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Perceptions of Creativity among
Faculty in Higher Education
by
Ellie Melissa Potter
April 2013

Master's Thesis
Submitted to the
Graduate Faculty of the College of Education
At Grand Valley State University
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Ellie Melissa Potter

Abstract

Higher education instructors do not sufficiently incorporate creativity in the teaching and learning environments within which they operate. While there is a great deal of research available regarding creativity and primary or secondary education, there is little research available regarding creativity and higher education. This study contributes to that gap of knowledge by surveying faculty members in one institution of higher education in order to understand their perspectives regarding creativity, both as it relates to being a creative individual and to teaching others to be creative themselves. There were 358 faculty members who participated in the online survey designed specifically for this study. Those participants were tenured, tenure-track, visiting, and affiliate faculty from eight different academic units at both the graduate and undergraduate levels. The survey instrument asked participants to answer six demographic questions, eleven Likert scale statements, and two short answer questions. The results of the surveys were gathered and organized by response, allowing the researcher to identify similarities and tabulate percentages of responses. The majority of faculty participants believed creativity to be a positive concept that should be incorporated in higher education. However, when asked if they believed their faculty peers engaged in creative action, most participants did not perceive that to be the case. Several barriers to creativity, along with factors that could potentially promote creativity, were identified in this survey as well. The results have important implications for institutions of higher education if they are seeking to incorporate creativity. There is still a significant amount of research needed that could further promote this field of knowledge.

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Chapter One: Introduction

Problem Statement

Higher education instructors in the United States do not sufficiently incorporate creativity in the teaching and learning environments within which they operate (Brinkman, 2010; Donnelly, 2004; Kampylis, Berki, & Saariluoma, 2009; Romero, Hyvonen, & Barbero, 2012; Teo & Waugh, 2010). And yet despite this problem, while there is a large amount of research regarding creativity in primary and secondary education (Bramwell, Reilly, Lilly, Kronish, & Chennabathni, 2011), there is a significant gap in research regarding creativity in higher education (Kampylis et al., 2009).

The concept of creativity is currently a controversial topic in educational settings (Simmons & Thompson, 2008). Part of this controversy is due to the tension between emphasizing innovation and risks, or emphasizing productivity and accountability (Craft & Jeffrey, 2008). However, incorporating the teaching and learning of creativity in institutions of higher education is essential if educators are seeking to equip their students with tools that will help them succeed in their futures (Gibson, 2010; Livingston, 2010).

Importance of the Problem and Rationale for the Study

In some educational settings, learning how to teach creativity has become a part of the training educators receive (Teo & Waugh, 2010). However, even though many teachers have been introduced to the concept of creativity and its importance, there is little known about the beliefs of educators regarding creativity (Diakidoy & Kanari, 1999), nor the creativity of educators themselves (Bramwell et al., 2011).

This study will seek to better understand higher education faculty members' perceptions of creativity, thus helping to close that gap of missing knowledge. With this information, institutions of higher education in the United States would be able to begin to identify areas for improvement regarding the teaching and learning of creativity.

If an institution of higher education wishes to teach its students how to think and act creatively, one of the most influential means of transferring that concept is through its faculty. Without understanding the perspectives of its faculty members regarding creativity, American higher education is unable to adequately assess areas for improvement.

Background of the Problem

Many scholars agree that educators do not adequately incorporate creativity within their teaching (Brinkman, 2010; Donnelly, 2004; Kampylis et al., 2009; Romero et al., 2012; Teo & Waugh, 2010). However, in order to best assess what needs to change in order to reach the solution for that problem, one must first look at where the problem exists, why it exists, and the extent of its existence.

This study will begin to ask the questions that will provide data related to the perceptions of faculty regarding creativity in higher education. It will provide the groundwork to determine faculty members' beliefs about creativity, and what could best be done to improve the perceptions of creativity in order for its incorporation in higher education.

While many studies have been conducted that focus on creativity within primary and secondary education, it is difficult to find a valid study that directly assesses faculty members' perceptions and incorporation of creativity within higher education. However,

scholars agree that it is essential for faculty to incorporate creativity in their teaching. Livingston (2010) states, “Higher education needs to use its natural resources in ways that develop content knowledge and skills in a culture infused at new levels by investigation, cooperation, connection, integration, and synthesis. Creativity is necessary to accomplish this goal” (p. 59).

Statement of Purpose

This study will seek to understand faculty members’ perceptions of creativity within one institutional type at Grand Valley State University (GVSU). In doing so, it will contribute to the gap of knowledge regarding creativity in higher education. By further understanding these beliefs, higher education professionals (i.e., faculty, student affairs staff, administrative staff) can begin to better recognize areas for improvement, and find solutions for the problems presented in those areas.

Research Question

A few of the main concepts addressed in this study can be summarized in a broad question that will drive its research. This study will ask faculty, “What are your perceptions of creativity and its incorporation within higher education environments?” To further delve into the implications of that question, faculty participants will be asked to respond to several other questions and statements regarding related concepts. A few of these concepts are listed below.

While the survey questions in this study will be mostly quantitative, and thus closed-ended, they will still address several questions. Is creativity accessible to everyone? Do faculty members teach students to be creative? Do faculty members believe creativity to be beneficial or a hindrance to the education of their students?

Should creativity be taught in higher education, or is another environment more appropriate? These concepts will be further explored in the survey presented to faculty participants.

Design, Data Collection and Analysis

This descriptive study will be completed at GVSU. Participants will include tenured, tenure-track, visiting, and affiliate faculty members from varying departments at both the undergraduate and graduate level. Permissions will be obtained from GVSU's Human Research Review Committee, Phillip Batty (the Director of Institutional Analysis at GVSU), and each individual faculty member who chooses to participate in the study (see Appendices A and B).

Faculty participants will be asked about their perceptions of creativity within higher education. The definition of creativity will be offered to the participant before completing the survey. Several of the concepts discussed will be the roles of educators, institutions of higher education, and students regarding creativity.

Data collection will be completed through an online survey tool (Survey Monkey) using an anonymous survey prepared uniquely for this study. The survey will include both quantitative and qualitative questions, designed specifically to promote maximum levels of participation from the faculty involved in this study. The start of the study will include the completion of a permissions request (see Appendix C), as well as anonymous demographic information of the participants. From there, questions 1-11 will be quantitative, and questions 12-13 will be qualitative. Once returned, data from the surveys will be compiled, reviewed for similarities, and documented accordingly in the corresponding chapters of this thesis.

Definition of Terms

There is only one significant term that will be defined in this thesis, and that is creativity. Definitions for this term vary. For the purpose of this study, creativity will be defined as intentional thought that is imaginative, inventive, original and/or contrary to the ordinary, resulting in action that promotes new ways of thinking. Due to the varied opinions about the meaning of creativity, this definition was compiled from the thoughts of many scholars (Bramwell et al., 2011; Brinkman, 2010; Diakidoy & Kanari, 1999; Donnelly, 2004; Galbraith & Jones, 2003; Gibson, 2010; Livingston, 2010; Romero et al., 2012; Teo & Waugh, 2010; Whitman, Holcomb, & Zanes, 2010).

Delimitations of the Study

This study has been designed specifically to reduce delimitations to its external validity and generalizability. However, there are a few important factors to note, which reduce the generalizability of this study. First, this study will only be conducted at one masters institution in the United States, thus limiting its application to institutions of higher education that may be similar in nature. Furthermore, because of its localization, it cannot be generalized to other cultures inside or outside of the United States.

In addition to these delimitations, it is important to note that this survey will only be conducted in such a way as to capture the perspectives of various faculty members. It will not be a collection of data based on actual occurrences within adult and higher education. Rather, this study will gather data based on the views of faculty members regarding the concept of creativity.

Finally, this study will include a survey that is limited to only a few specific questions, thus able to address limited concepts regarding creativity. Many of the

questions will only allow for a select number of responses, increasing the validity but reducing the scope of the study. There is a significant amount of research that could be done in the future to further understand faculty members' perceptions about creativity and its incorporation in higher education environments.

Limitations of the Study

The limitations of this study that affect its internal validity are largely related to the opportunity for bias. Faculty will be asked questions having to do with their experiences and practices. Because they are being asked about themselves, the opportunity exists for bias to occur in the perceptions of faculty members regarding creativity. Accurate self-perception involves recognizing bias and striving to limit its influence on one's thoughts. If faculty members involved in this study do not seek to remove their biases, it could affect the internal validity of the study.

There is one other limitation that could influence the internal validity of this study. Approximately 1,100 online surveys will be sent out to faculty members at GVSU. In order for this survey to be both valid and generalizable to similar settings, at least 150 responses will need to be obtained.

Organization of Thesis

In the following chapters of this thesis, scholars opinions regarding concepts in this study will be introduced (chapter two), the study itself will be described and outlined (chapter three), the results of the survey will be presented (chapter four), and conclusions will be drawn (chapter five).

To begin, chapter one will serve as a proposal for the work to be done in this thesis. Chapter two will then provide the reader with a synthesis of the literature that was reviewed related to the concepts to be discussed in this study.

Chapter three will outline the details of this study's research design. This will include the study's participants, the instrument used (an online survey), the means for collecting the completed surveys, and the analysis of the data gathered from those completed surveys.

The topic of chapter four will be related to the returned surveys and the data gathered from analyses of the returned surveys. It will include the demographic information of participants who completed the surveys, as well as outline the findings of the study as a result of the data analyses.

Finally chapter five will summarize the conclusions that can be drawn from the information presented in chapter three. It will suggest recommendations for future research, as well as implications for policy and practice within institutions of higher education.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

Introduction

This chapter will provide a synthesis of the current research related to the concept of creativity within education. The review of literature will begin by defining creativity in order for the reader to better understand creativity. It will look at common definitions, recognize distinctions, and offer the reader a definition from which the accompanying study will be conducted.

Following that, this chapter will discuss the role of creativity within education. This will include what that role has been in the past as well as beliefs regarding what the role of creativity within educational environments should be in the future. It will then discuss the benefits of creativity, for students, educators, and organizations.

To recognize the contrasting aspects of the incorporation of creativity within education, this chapter will then discuss some of the barriers to that implementation. From there, it will address the attitudes of educators with regards to creativity, as well as the importance of understanding those beliefs. At that point, the chapter will indicate the need for future research with regards to the attitudes and beliefs of educators towards creativity.

Next, this paper will summarize the key points in one concise section. Then, the chapter will offer a conclusion to the reader in a way that will allow them to review the content of the chapter as a whole, as well as indicate what one can infer from the current literature. This part of the chapter will also further indicate the need for the proposed study.

Synthesis of Research Literature

Defining creativity. In order to research the concept of creativity, one must first seek to understand the definition of creativity itself. Scholars vary in their definitions of creativity, as the concept is difficult to reduce to any one specific circumstance. Whitman et al. (2010) state, “Creativity, occurring across a diversity of domains such as art, literature, science, mathematics, and so on, is undoubtedly influenced by a wide range of psychological and social factors, making it difficult to define in a universally acceptable manner” (p. 109). Put simply, “Creativity, as has been established, is difficult to define” (Donnelly, 2004, p. 161).

However, even though choosing one specific definition for creativity is difficult, it is still important to seek to understand creativity. One of the best ways to do so is to look at the work of multiple scholars and use their thoughts to combine one general definition. In doing so, one can better comprehend the concept of creativity, and thus conduct research related to creativity with greater validity.

According to Galbraith and Jones (2003), “Creativity seems to be concerned with innovation, change, reflection, tolerance, challenge, and nurturing of the unforeseen to make something a reality” (p. 19). Teo and Waugh (2010) add to this definition, stating, “Some researchers have described creativity as the skill of bringing about something new and valuable” (p. 208). They go on to identify that “a creative result is both original and appropriate” (Teo & Waugh, 2010, p. 208).

According to the above definitions, creativity is related to innovative and new thought, along with the actualization of that thought. Thus, the reader can generalize an operating definition of creativity to be intentional thought that is imaginative, inventive,

original and/or contrary to the ordinary, resulting in action that promotes new ways of thinking.

While creativity involves innovation and bringing about something new, a few scholars conducted a study, finding that participants in that study “associated creativity with imagination and self-confidence, but not with intelligence” (Diakidoy & Kanari, 1999, p. 236). Gibson (2010) stated, “Early research into creativity often viewed it as analogous to intellectual ability” (P. 608). However, he went on to comment, “Today, creativity is no longer considered synonymous with intelligence” (Gibson, 2010, p. 608).

