

International Branch Campuses: Motivation, Strategy, and Structure

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Program in Higher Education

INTERNATIONAL BRANCH CAMPUSES:
MOTIVATION, STRATEGY, AND STRUCTURE

Dissertation
by

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Motivation, Strategy, and Structure

by

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Abstract

Over 200 international branch campuses (IBCs) currently exist globally and the number continues to rise (Lawton & Katsomitros, 2012). This study examines the strategy, structure, and motivation behind a single American IBC—Texas A&M University at Qatar (TAMUQ). Drawing from organizational theory and international higher education literature, this research reveals important considerations for institutions developing or currently operating IBCs. Findings stemmed from 27 in-depth qualitative interviews with faculty and administrators from the branch campus in Qatar, the main campus in Texas, and the host country sponsor.

Multiple factors contributed to Texas A&M being poised and ready to accept the opportunity to open an international branch campus: an invitation from a host country sponsor willing to cover all expenses, existing international ambitions, and strong support from the central administration. The inception period leading up to the opening of the branch campus proved crucial for success. University administrators wisely developed buy-in among campus constituencies, negotiated important contract stipulations with the host country, ensured that the institution's existing structure could reasonably support such an endeavor, and assessed whether Qatar was a good fit. The early years of

TAMUQ resembled a startup organization. The pioneering team of faculty and staff brought an entrepreneurial spirit necessary to build the institution, but they operated largely independent from the home campus in Texas. A later push for greater ties with the main campus was difficult but important for progress.

Since TAMUQ is a derivative of the main campus, administrators had to consider the degree to which they would replicate and adapt various institutional elements.

Academically, the curriculum is only modified slightly, but course content and pedagogy are adapted more heavily in response to the unique needs of the student population.

Hiring faculty with experience teaching on the main campus is considered an important way to maintain quality, yet administrators consistently struggle to recruit faculty.

Unlike other IBCs, TAMUQ has developed a robust research program through the financial support of the host country sponsor.

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CHAPTER ONE. Introduction

Higher education institutions across the globe are increasingly engaged in efforts to internationalize (Altbach, Reisberg, & Rumbley, 2009b). Approaches vary from the traditional: introducing new study abroad destinations or increasing international student enrollment, to the more innovative: developing transnational dual- and joint-degree programs and massive online open courses (MOOCs) freely available to students across the world. Institutions engage in internationalization for a number of reasons: to enhance academic programs and research opportunities, to compete with peer institutions and climb in the rankings, and to generate revenue (Knight, 2012). On a national level, countries encourage internationalization to develop human capital, form strategic global alliances, and enhance trade. This study examines international branch campuses (IBCs), another recent manifestation of internationalization where a higher education institution establishes a derivative of itself abroad.

Although definitions vary, most scholars agree that IBCs share several characteristics: a campus with physical infrastructure such as a library or classrooms, the same institutional name and a close affiliation with the home campus, and the ability for students to complete a degree program at the foreign campus (Becker, 2009; C-BERT, 2013; Green & Koch, 2009; Lawton & Katsomitros, 2012). Between 2002 and 2009 approximately 140 IBCs opened across the world, primarily by American, Australian, and British institutions (Becker, 2009; Kinser, 2010). By early 2012, 200 such campuses were reported and the number continues to rise (Lawton & Katsomitros, 2012). Despite this significant growth, the IBC phenomenon has gone relatively unexplored in the

scholarly literature on internationalization, and a need exists for additional research. Using a case study approach, this dissertation provides insight into the inception and development of international branch campuses through the in-depth exploration of a particular IBC by analyzing its institutional motivations, strategies, and structures and the relationship among them.

Institutions cite a variety of motivations, rationales, or logics leading them to engage in the complex process of opening a foreign campus. Many of these motivations are consistent with broader internationalization goals, while others are unique. IBCs are a means to enhance international engagement by increasing overseas teaching and research opportunities for faculty, by providing a study abroad destination for home campus students, and by tapping into new foreign student populations (Becker, 2009; Wilkins, 2011). Other, perhaps more controversial and often implicit, motivations include heightened marketing potential, the quest for prestige, climbing the rankings ladder, and financial gain.

Host countries view branch campuses as a means to increase higher education capacity quickly, improve the overall quality of tertiary education, introduce new academic programs, train students to meet workforce needs, contribute to economic development, build a research and development sector, develop a concentration of international students, and gain regional or international prestige (Becker, 2009; Knight, 2011a; Wilkins, 2011). Clusters of IBCs have emerged in the Middle East and East Asia, primarily due to the high demand for tertiary education, favorable host country environments, and intentional efforts by host countries to recruit overseas partners through financial incentives (Becker, 2009; Knight, 2011b).

American institutional partners are especially sought after by foreign countries for branch campus projects due to the United States' reputation for high quality postsecondary educational experiences and globally valued degrees. For students, the underlying premise and allure of IBCs is the ability to pursue an American degree without leaving a home country or region (Lawton & Katsomitros, 2012). In fact, most institutions confer degrees identical to their home campuses, without a branch campus distinction (Hughes, 2011). Consequently, institutions are concerned with replicating the home campus experience and maintaining academic quality, which they accomplish through a variety of approaches, such as hiring home campus faculty and upholding admission and graduation standards similar to the home campus. Moreover, host countries, local partners, and students expect the branch campus to mimic the home campus rigor, experience, and ethos. Yet, in an apparent contradiction, institutions face external and internal pressure to adapt certain elements to align with the unique cultural context and expectations of the host country. These expectations and tensions, along with numerous other factors, inform an institution's decision whether to open a branch campus, the subsequent planning process, and the eventual structure of a new foreign outpost.

Research Problem and Purpose

With the recent surge of IBCs opening across the globe, and as an increasing number of institutions consider opening foreign campuses and host countries gauge the potential value-added for their society, a need exists for empirical research to understand, guide, and inform these complex and potentially risky projects (Chalmers, 2011; Croom, 2012). Numerous accounts of struggling IBCs exist (Staley, 2013). Such campuses often

fail to meet enrollment targets, cover their bottom line, and put a drain on home campus resources (Becker, 2009). A number of high profile IBCs have closed their doors after short periods in operation (e.g., University of New South Wales in Singapore and George Mason University in the United Arab Emirates). Many institutions rush the process of opening international branch campuses, develop them in an ad hoc manner without clear goals, and effectively ignore long-term sustainability (Altbach, 2010; Kinser, 2010; Wilkins & Huisman, 2012). Institutions are wise to consider myriad complexities and implications of opening overseas campuses. Once a decision is made to move forward, for IBCs to survive and prosper, institutional motivations, strategies, and structures must be thoroughly contemplated and aligned, which is a key assumption driving this research.

In an effort to make sense of the inception, design, and operation phases of international branch campuses, this dissertation explores three elements: 1) *motivations* that drive the establishment and continued operation of IBCs; 2) the *strategy* or plan that guides their development; and 3) organizational *structures* that comprise the IBC. The limited existing research emphasizes motivations, strategies, and structures as key characteristics necessary to understand IBCs, but offers limited empirical analysis and is largely lacking in depth. Furthermore, these three elements are predominately discussed in isolation, with little exploration as to how they are associated and influence each other. Understanding how motivations, strategy, and structure are aligned, interact, overlap, and influence each other is crucial to designing and operating a successful IBC. In an effort to understand these issues more thoroughly, this research offers an in-depth exploration of one institution's motivations, strategy, and structure and attempts to identify the relationship among these three elements. The study goes on to examine the implications

of the connections (or lack of connections) among the three elements and the subsequent impact on achieving institutional goals. The three elements and their relationship are likely to shift over time, thus the connections are examined during the inception, development, and maintenance of international branch campuses.

Key Terms

This study defines *strategy* as the “determination of the basic long-term goals and objectives of an [organization], and the adoption of courses of action and the allocation of resources necessary for carrying out these goals” (Chandler, 1969, p. 13). In other words, strategy is both aspirational and action oriented (Toma, 2012). Although traditionally conceptualized of as an intentional act of planning, strategy may also be evident through “consistent patterns of action,” which is referred to as emergent strategy (Mintzberg & Rose, 2003, p. 271). Both forms of strategy are considered in this study. The challenges and opportunities organizations face are complicated and dynamic, thus strategies can also be expected to be complex and change over time (Toma, 2012). Analyzing formal strategic planning documents and exploring high-level decisions (and the rationale behind them) taken during the implementation and development of international branch campuses will help identify and interpret strategies.

