Enrollment Management in Academic Units

by

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A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Education

Approved April 2012 by the
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May 2012

ABSTRACT

This study provides an understanding of how administrative leaders make decisions regarding enrollment management within academic units at a major research university in the southwestern United States. Key enrollment management functions of recruiting, admissions, marketing, orientation, financial aid/scholarships, academic advising, student engagement, retention and career services were identified from the literature. Typically applied at the institutional level, this study provides an understanding of how leaders in academic units decide to implement enrollment management.

A case study was conducted using qualitative data collection methods which emphasized interviews. Senior administrators, such as associate deans within academic units who have responsibility for enrollment management, served as the sample. Three main theoretical constructs were derived after analysis of the data: Theoretical Construct 1: To meet enrollment and retention goals, leaders strategically plan structures and manage resources for enrollment management functions in their academic units. Theoretical Construct 2: To increase retention, leaders intentionally strive to develop a sense of community through customized programs and services for students in their academic units. Theoretical Construct 3: To achieve enrollment objectives within a school-centric model, leaders build relationships with centralized enrollment management functions and other academic units.

The discussion and analysis of the study suggests that academic units follow a similar evolutionary model to institutions as they develop enrollment

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management functions. Five recommendations on how leaders in academic units

can more strategically utilize enrollment management principles in decision

making are offered.

DEDICATION

To all the individuals who have encouraged me along this journey and to my

mother, Sandra De Biaso, who would have been proud to have seen me

accomplish this goal.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I must also acknowledge some of the amazing people that I had the pleasure of working with in higher education, and from whom I drew my inspiration to pursue this degree and a career in higher education. Special thanks go to Kitty McGrath for taking a chance on me and giving me the pleasure of serving in your MBA career center. I express my gratitude to Sharon Alexander for rescuing me to the world of MBA admissions and allowing me to join a truly exceptional team. To one of the best admissions teams around, you all endured my grumpy days in the office, helped me celebrate my milestones, and encouraged me along the way. Thanks to Jennifer Shenfeld, Jayne Kaiser, Michelle Weber, Jason Simmons, Glen Fogerty, Jana Stern, Bibiana Am, Tim McBride and Nick DePorter. A special thanks to Rudy Pino for offering words of wisdom, support, friendship and the occasional reality check as we both completed our graduate programs.

To all the readers of this dissertation, I leave you with the following quote which I wrote during my first semester of this program.

Your journey in life should be made up of a series of detours, each sending you in a new direction; new steps on a different path you never thought of taking before. Your mark on this world is defined by how your paths are intimately connected to so many others.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

In challenging economic times, colleges and universities have been called

upon to look at operations as they grapple with ensuring financial viability. A

focus on revenue generation through more stringent management of tuition

revenue has been one strategy in the past which led institutions to focus on a more

strategic approach to enrollment management (Bontrager, 2004a). Potential

revenue shortfalls for many institutions faced with budget and funding cuts during

the recession between 2008-2010 have again brought a new level of attention

toward enrollment management in many institutions (Humphrey, 2008).

An enrollment management philosophy seeks to ensure an optimum

recruitment, retention, and graduation rate of students is achieved while ensuring

financial stability (Dolence, 1998; Whiteside, 2001). Enrollment management is

often defined in the literature as a strategic and comprehensive use of the areas

represented by recruiting, admissions, marketing, orientation, financial

aid/scholarships, academic advising, student engagement, retention, and career

services (Bontrager, 2004b; Hossler & Bean, 1990; Huddleston, 2000).

Collectively combining these functions under one umbrella yields what can be

described as institutional enrollment management.

Early enrollment management models in the 1980s focused on processes

and structures dedicated to combining disparate functions related to the

admissions and recruiting process (Henderson, 2005; Hossler, 1984). These

models were soon followed by incorporation of other campus areas in student

affairs such as student services, advising services, and career services which could

help to facilitate retention of current students (Penn, 1999). In many cases, highly complex enrollment management organizations grew within a silo of student affairs (Henderson, 2005). Increases in enrollment and a rebounded economy by the middle of the first decade of the twenty-first century brought another shift in enrollment management.   This transition focused on more actively incorporating and engaging the academic context of the university environment into enrollment management through stronger cooperation with faculty and academic unit leaders (Henderson, 2005). Additional migration of traditional student affairs functions to academic affairs and individual academic units has also begun to occur within many institutions as institutions seek to be more deeply connected to the learning part of the organization (Kuk & Banning, 2009; Penn, 1999).

A strategic approach to enrollment management includes alignment of key areas such as admissions and recruitment with financial aid, registration, orientation, and marketing which are aimed at bringing new students into the institution. An expanded enrollment management model includes student services functions such as academic advising, student engagement, and career management, which support retention of current students and outcomes upon graduation (Huddleston, 2000). Ultimately, the leadership and cultural context contribute to development of a definition and application of enrollment management philosophies within an individual institution (Dolence, 1998).

While many institutions have adopted enrollment management models, there has been less acknowledgement of the migration of enrollment management responsibilities downward within individual academic units such as specific

colleges or schools within large institutions. Henderson's (2005) iteration of

enrollment management calls for a more inclusionary approach within the

academic context of the university. He suggests the enrollment management

structure should perhaps "reside in academic affairs instead of student affairs" (p.

4). The embedding of some enrollment management activities within academic

units helps to tie the academic functions with established institutional enrollment

management structures (Henderson, 2005). Academic units are most

knowledgeable about the specialized research, curriculum, and course offerings as

well as student success factors in their specific disciplines, making staff and

faculty in the academic unit excellent resources to facilitate enrollment

management activities within their own organization (Humphrey, 2008). In order

to more actively support the newest enrollment management models, academic

units have now been called upon to develop their own defined admissions,

recruiting, student services, academic advising, and career services organizations

in support of continued enrollment of students within their unit. In this structure,

academic units retain some level of independence due to their specialized

knowledge within the complex system of a large university organization (Goff &

Lane, 2008).

  There is no perfect enrollment management model applicable to all

institutions; instead it is critical to identify organizations, structures, processes,

and programs which address the local context of an institution while using the

guiding principles established in the most contemporary views of enrollment

management (Dolence, 1998; Wilkinson, Taylor, Peterson, & deLourdes

Machado-Taylor, 2007). Crow's (2010) model encourages collaboration and redefinition of how a university is structured to deliver services to students and the community. In this type of school-centric model, the individual academic units are encouraged to act in an entrepreneurial manner by increasingly taking responsibility for managing their organizations in an effort to achieve unit-level goals . The institution in this study is pursuing this type of model and provides a unique context that serves as an interesting case example to seek understanding of how academic units are taking ownership for enrollment management functions during a period of increased inclusion of the academic units into enrollment management models.

Utilization of practices of institutional enrollment management can serve as models for individual academic units by offering new strategies and methodologies for increasing efficiency, building student recruitment and retention, and utilizing sophistication that provides for maximizing overall enrollment and revenue goals for their unit. Positive benefits have been achieved by institutions through the use of enrollment management. Leaders within academic units have unique opportunities to make decisions on how to develop and implement enrollment management models, structures, processes, and programs within their organization to reap similar benefits.

Context

The institution in which this study took place was a large urban research university in the southwestern United States. The institution had over seventy thousand students enrolled in Fall 2010 on four campuses across the metropolitan

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area and is one of the largest American public research university under one single administration. In recent years, the university embarked on an aggressive transformation through reevaluation of academic programs and operations. According to the Office of the President, this process focused on development of unique and different learning environments that address the needs of students through the invention of cross-disciplinary academic units and an increased level of autonomy. The university serves as the primary higher education institution for one of the country's ten largest metropolitan areas. At the time of the study, the university's website indicates academic excellence, broad access, and promoting diversity serve as central goals of the university. The reorganization of the university has come with a shift toward creating entrepreneurial responsibility to the fourteen schools and colleges which make up the university. A heavy focus on a school-centric model, whereby academic units are responsible for many of their own activities and decision making, has also been a key tenet of the university's reorganization.

This unique context provides an excellent environment to understand how leaders apply enrollment management in academic units. The shift in creating more specific responsibility within individual schools and colleges has created defined leadership roles of assistant and associate deans with responsibilities which span many facets of enrollment management from recruitment to advising, student engagement, and career services. Furthermore, shifts in the traditional model for student affairs functions at the university, as well as a multi-campus structure, have further diversified the ownership of these functions.

Community of Practice

This study seeks to understand how individuals in the roles of associate dean with operational responsibilities choose to apply enrollment management within their academic units. This community of administrators has an opportunity to share their experiences and historical development of their roles in an effort to provide their personal perspectives on factors used in making decisions around how to apply enrollment management as leaders within an academic unit. This study follows an action research orientation which seeks to leverage the perspectives of professionals working in a specific field to inform and contribute to an issue of immediate interest (Thomas, 2004). Through their stories, development of themes around the role of enrollment management in academic units will be able to provide guidance and insight to other aspiring leaders seeking an associate dean role. Little research exists regarding the role of the associate dean. This study serves to contribute to the broader understanding of the evolving roles of associate deans within higher education. Decision making within the higher education environment carries with it unique challenges which depart from traditional decision-making theory (Johnson, 2009). This study will also help to further explain the factors which educational leaders must take into consideration, as well as the local context, which may serve to help current and future professionals to make more informed decisions as higher education leaders.

The researcher worked for nearly ten years in several areas of enrollment management which included career management, admissions, student services, and marketing communications with a master of business administration (MBA)

program. The researcher developed an interest in the topic of enrollment management within academic units based on his personal experiences with how the MBA program approached enrollment management utilizing an integrated approach to enrollment management including the functions of admissions, student services, and career management maintained under the role of an assistant dean. The MBA program maintained significant autonomy to make decisions regarding its own enrollment management practices. It was the researcher's desire to better understand how enrollment management had developed within other academic units, particularly in light of the more entrepreneurial approach within the institution under study.

In an attempt to also further diversify the researcher's own professional career beyond that of an MBA program, this study served to offer a more clear understanding of the evolution of enrollment management in other contexts by specifically looking at undergraduate academic units. In addition, further perspective from other administrative leaders offers additional understanding for the researcher and others who aspire to have non-academic leadership roles within academic units with oversight for staff working in enrollment management. This study offers recommendations for the researcher, his peers, colleagues, and the community of practice's understanding of the phenomenon.

Through a descriptive case study design and convenience sample selection, this study is localized to the campus of a major research institution in the southwestern United States where the roles of associate deans are broad and

diverse. The primary community of practice for this study focuses on individuals in, or aspiring to, similar roles within academic units.

Problem Statement

Higher education has been increasingly challenged by the decreased level of funding experienced during the economic recession (Finney, 2010). To combat funding challenges, institutions often focus on seeking to create the optimum level of enrollment to ensure that optimal revenue and class profile goals can be achieved while also seeking financial stability and maximizing academic quality (Dolence, 1998). Academic units can consider utilizing enrollment management to further their own achievement of similar goals related to revenue attainment, a desired class profile, and enhancing financial stability for their own unit. There are also increasing shifts of traditional student affairs functions moving into academic affairs and academic units (Kuk & Banning, 2005). In an era where academic units are being called upon to act more independently and to provide tailored services to their students, this study sought to understand the decision of how to apply principles of enrollment management in academic units. A more detailed explanation of this phenomenon can potentially assist administrative leaders in identifying opportunities for deeper application of enrollment management practices to ensure goals related to enrollment, revenue, class profile, and student retention can be met within individual academic units.

Research Question

The primary research question for this study was:

How do leaders in academic units make decisions regarding enrollment

management in the areas such as recruiting, admissions, marketing, orientation,

financial aid/scholarships, academic advising, student engagement, retention, and

career services in their academic units?

Purpose

The purpose of this case study was to understand the role of academic unit

leaders and how they make decisions regarding enrollment management within

academic units. It was also to identify specific recommendations for individuals

currently serving, and aspiring to serve, in leadership roles within academic units.

In this study, a descriptive case study design was used which included interviews

with leaders in academic units as the primary data collection tool. The interviews

were used to provide a deep understanding of the evolution of enrollment

management within academic units and the roles leaders play within academic

units.

Theoretical Lens

Identifying a theoretical lens, or paradigm, through which a researcher

approaches his or her work is an important first step when engaging in research

activity. A paradigm is a set of world views that help to define the relationships

of things in the world (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). A constructivist world view is

one in which the researcher believes that individual realities are based on personal

experience within a local context (Creswell, 2009). Research projects in the

constructivist tradition seek understanding through close and unique interactions

between the researcher and the participant to ensure knowledge is acquired which

contributes to an understanding of the participant's personal experience with the

phenomenon in their local context (Creswell, 2009; Guba & Lincoln, 1994). This

perspective calls for the researcher to be able to make sense of the meanings that

others have about the world to assist in developing a theory about the

phenomenon being studied. Constructivists also believe that when conducting

research, one must be open to revisions which come about through inductive

assessments during the data collection and analysis (Creswell, 2009; Gliner &

Morgan, 2000).

This world view is consistent with the researcher's own beliefs and the

primary focus on qualitative research design in this case study. Qualitative

research is often used for developing a deep understanding of individuals'

perceptions of problems or situations with a focus on the local context or setting

within which they exist (Creswell, 2009). It provides for a rich description in the

data which is subsequently interpreted by the researcher as the reality of the

participants to formulate an understanding of human behavior (Bogdan & Biklen,

1998). The constructivist world view was consistent with this research

methodology, offering foundations which both focus on an understanding of

individual experiences, local context or setting, and an inductive approach to data

analysis.

It was through the constructivist theoretical lens which this researcher

approached this study. The constructivist paradigm aligns closely with the

researcher's own world view where individuals can serve as key experts in describing and telling their own stories about their personal experiences within their own environment.

Definitions

For purposes of this study specific terminology will be utilized. The following section details the definitions used for these terms.

- Enrollment management was defined as the functions of recruiting, admissions, marketing, orientation, financial aid/scholarships, academic advising, student engagement, retention, and career services.

- Institution is used to generally describe the entire university and all of the academic units which are encompassed under its umbrella.

- Academic units are defined as individual schools or colleges within the institution. Since these terms (college and school) are often used interchangeably, and to avoid confusion for the reader, the term academic unit is utilized.

- Academic departments are individual disciplines within an academic unit.

- Academic unit leaders are individuals serving in a leadership capacity with responsibility for enrollment management functions for a specific academic unit.

- Centralized university enrollment management functions is collectively used to refer to any enrollment management function that exists at the institutional level, outside the academic unit, and provides

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services and coordination across all areas of the institution.

References may also be made to specific centralized functions with similar meaning such as the centralized university admissions office or centralized university orientation function.

Conclusion

The following chapters of this study will seek to address the research question emphasizing how leaders in academic units make decisions regarding enrollment management functions. A review of the literature will provide background on the evolution of enrollment management functions and the roles of academic unit leaders. The next chapter offers a detailed review of the methodology used for the study which utilizes an action research orientation to conduct a qualitative case study. Chapter Four discusses the results obtained upon conducting the study including a review of the sample, theoretical constructs developed from the data analysis, and specific examples from each of the participants supporting the constructs. Finally, recommendations are presented in the last chapter, offering current and aspiring leaders in academic units ideas for how they can best make decisions on how to apply enrollment management practices within their academic units to have impact on overall enrollment, revenue and student retention.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

This literature review covers the key functions associated with enrollment management. Specific attention focuses on the broad literature applying to institutions, but additional attention is also placed on the application of enrollment management within academic units, the roles of associate deans, and decision making within higher education. The selection of literature focused on contemporary journal articles, books, scholarly publications, and professional organizations. In addition, periodicals were reviewed for the most current and up-to-date information on the topic. Analysis and synthesis of the data contained in these publications provided the core topics associated with the most comprehensive view of enrollment management.

The literature review will focus on defining and addressing the following key topics:

- Historical Framework of Enrollment Management

- Enrollment Management Structures

- Recruitment, Admissions, Financial Aid and Marketing

- Academic Advising, Student Engagement and Retention

- Career Services

- Information Systems

- Enrollment Management in Academic Units

- Leaders in Academic Units

- Decision Making in Higher Education

The literature review focuses on the most critical topics associated with enrollment management. Individual institutions may elect to include or exclude other university functions or departments depending on the local interpretation of enrollment management. For this reason, only the most common functions found in most enrollment management organizations are included. The researcher acknowledges that much of the most relevant theory related to enrollment management appears in early works on the topic dating between twenty and thirty years ago. Many of the more contemporary writers regularly cite the seminal pieces by Hossler (1984), Hossler and Bean (1990), and others. Key research works cited in the literature review are from these early works with additional articles incorporated where advances in theory were developed. Of importance to note is that many key authors on the topic of enrollment management are primarily practitioners who occasionally conduct research. As such, fewer articles on the topic appear in more contemporary peer-reviewed journals, but instead in less frequently published books, anthologies, and printed publications of professional organizations.

Historical Background

Since the days of the earliest institutions of higher education in the United States, an admissions function has existed to determine who should enroll. With an initial scholarship endowment to Harvard in the 1600s, the concept of financial aid also became an institutional function (Coomes, 2000). The colonial colleges soon gave way to an ever-growing number of institutions aided by the passage of the Morrill Acts in the late 1800s. During the twentieth century, a number of

federal aid programs and significant growth of higher education in the post-war period brought an even greater complexity to managing the operations of the institution, including the enrollment function.

Simplistically, enrollment management is defined as a way of organizing related functions for prospective and current students while meeting organizational goals using collaborative decision making across many parts of the organization (Penn, 1999). Institutions further can define enrollment management within the context of their own environments, but ultimately these efforts are focused on maintaining the optimum recruitment of new students to yield tuition revenue and retention and graduation rates of current students to manage student profile (Dolence, 1998).

Since noted in the literature beginning in the 1980s, enrollment management was seen as an organizational model to bring disparate functions associated with the admissions and enrollment cycle together (Hossler, 1984). Over time, enrollment management grew beyond an organizational concept used to structure the organization to streamline processes to become an organization which focuses on optimizing recruitment and current student enrollment (Kalsbeek, 2006). While enrollment management initially was a response to addressing demographic shifts and enrollment challenges during periods of financial uncertainty, "it has been nurtured in an environment of increased accountability and, in a growing number of cases, constrained resources" (Bontrager, 2004a, p. 11). As enrollment management grew in popularity, many organizations elected to take the leap from a traditional structure of many

disparate and uncoordinated student service and admissions functions toward a comprehensive strategic enrollment management model where all these functions are managed as a collective entity (Hossler & Bean, 1990).

Disparate parts of an institution are often committed to similar goals involving recruitment, student success, and academic achievement. Institutions have realized developing an integrated enrollment management organization is critical to realizing the mission, shaping the character, and advancing the institution (Hossler, 1984). A number of researchers have identified reasons why enrollment management should exist. The most simplistic approach put forth by Bontrager (2004b) suggests enrollment management exists to link the school's mission with a specified number of enrolled students who meet a desired institutional profile with desired net tuition revenue which will ensure financial viability. DesJardins and Bell (2006) state, "The scope of enrollment management includes trying to increase the pool of prospective students, attracting applicants, optimizing financial aid packages, establishing effective student services, and trying to maximize the chances that students will successfully complete their academic careers" (p. 59). Hossler, in one of the first works addressing the topic of enrollment management in 1984 and additionally in 1990, stresses the importance of enrollment management and the careful balancing act which an institution must play in order to successfully integrate functions to achieve institutional goals.