These comments indicate that the concept of creativity has decreased in its association with intelligence. With intellectual and cognitive development such a focal point of higher education today, research conducted on creativity in higher education could be influential in determining educators’ current feelings and incorporation of creativity, along with whether or not education environments should seek to promote positive interactions with creativity.

It is interesting to note that “Albert Einstein suggested that creativity is far more significant than knowledge in the advancement of humankind” (Galbraith & Jones, 2003, p. 23). And yet, “Notions of creativity currently occupy a somewhat paradoxical position in educational discourse (Simmons & Thompson, 2008, p. 603).

While creativity in education is often a subject of debate, scholars have still contributed to its definition more specifically within that environment. Thompson (2009) states, “Creativity in education is commonly taken to include both creative teaching...and teaching to develop the creativity of learners” (p. 40). And yet, “creativity...is rarely

articulated as an explicit learning objective in the academic curriculum” (Donnelly, 2004, p. 161).

For some, creativity and its implications can be confusing, frustrating, or even unknown. Simmons and Thompson (2008) agree that “there is a concern to reassure teachers that creativity is not mysterious” (p. 606). In doing so, perhaps more educators would incorporate creativity in their learning environments.

In addition to the unknown, paradoxical nature of creativity at times, educators might be led to believe that some of their students are not capable of being creative. In fact, “many regard creativity as something that only very gifted people possess” (Donnelly, 2004, p. 156). However, there are quite a few scholars who would disagree with that statement. Livingston (2010) states that all “human beings are inherently creative” (p. 59). Simmons and Thompson (2008) add, “Official definitions of creativity in education largely approach their subject by taking a universalist view: that is, creative action and the ability to appreciate creative acts are assumed to be accessible to all” (p. 604). Donnelly (2004) also find that “the psychological research on creativity has been very useful for revealing that people are creative in varying degrees and styles. Past research has demonstrated that an individual’s level of creative potential can be increased through formal training” (p. 165). With that said, “the ultimate question, then, is not how to teach creativity, but rather how to understand, harvest, and build up the very creativity that every student already possesses and uses” (Livingston, 2010, p. 61).

The role of creativity in education. While many would agree that creativity is a “worthwhile end in itself” (Simmons & Thompson, 2008, p. 606), it is still a subject of debate as to whether or not higher educational environments would be an appropriate

milieu for fostering creativity in their students (Simmons & Thompson, 2008). In itself, “being creative is an arduous undertaking” (Donnelly, 2004, p. 159).

And yet, policy makers over the past 20-30 years have begun to recognize creativity in education as increasingly significant (Craft & Jeffrey, 2008). A study conducted by Kamylyis et al. (2009) found that “the majority of prospective teachers (61.3%) shared the optimistic view that school is the best environment for students to manifest their creativity” (p. 23). Teo and Waugh (2010) add, “fostering creativity in students is considered to be important and, in some places, is considered to be a part of lecturer and teacher training” (p. 208).

One scholar suggests that educators should not rely on the full acceptance of creativity in order to incorporate it in their teaching. She states, “We do not have to wait for the field to be more coherent and self-disciplined to get on with teaching for creativity” (McWilliam, 2009, p. 282). Diakidoy and Kanari (1999) found in their study that 93.9 percent of participants agreed that educators “can facilitate creativity in their pupils” (p. 234). This “belief that creativity can be exhibited by most students and in a variety of ways magnifies the role of the teacher and his/her responsibility in its identification and facilitation” (Diakidoy & Kanari, 1999, p. 228).

When seeking its incorporation in educational environments, specifically those within higher education, there are many ways to apply the concept of creativity. Romero et al. (2012) state, “As a human capability, creativity is considered to be a competence that can be learned and developed in a dynamic way across the life span, not only as an individual process but also as a collaboratively constructed one” (p. 422). As a result of one study, several authors stated, “We strongly believe that creative education should not

only be a specific subject in the curriculum but also a general function of education, integrating skills and knowledge from various school subjects” (Kampylis et al., 2009, p. 27).

It is interesting to note here that Kampylis et al. (2009) indicate that creativity can and should influence education across “various school subjects” (p. 27). Williamson (2011) stated that “research, carried out mainly in the period between the 1960s and the 1980s, reported significant differences in the thinking styles of science and art students” (p. 31). However, in his study, “no differences were found in the problem solving skills of [116] arts and science students using the specific tests for convergent thinking, divergent thinking, preferred learning style and creative problem solving skills” (p. 42). Whitman et al. (2010) also conducted a study that provided “support for models of creativity arguing that the collaboration of differing worldviews of the two hemispheres is critical to the cognitive processes underlying creative thinking” (p. 114). These studies indicate that creativity can and should be used, regardless of discipline, in educational settings.

Creativity can be influential, across disciplines, in allowing an individual to shape society. McWilliam (2009) sees its benefits when she states that “policymakers worldwide are now looking to this type of creativity – epistemological agility, or the capacity to work productively across knowledge domains – as an engine of future productivity and social dynamism” (p. 283). Galbraith and Jones (2003) add, “Higher and adult education need to take on the responsibility of fostering creativity in learners, faculties, and administrators who can function in shifting social and cultural climates” (p. 19). Shaheen (2010) also comments, “Educational process primarily needs to set a target

on new thinking and creativity for it to make education have the real effect on society” (p. 168).

Numerous scholars agree with this concept, that creativity is essential for both staying current with society as well as influencing it. “In order to keep up, more innovation is needed and more creativity is exhorted” (Craft & Jeffrey, 2008, p. 578). In fact, creativity “has been heralded as a means with which to solve a plethora of social, political and economic problems facing the twenty-first century” (Gibson, 2010, p. 607). McWilliam (2009) also adds,

While popular notions of creativity continue to reflect first-generation understandings, second-generation creative capacity is being acknowledged by scholars worldwide as a valuable component of social and economic enterprise, and as fundamental to an increasingly complex, challenge-ridden and rapidly changing economic and social order (p. 282).

While there are many benefits of incorporating creativity in higher education environments (as will be mentioned further on in this chapter), one of the biggest reasons for doing so is the ability of creativity to equip its user for future successes. Gibson (2010) states, “It seems clear that if we, in higher education institutions hope to produce individuals who will succeed in our complex and rapidly changing world, the focus must remain firmly on creativity as an essential capacity” (p. 612). Romero et al. (2012) add, “Creativity is one of the competencies required in order successfully to meet challenges across the life span” (p. 422). In fact, “promoting creativity in instructors, learners, and organizations in higher and adult education is an essential response to the changing nature of our social, educational, political, psychological, and economic world”

(Galbraith & Jones, 2003, p. 27). McWilliam (2009) adds to the comments about creativity and its ongoing benefits throughout time when she states, “The value of creativity is not limited to the twenty-first century workplace. It is also increasingly necessary to a planet where a high degree of scientific literacy is important to civic participation in mitigating global climate change” (p. 284).

But not only is creativity essential for success as one both faces and influences the changes around them, it is also key in promoting the success of higher education environments. Galbraith and Jones (2003) state, “Organizations that advocate creativity are supporting the importance and necessity of human originality and innovation, which are essential in the continuation of effective higher and adult education organizations” (p. 27).

Benefits of creativity. Creativity has numerous benefits. Some are mentioned above, such as the ability to integrate thinking across disciplines, as well as the ability to adapt to a changing world. However, there are many more specific benefits as well, for students, educators, and organizations. This section of the chapter will address some of these benefits. It is important for the reader to note that these benefits are not extensive, as the positive aspects of creativity are numerous.

Students. A few of the benefits of learning and incorporating creativity for students include the promotion of teamwork (Galbraith & Jones, 2003), greater confidence (Galbraith & Jones, 2003; Lilly & Bramwell-Rejskind, 2004), and increased active participation and collaboration with peers (Gibson, 2010). In addition, a creative environment promotes “opportunities for inquiry-based learning, constructivism, [and] project-based learning” (Gibson, 2010, p. 610).

Galbraith and Jones (2003) add to the list of creativity's benefits for students when they state that creativity "allows for honest sharing of new ideas with people whose learning perspectives may be dissimilar", as well as "encourages and values inclusive decision making" (p. 25). In their study, Galbraith and Jones (2003) found that students who engaged with creativity began to take more risks when participating in classroom activities, increased their competence in course material, and found greater levels of comfort within the classroom environment.

Edmondson, Boyer, and Artis (2012) found a direct correlation between creativity, curiosity, and self-directed learning. And finally, Galbraith and Jones (2003) state that an educational environment that incorporates creativity "promotes independence, self-confidence, and the ability to solve problems" (p. 24).

Educators. Creativity in education does not just hold benefits for its students, but also for educators as well. As educators incorporate creativity, they begin to improve their teaching in ways that better both the students and educational environments as well. Gibson (2010) speaks from the perspective of an educator when she states, "By fostering creativity in our students, we learn about our own teaching and ultimately become more creative teachers" (p. 612). Lilly and Bramwell-Rejskind (2004) contribute to this conversation by adding, "Creative characteristics prove to be especially helpful to teachers who introduce the inquiry methods of research and discovery learning into their classrooms, who strive to improve their practice, and acquire new teaching strategies on their own initiative" (p. 105). Thus, it can be surmised that educators who incorporate creativity will find themselves benefiting from the work they put into that task.

However, for those faculty who might be less likely to take the initiative to search for something new and worthwhile in the ways in which they teach, creativity can still hold many benefits. Galbraith and Jones (2003) tie in the benefits of creativity as it relates to working in a creative environment when they add, “In general, instructors who work within organizations that support creativity find themselves more willing to try out new ideas, curriculum materials, and teaching strategies and methods” (p. 25). Creativity holds benefits for both educators and organizations as well.

Organizations. Incorporating creativity can benefit individuals as well as the environments in which those individuals exist. In the case of institutions of higher education, there are many benefits to be found. In a study conducted by Ayhammar and Andersson (2001), it was found that faculty who assessed their educational environment as having a high degree of creativity also viewed that environment as “having a positive organizational climate” (p. 203).

When coupled with the concept of productivity (which often occurs as a result of creativity), educational organizations achieve great amounts of value. In the same study mentioned above, the authors found “appraisals of creativity and of productivity to have much in common and to be closely related to the organizational conditions of climate and sufficiency of resources” (Ayhammar & Andersson, 2001, p. 203). Thus, creativity not only benefited the organization in this instance, but it also allowed its participants to use their resources in an efficient manner.

Barriers to the incorporation of creativity. While creativity has numerous benefits, there are also many barriers to its implementation in educational environments. Teo and Waugh (2010) found,

In industry, apart from the having good competency in the particular discipline, graduates need to possess attributes like the ability to think creatively, independently, and critically. There have been few attempts by schools to implement proper systems to ensure that these attributes are actively pursued by both teachers and students (p. 206).

Looking at some of the barriers to creativity might begin to help one understand how to contribute to a system that is both able to and desires to pursue the teaching of these attributes to its students.

It is no question that an environment impacts those individuals within that environment. In a study conducted by Kamylyis et al. (2009), “there was an impressive total agreement (100%) among the participants...that sociocultural and environmental factors influence creative performance” (p. 21). This is indicative of the importance of recognizing the factors of one’s environment when seeking to promote creativity. Gibson (2010) states, “Elements of organization including universities can and frequently do stifle creativity” (p. 610). Livingston (2010) adds, “The classroom lecture format is, by nature, not a natural laboratory for interaction and collaboration” (p. 60).

In a study conducted by Kamylyis et al. (2009), “more than four out of five participants (85.5% of prospective teachers and 88.5% of in-service teachers) thought that students do not have enough time to express their creative potential in the classroom” (p. 25). Craft and Jeffrey (2008) attributed this to what they called the “two parallel agendas of creativity and performativity” (p. 580). Simmons and Thompson (2008) even go so far as to say, “It can be argued that the impact of performance management upon teachers is to stifle innovation and to encourage deeply conservative practices” (p. 612).

