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Effective Leadership of Institutional Effectiveness Accreditation Initiaties: A Qualitative Case Study

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EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP OF INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS ACCREDITATION INITIATIVES: A QUALITATIVE CASE STUDY

by

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ABSTRACT

A qualitative case study of a two-year institution of higher education which had recently completed a successful institutional effectiveness initiative explored the factors that faculty and administrators believe encourage the support of institutional effectiveness initiatives and how certain factors encourage faculty and administrative support for institutional effectiveness activities that lead to their success. Participants included faculty and administrators at institutions of higher education and experts in the field of institutional effectiveness. There were four basic findings of the study. First, leaders of institutional effectiveness initiatives should ensure that the motivation of the topic of a project is perceived to be internal by the entire campus community. Second, participation in the initiative is optional. Third, communication and collaboration are benefits of institutional effectiveness initiatives. Finally, the value of accreditation is built into the culture of the institution. Leaders of institutional effectiveness initiatives can benefit from the findings of the current study and support the success of the initiatives to create lasting impacts on quality at institutions of higher education.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Higher education institutions are under ever-increasing pressure to prove quality and accountability to both governmental agencies that provide financial support and accreditation agencies that provide substantiation of quality (Eaton, 2011; Migliore, 2012; Welsh & Metcalf, 2003). Institutions often undertake institutional effectiveness activities in order to demonstrate a continual effort to improve quality. These activities require some type of change within the institution that affects faculty and administrators. Change in higher education is a unique undertaking due to the distinctive considerations found in this arena and is met with resistance, particularly from faculty (Ericksen et al., 2015; Styron et al., 2015; Welsh & Metcalf, 2003). These unique characteristics include things such as academic freedom, autonomy from oversight, shared governance, and a desire to maintain the status quo (Ketcheson & Everhart, 2002; Migliore, 2012; Welsh & Metcalf, 2003). Higher education is also unlike other businesses, corporations, or institutions when measuring and creating quality (Campbell & O'Meara, 2014; Migliore, 2012; Welsh & Metcalf, 2003). Change and quality, therefore, must be approached strategically in institutions of higher education in order for success. The pressure to continually prove an increase in quality leaves a need to understand why initiatives such

as those undertaken for institutional effectiveness and intended to improve quality often fail (Welsh & Metcalf, 2003).

Faculty resistance is a significant factor that acts as a barrier to the success of institutional effectiveness activities (Welsh & Metcalf, 2003). This resistance is partially the product of a long history of strongly held ideals in higher education including academic freedom, autonomy, and shared governance (Campbell & O'Meara, 2014; Migliore, 2012; Welsh & Metcalf, 2003). Due to the unique role that faculty and administrators play in institutional effectiveness activities and the importance of their support for the initiatives, it is imperative to find factors and strategies that foster the support of these initiatives by both administrators and faculty. Some factors influence support for change initiatives, institutional goals and projects, and institutional effectiveness activities (Ericksen et al., 2015; Styron et al., 2015; Welsh & Metcalf, 2003). These factors include time, organizational fit, transparency, faculty-administrator relations, professional development resources, internal versus external motivation, and depth of implementation.

Leaders of institutional effectiveness activities can influence the factors that affect the support of the initiatives (Campbell & O'Meara, 2014). This creates an opportunity for administrators to increase the probability of success for these activities and a need for leaders to have a roadmap of leadership strategies that can foster support when implementing institutional effectiveness activities. Despite the increasing amount of financial, physical, and human resources invested in institutional effectiveness projects, leaders at institutions of higher education lack powerful advice on making the initiatives

successful at improving quality (Ericksen et al., 2015; Styron et al., 2015; Welsh & Metcalf, 2003).

Problem Statement and Research Questions

Despite information on the increasing requirements for accountability in institutions of higher education, there is little information on the successful leadership of initiatives undertaken to prove quality or documented reports of their effectiveness at accomplishing lasting change (Ketcheson & Everhart, 2002; Welsh & Metcalf, 2003). A limited body of information shows that this may be due to barriers to the success of these initiatives, namely a lack of support by various stakeholders, including faculty (Ericksen et al., 2015; Migliore, 2012; Welsh & Metcalf, 2003).

This study examined the following research questions:

RQ1: What are the perceived factors that faculty and administrators believe encourage the support of institutional effectiveness initiatives?

RQ2: How do certain factors encourage faculty and administrative support for institutional effectiveness activities that lead to their success?

Conceptual Framework

The O'Meara et al. (2011) framework of agency in faculty professional lives conceptualizes the influences and outcomes of faculty agency (Campbell & O'Meara, 2014). It provides a theoretical rationale for connection between organizational factors and faculty agency. Organizational factors that influence faculty agency in this framework are structural factors such as policies but also cultural factors such as norms. In this framework, agency is any action or perspective that moves a person towards goals

that are important to them. In this way, faculty agency has an impact on faculty attitudes and actions that support the goals of organizational goals such as institutional effectiveness activities. Essential to the application of the present study is the consideration that faculty agency is rarely a selfish endeavor. The body of literature on agency shows that increase in agency increases productivity and well-being and suggests that this can lead to a greater capacity to contribute to the success of institutional goals. Studies have shown that faculty who exert agency tend to support and facilitate the success of institutional goals. These considerations, therefore, indicate that organizations and factors that foster faculty agency also foster success of institutional goals (Campbell & O'Meara, 2014). This would lead to the application of this framework to the research questions investigated in the present study by determining factors that foster faculty agency, thereby fostering support for institutional effectiveness activities.

This framework assumes that a variety of individual, organizational, and societal factors influence faculty agency and likewise, affect individual outcomes, organizational change, and societal change (Campbell & O'Meara, 2014). This is relevant to the present study in that it sought to determine factors that influence faculty and administrator support for organizational change. Notably, this framework also considers the role of faculty agency in overcoming resistance to achieve goals (Campbell & O'Meara, 2014). These can be personal or organizational goals, and resistance to implementation of institutional effectiveness activities as a barrier to success is well documented and an important implication for the findings of the current study. This framework also utilizes the concept that administrators can impact faculty agency in order to impact the success of organizational change by addressing the factors known to impact that agency

(Campbell & O'Meara, 2014). In this way, the framework lends itself to the research question in the current study of how administrators can exploit factors known to impact faculty support of institutional effectiveness activities in order to increase their success.

Definition of Significant Terms

Administrators: Administrators in the current study are defined as leaders who are engaged in institutional effectiveness initiatives whose primary duty is not teaching and/or research (Welsh & Metcalf, 2003).

Faculty Agency: Any action or perspective that moves a person towards goals that are important to them (Campbell & O'Meara, 2014).

Institutional Effectiveness Activities: Activities undertaken by an institution of higher education in order to prove a commitment to continuous improvement and improve student learning outcomes and success (Southern Association of Colleges and Schools [SACSCOC], 2017)

Stakeholders: Stakeholders in the current study will be anyone who has an interest or concern in an institution of higher education and can include students, parents of students, faculty, staff, administrators, taxpayers, accreditation agency employees, politicians, and many others (Welsh & Metcalf, 2003).

Successful Institutional Effectiveness Activity: An institutional effectiveness activity will be considered successful for means of the current study if it accomplished, through measurable ways, the goals of the activity at that particular institution (SACSCOC, 2017).

Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP): A specific type of institutional effectiveness activity required for accreditation by Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) (SACSCOC, 2017).

Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC): The recognized regional accrediting body for institutions of higher education in the eleven southern United States (SACSCOC, 2017).

Purpose of this Study

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to determine how leaders foster support for institutional effectiveness initiatives and to discover strategies that institutional effectiveness leaders at institutions of higher education use in order to foster the success of these initiatives. Faculty and administrators often have different perspectives on these initiatives, and their values and beliefs surrounding them shape how they respond to the leadership and support the initiatives (Ketcheson & Everhart, 2002; Welsh & Metcalf, 2003). The current study discovered strategies that institutional effectiveness leaders at institutions of higher education should use in order to foster the success of these initiatives.

Delimitations

One delimitation of this study is that there are tangential problems to the implementation of institutional effectiveness initiatives not considered here. The factors chosen as the focus of the current study, however, can be directly related to the success of implementation, which is an important barrier for many institutions during accreditation. Another delimitation of the study was institutions accredited by a variety of agencies

because the institution chosen for the case study was an institution accredited by SACSCOC. This was necessary for reasonable access for the researcher and also to preserve the meaning and understanding of many of the factors. Additionally, the factors chosen for the current study represent a portion of what the literature finds important for the leadership of change and other factors may also play a role.

Limitations

Limitations include that although the current study found certain factors are predictors of support for institutional effectiveness initiatives, there may be confounding factors at the institution for which the current study did not control. Additionally, the interviews did not control for outside factors and were not representative of a general population, and the researcher had some resistance to participation. The institutional context and case study methodology limited the generalizability and external validity of the current study. There is also the potential that some people were guarded in their responses in this area because this type of faculty and administrative work is often associated with evaluation and the tenure and promotion process for faculty.

Significance of the Study

Institutional effectiveness activities, or quality enhancement activities, have become an integral part of accreditation, which institutions of higher education seek for many reasons, including funding and reputation (Welsh & Metcalf, 2003). It is foreseeable that the importance of institutional effectiveness initiatives will continue to increase with time as the question of quality in higher education continues to grow with graduates struggling to find employment and repay student debt (National Institute for Learning Outcomes

Assessment [NILOA], 2016; Welsh & Metcalf, 2003). The necessity and importance of these activities leave a need to understand why initiatives intended to improve quality often fail (Welsh & Metcalf, 2003). Despite their importance to accreditation, these initiatives have rarely shown to have measurable impacts of success on institutions. While governmental and accrediting agencies find them essential, faculty have an equally strong desire to maintain higher education in the way they have known it (Welsh & Metcalf, 2003). Furthermore, most accrediting bodies require broad campus participation in the initiatives from a variety of stakeholders, which includes the faculty who lack a desire for change (Welsh & Metcalf, 2003). The current study contributed significant knowledge to higher education leadership by providing information on the way that administrators can implement institutional effectiveness activities that both satisfy the needs of accreditation and succeed in improving the quality of the institution in ways that a variety of stakeholders' support.

Summary

Institutional effectiveness activities are a necessary but largely unsupported and unsuccessful facet of higher education (Ketcheson & Everhart, 2002; Migliore, 2012; Welsh & Metcalf, 2003). Understanding how some leaders have created support for these initiatives leading to their successes contributed to a lack of information in the leadership of higher education. The literature review demonstrated that institutions must approach change and quality strategically in higher education as they are unique enterprises (Ericksen et al., 2015; Migliore, 2012; Styron et al., 2015). The literature review also showed that certain factors can impact the support of these initiatives by faculty and administrators (Campbell & O'Meara, 2014; Ketcheson & Everhart, 2014; Welsh &

Metcalf, 2003). Last, the literature review will demonstrate that research in this area is limited, particularly research that illustrates how institutions that accomplished successful institutional effectiveness activities designed and implemented these initiatives.

To determine how a successful institution accomplished this change, the third chapter outlines the proposed methodology for the current study. The current study used a qualitative case study design. This design allowed a deep understanding of the context and environment that contributed to the success of the initiative. The third chapter includes details regarding the role of the researcher, selection of participants, data collection/analysis, and trustworthiness issues.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Leaders of institutional effectiveness initiatives can impact the success of these activities, which institutions undertake as requirements for accountability (Eaton, 2011; Styron, 2015; Welsh & Metcalf, 2003). Due to the mandatory and costly nature of institutional effectiveness activities, it is important to determine factors that may predict and support success. The purpose of this study was to determine how leaders foster support of institutional effectiveness initiatives. Faculty and administrators often have different perspectives on these initiatives, and their values and beliefs surrounding them shape how they respond to the leadership and support the initiatives (Ketcheson & Everhart, 2002; Welsh & Metcalf, 2003). Administrators in this study were leaders who are engaged in institutional effectiveness initiatives whose primary duties do not include teaching and/or research. This study sought to discover strategies that institutional effectiveness leaders at institutions of higher education can adopt in order to foster the successes of these initiatives.

In order to explore the existing knowledge on this research topic, this literature review first focuses on change and quality in higher education. Despite the knowledge on leadership techniques that foster support of change in other types of organizations such as businesses, researchers must study higher education as a unique sector with

its own nuances (Migliore, 2012; Tracey, 2006; Welsh & Metcalf, 2003). The pressure for institutions of higher education to prove quality improvement continues to increase as institutions seek funding from governmental agencies and accreditation through accrediting agencies (Eaton, 2011; Welsh & Metcalf, 2003). In order to prove quality, institutions engage in institutional effectiveness activities, which require some type of change within the institution. The effectiveness of these initiatives at accomplishing positive, lasting change in institutions is debated due to many different barriers to success (Strawn & Littlepage, 2021). A lack of support by various stakeholders, including faculty, is cited as a common hindrance to the success of these initiatives (Welsh & Metcalf, 2003).

Next, this literature review examines the literature on factors shown to influence support for change initiatives, institutional goals and projects, and institutional effectiveness activities (Ericksen et al., 2015; Styron et al., 2015; Welsh & Metcalf, 2003). These factors include time, organizational fit, transparency, faculty-administrator relations, professional development resources, internal versus external motivation, and depth of implementation. Administrators have an immense opportunity to increase the probability of success for institutional effectiveness activities by leveraging these factors in the leadership of these initiatives.

In a search on EBSCO using the terms *institutional effectiveness faculty involvement* and the parameters of scholarly peer-reviewed journals published between the year 2000 and 2021, the search returned 57 results. Many of these results, however, did not apply to the current study as they included reports on things such as faculty involvement in institutional repositories, community outreach, institutional research on

faculty work, and other topics tangential to the research questions studied here. An EBSCO search using the terms *quality enhancement leadership higher education* also limited to scholarly peer-reviewed journals published between the year 2000 and 2021, returned 76 results; however, the majority of these were about institutions outside the United States, which is outside the scope of this research project. The topic of the pressure to prove quality in higher education due to governmental and accrediting requirements as well as the uniqueness of the higher education industry in regard to change and quality is well-documented. The barriers to success of change and quality initiatives as well as factors and leadership techniques that can reduce these barriers and increase support by faculty and administrators need additional study.

This literature review will first provide information on the theoretical framework. It will then explore two broad topics relevant to the research questions: 1) change and quality in higher education and 2) factors that affect support of change and quality in higher education. Under each of these topics, the most relevant and informative papers are presented in detail with background, context, and critique. Next, some generalizations are made drawing from those papers under each topic as well as additional sources that were found in the literature review but not presented in detail. Within quality in higher education, the literature review will explore the pressure to prove quality, the hindrances of change in higher education, and the uniqueness of quality in higher education. Within the topic of the factors that affect support of these initiatives, several factors that were important in the literature are described in more detail, including time, organizational fit, administrator faculty relations, professional development opportunities, internal versus external motivation, and depth of implementation. Finally, conclusions from the literature

review are presented along with the demonstrated need for the present study to determine factors that affect support of these quality and institutional effectiveness initiatives.

Theoretical Framework

The O'Meara framework of agency in faculty professional lives conceptualizes the influences and outcomes of faculty agency. It provides a theoretical rationale for the connection between organizational factors and faculty agency. Organizational factors that influence faculty agency in this framework are structural factors such as policies but also cultural factors such as norms. In this framework, agency is any action or perspective that moves a person towards goals that are important to them. In this way, faculty agency has an impact on faculty attitudes and actions that support the goals of organizational change, such as institutional effectiveness activities. Essential to the application of the present study is the consideration that faculty agency is rarely a selfish endeavor. The body of literature on agency shows that an increase in agency increases productivity and well-being and suggests that this can lead to a greater capacity to contribute to the success of institutional goals, not just personal goals. Studies have shown that faculty who exert agency tend to support and facilitate the success of institutional goals. These considerations, therefore, indicate that organizations and factors that foster faculty agency also foster success of institutional goals (Campbell & O'Meara, 2014). This would lead to the application of this framework to the research questions investigated in the present study by determining factors that foster faculty agency, thereby fostering support for institutional effectiveness activities.