Enrollment Management Structures

Once an organization establishes enrollment management as a priority,

there are a number of important considerations for implementation. Dedication to

adopt an enrollment management orientation requires an institution to strategize

about which factors take precedence and become the priority toward achieving the

mission: enrollment numbers, class profile, net tuition revenue, student success,

and/or academic experience (Dolence, 1998). There is no one prevalent or

prescribed solution for the structure or composition of enrollment management

(Hossler & Bean, 1990; Kalsbeek, 2006; Miller & Eddy, 1983). Instead,

organizations need to make important decisions regarding how it should be

organized based on their local context (Bontrager, 2004a).

Three primary functional areas are represented within most mainstream

enrollment management organizations. The focus is most heavily on the front-

end of the enrollment process with recruitment, admissions, financial aid, and

marketing. Nearly all enrollment management organizations contain these basic

tenets. Evolution of enrollment management brought the second tier of linkages

with the units responsible for student success and retention activities, sometimes

within a student affairs division, but also within the academic departments.

Third, loosely appearing in the current literature, but growing in prominence for

inclusion are additional functions such as career services which focus on student

outcomes upon graduation. Bontrager (2004a) further hypothesizes the next

iteration of enrollment management includes functions within institutional

research, institutional marketing, alumni relations, and community relations.

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Some models offer that additional links to the academic units of the institution can further advance enrollment management practices by integrating faculty and tying enrollment management to the academic context of the institution (Henderson, 2005).

Recruitment and admissions. The recruitment function plays a critical role in influencing the enrollment process. Most admissions offices are structured around recruitment processes, working with students through the three classic stages of the college selection models pioneered by Hossler and Gallagher (1987): predisposition, search, and choice. Recruiting activities, supported by marketing efforts and financial aid incentives, can help achieve desired enrollment goals.

The admissions and recruitment function follows a generally formulaic model for managing prospective students through the admissions pipeline. This includes usage of deep statistical models which measure the number of individuals as they pass through each segment of the funnel from prospective students, applicants, and ultimately enrolled students. Each institution will uniquely define how they approach recruitment and admissions and what each stage of the funnel looks like. Admissions and recruitment are ultimately focused on influencing enrollment headcount, entering class profile, and overall enrollment mix of the school, and are frequently considered to be the cornerstone of enrollment management (Penn, 1999).

Marketing. Central to an admissions function is marketing, which assists in promotion and positioning of the school. Marketing helps to facilitate the college selection model, utilizing different strategies for each stage, but heavily focusing on the search and choice stages (Kotler & Fox, 1985). Contemporary marketing initiatives tend to focus heavily on electronic means, such as interactive website content and extensive e-mail communication programs, along with some of the traditional marketing mix of view books and print materials. Most frequently, academic quality and program offerings, social opportunities, location, and financial aid programs serve as key drivers in the choice model and serve as guiding topics for marketing activities (Hossler & Bean, 1990).

The marketing function of enrollment management can plan marketing activities in a comprehensive marketing program to support the recruiting and admissions function. Marketing activities utilize specific messages to reach market segments which may be defined based on the point at which a student is in the admissions cycle (Miller & Eddy, 1983). Marketing also takes responsibility for conducting market research to identify the key messages and selling points used in communication materials. Upon development, messages are conveyed through various media tools which may include direct mail, electronic mail, web content, advertising, or other marketing channels. Constant review and modification of the marketing messages and selling points is needed to ensure consistency with the institution's mission and enrollment management goals (Hossler, 1984).

Financial aid. Financial aid programs serve as one of the most critical

tools to influence the yield, or ratio, of students who enroll (Kalsbeek & Hossler,

2008). Institutional aid is an increasingly significant component of the enrollment

management strategy whereby merit aid is distributed to entice certain profiles of

students to enroll in the institution. While concerns have been raised about access

to higher education through utilization of merit aid policies, institutions have had

to make tough choices regarding the distribution of aid while prioritizing

institutional goals of access, enrollment, and revenue (Kalsbeek & Hossler, 2008).

Critics of this shift in aid policy have also argued that there is an unwillingness to

treat students with different profiles with different levels of aid. With

implications for a number of goals, many enrollment managers engage in what

has the potential to equate to price discrimination in order to achieve overall

enrollment goals (Lapovsky, 1999).

Academic advising, student engagement, and retention. Enrollment

management initially brought together the functions of admissions and marketing,

along with financial aid. As more institutions began to look deeper into managing

headcount and tuition revenue, a need to look not only at the incoming student

population, but also current students emerged. Retention of students was the next

phase added to enrollment management. Incorporating retention into enrollment

management offers a partial solution to the predicament of nobody owning or

monitoring retention (Penn, 1999).

Retention is a complex function which has many dimensions and spans

across multiple entities within the institution. It is defined as the maintenance of a

student's progress toward their education objectives (Dolence, 1998). Student affairs may have responsibility for orientation or student success programs while academic units may have responsibility for academic advising, faculty support, and course scheduling and availability. Each of these activities has at least an underlying goal of providing services to students which will ensure they return from year to year and persist toward graduation. Student development theorists focus on the importance of student engagement and interaction to facilitate persistence (Hossler & Bean, 1990). The institution has the ability to control the variables associated with how the student interacts with the school, the availability of academic programs, and to some degree, the social environment which is available through student programming. Each of these components can influence a student's choice to continue their academic pursuits; however, there will also be external influences which affect whether students can be retained. Of most importance is the need to focus on maximizing those items within the control of the institution and to develop early warning systems when a student is at risk of leaving the institution (Dolence, 1998).

Career services. Less acknowledged in the enrollment management literature, student outcomes can also be considered an important component of enrollment management (Hossler & Bean, 1990). What transpires upon graduation further extends the enrollment management model (Bontrager, 2004a). Career management centers are often tasked with providing the important student services function to support employment outcomes, while academic units may be charged with facilitating graduate school preparation.

Enrollment Management in Academic Units

Academic pursuits are at the core of the missions of higher education institutions through facilitating student learning and conducting research endeavors. It is critical to ensure the academic side of the enterprise is effectively integrated into enrollment management (Henderson, 2005; Kalsbeek, 2006). By creating enrollment management plans at the unit level, institutions can ensure there is buy-in from departments to conduct activities to meet unit goals for new and current student enrollment (Goff & Lane, 2008). Academic units also have the unique position of being close to the curriculum, course offerings, faculty specialties, course scheduling, and in some cases revenue required for a program's success (Humphrey, 2008; Kalsbeek, 2006).

Issues for academic units in the enrollment management equation are sometimes different as they may elect to focus energies on the parts of retention which are within their purview by developing programs for student engagement and academic success within their units. They may attempt to influence enrollment goals for their specific programs. They may control pools of financial aid which are for their own purposes. Departments may also elect to place a different level of priority on headcount over enrolled student profile or net revenue goals. These imbalances of priorities may result in a different philosophical orientation toward enrollment management and conflicting priorities for institutional enrollment managers and academic unit leaders (Turcotte, 1983).

Leaders in Academic Units

The roles of deans, associate deans, and assistant deans are integral to the governance of individual academic units within a university environment (Jackson & Gmelch, 2003). Over time, as the roles of deans grew more complicated and encapsulated both internally and externally facing responsibilities, the development of the role of an internally focused assistant or associate dean became more important. Assistant or associate dean titles can be used interchangeably since they offer a number of commonalities (George & Coudret, 1986; Jackson & Gmelch, 2003). For simplicity, they will be referred to collectively as associate dean throughout this study, except where noted. The role of the associate dean is generally internally focused and centered on the administration of an individual school or college functioning in a management-oriented role responsible for internal functions in support of the deans (Jackson & Gmelch, 2003). These internal roles may have responsibility for staff across many functions including recruitment and admissions and student support services. Associate deans often are often faced with juggling the complexities of rising from the ranks of a faculty member into new management roles with responsibilities for operational and staff functions (Koerner & Mindes, 1997). Other associate deans may be promoted into their positions through progressively increasing responsibilities in staff functions (Jackson & Gmelch, 2003).

Decision Making in Higher Education

As leaders in their organizations, associate deans are faced with making complex decisions regarding their areas of responsibility. The work of

educational leaders frequently revolves around decision-making activities within

the complex social systems defined by the institutions within which they exist.

Educational institutions are human services organizations which have a diverse

set of constituents and stakeholders who often have conflicting demands and

expectations (Johnson, 2009). To streamline the decision-making process, leaders

must evaluate a number of alternatives and outcomes which will each have

individual trade-offs and considerations. Looking toward clearly established

goals and information necessary to evaluate decision alternatives can lead to the

most acceptable decision (Birnbaum, 1988). Leaders often must realize that not

every goal can be optimally achieved, and therefore decisions must often be

prioritized such that optimal outcomes can be achieved toward one goal, while

other goals may only be achieved within an acceptable range, but not optimized

(Birnbaum, 1988). In ideal situations, a rational administrative leader will utilize

a multi-step process that includes knowing what information is necessary to make

the decision, considering all possible alternatives, evaluating and comparing the

set of consequences, and ultimately selecting the best alternative. It is, however, a

rare circumstance where this ideal scenario exists (Birnbaum, 1988). Instead, a

number of factors including access to information, the cultural context within

which decisions are made, and the role of the decision maker all contribute to

making the most informed decisions possible (Johnson, 2009).

This complex balance of making decisions around goals and priorities is

further defined by the decision-making model leaders utilize. These models are

defined by an individual's decision-making philosophy within the context of their

institution (Bensimon, Neuman & Birnbaum, 1989; Birnbaum, 1988; Johnson, 2009). The lens through which leaders in educational institutions make decisions often fall into five major categories. These have been adapted from the wider decision-making theories to serve the education industry. (Bensimon et al., 1989). The bureaucratic model calls for a more rational decision-making process that emphasizes the role of the decision maker in the organization and the desire to follow a specified series of logical steps in decision making. It relies on established structure and distinct lines of authority as well as centralized systems. The collegial model places a heavy emphasis on the needs of individuals and the community. Decisions are made in a more democratic style which calls for satisfying the needs and aspirations of constituencies. In the collegial model, decision making is often a shared responsibility that follows a linear process with an emphasis on defining the issues and solutions. The third model is a political system which is centered around formal and informal groups vying for power. Decision making is often characterized by conflict, and outcomes are often a product of influencing, bargaining, or coalition building. In an organized anarchy model, decisions are considered ambiguous and are made out of necessity. Unclear goals often serve as a foundation upon which problems are mixed with information and solutions such that decisions can be illogical, but focused on a final outcome. Finally, the cybernetic system model is unique to the higher education environment incorporating elements of all four of the above models. Often as large organizations, institutions have a centralized and hierarchical system that is reinforced with the social nature of collaboration found in

education. Political power and individual influence associated with individual

unit goals are combined with the need to get things done. Due to all these varying

levels of influence, the cybernetic model often focuses on decisions which require

subtle intervention rather than dramatic and radical change (Bensimon et al.,

1989).

Conclusion

This literature review focused on key functions within a higher education

environment which define enrollment management. Organizations must initially

develop a philosophical orientation around enrollment management and identify

priorities associated with the function before driving toward organizational

structures and processes. Alignment of enrollment management goals with this

philosophy is the first step toward ensuring enrollment management can serve as a

strategic initiative.

The literature identified that there is no specific organizational structure

for enrollment management, but instead some broad guidelines that must be

reinterpreted and applied in a local context based on priorities, skills, and goals

(Hossler & Bean, 1990; Ward, 2005). Key university functions have been

gradually incorporated to the traditional admissions and recruitment operations to

also include financial aid, registration, orientation, and other pre-enrollment

services. An expanded enrollment management model includes student services

functions aimed at retention and outcomes.

The literature speaks to the slow maturation of enrollment management

over the past twenty to thirty years as institutions have implemented this approach

toward solving marketplace shifts, downturns in enrollment, and financial challenges. Virtually all literature speaks to enrollment management being an institutional function which seeks optimal enrollment, management of enrolled student profile, and focus on providing services to students. The gap that remains is how enrollment management can be applied more in academic units in institutions who are shifting responsibility for these functions beyond the institutional level. In order to more effectively serve their student populations, or in response to manage retention and enrollment specific to their academic units, extensive admissions, financial aid, student support, and career centers may be developed outside the institutional framework and within the academic units (Henderson, 2005). A decentralized approach may appear contrary to institutional goals, but in the event academic units are encouraged to act more autonomously, there may be incentives to more effectively conduct enrollment management within their own organizations.

The role of the internally facing associate dean in an academic unit who has responsibilities for these functions is critical to the implementation of enrollment management in academic units. Furthermore, the factors which contribute to how decisions are made around enrollment management and the degree to which they are implemented are not significantly addressed in the literature.

The lack of literature on decision-making roles regarding enrollment management in academic units and the evolution of enrollment management within academic units provide a unique opportunity to conduct further research

into understanding enrollment management philosophies, structures, and

processes regarding decision making from the vantage point of the academic unit.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Introduction

The methodology section presented below addresses the research strategy utilized for this study. As with any study of this nature, presentation of important theories and methods by established researchers in the field will be presented to provide a firm foundation and rationale for conducting a research study. This informing research will be followed in each section by details regarding utilization of these methods with specific application to this particular study.

Approach

In order to most effectively study the phenomenon at hand, an action research orientation was followed. Action research can provide some specific advantages when the researcher is an insider in their own professional setting. Action research is inquiry which is considered a reflective process whereby members of a professional community seek to provide input into addressing a problematic situation (Herr & Anderson, 2005). Action research also provides for the ability to add value to the setting from which the research is done. It provides a frame of reference that permits the researcher to be intimately familiar and involved at a professional level with the phenomenon (Elliott, 1991). Action research also focuses on research questions which are of immediate interest and operates on the assumption that results are not generalizable, but can be applied to similar settings (Thomas, 2004). It allows for studies to be designed and executed which are outside of traditional scientific methodologies through utilization of specifically chosen samples on a smaller scale (Thomas, 2004).

A descriptive case study design was utilized. This type of design provides for an intensive, rich, detailed, and holistic description of a phenomenon in a bounded unit (Merriam, 1998). This design is one of the five primary types of qualitative research and is appropriate for this study as it allowed for a rich and thick description of enrollment management within academic units. This type of description provides for the ability to outline the complexities of the situation, include vivid details, and incorporate the opinions of several individuals from a variety of sources (Merriam, 1998; Yin, 1998). Case studies are often used in education to provide descriptive and detailed reports of specific issues or situations which are often innovative and unique (Merriam, 1998). Bounding the case is a critical step in utilization of the descriptive case study design (Merriam, 1998). For this study, the case was bounded by the institution, a major research university in the southwestern United States, such that descriptive data will be presented regarding how leaders make decisions to employ enrollment management within the various academic units of the university.

A qualitative approach allows for a better understanding of an individual's perception of a specific phenomenon (Creswell, 2009; Maxwell, 1998). A qualitative approach is useful for understanding the specific context in which participants act. It is helpful in developing an understanding of the process through which things occur or decisions are made and the activities which led to specific outcomes (Maxwell, 1998). For this study, the researcher relied on current leaders' perceptions of enrollment management as it related to their individual academic units. Leaders within academic units in this study were able

to provide detailed accounts of how they manage enrollment management within their specific unit.

Specific practices in qualitative research allow for collection of data using face-to-face interactions where relationships are developed with participants. Following a formalized protocol that also allows for flexibility based on participant and researcher interaction, qualitative research can yield rich and descriptive stories that chronicle a participant's experiences (Auerbach & Silverstein, 2003). This study relied on leaders within academic units to provide their perspectives on enrollment management through participation in interviews. A qualitative research study includes two major components, data collection and data analysis. Each of these components must be approached with care such that the researcher follows a semi-structured interview protocol for data acquisition (Maxwell, 1998). This is followed by a structured data analysis plan which allows for the researcher to have a carefully documented coding procedure (Auerbach & Silverstein, 2003). After completion of the interview protocol in this study, a comprehensive analysis of interview transcripts provided an understanding of decision making and enrollment management within academic units.

This study's research question focused on understanding decision making around enrollment management practices in the academic units at the institution under study. This question sought to understand the evolution of these functions and how leaders within a number of academic units make decisions regarding managing these functions. An action research approach utilizing a case study

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with an emphasis on qualitative data collection allowed for development of an understanding of the process of managing enrollment management within the specific local context. The research was conducted utilizing a sample of administrative leaders who have a direct connection and interest in further understanding their community of practice. The researcher is a professional who has served in various enrollment management capacities and aspires to have a role similar to those of individuals participating in this study. Through presentation of the qualitative data offered through the descriptive case study, this action research study provides benefits to a professional community of administrative leaders in academic units seeking to further their understanding of the responsibilities and decision-making processes associated with enrollment management in academic units.

Disposition

A paradigm is a set of beliefs, or a world view, which defines an individual's perspective on the relationship of things in the world. Paradigms must be accepted on faith as they are not considered to be an ultimate truth (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). A constructivist world view assumes the belief that realities are based socially with specific influence of the local context and setting of individuals. The intent of the researcher functioning under the constructivist paradigm is to make sense of the meanings that others have about the world or a specific phenomenon with a focus on the setting of the participants (Creswell, 2009).

A constructivist paradigm represents the world view from which the researcher conducted this study. This paradigm aligns with both the action research approach and qualitative methodology utilized. Action research calls for study of a phenomenon within the context of a specific professional setting (Elliott, 1991). Qualitative research also seeks to create understanding within a context of specific settings as well as through the perspectives and views of individual participants in the study (Maxwell, 1998).

Setting

Having a sense of the boundaries for the case to be utilized in a descriptive case study design within qualitative research is important at the outset. Parameters can be formed by first defining both the context and also the phenomenon (Yin, 1998). Cases can be selected for their uniqueness, but ultimately must be able to serve as the unit of analysis that will offer a deep, intensive, and holistic description of the entity (Merriam, 1998).

The institution in which this study took place was a large urban research university in the southwestern United States. The institution had over seventy thousand students enrolled in Fall 2010 on four campuses across the metropolitan area and is the largest American public research university under one single administration. According to the Office of the President. the university embarked on an aggressive transformation through reevaluation of academic programs and operations. This process focuses on development of unique and different learning environments that address the needs of students through the invention of cross-disciplinary academic units and an increased level of autonomy. A heavy focus on

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a school-centric model whereby academic units are responsible for many of their own activities and decision making has also been a key tenet of the university's reorganization. As of Spring 2012, 14 schools and colleges made up the university.

This unique setting provided an excellent environment to develop an understanding of decision making about enrollment management in academic units. The shift in creating more specific responsibility within individual academic units within this school-centric model has created defined roles of assistant and associate deans with responsibilities which span many facets of enrollment management from admissions and recruitment to advising, student engagement, and career services.

The study used a major research university in the southwestern United States as the single bounded case for this study. Individual sample participants from academic units were recruited to serve as experts with unique and different opinions as well as personal depictions of how decisions regarding enrollment management are made within their academic units. While each individual unit may have a different operating model regarding enrollment management, the study seeks to explore how leaders within academic units make decisions regarding enrollment management within the unique context of the institution under study.

