be linked back to them. An indifferent third party would conduct all data analysis and craft a written document discussing the findings. Moreover, these findings could then be distributed to faculty and administration to open discussion on best policies and practices.

Lastly, perhaps administration could validate their appreciation and the value of faculty members by instigating family leave policies. These policies would afford faculty members paid leave in the event they would need to take care of a family member who has become ill or suffered a traumatic injury. Although many institutions may not have the funds to put such a policy in place, doing so could make leaps and bounds in faculty retainment and longevity.

Concluding Thoughts

Birnbaum (1991) suggested that faculty participation in governance may largely be a result, or alternatively a defining criterion, of institutional mission, culture, and the perceived role of faculty by administrators. In the current study, several faculty members expressed their desire for the administration to be transparent about goals, future plans and direction for the college. Based on these interview responses, it seems that faculty may not play as large of role in governance as some perhaps wish to. The "perceived role of faculty by administrators" seems to coincide with Birnbaums description of a bureaucratic institution, wherein decisions are made from top down, a hierarchical model. In this instance, the administration appears to play the role of commander in chief.

Healthy relationships between faculty and administration are vital for faculty retainment and program growth. In the current study, one of the most essential components for establishing trust, and thus a healthy relationship between these groups, was transparency of communication. Collectively, faculty interviewed thought it imperative to be able to ask questions and voice concerns when appropriate. However, as mentioned earlier, many faculty are apprehensive about voicing their opinions for fear of reprisal. Some faculty members eluded to the fact that junior faculty, perhaps NTTF, partake even less in the decision-making process and seldom declare a position. It appears that faculty of higher status (i.e. senior, tenured) do bear more weight in the decision-making process than that of junior faculty, which aligns with Birnbaum's (1988) description of a collegial institution wherein the "views of senior faculty carry greater influence than those of the junior members, decisions are ultimately made by consensus."

As suggested by Birnbaum above, in a collegial atmosphere decisions are ultimately made by faculty consensus. This may not be the case for the college in question. Furthermore, as Birnbaum (1988) described the collegial institution, "…administrators are not placed above the faculty or the collegium as a whole but rather the administration is understood to be subordinate to the collegium and carries out the collegium's will." Baldridge (1982) argued that such an ideal setting where faculty meet in friendly environments to debate academic standards, policy, and administrative operations has never existed in the realm of higher education. This generalization may have been somewhat far-reaching; however, perhaps it laid the groundwork for institutions to seriously consider their organizational model and level of collegiality.

Based on the interviews conducted at the present college, it would seem appropriate to label its current organizational model as a bureaucratic one. Conversely, these findings are representative of only five faculty and may not be an accurate representation of the college in its entirety. Clearly, more research is needed to determine the relationship between faculty and administration, faculty climate, and the role of shared governance. Even so, the data gathered suggests that in order to build trust between faculty and administration, clear lines of communication must be in place. The present college may consider using this knowledge to develop strategies to improve communication amongst these groups and thus enhance their current relationship.

AFFILIATIONS

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