This framework assumes that faculty agency is influenced by a variety of individual, organizational, and societal factors and, likewise, affects individual outcomes,

organizational change, and societal change (Campbell & O'Meara, 2014). This is relevant to the present study in that it sought to determine factors that influence faculty and administrator support for organizational change. Notably, this framework also considers the role of faculty agency in overcoming resistance to achieve goals (Campbell & O'Meara, 2014). These can be personal or organizational goals, and resistance to implementation of institutional effectiveness activities as a barrier to success is well-documented and an important implication for the findings of this study. This framework also utilizes the concept that administrators can impact faculty agency in order to impact the success of organizational change by addressing the factors known to impact that agency (Campbell & O'Meara, 2014). In this way, the framework lends itself to the research question in this study of how administrators can impact faculty support of institutional effectiveness activities in order to increase success.

The seminal article on this theory studied a single institution in order to examine interactions between faculty and faculty experiences in departments because it allowed for a superior understanding of organizational influences on faculty and a full understanding of the context of the situation as opposed to studying multiple institutions with a broader perspective (Campbell & O'Meara, 2014). This is congruent with the methodology of the present study, which will allow the study to build on the body of literature that has already examined multi-institutional data on factors that affect the success of institutional effectiveness activities (Welsh & Metcalf, 2003). Studies of single institutions can contribute to bodies of knowledge on topics because they provide important information about history, culture, and norms that help explain the findings and also highlight how the findings may or may not apply in other contexts (Campbell &

O'Meara, 2014). By using the O'Meara framework of agency in faculty professional lives to examine how faculty and administrators experience change and quality initiatives within their unique context, this research characterized the influences on faculty and administrators by leaders of quality initiatives that impact positive outcomes.

Change and Quality in Higher Education

Both administrators and faculty at institutions of higher education are constantly assessing both measurable success as well as perceptions of success and subsequently using these measures to determine action (Bishop et al., 2015; Campbell & O'Meara, 2014; Heinerichs et al., 2015). Higher education institutions are extremely value-laden, largely because they are under ever-increasing pressure to prove quality and accountability to both governmental agencies that provide financial support and accreditation agencies that provide substantiation of quality (Eaton, 2011; Heinerichs et al., 2015; Welsh & Metcalf, 2003). Institutions undertake institutional effectiveness activities to demonstrate an institution's continual efforts to improve quality. These activities require some type of change within the institution that often affects a variety of stakeholders. This change is often met with resistance, particularly from faculty, and faculty and administrators view them from very different perspectives. Additionally, change in higher education is a unique undertaking due to the many distinctive considerations found in this arena (Heinerichs et al., 2015). It is foreseeable that the importance of institutional effectiveness initiatives will continue to increase with time as the question of quality in higher education continues to grow with graduates struggling to find employment and repay student debt leaving an important need for the determination of factors of success in these initiatives (Head, 2011; Welsh & Metcalf, 2003).

This literature review discusses three studies below, which are the most informative and relevant studies pertaining to this pressure and distinction regarding quality in higher education. These studies include quantitative and qualitative methodologies through surveys of several institutions accredited by one regional accrediting body in the southern united states, case studies of two institutions that completed successful institutional effectiveness activities, and the development of a leadership model (Ericksen et al., 2015; Migliore, 2012; Styron et al., 2015; Welsh & Metcalf, 2003). The studies all point to ways that leaders can impact support of these initiatives through positive efforts to acknowledge concerns and needs of faculty and administrators. Each study is presented with background, context, and critique, followed by three generalizations that can be made across these papers and with support from additional resources found in the review of the literature.

Overview of Significant Studies

In a seminal study in this area, Welsh and Metcalf (2003) address two research questions regarding institutional effectiveness activities. The first research question in the Welsh and Metcalf study states, “Are there significant differences between faculty and administrators in their attitudes toward the importance of institutional effectiveness activities?” The second research question states, “What factors help us understand faculty and administrative support for institutional effectiveness activities?” The study identifies four variables that affect faculty support for institutional effectiveness activities: perceived motivation, perceived depth of implementation, perceived definition of quality, and reported level of involvement (Welsh & Metcalf, 2003). The purpose of the study was to determine the impact of the variables on the relationship between the participants’

roles in the institution and their support for institutional effectiveness activities (Welsh & Metcalf, 2003).

The study used a survey sent to faculty who had participated in institutional accreditation and administrators at 168 institutions, all located in the southern region of the United States and accredited by the SACSCOC (Welsh & Metcalf, 2003). One delimitation to this methodology noted by the authors is the limited ability to generalize the results due to the selection of participants from institutions accredited by one accrediting body (Welsh & Metcalf, 2003). The study found that faculty support for institutional effectiveness activities increases when the motivating factors are perceived to be internal and faculty feel that the initiative is good for the college and not just tied to accreditation mandates; when the faculty perceive that they are involved in the activities and that leaders values their involvement; and when the faculty perceive that outcomes rather than inputs define quality (Welsh & Metcalf, 2003). The study did not find that faculty perception of depth of implementation was a significant predictor of support for institutional effectiveness activities, but it did find that there are differences between administrator perspectives and faculty perspectives on this topic (Welsh & Metcalf, 2003). In their results, perceptions of the depth of implementation, motivation for institutional effectiveness, and level of involvement impact administrative support for institutional effectiveness activities (Welsh & Metcalf, 2003).

Welsh and Metcalf (2003) suggest that future research look at additional factors that impact faculty and administrative support for such activities, and examine faculty who are more broadly representative of the general population than faculty who have a history of being involved with institutional accreditation. This last consideration for

future research is also a limitation of this study mentioned by the authors. Namely, faculty who have been on accreditation committees may have very different perspectives of these activities than other faculty who participated in institutional effectiveness initiatives involuntarily (Welsh & Metcalf, 2003). The study acknowledges that administrators often select faculty for such committees who have an interest in accreditation. In conjunction with this limitation, this oversight would be one critique of this study because the reality that administrators often cannot strategically select which faculty are impacted by institutional effectiveness activities leaves a need for an understanding of factors that can positively influence faculty support for the activities regardless of their disposition towards accreditation mandates (Welsh & Metcalf, 2003).

Another study in this area provides a qualitative methodology that gives a more detailed view of steps leaders took to successfully involve faculty in a quality initiative. This is a study that took place at an institution of higher education implementing a change initiative on a short timeline and is applicable to many other institutions of higher education (Ericksen et al., 2015). It addresses lessons learned from a project tied to a QEP that implemented Living Learning Communities (LLCs) at a Historically Black College or University (HBCU) (Ericksen et al., 2015). Although this is a limited context, the information contained in the paper is trustworthy and generalizable because the aspects of the implementation discussed are intricacies that are considered in many different types of institutions when implementing change, and the qualitative data presented validate these claims (Ericksen et al., 2015). Due to the universality of certain aspects of higher education, the findings in this study are applicable to many different contexts of institutions of higher education implementing a change initiative.

Feedback from faculty on a series of off-campus workshops and trainings in which the institution invested in order to facilitate the implementation of their quality initiative provided the valuable information in this paper (Ericksen et al., 2015). This is a valuable source of information and perspective as faculty perception is often a barrier that blocks the success of quality improvements (Ericksen et al., 2015). The author asserts that simply acknowledging and validating challenges and difficulties for faculty may ease the resistance to change based on qualitative data from stakeholders involved in the process (Ericksen et al., 2015).

The central themes that contributed to the success at this institution are developing supportive teams, creating an effective advisory committee, and the incorporation of administrators and faculty (Ericksen et al., 2015). Unfortunately, the details of how the institution accomplished these actions are absent. Ericksen et al. (2015) points out that the leadership team, student affairs personnel, and academic affairs personnel created support networks and enabled the success of the project without providing any specifics on steps taken to foster the success of these partnerships. The paper states one of the most important goals and lessons from the project is how each person integral to the process facilitated the implementation and how it could be replicated at other institutions, but the paper does not include this information. Similarly, the central role of academic and student affairs appears to be very crucial to the success and an innovative approach, but the paper lacks details about getting buy-in and participation from these groups to assist other institutions in benefiting from this success. The role of LLC director, Advisory Committee, student affairs, academic affairs, faculty, deans, Resident Advisors (RA), and others are again mentioned and pointed to as

positive, supportive factors for the success of the project (Ericksen et al., 2015), but the details of how these people and groups worked together were absent.

Ericksen et al. (2015) raise the important issue of incorporating faculty in a way that provides opportunities for growth and development while acknowledging their own unique teaching styles and that the project is asking them to change and step out of their comfort zone (Ericksen et al., 2015). This is a paramount consideration in any type of change at an institution of higher education and one that is known to require special effort and attention (Heinerichs et al., 2015). The paper does not explain in much detail specific actions to accomplish this goal.

Styron et al. (2015) also explore the role of leaders, specifically the project director for a QEP, including ways that leaders engage in forming meaningful and supportive relationships with the academic partners during the implementation of a QEP project at a university in the southern region (Styron et al., 2015). The paper outlines steps taken to address aspects of a new implementation strategy such as incentives for faculty, steps taken to model good behavior, and participation by leaders in required actions (Styron et al., 2015). The model described illustrates how to navigate unique aspects of an institution of higher education as well as the leader's personal attributes in order to successfully implement a solution (Styron et al., 2015).

The information presented by Styron et al. (2015) is trustworthy and generalizable because it clearly demonstrates the relevancy of aspects of a developed model that is employable in the higher education sector, and the paper presents data that the project improved metrics of success (Styron et al., 2015). These findings are important and applicable to many other contexts as there are always problems to be solved in higher

education, and institutions should always be aiming to improve. The rationale for the study is a commonly encountered issue by leaders in higher education, which makes it relevant to many other contexts. Administrators often recognize an issue facing their university along with a viable solution but face resistance from people necessary for implementation. This creates a roadblock in successfully implementing an improvement initiative and supports this particular generalization (Styron et al., 2015).

Styron et al.'s (2015) research on a new leadership problem-solving model called the Alloy Improvement Model (AIM) claims to show that the model led to the successful implementation of a QEP that integrated team-based learning (TBL) into a curriculum in order to improve student learning and critical thinking skills (Styron et al., 2015). Styron et al (2015) do not include qualitative and quantitative data and information on the link between the AIM model and successful implementation of the QEP or further information regarding faculty and student perceptions directly related to the strategy. Styron et al. (2015) do not tie the success of the QEP directly to the implementation strategy or problem-solving model. Inherent to the AIM model developed and described in the paper is a leader's need to examine their own strengths, weaknesses, and biases (Styron et al., 2015), but the paper does not account for how this applied to the project design or success of the model. Additionally, although the steps of examining one's own influence on a process are generally described (Styron et al., 2015), it is not clear from the paper how the project of implementing this QEP took these issues into account.

Taken together, these three paramount studies, along with other studies found in this literature review but not detailed here, illustrate three important generalizations about change and quality in higher education. First, institutions of higher education are under

increasing pressure to prove quality (Ericksen et al., 2015; Styron et al., 2015; Welsh & Metcalf, 2003). Next, quality and change in higher education must be approached strategically due to the nuances found in this arena (Migliore, 2012; Welsh & Metcalf, 2003; Styron et al., 2015). Finally, there are some predictable hindrances to quality and change in higher education that leaders should address when designing and implementing institutional effectiveness activities (Styron et al., 2015; Ericksen et al., 2015; Welsh & Metcalf, 2003). The studies on this topic encompass many different methodologies, including quantitative studies that employ the use of surveys and qualitative studies that examine the unique contexts of institutions. The O'Meara framework of agency in faculty professional lives helps examine these studies so as to learn from them and the leadership strategies discussed within them that foster faculty support of institutional goals.

Pressure to Prove Quality

By examining these studies along with others, this literature review demonstrates that institutions of higher education have come under increasing pressure to prove quality. The need for quality improvements in education has increased (Bishop et al., 2015; Eaton, 2011; Welsh & Metcalf, 2003). This is due to many factors, including the burden that administrators face declining enrollment and a need for responsiveness to customer satisfaction (Tracey, 2006). The diverse groups of people who comprise the customers of higher education also compounds this issue (Brown, 2018). The many and varied customers of higher education seek evidence of a quality product, and this measure of quality is much less tangible and much more difficult to achieve (Ewell, 2011; Migliore, 2012). Last, institutional effectiveness initiatives, also often referred to as QEPs, have become an integral part of accreditation, which institutions of higher

education seek for many reasons, including funding and reputation (Ericksen et al., 2015; Styron et al., 2015; Welsh & Metcalf, 2003). Despite their importance to accreditation, customers, and enrollment, institutional effectiveness initiatives have rarely shown to have measurable impacts of success on institutions (Strawn & Littlepage, 2021; Welsh & Metcalf, 2003). Furthermore, most accrediting bodies require broad campus participation in the initiatives from a variety of stakeholders, which includes faculty who lack a desire for change (Welsh & Metcalf, 2003). The pressure to continually prove an increase in quality leaves a need to understand why initiatives intended to improve quality often fail (Welsh & Metcalf, 2003).

Hindering Change in Higher Education

One of the main impediments to institutional effectiveness activities is that while governmental and accrediting agencies find institutional effectiveness initiatives essential, faculty have an equally strong desire to maintain higher education in the way they have known it, which causes resistance to the initiatives in many institutions (NILOA, 2016; Welsh & Metcalf, 2003). One major obstacle that institutions face when implementing institutional effectiveness activities is the dichotomous views that administrators and faculty have regarding the activities (Welsh & Metcalf, 2003). Administrators often recognize an issue facing their university along with a viable solution but face resistance from people necessary for implementation (Styron et al., 2015). Often, administrators see the change as a logical and simple way to improve the institution while proving quality and accountability to government and accreditation agencies (Head & Johnson, 2011; Welsh & Metcalf, 2003). Faculty, on the other hand, question the initiatives as infringing on academic freedom, valuing demands of

government agencies more than institutional stakeholders, and other factors that threaten academia the way they know it (Head, 2011; Welsh & Metcalf, 2003). Many faculties do not seek to understand the importance of institutional effectiveness activities, and therefore, do not value them (Welsh & Metcalf, 2003). The literature supports the generalization that faculty resistance is a significant factor that acts as a barrier to the success of institutional effectiveness activities. This resistance is the product of a long history of strongly held ideals in higher education, including academic freedom, autonomy, and shared governance (Welsh & Metcalf, 2003).

The Uniqueness of Quality in Higher Education

Finally, the literature supports the need for change initiatives and quality improvement measures to be approached strategically in the higher education setting due to faculty resistance to change created in part by historical values of higher education. It is a unique environment, and expectations found there are often different from other sectors. Total Quality Management (TQM) has often been used in the business sector to increase productivity, improve quality, and decrease costs (Tracey, 2006). Most of these tools and strategies, however, are not applicable to higher education without at least some adaptation due to the unique circumstances of what can be considered employees as well as customers (Tracey, 2006). For example, in higher education, faculty can be thought of as the employees; however, unlike in business, faculty are not usually bound by one way of conducting the business of the institution due to academic freedom (NILOA, 2016; Tracey, 2006). Business ideals are often contradictory to the ideals of shared governance and academic freedom among faculty, presenting an issue using similar concepts of

quality management (Council for Higher Education Accreditation [CHEA], 2012; Tracey, 2006).

Another important consideration is that the value of the product in the context of higher education is not judged by an individual consumer but rather by many different stakeholders and perceptions (Ewell, 2011; Migliore, 2012). Higher education stakeholders continue to make up an increasingly diverse body of people, and each group expects their priorities and opinions to be heard and valued (Ewell, 2011; Ketcheson & Everhart, 2002). The customers of higher education are a varied group of people, including students actually enrolled in the college, their parents, and the community who would employ those students after graduation (Migliore, 2012).

One of the most important considerations when approaching change and quality improvement in higher education is the unique perspectives of faculty on topics such as ideals of academic freedom, unique interests and emphasis, and protected positions, which make change difficult (CHEA, 2019; Migliore, 2012). Faculty values often most strongly align with academic freedom, a sense of autonomy, and their academic disciplines, which often contradict the change and accountability that accompany institutional effectiveness activities (Welsh & Metcalf, 2003). Many faculty are more loyal to their disciplines than the mission of the institution as a whole, which causes a conflict when administrators attempt to create change in line with institutional priorities (Ketcheson & Everhart, 2002). In fact, it is suggested that it may be more difficult to gain faculty support of institutional effectiveness activities at institutions where faculty ties are stronger in their departments than to the institution as a whole (Welsh & Metcalf, 2003). Often, faculty who are more committed to teaching and learning than service to the

university through committees or accreditation endeavors hinder change in higher education (Heinerichs et al., 2015; Ketcheson & Everhart, 2002). These individuals, however, should and sometimes must be included in such change by virtue of the initiative (Head & Johnson, 2011; Ketcheson & Everhart, 2002). Due to the unique role that faculty and administrators play in institutional effectiveness activities and the importance of their support for the initiatives, it is imperative to find factors and strategies that foster the support of these initiatives by both administrators and faculty.