Participants

Sample selection for the study was conducted using convenience sampling. Convenience sampling is a method which allows for the researcher to

select participants who are easy to access and can serve as experts when addressing the phenomenon under study (Auerbach & Silverstein, 2003). Convenience sampling is often used with qualitative studies as it allows for selection of participants who are able to provide the deep descriptions of their own personal experiences and opinions to further understanding of a particular topic within a context which cannot be found elsewhere (Maxwell, 1998). A small sample can be used provided it has been systematically selected. Careful selection provides for the ability to ensure participants can adequately address the research questions from their unique and specific perspective. This approach allows for stronger theory development or validation (Maxwell, 1998).

Sample. The sample of participants for this study was recruited with attention placed on the context of the study. The following criteria were used to identify potential study participants to target for recruitment.

1. Current job title of assistant or associate dean, or equivalent, within an undergraduate academic unit.

2. Management responsibility of one or more enrollment management functions for their academic unit.

3. Responsible for enrollment management functions for at least one year.

Identification of potential participants who met the above criteria was made through a combination of direct research of the university directory and individual academic unit websites. Details of individual roles and responsibilities were confirmed through a pre-interview survey with the participants prior to

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scheduling interview appointments. This step ensured participants were in a leadership role with management responsibilities for enrollment management functions such that they could serve as experts in conveying their personal experiences regarding decision making and the current state of enrollment management within the context of their professional work environment.

Recruitment and selection. In order to capture a diverse set of perspectives, the sample selected for recruitment using the criteria outlined above included approximately six to ten potential participants from across the 14 academic units at the institution. These potential participants yielded four personal interviews. Efforts were made to provide for representation of individuals from across the many academic units within the university. The university is dispersed across four different geographic locations in the metropolitan area. Recruitment of participants took place only at the main campus of the university which houses the largest number of academic units and students. Individuals representing academic units which had the largest enrollments or more stringent enrollment standards were more likely to have more highly developed enrollment management capabilities and were strategically targeted as participants. Online degree programs were experiencing high growth and utilized a specialized delivery format and enrollment management model. For this reason, the scope of this study only included sample participants from academic units responsible for delivering programs primarily through a traditional face-to-face format.

Recruitment included a two-step process. An initial e-mail solicitation from the researcher to the potential participants was sent to request participation (Appendix A). This message outlined the purpose of the study, detailed the interview format of the study, and described the benefits of participation. Upon confirmation of participation, a formal letter via e-mail offering the specific details of the interview process was provided. A letter outlining the required informed consent (Appendix B) was provided with the interview confirmation to ensure proper consent for participation was provided by the participants.

Additional recruitment follow up was necessary to solicit participation. This was conducted using a combination of supplemental e-mail follow up and personal calls from the researcher to further discuss the study. Personal interaction through phone also further assisted in relationship development and rapport with potential participants.

Once participants had indicated a willingness to participate, completion of a brief online pre-interview questionnaire (Appendix C) was requested. This questionnaire assisted with ensuring participants met the study selection criteria. It also entailed a review of which of the primary enrollment management functions are within the area of responsibility of the participant. Basic demographic data on the participant was also obtained as well as the number of staff working under their supervision.

Interview appointments were scheduled once the pre-interview questionnaire had been completed, and it was determined the participants met the selection criteria for the interview protocol. Upon confirmation of the

participants, a review of the sample took place to ensure diverse representation of perspectives from academic units around the university.

In qualitative research, sample size should be based on theoretical saturation. Theoretical saturation is defined as the point at which additional participants are no longer offering any new concepts or ideas to the data set (Auerbach & Silverstein, 2003). Saturation was obtained through these participants once the data analysis was completed and no new information was emerging in the analysis. In the event saturation had not been achieved, further recruiting and interviews would have been conducted.

Role of researcher. An action research approach and qualitative research methodology call for specific roles of the researcher as an active participant with a specific role within the professional setting (Elliott, 1991). In qualitative research, the researcher utilizes an inductive form of data acquisition and analysis which calls for the researcher to collect data and reflect on it during the process (Creswell, 2009). Changes may be made as needed to adjust for new information or new themes which may be emerging as information is reviewed. This reflexive approach allows the researcher to incorporate their own knowledge about the phenomenon to allow for better evaluation and conclusions (Auerbach & Silverstein, 2003).

The researcher worked as a professional staff member with a major public university for nearly ten years prior to the completion of the study. Work experience was in several areas of enrollment management including career management, admissions, student services, and marketing communications with a

master of business administration (MBA) program. The researcher developed an interest in the topic of enrollment management within academic units based on his personal experiences with how the MBA program approached enrollment management utilizing an integrated approach to enrollment management functions including admissions, student services, and career management maintained under the role of an assistant dean. It is the researcher's desire to better understand how enrollment management developed within other academic units within the university, particularly in light of the more entrepreneurial approach and school-centric model advocated by the president of the university.

The researcher acknowledges that certain biases may be present having extensive familiarity with the institution where the study took place and having thorough knowledge of the location and context. The researcher acknowledges that he has not worked with any of the participants recruited in a professional capacity, which should minimize concerns associated with integrity during the data collection. Similarly, most of the researcher's work experience was focused exclusively on graduate programs while the emphasis of this study is on undergraduate programs. The researcher has not worked in a capacity that serves undergraduate students, but has a high level understanding of the similarities and differences with graduate programs. Recognizing that the researcher wishes to have a broader professional role beyond that of graduate programs, this study served to inform the researcher as well as other individuals wishing to work in leadership capacities with oversight for undergraduate programs.

Action Plan and Timeline

The primary method of data collection for the qualitative research design utilized interviews to allow for collection of rich descriptive data to provide an understanding of how leaders apply enrollment management in academic units.

This study was conducted according to a prescribed timeline. Approval from the Institutional Review Board was received in April 2011. The dissertation committee approval was received in May 2011. Data collection began in December 2011 and concluded in January 2012. This timeline was selected principally out of convenience to the participants who had better availability due to reduced academic activity during the winter break period.

Data Collection Plan

Utilization of interviews is an effective means of data collection for qualitative research. Interviews offer the ability for participants to offer personal opinions and statements regarding their individual experience with the phenomenon (Auerbach & Silverstein, 2003; Creswell, 2009; Maxwell, 1998). An interview also serves as a purposeful conversation between two or more individuals to obtain information and descriptive data in the words of the participant (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998). The interview can serve as a rich foundation upon which a holistic account of a very complex problem can emerge through the detailed accounts of various participants (Creswell, 2009).

Interviews offer a unique window into the perspectives of study participants within their own settings. While a specified interview protocol is recommended, utilizing only a semi-structured set of interview questions can help

to ensure the researcher has latitude to interact with the participant to ask probing questions that can help to clarify specific examples (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998). Of additional importance is the need for the interviewer to be responsive to the interview session. Ensuring the participant is comfortable throughout the interview and exercising good listening skills allow the researcher to establish additional rapport with the participant and yield better data (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998). A semi-structured interview script utilizing open-ended questions allows for the participant to walk through their personal historical experience with the phenomenon (Auerbach & Silverstein, 2003). Interview scripts consisting of a limited number of questions regarding the phenomenon can be identified from a review of the literature (Auerbach & Silverstein, 2003). To facilitate the data analysis process in qualitative research, interviews can be recorded and later transcribed (Creswell, 2009).

Interview protocol.   A specific interview protocol was followed for this study which called for scheduling of interviews at a time and location of convenience for the participant. Interviews were conducted between December 2011 and January 2012. Interviews were approximately one hour in duration and began with an overview of the study including definitions of enrollment management and outlining the format of the interview. Confirmation of the voluntary participation and informed consent (Appendix B) was obtained at the outset of the interview. A semi-structured interview questionnaire was used to conduct the interview (Appendix D). Digital recordings were conducted at the time of the interview and later transcribed to allow for more detailed review and

analysis. At the conclusion of the interview, the researcher reviewed the next steps in the study and the expected timelines for completion, including covering the potential need to have the participants later verify transcripts or provide additional clarification of details through a process known as member checks (Maxwell, 1998).

Interview script. A review of the literature offered a thorough understanding of the many facets of enrollment management and decision making within higher education. Subsequently, the interview script (Appendix D) identified for this study was developed to address the participant's engagement with and decision-making process around enrollment management within their academic unit. A majority of the interview sought to understand the roles these functions play within the academic unit and how decisions are made around them. Each question was asked in an open-ended format to allow for explanation and individual opinions to be expressed. The interview was preceded by the participant completing a brief online questionnaire that offered some basic demographic data to be obtained from the participant to allow for additional data analysis and segmentation.

Pilot study. A pilot study can be a useful means to test the tools, such as the interview protocol and data collection procedures. A pilot study helps to minimize bias of the researcher by obtaining additional feedback from peers or potential study participants prior to the formal launch of the study (Maxwell, 1998). Qualitative research calls for a reflective and iterative process to data acquisition (Creswell, 2009). Therefore, testing the interview questions and

making any necessary changes may be helpful to ensure the proper data is being collected. For purposes of this study, one pilot interview was conducted with an associate dean of one academic unit. This academic unit understood that the interview was also being conducted to provide insight to the researcher into the viability of the interview tool. The interview protocol, including the pre-interview survey, recording, and transcription were conducted. In addition, the transcript was analyzed according to the same data collection and analysis protocols outlined for the full study. The pilot study was conducted in December 2011. Upon conclusion of the pilot study, no modifications were deemed necessary to the interview script. Due to the quality of the interview data, the results of the pilot study were incorporated into the full research study.

  Timeline. A project timeline is important to ensure the research can be completed, including questionnaire development, sample selection, data collection, and analysis (Bickman, Rog & Hedrick, 1998; Thomas, 2004). The interviews were conducted between December 2011 and January 2012. Recruitment materials were sent out via email in December 2011 with additional follow up messages and phone calls as needed to confirm participant interview times. A final e-mail confirmation was sent two to five days prior to the scheduled interview.

Data Analysis Plan

  Qualitative researchers are called upon to utilize definitive procedures for analyzing data due to the potential for subjective assessment of the responses provided by participants (Auerbach & Silverstein, 2003; Bogdan & Biklen, 1998).

A number of data analysis procedures are available for qualitative data. These call

for close scrutiny of the transcripts obtained from the raw interview

conversations. Coding is a procedure for organizing the text and subsequently

discerning patterns within the text (Auerbach & Silverstein, 2003). One of the

most critical steps in this coding process is the need for the researcher to outline

this process such that others are able to understand how the data was analyzed

(Auerbach & Silverstein, 2003). This structured interpretation using coding

mechanisms allows for stronger validity to the analysis. Creswell (2009) outlines

a six step process for qualitative data analysis. The foundation of Creswell's

process suggests organizing the data into segments or passages which represent

specific categories. Further coding permits themes to emerge as the major

findings associated with the study. The themes can also offer a description of the

setting. Specific passages are then located to support the themes and provide

narrative description to convey the overall findings.

Data analysis for this study followed a process that combines those

procedures outlined by Auerbach and Silverstein (2003) and Creswell (2009)

outlined in Table 1. Creswell's six step process will be followed substituting step

three regarding analysis. Instead, the coding process recommended by Auerbach

and Silverstein (2003) which offers a deeper methodology for reviewing the data

was utilized. This deeper coding calls for a three-tiered process whereby review

of the text yields repeating ideas. Subsequently, repeating ideas which offer

significant commonalities will yield themes. Themes are grouped into larger,

more abstract ideas, called theoretical constructs. This combination of an explicit

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six step review process of the data and presentation of the findings (Creswell 2009) and specific three step coding procedures (Auerbach & Silverstein, 2003) will aid in ensuring a reliable and valid analysis process. The qualitative data which offers unique personal stories and experiences within specific contexts and settings can be translated through this methodology into broader themes and constructs.

Table 1

Creswell's Six Step Process and Auerbach and Silverstein's Coding Methodology

Step		Procedure	Attributed to
Step 1		Organize and prepare data through transcription	Creswell
Step 2		Review data to determine a general sense of the content	Creswell
Step 3		Analysis and coding	Auerbach and Silverstein
	a	Relevant text yields repeating ideas	Auerbach and Silverstein
	b	Repeating ideas yield themes	Auerbach and Silverstein
	c	Themes grouped into theoretical constructs	Auerbach and Silverstein
Step 4		Description of theoretical constructs	Creswell
Step 5		Develop narrative	Creswell
Step 6		Interpretation	Creswell

Adapted from Creswell (2009) and Auerbach and Silverstein (2003)

Computer programs can serve as useful tools for categorizing and completing the coding process, provided there is an appropriate level of intervention by the researcher (Maxwell, 1998). Data available from transcripts was imported into QSR International's NVivo9 software designed for organization, coding, and analysis of qualitative data. The software provides for additional systematic approaches to data analysis and the ability to manage all material in a single electronic location (QSR International, 2010). Through software utilization, the coding process outlined in Step 3 of the data analysis plan was realized. Identification of specific narrative passages was facilitated by the software to ensure comprehensive illustrations of themes and theoretical constructs.

Reliability, Validity, and Generalizability

Qualitative researchers must take a number of steps in their research to ensure that the issues of reliability, validity, and generalizability are addressed. These concepts are essential for helping to eliminate or minimize the subjectivity and interpretation for which qualitative researchers are often criticized. Utilizing standards within qualitative methods and analysis procedures will help to address these issues most commonly associated with qualitative research processes (Auerbach & Silverstein, 2003).

Reliability. Reliability is the extent to which there is fit between what is recorded through the interview process and what is actually occurring in the setting (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998). Researchers should be concerned about the ability for others to be able to review the data to arrive at conclusions using the

same documented process. This is often permitted through an accurate and comprehensive data collection process (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998). In qualitative research, the conclusions do not necessarily have to be the same, but they should not be contradictory in terms of results.

Reliability will be maintained in this study utilizing a number of techniques suggested by Creswell (2009). First, the transcripts will be reviewed for detail and accuracy. Removing errors in the transcription process can ensure data is captured exactly as it was provided by the participant. Second, use of computer software will allow for documentation of detailed coding systems as well as capturing the meaning of the codes and subsequent themes and constructs. Finally, detailed notes throughout the coding process which document rationale for developing and assigning codes will be maintained.

Validity. Validity in qualitative research is defined as assuring that findings are accurate through the use of various procedures that can be implemented during analysis (Creswell, 2009). This research study will utilize multiple strategies to ensure accuracy of the findings and to ensure validity. Member checking will allow for participants to review transcripts, themes, and findings to allow them to confirm accuracy. Through an iterative process, the participants can provide additional insight that may not have been covered in the initial interview conversation. Rich descriptions also allow the researcher to confirm the accuracy of the study through the use of realistic and detailed examples from participants. Inclusion of these stories will ensure specific understanding, opinions, and thoughts of participants bring depth to the final

report. Finally, the researcher acknowledges that a certain level of bias may be inherent in this study through his professional work experience in higher education and the interactive nature of the interview procedure. The reflective nature of the qualitative research process also calls for this bias to be addressed in detail through the descriptive results.

This study utilizes qualitative data which is built around the premise that the participant selection is purposeful. It is being conducted within a unique and specific context which is integral to the results. The researcher does not make any claims about the data being generalized to a larger population or context, but will have utilized procedures which permit for the study to be conducted in another setting or with other groups of participants. Replication of the study is not intended to yield the same results, but instead to provide theories which are specific to the phenomenon in its context.

Generalizability. The primary function of qualitative research is to understand the perspectives of specific individuals within a specific context (Creswell, 2009). Therefore, by definition, the nature of specific results of qualitative research is not intended to be universally applicable, but instead to generate specific themes and conclusions specific to the population in the study (Maxwell, 1998). In order to ensure the ability for broader generalizability for the qualitative methodology, it is important to allow for the study to be replicated with other populations or samples utilizing the same methodology outlined (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998). Similarly, the theories generated from the research may also be considered transferable to other contexts or settings.

Conclusion

This study sought to develop an understanding of how leaders make decisions to apply enrollment management in their academic units. The methodology selected utilized an action research orientation. This approach was chosen to obtain results which can inform a community of practice of current and future leaders within higher education who seek administrative roles within academic units. A qualitative approach focused on obtaining data through interviews with leaders in academic units with responsibility for enrollment management was utilized to allow for collection of deep and rich narrative.

Procedures were outlined for both data collection and analysis to minimize concerns associated with reliability, validity and generalizability. These include a formalized plan for conducting interviews. The data collection took place between December 2011 and January 2012. For analysis, a structured coding process was outlined that utilized computer software for analyzing qualitative data.

The next section presents the results of the study and data analysis. The theoretical constructs identified from the data provide an effective foundation for the rich, descriptive narrative depiction offered regarding the evolution and current state of decision making about enrollment management within academic units.

Chapter 4: Discussion of Results

The research question of this study focused on evaluating how leaders in academic units at a major research university in the southwestern United States make decisions regarding enrollment management in in areas such as recruiting, admissions, marketing, orientation, financial aid/scholarships, academic advising, student engagement, retention, and career services in their academic units. This chapter will begin with a brief review of the study design and participants. Through analysis of the data, three theoretical constructs emerged which can serve as indicators of how leaders make decisions about enrollment management functions in academic units. Upon presentation of each theoretical construct, narrative will be presented from the participants to provide a depiction of each construct within each of the academic units in the study.

Review of the Study

A qualitative research methodology using personal interviews was used for this study. Participants who held the position titles of associate dean within academic units were recruited. Individuals were screened based on having responsibility for enrollment management functions within their academic unit. One hour interviews, which utilized a semi-structured interview protocol, were conducted. Transcripts of interviews were analyzed according to a specific data analysis plan. Through the coding process outlined by Auerbach and Silverstein (2003), theoretical constructs emerged. Narrative by participants was taken from the interviews to provide a rich depiction of the application of these theoretical constructs within the context of each academic unit.

Context and Participants

This study was conducted at a major research institution in the southwestern United States. According to the University Office of the President, the university has been undergoing a transformation under the leadership of the current president which emphasizes a shift in responsibility to the individual academic units within the university through the creation of a school-centric model . Participants in the study held the title of associate dean and had responsibility for enrollment management functions within their academic units. This section will highlight some of the basic characteristics of each of the participants and their academic units. As specified in the informed consent documentation and to aid in protecting the identity of participants and academic units, each participant and academic unit has been assigned an alias. Throughout the discussion of the results of this study, each unit will be referred to with one of the following designations: the Arrington School, the Barker School, the Cready School and the Dillard School. Specific references to participants will use the following designations: Associate Dean Almond, Associate Dean Benton, Associate Dean Carpenter or Associate Dean Drummond. For ease of the reader, the first letters of the name of academic units and their corresponding associate deans have been made the same to facilitate association of the school and their respective leader. Names of the academic units have been edited to incorporate the word school to facilitate the flow of the narrative, but these entities will generally be referred to as academic units throughout this study.

The following definitions will also help to assist in understanding the key terms that will be used throughout this discussion.

- Institution is used to generally describe the entire university and all of the academic units which are encompassed under its umbrella.

- Academic units are defined as individual schools or colleges within the institution. Since these terms (college and school) are often used interchangeably, and to avoid confusion for the reader, the term academic unit is utilized.

- Academic departments are individual disciplines within an academic unit.

- Academic unit leaders are individuals serving in a leadership capacity with responsibility for enrollment management functions for a specific academic unit.

- Centralized university enrollment management functions is collectively used to refer to any enrollment management function that exists at the institutional level, outside the academic unit and providing services and coordination across all areas of the institution. References may also be made to specific centralized functions with similar meaning such as the centralized university admissions office or centralized university orientation function.