Next, within a university, organizational *structure* is typically thought of as the configuration of governance bodies, reporting lines, and academic and administrative departments, programs, offices, and divisions (Mintzberg & Rose, 2003). The structure of a university is notably complex, and the addition of an overseas branch campus further complicates structural arrangements. This complexity stems from the sometimes-ambiguous connections to and level of autonomy from the home campus. IBC structures

and the implications of their configuration can be identified and understood by conferring with relevant personnel and examining institutional documents such as reporting hierarchies and Website materials. This study will primarily consider the structure of an international branch campus; however, instances where the *home campus* structure affects or overlaps with IBC motivations, strategies, and structures will also be discussed.

The term *motivation* is used to describe the rationale, driver, or logic pushing or pulling institutions and host countries to consider and participate in IBC projects. The analysis of existing reports on IBCs and conversations with administrators and faculty will reveal the explicit and implicit motivations behind them. Lastly, *environmental factors* are defined as matters external to an institution that affect IBC motivations, strategies, and structures. Host country accreditation requirements for foreign institutions and limits on academic freedom are examples of environmental factors that may impact institutional motivations, strategies, or structures. Administrators involved in strategic-level decision-making will have insight into the expected and unexpected environmental factors that impact the development and ongoing operation of an IBC.

Research Questions

What are the institutional motivations, strategies, and structures of international branch campuses, and how are they related?

Sub-questions:

- To what extent do planned strategies influence IBC structures? To what extent do existing institutional structures influence IBC strategies?

- How have the motivations of various stakeholder groups (i.e., senior-level administration, faculty, host country) affected institutional strategy and structures of IBCs?
- What are the consequences of different relationships between motivations, strategies, and structures?
- What environmental factors influence motivations, strategies and structures?
- What role do institutional replication and cultural adaptation play in developing IBC strategy and structure?
- How do the interactions between motivations, strategy, and structure differ depending on the phase an IBC is in (i.e., inception, development, or maintenance)?
- In what areas and to what extent are various institutional actors (e.g., administrators, faculty, students) involved in making decisions related to IBC strategy and structure?
 - Are institutional actors in agreement over or aware of motivations, strategy, and structure (and how they are related)? If so, how are the connections affected?
- To what extent do IBC strategies stem from or align with home campus academic missions and goals?

Research Significance

This dissertation covers key topics that have the potential to help institutions and host countries determine whether to engage in branch campus projects, how to design them to meet institutional goals, and how to operate them successfully. As its

foundation, this study offers an in-depth exploration and multifaceted understanding of the motivations, strategies, and structures of a particular branch campus. Few, if any, studies exist that attempt to investigate these fundamental elements beyond offering broad generalizations with little effort to go deep and analyze underlying complexities. For instance, much of the scholarly literature and education journalism discussing the institutional motivations behind IBCs includes “revenue generation” as a factor. While this may be the case, there is a noticeable lack of explanation as to how that conclusion was reached, what financial gain really means, how it ranks among other motivations, and the resulting implications on an institution. This paints an incomplete and perhaps unsubstantiated picture of a branch campus and is unhelpful to institutions attempting to interpret the complex questions around financing a transnational project.

Institutions will also be interested in the process the case study institution follows to translate motivations into strategic plans and branch campus structures. For instance, if an institution hopes to introduce a new revenue source, what are the steps they should follow to develop an IBC strategy and corresponding structure to help accomplish this goal? Moreover, which faculty, administrators, and departments should be involved in determining motivations, strategy, and structure? Additionally, given that most IBC strategies center on replicating an academic program offered on the home campus, how do institutions design structures that accomplish this aim while balancing the pressure to adapt to local culture and norms? These and a number of other core issues are highlighted through this research.

Institutions will also benefit from understanding the counter relationship among structures, strategies, and motivations. In other words, how do existing structures affect

strategy and motivations, and how do strategies influence motivations? For example, an institution already involved in international initiatives with preexisting strategies and structures may be better equipped to engage in an international branch campus project. How can these institutions capitalize on their existing propensity for international engagement when developing an IBC? Ultimately, this research hopes to understand the relationship among motivations, strategy, and structure in order to draw conclusions about how they should be aligned to help institutions reach their goals.

A number of external environmental factors further influence the motivations, strategies and structures of an IBC, which institutions will benefit from identifying and interpreting. For instance, academic regulatory and accreditation requirements, limits on academic freedom, cultural expectations, and host country financial restrictions can influence strategies and structures. Are an institution's goals reasonable considering the limitations imposed by these external forces?

The stakes are not only high for institutions. Host countries and other partners involved in establishing and operating branch campuses take on risks as well (Becker, 2009). The design, implementation, and execution of IBCs requires significant time, money, political capital, and other resources from all involved partners (Kinser, 2010). The findings of this study are relevant to each stakeholder group. Nevertheless, this study analyzes the motivations, strategy, and structure primarily from an institutional perspective, thus the findings are geared to institutional administrators and faculty involved in branch campus projects.

Theoretical Framework

Organizational theory emphasizes the importance of institutional strategy and organizational structure and thus provides a useful theoretical orientation for this study. Alfred Chandler's (1962) seminal work, *Strategy and Structure: Chapters in the History of the American Industrial Enterprise*, investigates the relationship between strategy and organizational structure at several large American corporations (e.g., General Motors, Standard Oil Company, and Sears, Roebuck and Company). In essence, Chandler determined that new organizational strategies require evolving structures. In other words, structure follows strategy. More recently, Henry Mintzberg (1990) argued that the relationship between strategy and structure is more complex and dynamic. Although strategy can drive structure, existing structures are often difficult to change and may, in contrast, influence strategy. Moreover, organizations often capitalize on existing structural strengths when developing strategy. Mintzberg (1990) compares the strategy/structure relationship to walking, "Structure follows strategy as the left foot follows the right...In effect, strategy and structure both support the organization. None takes precedence; each always precedes the other, and follows it" (p. 183). Moreover, "the match between strategy and structure influences [organizational] performance" (Miller, 1986). Thus, put simply, in order for an organization to be successful a complementary relationship between strategy and structure is necessary. This study applies this concept to international branch campuses to begin to understand the necessary ties between strategy and structure for their successful design and operation.

Chandler (1969) also notes that strategies are driven by organizational opportunities and needs, which this study refers to as motivations. As stated, numerous

and diverse motivations push and pull institutions, host countries, and other partners to engage in international branch campuses projects (Becker, 2009; Edelstein & Douglass, 2012). This study identifies and examines these motivations and their relationship to strategy and structure. Motivations are identified through interviews with key personnel and inferred based on other factors such as institutional resource allocation.

Finally, organizations must also consider the impact of the environment in which they operate (Mintzberg, 1987). External factors, often related to context, influence motivations and the development of both strategy and structure. For example, a host country might insist that a branch campus academic curriculum align with the specific workforce needs of the local economy. This external expectation would likely affect an IBC strategy and structure.

Organizational theory generally stems from studies of for-profit corporations, thus the direct applicability of Chandler, Mintzberg, Miller, and other theorists' findings are uncertain (Mintzberg & Rose, 2003; Toma, 2012). For instance, studies that suggest how to align strategy and structure assume an organization's primary motive is maximizing profit for its shareholders. Although revenue might play a role, most branch campuses are not run as for-profit endeavors and thus the findings of these studies are unlikely to be useful. Nevertheless, as stated, the overarching concept of exploring motivations, strategy, and structure and their relationship is relevant to all organizations, including higher education institutions, and has the potential to help form a deeper understanding of how IBCs can be conceptualized and carried out successfully. For international branch campuses, linkages—whether articulated clearly or not—ideally exist between these

motivations, strategies, and structures of branch campuses, which this study aims to identify and interpret.

To understand an organization's strategy, one must examine both how decisions were made and the resulting plan of action. This study utilizes two conceptual frameworks to help analyze these two aspects of strategy for international branch campuses. First, John Davies' (1995) identifies six key elements institutions should consider when developing an internationalization strategy. His framework provides a list of possible factors that may have played into an institution's decision-making process around the establishment of an IBC. The first three factors are internal to an institution. Universities should consider how their missions align with their specific desire to internationalize. Second, institutions must examine their strengths and weaknesses in current programs, personnel, and finances to determine how they will support internationalization efforts. The third internal element points to the importance of organizational leadership structure and identifying which individuals or departments should be responsible for international programs.