Factors that Affect Support

Leaders of institutional effectiveness activities can influence many of the factors that affect the support of the initiatives (Campbell & O'Meara, 2014). This creates an immense opportunity for administrators to increase the probability of success for these activities. The environment of an organization is important for either facilitating or frustrating faculty agency and, therefore, faculty support for institutional goals (Campbell & O'Meara, 2014). This creates a need to determine factors that create a supportive environment of faculty agency and support for institutional goals. Factors that act as barriers to success of institutional effectiveness activities are more prominent in the literature than factors that create support, and these include things such as a lack of sustained support by administrators and a lack of faculty commitment (Welsh & Metcalf, 2003). Institutions and administrators need a roadmap of leadership strategies that can foster support when implementing institutional effectiveness activities in order to support institutional commitment by other administrators and faculty. No study can account for all the factors that contribute to faculty and administrator support for institutional

effectiveness activities; however, the literature establishes some factors that improve support (Migliore, 2012; Tracey, 2006).

The section below presents three studies that are the most informative and relevant studies pertaining to the leadership strategies that can foster faculty and administrative support of institutional change and goals included in initiatives for quality improvement. These studies include qualitative strategies to examine successful quality initiatives and also the development of a theoretical model for leadership of change at institutions of higher education (Ketcheson & Everhart, 2002; Migliore, 2012; Tracey, 2006). The studies indicate ways that leaders can impact support of these initiatives through positive efforts to acknowledge the concerns and needs of faculty and administrators. Each study is presented with background, context, and critique, followed by three generalizations that can be made across these papers and with support from additional resources found in the review of the literature.

Overview of Significant Studies

As a comparison of quality initiatives and lessons learned at a school of education at a very large university and other institutions, Tracey (2006) examined such initiatives at six institutions of higher education. The purpose of the study was to establish a model by which quality initiatives can be determined and implemented that takes advantage of the TQM strategy often used in business and the academic values of higher education (Tracey, 2006). The author provides information on the process undertaken at the institution, and the paper indicates the incorporation of an iterative process used for choosing topics for the development of quality initiatives that best suit an institution. The author outlines four broad lessons learned as a result of the process, including active

participation and support from leaders is a key component to success; inclusion and consensus-building are important to obtain faculty commitment; leaders should provide ways to participate without huge additional time commitments; and taking advantage of existing programs or resources increases opportunities for initiatives to succeed (Tracey, 2006). The model itself may be useful to many other types of institutions attempting to undertake a quality initiative, but the paper lacks detail regarding actual implementation.

As a qualitative review, the paper did not present sufficient quotes or input from stakeholders but was more of a summary of actions that took place (Tracey, 2006), making the results less generalizable to other contexts. The author presents a visionary plan and represents several important steps as effortless (Tracey, 2006) without any acknowledgment of the obstacles that anyone familiar with higher education may anticipate. For example, the author made sweeping statements about faculty coming to a consensus or participating in meetings without any description of how this was encouraged, received, and actualized (Tracey, 2006). The author also describes meetings with faculty and staff attendance and participation but does not address buy-in, perception, or if the institution provided incentives to accomplish this (Tracey, 2006). The paper addresses the importance of chairs providing information to faculty and staff (Tracey, 2006), but the paper does not describe actual comments during meetings, how leaders resolved conflicts, or how the leaders carried out processes. Meetings are described as being inclusive of all faculty without increasing time demands (Tracey, 2006) and involving a critical mass getting on board with the mindset of quality improvement (Tracey, 2006). The paper lacks detail in providing a roadmap for leaders at other institutions.

Another qualitative paper on an individual accreditation effort at Portland State University (PSU) describes the implementation of an electronic portfolio (Ketcheson & Everhart, 2002). The purpose of the paper is to demonstrate the success of the project as being due to a partnership between institutional research administrators and a faculty committee (Ketcheson & Everhart, 2002). While the paper is somewhat limited in scope to the unique context and environment of this project at PSU, the paper addresses the broader issue of the importance of engaging faculty in institutional initiatives in order to satisfy increasing pressure for accountability and assessment while many faculties feel that this work is isolated to administrators and distant from their concerns or responsibilities. (Ketcheson & Everhart, 2002). The authors also discuss the importance of communicating quality to internal and external stakeholders and how this is an important consideration in the development and implementation of a project (Ketcheson & Everhart, 2002). The authors describe how PSU facilitated a collaborative approach, including how the institution chose leaders and the ultimate product and success of their work (Ketcheson & Everhart, 2002).

Migliore (2012) attempts to construct an integrated approach to leadership within higher education founded on the principle of trust and incorporating aspects of four business models while accounting for the nuances of higher education. The information in the paper provides justification of an integrated model for leaders in higher education built on trust with the goal of being able to effect change that leads to higher quality education (Migliore, 2012). The paper actually references this model as being helpful to board members and governing boards, but leaders at institutions can easily adapt the

principles discussed to university administration as well as specific committees tasked with leadership or quality improvement (Migliore, 2012).

Migliore (2012) establishes background and context as the paper broadly describes the unique attributes of higher education as opposed to other sectors such as business that must prove a level of quality. Additionally, the author acknowledges the added complexity of differences in abilities, cultural settings, personalities, motivations, responsibilities, and interpersonal competence, all of which affect trust (Migliore, 2012). The author came to assess the need for adapted business models for quality improvement in higher education by thoroughly exploring and clearly presenting the ideas behind four leadership education strategies (Migliore, 2012). The information contained in the paper is very trustworthy and generalizable as it relates to principles common among many forms of leadership. It is also based on previously proven strategies. The context to which the results can be generalized, however, are debatable as the model was simply developed and explained in the paper and not actually applied to a specific project (Migliore, 2012). The model is seemingly valid as the author based it on other documented models, but the reliability is not proven as the author did not apply the model to a specific context.

Despite these shortcomings, the model in Migliore (2012) adequately supports the idea that factors other than data such as motivation and climate are important for establishing success for quality improvement in higher education. Migliore provides detail regarding the theoretical implementation of a leadership model in a way that is helpful and broad enough to be applied to other institutions (Migliore, 2012). The author acknowledges that more research regarding this model is needed. Most obvious, the

model needs to be applied to an actual institution and tested for viability (Migliore, 2012).

The literature shows seven factors that increase faculty and administrative support of institutional goals, such as quality initiatives (Welsh & Metcalf, 2003). These factors include time, organizational fit, administrator faculty relations, professional development activities, depth of implementation, internal versus external motivation, and transparency. The studies on this topic primarily include qualitative methodologies that examine the unique contexts of institutions and leadership models. The O'Meara framework of agency in faculty professional lives helps examine these studies so as to learn from them and the leadership strategies discussed within them that foster faculty support of institutional goals.

Time

Administrators must consider the burden of implementation of any new initiative on faculty when designing institutional effectiveness activities in order to gain the support of faculty for the activities (Bank et al., 2017; Heinerichs et al., 2015; Welsh & Metcalf, 2003). Time is one of the most valuable and scarce resources for employees of higher education, including both faculty and administrators (Campbell & O'Meara, 2014; White, 2018). University faculty are increasingly burdened by heavier teaching loads, which creates less time for research and course preparation (Tracey, 2006). It is, therefore, important to find ways to include faculty in institutional effectiveness activities that do not add to their already large list of responsibilities (Tracey, 2006). If leaders provide faculty with ways to contribute to the success of the initiative that fits into

already scheduled meetings or responsibilities, it increases their willingness to participate and support the initiative (Tracey, 2006).

Organization Fit

Another factor in the literature that contributes to the willingness of faculty to participate in institutional initiatives is faculty perceptions of the fit between their values and the values of the organization. Organizational fit has a significant impact on faculty agency, which contributes to faculty support of institutional goals (Campbell & O'Meara, 2014). Equally important is the perception of faculty of their fit within the social and professional relationships of the institution (Campbell & O'Meara, 2014). Collegiality, or the companionship between colleagues, has an important impact on faculty agency (Campbell & O'Meara, 2014). An important understanding of how faculty fit within an organization is to appreciate that the organization must show support and recognition of the faculty that it has and not that the organization should only seek out a specific type of person to fit within the organization (Campbell & O'Meara, 2014). In this way, administrators should seek to recognize faculty for their successes and contributions and to acknowledge and support the values of those faculty (Campbell & O'Meara, 2014; Head, 2011). The perception by faculty of the value of service to the institution plays a role in faculty agency (Campbell & O'Meara, 2014), and participation in institutional effectiveness activities would fall under the umbrella of service to the institution in most cases. Increasing faculty perception of fit within the organization is a low-cost way for administrators to increase faculty satisfaction and support for organizational goals (Campbell & O'Meara, 2014).

In addition to the perception of the values of the university, the value of institutional effectiveness activities themselves is an important factor that administrators must address to foster support of the activities (Bank et al., 2017; Welsh & Metcalf, 2003). Working within an institution's existing culture is important to foster the success of these initiatives. The creative use of existing resources and sharing of existing funding is helpful in stimulating creative thoughts about funding improvement initiatives to overcome the roadblock of financial and physical support (Ericksen et al., 2015). Even when working within a given culture, administrators must address differing perceptions of quality between faculty and administrators to achieve this alignment of value (Welsh & Metcalf, 2003). Leaders of institutional effectiveness initiatives should tailor the delivery of information about the project to different groups depending on their focus and priorities (Ericksen et al., 2015). This subtle accommodation of stakeholders' previously held priorities fosters success in the face of change (Ericksen et al., 2015).

In order to address the perception of value and fit, administrators need to work to establish a culture of loyalty to the organization in the ways they organize leadership structures, involve faculty in decision-making, and implement change (Ketcheson & Everhart, 2002; Welsh & Metcalf, 2003). In their daily decisions, administrators should work to value what faculty value in order to foster and preserve their commitment to the institution as a whole (Ketcheson & Everhart, 2002). The culture of an organization cannot be something that is simply wished for or mandated. The day-to-day operations, patterns, norms, routines, and workings of the institution determine the culture of an organization (Ketcheson & Everhart, 2002). Recognition and support of faculty can improve the climate of the organization to one that values and appreciates the work of

faculty (Campbell & O'Meara, 2014). In this way, administrators can begin to develop in faculty the importance of loyalty not only to their disciplines but also to the institutions that support their teaching and research (Ketcheson & Everhart, 2002). If faculty feel that the work of a committee or initiative is in line with their values and also their perceived values of the institution, they will have more commitment to the initiative (Ketcheson & Everhart, 2002). It is important for administrators to choose topics for the development of quality initiatives that best suit an institution and the values of its faculty. They should also examine strengths of the institution and areas that could be improved and consider input from various sources, including faculty (Smith, 2016; Tracey, 2006).

Transparency

Valuing input from multiple sources also contributes to a sense of transparency. Transparency is an important factor for many aspects of leadership, and leaders of institutional effectiveness initiatives should consider transparency to both internal and external stakeholders. Of particular importance, faculty satisfaction and success is positively correlated to transparency in an organizational context, and faculty satisfaction contributes to faculty loyalty to institutional goals (Campbell & O'Meara, 2014). Faculty engagement in decision-making and free expression of ideas are factors closely related to transparency and are important factors for faculty agency, which is important in faculty support for organizational change (Campbell & O'Meara, 2014; Ronco, 2012). The literature shows that faculty are more open to change when leaders involve them in the change (Welsh & Metcalf, 2003). The failure of many administrative initiatives can be attributed to the lack of shared interest or decision-making by administrators and faculty (Welsh & Metcalf, 2003).

Due to the integral role faculty often play in the success of institutional effectiveness activities, it is important to involve them in the planning and implementation to the greatest extent possible (Welsh & Metcalf, 2003). Involving faculty early in the change process and in a collaborative manner will support the success of the initiative (Ketcheson & Everhart, 2002; Smith, 2016; Welsh & Metcalf, 2003). When faculty are involved in this decision-making, the environment should support the discussion of creative ideas so that faculty feel they can take ownership of the initiative (Ketcheson & Everhart, 2002). Additionally, an inclusive communication system is extremely important to demonstrate that the desire for broad participation is genuine (Tracey, 2006). Consensus-building strategies when determining details and implementation design fosters support of the initiatives and obtain buy-in from a variety of stakeholders (Tracey, 2006). Administrators should not expect that initiatives designed without faculty input will be readily adopted by them (Welsh & Metcalf, 2003). When faculty are involved only to implement change after the decisions are made on what and how to change creates a larger sense of frustration for them (Ketcheson & Everhart, 2002). While it is important to involve faculty and other stakeholders, it is also important to clearly define the roles of participation so as to set reasonable expectations (Welsh & Metcalf, 2003).

There is a large need for campus-wide involvement in decision-making; in fact, the literature shows that administrators who take a top-down approach to leadership usually do not last long in their positions (Ketcheson & Everhart, 2002). Faculty appreciate being able to produce something rather than simply being asked to work on things developed without their input (Ketcheson & Everhart, 2002; Smith, 2016). Success

of institutional effectiveness initiatives often involves a critical mass getting on board with the mindset of quality improvement and the importance of participation of faculty and staff (Tracey, 2006).

Professional Development Resources

Another important factor that impacts faculty satisfaction and, therefore, support of organizational goals and change is administrative support for professional development resources (Campbell & O'Meara, 2014; Strawn & Littlepage, 2021). Institutional effectiveness activities are good opportunities for leaders to provide these professional development resources because they can come as part of the training for faculty and/or staff, and faculty support increases when they are provided with resources to learn during the implementation of the activity (NILOA, 2016; Welsh & Metcalf, 2003). Many professional development activities associated with institutional effectiveness initiatives, such as mentoring, are low-cost and have been shown to have a positive impact on faculty agency (Campbell & O'Meara, 2014).

The incorporation of faculty into institutional effectiveness activities in a way that provides opportunities for growth and development provides a reward for the faculty for the valuable time they put into the project. Professional development activities can also be a way of acknowledging that the initiative is asking them to change their own unique teaching styles and step out of their comfort zone in a way that increases the viability of change initiatives within the realm of higher education (Ericksen et al., 2015).

Faculty Administrator Relations

The issue of transparency can go far to facilitate trusting faculty administrator relations. Unfortunately, many people within higher education have come to accept

tension between faculty and administrators as an expected aspect of institutions (Welsh & Metcalf, 2003). In addition to the other factors impeding the success of institutional effectiveness activities, this lack of cooperation presents a large hurdle in the success of the activities (Welsh & Metcalf, 2003). The literature shows that faculty tend to be skeptical of administrators, but one factor that may improve this dynamic is administrative reward or recognition of faculty achievement or involvement (Welsh & Metcalf, 2003). Additionally, administrators must form partnerships with faculty in the sense that the administrators also assume some of the burden of change themselves and emulate a commitment to quality (Styron et al., 2015). Rather than simply dictating from above, administrators should demonstrate active support by also adapting some of their own activities to accommodate the initiative (Styron et al., 2015). It is crucial for faculty to perceive that administrators are also giving time, talent, and energy to the initiative and value the time, talent, and energy that faculty are inputting (Tracey, 2006). Steps taken to address aspects of the implementation of a new initiative such as incentives for faculty, modeling good behavior, and participation by leaders in required actions go a long way to bridge the divide between faculty and administrators (Styron et al., 2015).