The Arrington School and Associate Dean Almond. According to the website of the University Office of Institutional Analysis, the Arrington School is one of the largest academic units at the institution with nearly 18,000

undergraduate students representing a wide array of disciplines. It includes

several sub-academic units which include over 20 academic departments that

were aggregated three years ago under comprehensive leadership. This academic

unit has a unique situation in that it maintains some enrollment management

functions at a centralized level, but also has some functions that are decentralized

into specific academic departments. All enrollment management functions

including admissions/recruiting, marketing, academic advising, student

engagement, retention, career management, financial aid/scholarships, and

orientation reported to the associate dean who participated in this study. Directors

or assistant deans served in managerial capacities over various enrollment

management functions and all report to Associate Dean Almond. Associate Dean

Almond reports to the dean of the Arrington School.

Associate Dean Almond has over 20 years of experience in higher

education and has served in the current role for approximately three years.

Responsibilities of Associate Dean Almond include both student services and

academic programs which were described as everything focusing on recruiting,

retention, and also course scheduling or credit hour management. Associate Dean

Almond has approximately 100 indirect reports representing many enrollment

management functions. Approximately 70 of these individuals are academic

advisors, who are decentralized in the academic departments of the unit.

The Barker School and Associate Dean Benton. The Barker School is a

college which enrolls academically high achieving students. Students are

concurrently enrolled with other academic units and can access specialized

courses which are taught at an advanced academic level. According to fact book

obtained from the University Office of Institutional Analysis website, this

academic unit has a significant living-learning component and enrolls

approximately 1,000 new undergraduate students each year and had a 2010

enrollment of just over 3,500 undergraduate students. This academic unit must

work closely with other academic units due to the concurrent enrollment of

students. It has a supplemental admissions application process beyond that which

is administered at the centralized university level. No other academic unit in the

study had this additional admissions process. Admissions/recruiting and

marketing exist within this academic unit, but report directly to the dean of the

Barker School. All other enrollment management functions including academic

advising, student engagement, retention, career management, financial

aid/scholarships, and orientation report to Associate Dean Benton. Associate

Dean Benton reports to the dean of the Barker School.

Associate Dean Benton has approximately 18 years of higher education

and enrollment management experience. This individual has served in the current

role of Associate Dean for Student Services for six years having supervised nearly

every enrollment management function at some point while employed at the

Barker School. Current responsibilities for Associate Dean Benton include

supervising a staff of 15 and overseeing enrollment management functions except

for the marketing and admissions/recruiting functions.

The Cready School and Associate Dean Carpenter. The Cready School

is a professional school enrolling about 1,700 new undergraduate students each

year for a total undergraduate enrollment of nearly 8,500 per the website of the University Office of Institutional Analysis. The Cready School has fully centralized enrollment management functions within the academic unit and does not rely on any of its academic departments within the unit to administer enrollment management functions. Associate Dean Carpenter is responsible for all functions including academic advising, student engagement, retention, career management, financial aid/scholarships, and orientation. An assistant dean for admissions/recruiting and an assistant dean for marketing exist within the academic unit, but report directly to the executive dean and dean respectively.

Associate Dean Carpenter has worked in higher education for 28 years, and in the current role overseeing undergraduate programs and enrollment management functions for seven years. Supervising a staff of nearly 60 professionals, Associate Dean Carpenter manages all enrollment management functions with the exception of admissions/recruiting and marketing. Associate Dean Carpenter reports to the executive dean of the Cready School.

The Dillard School and Associate Dean Drummond. The Dillard School is made up of several sub-academic units offering technical degree programs to about 5,000 undergraduate students and enrolling 1,500 to 1,800 undergraduate students annually as stated in reports available from the University Office of Institutional Analysis website. All enrollment management functions within the unit report directly to the associate dean with the exception of marketing which reports to the dean of the Dillard School.

Associate Dean Drummond has overseen academic and student services for the past five years and has worked in higher education for 32 years. Associate Dean Drummond has a staff of 22 direct reports and additional indirect reports responsible for academic advising within individual departments. Associate Dean Drummond reports to the dean of the Dillard School.

Table 2

Summary of Enrollment Management Functional Responsibilities by Associate Deans

Function	Associate Dean Almond	Associate Dean Benton	Associate Dean Carpenter	Associate Dean Drummond
Admissions/ Recruiting	X			X
Marketing	X			
Academic Advising	X	X	X	X
Student Engagement	X	X	X	X
Retention	X	X	X	X
Career Services	X	X	X	X
Financial Aid/Scholarships	X	X	X	X
Orientation	X	X	X	X

Table 3

Summary of Enrollment Management Functions by Academic Unit

Function	Arrington School	Barker School	Cready School	Dillard School
Admissions/ Recruiting	X	X	X	X
Marketing	X	X	X	X
Academic Advising	X	X	X	X
Student Engagement	X	X	X	X
Retention	X	X	X	X
Career Services		X	X	X
Financial Aid/Scholarships	X	X	X	X
Orientation	X	X	X	X

The sample of the four academic units included a broad array of academic disciplines representing 31,066 students from among the university's 56,562 total undergraduate student enrollment for Fall 2010 as reported on the website of the University Office of Institutional Analysis. This represents 55% of the enrolled undergraduate student population. Participants were recruited who represented academic units with a majority of the student population within the university. Associate deans participating in the study had an average of 24.5 years of experience in higher education and an average of 4.25 years in their current roles.

Emergent Theoretical Constructs

Within the institution in which this study was conducted, academic unit

leaders have been faced with making decisions regarding developing an

enrollment management strategy or organization in response to a number of

factors. Participants in the study all indicated they had felt an increasing pressure

to take responsibility for growing enrollment of new students and retention of

current students. Much of this is due to the university president's focus on a new

model for higher education. Encouraging an entrepreneurial approach, this model

is transforming the institution in this study and has brought about an emphasis on

being school-centric where academic units take more ownership for their own

goals and objectives. Leaders are tasked with developing and implementing

programs and services that will best meet the needs of their students. While

defining these new roles and responsibilities within the academic units, the

participants still must work collaboratively with centralized university functions

and leadership that set the strategic direction for the institution. Financial

constraints brought on by a period of budget crises and funding cuts have placed

additional pressures on academic unit leaders in the study. The combination of

these factors and the context in which the study takes place have placed an

interesting set of challenges in front of academic unit leaders who are responsible

for enrollment management.

Associate deans are making specific choices to tackle these enrollment

management challenges within the evolving institutional model. Three theoretical

constructs indicating how leaders are addressing these challenges emerged from

this study. The three theoretical constructs were derived through the coding

process outlined by Auerbach and Silverstein (2003). The constructs were the

byproduct of reviewing interview text for repeating ideas. Repeating ideas were

then grouped into themes. Related themes were further grouped to arrive at the

theoretical constructs. A table is provided with each theoretical construct to

provide a summary of key repeating ideas and themes leading to each theoretical

construct. The three theoretical constructs that will be discussed in detail include:

- Theoretical Construct 1: Structures and Resources

  To meet enrollment and retention goals, leaders strategically plan
  structures and manage resources for enrollment management functions
  in their academic units.

- Theoretical Construct 2: Enhanced Services

  To increase retention, leaders intentionally strive to develop a sense of
  community through customized programs and services for students in
  their academic units.

- Theoretical Construct 3: Relationships

  To achieve enrollment objectives within a school-centric model,
  leaders build relationships with centralized enrollment management
  functions and other academic units.

In the following sections, each theoretical construct will be discussed with

a general overview of its applicability across all academic units. Subsequently,

each of the academic units will be discussed individually with a specific focus on

how the theoretical constructs are being applied within the individual

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organizations. Where available, direct quotes from the participating associate

deans are provided as additional evidence to support the narrative.   This narrative

offers a richer descriptive text to depict stories and experiences and to bring to life

the related construct.

Discussion of Theoretical Construct 1: Structures and Resources

The first theoretical construct focuses on structures and resources. It was

developed based on a number of repeating ideas centered on the specific

enrollment management functions that were housed within the academic unit and

financial resources available to develop them. Codes were assigned to each

enrollment management function which allowed them to emerge as repeating

ideas. A theme around enrollment management functions emerged that described

which enrollment management functions existed within units. A second key

theme, resources, emerged from repeating ideas surrounding funding, program

fees, and resource allocation for enrollment management functions. Lastly,

specific goals and strategies supporting enrollment management as well as

organizational structure helped define the responsibilities of leaders in academic

units regarding managing staff. These three themes led to the development of

Theoretical Construct 1:

To meet enrollment and retention goals, leaders strategically plan

structures and manage resources for enrollment management functions in

their academic units.

Table 4

Repeating Ideas and Themes for Theoretical Construct 1: Structures and
Resources

Repeating Ideas	Themes	Theoretical Construct 1: Structures and Resources
Recruiting/Admissions Advising Career Services Financial Aid- Scholarships Orientation Retention Marketing	Functional Theme	To meet enrollment and retention goals, leaders strategically plan structures and manage resources for enrollment management functions in their academic units.
Funding Program Fees Resource Allocation	Resources Theme	
Goals and Strategies Managing Staff Organizational Structure	Organizational Theme	

Academic unit leaders indicated that their units had increasingly taken on

responsibility for many enrollment management functions. Variations existed

among the participating academic units as to the evolution of these functions

within their unit and when resources began to be dedicated to them. The

recruiting function received a significant amount of attention. There was a

specific choice to use the word recruitment or recruiting as opposed to

admissions. While academic units felt they had some ability to influence the

desired academic qualifications criteria for students to their programs and the ability to have recruiting staff dedicated to generating interest and applications, there was a clear delineation that admission to the university was a centralized university function. They felt they had to work closely with the centralized admissions function, but they had little decision-making authority when it came to decisions regarding if a student would be admitted to the university or not. They all were focused on meeting specific enrollment targets for incoming students and felt the need to utilize their own recruiting staff as one of the ways that would ensure they met the goals.

Academic advising received a significant amount of resources within all academic units, having historically been a function of the academic departments. With the recruiting function to assist in bringing students to the academic unit, comments frequently turned toward activities that served current students and could help achieve retention goals. A number of additional services and programs have been developed and administered within the academic units with the express goal of managing and increasing retention rates. With retention being a key enrollment management component, all academic units discussed retention metrics in some level of detail and indicated they were held accountable by the institution for meeting retention goals. To facilitate this process, participants chose to hire staff and create enrollment management functions which were responsible for programs and services that would ensure their academic unit met retention objectives.

An increased level of financial resources in three of the four academic units came from specific program fees that had been pursued by certain academic units. These fees required approval from the State's Board of Regents and had all been requested within the past five years, during a period when many of the enrollment management functions were being built within the academic units. As an incremental fee in addition to tuition revenue, the program fees were funds that were retained within the academic unit in which the student was enrolled. Program fees provided the primary source to fund the organizational structures, staff resources, and enhanced services and programs for many enrollment management functions within the academic units.

Every participant referenced an organizational chart to help provide an overview of their organization's structure. No one was willing to provide a copy to the researcher due to confidentiality or additional changes that were being made. Nonetheless, they referenced specific individuals in roles and functions in the organization and indicated that choices had been made to create structures to support enrollment management. The leaders of the academic units also claimed responsibility for setting priorities and strategic direction for most of the non-academic undergraduate initiatives within their schools. Direct and indirect reporting relationships within their organizations were from approximately 20 to over 100 people demonstrating that organizations within the academic units had been specifically developed to support enrollment management functions.

In the following sections, each academic unit will be reviewed with regard to its individual enrollment management organizational structure. Prospective student functions will be addressed followed by resources dedicated to current students. Nuances that are unique and different to each unit as it relates to structures and resources will be addressed at the end of each unit's discussion.

The Arrington School. Enrollment management functions within the Arrington School exist in both a centralized and decentralized manner. Some enrollment management functions are centralized for the entire academic unit, and others are decentralized and delegated to specific academic departments within the unit. Associate Dean Almond said, "Each one of our departments has a role in all of the important functions of recruiting students and then yielding them to the departments. My job is to coordinate that with the staff" (personal communication, January 4, 2012). This provides the ability for staff at the unit level to serve in a coordinating capacity for processes utilized by individual academic departments and to act as a liaison with the centralized university enrollment management functions such as admissions, orientation, and residential life. Associate Dean Almond states, "Having a one size fits all model of recruitment and yield makes no sense" (personal communication, January 4, 2012). Therefore, the unit has had to evolve their enrollment management organization to best serve their prospective students. Relying on a singular recruiting process offered through the centralized admissions office was not enough. Associate Dean Almond went on to offer that the decentralized nature of some enrollment management functions within the unit is effective as it allows the

department, which is at the forefront of teaching, developing curriculum, and advising students to ensure prospective students have access to better information about their program of interest. This desire to have the most relevant information available to students has served as additional rationale to have enrollment management functions contained within the academic unit.

The Arrington School has a combination of centralized and decentralized marketing functions within the unit. Some individual departments maintain marketing capabilities, but core branding, communication standards, and tools are provided at the academic unit level. The unit took responsibility for all prospective student communication because it was more efficient. However, the individual departments were responsible for developing the content of the message since they have better knowledge of the specific content in which students may be interested. The Arrington School sought to "match the message to the student" (Associate Dean Almond, personal communication, January 4, 2012) to provide better quality information. This allocation of resources is an example of how the academic unit has taken ownership to develop a marketing function to support enrollment specific to that academic unit while also being able to develop its own messaging that is applicable to students in individual academic disciplines. In the end, these efforts were primarily aimed at overseeing new student enrollment and yield management.

Academic advising within the Arrington School is delegated to the academic departments. Approximately 70 staff members serve as advisors to meet with students to ensure they are on track to meet academic requirements.

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There are six additional staff members under Associate Dean Almond who serve

in a coordination capacity with academic departments and also handle special

cases of advising related to transfer students and transitional students as well as

those with complex academic concerns. For the first time this year, the unit

administered a survey to its current students to assist with identifying key issues

with which students were struggling. The outcomes of the survey allowed the

unit to decide where to use staff and financial resources toward developing

programming that was in demand by students.

Unlike all other participants in the study, the Arrington School does not

have program fees as a revenue source to help fund its enrollment management

functions. Therefore, they rely on academic departments to shoulder some of the

financial burden. Further to this point, the Arrington School relies on the central

university career services function for most support in that area.

In the case of the Arrington School, they have developed core enrollment

management functions with an emphasis on resources being most heavily

allocated to recruiting, marketing, and advising. With some centralized and

decentralized functions and limited access to specialized funding to assist with

developing a more robust enrollment management organization, the Arrington

School has developed structures that work for its particular organizational model,

student population, and academic departments and funding availability.

The Barker School. For more than 15 years, the Barker School has

developed resources dedicated to enrollment management functions. The core

enrollment management functions including admissions/recruiting, advising,

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orientation, and retention programs have existed for some time. As of late, the

model in the Barker School has expanded to include resources dedicated to

financial aid/scholarships and most recently career services and marketing.

The focus on the recruiting of new students has been significant with

planned year-over-year growth in the incoming class of 600 to 1000

undergraduate students. The admissions and recruiting group in this unit reports

directly to the dean and was expanded from one to two staff members to help

facilitate the growth. Marketing resources were recently added in the Barker

School. In the last year the unit has hired a webmaster and a dedicated marketing

and public relations specialist because Associate Dean Benton felt, "I think the

way that we are presented to the world and to the community, really can't take

second fiddle" (personal communication, January 9, 2012). This need to

communicate to prospective students the culture, unique academic offerings, and

enhanced services of the unit were the primary reason to build this new marketing

function. In addition, they could rely less on the centralized university marketing

department to provide the higher level of marketing activities and messages the

school desired to convey.

As enrollment numbers grew, additional staff were added in advising.

According to Associate Dean Benton, "We started hiring more academic advisors

to make the ratios [between advisors and students] at least somewhat reasonable.

And then we required [students] to come in for academic advising and we're now

at 78% retention to [the Barker School] and we climb a big chunk every semester"

(personal communication, January 9, 2012). Specialized advising was seen as a

competitive advantage in the Barker School. The unit had developed a mandatory

advising plan which was primarily targeted at retaining current students and

ensuring they were meeting degree requirements. A new employee dedicated to

facilitating internship and research activities has been added within the last year

demonstrating additional growth in the enrollment management functions within

the academic unit.

A defining moment in the Barker School's ability to offer more enhanced

enrollment management functions for its students came with approval of a $1,000

per year fee for students enrolled in the unit. According to Associate Dean

Benton, "That's generated a lot more revenue within [the Barker School] for us to

be able to hire some of these positions and for us to be able to build more layers

into the student experience" (personal communication, January 9, 2012). These

additional layers have been in the form of admissions, advising, and career

support staff that have grown with the enrollment numbers.

As the Barker School has grown and evolved, the unit has continually

chosen to add resources expanding the amount of the organizational structure that

is dedicated to enrollment management functions within the academic unit. The

key reasons for adding these functions have been the desire to support enhanced

services for their students and to support enrollment growth within the academic

unit.

The Cready School. The Cready School has a highly evolved enrollment

management structure. Most functions supporting undergraduate students in the

areas of advising, career services, financial aid/scholarships, and retention

activities were under Associate Dean Carpenter's organization. The recruiting function reported separately to an assistant dean who had a direct reporting relationship to the unit's executive dean. The recruiting function has been developed because "we needed to take more responsibility for [admissions] and in terms of generating the numbers as well as trying to shape the class, trying to get in more high-end students - students who were academically strong" (Associate Dean Carpenter, personal communication, December 1, 2011). A major driver for the Cready School to devote resources to developing enrollment management functions has been a focus on enrollment growth, class profile, and retention.

To further bridge the gaps between services offered to prospective and current students, a new employee has been hired to focus on retention or yield of admitted students as part of the admissions process. A second staff member focuses on retention from an advising perspective. Some staff are shared resources splitting their time between advising and recruiting or advising and career services at satellite campuses.

Associate Dean Carpenter describes the unit's approach to advising, student engagement, and retention programs as one which is comprehensive:

> We really took responsibility for assuring that students not only have a strong academic focus while they're here, but all the extracurricular pieces that go along with it support that and that students really have an outstanding 100% holistic experience while they're here. That, we believe, contributes significantly not only to happier alumni, but also to

our retention efforts. (Associate Dean Carpenter, personal

communication, December 1, 2011)

Associate Dean Carpenter continued, "So we start right at that point of orientation

with our retention activities and it moves into things like [camp] where we try to

get our freshman to attend these activities where they can bond with the school

and really believe that they're a part of [the Cready School]" (personal

communication, December 1, 2011). The Cready School demonstrated they had

developed a strong philosophy and specific services that were dedicated to the

retention of current students that begin from the time the students are admitted,

through orientation programs and ultimately by providing a wealth of services

throughout the student's time enrolled in the unit.

Within the past four years, the Cready School has instituted a program fee

of $500 per student per semester which provides additional financial resources.

In discussing the fees, Associate Dean Carpenter said,

We've really moved into a place where we provide additional support,

additional services to our students and our students believe that that is a

worthwhile expense and they are willing to support it with their dollars.

We could not do this if we did not have those fees. (personal

communication, December 1, 2011)

This type of fee model which allows the individual academic unit to retain

revenue served as a critical decision to offer enhanced enrollment management

functions. A significant driver of creating the fee structure was development of a

comprehensive career services organization within the unit. It serves as the most

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advanced model for an academic unit career services office in this study. A staff

of nine professionals offers career advising to students of that academic unit.