But perhaps it's not just the structure of the environment itself that creates a barrier to the incorporation of creativity. Simmons and Thompson (2008) conducted a study in which "heavy workloads, scant resources and a culture of anxiety produced by hierarchical organisational ethos were found to thwart creativity" (p. 613). In fact, "A culture of teaching that values obedient attentiveness or busy work for its own sake, rather than the attention and busy-ness that speaks of productive engagement, is death to proactive, self-managing learning" (McWilliam, 2009, p. 291). Simmons and Thompson (2008) add, "A further obstacle to creativity in [further education] is provided by its tendency in some curriculum areas to act as a site of social reproduction rather than as a transforming agent" (p. 613). Teo and Waugh (2010) identify the requirements of turning out adequate grades, making sure important technical knowledge is attained by students, and meeting standards and criteria set by accrediting agencies, authorities in education, and economic advisors as just a few of the reasons why it is difficult to put the time and energy into the incorporation of creativity in higher education environments.

It is understandable that creativity can be very difficult to implement in a system that is not yet used to the concept. As with anything new, change comes with resistance. Cheng (2011) speaks about this process, stating that "finding methods to integrate creativity learning and that of content knowledge is unavoidable. Obviously, it is not an easy task. In the process of integration, adjustments, balancing and compromise between the two learning domains are expected to occur" (p. 84). Simmons and Thompson (2008) add that the incorporation of "creativity into classroom practice is...likely to be complex and problematic, with the interaction of economic, performative and liberal accounts leading to purportedly creative practice that is seriously compromised" (p. 602).

This concept of needing to perform, to acquire knowledge, and to meet standards, is often in direct competition with the incorporation of creativity in educational environments. In a study conducted by Diakidoy and Kanari (1999), “an emphasis on knowledge acquisition was considered to be a primary reason for the school’s lack of success in promoting creativity” (p. 239). Lilly and Bramwell-Rejskind (2004) discovered that “students’ creativity has been found to suffer from the traditional teaching practices of evaluation, reward, competition, and lack of student choice” (p. 104). Gibson (2010) also adds that “traditionally, teachers in higher education have focused on imparting content knowledge rather than on considering how different students learn and which strategies might in fact, promote that learning” (p. 611).

Simmons and Thompson (2008) argue that creativity can play a crucial role in shaping “learners to take their place as flexible and adaptable employees and consumers in western capitalist societies” (p. 601). They go on to say that “this is underpinned by a performative education system” (Simmons & Thompson, 2008, p. 601). Livingston (2010) argues, “Higher education needs to use its natural resources in ways that develop content knowledge and skills in a culture infused at new levels by investigation, cooperation, connection, integration, and synthesis. Creativity is necessary to accomplish this goal” (p. 59).

Not only is creativity difficult to incorporate in an educational environment because of its competition with performance standards, it also takes more time to engage in creative processes. Galbraith and Jones (2003) state, “To engage in creativity for the purpose of generating new ideas, projects, concepts, or innovative approaches, it is vital that appropriate time be provided to engage in such processes” (p. 21). Other scholars

contribute to this line of thought when they conducted a study with 85 participants, finding that greater amounts of available time helped the creative process (Cohen & Ferrari, 2010).

All in all, there are many barriers to the incorporation of creativity within educational environments. Donnelly (2004) adds to the concept, stating,

Many attribute the neglect of creativity to a number of reasons: the Platonic notion that creativity is a mystical phenomenon; the persistent belief that creativity is a spiritual process that does not lend itself to scholarly scrutiny; or the fact that early twentieth-century schools of psychology, for example, structuralism, functionalism and behaviorism, ignored creativity (p. 156).

Perhaps some of the barriers mentioned above can help explain why educators are having a difficult time incorporating creativity. However, it is important to acknowledge the attitudes and opinions of educators, as well as their actions, when looking at their incorporation of creativity.

Educators and creativity. When contemplating the importance of incorporating creativity in educational environments, one must first discover the current perspectives and actions of educators before they seek to make successful changes. This section of the chapter will outline a few of the attitudes of educators towards creativity.

It is significant to note the opinions of educators if the incorporation of creativity is going to be successful in an educational environment, because educators' beliefs influence their teaching. Hong, Hartzell, and Greene (2009) conducted a study, which found that "teachers' own personal beliefs and attributes do have influences on how they structure their classroom instruction" (p. 206). In fact, "Creative teachers will be most

successful when they use their personal intelligences to choose projects that both fit their own values and their students' needs and interests" (Bramwell et al., 2011, p. 236).

Another study measured seven aspects of fostering creativity, finding "that lecturer attitudes of fostering creativity with their students directly influence, and are easier than, their corresponding behaviors" (Teo & Waugh, 2010, p. 217).

Diakidoy and Kanari (1999) argued that there are two important concepts to consider when seeking to incorporate creativity in educational environments: "(a) the extent to which training prepares teachers to successfully undertake the task of identifying and facilitating creativity in the classroom, and (b) teachers' theories of and beliefs about creativity and the factors that have been found to influence it" (p. 226).

These authors recognize the importance of educators' attitudes toward creativity, but also indicate that training educators could be beneficial in the process of incorporating creativity.

Yet, educators will not often benefit from this type of training if they do not have a positive attitude towards creativity. In their survey of educators, Diakidoy and Kanari (1999) found that "creative outcomes were thought to be novel but not necessarily appropriate or correct" (p. 225). In another study, it was discovered that "one out of three prospective teachers [did] not believe that creativity is a key factor for personal and social progress" (Kampylis et al., 2009, p. 21). Those same authors went on to indicate that as a result of these attitudes, educators might not "strive to facilitate students' creative development" (Kampylis et al., 2009, p. 21).

Creativity is also not often a well-understood concept. Gibson (2010) states, "In exploring the subversive nature of creativity, I propose that it runs counter to many of the

dominant influences in current higher education learning” (p. 607). Romero et al. (2012) add, “Creativity as a concept is neither adequately understood nor supported among the teachers” (p. 425). Aljughaiman and Mowrer-Reynolds (2005) support this idea when they say,

Teachers feel ill-prepared to foster creativity when they do not know how to define creativity, recognize creativity, appreciate creative behaviors, or are overburdened with the demands of teaching content driven curricula toward high stakes testing. Steps must be taken to ensure that adequate training and resources are provided for teachers at all levels of teacher preparation and practice, so that creative and regular students alike will have their creative talents actualized (p. 31-32).

Put directly, “teaching others to be more creative is a step that many teachers do not take” (Brinkman, 2010, p. 49). Teo and Waugh (2010) add, “Many higher education institutions in Western countries do not have an adequate emphasis on creativity and critical thinking” (p. 206). Another scholar agrees with this lack of emphasis on creativity, stating, “Too little of our teaching in higher education is focused on nurturing students’ ability to think in creative ways” (Donnelly, 2004, p. 160-161).

However, despite this seemingly impossible task, that is, the incorporation of creative teaching and learning within higher education environments, there are still steps that can be taken to make progress towards its full implementation. Galbraith and Jones (2003) offer that “creativity is enhanced when organizational life and those that comprise it demonstrate that risk-taking is valued and encouraged” (p. 20).

In order to move towards the creation of these environments, one must first understand the current situation. Diakidoy and Kanari (1999) state, “Even though the importance of facilitating creativity in educational settings has been recognised, little attention has been paid to teachers’ beliefs about creativity” (p. 225). If educators are to facilitate the incorporation of creativity within education, more specifically higher education, one must first understand their perspectives before they propose changes to the current structure.

Need for further research. Understanding the attitudes of educators with regards to creativity is key to its successful incorporation within educational environments. While some research does exist, there is a significant gap of knowledge in the area of adult and higher education specifically. Bramwell et al. (2011) state, “The literature on creativity in gifted and regular education is primarily concerned with creativity in children and youth and teachers’ roles in supporting them” (p. 228).

It is important to study creativity in higher education specifically if one is going to better know how to facilitate its incorporation. Lilly and Bramwell-Rejskind (2004) state that “students’ creativity has been found to suffer from the traditional teaching practices of evaluation, reward, competition, and lack of student choice” (p. 104). They go on to say that “this highlights the importance of continued research studying creativity and creative teaching” (Lilly & Bramwell-Rejskind, 2004, p. 104). Bramwell et al. (2011) add, “Good teaching is creative teaching, yet there is little research focusing on creative teachers themselves” (p. 228). Kamylyis et al. (2009) also join the conversation, stating that there is “a need for further research on teachers’ conceptions and implicit theories of

creativity and their role in students' creative thinking development" (p. 16). The research conducted in this study will seek to offer more data to this gap of knowledge.

Summary

Defining creativity can be a daunting task. It is a complex and multi-faceted concept. For the purpose of this study, creativity will be defined as intentional thought that is imaginative, inventive, original and/or contrary to the ordinary, resulting in action that promotes new ways of thinking.

Incorporating creativity in higher educational environments is greatly influential in promoting the successes of individuals within those environments. Kamylyis et al. (2009) state,

In our view, all learners are capable of creative achievements if they are given the opportunity and the means. We strongly believe that a democratic educational environment should offer opportunities and means for everyone to express their creative potential irrespective of race, age, sex, and cultural or educational background (p. 19).

Other scholars agree with this concept, adding "Creativity needs to be an essential component in the higher and adult education field if it is to foster flexibility, openness, and the ability to tolerate uncertainty in a changing educational and social world" (Galbraith & Jones, 2003, p. 18).

Creativity offers its user many benefits, whether that participant is a student, educator, or organization. A study conducted by Netzer and Rowe (2010) discovered that master's level students reported that discussing important aspects of creative and innovative processes with their peers was influential in enabling them to better

understand and apply course readings, as well as in seeking to learn more through further research at the library. These are only a few of the benefits of creativity.

However, while there are many positive aspects of the incorporation of creativity within educational environments, there are many barriers that accompany that process as well. In a study conducted by Diakidoy and Kanari (1999), it was found that educators “did not consider the school environment to be conducive to creativity” (p. 234).

Creativity is often in direct conflict with standards for productivity, the lack of time available, and educators’ misperceptions and negative attitudes towards creativity.

In fact, while a significant amount of research has been done regarding the opinions of educators regarding creativity in primary and secondary education, there is a gap in research when it comes to looking at creativity within higher education environments. Teo and Waugh (2010) state, “It is an important issue to understand how lecturers manage, and what strategies they use, to teach creative development in their students” (p. 206-207). This study will seek to better understand educators’ opinions and beliefs when it comes to the incorporation of creativity within higher education environments.

Conclusion

Creativity can be a beneficial component to any educational environment. However, according to many scholars, educators do not often incorporate creativity as much as they should (Brinkman, 2010; Donnelly, 2004; Kampylis et al., 2009; Romero et al., 2012; Teo & Waugh, 2010). Incorporating creativity would better equip students to face societal changes and challenges (Craft & Jeffrey, 2008; Galbraith & Jones, 2003; McWilliam, 2009; Romero et al., 2012; Shaheen, 2010).

Yet, while there are many benefits to the incorporation of creativity within education, there are also many barriers to this process. Creativity takes time (Cohen & Ferrari, 2010; Galbraith & Jones, 2003; Kampylis et al., 2009), something that is often difficult for educators to find. In addition, being creative often comes into direct conflict with following university standards and production requirements (Craft & Jeffrey, 2008; Diakidoy & Kanari, 1999; Gibson, 2010; Lilly & Bramwell-Rejskind, 2004; McWilliam, 2009; Simmons & Thompson, 2008; Teo & Waugh, 2010).

If educational environments seek to wrestle with these challenges and achieve the task of incorporating creativity, a helpful tool would be to first understand the perceptions of faculty when it comes to creativity. Faculty opinions directly influence their teaching (Bramwell et al., 2011; Diakidoy & Kanari, 1999; Hong et al., 2009; Teo & Waugh, 2010). If one is hoping to change an environment, they must first influence the individuals who change that environment.

While there is a significant amount of research regarding the incorporation of creativity within primary and secondary educational environments, the research that exists about creativity and higher education is limited (Bramwell et al., 2011; Kampylis et al., 2009). This study will contribute to that gap of knowledge by surveying faculty members' opinions of creativity in higher education, allowing institutions of higher education to better understand what might be standing in the way of the incorporation of creative thoughts and actions within their educational environments.

Chapter Three: Research Design

Introduction

This study will seek to contribute to the gap in research regarding creativity within higher education by surveying faculty members about their perceptions of creativity. An online survey was used to ask faculty several related questions. These questions addressed concepts such as the use of creativity when presenting course content, teaching students to be creative themselves, whether or not creativity is accessible to everyone, and creativity's role in an institution of higher education. A copy of the survey and the questions therein can be found in Appendix D.