The divide often comes because faculty often feel that the work of accreditation and institutional improvement or accountability is far removed from their own work or concerns and sees these efforts as just the isolated work of administrators (Head & Johnson, 2011; Ketcheson & Everhart, 2002). In fact, university stakeholders as a whole make the mistake of drawing a distinction between administration and the actual work of the institution (Brown, 2018; Ketcheson & Everhart, 2002). Avoiding this divisive mentality requires faculty and administrators to regularly work together to achieve and

determine institutional priorities (Ketcheson & Everhart, 2002; Strawn & Littlepage, 2021). It is also very important that leaders not only ask for the input of faculty and stakeholders but also act on that input (Ketcheson & Everhart, 2002). One interesting assertion that could be helpful to many administrators in forming partnerships during change is that faculty are not only employees of higher education but also a customer of higher education to be considered. Taken from this perspective, change initiatives should not only have faculty as part of the leadership but should consider faculty when building trust and confidence in the institution (Tracey, 2006).

Internal Versus External Motivation

Skepticism and lack of confidence in the institution often stem from the perception that institutional leadership places a higher priority on outside demands than the concerns of internal stakeholders. Institutions of higher education have long valued their autonomy and lack of accountability to or oversight by government agencies (CHEA, 2012; Welsh & Metcalf, 2003). With an increased reliance on governmental agencies for funding, however, administrators of higher education have increasingly sought to meet the demands of these agencies (Brown, 2018; Welsh & Metcalf, 2003). Faculty, on the other hand, have continued to value autonomy and are resistant to mandates for change influenced by groups outside of the institution (Welsh & Metcalf, 2003). It is important, therefore, that faculty perceive that the impetus for change and the topic and structure of that change are the result of institutional stakeholders' opinions and preferences and not those of external agencies (Welsh & Metcalf, 2003). There are some factors related to institutional effectiveness activities that increase faculty perception of

internally motivated change, such as initiatives to recruit more students and better students (Welsh & Metcalf, 2003).

As Ericksen et al. (2015) describes in his project on implementing Living Learning Communities (LLCs), the decision to begin a project in programs that were already on campus and known to be successful can ease the skepticism often encountered with change (Bank et al., 2017; Ericksen et al., 2015). This builds on the commitment that faculty have to internal programs and internal successes. Faculty members feel more committed to the change when they have the perception that it supports the institutional mission and the teaching and learning of the institution and not just external motivating factors (Ketcheson & Everhart, 2002; Smith, 2016).

Faculty often do not agree with accrediting agencies on their measures of quality. Accrediting agencies in the past determined quality by measurable resources such as endowments and physical facilities (Welsh & Metcalf, 2003). Increasingly, external agencies measure quality by learning outcomes, and these have an important role in determining institutional effectiveness activities (Bishop et al., 2015; Welsh & Metcalf, 2003). The major complication that arises from this measure of quality is that administrators are far more likely than faculty to support the idea of measuring quality in terms of the impact of instruction on student learning and see how this fits within the organization; however, faculty are an integral part of any initiative or measurement that determines quality in this way, making them a necessary participant in institutional effectiveness activities that use learning outcome measurement to impact delivery methods or other educational activities (Welsh & Metcalf, 2003).

Depth of Implementation

Last, faculty and administrators are more likely to devote time and energy to institutional effectiveness activities if they perceive that the initiative will be comprehensively integrated into the institution and will have a lasting impact, which is the depth of the implementation of the project. If faculty and administrators view the initiative as simply being adopted into one area for the duration of a specific administrator's tenure at the institution or the length of an accreditation directive or some other fleeting factor, they are much less likely to work to support the goals of the initiative (Welsh & Metcalf, 2003). In general, administrators tend to see initiatives as being more deeply implemented into the institution than faculty (Welsh & Metcalf, 2003).

Faculty must perceive that an initiative is more than just a housekeeping project in order to develop commitment to it (Ketcheson & Everhart, 2002). One way to improve this commitment over time is to create into the culture of the organization this depth of perception by sustaining committee work after the completion of the development of a project (Ketcheson & Everhart, 2002). When collaboration between faculty and administrators outlives the actual initiative, the culture of the organization begins to influence future initiatives and perceptions (Ketcheson & Everhart, 2002).

Summary

Higher education is a very unique arena that is unlike any other business, corporation, or institution, especially when it comes to measuring and creating quality (Campbell & O'Meara, 2014; Migliore, 2012; Welsh & Metcalf, 2003). Change and quality, therefore, must be approached strategically in institutions of higher education in

order for success. Institutional effectiveness projects are more successful at institutions of higher education when leaders take into account certain factors that impact the support of the initiatives by both faculty and administrators (Ericksen et al., 2015; Styron et al., 2015; Welsh & Metcalf, 2003). Studies up to this point on the successful implementation of institutional effectiveness initiatives in higher education are lacking specific details or actions that are replicable at other institutions, leaving a need for further research to determine more of a roadmap for success for institutions undertaking such an initiative. This is increasingly important as institutions of higher education are under growing pressure to prove quality for accreditation and funding purposes.

The factors that predict success of these activities are predominantly consistent across the literature. Change within any organization can be met with resistance, and resistance increases in the higher education setting due to long-held ideals and beliefs such as academic freedom and autonomy from oversight (Migliore, 2012; Tracey, 2006; Welsh & Metcalf, 2003). Administrators of higher education institutions need to understand the dynamics and relationships found within the unique context in which they develop. Each institution has different leadership, priorities, students, and other factors that affect institutional effectiveness activities. While the leadership on faculty agency and support for institutional effectiveness activities has quantitatively studied these factors at large numbers of institutions, researchers need to study institutions that have experienced success in these areas in depth in order to facilitate an understanding of why and how these factors can be leveraged by administrators and leaders for support of the initiatives.

Additionally, the literature discusses faculty members who self-selected to be involved with institutional effectiveness or have been involved intimately with accreditation for a long time (Welsh & Metcalf, 2003). While this may be helpful in some institutions, institutional effectiveness activities often impact faculty who do not self-select to be involved with them. This can create new barriers to the success of the activities, and research has not explored the ways in which the previously studied factors are viewed by the faculty.

Qualitative studies on successful institutional effectiveness activities have given perspective to the leadership of these initiatives (Ericksen et al., 2015; Styron et al., 2015; Tracey, 2006); however, these studies do not incorporate leadership strategies in a way that is replicable at other institutions. The current study helped to increase the body of knowledge on this topic in order to show how leaders can impact success and give more of a roadmap or explanation to facilitate the translation of institutional effectiveness activities into actual quality improvement.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to determine how leaders foster support for institutional effectiveness initiatives and to discover strategies that institutional effectiveness leaders at institutions of higher education use in order to foster the success of these initiatives. Administrators in this study were leaders engaged in institutional effectiveness initiatives whose primary duty is not teaching and/or research. By determining these factors, attitudes, and opinions, this study discovered leadership strategies that administrators at institutions of higher education can adopt in order to foster the success of these initiatives usually undertaken for the purpose of accreditation. This chapter describes the design of the study, the research questions and methodology used, the role of the researcher, the selection of the case and participants, data collection and analysis, and the validity, reliability, and trustworthiness of the study.

Research Questions

This study examined the following research questions:

RQ1: What are the perceived factors that faculty and administrators believe encourage the support of institutional effectiveness initiatives?

RQ2: How do certain factors encourage faculty and administrative support for institutional effectiveness activities that lead to their success?

Research Design

This study was a case study of an institution that successfully implemented an institutional effectiveness initiative. Success indicated that the institution had support of faculty, administrators, and the broad campus community for the initiative and also met the objectives of the project. The theoretical lens for the current study was the O'Meara framework of agency in faculty professional lives (Campbell & O'Meara, 2014). The research questions are appropriately studied through qualitative research as the purpose of qualitative research seeks to understand some experience or phenomenon (Stake, 1995). A case study is the best way to study these research questions because the research questions are *how* and *why* questions explain causal links in a complex contemporary phenomenon, and the researcher has no control over the events and cannot manipulate behaviors or actions (Yin, 2014). The current study did not seek to determine whether or not it was successful but rather examine why an initiative was successful, which is excellent material for a case study (Yin, 2014). Additionally, the implementation of an institutional effectiveness initiative is a complex social phenomenon, making it appropriate for case study research. In order to explain how certain factors lead to the success of such an initiative, it is necessary to trace the links of such factors to events, interactions, or occurrences rather than the frequency of any certain event, interaction, or occurrence (Yin, 2014).

A strength of the case study design in this case is the ability to triangulate data from multiple types of sources (Yin, 2014). The current study used interviews from faculty and administrators at the case study site as well as experts in institutional effectiveness from a variety of institutional types to recognize factors and themes and

confirm their meaning through the convergence of multiple perspectives (Yin, 2014). The current study also used institutional data and reports to confirm information discovered in interviews. Another strength of case study research important to the current study is the ability to illuminate multiple realities that depend on the observer or participant (Yin, 2014). In this case, the researcher expected that the reality of implementation would be experienced differently from the faculty than from the administrators (Welsh & Metcalf, 2003), and this is an important consideration for the determination of the causal linkage between certain leadership factors and the success of the initiative. Illuminating why these factors are perceived differently and how this impacts the success of the initiative addressed the research questions tied to the current study.

Role of the Researcher

The researcher who conducted the present study was the coordinator for a QEP at a university that is accredited by SACSCOC. A QEP is a type of institutional effectiveness initiative, and the researcher was intimately involved with the administrative and faculty perspectives of this type of project. The researcher had existing beliefs and values because of the professional work regarding faculty support for these initiatives, as working with faculty on implementation was an essential piece of job duties for the researcher. For example, the researcher believed that faculty tend to be resistant to initiatives that involve a change in the manner in which they teach or assess students. The researcher also believed that administrators can facilitate support for such initiatives by being willing to adapt the initiative to the preferences of feedback of the faculty. In order to avoid bias, the researcher was open to contradictory evidence and reported preliminary findings to colleagues in order to get input on the perceptions or

inferences made at an early stage in the research. According to Yin (2014), this is a good way to avoid potential bias. Additionally, the coding of the data helped to provide some oversight and remove bias (Stake, 1995).

Selection of the Case

Due to the instrumental nature of this case study, it is not necessary to demonstrate the typicality of the case chosen because the perplexities of unique contexts are often surprisingly applicable to other contexts (Stake, 1995); on the contrary, the uniqueness of the case provided a large opportunity to learn. The case chosen was a two-year institution accredited by SACSCOC that had recently undertaken a QEP for the purposes of accreditation with SACSCOC. In addition to being a two-year institution in the southern region of the United States, the institution for the case study is an open-enrollment institution with multiple campuses offering associate degrees as well as technical certifications. The main criterion for selecting the case was sufficient access to appropriate people for interviews and willing participation from the institution (Stake, 1995; Yin, 2014). Also important was that the institution had successfully implemented a QEP that accomplished what it set out to accomplish with faculty and administrative support in order to maximize understanding of the factors that influenced support for institutional effectiveness initiatives. This ensured that the case chosen was the most likely to provide insight to the research questions and provide a maximum opportunity to learn (Stake, 1995; Yin, 2014). The information gained in this manner can refine current understandings and generalizations gathered from other studies that have looked at large samples of institutions accredited by SACSCOC and attitudes and support for institutional effectiveness initiatives at those institutions (Welsh & Metcalf, 2003).

Selection of Participants

Participants for interviews were chosen by purposeful sampling so as to gather information and experiences that were important to understanding the focus of the research- the success of institutional effectiveness initiatives (Stake, 1995). The researcher selected administrators and faculty members intimately involved with institutional effectiveness initiatives as part of the accreditation process from the institution as interviewees in order to get an understanding of their unique experience. These participants were also able to suggest other people within the institution who could offer valuable information, and these additional people were also then asked to contribute (Yin, 2014). The researcher determined the sample size by a saturation of information rather than the determination that the participants have equally represented the population (Stake, 1995).

The participants chosen to participate as experts on institutional effectiveness to offer triangulation of the data were selected based on experience with successful institutional effectiveness initiatives and experience with different contexts. These interview participants represented different levels of administration within institutions, different types of institutions, and experience with different types of projects. Their unique experiences and opinions were able to add to the information gathered on factors that impact the success of an initiative.

Data Collection

The current study collected interview information from multiple sources as well as institutional information and data. The collection of multiple sources of data is a strength of case study research that contributes to its construct validity and reliability

(Yin, 2014). Time frames relevant to the initiative undertaken by the institution bounded the data for the case study (Yin, 2014). The beginning date of conversations of meetings surrounding selecting an initiative and the ending date of the 5-year report delivered to SACSCOC regarding the progress of the initiative were the benchmarks for the beginning and ending of data collection.

The determination of when enough information was collected and evidence reviewed was determined by finding a point of saturation where conclusions were confirmed by more than one source and also where rival explanations were explored deeply enough (Stake, 1995; Yin, 2014). Table 1 describes how each was collected and for what purpose, as well as the connection to the research questions. The nature of the initiative designed and implemented by the institution selected as the case for the study determined a lot of the information collected.

Table 1

Data Collection and Purpose

Data Source	How Collected	Connection to Research Question(s)
Observations	Field notes Audio Recordings	RQ1: Reveals the possible differences in interactions that faculty and administrators have in activities surrounding the initiative RQ2: Reveals how faculty and administrators work to implement and create success surrounding the initiative
Interviews	Field Notes Audio Recordings	RQ1: Allows participants to express their values and beliefs regarding the factors that fostered support or lack thereof for the initiative RQ2: Allows participants to describe factors that increased support for the initiative
Institutional Data	Institutional Records of Accreditation reports and Conference Presentations	RQ2: Analysis reveals how factors fostered the success of the initiative

Interviews

Researchers conduct interviews as a conversation centered around the purpose of gathering information to understand a particular subject or experience (Merriam, 2009). Interviews are particularly helpful when the researcher wants to gain knowledge about something that happened in the past or cannot be directly observed (Merriam, 2009). Due to the nature of the current study, many of the activities of implementation of the QEP at the institution observed took place before the beginning of the study; therefore, the researcher collected data about these events through the interview process. See Appendix A for the interview protocol. The interviews used in the current study were semi-structured in that a predetermined set of questions or issues guided the conversation; however, the researcher allowed the conversation to deviate from those questions in order

to explore unique experiences or important perspectives on circumstances at the institution (Merriam, 2009; Yin, 2014). The interviewer made audio recordings of the interviews and took field notes during the interview as well as direct quotes (Stake, 1995). After the interview, the interviewer made notes and summaries of impressions and key findings and presented those to the interviewee for member checking to ensure that interpretations were accurate (Stake, 1995).

The semi-structured manner of the interviews guided the conversation towards information bounded by the research questions but also elicited comments from the participants that may be relevant to the topic but not predicted during the construction of the interview questions (Yin, 2014). This design allowed the researcher to take advantage of unexpected opportunities while also avoiding potentially biased questioning or conversation (Yin, 2014). The line of questioning was consistent with the interviewees but also fluid in order to pursue relevant topics, opinions, perceptions, and important insight and information (Yin, 2014). The interviews ranged from about 20 minutes to an hour and 15 minutes. The interviewees were able to provide insight on other sources of evidence that should be pursued, such as other interviewees (Yin, 2014).

Direct Observations

Direct observations during the interviews included workspaces, environments, and other context information that indicated something about the culture of the institution and the factors that played an important role in the implementation of the initiative (Yin, 2014). This provided some direct observation of the interactions and relationships even though the meetings and implementation occurred in the past (Yin, 2014).

Documentation

Documentation was retrieved from the institution pertaining to paperwork submitted to SACSCOC and institutional information relevant to the outcomes of the initiative. Additionally, conference presentation materials from one of the experts interviewed were collected to support information obtained through the interview process. Documentation is beneficial because it is an unobtrusive way to collect information that corroborates information provided in interviews (Merriam, 2009; Yin, 2014). The documentation also was helpful in that it gave specific information on important factors in the implementation of the initiative (Yin, 2014). The researcher remained aware that documentation can also contain bias depending on who compiled the document, and the documentation served to corroborate other forms of data. One important consideration for documentation obtained was to examine for whom the document was intended, to whom the writer distributed the documentation, and by whom it was composed.

Participant Description and Pseudonyms

The researcher created pseudonyms for each participant, and excluded information that would jeopardize the anonymity of the participants. Table 2 discloses the participant pseudonyms along with details of observations from interviews.