The other three elements considered within this framework are external strategic factors: external perceptions of image and identity (i.e., credibility with stakeholders), evaluation of trends and opportunities in the international market place, and assessment of competitive situation. As Davies (1995) states,

This analysis may be used as a checklist by universities, since it is likely that failure to do the necessary in respect of each item could lead to under-performance in the international arena, and a great deal of frustration and tension internally. (p. 5)

Although this framework was developed for broader internationalization strategies, the six elements are largely relevant to international branch campuses and will help explore the factors that influence an institution during the inception and strategy development of an IBC.

On a broad level, the American Council on Education's cross-border framework for U.S. providers and programs abroad will inform the identification and analysis of the strategy or the plan of action for a branch campus (Eckel, Green, & Berniaz, 2007). The original intention of this framework "is to identify the range of strategies and distinguishing characteristics that differentiate the means through which U.S. institutions (as well as from other countries) provide their education abroad" (Eckel et al., 2007, p. 147). Factors relevant to discerning branch campus strategies include: "location, extensiveness of activity, partners, legal status, accreditation status, program level, degrees awarded, field of study, curriculum content, faculty/academic staff, students, and facilities" (See Appendix A for a description of each factor) (Eckel et al., 2007, p. 147-48).

Chapter Outline

The subsequent chapter describes and analyzes the rather limited body of scholarly literature on international branch campuses and offers a brief description of the broader concept of internationalization and the various manifestations of transnational higher education. This is followed by an explanation of the methodology behind this study and the rationale for selecting a single case study. The succeeding four chapters are arranged according to the chronology of the branch campus examined in this case study and divided by themes discovered during each time period. Chapter four offers a brief

overview of the case study institution and an in-depth explanation of the inception process. The next chapter discusses what motivated the sending university to open a branch campus and the sponsoring country's rationale for importing foreign higher education. Chapter six discusses a number of themes present during the early and middle years of the branch campus' evolution such as faculty recruitment and strategic planning. The final chapter in this section considers the institution's push for faculty research, graduate programs, and involvement in the local community.

The final two content chapters cover themes that were present across the entire timeline of the branch campus: many masters and adaptation versus replication. The discussion of many masters examines the impact of external organizations and individuals with control over the branch campus (e.g., the sponsoring organization and the main campus) and how university officials respond and manage such relationships. Chapter nine looks at the branch campus' academic elements, the co-curricular experience, and the undergraduate admissions process to assess the degree to which each is replicated from the main campus or adapted to the local context.

Findings from the study, the analysis and interpretation, and implications are presented within each of these chapters. The final chapter concludes with a summary of the most significant themes and discussion points, and proposes broad implications for institutions considering international branch campuses as a part of their internationalization strategies.

Conclusion

The reader will find that this study's thorough explanations, analyses, and interpretations of a particular university's efforts to establish and operate a branch

campus reveals valuable insights into setting realistic expectations, designing appropriate goals and objectives, and implementing an effective operating plan. By exploring the motivations, strategies, and structures of an IBC, administrators, policy makers, and other actors considering or creating a physical branch campus overseas will begin to understand the process and elements necessary for successful implementation and continued operation.

CHAPTER TWO. A Review of the Literature

This chapter offers a brief overview and analysis of scholarly literature concentrated on international branch campuses (IBCs), which is primarily found in higher education peer-reviewed journals, topical monographs, and research reports. The IBC is a niche topic studied consistently by fewer than ten researchers. Branch campuses can be classified as a subcategory of a broader trend referred to as cross-border higher education. Also referred to as transnational higher education, these terms encompass the movement of academic programs and institutions across national boundaries (Knight, 2011a). At an even higher level, cross-border higher education falls under the broader phenomenon of internationalization.

Aligned with the purpose of this study, this chapter gives particular attention to literature surrounding branch campus motivations, strategies, and structures, though few exist for the latter two. The pool of scholarly literature around branch campuses has grown and matured alongside the branch campus phenomenon; however, articles tend to focus on reporting trends and descriptive statistics (McBurnie & Ziguras, 2007). Furthermore, much of the literature offers broad generalizations and unsubstantiated conclusions. A limited number of noteworthy exceptions exist that use empirical evidence to reach informed conclusions.

Mainstream and higher education media such as the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, *Inside Higher Ed*, *New York Times*, and *Times Higher Education* have published articles specifically covering IBCs (Carey, 2010; Hacker & Dreifus, 2010; Morgan, 2010); however, they typically offer little analysis beyond reporting the latest

IBC news (e.g., NYU opens a branch campus in Abu Dhabi) and editorial commentary—neither of which are empirical or theoretical. Nevertheless, these journalistic pieces occasionally offer unique information and insights not available in the scholarly literature; therefore, select articles from periodicals are included in this review.

Prior to exploring the IBC literature, this review first surveys the broader environment within tertiary education where branch campuses reside, referred to as cross-border or transnational higher education. Understanding the broader context of branch campuses helps identify overarching motivations driving involvement in cross-border higher education and situates the branch campus as one strategy among many. This is followed by a description of the characteristics of an international branch campus and the most common definitions. The proceeding section covers a brief history of IBCs and an explanation of recent trends. A bulk of the review focuses on exploring what the literature has to say (and not say) about branch campus motivations and strategy, structures, and external environmental factors that influence each.

Internationalization and Cross-Border Higher Education

The terms globalization and internationalization are frequently used to describe the changing nature of higher education. Globalization can broadly be defined as “a process through which the world is becoming more interconnected and interdependent because of increasing flows of knowledge, people, culture, ideas, and trade” (Hendrickson, Lane, Harris, & Dorman, 2013, p. 62). Although definitions vary, in the realm of higher education, internationalization is widely viewed as “specific policies and programs undertaken by governments, academic systems and institutions, and even individual departments to deal with globalization (Altbach, 2006, p. 123). Put simply,

internationalization is a planned response to globalization. (Altbach, Reisberg, & Rumbley, 2009a) distinguish between the two concepts based on the locus of control, “Globalization and its effects are beyond the control of any one actor or set of actors,” while “internationalization...can be seen as a strategy for societies and institutions to respond to the many demands placed upon them by globalization and as a way for higher education to prepare individuals for engagement in a globalized world” (p. 23-24).

From an organizational theory perspective, the increase in internationalization efforts can be explained further by the changing nature of higher education environments. First, in a tough economic climate, institutions face intense competition for resources. New international programs and partnerships provide opportunities to increase resources (e.g., new donors, additional research opportunities, new degree programs). In addition to competition for resources, in an increasingly overcrowded market, higher education institutions seek to increase institutional legitimacy in an effort to stand out and compete with peer institutions. For instance, introducing international elements may indicate an effort to enhance legitimacy by mimicking aspirational institutions (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983).

Although internationalization is not a new phenomenon in higher education, the variety of approaches and frequency of engagement has increased dramatically in recent years in response to the reasons discussed above. Internationalization occurs in a variety of forms: student and scholar mobility, partnerships with overseas institutions, the inclusion of global dimensions in the academic curriculum, and numerous other initiatives (Knight, 2004).

The mobility of students and scholars across national boundaries is a well documented phenomenon in higher education and has a healthy body of literature examining its various manifestations (McBurnie & Ziguras, 2007). Alternatively, the movement of academic programs and institutions across national borders, referred to as cross-border or transnational higher education, is a relatively new occurrence, increasing in frequency over the past two decades.

There is some discrepancy in the literature over the terms cross-border and transnational higher education (Knight, 2004; OECD & The World Bank, 2007). Some authors and agencies define cross-border and transnational higher education more broadly to include student and scholar mobility, but more recently the terms have been used specifically to refer to programs crossing national boundaries rather than individual actors (Knight, 2011a; OECD & The World Bank, 2007). For purposes of this literature review the terms “cross-border” and “transnational” higher education are used synonymously to describe offshore educational programs or arrangements that span national boundaries. The body of literature surrounding the many varieties of cross-border higher education is far more limited and primarily consists of descriptive reports with little analysis based on empirical evidence (McBurnie & Ziguras, 2007).

Cross-border higher education has grown in popularity for a variety of reasons, but the phenomenon is primarily driven by two distinct factors. First, some institutions view transnational education as a market-driven endeavor to establish educational services in areas with demand, often in pursuit of a new stream of revenue (McBurnie & Ziguras, 2007). From another perspective, cross-border education is a means to develop another country or region by increasing tertiary education capacity, improving quality,

and introducing new opportunities for research that, ideally, contribute to an improved economy.