In this chapter, several details about the research instrument and other specifics of the study will be addressed. It will first identify those that were sampled and which characteristics they hold. Then, it will discuss the research instrument itself, detailing both the online survey and the permissions required in order to distribute and implement that survey. From that point, this chapter will address the ways in which data was collected, the analysis of that data, and the procedures used in both of those processes. Finally, the chapter will end with a summary of the research design.

Participants

The individuals who were invited to participate in this study are 1,100 affiliate, visiting, tenured, and tenure-track faculty members at GVSU. Invited faculty participants are both from the graduate and undergraduate levels.

Adjunct faculty members were not included in the participant group due to the nature of their role being significantly different from the roles of affiliate, visiting,

tenured, and tenure-track faculty members. In addition, the number of faculty invited (approximately 1,100) was the total sum of tenured, tenure-track, affiliate, and visiting faculty members currently working at GVSU. This was done in order to obtain a greater number of responses from the participant population.

Instrumentation

The instrument used for this study was an online survey developed by the author and posted on the website, www.surveymonkey.com. Participants were invited to complete this survey through an email that was sent to them which included the link to the survey. Philip Batty, Director of Institutional Analysis at GVSU, provided the means for that email communication (see Appendix B for his approval letter). For this study, the survey was designed in such a way so as to only allow an individual to participate in the survey one time from any given computer. This was tracked using the Internet Protocol address from those computers. By implementing this strategy, participants were prevented from taking the survey more than once, thus increasing the reliability and the validity of the study.

The questions within the survey itself were designed directly by the researcher conducting this study. They included six initial questions regarding the participants' demographic information and current teaching role, eleven multiple choice statements based on a Likert scale, and two short answer questions. All of the items on the survey were reviewed and approved by the Human Research Review Committee at GVSU (see Appendix A), along with members of the researcher's thesis committee. These members include Dr. Stephen Worst (committee chair), Dr. Donald Mitchell, and Dr. Jay Cooper.

In addition, survey participants were asked to give their consent for participation on the first page of the survey, prior to answering any of the survey questions (see Appendix C).

Data Collection

The survey used for this study was opened to participants on Monday, March 25, 2013. Participants were invited to complete the survey through an initial email (Appendix E). A reminder email was sent out to participants on Thursday, March 28, 2013 (Appendix F), and the survey was closed on Monday, April 1, 2013.

Survey results were collected and organized by the website, www.surveymonkey.com. The information was then forwarded to the researcher by a selected individual in the department of Institutional Analysis at GVSU. This was done in the specified manner due to the researcher using the Survey Monkey account (having gained approval to do so) of Phillip Batty, the director of Institutional Analysis (see Appendix B). In order to preserve the privacy of other individuals who used that account to distribute their survey, the researcher was not given direct access to the account.

Participants who only completed demographic information, but who chose to not complete the remaining questions in the survey, were not included in the results presented in this study. However, there were a few individuals who chose to complete the multiple choice statements, but not the short answer questions. Their responses were included in the final analysis.

Data Analysis

Data from the surveys were received by the researcher in a Microsoft Excel document, organized by category, participant, and response. The researcher tabulated the data for each survey item by counting the number of participants who selected a given

response, and then identifying what percentage of the participants had selected that response as indicated by the calculated total.

For the demographic information section, two of the questions had open-ended responses, and the remaining four questions had selected answers from which participants could choose. The open-ended responses were counted as grouped together by categories. These two questions were with regards to participants' age and the total number of years they have worked as a faculty member. For the question regarding age, responses were grouped together in six sections, for ages under 30, 30-39, 40-49, 50-59, 60-69, and over 69 years of age. For the survey question regarding years worked as a faculty member, responses were grouped together in five sections, for the total number of years being under six, 6-10, 11-20, 21-30, and over 30 years of service. Responses were grouped together in each of these sections in order for the researcher to more accurately and concisely present the information in the results of the survey.

The eleven multiple choice statements following the demographic information used Likert scale rankings of *strongly disagree*, *disagree*, *agree*, and *strongly agree*. The researcher designed these questions in such a way so as to reduce the number of participants who might select an answer of *not applicable*, or *neutral*, should the option present itself.

The final two short-answer questions were tabulated by the researcher according to response. The researcher identified themes, counted the number of responses mentioned in any given category, and then used the total number of responses to calculate a percentage for each selected category.

Summary

The research in this study was conducted using an online survey, as opposed to hard copies distributed in person, so as to allow for a collection of data that would be more convenient and anonymous in nature, thus potentially gaining a greater response rate from participants due to the increased ease of survey submission. Participants were given a total of eight days in which they would be able to complete the survey. Once the survey was closed and data collected, the researcher tabulated the responses according to the above specifications. More information regarding the specifics of the participants' responses can be found in Chapter Four of this thesis.

Chapter Four: Results

Introduction

This chapter will discuss the findings of the study, as collected through the survey and analyzed by the researcher. Initially, the chapter will present the reader with information regarding the demographic information of participants, along with the rate of response from the total number of invited individuals. From that point, the chapter will outline the results of the survey as a whole, detailing each section specifically. And finally, the researcher will present the reader with a summary of the key findings of this study at the end of this chapter.

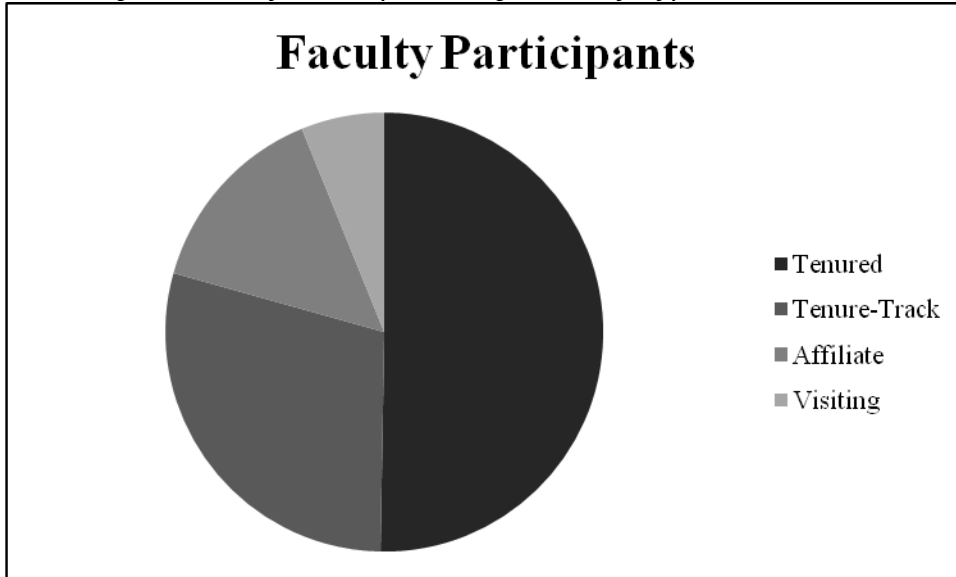
Context

There were 1,100 faculty members at GVSU invited to participate in this study, of which 358 completed the survey beyond the demographic information, for a response rate of 32.55 percent. Participants were split fairly evenly between male and female with 172 males (48.04%) and 186 females (51.96%). Most of the participants reported teaching mainly at the undergraduate level (294 individuals, 82.12%), with the remaining 64 participants (17.88%) teaching primarily at the graduate level (see Table 1). Among the participants, 180 (50.28%) were tenured, 104 (29.05%) were tenure-track, 52 (14.53%) were affiliate, and 22 (6.15%) were visiting (see Figure 1).

Table 1
Gender and Teaching Level Demographics

	Male	Female
Graduate	25	39
Undergraduate	147	147

Figure 1
Percentage of Faculty Participants Organized by Type



Respondents varied in age from 25-77 years old, with 12 (3.35%) reporting being under 30 years of age, 73 (20.39%) between 30 and 39 years of age, 109 (30.45%) between 40 and 49 years of age, 104 (29.05%) between 50 and 59 years of age, 52 (14.53%) between 60 and 69 years of age, and 8 (2.23%) reporting being older than 69 years old. In addition, respondents reported working as a faculty member for between zero and 45 years, of which 93 (25.98%) had worked as a faculty for less than six years, 77 (21.51%) for 6-10 years, 122 (34.08%) for 11-20 years, 48 (13.41%) for 21-30 years, and 18 (5.03%) reporting working over 30 years as a faculty member.

Participants in this survey were from six different academic units at GVSU. The majority of faculty who completed the survey were from the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (201 individuals, 56.15%). The remaining faculty members included 31 (8.66%) individuals from the College of Education, 29 (8.1%) from the College of Community and Public Service, 26 (7.26%) from the College of Health Professions, 24 (6.7%) from the Seidman College of Business, 18 (5.03%) from the Brooks College of

Interdisciplinary Studies, 18 (5.03%) from the Kirkhof College of Nursing, and 11 (3.07%) from the Padnos College of Engineering and Computing (see Table 2).

Table 2
Division of Faculty Participants and Academic Units

	Number of Faculty	Percentage of Total Faculty
College of Liberal Arts and Sciences	201	56.15%
College of Education	31	8.66%
College of Community and Public Service	29	8.10%
College of Health Professions	26	7.26%
Seidman College of Business	24	6.70%
Brooks College of Interdisciplinary Studies	18	5.03%
Kirkhof College of Nursing	18	5.03%
Padnos College of Engineering and Computing	11	3.07%

Findings

After being asked to respond to questions regarding demographic information and their current faculty status and context, faculty participants were asked to answer eleven multiple choice questions by selecting one of four options using Likert scale rankings of *strongly disagree*, *disagree*, *agree*, or *strongly agree*. Results are presented below. In addition, the reader can find tables outlining this data in Appendix G.

Likert scale statements. When asked if everyone is capable of being creative, 172 faculty members (48.04%) agreed and 149 faculty (41.62%) strongly agreed, resulting in a total of 321 participants (89.66%) who agreed to one extent or another. This left only 37 faculty members (10.34%) that disagreed (32 participants, 8.94%) or strongly disagreed (5 participants, 1.4%) with the statement. Participants also responded in favor of the ability for an individual to grow in their creative capabilities, with 157 individuals (43.85%) agreeing and 196 individuals (54.75%) strongly agreeing, resulting in a

combined total of 353 participants (98.6%) who agreed to one extent or another, leaving only five individuals (1.4%) to disagree with the premise.

In addition, faculty members were asked whether or not they believed creativity was a crucial component of living successfully. The majority of faculty agreed (181 participants, 50.56%) or strongly agreed (131 participants, 36.59%). However, 44 individuals (12.29%) disagreed, and two individuals (0.56%) strongly disagreed.

Participants were also asked if creativity could be a part of any department within an educational environment. Almost all participants agreed (134 individuals, 37.43%) or strongly agreed (219 individuals, 61.17%), leaving only five people (1.4%) who disagreed (four participants, 1.12%) or strongly disagreed (one participant, 0.28%).

Furthermore, faculty members were asked if they agreed that the incorporation of creativity is best suited for primary and secondary education. In response to this question, the majority of participants opted to either disagree (189 individuals, 52.79%) or strongly disagree (96 individuals, 26.82%), with the remaining faculty participants selecting to agree (55 individuals, 15.36%) or strongly agree (18 individuals, 5.03%). (For the number of respondents for each Likert scale option in statements one through five, see Table 3. For the percentage of each response to Likert scale statements one through five, see Table 4.)