Table 2

Participant Pseudonyms and Descriptions

Participant Pseudonym	Descriptions and Observations
F1	F1 is an instructor at a two-year institution of higher education. The researcher interviewed F1 over Zoom, and the interview was both video and audio recorded. F1 was an instructor at the high school level prior to joining the institution of the case study.
F2	F2 is an instructor at a two-year institution of higher education. F2 has also voluntarily taken on some administrative tasks that are part of the institutional effectiveness initiative at the institution, such as data analysis and contribution to accreditation reporting. F2 expressed interest in institutional data and accreditation. The researcher interviewed F2 over Zoom, and the interview was both video and audio recorded.
F3	F3 is an instructor at a two-year institution of higher education. The researcher interviewed F3 over Zoom, and the interview was both video and audio recorded. F3 is very classroom-focused and has no interest in accreditation.
A1	A1 is an administrator at a two-year institution of higher education. A1 oversaw the department of implementation for the institutional effectiveness initiative. The researcher interviewed A1 in person, and the interview was audio recorded.
A2	A2 was an administrator at a two-year institution of higher education. The day of the interview for the current study was A2's last day at this institution. A2 was in upper administration at the institution. The researcher interviewed A2 in person, and the interview was audio recorded.
E1	E1 is an administrator of a four-year institution of higher education. E1 is the accreditation liaison for the institution at which they work. The researcher interviewed E1 in person, and the interview was audio recorded.
E2	E2 is an administrator of a four-year institution of higher education. E2 oversees the implementation and department for the current institutional effectiveness initiative at their institution. The researcher interviewed E2 in person, and the interview was audio recorded.
E3	E3 is an administrator of a two-year institution of higher education. E3 is in upper administration at the institution and is over institutional effectiveness. The researcher interviewed E3 over Zoom, and the interview was video and audio recorded.

Data Analysis

The striking characteristic of qualitative data analysis is that it occurs throughout the research process (Merriam, 2009; Stake, 1995). Impressions and interpretations were recorded along the way and then aggregated into a more concrete analysis of the phenomenon retrospectively when looking back at notes or journal entries (Stake, 1995). While this aggregation can create meaning in itself, qualitative researchers also find meaning in discreet occurrences (Stake, 1995). Analysis of data from interviews also uses the observance of patterns in order to establish meaning from observations and recordings (Stake, 1995). Coding is one of the primary forms of data analysis for qualitative data, such as interviews (Saldana, 2013; Stake, 1995). Coding allows the researcher to observe themes and find meaning from them in the context in which they appear by discovering the conditions under which those themes are present (Saldana, 2013; Stake, 1995). Last, naturalistic generalizations are an important type of analysis for case studies (Stake, 1995). By presenting enough information that is open to interpretation, qualitative researchers allow readers to determine their own meaning from the research based on their individual knowledge and experiences (Stake, 1995; Yin, 2014).

The data analysis for the current study took into consideration all of the data collected to ensure that bias did not enter the interpretation of the information. The data set for the current study included information from interviews from faculty and administrators at the case study site as well as experts in institutional effectiveness at other institutions. The researcher kept information in word processing programs such as Microsoft Word. The researcher uploaded audio recordings from the interviews into software in order to produce transcriptions, and compared the transcriptions with the

original audio files for correctness. The researcher reviewed interview notes immediately after the interviews took place in order to create a more accurate recollection of impressions and perceptions. Observations other than verbal information in the interviews were also noted and reviewed in order to consider multiple components of information and how the interviewee experienced the reality of the implementation of the initiative. The researcher applied preliminary coding to the data based on impressions, and then final codes were developed based on the frequency and similarities and differences in these preliminary codes. The interviewer then presented this information to interviewees for member checking to ensure the impressions were accurate.

Structural coding was used on all data as it is appropriate for studies that gather information in a semi-structured manner from multiple participants (Saldana, 2013). Structural coding tied the coding to specific research questions as well as specific factors and then counted according to how many participants discussed each code or how many documents contained the code (Saldana, 2013). Data were categorized by codes in ways that they could be reorganized and rearranged in order to create meaning and explanation (Saldana, 2013).

Institutional documentation and conference presentation materials were then analyzed and coded by themes. By looking for convergent evidence from both interviewee reports as well as documentation and institutional data, the themes of the findings were determined (Yin, 2014). Analytic reflection of the coding of the data resulted in patterns that emerged as themes (Saldana, 2013). The researcher compared the themes for patterns, repetition, and other significant factors (Saldana, 2013). The

researcher presented themes and patterns to participants for member checking as well as colleagues in order to ensure the integrity of the process (Saldana, 2013).

Data were analyzed to determine where different sources of information corroborate findings or where there are contradictory pieces of evidence (Yin, 2014). The researcher compiled data by theme in order to find where the information from different sources converges and patterns begin to emerge (Yin, 2014). This process also highlighted the differences in values, beliefs, and perceptions held by the different participants depending on their classification as a faculty member or an administrator (Yin, 2014). The researcher compared themes and patterns with rival explanations in order to explore all aspects of the data (Yin, 2014). This methodical approach to compiling the different information sources strengthened the analysis of the data (Yin, 2014).

Trustworthiness of this Study

Credibility of the Study Overall

Investigation of rival explanations for the findings of the case study strengthened the credibility of the current study (Yin, 2014). Rival explanations in this case included factors that are unique to the case chosen, such as administration, location, funding, and student body. The rival explanations were also theories that were applicable to other contexts, such as specific goals or topics chosen for the initiative. Exploring these rival explanations strengthened the findings of the case study and the factors explored related to the leadership and implementation of the initiative (Yin, 2014). Member checking with the interviewees also strengthened the credibility of the study (Saldana, 2013; Yin, 2014). The researcher conducted member checking after interviews.

Construct Validity

Qualitative research does not seek to remove outside variables to accomplish control because it seeks to understand, and this understanding must take into account the many variables that created the experience or finding (Stake, 1995). The construct validity of the current study was strengthened by using multiple types of evidence and by member checking through having key people from the institution review a draft of the case study report for accuracy (Stake, 1995; Yin, 2014). The use of multiple sources of evidence created converging lines of inquiry, where a theme or conclusion can be confirmed by multiple pieces of data so that it lessens the opportunity for bias (Yin, 2014). This is a form of triangulation in qualitative research that seeks corroboratory evidence in order to strengthen the findings of the study (Stake, 1995; Yin, 2014). Additionally, the factors chosen as important for successful implementation of institutional effectiveness initiatives originate from the literature and previous studies (Welsh & Metcalf, 2003; Yin, 2014).

Internal Validity

The current study addressed internal validity primarily by investigating rival explanations (Yin, 2014). Comparing the conclusions to rival explanations increased the internal validity of the study by ensuring that bias did not enter the influence of the conclusions of the study. This comparison showed a causal linkage between the factors discussed as influencing support of institutional effectiveness initiatives and the success of those initiatives (Yin, 2014).

External Validity

By using appropriate theory, the current study addressed the issue of external validity (Yin, 2014). The data collected was continually viewed using the theoretical issues tied to the research questions in order to ground the data (Yin, 2014). Due to the qualitative nature of the current study, the results were not generalizable in the statistical sense (Merriam, 2009). The information, however, can be applied to other contexts and was based on factors already present in the literature (Welsh & Metcalf, 2003). It is often more common than believed that complexities of process and situation are often found in many different contexts (Stake, 1995) making the external validity of the present study strengthened.

Reliability

In order to maximize the reliability of the current study, the researcher minimized biases and errors in several ways (Yin, 2014). One way was by developing a case study database or audit trail that included all of the raw notes, preliminary impressions, and other sources of primary data or evidence separate from the final case study report (Stake, 1995; Yin, 2014). This information is available for other researchers to view, analyze, and interpret in its original form (Yin, 2014). The database was kept separate from the researcher's report and narrative interpretation of the information and is complete enough that another researcher could question the conclusions or propose alternative explanations (Yin, 2014).

Limitations

Some limitations are that although the current study found that these factors are predictors of support for institutional effectiveness initiatives, there may be confounding

factors at the institution for which the current study did not control. Additionally, the interviews did not control for outside factors and were not representative of a general population, and the researcher had some resistance to participation.

Delimitations

One delimitation of this study is that there are tangential problems to the implementation of institutional effectiveness initiatives not considered here. The factors chosen as the focus of the current study, however, can be directly related to the success of implementation, which is an important barrier for many institutions during accreditation. Another delimitation of the study is institutions accredited by a variety of agencies because the institution chosen for the study is an institution accredited by SACSCOC. This was necessary for reasonable access for the researcher and also to preserve the meaning and understanding of many of the factors. Additionally, the factors chosen for the current study represent a portion of what the literature finds to be important for the leadership of change and other factors may also play a role.

Summary

The current study aimed to understand how certain factors lead to faculty and administrative support of institutional effectiveness initiatives and how administrators and faculty view these factors differently. The exploration of the factors in the current study leads to an explanation of how these factors can contribute to the success of such an initiative. Therefore, the current study was a single case study of an institution that had successfully implemented an institutional effectiveness initiative to illuminate the factors that contributed to that support and how key people at the institution experienced the

implementation of that initiative. The research collected data in the form of interviews of faculty, administrators, and experts in institutional effectiveness, and these data were analyzed using structural coding to arrive at significant themes, patterns, and meaning that can instruct other organizations on how to increase the opportunity for success when implementing an institutional effectiveness initiative.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to determine how leaders foster support for institutional effectiveness initiatives and to discover strategies that institutional effectiveness leaders at institutions of higher education use in order to foster the success of these initiatives. Chapter 4 presents the data collected for the current study and the results of the study organized by themes that emerged.

The sources of data for the study included interviews of faculty and administrators at a two-year institution of higher education that had recently completed a successful institutional effectiveness initiative and interviews of experts in the field of institutional effectiveness at both two-year and four-year institutions of higher education. The data also included the Executive Summary and Impact report of the institutional effectiveness initiative for the accreditation agency at the institution of the case study. Additionally, the data included information taken from a conference presentation given by one of the experts in institutional effectiveness.

The first step in analysis of the data was transcription of the recorded interviews. Some interviews were recorded on Zoom using video and audio and some conducted in person and only audio recorded. An online transcription service transcribed all interviews. The transcriptions were then reviewed and corrected. Participants received a summary of impressions and findings for member checking.

The second stage in the analysis of the information was to summarize the interviews and pull out important statements and observations. During this analysis, four themes emerged. Interviews were then analyzed again and coded to find evidence for each theme. Documentation and reports from the institution and experts were also analyzed to find evidence of each theme. Triangulation was strengthened by having multiple sources of evidence, including interviews and institutional data. Having a variety of perspectives from people with different roles, different institutions, and different contexts also strengthened triangulation. The themes that emerged surrounded the topics of internal motivation, optional versus mandatory participation, communication and collaboration, and the value of accreditation.

Research Questions

The current study proposed to examine the following research questions:

RQ1: What are the perceived factors that faculty and administrators believe encourage the support of institutional effectiveness initiatives?

RQ2: How do certain factors encourage faculty and administrative support for institutional effectiveness activities that lead to their success?

Presentation of Results

The results of the current study emerged as four main themes. These themes include ideas surrounding internal motivation, optional versus mandatory participation, communication and collaboration, and the value of accreditation. The following section aligns these themes with the research questions of the study and explains them in further detail with evidence.

Project Motivation

The consensus of participants in the current study emerged that it is imperative for the campus community to perceive that the motivation for an institutional effectiveness initiative is internal as opposed to being undertaken to satisfy an outside regulatory agency. In particular, the topic should be motivated by internal priorities and perceived as an area of need for that particular institution by stakeholders and the campus community. The following quote from A1 is typical of the perspective of participants across the study:

> It is twofold so. So our initial SACSCOC accreditation requests, whenever we chose to do this, because at that time, you know the accreditation expectation of individual institutions within our collegiate system was pretty much left up to the individual entities. There was no system wide standard, and so it was decided before I was an administrator, I was a faculty member, that we were going to pursue full institutional accreditation through SACSCOC. Part of the accreditation process is to identify with that, with that oversight board, is to identify a quality enhancement program and lay out a plan of action to strategically analyze with the intent of improving a college wide problem. That's how it's identified, I mean, that you need to find something that touches every student, you need to recognize that there is an issue that can be improved upon in regards to performance.

As seen in this quote, administrators believe internal motivation to be an important factor for garnering support of an initiative, and reactions of faculty to initiatives that are internally motivated are more positive. This demonstrates, in response to RQ1, that one perceived factor that faculty and administrators believe encourages the

support of institutional effectiveness initiatives is that the motivation for the project is perceived to be internal as opposed to external.

Institutional data in the institution's executive summary of their initiative to the accrediting agency also supported this theme. An abridged and anonymized version of the report can be found in Appendix C, and states:

> Through an extensive and inclusive process, the College reached out to faculty, staff, students, business, and industry through focus groups and surveys…. The attainment and retention of math skills was already of concern to the College's faculty and staff. Fifty-two percent of the entering freshman class tested into developmental math and the retention rate for those enrolled in developmental math had been 36%. As a consequence, initiatives to improve math skills were already in progress.

Statements made by participants from all three categories acknowledged that accreditation does, however, play an important role in the motivation behind institutional effectiveness initiatives, and this role should be acknowledged. E1 acknowledged this concept:

> We should be doing this regularly anyway. Now we've got an external agency that holds us accountable. But this is good news for us, right? This is good. We're doing it anyway. You can get in here and take a bite of the apple.

Both faculty and administrators at institutions of higher education often see an opportunity for improvement but lack the resources, cooperation, or motivation to initiate change without some external pressure. For institutional effectiveness initiatives, this

external pressure comes from accrediting agencies. For example, E2 found that external pressure can create community buy-in for a necessary change:

> I knew we needed new math, correct? I could see this coming. But it wasn't until the state said, "Hey, you know, you got to do this' that the faculty finally were like, 'Hey, we got to do this right?'" So I think sometimes it's projects like the QEP are done for accreditation or updating.

And as F3 acknowledged, that external pressure can also create opportunities for reflection so that the area they try to improve has a noticeable impact:

> Little bit of both as a requirement and since it's a requirement, you start looking to say, where can we try to make the most improvements? I would say it's a combination of the two.

By acknowledging that the project is being undertaken as a requirement for accreditation while at the same time presenting it as a positive opportunity for the institution, leaders can garner support and even desire for the project. In response to RQ2, the important balance to strike is that although accreditation is the driving force for an institutional effectiveness initiative, the topic for the project must be a true area of need for the institution. When the campus community sees the motivation for the project as both a requirement for accreditation but also a true area of need for improvement at the institution that could benefit both students and retention rates for the institution, projects are more successful.

Findings from interview and document analysis indicate that institutional effectiveness initiatives are both undertaken as a requirement for accreditation and also chosen as an area of opportunity specifically tailored to the institution. The experts

acknowledge that institutions usually have a lot of areas that need improvement, and they should constantly be improving to provide a quality product to students. Realistically, however, resources in the form of both money and time are often not dedicated to these things unless there is some external pressure to do so. The motivation for a project, therefore, is to satisfy accreditation agencies, but the topic of the project can be something that the institution would like to improve.

Another aspect of project motivation that became clear from participant interviews was that although the motivation for an institutional effectiveness initiative should be perceived as internal by both faculty and administrators, the project's purpose and success may be evaluated differently by faculty and administrators. Statements from faculty and administrators showed that the campus community must share the underlying goal to improve student and institutional success to foster support of the initiative, even if this goal is seen slightly differently by different groups of participants. For example, faculty were judging the success of the initiative from the individual student outcomes. F1 stated:

> I think it will be successful if you go back and not all students, but if you go back and talk to the student that really benefited from it and that they were able to get through these two remedial classes and that they're now ready for MATH 110, college algebra, I believe they would tell you, yes, it was a great program and they would recommend it.

Similarly, F3 described it this way:

> Everybody was concerned about that. And they said, well, we wanted to try this. And I think, you know, as teachers, we were like, OK, if the pass rates are this

> bad, let's try something different. And so I think that was part of the in for Faculty. What can we do if this is something that can be successful? Let's go for it.

Meanwhile, administrators focused on the aggregate data, as described by A1:

> Definitely, in regards to data collection and analysis, look like our Office of Institutional Effectiveness, right? Yes, it's a necessity. You can't consider yourself an institute of higher learning without having a scientifically based analysis and improvement program. The only reason we collect data is to be able to adapt and hopefully predict the future regarding trends.