The increasing commercialization of higher education, more generally, is unnerving to many in the field, thus the sometimes-commercial nature of cross-border higher education can be controversial. McBurnie and Ziguras (2007) attribute this tension to the new and innovative nature of the phenomenon:

What fascinates us about transnational education is both its (sometimes grubby) commercial reality, and the emotional richness of the rhetoric that has surrounded its rapid development over the past two decades. The reason for the considerable amount of heat, or at least adrenaline, in much of the commentary is that transnational education is at the leading edge of the most fundamental changes taking place in higher education today. (p. 1)

Although countless variations of transnational education exist, several over-arching categories help illuminate the landscape. The most common forms are joint- and dual-degrees, franchising, twinning, distance education, branch campuses, and research partnerships. Franchise arrangements occur when an institution in one country gives permission for an institution in another country to deliver its curriculum, and the credential is awarded by the exporting institution (Hendrickson et al., 2013). Twinning or articulation programs allow students to complete part of a degree program in one country and part in another. These types of arrangements are often referred to by the number of years students study at each institution (e.g., 1+3, 2+2), and the degrees are typically conferred by the institution where the final year of study takes place (Hendrickson et al., 2013). Other instances of cross-border programs result in dual- or

joint-degrees. Joint-degree programs offer a single degree jointly conferred by both participating institutions, while dual-degree programs provide graduates with two degrees, one from each participating institution. International branch campuses are likely the smallest of these cross-border modalities and, as the focus of this review, are explored in-depth in subsequent sections. Transnational research partnerships can be defined as formal research linkages between institutions in two or more countries. Though increasingly common, few resources exist that examine the variety of form and function.

Literature covering cross-border higher education primarily falls into two categories. The first category consists of books and articles exploring the broader landscape, characteristics, themes, and implications of transnational education (Fegan & Field, 2009; Lane, Kinser, & Knox, 2012; Lane & Kinser, 2011; McBurnie & Ziguras, 2007). The other body of literature explores similar concepts but offers a more detailed perspective through the study of specific case studies (Green, Kinser, & Eckel, 2008; Sakamoto & Chapman, 2011).

As stated, a fairly substantial body of literature exists on internationalization and to a lesser extent on cross-border higher education programs. An exhaustive review of such materials is unnecessary considering the primary purpose of this dissertation—the exploration of international branch campus motivations, strategies, and structures. That said, as a subcategory of cross-border higher education, branch campuses are sometimes included in literature covering transnational education more broadly, thus when such materials provide relevant insight they are included in this review.

International Branch Campus (IBC) Definition

While there is no consensus on the definition of an international branch campus, the Observatory on Borderless Higher Education (OBHE), a UK-based organization that studies and reports on cross-border educational activity, the Cross-Border Education Research Team at SUNY Albany, and the American Council on Education (ACE) have published reports on IBCs that offer similar definitions with subtle distinctions (Becker, 2009; C-BERT, 2013; Green & Koch, 2009). The first OBHE report on international branch campuses was released in 2002, followed by updates in 2006, 2009, and 2012 (Becker, 2009; Garrett, 2002; Lawton & Katsomitros, 2012; Verbik & Merkley, 2006). The most recent OBHE report on IBCs offers the following definition of an IBC:

A higher education institution that is located in another country from the institution which either originated it or operates it, with some physical presence in the host country, and which awards at least one degree in the host country that is accredited in the country of the originating institution. (Lawton & Katsomitros, 2012, p. 3)

Lawton & Katsomitros (2012) broadened their definition from Becker's (2009) previously published OBHE report by including institutions that allow students to complete only part of their degree at the branch campus and the remainder at the home campus. Additionally, the tweaked definition includes institutions with degrees accredited in the host country, as long as the degree is also accredited in the home country.

Drawing definitional boundaries is difficult due to the expanding variety of foreign outpost arrangements (Lane & Kinser, 2012; Lawton & Katsomitros, 2012). In

fact, currently, the confines of IBC definitions exclude a majority of existing foreign outposts. This is evident in the 2012 OBHE report that includes a lengthy list of institutions excluded from the IBC list that did not fully fall within the definitional boundaries and another section devoted to explaining instances where the authors had to make judgment calls on whether or not to include them (Lawton & Katsomitros, 2012). For instance, Yale-NUS College in Singapore was included in the inventory “because of Yale’s involvement, the dedicated physical campus, and the Yale brand,” despite the fact that NUS is conferring the degrees, not the home campus (Lawton & Katsomitros, 2012, p. 10). Interestingly, this stance seems to imply that exceptions should be made for prestigious institutions.

The definition proposed by the 2009 American Council for Education (ACE) report, *U.S. Branch Campuses Abroad*, includes the following requirements: a physical building in the host country, courses from more than one discipline, the ability to finish a majority of course requirements at the branch, in-person instruction, and a full-time administrative staff (Green & Koch, 2009). Kinser and Lane (2012) offer a final variation of an IBC:

An entity that is owned, at least in part, by a foreign education provider; operated in the name of the foreign education provider; engaged in at least some face-to-face teaching; and provides access to an entire academic program that leads to a credential awarded by the foreign provider. (p. 2)

Similar to Lawton and Katsomitros (2012), this definition focuses on “specifying the links between home and branch governance and academic oversight” (Lane & Kinser, 2012, p. 2). This definition differs, however, from the Lawton and Katsomitros (2012)

definition by requiring that a student be able to complete his or her entire degree at the branch campus and that the branch campus name be shared with the home campus. Interestingly, both inventories were published in 2012, and despite these seemingly important definitional differences, both inventories report approximately 200 branch campuses. This may point to the complexity of obtaining accurate and complete information on branch campuses. Although the exact definitions vary, the suggested characteristics required to be classified as an IBC all seem to imply that the foreign outpost should be both substantial (e.g., physical buildings, courses from a range of disciplines, and ability to complete an entire degree) and have a significant connection to a home campus.

Foreign Outposts

Overseas institutions take on an increasing variety of forms. Many fall outside the definitional parameters of an international branch campus, thus an increasing number and variety of foreign outposts are ignored in the literature (Kinser & Lane, 2012). For instance, India's Manipal University operates several institutions overseas; however, all but the Dubai campus fall outside the conventional definition of a branch campus. One example, Manipal Melaka Medical University, has all the standard characteristics of an IBC but requires that student complete a portion of the curriculum in India, thus it does not qualify as a branch campus. These alternative forms of foreign outposts go unnoticed due to insufficient typologies and, as a result, receive little attention from researchers. Figure 2 offers a visual representation of the landscape in which IBCs are located.

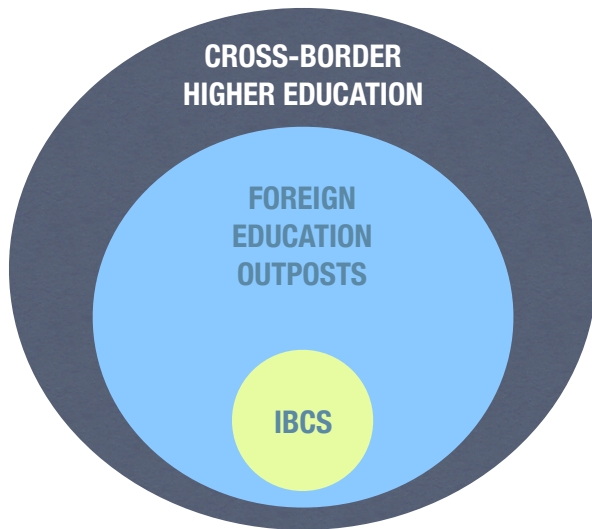


Figure 1 – The Broader Landscape of IBCs

The Evolution of International Branch Campuses

Although the branch campus phenomenon has increased rapidly in recent years, the concept dates back almost a century. The first reported IBC was the U.S.-based Parsons New School for Design that opened a campus in Paris in 1921 (Guttenplan, 2012). Florida State University opened a campus in 1933 for U.S. citizens in the U.S. Canal Zone of Panama (Green, Kinser, & Eckel, 2008; Lane, 2011a). Johns Hopkins University also opened a campus in the 1950s in Italy offering a graduate program in international relations (Lane, 2011a).

The first recorded surge of branch campuses occurred during the 1980s when more than 30 American institutions attempted to open campuses in Japan (Lane, 2011a). The Japanese government encouraged American universities to establish campuses as a means to enhance bipartisan relations; however, for a variety of reasons, including a significant economic downturn in Japan, all but one of these IBCs failed within a very

short period. Temple University's Japan campus is the sole survivor from the 80's surge (C-BERT, 2013; Lane, 2011a). Prior to the turn of the century, approximately 50 international branch campuses had been established around the world, not including the failed campuses in Japan (Lane, 2011a). An up-to-date listing of international branch campuses is available online through the Cross-Border Education Research Team (C-BERT) located at the University at Albany. Given C-BERT's fairly strict definition of an international branch campus, some institution's that were included in OBHE's 2012 report are not included in C-BERT's inventory.