Table 3
Number of Responses to Likert Scale Statements 1-5

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Everyone is capable of being creative.	5	32	172	149
An individual can grow in their creative capabilities.	2	3	157	196
Creativity is a crucial component of living successfully.	2	44	181	131
Creativity can be a part of any department within an educational environment.	1	4	134	219
The incorporation of creativity is best suited for primary and secondary education.	96	189	55	18

Table 4
Percentage of Responses to Likert Scale Statements 1-5

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Everyone is capable of being creative.	1.40%	8.94%	48.04%	41.62%
An individual can grow in their creative capabilities.	0.56%	0.84%	43.85%	54.75%
Creativity is a crucial component of living successfully.	0.56%	12.29%	50.56%	36.59%
Creativity can be a part of any department within an educational environment.	0.28%	1.12%	37.43%	61.17%
The incorporation of creativity is best suited for primary and secondary education.	26.82%	52.79%	15.36%	5.03%

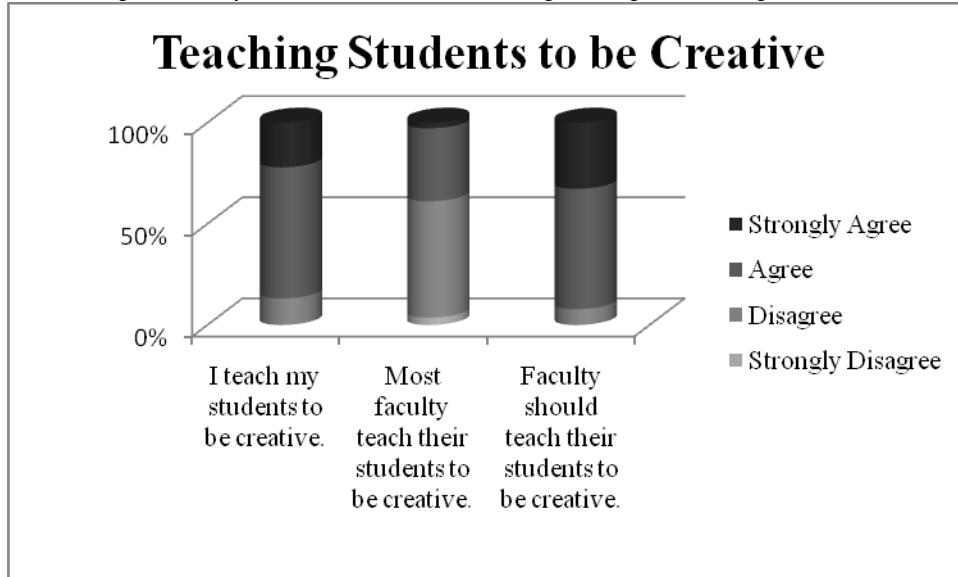
It is interesting to note that only 98.6% of surveyed individuals believed that creativity could be a part of any department in education. In addition, 20.39% of surveyed individuals thought that creativity was best suited for primary and secondary education.

For the remaining six multiple choice questions, faculty members were asked to respond to two premises from three different perspectives each. The first premise asked about teaching students to be creative, while the second asked about being creative in the presentation of course content. Faculty members were requested to identify if they participated in those two activities, if they believe that the majority of faculty members involve themselves in those actions, and if they thought faculty should operate in those ways.

When asked if they teach their students to be creative, 232 participants (64.8%) agreed and 79 participants (22.07%) strongly agreed, leaving 47 participants (13.13%) who disagreed. And yet, while over 86% of participants stated that they teach their students to be creative, the majority of participants (over 61%) stated that they do not believe that most faculty members teach their students to be creative. When asked about the latter, only 129 individuals (36.03%) agreed and 10 individuals (2.79%) strongly agreed that the majority of faculty members teach their students to be creative, while 206 individuals (57.54%) disagreed and 13 individuals (3.63%) strongly disagreed. And yet, most faculty members agreed that both they and their peers should be teaching their students to be creative. In fact, when asked about the issue, 213 participants (59.5%) agreed and 117 participants (32.68%) strongly agreed that faculty should be teaching their students to be creative, leaving only 28 participants (7.82%) who disagreed with the statement. (See Figure 2 for a side by side comparison of these three questions.)

Figure 2

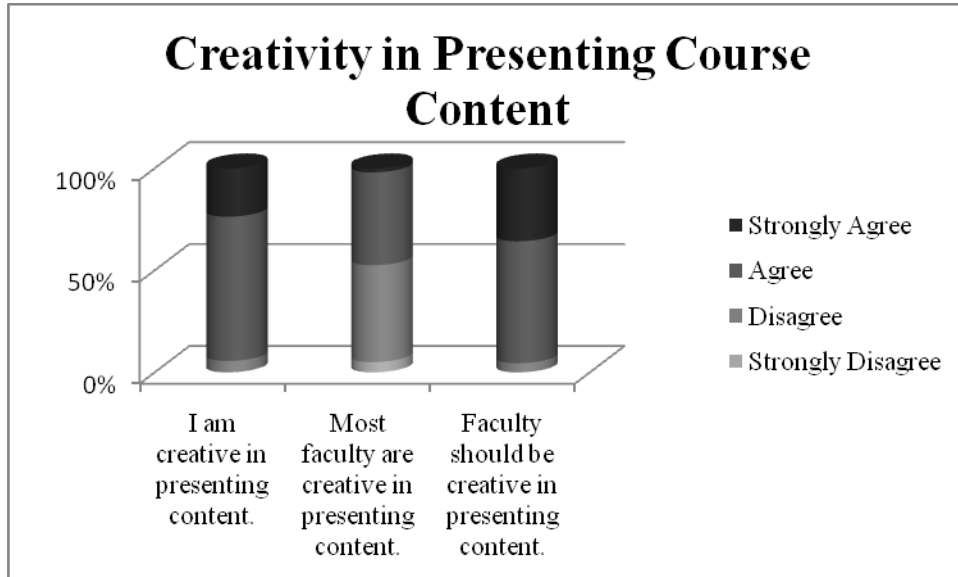
Percentage of Responses to Statements Regarding Teaching Students to be Creative



Presented with a statement indicating that the participant is creative in their presentation of course content, the majority of faculty members agreed (253 participants, 70.67%) or strongly agreed (85 participants, 23.74%), leaving only 20 participants (5.59%) who disagreed. When asked if they believed faculty members should be creative in their presentation of course content, 214 participants (59.78%) agreed, 128 participants (35.75%) strongly agreed, and only 16 participants (4.47%) disagreed. And yet, even though the majority of faculty indicated that they themselves are creative in their presentation of course content, and that they believed that faculty should be doing the same, over half of the participants disagreed with the premise that the majority of faculty are creative in their presentation of course content. In response to the latter, 18 faculty members (5.03%) strongly disagreed, 170 faculty members (47.49%) disagreed, 163 faculty members (45.53%) agreed, and seven faculty members (1.96%) strongly agreed that most faculty are creative in their presentation of course content. (See Figure 3 for a chart outlining these responses.)

Figure 3

Percentage of Responses to Statements Regarding Being Creative in the Presentation of Course Content



Short answer questions. The remaining two questions in the survey were both short answer questions, asking participants to provide three answers to each.

Barriers. First, participants were asked to provide three barriers to the incorporation of creativity. There were 954 responses to this question in total (as participants were allowed to submit up to three answers each). While responses were varied, there were several answers that many participants seemed to agree upon.

When identifying barriers to the incorporation of creativity, faculty participants listed limited amounts of time as their primary answer, with 171 responses, for a total of 17.92% of all responses to the question. Following the issue of not having enough time, participants identified content requirements (111 responses, 11.64%) and the difficulty of assessment (89 responses, 9.32%) as two other significant barriers.

Three other items that had over 30 responses each were apathy (60 responses, 6.29%), inertia, or being stuck in tradition (50 responses, 5.24%), and too large of class sizes (34 responses, 3.56%). After that was listed a lack of training how to be creative (30

responses, 3.14%), faculty members being unsure how to teach creativity (30 responses, 3.14%), a lack of faculty creativity (26 responses, 2.72%), and the difficulties involved in defining creativity, along with the misconceptions that occur as a result (26 responses, 2.72%). The only other items that held answers of over 2% of the total responses were a lack of recognition or value of creativity from the university (20 responses, 2.1%) and other responsibilities and workload (20 responses, 2.1%).

There were ten more items that more than 1% of faculty responses agreed upon. Fear and risk aversion had 18 responses (1.89%). Limited funds had 17 responses (1.78%). Unwillingness to change had 16 responses (1.68%). Student expectations as reflected in their evaluations also had 16 responses (1.68%). After that, student perceptions had 14 responses (1.47%), lack of incentives or rewards for creativity had 13 responses (1.36%), and the environment and physical space had 12 responses (1.26%). Resources (12 responses, 1.26%), bureaucracy (11 responses, 1.15%), and the pressure to conform (10 responses, 1.05%) were also listed as barriers to the incorporation of creativity in education.

After the items listed above, there were 148 additional responses (15.51%) in 61 categories that contained less than 10 responses (and less than 1% of the total responses) each. If desired, the reader can find a complete list of responses to this item on the survey in Appendix H.

Promoting factors. For the final question on the survey, participants were asked to identify three factors that could promote the incorporation of creativity in higher education. There were 895 total responses to this question in 83 categories. Regarding this question, the item of training and learning how to teach creativity stood above the

rest in terms of total answers, with 127 responses (14.19%). Next, faculty listed rewards and incentives for creativity (59 responses, 6.59%) as another key factor that would promote the incorporation of creativity in higher education. Thirdly, collaboration had a total of 56 responses (6.26%).

Beyond those top factors, there were many other items identified as well. Making creativity an educational goal and value had 53 responses (5.92%), more time had 49 responses (5.47%), smaller groups of students had 39 responses (4.36%), and flexible assessments and outcomes also had 39 responses (4.36%). There were 38 responses (4.25%) for institutional support and 36 responses (4.02%) that indicated the inclusion of creativity in higher education could be increased by gaining a better perspective of creativity through defining it.

Other factors listed were flexible course content (25 responses, 2.79%), a willingness and desire (24 responses, 2.68%), a decreased workload (22 responses, 2.46%), innovative teaching (22 responses, 2.46%), more money (21 responses, 2.35%), and research that would provide evidentiary support as to the benefits of creativity (21 responses, 2.35%). Beyond that, faculty listed incorporating the arts and creativity across disciplines (20 responses, 2.23%), academic freedom (16 responses, 1.79%), increased understanding and use of technology (14 responses, 1.56%), and the encouragement of risk-taking despite potential for failure (14 responses, 1.56%) as several other factors that could positively influence the inclusion of creativity in higher education. The final six factors that had at least ten responses each were better student preparation in grades K-12 (12 responses, 1.34%), role modeling (12 responses, 1.34%), open-ended questions and

assignments (12 responses, 1.34%), open-mindedness (11 responses, 1.23%), resources (10 responses, 1.12%), and classroom space (10 responses, 1.12%).

There were numerous other responses to this question as well. Listed above are the items that had at least 10 responses each. For a complete list of all items, including those with less than 10 responses each (and 1.01% or less of all responses for each category), please see Appendix I.

Summary

Over 32% of faculty members that were invited to participate in this study completed the survey designed by the researcher. Among those responses, there were varied opinions. The majority of faculty agreed that anyone can be creative, and can grow in their creativity as well. Most faculty members also agreed that creativity is a crucial component of living successfully. When asked if creativity should span education levels, as well as reach across disciplines, most faculty participants agreed that it should.

In addition, most faculty members reported that they themselves both teach their students to be creative and are creative in their presentation of course content. Furthermore, the majority of participants identified that they believed faculty should involve creativity in their presentation of course content, as well as should teach students to be creative. However, when asked if the majority of their peers, other faculty members, were participating in those two activities, most faculty members believed that they were not.

When discussing what barriers existed to the incorporation of creativity, time, content requirements, and the difficulty of assessment were listed as the top three items. Regarding the factors that would promote creativity in higher education, participants

identified training and learning how to teach creativity, rewards and incentives for creativity, and collaboration as the top three items. The implications of the above-mentioned findings and the conclusions that can be drawn from their results will be discussed in the following chapter.

Chapter Five: Conclusion

Summary of the Study

Educators in the United States do not sufficiently incorporate creativity in the teaching and learning environments within which they operate (Brinkman, 2010; Donnelly, 2004; Kampylis et al., 2009; Romero et al., 2012; Teo & Waugh, 2010). Even though scholars agree about this problem, there is still a significant gap in research regarding creativity in higher education (Kampylis et al., 2009). The research completed in this study seeks to contribute to that gap of knowledge.

This study was conducted with 358 affiliate, visiting, tenure-track, and tenured faculty at GVSU. They were given an online survey and asked to respond to questions in order for the researcher and others to better understand the perceptions of faculty with regards to creativity and its role in higher education.

For the purpose of this study, creativity was defined as *intentional thought that is imaginative, inventive, original and/or contrary to the ordinary, resulting in action that promotes new ways of thinking*. This definition was compiled by the primary investigator of the study, assembling thoughts from many scholars (Bramwell et al., 2011; Brinkman, 2010; Diakidoy & Kanari, 1999; Donnelly, 2004; Galbraith & Jones, 2003; Gibson, 2010; Livingston, 2010; Romero et al., 2012; Teo & Waugh, 2010; Whitman et al., 2010).