According to Associate Dean Carpenter:

> The other really big move was creating our own … career center. We
>
> again believe that that has … a recruitment function as well, but it also has
>
> a strong retention function. Students need assistance right up front. We
>
> start at the freshman year. (personal communication, December 1, 2011)

The advising, student engagement, as well as the career center, all provide a

wealth of organizational structures dedicated to current students, all with an eye

toward driving retention efforts.

Several factors have been important in the Cready School's choice to

create enrollment management functions. These have included the desire to more

effectively recruit new students, create better retention programs, and offer

student engagement activities. As an additional service to their students a

comprehensive career management center was also developed to better prepare

students for employment upon graduation. To facilitate these changes a program

fee has helped to fund many initiatives.

The Dillard School. The Dillard School's development of enrollment

management has primarily been driven by the desire to achieve enrollment

growth. The unit has an assistant dean and recruiting staff dedicated to the

recruiting of new students. Due to the large size and diverse academic majors in

the unit, academic advising is contained within the academic departments with a

small staff at the unit level responsible for complex advising activities such as

students on probation, admitted students enrolling after a leave of absence, and individuals with academic difficulties. In addition, an associate director oversees first-year programs and student success initiatives that are focused on retention. The unit also offers a career services center offering a range of career advising and corporate recruiting activities.

Associate Dean Drummond placed emphasis on a desire to ensure enrollment growth targets were met. In describing the recruiting function Associate Dean Drummond said, "There's like multiple levels. You have the [university] level of recruiting. Within [the Dillard School] we have kind of almost a concierge level, next level up where we'll do more focused types of recruiting to enhance, to kind of sit on top of [our] programs" (personal communication, January 19, 2012). This enhanced level of knowledge about academic programs and a more fine-tuned and personalized approach toward recruiting students was central in the decision to house these functions within the academic unit. Associate Dean Drummond put a significant focus on diversity within the class profile of entering and current students: "The other key thing is from a demographics or profile perspective, being able to keep under-represented minorities and in particular females. So we want to yield them, we want to bring them in, and then we want to keep them" (personal communication, January 19, 2012).   This perspective on shaping the class profile was complemented by an emphasis on ensuring that certain academic standards for admission were also being met. The desire to have a recruiting staff was rooted in both offering a

more personalized level of services to recruits and also the desire to more directly impact the type of students applying for admission.

Complementing the recruiting process was a well-developed marketing organization responsible for recruiting materials, web content, and public relations. Associate Dean Drummond was closely involved with production of these materials alongside representatives from the academic units. Together, they ensured the key messages successfully represented the unit's culture and the wide array of academic programs.

Academic services in the Dillard School were comprised of several areas including academic advising and retention programs. While advising was spread across the academic departments, a number of retention programs were administered at the unit level. This structure allowed the departments to be more closely in touch with their individual students, course offerings, and individual advising services. A number of student success programs which focused on first-year students included offerings such as a camp for new students and a leadership academy. Additional extracurricular programs and living-learning communities were also administered by the student success group. Finally, a significant revision of the first-year curriculum was also done in the past two years to further help drive retention of students within the unit.

The Dillard School has also benefitted from instituting a program fee for its students. "Basically, the fee is used to support the extra activities that we're doing for the students. … All these retention activities, things that we were able to put into place," commented Associate Dean Drummond who went on to say, "So

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what the program fee has enabled us to do frankly is fund a lot of the activities

that we do, that we were not able to do in the past, so certainly would not have

been able to do with the budget cuts" (personal communication, January 19,

2012). The inclusion of the fees coincided with academic units taking on more

responsibility for managing enrollment of new students as well as a deeper focus

on retention. Associate Dean Drummond felt the development of additional staff

and programs to address these issues would not have been possible without the

additional funding source available through the program fees.

The Dillard School's keen focus on recruiting the right students along with

advising, retention, and career services for current students has been targeted at

keeping students within the unit. This emphasis on helping students succeed

academically, as well as educating them about career alternatives, was aimed at

ensuring students do not transfer to another academic unit within the institution or

leave the institution entirely.

Discussion of Theoretical Construct 2: Enhanced Services

Specialized programs and services along with examples of services

beyond the level of what the university provided were key themes for the second

theoretical construct focused on enhanced services. Repeating ideas about

specific programming and services for student engagement, advising, and career

support were the foundation for this theme. Community-building activities that

were focused around the concepts of developing a culture, building a bond with

the school or between students, and the development of living-learning

communities developed into a theme focused on building community within the

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academic unit. Furthermore, repeating ideas were common in the areas of recruiting messages, whether in print or electronic communication, current student communications, and a desire to better tell their own school-specific stories created a theme for school specific messages. These all combined to contribute to the development of Theoretical Construct 2:

> To increase retention, leaders intentionally strive to develop a sense of community through customized programs and services for students in their academic units.

Table 5

Repeating Ideas and Themes for Theoretical Construct 2: Enhanced Services

Repeating Ideas	Themes	Theoretical Construct 2: Enhanced Services
Specialized engagement programming Enhanced advising Additional career support	Enhanced Services	
Living-learning community Developing a bond Creating a culture	Building Community	To increase retention, leaders intentionally strive to develop a sense of community through customized programs and services for students in their academic units.
Recruiting messages Current student messages Ability to tell story better	School Specific Messages	

This construct yielded the most significant number of codes from the aggregated interview transcript data. The data also provided several very specific examples from each academic unit of the types of services and programs that were developed within the unit. One of the key emerging ideas was the desire to take ownership of their students. Participants often used the pronoun "our" to refer to the students in their academic unit. This feeling of ownership was then evidenced by the desire to create an enhanced, customized, or higher level of service compared to what the university was providing. Enhanced services were seen as one way to provide a more personal experience. This personal experience even extended further to examples of a "concierge" model. Services were also described as "frosting on the cake" in an effort to show that they were in addition to what the institution could offer. These nuances in describing not only the close relationships with the students, but also the exclusivity of incremental services, provides interesting insight into the sense of small community and cultural climate the units were seeking to evoke.

The desire to create a community specific to the academic unit was another reason resources were being dedicated to developing enhanced services. They sought to create a bond with students that offered a more intimate environment that would allow students to feel as if they were experiencing the atmosphere of a smaller school environment within the context of the larger university. Every academic unit in the study discussed their roles in developing living-learning communities in recent years that provided a unique residential experience for their students. These residential communities offered students

from similar academic disciplines opportunities to live within the same residence hall and in some cases on the same floor and have staff from their academic unit to serve as peer advisors. To enhance the experience, introductory courses were sometimes offered within the residence hall or with the same students in the community providing a deeper linkage between the academic and living environment. Services also extended to orientation programs which were seen as an important vehicle for establishing community and culture based on academic affiliation. Each unit also derived its own ways of executing enhanced services. These extended across a wide range of things such as mandatory advising, research programs, career service offerings, extra-curricular activities, camps, or leadership programs. A key focus of these enhanced services was the desire to increase retention rates within the academic unit.

Individual academic units generally found the broad sweeping marketing messages of the centralized university function assisted in creating an interest in the institution. However, each academic unit engaged in developing and creating their own websites, marketing materials and recruiting messages. These tools focused on telling more specific stories regarding the student experience, both academic and non-academic, specific majors and degree programs, or depicting the enhanced services offered to students. A reason for developing these tools was to assist in generation of applications or increasing yield of admitted to matriculated students.

In the following sections, examples will be provide that discuss how each of the academic units have chosen to approach enhanced services, build

community, and develop school-specific messages in pursuit of enrollment and retention goals.

The Arrington School. The Arrington School utilized its enrollment management staff in a number of different ways to impact not only prospective, but also current students. A move from a university orientation model to orientation programs more heavily administered by the academic unit and its individual departments has helped introduce students to their faculty and individual academic departments. Unique living-learning communities provide an excellent example of how a sense of community is being built. Finally, a centralized marketing function helps to manage the school's messages.

One enrollment management function where the Arrington School has devoted resources is orientation. Associate Dean Almond said, "We've been the leader in making orientation a very college-specific and departmentally-specific experience" (personal communication, January 4, 2012). Orientation programs have been built with a specific intent according to Associate Dean Almond:

> I think we wanted to make sure that [the students] felt comfortable coming
>
> to campus. I know there were a bunch of social dynamic issues that we
>
> put in [the university-wide orientation model]. What was lacking was a
>
> real academic focus, a kind of an excitement about coming into a
>
> university. … So we worked really hard at providing opportunities to
>
> really celebrate our college but also provide students opportunities to meet
>
> with faculty in their departments and to meet with other peers in their

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majors and a whole range of different experiences. (personal

communication, January 4, 2012)

Making orientation programs a unique aspect and introduction to the campus

experience is an example of school-specific services providing more than what

the university's centralized function can provide. Associate Dean Almond felt

orientation was one of the few opportunities that existed to provide an impression

on newly enrolling students and convey the wealth of support services and

programs that were available from the unit.

Associate Dean Almond said a major activity targeted at helping retention

and building a sense of community within the unit has been an emphasis on

creating academic affiliated living-learning communities.

So the college has committed itself to moving into [a living-learning]

environment with absolutely no hesitation. It makes sense. It's a way in

which we can have an impact on all of our freshmen.… We get to know

our students better; we get to address their concerns in a more proactive

way. (Associate Dean Almond, personal communication, January 4, 2012)

Within the living-learning environments, specialized programming focuses on a

range of different things, but emphasizes academics, leadership, and community

engagement as well as a personalized level of service. Ultimately, supporting

these environments has helped to ensure students are "retained at really high

numbers" (Associate Dean Almond, personal communication, January 4, 2012).

A specific initiative the unit launched with students in the living-learning

communities was a comprehensive survey where students could provide feedback

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and request personal follow up regarding specific services. One of the benefits of the survey has been the ability to develop a "one-on-one connection" (Associate Dean Almond, personal communication, January 4, 2012) with students and put the right resources students were interested in at the forefront. Associate Dean Almond indicated the ability to update and change the services based on student demand and the ability to offer a personalized level of services has been "a key component of our retention initiatives" (personal communication, January 4, 2012). Not only do the living-learning environments provide the ability to offer an enhanced level of service, but they also contribute to reaching retention goals and an environment where the unit can customize services in a meaningful way to students within the small communities in which they live.

The Arrington School developed a centralized marketing function to serve the unit as well as individual academic departments with a goal of managing external communication to prospective students. This support network allows them to "handle all of the communication to prospective students here [at the academic unit level], but the messaging is something that each of the departments craft as part of the communication flow" (Associate Dean Almond, personal communication, January 4, 2012). Placing resources into recruiting and yield activities has allowed the Arrington School to continue to "match the message to the student in a lot of different dimensions and the more information the better," according to Associate Dean Almond (personal communication, January 4, 2012). It has also contributed to their ability to attract the high-achieving students who are receiving scholarships and are vital to building strength in the unit's class

profile. The school's focus on the marketing function has been an important part of their ability to deliver very customized messages to specific segments of the prospective student population.

The Barker School. Enhanced services serve as a cornerstone to differentiate the experience of students in the Barker School. The development of orientation, advising, and research programs within the unit are contributing to retention goals. The living-learning community of the Barker School, as well as a newly developed marketing function, is also a key component that has contributed to building and communicating a sense of culture and community.

Associate Dean Benton expressed the unit has adopted a philosophy that they need to offer an "extra layer of service and [be] distinct … given the expectations and given our competitors and expectations of the students coming in to [the Barker School]" (personal communication, January 9, 2012). The desire to differentiate was expressed in a number of different ways including a focus on their living-learning environment and an ongoing commitment to adding resources to support new enrollment management functions. In relation to their newly developed staff member focusing on career-related resources, Associate Dean Benton referred to it also as "a whole other layer within the college" in addition to what the university or other academic departments could offer (personal communication, January 9, 2012). This desire to offer a more unique experience where students have access to individuals such as deans in leadership positions within the unit was further defined when Associate Dean Benton stated:

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There is a level of advocacy and there is a relationship where the students

have direct access to … the Deans. And that's what makes [the Dillard

School] really a unique experience to the students and the service so

elevated. (personal communication, January 9, 2012)

This approach to personalized service, access to unit leadership, and further

developing resources to support academic pursuits serves as a competitive

advantage to attract and retain students to the Barker School.

To further these efforts, unit-specific orientation programs were vitally

important. After having offered a very successful unit-specific orientation

program, concerns arose over the university's reluctance to schedule sessions that

were specific to the Barker School. Three years prior, the Barker School had

requested that their students attend one of six specific orientation sessions of the

many offered by the centralized university orientation office. This request had

been made due to the high volume of students and a limited number of advisors to

assist with the many orientation dates. These unit-specific sessions reiterate the

differentiated services that they offered in terms of dedicated advisors for

mandatory academic advising and their unique living-learning environment.

After significant negotiations and compromises with the centralized university

orientation function, the Barker School was able continue offering their

specialized orientation program in a slightly different format that included more

collaboration with the university's program.

Another means by which the Barker School offers an enhanced level of

service is through its advising function which serves as a key retention

component. Advising staff was added to accommodate increased enrollment and also upon development of a mandatory advising policy for current students. The success of this initiative has been demonstrated in an increased retention of students staying within the unit from 27% to 78% over a period of five years. They continue to see these numbers rise each semester (Associate Dean Benton, personal communication, January 9, 2012).

The Barker School offers the ability for students to conduct extensive academic research alongside faculty members. In addition to facilitating this as part of their academic program, the unit also provides financial assistance for students participating in research endeavors. As part of the additional program fees that are paid by the students, the unit can allocate these funds as needed. A staff member dedicated to career and research activities was also added to support students with research programs.

Building a sense of community and imparting its unique culture is vitally important to the Barker School. With a deep focus on a residential living-learning component offered by the unit, Associate Dean Benton discussed an annual event related to selecting new housing choices for the next academic year. This event is a major community building activity where students waited with anticipation to make selections for their rooms. Faculty and staff have utilized the event to socialize with students. "It was a community event; it built a sense of community. It built a sense of momentum moving into the college," said Associate Dean Benton (personal communication, January 9, 2012). Of concern was how to keep

this type of community building alive now that the university was moving toward online room selection for students.

A desire to manage the specific messages about the academic unit was something that was in an evolutionary state with the Barker School at the time of this study. They had developed specific points of pride regarding the unit which were being communicated in a variety of ways. New website content had been created and a marketing organization was in the midst of being developed, all with the desire to "better articulate … the way the student experiences college here" (Associate Dean Benton, personal communication, January 9, 2012). One of the key messages was: "What we're telling students that they have is this small college environment within a large university," stated Associate Dean Benton (personal communication, January 9, 2012). The unit regularly sought to make sure they were able to put their own "spin on the college experience" (Associate Dean Benton, personal communication, January 9, 2012) within their academic unit. With the growth of the school and the focus on telling a specific story, the marketing function needed to be developed in order to ensure the Barker School was effectively communicating elements of its culture and the enhanced services that were being offered.

The Cready School. With a focus on retention and recruiting, the Cready School prides itself on having a more concerted focus on enrollment management activities for the past ten years. In addition to a very personalized approach to serving students, the unit has a number of student engagement, orientation, and living-learning community programs dedicated to developing a comprehensive

student experience that goes beyond academics. An emerging marketing function within the unit is now beginning to work toward developing more unit and department-specific messages to aid in the recruiting process.

Enrollment management within the Cready School is built with a focus on a comprehensive experience for the student. According to Associate Dean Carpenter:

> We really took responsibility for assuring that students not only have a strong academic focus while they're here but all the extracurricular pieces that go along with it support that and that students really have an outstanding 100% holistic experience while they're here. (personal communication, December 1, 2011)

One benefit of offering these services is that they are often provided "above and beyond what would be the expectation of a university," commented Associate Dean Carpenter (personal communication, December 1, 2011). Students frequently do not realize they are receiving this enhanced level of service from their academic unit. One of the benefits of moving many of these services in-house is the ability to provide a more customized experience: "We are certainly able to take it down to a more granular level with an individual student than the university is able to do," said Associate Dean Carpenter (personal communication, December 1, 2011). The ability to personalize service and make it more extensive than what can be offered at a centralized university level was an important reason for developing them within the unit. A personal approach was seen as a way to positively impact student satisfaction and retention goals.

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The concept of creating a bond and community within the unit is important to the Cready School. To this end, a number of programs and services have been developed to aid in this endeavor. These services range from unit-specific orientation programs, a camp program for newly admitted students, and living-learning communities. On orientation programs, "What we are trying to so … is build this bond between students and [the Cready School] so that they understand that they are a part of us. They belong to us. There is a connection between us," said Associate Dean Carpenter (personal communication, December 1, 2011). This sense of ownership provided an interesting insight into the desire to create this sense of community and connection between the school and the student.

Another key service is the enhancements that have been made to living-learning communities within the Cready School. After a less than successful attempt several years ago at implementing this type of initiative, recently Associate Dean Carpenter said this time, "We tried it probably with additional resources behind it. Now we have seen improvements" (Associate Dean Carpenter, personal communication, December 1, 2011). One thing the unit was willing to do was devote resources so that all their new incoming students could have the opportunity to participate in the living-learning communities and to also remain consistent with what other academic units were offering. Developing living-learning communities has become such an important initiative of both the institution and the academic unit that "either we have to shift resources, or we're going to need to develop new resources to put toward that," said Associate Dean

Carpenter (personal communication, December 1, 2011). Living-learning

communities provide the opportunity for the Cready School to execute on a

number of their initiatives including combining both academic and extracurricular

experiences to impact retention. On the topic of career centers, Associate Dean

Carpenter acknowledged, "We all know the university has its own career center.

… But we just took the idea that we need to bring it closer to home" (personal

communication, December 1, 2011). One of the key reasons to bring these

functions within the academic unit was to better serve students within the unit.

A new focus over the past two years for the Cready School has been to

offer a more extensive amount of marketing activities dedicated to prospective

students. Leveraging the overarching marketing messages and creative

capabilities at the unit level, new staff have been added to focus communication

with potential students as well as to assist with the yield of admitted to

matriculated students. Utilizing primarily electronic communication tools such as

newsletters and e-postcards, stories depicting current students and faculty, and

highlights of academic programs focus on communicating the unique services and

experience offered by the Cready School.

The Dillard School. The Dillard School has created a number of

enhanced programs and services with its enrollment management functions.

These enhanced services focus on providing services over those offered by the

university as well as others, which are aimed at building a sense of community

within the student body. To facilitate these initiatives, the unit has also developed

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a marketing function which is primarily focused on messaging for prospective students.

At the center of the Dillard's School's philosophy is what Associate Dean Drummond calls a "concierge model" (personal communication, January 19, 2012). This terminology was used to reference how the unit's activities sit on top of what the university offers. For prospective students, this model works effectively as there are recruiting staff who specialize in specific academic disciplines as well as the unit overall, but can provide a personalized level of interaction and information. Extending to current students, special research programs, an entrepreneurship program, scholarship offerings, and community service opportunities are offered exclusively to students of the Dillard School. Not only have programs and services been developed, but the Dillard School has also invested in capital projects that provide innovation and study spaces that are conducive to the academic culture they are trying to create. The Dillard School has created a career services office that provides a range of services that are exclusive to their students and the employers most interested in hiring their students. Customized career counseling and advising staff assist students with a number of career preparation activities. Students can also access the university's career services office, but they have much better access to the staff of five professionals within their own school.