A2 also had a data driven view in the statement:

> I would say it's successful. We were the only community college in the state to hit a 60% pass rate in MATH 110.

As seen in these quotes, administrators often have a much more data-driven view of success and are interested in numbers, pass rates, retention rates, and measurable change that is attributable to the initiative. Faculty, on the other hand, are more focused on the impact the initiative has on helping students succeed from their view in the classroom and also the opportunities it provides to improve pedagogy and professional development. Nevertheless, these two perspectives can come together to support the overall outcome of the project because both groups see the project as improving the institution and students in an area valued by internal goals.

Leaders of institutional effectiveness initiatives bridged the different perspectives with faculty by explicitly showing how the aggregate data they collected can inform the student-centered data faculty value. For example, E3 gave the following example:

> We brought those statistics to faculty meetings. Specifically, we let individual faculty members know, hey, when nursing students come to the writing center, this is what happens with your students. Come, you're getting better outcomes. Your students are graduating at a higher rate. They're earning better grades in your courses that require writing because they're attending the writing center.

These leaders believed that by sharing the purpose of data collection, faculty members can value and utilize it more, as seen in this quote by E1:

> Employees, but primarily faculty, they have to see the value of it. I think part of it goes back again to personnel. That you can't just have one or two people that their whole responsibility is crunching numbers and nobody's asking the why. Yes, you know. Why do we need institutional effectiveness in this office? Why do we need it right? Is it so that we can satisfy Baton Rouge with numbers and data so we can satisfy accrediting agencies, whether it's discipline specific or factual? See? Why do we do it? Or is it so that as a faculty member that it can be looked at like, OK, over the last six semesters when you've taught this course, you know, six times here's your DFW, here's you know. Here's. Here's the information that you need to know what's the issue?

Faculty echoed this need to see the value in data collection because from their perspective they do not always understand its usefulness. F2 recognized this aspect when observing:

> And so I think a lot of times, faculty, maybe administration, they will undervalue the sort of data collection side because it's not necessarily clear what the value of

> that data is without someone saying, well, here's a decision that you can make with it.

The impact report on the project, as seen in Appendix C, provided by the institution to the accrediting agency also supported this idea:

> The QEP Committee and director noticed early on that the [name of project] could impact program retention and decided to include and track student retention data as part of a broader college focus…. Focusing resources and personnel at these critical junctures of student losses with a uniform approach, such as an early intervention system, will help facilitate a college-wide retention improvement effort.

As seen in this evidence, the experts interviewed echoed the sentiment that faculty often have a different view of institutional effectiveness than administrators, but faculty emphasis on classroom processes can motivate support for a project that they perceive as helpful to student learning goals. Participants across groups observed that much of institutional effectiveness is data analysis but the important aspect to emphasize to faculty is how that information can impact student success and classroom procedures. This also informs RQ2 by addressing how these factors can be leveraged to encourage support for the initiatives that lead to their success.

Optional Participation

Participants who primarily identified as both faculty and administrators expressed the benefit of designing institutional effectiveness initiatives such that participation in the project is optional rather than mandatory for a specific department or group of people. Both faculty and administrators see optional participation as having a positive impact on

the support for the initiative by people impacted by implementation. Administrators felt that volunteers helped transfer change throughout a program when they shared their experiences, as seen in this quote by A1:

> Then you would have a faculty member that said, well, I'll try it. Everything we've done really has started out with a volunteer pilot, the faculty member who is interested in being novel, try new things, energetic. Asks maybe or one on and then there's a positive reaction that happens whenever you let that faculty member share their experiences with their colleagues, whether they're good or bad, give them the spotlight, give them the floor.

Meanwhile, faculty valued the use of volunteers because it supported a gradual switch to the new program, as described here by F1:

> I was at one time the only one teaching those. And as we increase the number of them, they would hire more personnel or other teachers would start doing it. We were going to have so many QEP offerings and so many regular offerings. And then we started increasing the number of QEPs for SACS each year. We just kept increasing and then we cut back on the number of full semesters. So more teachers started teaching at the QEP.

In response to RQ1, this indicates that the nature of the participation in an initiative is a factor that is important for garnering support of a project. Projects should be designed so that people who are interested in and motivated for institutional effectiveness initiatives can self-select to be a part of the implementation. The institutional impact report on the project, as seen in Appendix C, supported this model of incremental

implementation, “The accelerated co-requisite model addressed completion issues by incrementally increasing compressed courses offered by 75% over the 5-year QEP.”

The experts in institutional effectiveness interviewed as part of the current study separately echoed that one benefit of an optional participation model of implementation is that the project became a positive opportunity to faculty members who may have been resistant or skeptical at the beginning of the project by other faculty members who have had a beneficial experience with it. They suggested that this creates the perception that the project is not a top-down mandate, but rather it is a peer or colleague describing and recommending the project due to its valuable impacts. E3 shared an anecdotal example:

> For us, it was the critical factor when we got our two largest programs nursing and forestry, when we got buy in from them. You know that the tide absolutely turned right. And really, I mean, really, it was forestry. I had [faculty member name] in the video. I love [faculty member name]. He’s a cool guy. He’s a leader among the faculty, even though he’s kind of low key. But when [faculty member name] started to refer students and then a year later required all of his students to come at least once a semester, he was talking about how much better his students were performing. Then nursing starts to say, Hey, wait a minute. Reading comprehension is part of this. It’s going to improve NCLEX. Yeah, they can write. Then welding comes to it. He says that I’ve got some great welders. They can’t pass occupational communication. Well, are you sending them to the writing center? Look at the success [faculty member name] had in forestry. That was it right? It was. It was getting the right faculty member one on board. They weren’t

> necessarily detractors, right? They didn't. They didn't put down the writing center. They didn't argue against it, but they weren't really using it until we got it.

Materials presented by this expert at a conference can be seen in an abridged and anonymized format in Appendix D and supported this idea. In a video as part of that presentation, the forestry instructor described here is interviewed regarding his positive perception of the project, and he comments that it is an "integral" part of his program and he recommends it to other programs on campus. The conference presentation materials also depict a graph that shows that visits to the writing center that was at the heart of their project increased from 35 visits per semester in January 2014 to 106 visits per semester in April 2019.

This addresses RQ2 by showing that this factor was leveraged to encourage support by building that support for the project through having someone who is highly motivated for the project spread a positive message about it so that others will buy in on their own. E2 described the concept of having cheerleaders for the project this way:

> You'll have those highly motivated people who take on the task. Not everyone will, but you'll be able to self-select those who are passionate about it. Obviously, if we say everyone has to do it, you're going to get poor quality. But if you again, if you get those cheerleaders and they start the ball rolling and you support them.

These quotes demonstrate that having highly motivated people self-select into the project can bring people on board who may have otherwise been resistant. Participants discussed the benefit of this model as having one instructor who was excited about the project and engaged in institutional improvement begin the project in their classes and then discuss with colleagues the success experienced from implementation. As the project

grows, other instructors are more willing to get on board after hearing the positive reports from colleagues and not just from leaders or administrators. The experts mentioned the importance of having a cheerleader or someone who is highly motivated in regard to the project that is a faculty member involved in the change to create buy-in for other faculty members whose participation is needed. The idea that the cheerleader for the project is a faculty member is important for a critical mass getting on board with a mindset of quality and improvement.

Faculty, administrators, and experts in institutional effectiveness all mentioned another benefit of designing a project so that people can self-select to be involved is that this model alleviates many concerns about academic freedom, which is one of the primary barriers to faculty support. A1 addressed this in the following quote:

> This is college and there is something very sacred known as academic freedom. That particular instructor had been teaching math for longer than I've been alive, and that particular instructor did not teach developmental math courses, but only college algebra. And so. It made sense to allow that instructor to teach the way they had always taught in the timeframe they always taught without being manipulated by the requirements of the QEP.

Experts also felt that restricting academic freedom would inhibit success of the initiative. E3 described it this way:

> All of the all of those things will support the achievement of whatever IE you're looking at. If you put too many rigid guidelines on it, I tend to think that academic freedom will be stifled and also just because I think that it's the best way to do it. Sometimes people have different ideas.

Although faculty did not speak of academic freedom with the same awe as administrators and experts, they did appreciate that this freedom was granted to them as seen in this quote by F3:

> They kind of gave us the freedom to kind of figure it out for ourselves. They didn't have any stipulations, or at least as far as I knew, there weren't any restrictions from them. This is kind of what we want. We want to try to do this corequisite model or whatever, and they kind of left it up to us to figure out the nuts and bolts of it.

These quotes show that the progressive, gradual model that did not mandate requirements for all instructors from the beginning likely eased the resistance tied to the ideals of academic freedom and autonomy. Faculty described the project as providing the flexibility and freedom to make it their own and adapt it to their classroom environment in the way they saw fit. This illustrates how impactful a well-designed, optional model can be on garnering the support and decreasing the resistance to an institutional effectiveness initiative. Additionally, designing projects to provide flexibility and autonomy can alleviate concerns of academic freedom while also encouraging faculty to take ownership. In response to RQ2, leaders of these initiatives should especially ensure that participants in the project feel that they have flexibility and autonomy in decisions made within the classroom to encourage support despite strongly held ideals of academic freedom.

Communication and Collaboration

Communication and collaboration were both stressed by participants as essential elements to garner support of institutional effectiveness initiatives. Participants also saw

them as an added benefit of the initiatives. Participants expressed that communication should come in the form of verbal messages and physical presence in order to convey the importance of the initiative. Leaders of institutional effectiveness initiatives expressed that communication and collaboration are important for the success of an initiative. E1 stressed this idea in the following way:

> Information. Information, communication. Or roundtable discussions or almost the idea of. The people that are supposed to be involved with this. Can it be something where? The questions almost being. You're going to be a huge part of a team for the QEP. What is the thing that excites you the most about this? What is the thing that scares you the most about this? Yeah. What can the leader of the QEP, be coordinator director? Whatever. What can that person do? To enhance or assuage or whatever, either enhance what I'm doing, assuage my fears. What needs to happen with this, and so I think that yet valuing the person, supporting the person, providing the information and then communicating

Likewise, faculty described the way that collaboration and physical presence created support across campus. An example of this was given by F1:

> I think everybody was on board really trying to make this successful, not only for the college and the students, but for SACS accreditation. It was it was pretty much all hands on deck. It seemed like that everybody was interested. I would have them come into my classroom and observe to see what was going on, and then they would question the students. And it wasn't just my supervisor, my direct supervisor. [Vice chancellor] came in several times and the chancellor came in one time to see.

These statements address communication both in the form of verbal discussions as well as physical presence and the message that it sends. They also support the emphasis that people involved from all groups placed on the idea of communication, information, and engagement. It is critical for faculty to have information and discussions with leaders of the initiative and also have them as a physical presence in the actual implementation of the initiative. In response to RQ1, the current study found that communication is a desired element of a project by both faculty and administrators. Physical presence of leaders is an important form of communication that sends the message that administrators care and are appreciative and in touch with what is going on and that the burden is not only expected of other people. Institutional data found in the impact report on the project, as seen in Appendix C, provided to the accrediting agency supported this theme, "During routine semester QEP Committee meetings, the QEP Director presented student and faculty survey results and a 'State of the QEP' for analysis and discussion."

Further, participants explained scenarios that highlighted that in order to get buy-in from faculty who may not see institutional effectiveness as their responsibility, leaders should communicate with and educate them on how information obtained through institutional effectiveness is used to inform a variety of decisions made at the university all the way to the level of the materials and strategies used in the classroom. The following quote from A2 is one example of how participants described the importance of distributing information to the campus community:

> We have something called knight school. because we are the knights. Yeah. So okay. And so basically it's just like a portal on our campus just for faculty. OK,

> yeah. They can log in and see their place and I can post whatever I want on there and I would post all this SACS information video, all the meeting recordings. So nobody adjunct or full time could say they didn't have access to what we were doing. And I put up ten points and how to videos and I'm like, I would do Streamcast videos and I narrate what to do. Yeah, here's a. Mistake. Don't make it, you know. Yeah, yeah. Anyway, so we created like a resource for all those that we have, faculty and part time people. Yeah, and that ended up being something very critical in our review process because they want to know the question, how do you.

This is an example of how participants described distributing information about institutional effectiveness as a way to incorporate faculty and bring them into accreditation.

Many participants discussed silos as a negative but common facet of higher education isolating faculty to their program or department, which reduces their commitment to the institution as a whole and also contributes to lower job satisfaction. In this context, communication and collaboration provide a venue for people to work together, and leaders can leverage institutional effectiveness initiatives as a way to bring instructors out of their silos and offer community and support. F2 described the benefit of collaboration and addressing the problem if silos in this way:

> It feels a lot of times like instructors are siloed into their little corner of the universe never to build consensus. And I mean, just experience alone should tell you that you can build a better, more cohesive plan or strategy by throwing more

> minds at the problem. You're not going to get a lot of buy in from somebody who thinks that what you're doing is not affecting anything that they have going on.

Leaders of institutional effectiveness also described silos and how institutional effectiveness initiatives can be a way to foster collaboration and alleviate the isolation of silos. A typical example of this from E2 was:

> I think there are these traditional silos. So you have someone like our student success center who's working on retention projects in a vacuum there, which then it doesn't it doesn't really loop in the faculty that it could impact. I don't know. I just I think there needs to be better communication, less silos, which is easy to say.

These quotes demonstrate the benefit that institutional effectiveness initiatives can have in giving faculty an opportunity to collaborate on a project and develop a sense of community and support with colleagues. The impact report on the project, as seen in Appendix C, provided to the accrediting agency by the institution also supported this idea:

> For over 5 years the survey data was collected and relayed by the QEP director to the QEP Committee and faculty provided important feedback guiding discussions and changes.

An aspect of collaboration that many participants described as being essential to the success of a project is collaboration on the design of the project. The overall response from participants was that people directly impacted by the initiative should be involved in the development so that the project will suit the needs or preferences of the group who will primarily bear the responsibility and feel the impact of the change. The theme

emerged in discussions with participants from various groups that it is important to let the people who will be impacted by the implementation of the initiative participate in designing the instruments, specifications of the change, and other requirements. F3 described this very well including a difference in collaboration on the initial idea and how the details would work best:

> I guess the initial idea, uh. Could come from either administration or faculty. You would definitely have to have faculty buy in to the thing. And, then after you would have to have buy-in on both sides with the administration backing the faculty for what they think is going to work best for the plan.

The institutional impact report on the project, as seen in Appendix C, provided to the accrediting agency supported this idea:

> The committee, appointed by the vice chancellor of academic affairs, was comprised of math faculty, administration, division chairs, and directors from every college department.

Administrators such as A1 also discussed the benefit of allowing faculty to communicate and collaborate on the project design:

> It allowed collaboration among faculty when actually they had been simply in their own slice of the pie. Yeah, we're a department now, but something like this really fostered a lot more communication and talk. I think those probably went to the initial positive response from the faculty. And I think that explaining the importance or conveying not necessarily explaining or dictating, but conveying the importance of the accreditation process, being a faculty driven ground floor expectation. Some institutions have strong faculty governance, some do not, but

> usually edicts come from the top down, right? Well. We took a very, very cautious approach to not direct anything. That was not critically required by the original plan and then to invite feedback constantly, not just here's the final exam, make sure your students pass it. But really. A number of meetings throughout the entire period. Focused on what your students failing? Where are you struggling? What is going on with the lesson plan? And do we need to adjust so that you have the time needed to prepare them for the next level? Communication's key and everything, but I think the success continued by opening the field to any participants. Suggestions this thing was a dynamic project. That some things worked for some and some not for others, and it didn't really skew the data and that a faculty member could control that element of their classroom.

Finally, leaders of institutional effectiveness such as E1 described the reactions they have seen to allowing collaboration on the design of projects:

> We can have focus groups forever and we can survey and we can all get together and we can all chat and we can take notes and everything else. But are we really talking to the people that that really are going to have to be the ones that are going to have to rubber meets the road? And if it's like with this cohort of people and you meet with them and say, you know, this is what we're thinking about for A QEP and then these are things that it would entail. What perspective do you have on this? And the immediate response is, well, I think that's terrible or that's going to fail or I disagree with that or whatever else. Not that they should be dictating what it is. But on the other hand, they're just saying you're very important message. You don't have buy in.