The findings of this study indicated that most faculty members believe that everyone is capable of being creative, that an individual can grow in their creative capabilities, and that creativity is a crucial component of living successfully. The majority of faculty members also reported that creativity can be a part of any department

within an educational environment. In addition, just under 80% of faculty members stated that they did not believe that the incorporation of creativity is best suited for primary and secondary education.

When responding to the concept of teaching students to be creative, the majority of faculty reported that they teach their students to be creative, and that they believe faculty should teach their students to be creative. However, over 61% of faculty members did not believe that most faculty members teach their students to be creative.

Furthermore, the majority of faculty members reported that they were also creative in their presentation of course content, as well as that faculty members should be creative in their presentation of course content. But when asked if they thought the majority of other faculty members were creative in their presentation of course content, over 52% disagreed.

Faculty members were also asked to identify three barriers to the incorporation of creativity in higher education. The top five responses listed were limited amounts of time, the difficulty of meeting content requirements, problems with measuring and assessing creativity, an apathy towards incorporating creativity, and inertia in the ways in which educational environments operate.

The last item on the survey asked faculty participants to identify three factors that could promote the incorporation of creativity in higher education. The five responses that were listed most often were training and learning how to teach creativity, rewards and incentives for creativity, collaboration, making creativity an educational goal and value, and allowing more time for creativity.

Conclusion

Several of the responses from the survey results were intriguing. The majority of faculty members demonstrated positive feelings towards the concept of creativity itself. This is evidenced by participants not only indicating that everyone could be creative, as well as grow in their creativity, but also that most participants identified creativity as a crucial component of living successfully. In addition, the majority of faculty members agreed that creativity could be a part of any department across various fields in higher education.

When asked if creativity is best suited for primary and secondary education, most professors disagreed. Yet, interestingly, most of the research on creativity has been completed regarding primary and secondary education (Bramwell et al., 2011), with little research focusing on creativity in higher education (Kampylis et al., 2009).

In fact, this lack of research was identified by faculty members as a barrier to creativity itself. Specifically, the lack of a consistent definition for creativity along with the perception that creativity is not rigorous were two significant barriers identified by faculty participants in this survey.

Another aspect of research that is missing regarding creativity in adult and higher education is seen in the perceptions of faculty members towards both teaching creatively and teaching students to be creative. When faculty participants were asked if they were creative in their presentation of course content, most replied that they were. When they were asked if they taught students to be creative, most agreed as well. And when asked if they thought most faculty should participate in each of the two above-mentioned concepts, most of the participants agreed that faculty should. However, the majority of

faculty participants still reported that they believed that most other faculty members neither teach their students to be creative, nor are creative themselves in their presentation of course content.

These findings indicate a lack of consistency between the perceptions that faculty members have of themselves and their opinions of other faculty members' actions. Without further research, it is difficult to determine the reasons behind this disconnect. This could be connected to the lack of collaboration in higher education that was reported by faculty participants. It could also be related to the lack of support for creativity from the institutional level, as reported by participants, which could result in feelings of isolation regarding the creative efforts of faculty members. However, without further research, it is difficult to narrow down the cause for this inconsistency.

As mentioned above, another significant finding of this study was that faculty members believed there to be a lack of institutional support for creativity, which impeded its incorporation into the environment of higher education. Faculty identified the apathy of not only other faculty members, but of leaders in the institution as well as being a key barrier to the incorporation of creativity in higher education. Other barriers that were mentioned included a lack of training opportunities for faculty members, a lack of collaboration among peers and leaders, and a lack of available resources for their use. In addition, faculty members mentioned that they felt as if the reward system of the institution did not recognize creative efforts. In fact, several participants identified that the environment in which they worked seemed to discourage risk-taking. And finally, participants reported that bureaucracy often got in the way of creativity's role in higher education.

The current structures in higher education were identified as another significant barrier to creativity's implementation. These structures included the lack of time afforded to faculty members to complete job requirements, along with significant workloads that contributed to that lack of time. Faculty participants identified that the current class sizes and physical environments also operated as barriers to creativity.

Among the listed structures in higher education that hindered creativity were also evaluation processes for faculty members, along with the current systems of assessment for classroom learning. And finally, content requirements were also listed as a structure that afforded little room for creativity.

Discussion

Some of the findings of this study were consistent with the thoughts of other scholars and researchers. And yet, other results of the study offered new thoughts and perspectives on creativity as held by surveyed faculty members. In order to better understand the implications of these findings, it is helpful to first compare them with the research that currently exists.

Comparison with literature. Most individuals in this survey reported that everyone is capable of being creative (89.66%). This thought is both supported and challenged by other scholars. Some believe that only the gifted can be creative (Donnelly, 2004), while others state that everyone can be creative (Simmons & Thompson, 2008). Even other individuals would argue that everyone already is creative in one way or another (Livingston, 2010).

In addition to the above-mentioned finding, most faculty participants in this survey identified that an individual can grow in their creative capabilities (98.6%). This

seems to be supported by the research. Donnelly (2004) states that people can both be creative to varying extents, and that their creativity can grow through training.

From the 358 surveyed participants, 312 (87.15%) believed creativity to be a crucial component of living successfully. This belief is supported by other scholars as well, who identify several concepts about the importance of creativity for success in society. McWilliam (2009) states that policymakers are looking for creativity that allows individuals to be productive across knowledge domains. Others argue that creativity allows an individual to have a significant influence on society (Shaheen, 2010), to respond well to societal changes (Craft & Jeffrey, 2008), and to solve political, economic, and social problems (Gibson, 2010). Romero et al. (2012) identify creativity as being necessary for taking on challenges throughout the course of one's life. In fact, Galbraith and Jones (2003) address creativity in higher education directly when they argue that higher education must teach its learners to be creative in order for those learners to be able to operate well in a changing society.

Conversely, in a study conducted by Kamylyis et al. (2009), one third of educators did not think creativity was important for personal and social progress. However, the thoughts by educators in that study seem to be both outside of the norm, and inconsistent with the findings of the current study as outlined in this paper.

Thompson (2009) argues that creativity in education commonly means both teaching creatively and teaching students to be creative. When asked if faculty should be creative in their presentation of course content, the majority of participants agreed (95.53%). In addition, when asked if they believed faculty should teach their students to

be creative, most participants agreed as well (92.18%). However, Brinkman (2010) argues that most educators do not teach others to be more creative.

When looking at possible barriers to the incorporation of creativity in education, many of the items listed in this survey were supported by other scholars. Barriers identified include limited amounts of time (Cohen & Ferrari, 2010; Galbraith & Jones, 2003; Kampylis et al., 2009), requirements of content and knowledge acquisition (Diakidoy & Kanari, 1999; Gibson, 2010; Teo & Waugh, 2010), difficulty in assessment (Lilly & Bramwell-Rejskind, 2004; Teo & Waugh, 2010), large workloads (Simmons & Thompson, 2008), accrediting and professional standards and requirements (Teo & Waugh, 2010), limited resources (Simmons & Thompson, 2008), and the rigidity of the classroom environment (Livingston, 2010). Other barriers identified by scholars that were not mentioned by participants in this study include competition (Lilly & Bramwell-Rejskind, 2004), performativity (Craft & Jeffrey, 2008; Simmons & Thompson, 2008), and a culture of anxiety produced by a hierarchical design (Simmons & Thompson, 2008).

A few other scholars sum up many of the barriers listed to creativity. They argue that educators do not feel prepared to teach creativity when they don't know how to define, recognize, or appreciate it, and when they are dealing with large amounts of content aimed at a specific system of assessment (Aljughaiman & Mowrer-Reynolds, 2005).

In addition to the barriers identified above, participants in this study mentioned several ideas that they believe could promote the incorporation of creative thoughts and actions within higher education. Many of these concepts were also supported by scholars.

Being able to define creativity, and thus better understand and be able to identify it, was listed by participants as one idea that could promote the incorporation of creativity. Scholars agree that creativity is difficult to define (Donnelly, 2004; Whitman et al., 2010). In fact, the need for a stronger, more consistent definition of creativity is supported by scholars who identify that creativity is not well understood or supported by educators (Romero et al., 2012).

Another idea identified by faculty participants that might promote creativity was offering courses designed specifically to teach creativity. Kampylis et al. (2009) agree with this concept, arguing that creativity itself should be a specific subject in education.

The ability to take risks and not be punished was also identified by faculty participants as something that could promote creativity. Faculty members noted that an environment that encourages appropriate risks is much more conducive to creativity. Galbraith and Jones (2003) support this concept, stating that when institutional environments value and encourage risk-taking, creativity is enhanced.

Another idea that many faculty participants agreed on as something that would promote the incorporation of creativity was training for educators. Over one third of participants agreed with this concept. In addition, others outside of this study have also identified that both training and resources must be provided for educators if the creative abilities of their students are going to be fostered (Aljughaiman & Mowrer-Reynolds, 2005).

Faculty participants in this study further identified that offering incentives and rewards for creativity, along with higher levels of recognition and value for creativity from an institutional standpoint, would promote the incorporation of creativity within

higher education. However, McWilliam (2009) challenges these thoughts when he states that educators do not have to wait for encouragement for their institutions in order to be creative.

Implications. Results from this study have significant implications for both educators themselves and institutions of higher education. While implications are numerous, there are a few significant concepts to be noted.

As evidenced by faculty participants' responses in this survey, there was a demonstrated disconnect between educators' perceptions of their actions, what they believe should be occurring, and their opinions of the actions of other faculty members. Looking at these responses allows one to recognize that educators must work to collaborate and communicate more if they are going to accurately identify components of their environments, as well as operate successfully within those environments.

In addition, both faculty members and institutions of higher education as a whole should work to eliminate some of the barriers to creativity that were identified in this study. While some of these barriers might have simple solutions, many of them can be difficult to eliminate. Working towards a creative environment often involves taking small steps towards valuing and incorporating creativity. As it is incorporated, creativity itself can help in finding solutions to many of the barriers identified by participants in this study.

And finally, results of this study indicate that the majority of faculty participants agreed on the importance of creativity. If institutions can recognize this, as well as begin to emphasize and value creativity for the betterment of both themselves and their

students, working together with faculty members could prove to be a tool that could accomplish the daunting task of becoming a creative environment.

Recommendations

Based on the results of this study, along with the implications listed above, it is important to note two things. First, research conducted should lead to an increased awareness and identification of both the current situation and what can be done to achieve the ideal situation. This paper has outlined the current status of faculty members' perceptions of creativity in higher education within one institution. It will now address several ideas for identifying what should be done regarding creativity in higher education, along with ways in which both institutions and faculty members can obtain those goals.

Secondly, there is a significant need for more research regarding creativity in higher education. This paper will outline several concepts that would be beneficial to research. It is important for the reader to note that the concepts listed for research are not exhaustive. Any appropriate and scholarly research that can be done regarding creativity in higher education would serve to benefit the field immensely.

Recommendations for practice. There are many options for both educators and institutions of higher education to think about as they seek to incorporate creativity. First, in order to better incorporate creativity, both faculty and institutions of higher education must first demonstrate an appreciation of and value for creativity. This can be done by both reviewing the research that currently exists, as well as continuing to contribute to the research available. As creativity is better understood, institutions of higher education, along with their faculty members, can begin to recognize its value.

In addition to research, there are a few other concepts for both faculty and institutions of higher education to consider. First, if creativity is going to be a part of any environment, the individuals within that environment must take responsibility for its incorporation. This survey asked faculty members to identify several barriers to the incorporation of creativity in higher education. As indicated by their responses, it was clear that it was much easier to identify barriers outside of oneself than to recognize one's own shortcomings with regards to creativity. If creativity is going to be fostered, both the institution as a whole and individuals within that institution (faculty or otherwise) must start by taking responsibility for their part in developing that creativity.

Secondly, an unwillingness to change was identified as another barrier to creativity. This factor holds significant implications for higher education institutions and their faculty. It is often easy to continue a certain pattern or way of doing things, and more difficult to break outside of that norm to bring about something new. However, if creativity is going to be incorporated in higher education, institutions and faculty members must be willing to step into what might be uncomfortable to try something new.

Institutions of higher education. In addition to the items mentioned above, there are a few concepts to note specifically for institutions of higher education as they seek to incorporate creativity. First, faculty members are in need of a better understanding of creativity itself, along with the opportunity to learn more about how to be creative. One way to achieve this is by offering training for faculty. If an institution can accomplish this task, it will also contribute towards goals of both valuing and emphasizing creativity, along with collaborating among individuals within the institution.