Building a sense of community is at the forefront of many of the Dillard School's enrollment management initiatives. One of the key means through which the community is built is a mandatory camp for all first year students

lasting three days and two nights. New students are taken to a camp environment for a multitude of activities involving faculty, staff, and peer mentors. On the camp activities, Associate Dean Drummond said the event is: "Team-building, communication skills, faculty show up, staff. The real intent to that is there is community-building" (personal communication, January 19, 2012). The unit sees the camp program as an extension of the orientation and welcome week activities, all of which provide the opportunity to highlight unit-specific topics, services, and programs offered by the unit and to create memorable interactions among participants. Through these endeavors, "I guess the big thing, even though we're huge, you know, we are trying to create a community and we're always trying to show the students at each level what they can look like," (personal communication, January 19, 2012) stated Associate Dean Drummond when discussing the programs offered to their students. Through the use of the mandatory camp for new students, peer mentors provided insight into what the future of being a student in the Dillard School would be like from both an academic and personal perspective. This roadmap helped inspire students to persist. Many of these programs are focused around increasing retention which Associate Dean Drummond felt was directly linked to the unit's extensive community-building activities.

In order to help meet enrollment goals and to entice students to select the Dillard School, the unit's marketing function is highly developed. Associate Dean Drummond felt the school held a high level of responsibility for creating and developing messaging about academic programs and student support services.

They utilized a strategy that relied on "top down, bottom up communication" (Associate Dean Drummond, personal communication, January 19, 2012) whereby the marketing function developed the high-level messages and creative concepts. Students, faculty, and academic programs helped to bring those messages to life with more specific and detailed depictions of their personal experiences. Using a combination of photographs, student stories, quotes, and program descriptions materials are developed that focus on "what's really the niche" (Associate Dean Drummond, personal communication, January 19, 2012). This deep level of detail and explanation of the unique things the Dillard School offers indicates the desire to have very school-specific messaging that will help to achieve their enrollment goals.

Discussion of Theoretical Construct 3: Relationships

The need for academic units to work collaboratively is emphasized by theoretical construct three which focuses on relationships. Relationships with the centralized university functions of admissions, orientation, and residential life were the most common repeating ideas forming the foundation for the key theme of managing school-university relationships. Another major repeating idea within this theme was the concept of mandates or directives which came from the university's Provost Office with regard to enrollment, retention, or programs and services for which the academic units were responsible. The interview data also provided many repeating ideas that formed into comparisons which the academic units made between themselves and other academic units within the university. External comparisons for competitive reasons were also common. The need to

manage all of these relationships contributed to the development of Theoretical

Construct 3:

> To achieve enrollment objectives within a school-centric model, leaders
>
> build relationships with centralized enrollment management functions and
>
> other academic units.

Table 6

Repeating Ideas and Themes for Theoretical Construct 3: Relationships

Repeating Ideas	Themes	Theoretical Construct 3: Relationships
Directives and mandates University admissions University orientation Residential life	School-University Relationships	To achieve enrollment objectives within a school-centric model, leaders build relationships with centralized enrollment management functions and other academic units.
Internal comparisons External comparisons	Comparisons to Other Schools	

Participants frequently discussed the relationships with many of the

centralized university functions. The most common of these were related to the

admissions and orientation functions. While each academic unit had resources

dedicated to these functions, much of the high-level strategy, process, and

structure were handled at the centralized university level. Academic units cited

complexities associated with working with these areas to achieve their enrollment

goals. They relied on the university to deliver a certain level of services, but the

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point at which the academic unit took responsibility for executing them varied.

Academic units see their role as it relates to many of the enrollment management functions as one which does not interfere with what the university is providing, but adds a school-specific component to it. Directives and mandates from the centralized university enrollment management functions regarding specific initiatives, goals, or processes were also mentioned by nearly every academic unit. The interpretation of how to execute on these orders was left to individual academic units. Most commonly these related to enrollment targets, retention targets, or advising initiatives.

Also interesting to note was that units all commonly stated they had a good working relationship with the university enrollment management functions. They stated there was a concerted effort to increase enrollment, enhance the class profile, and focus on revenue. These functions were coordinated centrally, but relied on individual academic units to assist with execution. Each took a part in the ownership and responsibility for meeting goals. A strong team-based orientation of individuals working in the academic unit and a desire to work along with central enrollment management staff contributed to more effective outcomes.

Frequent references to other schools or colleges within, or external to, the institution were made during the interview process. There was clear knowledge of the programs and services that other academic units had implemented, and in some cases a desire to utilize the programs of other academic units as inspiration for developing something similar in their own unit. As individual academic units have developed new services, a growing need to offer similar services in order to

stay competitive was highlighted. Internal competition was perceived as important since students can transfer within the university. Offering competitive services in comparison to what other institutions offered was more critical for prospective student recruiting.

   The Arrington School. The Arrington School was closely tied to the centralized enrollment management functions. "The Provost Office has a very strong relationship with the college in terms of working alongside us [on enrollment goals]," commented Associate Dean Almond. Furthermore, "Not all colleges have that kind of nexus, but that's something we've been committed to," continued Associate Dean Almond (personal communication, January 4, 2012). This close relationship was developed as a result of the number of general education courses that were offered by the Arrington School. Regardless of which academic unit students were enrolled in, they almost always had to take some courses administered by the Arrington School. In this role as a key resource responsible for a significant amount of academic course scheduling, the Arrington School had to pay close attention to enrollment numbers across the institution by working with the centralized enrollment management function. It then would use this information to adjust courses and faculty resources to match the trends: "We have to be vigilant and monitor [enrollment numbers] as the enrollment season kind of moves from fall through the spring," said Associate Dean Almond (personal communication, January 4, 2012). Working closely with the university's enrollment management leadership was critical to the success of both

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the Arrington School as well as the university overall in delivering the right number of courses to students.

As one of the academic units committed to the growing use of living-learning communities, Associate Dean Almond indicated, "We work hand in glove with Res Life" (personal communication, January 4, 2012). This partnership allowed the academic unit to ensure they could plan accordingly to have the right number of unit resources to support the living-learning population. This relationship was also well developed due to the large number of undergraduate students who enrolled each year in the Arrington School. Its incoming student enrollment approaches 3,000 each year and is the largest of all academic units, which places a heavy burden on the residential life facilities.

Communication activities with prospective students were another area that the Arrington School felt they had good working relationships with the centralized university functions:

> We work regularly with the communications group and the folks in the enrollment management area to make sure that when we are making a decision about who is in the best position to provide the content and the execution of our enrollment management strategies … and it's an active place where we have very open relationships and contacts with both the Provost Office and our departments to make sure we know what works and what's most efficient. (Associate Dean Almond, personal communication, January 4, 2012)

Overall, the Arrington School provided several examples which helped to demonstrate their commitment to having strong relationships with the centralized university functions. In addition, there were also comments shared about their interactions with other schools within the university. One challenge was that they indicated their students were from a wide array of disciplines and that "people don't identify with colleges like ours compared to [the Cready School] and [the Dillard School]," according to Associate Dean Almond (personal communication, January 4, 2012). This presented challenges to the Arrington School in developing a bond with their students due to the large and diverse academic disciplines in the unit. In addition, Associate Dean Almond stated, "Working with our other college partners is vitally important" (personal communication, January 4, 2012). Ensuring the relationships with other academic units worked effectively was important since students enrolled in nearly every other academic unit would take some courses from the Arrington School at some point in their academic career. Ensuring course availability was important for student satisfaction, a concern at the university and academic level and also contributed to retention within the university and each unit.

The Barker School. Associate Dean Benton from the Barker School offered insight into relationships with the university's centralized enrollment management functions and indicated, "Undergrad admissions, residential life, they all, in consultation with us, with me in many cases, would come up with ways to promote and present [the Barker School] to the community" (personal communication, January 9, 2012). It was vital to ensure their partners in the

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centralized university functions were familiar with their academic programs and key services they offered so that they could convey the culture and community the unit had been actively developing. Associate Dean Benton felt that there were definite efforts to establish a "one-size fits-all institutional practice" that have "good intentions to sort of systematize practices" (personal communication, January 9, 2012). What became important was for the academic unit to then determine how they would be able to adapt to make these practices work within their environment. This perspective provides additional evidence of how the academic unit felt the role of the centralized university functions was to create strategies and processes that would be implemented within the academic units.

Orientation planning has also been a contentious concern of the Barker School which was accustomed to having a very strong presence in coordinating and participating in unit-specific orientation programs for incoming students. The centralized orientation function made a number of changes to scheduling that would no longer offer the Barker School their own orientation sessions. Associate Dean Benton indicated, "So we found out about this in a meeting and I wasn't that happy about the way that had been presented to us, but nevertheless, went back [to the academic unit]. We had discussions in-house and said we'll get back to the orientation staff" (personal communication, January 9, 2012). While an amiable solution that consisted of co-branding the orientation session was developed, it demonstrated the need for academic units to ensure they make the efforts to work in partnership with the other organizations within the university during programmatic changes.

The Barker School was the most concerned of all participants about comparisons to external organizations. As a smaller academic unit with a living-learning component and academically strong students, Associate Dean Benton indicated they frequently had to compete with a number of well-established liberal arts colleges and private institutions who were seeking to recruit the same students. Associate Dean Benton was keenly aware of academic and service offerings at competitive institutions and made note of the importance of ensuring that marketing materials produced by the academic unit highlighted these unique competitive advantages. "We have to have the kinds of student life and attention to students and student services that you would find with the kinds of colleges that we're competing with," said Associate Dean Benton (personal communication, January 9, 2012). To that end, one of the strategies to address this issue was "to elevate and build in another layer of service within the college to serve those students in a way that we think they need to be served" (Associate Dean Benton, personal communication, January 9, 2012). This level of service was aimed at making the Barker school more competitive with its set of peer institutions with whom it was competing with some of the academically strongest students.

The Cready School. The Cready School finds teamwork and ensuring everyone is on the same page is an effective means for managing the relationship with centralized university functions. Associate Dean Carpenter said, "So I think what we have tried to do is figure out what the university [can] do best and how do we layer on top of it to provide added value to our students" (personal communication, December 1, 2011). This perspective supports the need to have

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defined roles and responsibilities when it comes to enrollment management activities being handled within the academic units. Additionally, when discussing the unit's relationship with other university functions, Associate Dean Carpenter said:

> It takes effort, energy and, truthfully, people who can play well with others. … It is wonderful when all cylinders are firing and we're all on the same page. … Everyone works well with their respective [functional] unit at the university level. (personal communication, December 1, 2011)

Although, Associate Dean Carpenter indicated, "There are times when there are clashes and we just have to figure out how to manage through that" (personal communication, December 1, 2011). These comments support the need to carefully ensure that the university relationship is effectively managed and roles are clearly defined.

Specific initiatives from the centralized enrollment management functions were referenced by Associate Dean Carpenter during the interview. The institution must incorporate the voices of individual academic units when rolling out new initiatives. Sometimes "we end up in kind of a reactionary mode" (Associate Dean Carpenter, personal communication, December 1, 2011) trying to interpret how something can be executed within the individual academic unit. One example was regarding advising activities and processes that the university was putting in place. This was one area where Associate Dean Carpenter acknowledged there had been changes calling for the ability to aggregate advising data throughout the university. The challenge for the Cready School was to

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determine how this could co-exist among individual advising guidelines and reporting requirements developed within the academic unit. Associate Dean Carpenter seeks to be more involved and proactive in developing and deciding how to implement the initiatives alongside the centralized enrollment management functions in order to resolve implementation issues ahead of time.

In the Cready School, an assistant dean for undergraduate admissions reports directly to the dean and not Associate Dean Carpenter. However, this is one area which had received substantial additional resources over the past two years in an effort to assist in growing enrollment. Associate Dean Carpenter acknowledged not having a formal direct reporting relationship for the admissions/recruiting function, but did indicate a strong need for this organization to interface with the centralized admissions office.

The Dillard School. The Dillard School found a good balance in terms of their relationship with centralized university functions. Associate Dean Drummond held responsibility for the recruiting function within the organization, but indicated that "There are directives in terms of what we need to recruit, how many students we're expected to have" (personal communication, January 19, 2012). The Provost's Office was cited as being responsible for setting the budget which was heavily based on enrollment targets. As a result, Associate Dean Drummond said when the Provost sets goals, "That's what we march toward" (personal communication, January 19, 2012). The unit did have the flexibility to influence its class profile and was the most vocal about stating that they could alter their preferred admissions criteria in order to influence their total enrollment

numbers from year to year. In the event numbers were to trend too high,

Associate Dean Drummond stated, "I'm sure what we'll end up doing at that point

is tweaking our admissions. It's very easy for us. In fact, it's a debate our faculty

has all the time" (personal communication, January 19, 2012). So, while the

Dillard School had little control over the total enrollment targets, they did have

the ability to adjust admission standards as needed to manage their enrollment to

capacity, and they would work with the centralized university admissions function

to work toward their goals.

Associate Dean Drummond frequently worked with a number of the

centralized functions related to admissions, orientation, and residential life to

implement programs within the academic unit. An example of the relationships is

best summarized by Associate Dean Drummond: "Well orientation, that is

something that is largely driven by the university. So we have to kind of dance to

their tune. They kind of set the constraints, they determine the dates, they

determine the number of students" (personal communication, January 19, 2012).

Similarly, "What they do, they do. They've got their plan," (personal

communication, January 19, 2012) was one comment made by Associate Dean

Drummond. What epitomized the Dillard School's perspective on services

provided by the university versus the academic unit was the desire to work

alongside them and not replace them. "It's kind of frosting on the cake. Kind of

a concierge model," was how Associate Dean Drummond described the services

within the unit (personal communication, January 19, 2012). This ability to

understand and embrace the processes and strategies which came from the

centralized university functions allowed all organizations to contribute their respective parts toward the end goals.

While no direct external comparisons to other schools were made, an interesting observation was the understanding of the external marketplace and the influences it had on the unit's ability to manage enrollment. In one example Associate Dean Drummond discussed a new academic program that had been launched because they had specialized faculty who could teach in the discipline. "We basically defined the degree, but we didn't address very well … how do we recruit students, how do we get people excited about this, what will a student do with this" (Associate Dean Drummond, personal communication, January 19, 2012). After the first year, they found virtually no demand for the program, had difficulty marketing it and ultimately were found in a position where they had to determine how to more effectively match the program to the market needs.

Conclusion

A number of enrollment management functions have migrated to the academic units at the institution under study during a period where a school-centric model has placed more and more responsibility in the hands of academic unit leaders. Leaders have increasingly had to adapt to this new context as they have built a wealth of enrollment management functions within their own organizations. These functions have spanned from admissions and recruiting to marketing, orientation, academic advising, student engagement, retention, and career services. Faced with the need to make decisions around enrollment management, associate deans in this study have turned to three primary areas.

These areas are represented by the three theoretical constructs which emerged from the data in this study.

- Construct 1: Structure and Resources

  To meet enrollment and retention goals, leaders strategically plan structures and manage resources for enrollment management functions in their academic units.

- Construct 2: Enhanced Services

  To increase retention, leaders intentionally strive to develop a sense of community through customized programs and services for students in their academic units.

- Construct 3: Relationships

  To achieve enrollment objectives within a school-centric model, leaders build relationships with centralized enrollment management functions and other academic units.

By utilizing a variety of strategies within each of these areas to develop specific staff resources, create enhanced services and programs for students, and manage key relationships, associate deans in this study can provide guidance for others serving in a similar capacity who are also faced with similar enrollment management challenges. The following chapter will discuss additional recommendations for academic unit leaders on the implementation of an enrollment management model, philosophy, and strategy.

Chapter 5: Discussion and Recommendations

In this concluding chapter, a review of the problem statement and study will be provided. Next, a discussion of the outcomes provided in the previous chapter will be offered with references to the literature that support the findings. A model of institutional enrollment management that provides cues for how academic units can approach enrollment management will be discussed. After reviewing the study's limitations, five recommendations for leaders in academic units with enrollment management responsibilities will be presented. Lastly, opportunities for further research will be provided that have emerged upon conclusion of the study.

Restatement of Purpose

The purpose of this study was to understand how leaders in academic units make decisions regarding enrollment management. This study emerged from the trend toward enrollment management functions which have appeared in academic units over time and the researcher's desire to develop an understanding of how to apply principles of enrollment management within academic units to achieve strategic goals related to enrollment, revenue, and class profiles.

To address this phenomenon, the research question of this study was: How do leaders in academic units make decisions regarding enrollment management in the areas such as recruiting, admissions, marketing, orientation, financial aid/scholarships, academic advising, student engagement, retention, and career services in their academic units?

Review of the Study

      This study utilized an action research orientation and a qualitative research methodological approach that focused on the use of interviews for data collection. Participants were recruited from within academic units at the institution under study with the position titles of associate dean who had responsibility for enrollment management functions. Transcripts obtained from interviews with the participants were analyzed through a structured coding procedure. Through analysis of the data, three theoretical constructs emerged which can serve as indicators of how leaders make decisions around enrollment management functions in academic units. Narrative by participants provided a rich depiction of the application of the theoretical constructs within individual academic units.

Discussion and Supporting Literature

      This study highlights three significant findings. First, a specific shift has occurred within the institution in this study whereby enrollment management functions are being administered within the academic units. Second, the study shows that academic unit leaders are taking responsibility for execution of enrollment management activities within their academic units. These findings provide the basis for the reasons leaders in academic units make decisions regarding enrollment management. Third, the findings ultimately suggest that a new iteration of enrollment management model beyond those presented in the existing literature may be emerging. Within this model, the data from this study indicate that academic unit leaders utilize three primary strategies as they build their enrollment management models. These strategies are represented by the

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theoretical constructs presented in the previous chapter. The constructs focus on

structure and resources, enhanced services, and relationships.

     This study provides an example of the shift toward enrollment

management functions existing within academic units. The literature suggests

that the migration of enrollment management functions from traditional student

affairs organizations continues to move toward academic affairs where individual

academic units take ownership over these functions. Historically, many of the

functions which made up institutional enrollment management were part of the

student affairs division in most institutions. Kuk and Banning (2009) studied the

reorganization of student affairs organizations and suggest that the organization of

the function should be adapted to meet the goals and needs of the institution as

well as to best serve the needs of students. In their study 56% of organizations

had seen a shift of either the enrollment part of student affairs or all of student

affairs into academic affairs (Kuk & Banning, 2005). Price (1999) also notes that

mergers of academic and student affairs functions can enhance the learning

environment by creating closer relationships between staff and faculty serving

students. The embedding of student affairs and enrollment functions within

academic affairs can also align academic resources with enrollment management

functions (Henderson, 2005). This shift can occur when the needs of the

institution trend toward a more academic learning-centered organization or when

the mission is such that the organizational structure must shift to meet new

strategic goals or priorities (Kuk & Banning, 2005; Price, 1999). One of the

primary reasons institutions have developed enrollment management functions

has been to more effectively manage enrollment, retention and revenue in challenging economic times (Humphrey, 2008). When budget challenges are coupled with the migration of student affairs and enrollment management functions toward academic units, there is a significant incentive for individual academic units to adopt a more comprehensive enrollment management model.