Recent Trends

In 2002, 18 international branch campuses existed around the world (Garrett, 2002). Considering that 50 campuses opened between 1933 and the late 1990s and only 18 were counted in 2002, there were a number of closures. The number of IBCs skyrocketed to 82 in 2006, to 162 in 2009, and to 200 by 2012 (Becker, 2009; Lawton & Katsomitros, 2012; Verbik & Merkley, 2006). A direct comparison of these figures is problematic due to minor modifications in the IBC criteria in each revision of the report published by the Observatory on Borderless Higher Education (OBHE); however, they are helpful in understanding overarching trends, namely the significant growth that occurred during the first decade of the new millennium. The addition of only 38 new IBCs from 2009 to 2012 indicates a possible slowdown in the current growth rate.

There are several noteworthy trends across the pool of over 200 currently operating IBCs. Academic programs are offered primarily in "high skill areas such as engineering and sciences, in addition to areas such as business and social sciences," which typically align with the host country labor market needs and consumer demand

(Lane, 2011b, p. 373). This relates to a broader trend of IBCs being primarily centered around teaching and not research (Kinser, 2010). Though, there is some recent evidence that IBCs are increasing research and development in areas where the host country lacks capacity (Swan, 2013).

Another trend has occurred where host countries develop clusters of branch campuses, often putting them in close physical proximity to one another. Jane Knight (2011a) refers to these clusters as “educational hubs” or “a planned effort to build a critical mass of local and international actors strategically engaged in education, training, knowledge production, and innovation initiatives” (p. 233). Nine countries are in the process of building higher education hubs of varying forms: Bahrain, Hong Kong, Malaysia, Mauritius, Qatar, Singapore, South Korea, Sri Lanka and United Arab Emirates (Forestier & Sharma, 2013; IANS, 2014; Knight, 2011a; Lawton & Katsomitros, 2012). Host country motivations for establishing education hubs are discussed in the next section. Regionally, a concentration of IBCs has developed in the Arabian Gulf and in East Asia. The United Arab Emirates hosts the most IBCs, currently with 37 institutions, followed by Singapore with 18 and China with 17 (Lawton & Katsomitros, 2012). The most prevalent sending or home countries with branch campuses are the United States with 78, France with 27, and the United Kingdom with 25 (Lawton & Katsomitros, 2012). India is not far behind with 17 IBCs, indicating an emerging global South-South trend, opposed to the traditional flow from developed countries to developing countries (Lawton & Katsomitros, 2012).

Motivations and Strategies

Literature on international branch campuses frequently discusses the motivating factors and drivers pushing and pulling institutions and host countries to engage in IBC projects. The 2009 OBHE report (Becker, 2009) includes the most comprehensive list of motivations; however, the report offers little analysis and does not include a list of references, a description of research methods, or data sources explaining how each motivation was identified. This same lack of evidence holds true across a majority of the literature discussing motivations.

A more limited body of literature takes the motivation discussion a step further and examines institutional and host country *strategies*, which involves the process of deciding whether to open a campus, defining the goals and objectives of a project, and beginning to design the campus. A limited number of researchers are in the early stages of gathering and analyzing empirical data on motivations and strategies, several of which are discussed below (Kinser & Lane, 2012; Wilkins & Huisman, 2011, 2012). In order to thoroughly understand institutional motivations and strategy, one must also consider the often-related and intertwined motivations and strategies of *host countries*.

Home Campus

There are a number of factors influencing institutions' decisions to open branch campuses in increasing numbers over the past decade. First and most prevalent in the literature are financial incentives and considerations (Becker, 2009; McBurnie & Ziguras, 2007; Shams & Huisman, 2012; Wilkins & Huisman, 2012; Wilkins, 2011). In an age of decreasing financial support at home, some institutions view IBCs as an additional source of revenue typically stemming from tuition paying students or governmental subsidies

from the host country. Additional revenue opportunities occur through locally provided research grants and partnerships with local organizations such as a national public university or local industry.

Lawton & Katsomitros (2012) report that 61 out of 200 branch campuses received some form of financial support from the host country, while 87 received none. Data on financial arrangements are difficult to obtain and verify, as demonstrated by the fact that 52 campuses were left uncategorized and 23 out of 61 of the institutions with host country support were labeled with a question mark indicating the authors were not fully confident in their classification. Unfortunately, most of the literature that discusses revenue as a driver does not include specific institutional examples and none include actual financial projections or budget analyses, which would help to determine the extent to which money acts as a motivator. Private institutions have little incentive to release budgetary numbers or discuss the details of agreements with local partners, whereas public institutions in some cases may be obligated by law to reveal this information.

The financial undertaking for institutions and host countries involved in branch campuses is complex and substantial, thus the promise of additional revenue is not a guarantee (Lane, 2010). A number of institutions have reported lower than anticipated surpluses and, in some cases, substantial losses. New York University's campus in Singapore, Tisch Asia, recently announced their imminent closure citing significant financial difficulties (Schmidt Campbell, 2012). Not surprisingly, the global financial crisis of 2008 affected branch campuses relying on tuition revenue. Dubai's economy was devastated by the recession, which proved challenging to the country's IBCs that are heavily tuition-dependent. Although IBC student applications declined, a number of

institutions forged ahead with their plans to open new campuses, despite the recession. This would eventually lead to the closure of several IBCs (Lane, 2010; Wilkins & Huisman, 2011). The literature is divided on whether branch campuses are a viable and sustainable option to generate revenue (Shams & Huisman, 2012).

Financial arrangements for IBCs vary depending on the motivations and strategy of the sender and receiver. Wealthy host countries focused on building strong national workforces and knowledge-based economies often cover a substantial portion of branch campus operating expenses (e.g., Carnegie Mellon University in Qatar and New York University in Abu Dhabi) and even provide generous scholarships for citizens (Lane & Kinser, 2011; Wilkins, 2010). An Australian branch campus in Sarawak, Malaysia follows a blended model where the host country helps with start-up investment and operating costs, while the branch campus is expected to cover remaining expenses through student tuition fees (Lane & Kinser, 2011). In both instances, theoretically, the home institution is not responsible for any costs associated with the branch campus, and the tuition-driven IBCs hope to generate excess revenue or break even. When setting up branch campuses, institutions may experience unforeseen expenses such as the costs resulting from staff time spent negotiating with the host government, developing new HR policies, and adapting academic curricula (Altbach, 2011). Other financial complexities exist. For instance, publicly funded institutions may face restrictions on using university resources abroad. The foregoing discussion of the complexities of IBC financial management necessitates research that includes greater detail and specific analyses of branch campus success (or failure) over time.

A final perspective on financial motivations and strategy suggests that some institutions set up branch campuses to reduce system-wide risk or vulnerability (Wilkins, 2011). For example, tuition generated by an American IBC could help offset a state subsidy reduction on the home campus. Contrastingly, other researchers argue that the branch campus strategy is high risk due to the large financial investment and potential for reputational harm in the case of a failed or underperforming venture (McBurnie & Ziguras, 2007; Shams & Huisman, 2012).

Another common motivator for the home institution is the anticipated benefits associated with internationalization (Becker, 2009). Many higher education institutions believe they must increase international connections to survive in an increasingly interconnected world and to compete with peer institutions—opening branch campuses is one strategy to accomplish this aim (Edelstein & Douglass, 2012). A subset of goals exists under the broad umbrella of internationalization. For instance, some IBCs aim to increase cultural exposure and mutual understanding for students and faculty (Becker, 2009). From an academic perspective, some institutions hope that faculty exposure to a new culture will encourage the incorporation of international perspectives in course materials and foreign research collaboration.

A number of additional, less apparent, motivations exist for home campuses to open IBCs. Recently, several host countries have launched attractive new research opportunities to attract prospective IBCs and faculty (Swan, 2013; Wilkins, 2011). Increasing research and development efforts also stands to benefit the host country through shared intellectual property, the development of new industry, and the recognition that comes along with innovation and discovery. Another motivation

involves the quest for institutional legitimacy and prestige. A university might feel pressure from a peer institution that opened a branch campus or seek the publicity that could result from implementing innovative global initiatives (Becker, 2009; Edelstein & Douglass, 2012; Wilkins & Huisman, 2012).