Second, having the proper resources can greatly assist in creativity. A large part of this includes funding. While creativity can exist without additional funds, many faculty reported in this study that they did not feel supported enough financially to be able to incorporate creativity within their classroom environments. It is important to note that having helpful resources can include items such as classroom equipment in addition to funding.

Thirdly, institutions of higher education must learn to be flexible. This idea can be applied to many other concepts. There is a need for flexibility in time that is allotted to faculty for the incorporation of creativity in their work. There is also a need for institutions to be flexible with the ways in which content is delivered to students, along with the types of assessment available for measuring that acquired knowledge.

Faculty members. The responsibility of incorporating creativity cannot rest solely on the institution. Faculty members must also contribute to its implementation if involving creativity in higher education is going to be successful. There are many ways to accomplish this task. However, there are three significant concepts that will be noted here.

First, faculty members must begin to take appropriate risks to incorporate creativity. It is important to note that risks are not always appropriate. Yet, when risks can be taken in appropriate and beneficial ways, faculty members will better be able to incorporate creativity in a variety of settings.

Secondly, it is imperative that faculty members communicate and collaborate, both with other faculty members and with members of the institution as a whole. Collaboration was identified by faculty participants in this study as one factor that could

promote creativity. Conversely, participants also identified that a lack of collaboration served as a barrier to creativity. When faculty, staff, and other members of an institution of higher education can work together, they will find that their goals will be reached much more readily. That concept is important to consider when seeking to implement creativity.

Thirdly, faculty members can continue to contribute to a better understanding of creativity and its benefits by conducting research on creativity, specifically regarding higher education. There is a demonstrated need for more research regarding creativity in higher education. If faculty members can contribute to this need, a greater understanding of and appreciation for creativity can be achieved, along with more knowledge regarding the best methods for approaching the task of incorporating creativity in higher education.

Recommendations for future research. As mentioned above, there is a significant need for further research regarding creativity in higher education. While research on this topic would be beneficial in many areas, there are a few ideas listed below that might serve to prompt further thought.

First, there is a need to research what is meant by the term creativity. How does the concept of creativity vary in its definition from one environment to another? What does it mean to be creative? These are a few questions that would benefit those who are trying to incorporate creativity in higher education.

Secondly, looking at the benefits and drawbacks of creativity would help faculty members and institutions as a whole to better understand when and how creativity could be beneficial to them. Related to this, discussing the successes of creative environments

versus the successes of non-creative environments would also contribute towards the gap in research that currently exists regarding creativity in higher education.

In addition, it would be helpful to continue to research the perceptions of faculty members regarding creativity. Not only would understanding faculty members' perceptions be beneficial, but also learning more about the creativity of educators themselves in higher education.

One other area for research would be to look at how institutions of higher education work to support creativity. Or, if they do not support creativity, what are the reasons behind that decision? Is it in fact a decision, or have they just not intentionally sought out the incorporation of creativity? Are institutions of higher education informed about the characteristics of creativity that could benefit them?

And finally, most directly related to the research in this study, it is significant to note that faculty members reported both that they are creative and teach their students to be creative, that they believe that faculty should be engaging in these actions, but that they viewed their peers as not being creative or teaching their students to be creative. There are many options for why this disconnect could have occurred. It would be beneficial to research whether or not this concept is consistent across institutions of higher education, and the reasons behind its existence.

Overall, there is a consensus on the need for more research regarding creativity in higher education. Any scholarly research that can contribute to that gap of knowledge will be beneficial both for further understanding creativity, as well as knowing when, and how, to best incorporate it within higher education.

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Appendix A

Permissions from the Human Research Review Committee at GVSU



DATE: March 20, 2013

TO: Ellie Potter, B.S.
FROM: Grand Valley State University Human Research Review Committee
STUDY TITLE: [431040-1] Higher Education Faculty Members' Perceptions of Creativity
REFERENCE #: 13-126-H
SUBMISSION TYPE: New Project

ACTION: APPROVED
APPROVAL DATE: March 20, 2013
EXPIRATION DATE: March 20, 2014
REVIEW TYPE: Exempt Review

Thank you for your submission of materials for this research study. The Human Research Review Committee has approved your research plan application as compliant with all applicable sections of the federal regulations, Michigan law, GVSU policies and HRRC procedures. All research must be conducted in accordance with this approved submission.

Due to especially heavy survey activity on GVSU campus this term, the HRRC requests that you consider a sample of the population rather than a comprehensive survey. P.Batty has agreed to assist with a sample and suggested a 25% random or stratified sample.

2 survey suggestions are offered for your consideration that do not affect approvability of the study.

1. Age: ___ Gender: ___ Years Worked as Faculty: ___ Department: _____

For question 1, is this "years worked as faculty" in total, or only at GVSU? What if they worked in more than one department?

2. Type of Faculty: ___Visiting ___Affiliate ___ untenured, Tenure-Track ___Tenured

For question 2, consider adding lecturer, adjunct, emeritus

This approval is based on no greater than minimal risk to research participants. This study has received expedited review, category 2-6, based on the Office of Human Research Protections 1998 Guidance on Expedited Review Categories.

Please insert the following sentence into your information/consent documents as appropriate. All project materials produced for participants or the public must contain this information.

This research protocol has been approved by the Human Research Review Committee at Grand Valley State University. File No. 13-126-H Expiration: March 20, 2014.

Please remember that informed consent is a process beginning with a description of the study and insurance of participant understanding followed by a signed consent form. Informed consent must

continue throughout the study via a dialogue between the researcher and research participant. Federal regulations require each participant receive a copy of the signed consent document.

Please note the following in order to comply with federal regulations and HRRC policy:

1. Any revision to previously approved materials must be approved by this office prior to initiation. Please use the *Change in Protocol* forms for this procedure. This includes, but is not limited to, changes in key personnel, study location, participant selection process, etc.
2. All UNEXPECTED PROBLEMS and SERIOUS ADVERSE EVENTS to participants or other parties affected by the research must be reported to this office within two days of the event occurrence. Please use the UP/SAE Report form. All instances of non-compliance or complaints regarding this study must be reported to this office in a timely manner. There are no specific forms for this report type.
3. All required research records must be securely retained in either paper or electronic format for a minimum of three years following the closure of the approved study. This includes signed consent documents from all participants.
4. This project requires continuing review by our office on an annual basis. Please use the appropriate *Continuing Review* forms when applying for approval extension.
 - Protocols that are active and open for enrollment require both the Primary Investigator and Authorizing Official to electronically sign the Continuing Review submission in IRBNet.
 - Protocols that are open for data analysis ONLY, require the Primary Investigator's signature.

If you have any questions, please contact the HRRC Office, Monday through Thursday, at (616) 331-3197 or hrrc@qvsu.edu. The office observes all university holidays, and does not process applications during exam week or between academic terms. Please include your study title and reference number in all correspondence with this office.

cc:

Appendix B



January 31, 2013

Ellie Potter
College of Education
Grand Valley State University

Ellie,

I will provide means for email communication for the following research project:

Creativity and Higher Education: A Survey of Faculty's Perceptions

Principal investigator(s) – Ellie Potter

Invitee population – Tenure-stream, visiting and affiliate faculty members (approx. 1100 individuals)

Nature and timing of contact – One invitation message per invitee, sent via email during the winter 2013 academic term. Content of messages must be exactly as approved by HRRC.

The e-mail addresses will not be released directly to you, but will be used to distribute your messages from a GVSU mail server.

This use of the data is in compliance with both FERPA and GVSU policies.

Philip Batty
Director, Office of Institutional Analysis

Appendix C

Permissions Page in Survey

This is the wording that will be presented in the first page of the online survey conducted by Ellie M. Potter at Grand Valley State University in February-April, 2013. Participants will be offered the following information, and then will be given the opportunity to select the “Next” button on the survey if they consent to participation.

“You are asked to voluntarily provide specific information to this web site. You may skip any question, or stop participating at any time. The information collected will be used for the stated purposes of this research project only and will not be provided to any other party for any other reason at any time except and only if required by law. You should be aware that although the information you provide is anonymous, it is transmitted in a non-secure manner. There is a remote chance that skilled, knowledgeable persons unaffiliated with this research project could track the information you provide to the IP address of the computer from which you send it. However, your personal identity cannot be determined.

The title of this study is *Perceptions of Creativity among Faculty in Higher Education*. The Principle Investigator of this study is Ellie Potter, B.S. The faculty advisor to this study is Stephen Worst, B.A., M.A., Ph.D. This survey will be conducted for the purpose of adding to the field of knowledge regarding the perceptions of higher education faculty members’ regarding creativity. It will research faculty beliefs about the incorporation of creativity in their teaching, as well as what they think about educating students to be creative. The approximate amount of time for completion of this survey is four-six minutes.

Participants are faculty at Grand Valley State University in Grand Rapids, Michigan. There are minimum risk levels for the participant. If participants wish to obtain information related to the results of this study, or have questions about the study or survey itself, please email Ellie Potter (Principle Investigator) at potterel@mail.gvsu.edu. In addition, if participants have questions about their rights as study participants, please contact the Human Research Review Committee (HRRC) at hrrc@gvsu.edu or 616-331-3197.

By choosing to proceed, I acknowledge that I have read the above information, agree, and am willing to participate in this survey.”

Appendix D

A Survey of Perceptions of Creativity among Faculty in Higher Education

Age: ____ Gender: ____ Years Worked as Faculty: ____ Department: _____

Level Currently Teaching: ___Undergraduate ___Graduate

Type of Faculty: ___Visiting ___Affiliate ___Tenure-Track ___Tenured

For the purpose of this study, creativity will be defined as *intentional thought that is imaginative, inventive, original and/or contrary to the ordinary, resulting in action that promotes new ways of thinking.*

Item	Statement	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree
1	Everyone is capable of being creative.	4	3	2	1
2	An individual can grow in their creative capabilities.	4	3	2	1
3	Creativity is a crucial component of living successfully.	4	3	2	1
4	Creativity can be a part of any department within an educational environment.	4	3	2	1
5	The incorporation of creativity is best suited for primary and secondary education.	4	3	2	1
6	I teach my students to be creative.	4	3	2	1
7	I am creative in my presentation of course content.	4	3	2	1
8	The majority of faculty teach their students to be creative.	4	3	2	1
9	The majority of faculty are creative in their presentation of course content.	4	3	2	1
10	Faculty should teach their students to be creative.	4	3	2	1

Item	Statement	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree
11	Faculty should be creative in their presentation of course content.	4	3	2	1

What are three barriers to the incorporation of creativity in higher education?

What are three factors that could promote the incorporation of creativity in higher education?

Appendix E

Initial Email

This is the wording used in the initial email that was sent out to faculty members on Monday, March 25, 2013 to invite them to participate in the survey.

Hello everyone,

My name is Ellie Potter. I am currently a graduate student in the College of Education at GVSU, attempting to complete my thesis regarding faculty members' perceptions of both their incorporation of creativity and their thoughts on teaching students to be creative. I have created a survey for the purpose of contributing to my thesis work, which will be titled "Perceptions of Creativity among Faculty in Higher Education". The survey is both voluntary and anonymous.

Could each of you please take four to six minutes and complete this survey? I am curious to learn more about your thoughts, and would be very grateful for your contributions. This survey will only be open for one week due to the time constraints of the semester, so if you could take the time to complete it as soon as possible, that would be appreciated.

The link to the survey is:

<http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/KHCXDXB>

If you would like to obtain more information about this study, please feel free to contact me at potterel@mail.gvsu.edu. In addition, if you have questions about your rights as a study participant, please contact the Human Research Review Committee (HRRC) at hrrc@gvsu.edu or 616-331-3197.

Sincerely,
Ellie M. Potter

Appendix F

Reminder Email

This is the wording used in the reminder email that was sent out to faculty members on Thursday, March 28, 2013 to remind them to participate in the survey.

Hello again,

I am emailing you regarding your participation in the survey sent out on Monday, titled “Perceptions of Creativity among Faculty in Higher Education”. For those of you who have completed the survey, thank you so much. I am very grateful for your contribution to this project.

If you have yet to complete this short survey, please remember that the survey will be closing around 5:00pm on Monday, April 1. Your participation in this survey is hugely influential in the completion of my thesis work.

The link to the survey is:

<http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/KHCXDXB>

In addition, I have included the original email below for your reference.

Thank you again for taking a few minutes to complete this survey! If you have any questions or concerns, feel free to email me at potterel@mail.gvsu.edu. Your comments will not effect your participation in the survey, as survey results will remain anonymous.