E2 also shared a similar perspective: “I would have gone. I would have said, ‘Hey, we get this opportunity. These are the resources that we’re going to get. Let’s design how we’re going to do this.’”

This evidence demonstrates the importance of having buy-in from faculty who will be responsible for implementing the change. It also shows how ensuring their participation in the development on the project can foster this necessary buy-in. This is an important response to RQ2 in order to answer how factors encourage support for the success of initiatives. These observations indicate the importance of leaving some of the design elements up to the faculty who will be responsible for implementing the change. Faculty participants were supportive of the initiative and had a favorable opinion of the approach of administrators towards the project and the support that they received from leaders during the project because of their ability to have input on what would work the best.

Value of Accreditation

The overall perception of the participants in this study was that leaders must build the value of accreditation into the culture of an institution as a whole in order to achieve support for institutional effectiveness initiatives. In response to RQ1, one of the perceived factors that impact the support for institutional effectiveness initiatives is the degree to which leaders work to generate enthusiasm surrounding accreditation and show its importance to the value of the institution. A1 offered one of the most poignant points surrounding the importance of a value of accreditation:

> But I think another thing that may have led to this being so successful and everyone buying in wholeheartedly and interested in the process and interested in

> the. Is that this is a really young institution. All right, we're celebrating its 20th year right now, and we've only been in our own campus like this campus for 10. And so the faculty, many of the faculty were here when this thing for many of the faculty, even a larger group were here whenever we got the good news, you are now accredited. You can transfer your credits anywhere in the southern region. Right. You're on the same level as your Big Brother University. And that was a huge thing. It was. So you have had a lot of people. Work on and understand the gravity of being accredited, and now this is one of those requirements. Transplant, that that same concept to a university that's been around for a hundred years or 70 years or 80 years, that thing's been plug and ride along for so long that I think the importance of it and the excitement of what are we actually doing here. I think you become complacent. I think the entire entity becomes complacent. And that's whenever you have. Administrators who realize this is part of my responsibility, and it starts to get shoved down peoples' throat, the newness that the youngness and the energy probably diminishes quite a bit.

Faculty such as F1 also expressed the appreciation of the importance of accreditation to the institution:

> I think everybody was on board really trying to make this successful, not only for the college and the students, but for SACS accreditation. It was it was pretty much all hands on deck. It seemed like that everybody was interested.

This evidence shows that the attitude and message that is sent to the rest of the campus community by leaders of accreditation shapes the value or lack thereof for accreditation. The value of accreditation has to come from the top down, and faculty have

to see that leaders are involved in accreditation efforts and do not just task others with those responsibilities. Leaders must spread the message of the importance of accreditation to the role the institution can play in the larger ecosystem of higher education and emphasize that the institution cannot take it for granted as something that one person or one office will always attain.

Additionally, participants expressed that leaders should shift the mentality concerning accreditation from being something with which the institution burdens faculty to an opportunity for participation. Leaders can send the message that institutional effectiveness is valued by investing resources in it and using it as an opportunity for professional development for those people involved. Administrators should portray an institutional effectiveness initiative as an opportunity for an area to be supported and provided with resources and collaboration on the project as a whole. Each of the experts discussed this aspect. E1 described the benefit as an opportunity to improve:

> Well, I think that they can show the value of the people that that are responsible for accreditation and not that it's. And not that it just becomes another other duties as assigned, which just happens to be accreditation. Accreditation has to be the heading. Right. And or the headline or whatever everyone said that that. Leadership has to show that. Everything we do as an institution. Is to improve what we do and as president says, be the best at what we do.

While E2 described the shift that sometimes must occur in faculty:

> When I polled the faculty, it was very low response for wanting to be involved in types of projects like this. And I do believe that's a cultural thing where, you

> know, it's not top down, it's not. It's looked at because it'll create more work instead of. It will help me in the long run.

Finally, E3 described more of a competition for resources:

> It was hard and it was hard to argue with the results of the QEP. So when people started to say, "Hey, how can I get some QEP money?" Yeah, let's. Now we're talking right? Right, right. We're about to spin up the process. We're about to open a survey. Write your ideas

This evidence shows that when there is overall support and enthusiasm for accreditation and its requirements, the support for institutional effectiveness initiatives will increase, and these experts in institutional effectiveness summarize well sentiments expressed across groups. In response to RQ2, administrators should use this factor to show that they value faculty involvement in institutional effectiveness by providing incentives, acknowledgment, and rewards for faculty who contribute positively to initiatives. Administrators and experts in institutional effectiveness especially recognize the importance of creating an appreciation of the value of accreditation in all campus community members. Faculty, however, also expressed an understanding of the excitement for institutional effectiveness initiatives to be successful. Accreditation has to be seen as important by all stakeholders and that message has to be communicated both in words and actions from administrators and faculty.

The idea of creating a mentality of competition to get the resources allocated to the project was discussed in other ways as well. Faculty such as F1 discussed the motivation to obtain resources they wanted for the classroom:

> Ours was actually we were given a good amount of funds so that we could use it to buy manipulativeness. We bought computers for the classroom, we had a set of computers and I even was able to implement a flipped class.

F3 also discussed the availability of the allocated resources:

> I believe we had the needed resources. We had a dedicated classroom. We had dedicated laptops for the teachers that were doing like the flip classroom. So we had the resources of this past year. The biggest thing was just the interruption of the COVID. It kind of just threw a loop with everything. But we had the resources. And if we didn't have them, we have the freedom to ask, can we get this? Can we get that?

The impact report on the project given to the accrediting agency and seen in Appendix C supported this allocation of resources in multiple places:

> Periodic changes were discussed and implemented to improve QEP course deliveries… as well as meet evolving technological expectations and needs… included… new gaming and simulation technologies…. A change in the online learning software used in QEP compressed courses had a profound impact on the success of the plan… [and] led to invaluable ongoing professional development for the QEP director and math faculty…. Dedicated technology classroom was piloted to improve student outcomes… a showcase classroom was outfitted with 28 laptop computers, easily accessible mobile chagrin station, large format smart board, and numerous math manipulatives for teaching fractions, integers, and graphing.

Leaders also leveraged the importance of workload to faculty as a resource. Time is one of the most valuable resources in most positions in higher education among both faculty and administrators. Consideration of workload, therefore, should be important to get faculty buy-in. Leaders of institutional effectiveness discussed the importance of workload. The following quote by E2 demonstrates this:

> I think the other thing that can motivate faculty and or staff is workload and the perception of how does this fit into my day to day? Workload or week by week or month by month.

E3 also shared a similar idea on workload with the following example:

> It was a pain in the butt for the faculty to learn, to use and to mandate. So those two things became optional at the faculty request.

These examples demonstrate that by showing that the work put towards these initiatives is acknowledged, appreciated, and valued, administrators communicate that this is an important area of service to the institution by providing resources as well as a lighter workload for faculty willing to participate. This also answers RQ2 because the initiative can also be an opportunity to provide incentives such as professional development opportunities or classroom resources as a benefit of the project. The evidence shows how faculty view the opportunity to have resources as participating in an institutional effectiveness initiative and how experts in institutional effectiveness view supporting faculty in order to make projects less of a burden and more of an opportunity.

Summary

The answers found to the two research questions provide a framework for establishing both an appreciation for the value of institutional effectiveness and support

of institutional effectiveness initiatives in such a way that they can make a lasting impact on the quality of an institution. If faculty and administrators see the initiatives as improving the institution and student success by virtue of initiatives for accreditation, accreditation will be perceived more as a beneficial undertaking than a burdensome requirement. The factors that are perceived as important to encourage support of these initiatives are internal motivation, optional participation, communication and collaboration, and a general value of accreditation. These factors encourage support of institutional effectiveness initiatives to increase their success by creating a shared goal for institutional and student success, alleviating concerns regarding academic freedom, leveraging the energy and enthusiasm of people highly motivated for institutional effectiveness, providing opportunities to bring people out of silos, creating communication and information opportunities to include people in decision-making, and conveying the importance of accreditation to the institution.

CHAPTER 5

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this research study was to determine how leaders foster support of institutional effectiveness initiatives and to discover strategies that institutional effectiveness leaders at institutions of higher education use in order to foster the success of these initiatives. Chapter 5 presents a discussion of findings and situates the findings of the current study within the context of existing research, recommendations for professional practice, implications for future research, and a conclusion.

Findings of the Study

The perception of the motivation for a project has an impact on the support of the project from both faculty and administrators. This finding addresses the perceived factors that faculty and administrators believe encourage the support of institutional effectiveness initiatives (RQ1). A finding from this study is that the campus community should perceive that the motivation for a project topic is internal and an area of need for that particular institution as opposed to being chosen to satisfy an outside regulatory agency. This aligns with existing research that finds that it is important for administrators to choose topics for development of quality initiatives that best suit an institution and the values of its faculty. Leaders should also examine the strengths of the institution and areas that could be improved with

information and input from various sources, including faculty (Tracey, 2006). This finding also aligns with the existing research that faculty support for institutional effectiveness activities increases when the motivating factors are internal and faculty feel that the initiative is good for the college and not just tied to accreditation mandates (Smith, 2016; Welsh & Metcalf, 2003).

Current research finds that faculty members feel more committed to change when they have the perception that it supports the institutional mission and the teaching and learning of the institution and not just external motivating factors (Heinerichs et al., 2015; Ketcheson & Everhart, 2002). One of the findings of the present study is that accreditation does, however, play an important role in the motivation behind institutional effectiveness initiatives, and this role should be acknowledged. This is different from existing research which finds that it is important that faculty perceive that the impetus for change and the topic and structure of that change are the result of institutional stakeholders' opinions and preferences and not those of external agencies (Welsh & Metcalf, 2003). The present study found that leaders can acknowledge that the impetus for change is the accrediting agency, but differentiate that from the motivation for the topic of the change, which should be internal. Noting the external pressure for change can have a positive, motivating factor and secure necessary resources.

Current research acknowledges that both administrators and faculty at institutions of higher education assess both measurable success as well as perceptions of success and subsequently use these measures to determine action (Campbell & O'Meara, 2014; Heinerichs et al., 2015). Leaders of institutional effectiveness initiatives can tie this link between measuring success and determining action with the goals of institutional

effectiveness for accreditation in order to gain support (Head & Johnson, 2011). Although the motivation for an institutional effectiveness initiative should be perceived as internal by both faculty and administrators, the project's purpose and success may be evaluated differently by faculty and administrators. This confirms what is found in the research that faculty and administrators often have different perspectives on these initiatives, and their values and beliefs surrounding them shape how they respond to the leadership and support the initiatives (Ketcheson & Everhart, 2002; Welsh & Metcalf, 2003). Leaders should acknowledge the ways that the initiatives have had success and informed decisions at the administrative and faculty levels (Head & Johnson, 2011).

The second finding is that leaders should design institutional effectiveness initiatives such that participation in the project is optional rather than mandatory for a specific department or group of people. This factor is not seen in the research and is not typically emphasized by accrediting bodies, but it provides an important response to RQ2 on how factors can encourage support. By making participation optional, the project can gain a cheerleader or someone who is highly motivated in regard to the project that is a faculty member involved in the change to create buy-in for other faculty members whose participation is needed. The idea that the cheerleader for the project is a faculty member is important for a critical mass getting on board with a mindset of quality and improvement.

Although existing research does not go into detail about the benefits of participation being optional, it does address the idea that leaders of change and quality in higher education have to approach these topics differently than in business. Institutions do not bind faculty by one way of conducting the business of an institution, as employees

of a company would be, due to academic freedom (CHEA, 2012; Tracey, 2006). Current research in this way confirms the idea that business ideals are often contradictory to the ideals of shared governance and academic freedom among faculty, presenting an issue using similar concepts of quality management (CHEA, 2019; Tracey, 2006). It does not, however, go further to address how to alleviate this barrier, as was found in the current study, by making participation optional and having colleagues spread enthusiasm for the project so that others will voluntarily get on board and be supportive of the project.

Existing research does address that faculty are often a barrier to the success of these initiatives because they question them as infringing on academic freedom and do not want to be involved (Welsh & Metcalf, 2003), which also addresses the negative outcomes of mandating participation. This finding helps to address this barrier of academic freedom. Leaders should design a project so that people can self-select to be involved to alleviate concerns about academic freedom, which is one of the primary barriers to faculty support.

The third finding surrounded the ideas of communication and collaboration. Communication in the form of verbal messages and physical presence is an element of successful institutional effectiveness projects. This addresses both RQ1 and RQ2 as a factor that faculty and administrators perceive as important and also how it is used to encourage support. Collaboration is both a strategy to gain support and an added benefit of conducting an institutional effectiveness initiative. Physical presence and show of interest impact the faculty perception that leaders are also invested in this initiative and not handing off the responsibility to faculty alone. This type of support creates an

important form of collegiality not only between colleagues at the same level but also between administrators and faculty.

Silos are a negative but common facet of higher education isolating faculty to their programs or departments, which reduces their sense of collegiality and commitment to the institution as a whole and also contributes to lower job satisfaction (Brown, 2018). Institutional effectiveness projects bring instructors out of their silos, which is a positive way to offer community and support. This increases collegiality at the institution, or at least in the department, which contributes to the support for an institutional goal. This finding is consistent with existing research that faculty engagement in decision-making and free expression of ideas are important factors for faculty agency, which is important for faculty support for organizational change (Campbell & O'Meara, 2014; Ronco, 2012; Smith, 2016).

Communication, information, and engagement provide a venue for people to work together, and leaders of institutional effectiveness initiatives should leverage them as a way to bring instructors out of their silos and offer community and support (Head, 2011). The literature shows importance of communication and collaboration in different contexts including chairs providing information to faculty and staff (Tracey, 2006); communicating quality to internal and external stakeholders and how this is an important consideration in the development and implementation of a project (Ketcheson & Everhart, 2002); and facilitating a collaborative approach (Heinerichs et al., 2015; Ketcheson & Everhart, 2002; Smith, 2016).

An associated finding of the present study is that the people directly impacted by the initiative should be involved in the development so that the project will suit the needs

or preferences of the group who will primarily bear the responsibility and experience the impact of the change. Most accrediting bodies require broad campus participation in the initiatives from a variety of stakeholders, which includes faculty who lack a desire for change (Welsh & Metcalf, 2003). The findings of the current study were that collaboration on the design of a project should come specifically from the department or group most impacted by the change. Existing research finds that faculty are more open to change the more that leaders invite them to be involved in the change, and administrators should not expect that initiatives designed without faculty input will be readily adopted by them (NILOA, 2016; Welsh & Metcalf, 2003), but there is not specific information on how leaders should coordinate this collaboration. Involving faculty only to implement change after others make decisions on what and how to change creates a larger sense of frustration for faculty, according to current research (Ketcheson & Everhart, 2002). The present study expands on this idea by finding that the faculty who will be responsible for the change should specifically collaborate on the design. While it is beneficial to give multiple stakeholders input on what the topic of a project should be, once the leaders select a topic, the majority of the collaboration on the project specifics should come from the people most impacted by the change.

The fourth finding is that the leaders of these initiatives should work to promote the general value of accreditation at an institution. Existing research describes this as a critical mass getting on board with the mindset of quality improvement (Head, 2011; Tracey, 2006) and notes that factors other than data such as motivation and climate are important for establishing success for quality improvement in higher education (Ewell, 2011; Migliore, 2012). The attitude and message of leaders impacts the climate of a value

or lack thereof for accreditation, and leaders must build it into the culture of the institution as a whole. Leaders must spread the message of how important accreditation is to the role the institution can play in the larger ecosystem of higher education and that the campus community cannot take it for granted as something that one person or one office will always attain (CHEA, 2019). This is reflected in the recommendation that leaders can increase faculty support for institutional effectiveness activities when the faculty are involved in the activities and that the leaders value their involvement (Head & Johnson, 2011; Welsh & Metcalf, 2003). As with the previous finding, this finding addresses both RQ1 and RQ2 as a factor that is perceived to encourage support and also a tool for how to encourage support.