Two noteworthy studies move beyond motivations and offer a thoughtful analysis of institutional strategy using a business and organizational theory framework. First, Gore's (2012) study used corporate strategy literature to explore cross-border higher education strategies, most of which focused on IBCs. Gore argues that there is a general lack of intentional strategy driving these initiatives and concludes that institutions would benefit from developing long-term strategies that align with their core mission. Gore concedes that academics are generally opposed to the commercialization of higher education and might hesitate to pursue internationalization using a business framework. Furthermore, organizational structures in higher education may not align well with this strategic management approach due to their “complex, multi-stakeholder, quasi-market conditions” (Gore, 2012, p. 10).

Gore (2012) describes three models of cross-border international engagement. The *global network* approach seeks to establish a presence in strategic parts of the world allowing students to freely move between campuses. New York University is implementing this model by developing comprehensive campuses, currently operating in Abu Dhabi and Shanghai, along with a series of student abroad sites operated by the institution. Laureate International Universities follow a similar strategy but instead of building campuses from the ground up they acquire already existing foreign institutions. The for-profit Laureate strives to “preserve their local identify while harmonizing the

hidden workings into an efficiently run network” (Gore, 2012, p. 16). NYU’s model focuses on enhancing student mobility, while Laureate attempts to capitalize on economies of scale obtainable through managing a large network of universities.

Other institutions utilize the more common *focused network* strategy where an institution identifies a small number of strategically important countries or regions to develop partnerships. The focus of this strategy is on depth of engagement versus broad global reach. The UK-based University of Nottingham has followed this strategy by establishing relatively large branch campuses in China and Malaysia. These IBCs primarily recruit students locally or regionally with less emphasis on student mobility between campuses. The final *global products* strategy attempts to “leverage the core competencies a university possesses over a wide geography” (Gore, 2012, p. 19).

Institutions following this model establish branch campuses that offer one or two niche academic programs. An example of this model is Georgetown University’s well-regarded School of Foreign Service that operates a branch campus in the Gulf state of Qatar.

In the second study focused on strategy, Wilkins & Huisman (2012) applied institutional theory, a concept that “attempts to explain the adoption of structures, practices and beliefs that conform to normative expectations for legitimacy” to understand how and why institutions decide to open IBCs (p. 3). The study analyzed literature to determine institutional motivations and discovered six core factors: “legitimacy, status, institutional distance, risk-taking, risk-avoidance and the desire to secure new sources of revenue” (p. 1). Several of these decision factors are novel and not prominent in other similar discussions in the literature, including the concept of

institutional distance, a theory that attempts to explain what impact the host country environment has on branch campus strategy.

In an instance where a significant gap exists between the regulatory, normative and cultural-cognitive environment in the home and host countries (*institutional difference*) and the host country has an under-developed organizational environment (*institutional uncertainty*), tertiary institutions are likely to *avoid* establishing branch campuses. When there is a high degree of institutional difference and low degree of institutional uncertainty, exporting institutions are more likely to consider establishing branch campuses, but expect to “*adapt* structures and processes to suit institutional context in the host country” (Wilkins & Huisman, 2012, p. 9). When both institutional difference and uncertainty are low, there is less risk in establishing a branch campus and the structures can be *transferred* from the home campus. In the final situation, when institutional difference is low and institutional uncertainty is high there is a moderate degree of risk involved in creating a branch campus, thus the authors suggest institutions *hedge* the risk by seeking joint venture partnerships or funding assistance from the local government. Wilkins & Huisman (2012) suggest that the concept of “institutional distance adds significantly to explaining branch campus strategies, for it helps to understand why certain host countries are avoided or why particular partnership constructions are developed that mitigate and reduce risk” (p. 11). By examining whether countries hosting branch campuses have high or low degrees of institutional difference/uncertainty, the authors determined that branch campuses are most prevalent in countries that institutions “can implement the less risky transfer or adapt strategies” (Wilkins & Huisman, 2012, p. 11).

Host Country

Hosting an international branch campus requires significant time and effort, thus countries must identify substantial benefits before entering agreements. Although popular media tend to concentrate on the benefits to exporting institutions, there are a number of advantages for host countries. Motivations and strategies for hosting branch campuses are closely linked to national priorities. The four most commonly discussed motivating factors and strategies for host countries are: 1) increasing higher education capacity and participation, 2) expanding economic development and building human capacity, 3) enhancing national prestige, and 4) improving educational standards (Becker, 2009; Knight, 2011a; Wilkins, 2011).

First, IBCs are an opportunity to add higher education capacity and enhance access in an efficient manner. This strategy is particularly evident in the Arab Gulf countries where populations have soared over the past 40 years and various forms of transnational higher education have helped to increase higher education capacity dramatically (Wilkins, 2011). One unique aspect of Gulf country populations is the large percentage of foreign workers. In this case, IBCs have the opportunity to recruit from both the national and expatriate populations, and the countries are able to host institutions they might not have the population to support otherwise. For instance, of Qatar's 1.7 million inhabitants only 300,000 are considered full citizens, thus both the national population and expatriates feed branch campus enrollment (Lane & Kinser, 2011). Host countries also view IBCs as a catalyst for economic expansion and human capacity building. Developing countries hope that IBCs can help train a workforce prepared to contribute to building a knowledge-based economy. These countries often encourage international students to stay and work upon graduation to contribute to the local

economy. Singapore is an example of a country encouraging IBC expansion primarily to assist with economic growth and development (Knight, 2011a; Wilkins & Huisman, 2011).

Thirdly, host countries bring in branch campuses to enhance their global or regional image by increasing the legitimacy of their higher education systems. This is particularly evident in countries focused on hosting prestigious higher education “brands” such as Education City in Qatar that hosts six branch campuses of well-known American universities. Witte (2010) confirms that this strategy can bear fruit, “The high-profile development of Education City has contributed to a radically changed image of Qatar” (p. 24).

A final motivation for host countries to import branch campuses is to improve the overall quality of their higher education systems. Wilkins (2011) submits that high quality branch campuses force national universities to raise standards through direct competition and encourage governments to further develop quality assurance measures. Qatar is again a helpful example, “The presence of Education City...undoubtedly exerts pressure on the national university to raise its standards of teaching and research” (Witte, 2010, p.24). Other motivations for host countries exist but have received less attention in the literature. For instance, one author argues that high quality branch campuses can help reduce brain drain by decreasing the number of students who study abroad (Lien & Wang, 2012). While there is little doubt the aforementioned issues are the primary motivations driving countries to host branch campuses, similar to home institution motivations, there is little research that empirically explores whether these are the actual motivations and if the intended benefits are becoming a reality.

Further illuminating host country motivations, Lane and Kinser (2011) highlight an intriguing irony regarding the private and public nature of branch campuses. On the one hand, home institutions establish IBCs for increased revenue, prestige, and global presence—motivations primarily private in nature. On the other hand, host countries are driven predominantly by the promise of contributing to the public good as they hope branch campuses will improve their workforce, economy, and educational standards. A dean from one of Qatar's Education City branch campuses underscored this relationship when noting the stark contrast between the extremely private nature of his home institution in the United States which stood in stark contrast to the Qatar branch campus where there was an implicit expectation to be heavily involved with the local community to help support industry (Lane & Kinser, 2011).

Lane and Kinser's (2011) study is an anomaly due to its theoretical nature. The theoretical framework consists of five dimensions: mission, ownership, investment, revenue, and regulation. For each dimension, the researchers compare the public versus private nature of branch campuses from a home country and host country perspective. For instance, the study revealed that Malaysian IBCs are jointly controlled by the home and host countries (i.e., public and private ownership), while the home campus institutions are private and not-for-profit. This study serves as a good example of how researchers can utilize currently existing IBC data to develop theoretical frameworks using deeper levels of analysis.

A final host country trend, education hubs, is a strategy used to multiply the benefits of cross-border education. Knight (2011a) defines an education hub as “a concerted and planned effort by a country (or zone, city) to build a critical mass of

education/knowledge actors and strengthen its efforts to exert more influence in the new marketplace of education” (p. 225). Although education hubs are comprised of a variety of educational entities, many consist of multiple international branch campuses. Knight (2011b) identifies three types of education hubs: 1) student hubs focused on recruiting and educating local and international students, 2) hubs designed to train students to be part of a skilled workforce, and 3) knowledge and innovation hubs aiming to develop knowledge-based economies. These three categories of hubs are directly related to the four host country motivations described above.