This study demonstrated that increased responsibility is being taken in academic units with regard to enrollment management activities. Faced with a desire to drive their individual mission, focus on enrollment goals, retention goals, and revenue, academic units are building their own integrated enrollment management functions. Utilizing similar criteria for the reasons an institution may establish an enrollment management function, individual academic units who are now meeting many of these same challenges may need to adopt a customized academic unit enrollment management model to help them achieve similar goals. At the institutional level, an integrated enrollment management model can serve to help advance the mission and the institution (Hossler, 1984). In addition, the reasons to adopt an enrollment management orientation are to link the mission of the institution with desired enrollment goals, retention goals, and revenue goals (Bontrager, 2004a). This can be achieved through bringing a number of disparate organizations together under the enrollment management organization (Hossler, 1984).

This study suggests that another iteration may be evolving in which defined enrollment management functions are housed within academic units with linkages to centralized enrollment management functions responsible for overall

coordination. Previous institutional enrollment management models do not address some of the evolutions exemplified in this study which call for an emphasis on the academic unit's responsibility for enrollment management activities. Early enrollment management models identified in the literature reference that there is no specific organizational structure for enrollment management, but instead, there are broad guidelines that must be reinterpreted and applied in a local context (Hossler & Bean, 1990; Ward, 2005). Institutional models evolved to incorporate traditional admissions and recruitment operations along with financial aid, registration, orientation and other pre-enrollment services. A subsequent iteration, an expanded enrollment management model includes student services functions aimed at retention and outcomes. The more advanced enrollment management models incorporate career services and outcomes as well as linkages and relationships with other institutional functions. Henderson's (2005) iteration of the enrollment management model calls for the embedding of enrollment management functions within academic units to provide a closer relationship to the academic mission of the institution.

This study has ultimately highlighted is the need for a new model to emerge to address the prevalence of enrollment management functions within academic units. The researcher suggests that this is evidence of another iteration of the traditional enrollment management models that have evolved at the institutional level and are presented in the existing literature from Hossler and Bean (1990), Bontrager (2004a), and Huddelston (2005). The economic environment at the time of this study was characterized by significant budget cuts

during a major economic downturn. In light of these challenges, some institutions

that have once utilized a highly centralized enrollment management function are

shifting to a more learning-centered institutional model which calls for individual

academic units to take more responsibility for enrollment management (Price,

1999). The literature surrounding the evolution of enrollment management

suggests that organizations must initially develop a philosophical orientation

around enrollment management and identify priorities associated with the

function before driving toward organizational structures and processes

(Bontrager, 2004b; Hossler & Bean, 1990; Huddleston, 2000). Once this is

achieved, an organization can begin to realize how an effective use of enrollment

management can serve to accomplish strategic goals.

A Model for Academic Unit Enrollment Management

The findings of this study suggest that leaders within the academic units at

the institution under study have been making decisions on how to develop and

administer their own enrollment management structures. These decisions have

come with the delegation of responsibility for managing enrollment and retention

to leaders of academic units and away from centralized functions. Consistent

with the literature which indicates that most enrollment management decisions are

based on the local context of the organization (Bontrager, 2004a), each academic

unit in the study has made choices about how they have developed their own

enrollment management structures over time.

This study offers an additional layer of complexity whereby at some point

in the evolution of the institutional enrollment management model, the institution

made a conscious choice to shift responsibilities to individual academic units with some support services handled centrally within the institution. The literature suggests that a deeper focus on a learning-centered organization that emphasizes the academic unit can be one reason for this shift (Huddleston, 2005). The movement and decentralization of other student affairs functions to academic units can be another reason (Price, 1999). In the case of this institution, the president also advocates a school-centric model in which more responsibility is held by individual academic units. What is most important is that these significant contextual changes in responsibility for enrollment management have provided the impetus for individual academic units to develop their own approach to enrollment management.

In the absence of a model that addresses the specific needs of academic units faced with these new responsibilities, it is important to consider the existing literature for the different models of enrollment management structures utilized at the institutional level. The phases that an institution goes through toward adoption of an enrollment management philosophy are common in much of the literature. Synthesizing models developed by Hossler and Bean (1990), Bontrager (2004a), and Huddelston (2005) yield commonalities in the four different evolutionary phases which enrollment management within an institution typically goes through. This is often accomplished through the incorporation of additional functions in an effort to arrive at a more comprehensive and integrated enrollment management organization.

Table 7

Strategic Enrollment Management Phases – Institutional Model

Phase I	Phase II	Phase III	Phase IV
Recruitment and Admissions	Academic Advising	Retention	Career Support
Marketing	Student Engagement	Specialized Services	Relationship Management
Financial Aid-Scholarships		Living-Learning Communities	
Orientation			

In this institutional model, recruiting, admissions, marketing, and orientation identified in Phase I are usually the first functions built into an enrollment management model. Phase II is characterized by the need to incorporate additional organizational structures and resources dedicated to academic advising and student engagement. Retention goals become a key focus of Phase III requiring additional resources to be dedicated to services and programs for students that will help facilitate retention. Ultimately in Phase IV, career services are added and more emphasis is placed on student outcomes and graduation rates.

Academic units in this study have demonstrated that they have followed very similar progressions to the institutional model described in the literature when faced with building their own enrollment management organizations. One

slight difference was the academic units started with ownership of academic advising and student engagement functions (Phase II). Realizing the need to focus more heavily on recruitment, additional services were added to support recruiting, marketing, and other services for prospective students similar to Phase I of the institutional model. As units took on more responsibility for retention goals, additional resources for enhanced or specialized services and programs as well as development of living-learning communities are developed similar to Phase III. Finally, when approaching the most comprehensive phase, academic units have added career services organizations for their own students. An additional layer that occurs with academic units is the need to manage relationships with the centralized university functions and other entities within the institution. Once an academic unit has progressed through all four phases, a strategic and integrated approach to enrollment management within the unit can be achieved.

As in most models, every situation may not directly adhere precisely to the guidelines that have been projected. In this case, the phases are the most common, but are not necessarily mutually exclusive. Each organization will evolve as needed to fit their own situations and constraints. Some phases may evolve simultaneously; some may be achieved out of order.

Each academic unit in this study can be categorized into a different phase in the enrollment management model. Utilizing interview data and survey data provided by the participants, an assessment was made of which functions were

currently in place in each academic unit to arrive at the phase each of the units has reached in its evolution developing its own enrollment management model.

Table 8

Assessment of Academic Units in the Study Against the Model

Arrington School	Barker School	Cready School	Dillard School
Phase III	Phase III-Phase IV	Phase IV	Phase IV

The Arrington School has developed a majority of the enrollment management functions, but has not developed its own career services function resulting in a designation of having achieved Phase III in the model. The Barker School lies somewhere between phases III and IV as they have just recently begun to focus on career services and have struggled to manage relationships with the centralized university enrollment management functions. The Cready School and the Dillard School have the most comprehensive models including nearly all enrollment management functions within their own organizations.

Just as institutions have gone through evolutions as it relates to enrollment management, individual academic units in this study find themselves on similar paths. In this study each academic unit has the components of an enrollment management model, but what remains to be seen is if they can achieve a highly integrated and strategic function. The literature references that to achieve

comprehensive strategic enrollment management all functions should be managed as a collective entity toward achieving organizational goals (Bontrager, 2004a; Hossler, 1984; Hossler & Bean, 1990). The data provided by participants in this study did not reflect that clear strategies were in place to address all of enrollment management functions in an integrated manner. If paralleling the institutional model, academic units would need to strategize about priorities related to enrollment numbers, class profile, tuition revenue, student success, and academic experience (Dolence, 1998). The academic units in this study appear to be falling just short of having a truly integrated strategic enrollment management function within their organizations.

Making Decisions

This study sought to identify how leaders in academic units make decisions regarding enrollment management. The key findings of this study indicate that contextual reasons serve as a guiding factor for how leaders make decisions regarding enrollment management within their areas of responsibility. Johnson (2009) supports these findings indicating that the cultural context in which decisions are made significantly contributes to the decision-making process. Birnbaum (1988) said that within education environments leaders must look toward goals and evaluate alternatives that will help their organizations achieve these goals.

What this study's results demonstrated was that academic unit leaders have chosen to make decisions regarding enrollment management in response to a number of contextual changes and shifts in organizational responsibilities. The

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primary contextual change was a move toward a more school-centric model

where more responsibility is placed on individual academic units. The means by

which they responded to these new responsibilities was primarily through the

development of organizational structures, enhanced services, and management of

relationships. These three primary decision areas are represented through the

theoretical constructs presented from the data analysis:

- Theoretical Construct 1: Structures and Resources

  To meet enrollment and retention goals, leaders strategically plan

  structures and manage resources for enrollment management functions

  in their academic units.

- Theoretical Construct 2: Enhanced Services

  To increase retention, leaders intentionally strive to develop a sense of

  community through customized programs and services for students in

  their academic units.

- Theoretical Construct 3: Relationships

  To achieve enrollment objectives within a school-centric model,

  leaders build relationships with centralized enrollment management

  functions and other academic units.

These constructs align closely with the evolutionary process which

academic units follow for developing enrollment management functions studied at

the institutional level. The phases represented in the institutional enrollment

management model in Table 7 demonstrate the phases an organization goes

through as it evolves its enrollment management model. Theoretical Construct 1

is centered on the development of specific enrollment management structures and functions. Academic units in this study have established enrollment management functions as they have evolved. These functions were created by dedicating staff and financial resources to recruiting, marketing, orientation, financial aid/scholarships, academic advising, student engagement, retention, and career services functions as they have moved through the phases of development. Development of these functions and structures is critical to achieving a comprehensive approach to enrollment management. Theoretical Construct 2 describes the utilization of enhanced services focused on retention of students within their academic units. These areas are represented in Phase I and III of the model which calls for various types of specialized services. For academic units, these services may come in the form of specialized or enhanced services that have been developed specifically to drive recruiting or retention goals. Examples represented in the data in this study included a one-on-one and personalized approach to recruiting, mandatory advising services, leadership programs, or living learning communities. Finally, Theoretical Construct 3 emphasizes the influences of relationships which become important as academic units adopt a more comprehensive enrollment management model that interfaces with the centralized university enrollment management functions. Ultimately, implementation of these strategies can help to move an academic unit through the evolutionary phases of the model to allow them to achieve a more integrated and strategic approach to enrollment management.

Contradictions in the Literature

The study provided a number of examples of how leaders in academic units are pursuing enrollment management strategies. There are, however, two significant areas where the institutional enrollment management literature has not yet addressed inclusion of the academic unit. One of the main reasons for an institution to adopt an enrollment management philosophy is to effectively maximize revenue through incoming and current student tuition (Bontrager, 2004b). Participants from the academic units in this study rarely referenced the need to focus on managing the revenue stream. Instead, the main area of emphasis for the participants was on headcount. While total enrollment numbers may generate revenue, what is of more concern in the enrollment management literature is the need to maximize revenue (Dolence, 1998). The school-centric model at the institution in the study places the management of revenue predominantly in the hands of the centralized enrollment management function. As a result, academic unit leaders in the study may not have referenced the desire to maximize revenue.

Further complicating the revenue picture in this study was the fact that three of the four academic units had implemented some type of program fee for their students. This program fee was seen as a unit-specific revenue stream that would fund programs and services for students within that academic unit with the goal of increasing enrollment or retention rates. The fees had been implemented in part to offset reductions in funding from tuition revenue received from the institution. In addition, new sources of revenue were needed to develop

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enrollment management functions and to offer enhanced services to students within the unit which would support a new emphasis on retention goals. As these new program fee models have evolved, the enrollment management literature has not yet addressed the implications on how this impacts an academic unit's interpretation of how to administer enrollment management.

Class profile data could include anything from academic qualifications to residency classification, ethnicity, socio-economic status, and gender among other things. While the academic units participating in the study all stressed the importance of academic qualifications of incoming students as a major goal, only one example provided specific and detailed plans to address other elements of their class profile such as gender and ethnicity. All academic units stressed the importance of tabulating statistics on their class profile, but there was a surprising lack of evidence to show that efforts were being made to influence the overall makeup of the class profile in areas other than academic qualifications. These findings were contrary to one of the major reasons for employing an enrollment management philosophy, which is the desire to manage class profile data (Kalsbeek, 2006).

Discussion of Findings

The extent to which academic units are autonomous to develop many of their own enrollment management functions was evident in this study. While much of the rationale for creating the structures and organizations may be somewhat specific to the school-centric model evolving within the institution, it is surprising the body of enrollment management literature has not yet addressed

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this type of enrollment management model. New and emerging models have regularly evolved since the enrollment management terminology first appeared in the literature in the 1980s. Some iterations have called for further incorporation of the academic functions into the models, but this study provides a unique example from which the researchers in the field can build upon.

One specific topic that emerged from the study was the emphasis placed on the living-learning communities by each academic unit. Brower and Inkelas (2010) define living-learning communities as residential housing programs that combine both academic components and community elements through common learning. Evidence was provided in the study that programs were being developed and funded by the academic units to have specific community assistants or peer mentors, academic programs, and other activities within the residence hall communities that would allow students from the same academic discipline to live and learn together. Daffron and Holland (2009) suggest that living-learning communities provide an excellent means for collaboration between academic affairs and traditional student affairs functions by providing unique social and academic environments for students to thrive. This emphasis on a learning-centered organization is consistent with trends toward stronger collaboration between academic affairs and student affairs (Kuk and Banning, 2005). The fact that every academic unit represented in the study emphasized the amount of resources and support they were placing on living-learning communities shows that they have realized the positive benefits they can have on building community and driving retention goals. They also provide a very clear

example to the student population of enhanced services that are specific to their academic unit. Of more interest is that the body of enrollment management literature does not address or incorporate residential life, housing or living-learning communities despite their long-standing history as part of a traditional university experience. As new models of enrollment management develop within institutions and academic units, the living-learning community component is likely to emerge as another important function to be added to the model.

Hossler and Bean (1990) emphasize the need for a true strategic enrollment management function to collectively manage multiple admissions and student services functions in an integrated manner. There was not significant evidence to suggest that the functions were being managed in an integrated way. Interestingly, academic units in this study placed significant emphasis on both enrollment of students and providing an enhanced level of services to current students, but these were seen as somewhat separate and distinct functions. There were two academic units, the Barker School and the Carrington School, where the recruitment function reported separately to the dean's office and not to the associate dean overseeing other enrollment management functions, further reinforcing a disconnect between prospective and current students. In addition, when conducting the study, the researcher had to place a significant amount of emphasis on the literature and the study defined enrollment management as a comprehensive view of not only the admissions and recruiting function, but also other areas including academic advising, financial aid, marketing, student engagement, retention, and career services. Participants in the study frequently

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still returned to referencing enrollment management as focusing on enrollment with a separate focus on the other services that apply to current students. This lack of focus on the broadest definition of enrollment management indicates that academic units may not yet see the benefits of adopting an integrated and strategic enrollment management philosophy. An integrated approach within the academic unit has the potential to provide for high enrollment, stronger retention numbers, and incremental tuition revenue. Further complicating the situation is when there is lack of clarity between who sets the enrollment management goals and priorities and who is responsible for execution of these goals. The centralized university enrollment management organization may not be as integrated with the execution of the goals as might have been expected. The participants indicated that overall strategy and monitoring progress was more commonly conducted by the centralized university enrollment management organization. Less emphasis was placed on coordinating and integrating centralized enrollment management activities with those that were taking place within the academic units.

Assumptions

At the outset of this study, the researcher made several assumptions regarding individual academic units and their application of enrollment management. First, academic units presumably were operating independently in terms of their decision-making authority in how they wanted to manage the various enrollment management functions within their organizations. The results of this study indicate that this was generally true. Some units had developed more complex and sophisticated organizations than others, but they all generally could

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make the choices deemed necessary to meet their goals and objectives. Second, the study showed that there was also variety in terms of how the individual academic units were structured internally. In two of the cases, there were over 20 individual academic departments within each of the two academic units. There were significant differences between disciplines within some academic units and as a result, some enrollment management functions were even further pushed down to the department level. This involved, for example, having individual academic departments with a recruiting function within an academic unit that also had a centralized recruiting function. It had been expected that each academic unit would have centralized services for enrollment management, but this was not necessarily the case.

Data can serve as an important tool in decision making as it pertains to enrollment management (Duniway & Wiegand, 2009). It was assumed that academic unit leaders would heavily utilize data tools and information systems in their decision-making processes. Results of the study indicated that access to data remained a challenge for most leaders, although it had improved over the past two years. The ability to access and report on data housed in a central institutional system was complicated for most. Some academic units had devoted resources to developing their own information technology tools and databases to meet their data and reporting needs, which further complicated the ability to use data effectively. In today's increasingly information-hungry world, it was expected that data would be more readily available.

Limitations

        The researcher acknowledges that this study has a number of limitations.

The study was undertaken in the context of one academic institution. For

purposes of this qualitative study, the researcher sought to specifically study the

enrollment management models within academic units at a major research

university in the southwestern United States due to the shift occurring across the

institution of these functions and the researcher's personal association with the

environment. This study was conducted with an action research orientation in an

effort to provide practitioners with information that can be immediately applied in

their work environments. Thomas (2004) suggests that action research allows the

researcher to focus on issues that are of immediate importance and operates on the

assumption that results are not generalizable, but can be applied in other contexts.

Despite these assertions, the researcher acknowledges that this unique

environment could be construed as a limitation.

        Only a subset of available academic units from within the institution was

recruited as participants for the study. Auerbach and Sivlerstein (2003) suggest

that in qualitative research, the sample size should be based on theoretical

saturation. Theoretical saturation is defined as the point at which additional

participants are no longer offering any new ideas or concepts (Auerbach &

Silverstein, 2003). In this study, the researcher believes theoretical saturation was

achieved with the use of the four participants in the sample. As data analysis and

interview coding was conducted, it became apparent to the researcher that no new

common ideas and themes were emerging by the time the fourth interview had

been coded. However, the researcher acknowledges that a larger sample size could produce additional richer data with further examples of the application of enrollment management in other academic units.

Within the sample, another limitation that should be addressed is the use of supplemental program fee revenue that was being collected from three of the four academic units in the study. Participants acknowledged that access to this additional revenue stream did make the ability to offer a wider range of resources dedicated to enrollment management functions possible. While many academic units at the institution under study have implemented these program fees and they apply to over half of the enrolled student population, units who do not have access to these additional funds may not be able to offer the same level of enrollment management services within their academic units. Having a large part of the sample with access to program fees may be considered a limitation as it may have provided an unrealistic picture of the enrollment management functions in academic units because they have access to more resources. The academic units included in this study also represented some of the largest and most diverse from within the university setting. This may be considered a specific limitation in that if smaller academic units were included, the results could have been different.