Gratefully,
Ellie M. Potter

Original Email

Hello everyone,

My name is Ellie Potter. I am currently a graduate student in the College of Education at GVSU, attempting to complete my thesis regarding faculty members’ perceptions of both

their incorporation of creativity and their thoughts on teaching students to be creative. I have created a survey for the purpose of contributing to my thesis work, which will be titled “Perceptions of Creativity among Faculty in Higher Education”. The survey is both voluntary and anonymous.

Could each of you please take four to six minutes and complete this survey? I am curious to learn more about your thoughts, and would be very grateful for your contributions. This survey will only be open for one week due to the time constraints of the semester, so if you could take the time to complete it as soon as possible, that would be appreciated.

The link to the survey is:

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If you would like to obtain more information about this study, please feel free to contact me at potterel@mail.gvsu.edu. In addition, if you have questions about your rights as a study participant, please contact the Human Research Review Committee (HRRC) at hrrc@gvsu.edu or 616-331-3197.

Sincerely,
Ellie M. Potter

Appendix G

Responses for Likert Scale Statements

Statement: Everyone is capable of being creative.

Responses:

Strongly Disagree – 5 (1.4%)
Disagree – 32 (8.94%)
Agree – 172 (48.04%)
Strongly Agree – 149 (41.62%)

Statement: An individual can grow in their creative capabilities.

Responses:

Strongly Disagree – 2 (0.56%)
Disagree – 3 (0.84%)
Agree – 157 (43.85%)
Strongly Agree – 196 (54.75%)

Statement: Creativity is a crucial component of living successfully.

Responses:

Strongly Disagree – 2 (0.56%)
Disagree – 44 (12.29%)
Agree – 181 (50.56%)
Strongly Agree – 131 (36.59%)

Statement: Creativity can be a part of any department within an educational environment.

Responses:

Strongly Disagree – 1 (0.28%)
Disagree – 4 (1.12%)
Agree – 134 (37.43%)
Strongly Agree – 219 (61.17%)

Statement: The incorporation of creativity is best suited for primary and secondary education.

Responses:

Strongly Disagree – 96 (26.82%)
Disagree – 189 (52.79%)
Agree – 55 (15.36%)
Strongly Agree – 18 (5.03%)

Statement: I teach my students to be creative.

Responses:

Strongly Disagree – 0 (0%)
Disagree – 47 (13.13%)
Agree – 232 (64.8%)
Strongly Agree – 79 (22.07%)

Statement: I am creative in my presentation of course content.

Responses:

Strongly Disagree – 0 (0%)
Disagree – 20 (5.59%)
Agree – 253 (70.67%)
Strongly Agree – 85 (23.74%)

Statement: The majority of faculty teach their students to be creative.

Responses:

Strongly Disagree – 13 (3.63%)
Disagree – 206 (57.54%)
Agree – 129 (36.03%)
Strongly Agree – 10 (2.79%)

Statement: The majority of faculty are creative in their presentation of course content.

Responses:

Strongly Disagree – 18 (5.03%)
Disagree – 170 (47.49%)
Agree – 163 (45.53%)
Strongly Agree – 7 (1.96%)

Statement: Faculty should teach their students to be creative.

Responses:

Strongly Disagree – 0 (0%)
Disagree – 28 (7.82%)
Agree – 213 (59.5%)
Strongly Agree – 117 (32.68%)

Statement: Faculty should be creative in their presentation of course content.

Responses:

Strongly Disagree – 0 (0%)
Disagree – 16 (4.47%)
Agree – 214 (59.78%)
Strongly Agree – 128 (35.75%)

Appendix H

Barriers to Creativity

Question: What are three barriers to the incorporation of creativity in higher education?

There were 954 total responses to this question, resulting in 83 different barriers listed. Those barriers, along with their percentage compared to the total amount of responses, are identified below.

<u>Barrier</u>	<u>Number of Responses</u>	<u>Percentage of Total Resp.</u>
Time	171	17.92%
Content Requirements	111	11.64%
Difficulty of Assessment	89	9.32%
Apathy	60	6.29%
Inertia	50	5.24%
Class Size	34	3.56%
Lack of Training	30	3.14%
Unsure How to Teach Creativity	30	3.14%
Difficulty in Defining Creativity and Its Misconceptions	26	2.72%
Lack of Faculty Creativity	26	2.72%
No Recognition or Value of Creativity from University	20	2.1%
Other Responsibilities	20	2.1%
Fear and Risk Aversion	18	1.89%
Money	17	1.78%
Student Expectations and Evaluations	16	1.68%
Unwillingness to Change	16	1.68%
Student Perceptions	14	1.47%
Lack of Incentives or Rewards for Creativity	13	1.36%
Environment and Physical Space	12	1.26%
Resources	12	1.26%
Bureaucracy	11	1.15%
Pressure to Conform	10	1.05%
Accreditation Standards	9	0.94%
Requirements of Professionalism	9	0.94%
Too Much Technology	9	0.94%
Perception of Creativity as Unnecessary	8	0.84%
Lack of Confidence	7	0.73%
Assumption that Creativity is Not Rigorous	6	0.63%
Lack of Research and Scientific Evidence	6	0.63%

Student Ability	6	0.63%
Class Structure	5	0.52%
Lack of Students' Exposure to Creative Thinking in K-12	5	0.52%
Tenure Clock	4	0.42%
Conservatism	3	0.31%
Excessive Accountability	3	0.31%
Lack of Collaboration	3	0.31%
Lack of Incorporation of the Arts Across Disciplines	3	0.31%
Limited Access to Technology	3	0.31%
Self-Imposed Restrictions and Limitations	3	0.31%
Vocational Education Demands	3	0.31%
Difficulty in Getting Students to Think Differently	2	0.21%
Disciplines Appear to Have No Room for Creativity	2	0.21%
Lack of Creativity	2	0.21%
Lack of Depth of Knowledge	2	0.21%
Lack of Experience	2	0.21%
Lack of Individualization	2	0.21%
Not Allowing Students to Make Mistakes	2	0.21%
Personal Opinions	2	0.21%
Personnel Processes	2	0.21%
Students' Use of Electronics	2	0.21%
Adaptability	1	0.1%
Age	1	0.1%
Attitude of Information as Static Data	1	0.1%
Being Too Creative Can Obscure the Concept	1	0.1%
Best Practices	1	0.1%
Creativity is Subjective in Nature	1	0.1%
Difficulty in Asking Students to be Creative	1	0.1%
Difficulty in Defining Success in Creativity	1	0.1%
Don't Know How to Change	1	0.1%
Emphasis on STEM	1	0.1%
Faculty Burnout	1	0.1%
Faculty Don't Understand Today's Students	1	0.1%
Focus on Results Over Practice	1	0.1%
The "Ford Model" of Education	1	0.1%
The Human Subjects Review Committee	1	0.1%
Inability to Change Constructs of Thinking	1	0.1%
Lack of Academic Freedom	1	0.1%
Lack of Critical Thinking	1	0.1%
Lack of Theoretical Design Framework	1	0.1%
Lack of Student Attendance	1	0.1%
Less Creative Methods	1	0.1%
Logistics	1	0.1%
Low-Risk Opportunities to Practice	1	0.1%
No Identification of Creativity in Students	1	0.1%
Not Everyone is Creative	1	0.1%

Parents	1	0.1%
PhD Programs	1	0.1%
Prejudices	1	0.1%
Program Constraints	1	0.1%
Students Do Not Have Equal Foundational Knowledge	1	0.1%
Student Individuality	1	0.1%
Students Thinking in Dualistic Terms	1	0.1%
Teacher-Centered Model of Teaching	1	0.1%

Appendix I

Factors to Promote Creativity

Question: What are three factors that could promote the incorporation of creativity in higher education?

There were 895 total responses to this question, resulting in 83 different factors listed. Those factors, along with their percentage compared to the total amount of responses, are identified below.

<u>Barrier</u>	<u>Number of Responses</u>	<u>Percentage of Total Resp.</u>
Training and Learning How to Teach Creativity	127	14.19%
Rewards and Incentives for Creativity	59	6.59%
Collaboration	56	6.26%
Make Creativity an Educational Goal and Value	53	5.92%
More Time	49	5.47%
Flexible Assessments and Outcomes	39	4.36%
Smaller Class Size	39	4.36%
Institutional Support	38	4.25%
Gaining a Better Perspective of Creativity by Defining It	36	4.02%
Flexible Course Content	25	2.79%
Willingness and Desire	24	2.68%
Decreased Workload	22	2.46%
Innovative Teaching	22	2.46%
More Money	21	2.35%
Research/Evidence to Support the Benefits of Creativity	21	2.35%
Incorporating the Arts and Creativity Across Disciplines	20	2.23%
Academic Freedom	16	1.79%
Encourage Risk-Taking, Even If Possible Failure	14	1.56%
Increased Technology Access and Understanding	14	1.56%
Better Student Preparation in K-12	12	1.34%
Open-Ended Questions and Assignments	12	1.34%
Role Modeling, Possibly Through FTLC Programs	12	1.34%
Open-mindedness	11	1.23%
Classroom Space	10	1.12%
Resources	10	1.12%
Future Vocational Demands on Students	9	1.01%
Revised Evaluation Process	9	1.01%
Classes Specifically to Teach Creativity	7	0.78%

Student-Driven Courses	7	0.78%
Being Imaginative	5	0.56
Problem-Solving Approach	5	0.56
Creative Faculty	4	0.45%
Decreased Bureaucracy	4	0.45%
Identification of Creative Students	4	0.45%
Ability	3	0.34%
Changes in Accreditation Criteria	3	0.34%
Discourage PowerPoint Presentations	3	0.34%
Higher Standards for Admission	3	0.34%
Making Education Conceptual	3	0.34%
Minimize Use of Student Evaluations	3	0.34%
Non-Standard Class Times	3	0.34%
One on One Time with Students	3	0.34%
The Promotion of Critical Thinking	3	0.34%
Reduced Access to Technology	3	0.34%
Diversity	2	0.22%
Effort	2	0.22%
Experience	2	0.22%
More Reading	2	0.22%
State and Government Support	2	0.22%
Practice	2	0.22%
Recognize Individuality	2	0.22%
Personal Responsibility	2	0.22%
Creativity Recognized and Valued in Publications	2	0.22%
Well-Grounded in Discipline	2	0.22%
Achieved Tenure	1	0.11%
Better Understanding Educator's Role	1	0.11%
Broad Definitions of Success	1	0.11%
Consequences for Poor Class Attendance	1	0.11%
Count Teaching Time as Research	1	0.11%
Courage	1	0.11%
Curiosity	1	0.11%
Emphasize Service	1	0.11%
Equal Opportunity for Participation	1	0.11%
Face-Time with Administrators	1	0.11%
Flexible Accreditation Standards	1	0.11%
Food for Faculty	1	0.11%
Good Textbooks	1	0.11%
Independent Classroom Work	1	0.11%
Job Security	1	0.11%
Limit Discussion of Market Value	1	0.11%
Listening to Students	1	0.11%
No General Education Courses	1	0.11%
Parents' Experience with Creativity	1	0.11%
Personality	1	0.11%

Pre-Tenure Sabbatical	1	0.11%
Rotating Classes that One Teaches	1	0.11%
Start Small	1	0.11%
Student Engagement with Content Outside of Class	1	0.11%
Student Internships Outside of Courses for Creativity	1	0.11%
Tougher Testing in First Years	1	0.11%
Use Books from Library	1	0.11%
Using Examples to Move Abstract to Concrete	1	0.11%
Viewing Creativity as an Approach, Not Teachable	1	0.11%

**GRAND VALLEY STATE
UNIVERSITY
ED 695 Data Form**

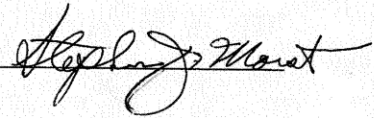
NAME: Ellie Melissa Potter

MAJOR: Adult and Higher Education

TITLE: Perceptions of Creativity among Faculty in Higher Education

PAPER TYPE: Thesis **SEM/YR COMPLETED:** Winter 2013

SUPERVISOR'S SIGNATURE OF APPROVAL:



ERIC DESCRIPTORS:

1. Adult Education
2. College Faculty
3. Creative Teaching
4. Creative Thinking
5. Creativity
6. Faculty
7. Higher Education
8. Higher Education Institutions