In order to attract foreign institutions to education hubs, some countries have established “free zones” where IBCs are exempt from federal quality assurance regulations (Knight, 2011a; Lane, 2010a). The benefits of an education hub extend beyond the foreign institution and host country into the private sector. Hubs in Dubai and Malaysia, for example, are managed by private or quasi-governmental property developers seeking to earn a profit by charging the IBCs rent or by increasing property value around the institutions (Altbach, 2011; Lane & Kinser, 2010). Thus, the potential for financial gain is yet another possible motivating factor for host countries. The viability of this motivation is dubious, as there are few if any examples of branch campuses that have resulted in significant revenue surpluses.

Institutional Fit

The degree of institutional fit or synergy between home institutions and host countries is another factor that influences the decision to engage in a branch campus project. Spangler and Tyler (2011) describe the process Houston Community College (HCC) undertook in order to identify two international partners—Qatar and Vietnam.

With a tradition of identifying and adapting to community needs, the process of determining institutional fit may come more naturally to community colleges than four-year institutions; however, the process is equally important and valid for all types of institutions. One way to examine institutional fit is to identify “the rationale for the location and nature of the partnership” (Spangler & Tyler, 2011, p. 45). For instance, with close ties to the oil and gas sector in Houston, HCC considered international partners with ties to the energy sector. Ultimately, Qatar emerged as the best partner for this and other reasons. HCC’s first overseas partnership with Saigon Institute of Technology in Vietnam developed from Houston’s connection to the Vietnamese people. After the Vietnam War, many Vietnamese refugees moved to Houston and took courses at HCC. Vietnamese people in Houston began to understand the value of a two-year degree, which naturally led to the HCC partnership in Vietnam. Although impossible to list all the possible factors that help determine good institutional fit, Spangler and Tyler (2011) offer blunt advice on what it is not, “There must be more to the partnership than money or prestige” (p. 45).

Students

Student motivations and strategies for applying to and attending international branch campuses are mostly absent from the literature. The 2009 OBHE report lists several aspects of IBCs that might be attractive to local and regional students: the opportunity to receive a foreign degree while staying close to home, saving money from lower tuition and living expenses, and the ability to continue working in full-time jobs (Becker, 2009; Lawton & Katsomitros, 2012). As an enticement for potential students,

some institutions confer degrees identical to their home campuses, without a branch campus distinction (Hughes, 2011).

Relatedly, Wilkins and Huisman (2011) administered a survey to 160 international students at a British university to determine what factors influence students' decisions to attend IBCs. In one of the few quantitative studies looking at IBCs, the researchers developed a logistic regression model based on the results "that was able to significantly predict whether an individual student would consider studying at an international branch campus" (Wilkins & Huisman, 2011, p. 299). Their findings suggest that reputation, program quality, and rankings are the most important factors influencing international students to consider IBCs. Contrary to previous findings on international student college choice, this study indicates that pull factors (e.g., reputation of the foreign institution) are more important than push factors (e.g., poor quality institutions in home country).

Although research of this nature is both necessary and potentially useful, this study in particular focuses on international student choice and not the motivations of local students to attend branch campuses. In addition to recruiting international students, IBC admission and recruitment departments often target local students revealing a clear limitation to this study. Additionally, the fact that the survey results were obtained from students at one institution in the United Kingdom limits the generalizability of the findings to other institutions. Moreover, research outside the U.K. may reveal different international student motivations to consider IBCs.

A number of interesting research questions related to motivations are absent from the literature. For instance, within the realm of student motivations, what characteristics

correspond to enrollment (e.g., gender, religion, socio-economic status, previous international experience)? Other research questions could apply to all three categories (i.e., home-country, host-country, or students). For example, do motivational factors shift over time, and to what extent are motivations realized after branch campuses are established? Lastly, other categories of motivations such as faculty and staff recruitment should also be considered and studied further.

Adaptation Versus Replication

Shams and Huisman (2012) utilized strategic management and international business literature focused on multinational corporations to develop a conceptual framework to analyze and inform IBC strategies and structures. They argue that in order to develop a competitive advantage IBCs must establish legitimacy by striking a balance between standardization and adaptation, but many factors complicate this equation. To achieve legitimacy (a strategic goal), the host country must perceive that students will receive a similar quality learning experience to the home campus, yet the IBC must modify some practices to avoid being viewed as cultural imperialists and in order to comply with local regulatory requirements. In order to compete in the local market, Shams and Huisman (2012) argue that branch campuses must consider the extent to which they will standardize or adapt three main elements from their home campus: curriculum, research, and staffing.

By definition, international branch campuses are derivatives of their home campuses, thus some structural elements of the branch naturally resemble the home campus; however, IBC strategies can differ quite significantly from the home campus, affecting their structures. Complicating matters further, IBCs operate in unique cultural

environments and have diverse student bodies. This section explores areas present in the literature where institutions must consider the replication versus adaptation continuum, including teaching and learning, the co-curriculum, research, staffing, and operations. Present in each of these categories are strategic choices and structural elements that institutions establishing or operating branch campuses must consider.

Teaching and Learning

Delivering a university curriculum abroad is a complex undertaking and philosophies vary greatly just as they would in a domestic context. Hughes (2011) suggests two key questions that follow a similar line of thinking to Shams and Huisman (2012): One, “how far can/should the educational approach be adapted to the local context?,” and two, “how do you ensure the quality of teaching and the maintenance of standards across sites?” (p. 19). The answer to both questions varies greatly by institution and host country and requires careful consideration.

Hughes (2011) stresses that campus academic administrators should consider the extent to which an IBC should adjust curricular content and pedagogy. Some institutions allow the IBC administration to make such decisions, while others require that all academic curriculum issues go through the home campus administration. This reflects a broader tension of how much autonomy, in general, a branch campus should have from the home campus.

The more rigid or fixed content and delivery models allow for tight quality control but often do not account for the unique branch campus learner. Flexible content and delivery models allow room for cultural adaptation but limit quality control from the home campus. Moreover, if the branch campus curriculum differs too greatly from the

home campus, students and faculty may question the extent to which the education is of the same quality (Hughes, 2011). This is an important consideration given that IBCs rely heavily on the reputation of the home campus brand name (Hughes, 2011). Some IBCs claim their academic experience is so similar that they grant students the same degree as the home campus, with no special distinction for students who studied at the branch.

Another common challenge branch campuses face is inadequate primary and secondary school preparation for incoming students, which may require institutions to add a foundation year or other academic pre-college programs (Hughes, 2011). At Education City in Qatar, the Academic Bridge Program helps equip students with the math and English skills necessary for admittance to the American branch campuses (Wilkins, 2011). As Hughes (2011) aptly summarizes, “No one should imagine that in the process of setting up a branch campus an academic ethos can be simply transplanted to a geographically different place” (p. 28). Although Hughes (2011) suggests a number of teaching and learning considerations for IBCs, more in-depth analysis exploring the use of and effectiveness of standardization versus adaptation would prove useful to academic administrators.

Co-curricular

The tertiary education experience goes beyond the academic curriculum. Many of the distinguishing features of a university lie in the co-curriculum or student affairs realm, especially in the case of American higher education. How do traditional co-curricular elements such as residential life, student organizations, service learning, leadership development, and spiritual life transfer to a branch campus? The same question of adaptation versus standardization applies to the co-curricular—to what extent

should administrators attempt to import co-curricular elements to a branch campus in order to recreate the full student experience? Howman Wood (2011) strongly suggests that “a campus without ethos or a unique culture offers little more than an exercise in academic persistence” (p. 30). That being said, host countries often expect IBCs to provide the full experience of the home campus, including some elements of the co-curriculum.

Institutions with a strong reputation for student life and co-curricular involvement may attempt to follow a more direct replication model. For instance, Texas A&M University in the United States has a rich history of traditions such as the 12th Man where students widely support and attend sporting events. According to Howman Wood (2011), this tradition translated successfully to the Texas A&M branch campus in Doha, Qatar. Interestingly, over time, students on the Qatar campus modified the ritual to fit their unique cultural context. Students yell traditional cheers loudly “in both English and Arabic and traditional Arab drums are brought along to games and played enthusiastically” (Howman Wood, 2011, p. 35). Other Texas A&M traditions were not appropriate to introduce in Qatar. Dogs, for instance, are considered unclean according to Islamic tradition, therefore the school’s Collie mascot, Reveille, was not adopted.