Recommendations for Leaders in Academic Units

Insight into how leaders in academic units make decisions regarding enrollment management within their academic units is available as a result of this study. Decisions centered on creating enrollment management structures, developing enhanced services to support retention, and managing relationships

with other entities. The researcher recommends that academic unit leaders with enrollment management responsibilities use the findings from this research to inform their decision making within their own organizations. This study was conducted under an action research orientation which encourages utilization of practicing professionals in a specific field to inform others about an issue of immediate interest (Thomas, 2004). The associate deans interviewed as participants in this study have provided expert testimony about their abilities to make decisions regarding enrollment management in their academic units. The findings, combined with the body of literature surrounding enrollment management contribute to the following recommendations for leaders in academic units:

- Recommendation 1: Cultivate an enrollment management philosophy

- Recommendation 2: Embrace the migration of enrollment management functions

- Recommendation 3: Leverage ideas of other academic units

- Recommendation 4: Develop a strong marketing function

- Recommendation 5: Build partnerships with centralized university enrollment management functions

Recommendation 1: Cultivate an enrollment management philosophy. One of the cornerstones to institutions achieving a strategic enrollment management function is the desire to integrate functions and achieve specific organizational goals (Hossler & Bean, 1990). Academic units should seek to adopt this perspective before they begin creating the structures, functions,

and services under their enrollment management umbrellas. Academic units in this study discussed enrollment management in terms of focusing on the enrollment part of the equation. They also spent much time focusing on retention programs. What academic units must do is to combine efforts in these areas such that they are holistically looking at their entire enrolled student population. A strategic enrollment management philosophy calls for optimizing not only prospective student enrollment, but also current student enrollment (Bontrager, 2004a). It also means that an organization should focus on the total student enrollment in order to achieve goals related to the class profile and ultimately to maximize net tuition revenue (Bontrager, 2004b). Academic units have an opportunity to look much deeper at the entire student profile to ensure the quality of students desired are being enrolled and retained. Furthermore, they must also look at the revenue stream associated with the enrolled student population to ensure it meets desired goals. There was limited focus on these important enrollment management activities in this study. What was more apparent was a desire to focus on headcount of total enrolled students and to the ability of students to meet the admission requirements. Cultivating a broad and strategic perspective to managing enrollment as well as understanding the reasons for creating an integrated function is imperative to success. To achieve this goal, academic unit leaders should spend time understanding the models of enrollment management and developing their own philosophy. Ensuring this vision of an integrated approach to achieving enrollment management goals is communicated

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and practiced throughout the academic unit will help to achieve use of a strategic enrollment management model.

Recommendation 2: Embrace the migration of enrollment management functions. Over time, each academic unit in this study was the recipient of various enrollment management functions that had migrated, either all or in part, away from a centralized university function. The willingness to embrace these functions was positive, but it has created a burden on individual academic units to support and develop their own enrollment management infrastructure. What has been consistent is that in difficult economic times, individual academic units were being asked to shoulder more of the burden for these functions in order to alleviate the overhead costs at the centralized university level. Placing these functions and services more closely to the academic departments that have a closer ability to serve the students has merit (Manning, Kinzie, & Schuh, 2006). What is likely to be a continuation of the evolution of enrollment management is the continued migration of centralized enrollment management functions. The centralized functions may soon serve only in a coordinating capacity by establishing guidelines and processes. Execution of enrollment management activities may be delegated to the academic units. A key example offered in this study pertains to living-learning communities. Significant resources were dedicated to replicating many services provided by the residential life office such as community assistants or peer mentors. Based on this finding, it is likely that a function such as residential life may soon reside solely in the hands of the academic units with the residential life

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office offering coordination of facilities and housing assignments. Academic units in this study have embraced the recruitment function while leaving the admission processing and decision making to the centralized university admissions office. Ultimately, to accomplish their individual enrollment management goals, academic units will increasingly have to take on additional responsibilities. What is critical to success is the ability to embrace these functions and incorporate them into their enrollment management strategy by devoting the necessary resources to support them. Academic units in this study exemplified this strategy by successfully creating new admissions, career services and other enrollment management functions as these functions have migrated from being completely centralized functions.

Recommendation 3: Leverage ideas of other academic units. When functions are decentralized, the potential for having specialized skills becomes less common. Individual academic units may need to have employees who have skills in a number of enrollment management functions simply because they do not have the resources to employ specialists in every area. One of the opportunities that exists to combat this problem is the need to leverage the ideas developed and created by other academic units within the institution. In this study, some academic units indicated they had looked to the examples of programs and services created in other areas for inspiration. Instead of seeing programs as points of differentiation between academic units, leaders should see the ability to create similar programs as an opportunity to share best practices, expertise, and successes. Students ultimately will choose the discipline they wish

to study based upon their individuals interests. Academic units should avoid utilizing differentiated services as an enticement to draw enrollments away from other areas from within the institution. Instead, they should utilize their resources to more effectively position themselves as superior to other similar schools at peer institutions with which they compete for students.

In this study, examples of similar services across units existed in several areas, particularly as it pertained to camp experiences for new students, leadership-focused programs, and living-learning communities. Units each had a slightly different perspective on how they administered their programs, but there was little mention of collaborating. Units could benefit from the development of cross-unit task forces or meetings where enrollment management professionals can learn about innovative programs offered in other areas that could enhance the opportunities for students across multiple academic units. Leveraging these cross-unit capabilities can allow individual units to achieve goals and build internal relationships while also supporting institutional priorities.

Recommendation 4: Develop a strong marketing function. Leaders in academic units can benefit from having a strong marketing function within their academic unit. Marketing messages are critical to promoting and positioning an organization to achieve goals and objectives (Kotler & Fox, 1985). To accomplish these goals, development of a marketing organization that has responsibility for ensuring that key topics such as academic quality, student services, social opportunities, and other programs is important (Hossler & Bean, 1990). Prospective and current students as well as other stakeholders are now

more information savvy and have begun to need more information to make informed choices. If a marketing function already exists, it is important to ensure there are resources within that function to support the recruitment of students. Results of this study indicated that leaders in academic units have developed functions to support the recruitment of students, but marketing departments were less developed. Recruiting teams must have the appropriate marketing materials including print materials, websites, email communication, advertising, and social media strategy to facilitate the recruiting process. Establishing a specific culture and community bond were indicated as important goals of academic unit leaders. A strong marketing function can also help to ensure these messages are effectively communicated. The closer the marketing resources are to the academic departments and students, the better they can be at developing the appropriate messages. Leaders need to become active participants in partnering with their marketing organization to ensure their enrollment management goals are met. Two participants in this study provided specific examples of their involvement in development of marketing materials whereby they actively participated in brochure development and approval processes. This link between marketing and the academic unit leader can help to build strength in the marketing organization and ensure the desired messages that will help meet enrollment management goals are emphasized.

Recommendation 5: Build partnerships with centralized university enrollment management functions. To be successful in overseeing enrollment management within the academic unit, it is critical for leaders to establish strong

working relationships with the centralized university enrollment management functions. Likewise, centralized enrollment management leaders must actively engage with their academic unit counterparts. Regardless of whether the function is admissions, orientation, residential life or another area, this study has demonstrated that leaders in academic units have had to learn to work alongside their institutional counterparts. Receiving goals, direction, and procedures from the centralized functions were common, but where academic unit leaders can excel at execution of these initiatives is when working collaboratively. It is critical to understand the boundaries and guidelines such that clear responsibilities are outlined for both the centralized and academic unit enrollment management staff. The participants in this study frequently cited they saw the enrollment management functions within their units providing services which were above and beyond services the university offered. In doing so, it is therefore important to ensure that these are integrated and coordinated such that the prospective and current students are not receiving conflicting or mixed messages.

This focus on developing partnerships may offer the opportunity to more effectively handle complex or difficult situations that may arise. Determining which recruiting events to attend, when to schedule orientation sessions, or how housing assignments in living-learning communities will be formed are just a few of the examples where the needs of academic units will need to intersect with the centralized university functions and where relationships can be strengthened. This may be accomplished through more frequent meetings between the individuals responsible for carrying out the work. Clear delegation of tasks and

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responsibilities for execution of goals and stronger communication when milestones are achieved may also assist in creating additional trust in these complex relationships.

The ability to execute on specific mandates or directives issued from the institution was one of the challenges academic unit leaders voiced. Partnerships that are strongly developed can help to ensure the voices and needs of the academic units can be considered in institutional decision-making processes. Being aware of policy changes or guidelines prior to them being issued can also assist academic units to make sure they have the proper resources to support the initiatives and incorporate local changes when needed.

Opportunities for Further Research

This study sought to conduct new research to explore the emergence of enrollment management functions in academic units and how leaders choose to manage these functions. This study has further confirmed that the roles of associate deans are continuing to emerge as internally focused administrators within an academic unit responsible for making choices around enrollment management. The researcher believes that several additional opportunities exist for further research into this area.

This study was developed with the intention of understanding enrollment management decision making within the context of one institution. Significant opportunities exist to replicate this study in a number of other contexts to further explore the theoretical constructs developed from the data in this study. The sample for this study included four large academic units within a setting that was

shifting responsibility for some enrollment management functions from centralized functions to academic unit leaders. It may be interesting to look at these same issues within a medium-sized institution. In addition, a sample of smaller academic units from the institution studied here may provide another interesting set of results. Similarly, graduate programs and graduate schools often must shoulder responsibility for many enrollment management functions for their specific programs and could provide further results of interest to practitioners leading these programs. Looking at the phenomenon within the context of an institution not experiencing these shifts of traditional enrollment management or student affairs into academic units may also be of interest.

This study was designed such that it could be replicated in nearly any setting by following a similar methodology and data analysis protocol. Additional research could focus on other institutions and academic units of similar size to provide comparative data between different institutions, disciplines, or academic units. Another opportunity for replication would be within a very large academic unit that has multiple large departments or schools. Leaders of each of these subunits could be recruited as participants providing another unique set of perspectives on how they manage the enrollment management function within their own micro-context. It could be interesting to see if the enrollment management structures within these sub-units have evolved along the same path as the institutional model or if they have developed differently.

Another opportunity for further research would be to conduct a similar study from the perspective of leaders in the centralized enrollment management

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functions who have to interface with the leaders of the academic units. Their

perspectives on the shift of responsibility for enrollment management functions

could provide the contrasting point of view. It may also provide leaders in

academic units with further information on how to effectively build relationships

with centralized enrollment management functions.

Finally, there are several other opportunities to extend this research

through the use of a more quantitative methodology. This would permit the

researcher to extend the sample size to many other levels of employees within an

academic unit and across many enrollment management functions. Survey

questions could be developed in a similar fashion using the existing literature to

evaluate individual opinions on the degree to which they believe enrollment

management exists within the academic units. Extending this across a number of

academic units could provide a wealth of data utilizing a different approach.

Combining the results of a quantitative and qualitative research design could

create a more detailed set of results.

Conclusion

The literature on enrollment management provides guidance for how an

institution may evolve its enrollment management function over time. This model

incorporates several different functions beginning with recruiting and admissions

and marketing and later incorporating academic advising and student engagement

and soon growing to include recruiting, marketing, retention, and career services.

When an institution like the one in this study elects to shift enrollment

management responsibilities to academic units, leaders are left to seek out an

enrollment management model as they begin to grow and develop their own enrollment management organizations. The findings in this study suggest that academic units follow a similar path to developing an integrated and strategic enrollment management model. Academic unit leaders who participated in this study provided a wealth of information that provide guidance on how to develop structures and resources, create enhanced services, and manage relationships to build an enrollment management model for use in their academic unit.

This study leaves the reader with five key recommendations for leaders in academic units who are responsible for enrollment management. These include cultivating an enrollment management philosophy, embracing the migration of enrollment management functions, leveraging ideas of other units, developing a strong marketing function, and building partnerships with the centralized university enrollment management functions. With variations in institutional culture, local context, and individual leadership style, there is no perfect solution to the enrollment management dilemma within an academic unit. With careful review of the findings and pursuit of the recommendations offered through this study, academic unit leaders may find it easier to build and evolve their organizations to build their own strategic enrollment management philosophy.

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APPENDIX A

RECRUITMENT SCRIPT

Recruitment Script
Recruiting Script – Initial E-mail to Administrators

Dear _____,

       I am conducting a research study in conjunction with my Doctor of Education program and as an aspiring leader in higher education. This study seeks to understand the evolution and current state of enrollment management in academic units. I am seeking to interview individuals such as yourself who are in leadership roles within academic units with responsibility for one or more of the following functions: recruiting/admissions, marketing, orientation, financial aid/scholarships, academic advising, student engagement, retention or career services.

       I am inviting your participation, which will involve a one hour interview, to be scheduled at your convenience. The interview will entail a brief discussion of the various enrollment management functions which exist within your academic unit. It will include approximately ten questions.

       By participating in this study, your responses will be able to:

- Contribute to an understanding of how enrollment management has evolved within academic units.
- Review an electronic copy of the final report which summarizes how enrollment management in academic units helps to serve students and enhance your operations.

       I realize your time is valuable. You may reply to this message to indicate your interest in participating. Upon receipt, I will contact you to schedule an appointment to conduct the interview within the next few weeks.
Thank you in advance for your consideration. I look forward to the opportunity to meet with you for just one hour and ultimately providing you with additional information that can help your organization to achieve its goals.

Sincerely,
Nick DeBiaso
Mary Lou Fulton Teachers College
Ed.D. Candidate
Attachment: Informational Letter

Recruiting Script - Phone call to Administrator

Hello, my name is Nick DeBiaso. I recently sent you an e-mail message regarding a research study I am conducting for my doctoral program. I am seeking to conduct one hour interviews with administrators such as yourself who have responsibility for enrollment management functions within an academic unit.

I hope you will be willing to participate. Please contact me at your earliest convenience at 303-522-1067 so we may schedule a mutually agreeable time to meet.

I will shortly forward you a copy of the previous e-mail message in the event you wish to further review details of the study.

Again, my name is Nick DeBiaso and I can be reached at 303-522-1067. Thank you.

APPENDIX B

INFORMED CONSENT LETTER - INTERVIEWS

Informed Consent Letter - Interviews
Insert Date

Dear Participant:

I am a doctoral student under the direction of Dr. Lisa McIntyre in the Mary Lou Fulton Teachers College at Arizona State University.

For my dissertation, I am conducting a research study to understand enrollment management in academic units. Your participation is requested in completing a one hour interview regarding the various enrollment management functions which exist within your school or college. For purposes of this study, enrollment management includes any of the following functions: recruiting/admissions, marketing, orientation, financial aid/scholarships, academic advising, student engagement, retention and career services.

I am inviting your participation which will involve a one hour interview to be scheduled at your convenience. The interview will entail a brief discussion of the various enrollment management functions under your direction or within your academic unit. It will include approximately ten questions. Your participation in this study is voluntary. If you choose to participate, you can skip questions or withdraw from the study at any time, there will be no penalty.

By participating in this study, your responses will help to create an understanding of how enrollment management functions within an academic unit. Your responses can help leaders to build awareness for how these functions within an academic unit can more effectively and efficiently enroll and serve students.

I am conducting the research as a doctoral student and professional dedicated to the development of the enrollment management profession. As an individual with aspirations to serve in a leadership role in higher education, I am hoping this research will provide additional insight into the leadership of enrollment management functions.

Individual responses from interviews will not be shared, but excerpts may be included in the summary reports. At your request, I will make available an electronic copy of the final report at the conclusion of the study.

The identity of the institution of study and your identity will remain confidential. Your name will not be used at any time in the aggregate reporting. In an effort to understand enrollment functions at a school level, it may be important to include information regarding the discipline of your academic unit and certain demographic data (e.g. enrollment numbers, graduation rates, etc.) There are minimal foreseeable risks to your participation as the intent of this study is to document enrollment management practices in an effort to understand leadership in the context of school-centric enrollment management efforts. The results of this study may be used in reports, presentations, or publications but your name and identity will not be shared.

With your permission, I will digitally record the interview. The digital audio files will be kept until the completion of the final report, at which time they will be destroyed; digital recordings will not be shared publically in any way.

If you have any questions concerning the research study, please contact the research team at: Lisa.McIntyre@asu.edu or Nick.DeBiaso@asu.edu. If you

have any questions about your rights as a subject/participant in this research, or if you feel you have been placed at risk, you can contact the Chair of the Human Subjects Institutional Review Board, through the ASU Office of Research Integrity and Assurance, at (480) 965-6788.

Participation in the interview will be considered your consent to participate.

Sincerely,

Nick DeBiaso

APPENDIX C

PRE-INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE

Academic Unit Enrollment Management Pre-Interview Questions

Prior to conducting our formal interview, please provide some details regarding

your organization and background. By providing these details, it will help to

frame our interview conversation to focus on important enrollment management

topics and questions.

<u>Contact Demographic Questions</u>
Name:
Academic Unit/School/College:
What is your current job title?
Specify the number of years you been in your current role.
Specify the number of years you have worked in higher education.
For how many years in your current role have you had responsibility for one or
more enrollment management functions?

Functional Review

Use the following to provide information on the following functions in your organization.

	Admissions / Recruiting	Marketing / Communication	Academic Advising	Student Engagement	Retention	Career Management	Financial Aid / Scholarships	Orientation
1. Function exists in your academic unit and you have responsibility for it.								
2. Function exists in your academic unit, but you do not have responsibility for it.								
3. You have definitive plans to establish this function.								
4. You wish to implement this function.								
5. Function does not exist in your academic unit.								
6. Specify the number of FTE staff dedicated to this function.								

APPENDIX D

ACADEMIC UNIT ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Introduction

        This interview will seek information regarding various enrollment management functions which exist within your academic unit. Additional emphasis will be placed on how decisions are made with regard to enrollment management in your area of responsibility. Enrollment management for the purposes of this study is defined as the following student support functions: recruitment/admissions, financial aid/scholarships, marketing, academic advising, student services, retention, orientation and career services.

        The interview will take approximately one hour. Most of our time will focus on interview questions with some additional time dedicated to obtaining information about your organizational structure.

        As a participant in this study, your name will not be used in the summary. Efforts will be made to exclude academic unit and any specific identifying organizational information.   A copy of the summary report with findings from across many academic units in the university will be made available to you upon completion in exchange for your participation.

Interview Questions

1. Please provide me with a brief overview of your organization as it pertains to enrollment management functions. Would you be willing to share an organizational chart to assist in my understanding of your organization?

2. How do you determine which enrollment management functions to maintain within your academic unit?

3. What key factors are used to decide how to allocate resources among enrollment management functions in your academic unit?

4. How do you use data to facilitate your choices regarding enrollment management?

   Follow Up Questions: Where does this data come from? How important is it in the decision making process?

5. What is one specific enrollment or retention programs which your unit has implemented? Why did you make this choice? What factors led to this decision?

6. Tell me about one enrollment management decision you made which in retrospect you wish you would have made differently.

   Follow Up Questions: Why? What factors led to the initial decision?

7. How would you characterize your personal decision making philosophy? What types of information do you use to arrive at decisions?

8. How do factors from outside your academic unit have an impact on your decisions regarding enrollment management?

APPENDIX E

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL LETTER

Office of Research Integrity and Assurance

To:	Lisa McIntyre
From:	Mark Roosa, Chair $\mathcal{Sm}$
	Soc Beh IRB
Date:	04/21/2011
Committee Action:	**Exemption Granted**
IRB Action Date:	04/21/2011
IRB Protocol #:	1104006322
Study Title:	An Evaluation of Enrollment Management in Academic Units

The above-referenced protocol is considered exempt after review by the Institutional Review Board pursuant to Federal regulations, 45 CFR Part 46.101(b)(1) (2) .

This part of the federal regulations requires that the information be recorded by investigators in such a manner that subjects cannot be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects.   It is necessary that the information obtained not be such that if disclosed outside the research, it could reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability, or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, or reputation.

You should retain a copy of this letter for your records.