Administrators should shift the mentality concerning accreditation from being something with which the institution burdens faculty to an opportunity for participation. Leaders can send the message that institutional effectiveness is valued by investing resources in it and using it as an opportunity for professional development for those people involved (NILOA, 2016). This confirms existing research that incorporating faculty in a way that provides opportunities for growth and development while acknowledging their own unique teaching styles and that the project is asking them to change and step out of their comfort zones can also facilitate support (Ericksen et al., 2015). Existing research finds many things that can facilitate support. First, active participation and support from leaders is a key component to success. Also, inclusion and consensus-building are important to obtain faculty commitment, and leaders should provide ways to participate without huge additional time commitments. Last, taking advantage of existing programs or resources increases opportunities for initiatives to

succeed (Tracey, 2006). The present study expounded on this by finding that leaders can bring in faculty members who may not otherwise be interested in institutional effectiveness by communicating the opportunity to garner resources for a project or initiative that is important to them or their department. Leaders should use this investment of resources to attract faculty to the idea of institutional effectiveness.

Administrators should portray an institutional effectiveness initiative as an opportunity for an area to be supported and provided with resources and collaboration on the project as a whole and create a mentality of competition to get the resources allocated to the project and utilize the importance of workload to faculty (Strawn & Littlepage, 2021). Time is one of the most valuable resources in most positions in higher education among both faculty and administrators (White, 2018). Consideration of workload, therefore, should be important to get faculty buy-in.

One way leaders can communicate their support is by also allocating some of their own time towards institutional effectiveness. This confirms present research that administrators must form partnerships with faculty in the sense that the administrators also assume some of the burden of change themselves and emulate a commitment to quality (Styron et al., 2015; White, 2018). Rather than simply dictating from above, administrators should demonstrate active support by also adapting some of their own activities to accommodate the initiative (Styron et al., 2015). Other research finds that it is crucial for faculty to perceive that the administrators are also giving time, talent, and energy to the initiative and values the time, talent, and energy that faculty are inputting (Tracey, 2006).

Recommendations for Professional Practice

The leadership of institutional effectiveness initiatives can shape the success of the initiatives by strategically managing the project. The four key findings of the current study inform leaders of deliberate processes in the development and implementation of the initiative that will carry support through the duration of the project. From the beginning, leaders of institutional effectiveness initiatives should ensure that the campus community has input on the topic of an institutional effectiveness initiative and that the initiative chosen comes out of that input as something that is important to the goals of the institution. For example, the leadership should create an online form that is sent to all stakeholders to give anyone who wants input the chance to have it. Leaders should then judge this input against a rubric that includes institutional priorities and requirements of accreditation. This will ensure that the campus community perceives the motivation for the project as being internal.

Once the leaders choose a topic, participation in the initiative should be voluntary, and leaders should take advantage of participants who self-select to be involved and are highly motivated for institutional effectiveness to spread the information of their success with the project to colleagues in order to get more people on board. Leaders can accomplish this by finding even just one person in a department who is seen as a leader by peers and who is motivated for institutional effectiveness to begin the implementation.

Next, leaders should provide meaningful opportunities for input from the department or specific people who will be involved in the implementation. The people who will be directly impacted by the project should develop specific instruments or other necessary types of change for the project. The leaders should form an implementation

committee before the beginning of the project that includes the people who will implement the project. This committee should be allowed to design the project to work best for their department. Once implemented, this committee should also have input to make changes to things that are not working.

Throughout the process, leaders should acknowledge the opportunity to invest in such an initiative as a benefit of accreditation. Leaders should advertise the resources that will be allocated to a project at large university meetings and also send out information in emails. This helps to create a value of accreditation within the campus community. By acknowledging that accreditation is the external pressure to invest resources in an internal desire for improvement, the campus community will see the initiative as an opportunity provided by the requirements of accreditation rather than a burden, and departments will begin to develop their own internal motivation to obtain the project for their department in order to secure resources for improvement in an area that is meaningful to them. Leaders can also show the benefit that such resources have had in previous departments who had the benefit of an institutional effectiveness initiative if a previous project experienced success.

Last, leaders should provide communication, information, and engagement at all stages of the process to all members of the campus community. When faculty feel included and informed, they are more likely to be supportive of projects and initiatives that require time and financial resources. Institutional effectiveness actually provides an opportunity for leaders to include faculty and other stakeholders in decision-making and resource allocation. It also provides a much-desired opportunity for faculty to work together and contribute to innovation with colleagues with whom they may not otherwise

have the opportunity to work. Leaders should have regular meetings and emails dedicated to informing the campus community what is going on with institutional effectiveness, how it is improving the institution, student learning, and future goals.

All of these purposeful strategies lead to the development of a personal desire to participate in the initiative rather than being mandated to do so. When faculty see that the project is optional, but it is an opportunity to improve and receive resources and also opportunities for collaboration, their attitude and motivation toward participation will be much more positive.

Implications for Future Research

Based on the findings and limitations of the current study, I recommend future research on both quantitative and qualitative information, a qualitative study done at a four-year institution, a study to investigate further the impact of optional versus mandatory participation, and a study to investigate further the impact of collaboration by individuals directly impacted by the change.

The literature provides quantitative research on this topic with a study conducted through the administration of a survey to a large number of participants. The current study provides informative qualitative data on the perceptions and factors that impact support for institutional effectiveness. A study that combined both administration of a survey and in-depth interview data would provide additional context and information on the topic.

While the researcher for the current study did interview experts in institutional effectiveness from four-year institutions of higher education, much of the information was from a case study at a two-year institution. This may have influenced some of the

perceptions and impacts of the factors for support. A qualitative case study should, therefore, be conducted at a four-year institution to see how these factors and perceptions compare in that environment.

Two topics that emerged in the current study that warrant further research to determine how leaders can increase support for institutional effectiveness initiatives. First, a study should be done on the effects of mandatory or optional participation. Further research should compare the attitudes towards and success of projects that require certain faculty to participate in a project by virtue of their disciplines or other association with those that allow faculty to self-select. Second, a study should be done on the effects of collaboration or lack thereof by people directly impacted by the project. Often, institutions invite collaboration on the topic of the project but do not extend that once the topic is selected to allow the people impacted the most to make the project their own and design it to best fit their needs. Further research should compare the attitudes towards and success of projects that allow faculty impacted by the project to design the instruments, assessments, and other facets with those that are simply all designed by broad-based involvement but not specifically the people impacted.

Conclusion

The findings of the current study indicate what factors faculty and administrators of higher education perceive to encourage support for institutional effectiveness initiatives and how factors can encourage this support. There are four primary findings of the current study. First, the motivation for a project should be perceived by the campus community to be internal. Second, participation in the initiative should be optional. Third, communication and collaboration should be a priority and a benefit of the initiative.

Finally, leaders should work to promote the value of accreditation within the institution. These findings can help leaders of institutional effectiveness initiatives design and implement projects that have more of an impact on the quality of the institution.

While these findings give leaders practical actions to take to facilitate the success of a project, leadership of institutional effectiveness initiatives is an area that still needs more research in order for institutions to make the best investment possible in the projects. Future research should include additional modalities, different contexts, and further insight into the findings of the current study.

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APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Interview Protocol

I. General Information

1. What is your name?
2. What is your title or role at the institution?
3. Would you describe yourself as faculty or administration?

II. Importance of Institutional Effectiveness

4. Do you believe institutional effectiveness plays an important role in improving the institution? Why or why not?
5. Do you believe institutional Effectiveness activities are an important component of your job responsibilities? Why or why not?
6. Do you believe institutional effectiveness activities are primarily the responsibility of administrators or are they strengthened by faculty participation?

III. Internal vs External Motivation

7. In your opinion, what is the main reason the institution conducts institutional effectiveness activities? (accreditation requirements, performance-based funding, improvement of programs and services)
8. In your opinion, how much of an impact do institutional effectiveness activities have on the true quality of the institution?

IV. Depth of Implementation

9. Who is actively involved in institutional effectiveness activities at your institution? (Faculty, staff, administrators)
10. Are institutional effectiveness activities designed to fit your institution? If so, how?
11. Are the resources allocated to institutional effectiveness activities appropriate? If not, is it too little or too much?

V. Definition of Quality

12. Does improving quality at this institution involve collaboration between faculty, staff, and administrators?
13. Is the institutional effectiveness process important in determining quality? Why or why not?
14. What stakeholders are involved in determining what counts as quality at this institution?
15. How is quality defined at this institution?

VI. Level of Involvement

16. What is your involvement in institutional effectiveness activities?
17. Of what benefits from institutional effectiveness activities are you aware?
18. Did you voluntarily become involved with institutional effectiveness activities are were you assigned or involved by association with a specific job duty?
19. Are you satisfied with your current level of involvement with institutional effectiveness activities? Why or Why not?

VII. View of Others Involvement

20. What do you believe were the strengths of the leadership of this initiative?
21. What do you believe were the weaknesses of the leadership of this initiative?
22. How do you believe faculty view this initiative?
23. What factors associated with the leadership of this initiative impact the faculty view of this initiative?
24. What actions by faculty contributed to the success of this initiative?
25. What actions by faculty hindered the success of this initiative?

APPENDIX B

HUMAN USE EXEMPTION LETTER

LOUISIANA TECH
UNIVERSITY

OFFICE OF SPONSORED PROJECTS

EXEMPTION MEMORANDUM

TO: Ms. Mallory Herlevic and Dr. Bryan McCoy

FROM: Dr. Richard Kordal, Director of Intellectual Properties RSK
rkordal@latech.edu

SUBJECT: HUMAN USE COMMITTEE REVIEW

DATE: April 8, 2021

TITLE: "Factors that Impact Support of Institutional Effectiveness Initiatives by Faculty and Administrators"

NUMBER: HUC 21-085

According to the Code of Federal Regulations Title 45 Part 46, your research protocol is determined to be exempt from full review under the following exemption category(s):
46.104(a) (d) (1) ((2) (i) (ii).

(a) Unless otherwise required by law or by department or agency heads, research activities in which the only involvement of human subjects will be in one or more of the categories in paragraph (d) of this section are exempt from the requirements of this policy, except that such activities must comply with the requirements of this section and as specified in each category.

(d) Except as described in paragraph (a) of this section, the following categories of human subjects research are exempt from this policy:

(1) Research, conducted in established or commonly accepted educational settings, that specifically involves normal educational practices that are not likely to adversely impact students' opportunity to learn required educational content or the assessment of educators who provide instruction. This includes most research on regular and special education instructional strategies, and research on the effectiveness of or the comparison among instructional techniques, curricula, or classroom management methods.

(2) Research that only includes interactions involving educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures, or observation of public behavior (including visual or auditory recording) if at least one of the following criteria is met:

(ii) Any disclosure of the human subjects' responses outside the research would not reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, educational advancement, or reputation

Thank you for submitting your Human Use Proposal to Louisiana Tech's Institutional Review Board.

APPENDIX C

INSTITUTIONAL REPORTS

QEP Changes and Discussion

Section 2: Discussion of Changes Made to the QEP and Reasons for Making Them

During routine semester QEP Committee meetings, the QEP Director presented student and faculty survey results and a 'State of the QEP' for analysis and discussion. The committee, appointed by the Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs, was comprised of Math Faculty, Administration, Division Chairs, and Directors from every college department. Periodic changes were discussed and implemented to improve QEP course deliveries, program retention, and student course access, as well as meet evolving technological expectations and needs. These changing student, college, and systemic needs included the following: reducing overall course expenses, ease of access for all students, early identification and review of foundational math problem areas, new gaming and simulation technologies, emerging Open Resources (OER), and integrating a new Accelerated Co-Requisite Flipped Classroom model.

Adoption of MindTap Math Foundations eLearning Software

A change in the online learning software used in QEP compressed courses had a profound impact on the success of the plan. The software used at the time did not provide the desired level of support and was drastically overpriced. Based upon community, student, and faculty feedback during committee meetings and helping to reduce cost barriers, the new Cengage MindTap software was adopted Fall 2016. It incorporated the latest gaming, adaptive learning, and concept-check videos, helping students struggling with developmental math courses. The company also allowed us to pilot the new learning software free of charge for multiple semesters and then at a reduced student rate thereafter. The close relationship with Cengage Developmental Math and gaming content developers also led to invaluable ongoing professional development for the QEP director and Math Faculty, as well as to the adoption of OpenStax textbooks.

Adoption of OpenStax Textbook

In the Fall semester of 2017, the [redacted] Math Department adopted OpenStax Texts, an open educational resource (OER) for MATH 095, 099, and 110. Instructors found that first day access of Cengage learning software improved student outcomes by eliminating access and financial delays to course content. Adoption of a free, high-quality open license textbook allowed equal first day access to course content while eliminating high-cost barriers. Involvement with Cengage to pilot MindTap for developmental math students for free and OpenStax OER textbooks led to major savings for [redacted] students and based on this success, was widely adopted across the entire [redacted] system with annual cost savings into the millions of dollars.

Accelerated Co-Requisite Flipped and Showcase Classroom

An Accelerated Co-Requisite Flipped Classroom model and dedicated technology classroom was piloted to improve student outcomes by increasing student engagement. In Fall of 2019, a showcase classroom was outfitted with 28 laptop computers, easily accessible mobile charging station, large format smart board, and numerous math manipulatives for teaching fractions, integers, and graphing. This initiative showed a great deal of promise, and much time and effort went into its development by Admin, IT, and Math Faculty; unfortunately, it was stopped by the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. The [redacted] campus was closed, all classes were switched to online delivery, and the computers in the dedicated classroom were commandeered for use in this effort.

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Part V

QEP Executive Summary

[ ] strongly believes that broad-based campus involvement in the development of its QEP is essential to make the project a success. Through an extensive and inclusive process, the College reached out to faculty, staff, students, business, and industry through focus groups and surveys. Data emerging from questionnaires distributed to various constituencies conveyed the importance of mathematics skills for college success and the need for improvement in math skills among the students at [ ]. The attainment and retention of math skills was already of concern to the College's faculty and staff. Fifty-two percent of the entering freshman class tested into developmental math and the retention rate for those enrolled in developmental math had been 36%. As a consequence, initiatives to improve math skills were already in progress. A series of compressed courses linking developmental math courses and combining developmental and college algebra courses in a single semester were being piloted. Initial data were encouraging. The creation of these compressed courses was supported by theory and by databased studies that suggested the benefits reached beyond the simple cognitive transfer of skills and knowledge, but also improved students' overall attitudes and behaviors, and lead to improved integration into the college atmosphere, ultimately resulting in increased persistence and retention.

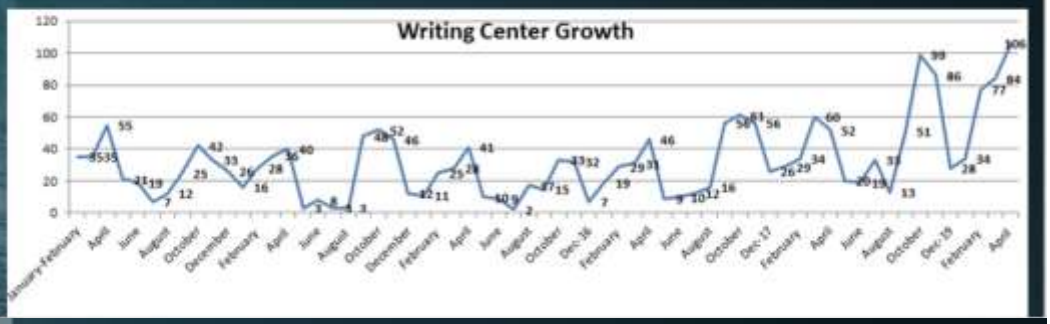
Student support and success initiatives outside the classroom environment will help bolster student learning within the developmental math learning framework. These initiatives are administered and overseen by members of the enrollment services and financial aid teams. Classroom learning will be aided by a series of extracurricular programs to assist students in overcoming issues like math anxiety and grade achievement. To do so, students will be engaged by subject matter experts three times during each semester of study.

After examination of current assessment data, a review of scholarly literature, and surveys of both internal and external constituents it was determined that the ability of [ ] students to be successful in math was key and became the basis for the College QEP topic: Making Math Count for Me.

APPENDIX D

CONFERENCE PRESENTATION MATERIALS

Writing Center Growth
January 2014-April 2019



Changes to the QEP

- Leadership Changes
- Budget
- Eportfolio
- Rubric
- Student demand
- Faculty buy-in
- Writing Center
  - Developmental English