There is a significant gap in the literature related to the co-curricular aspects of international branch campuses, and research on how IBCs attempt to create the non-curricular ethos of their home campus is an important aspect of understanding institutional structure. Furthermore, it would be helpful to break down the analysis by category, rather than jumping to institution specific examples. For instance, leadership education is often an important aspect of the co-curricular. Perspectives on what

constitutes effective leadership practice vary by culture. How do branch campus administrators account for these differences when designing leadership education programs or when advising student leaders?

Research

Although branch campuses are predominantly teaching institutions, a number of IBCs are also engaged in research (McBurnie & Ziguras, 2009; Swan, 2013). Research conducted at IBCs has the potential to benefit both the host country and the home campus, although many institutions choose to avoid the complexities of engaging in research (Shams & Huisman, 2012). Localized research offers tangible benefits to the home country. For instance, the University of Nottingham campus in Ningbo, China established a center that researches efficient and affordable energy sources to feed the surge in Chinese construction (McBurnie & Ziguras, 2009). Additionally, institutions can use research opportunities as a recruitment tool to entice home-campus faculty to teach at branch campuses with the promise of substantial research money and laboratories; however, these faculty may be less inclined to engage in localized research, preferring to continue working on projects from their home campus.

Staffing

Staffing is another important consideration along the standardization-adaptation continuum for several reasons. Staffing plans at branch campuses typically consist of local and expatriate staff (Harding & Lammey, 2011). Expatriate faculty and staff from the home campus can help ensure “academic standards are being met and maintained, and that other desired aspects of the home campus culture and standards are being transferred to the overseas campus” (Harding & Lammey, 2011, p. 75). These faculty and

administrators are often recruited from the home campus to work at the branch campus for a specified length of time. Altbach (2011) suggests that convincing faculty to leave their home campus to take an international post is difficult for a number of reasons, including the challenges of moving a family abroad and the complications involved in conducting research away from their home institution. Yet, Kleypas & McDougall (2011) argue that in the United States an increasing number of PhD's are competing for a limited number of full-time faculty positions, forcing an increasing number of faculty to consider teaching abroad. Although IBCs prefer to hire faculty and administrators from their home country or institution, additional roadblocks exist. From a budgetary standpoint, expatriate personnel cost significantly more (Shams & Huisman, 2012). Additionally, some host countries require that IBCs hire a certain percentage of staff locally, but finding qualified individuals is a challenge since most branch campuses are located in developing countries (Becker, 2009). Thus, when hiring locals there is a risk in reducing teaching and service quality, which could potentially harm external legitimacy. Additional in-depth analysis of IBC hiring practices and considerations would prove useful to institutional leaders and operations managers.

Operations, Local Regulations, and Institutional Policy

A number of additional factors require consideration of adaptation versus standardization: local laws and customs, institutional policies, home country regulations, and risk management (Harding & Lammey, 2011). Keeping some institutional policies and practices the same may prove logical, while others may require moderate to significant modification. Examples of policies that might need significant modification include health and safety procedures, governance structures, and immigration practices

(Harding & Lammey, 2011). Procedures requiring less modification might include travel policies and performance review processes. When creating internal policies Harding and Lammey (2011) also recommend IBCs account for culture and religion. For instance, in some countries the number of years one works at a university is the primary determinant for promotion, while others use a more meritocratic performance-based model.

External regulatory compliance is another complex operational consideration (Banks & McBurnie, 1999; Harding & Lammey, 2011). American branch campuses face U.S. government tax implications, foreign banking reporting requirements, and state and federal educational policies such as the Clery Act and human subjects compliance. Administrators may be tempted to focus more heavily on academic concerns; however, “adequate operational planning is paramount to the ultimate achievement of the long-term objectives and must be commenced early to allow for the academic development of the campus abroad to ultimately achieve its goals and standards” (Harding & Lammey, 2011, p. 70).

External Environmental Factors

A variety of external factors influence the strategy and structure of international branch campuses. In order to successfully design, implement, and operate IBCs, much of the literature suggests the following factors should be considered: quality assurance, student demand, financial arrangements, and academic freedom. In recent years, international branch campuses have almost a 10 percent failure rate, which is often attributed to the factors discussed below (Becker, 2009; Lawton & Katsomitros, 2012). A total of 29 IBCs have ceased operations since 1999. High profile closures include, Michigan State University in Dubai, George Mason University in Ras Al Khaimah,

U.A.E., and the University of New South Wales in Singapore. This section examines the following internal and external factors affecting branch campus strategies and structures as described in the literature: quality assurance, student demand, and academic freedom.

Quality Assurance

Kinser (2011) defines quality assurance as “all of the policies, procedures, and activities that are used to validate and improve the performance of a higher education institution” (p. 54). Quality assurance is a common topic in the branch campus literature (Becker, 2009; Coleman, 2003; Hughes, 2011; Kinser, 2011; Lane, Brown II, & Pearcey, 2004; Yokoyama, 2009). International branch campuses face a host of quality assurance challenges distinct from their home campuses. First, in addition to required participation in the home country accreditation process, many host country governments regulate IBCs (Kinser, 2011). Host country requirements vary in rigor and occasionally conflict with home country policies. For example, Dubai only permits IBC academic programs that exist at the provider institution; whereas, Australia has a rather liberal policy allowing Australian institutions to open foreign branch campuses with academic programs not offered at the home campuses (Kinser, 2011).

Branch campuses in Dubai have found compliance with governmental requirements particularly challenging. For instance, one local accrediting agency requires all students to take an Islamic studies class (Lane, 2010). Technically, Dubai-based IBCs operating in “free zones” can operate without agency approvals; however, institutions lacking accreditation are not eligible to receive governmental scholarships for Emirati citizens. Additionally, degrees conferred by IBCs lacking local accreditation may not be recognized by certain—often governmental—employers. For institutions

hoping to recruit local students, fulfilling all local quality assurance requirements is challenging but critical for sustainability.

Due to the overall increase in cross-border education around the world, a number of transnational quality assurance efforts have sprouted (e.g., Global Alliance for Transnational Education, Bologna, UNESCO); however, most of these attempts failed or have yet to fully materialize (Kinser, 2011). If such efforts succeed then branch campuses may have to adhere to yet another international level of external quality assurance. Host countries are more likely to favor a global standard, so they can avoid the complex process of building and maintaining in-house processes. For now, “the current system operates largely on a buyer-beware model, requiring importing countries to always be on guard against substandard operations” (Kinser, 2011, p. 63). The literature includes some examples of how quality assurance affects branch campuses, but a more thorough analysis of how particular IBCs respond to external quality assurance requirements would be a valuable contribution.

In many ways *internal* quality assurance can be more relevant and important than fulfilling external agency requirements. Branch campuses rely on the strong reputations of their home campuses and must strive to replicate the same quality. One way for branch campuses to maintain legitimacy is to align admission standards and academic requirements with their home campuses. Some experts and practitioners argue that striking an appropriate balance between adaptation and standardization, as discussed in the previous section, has a significant impact on internal quality (Hughes, 2011; Shams & Huisman, 2012).

Student Demand

A lack of qualified student applicants reportedly plagues many international branch campuses, although the literature is void of actual figures (Altbach, 2011; Green, Eckel, Calderon, & Luu, 2007). The ability to recruit qualified and sufficient numbers of students clearly impacts institutional strategy. Several failed branch campuses such as the University of New South Wales in Singapore and Michigan State University in Dubai blamed low enrollment as the primary issue leading to their closure (Altbach, 2011; Wilkins, 2010). In the case of Dubai, the gold-rush of IBCs led to a surge in capacity and not enough qualified students to fill all the seats (Lane, 2010; Wilkins & Huisman, 2011).

The United Arab Emirates is not the only Gulf country with enrollment issues. With a small population and strong competition from abroad, Qatar's Education City has struggled to attract qualified Qatari nationals (Witte, 2010), though, as noted, branch campuses also target expatriates. In Dubai, for instance, institutions such as Manipal primarily serve Indian expatriates and their children living in the Gulf. There are a variety of reasons prospective students do not consider enrolling at branch campuses. High achieving students often prefer the cultural experience of attending a Western institution with an increased likelihood of finding a job in the destination country after graduation (Altbach, 2011). Chinese students are also hesitant to attend American branch campuses in China due to high tuition and a perceived lack of quality (Altbach, 2011).

Although enrollment issues are frequently discussed in the IBC literature, few comparison studies of target versus actual enrollment numbers exist. Furthermore, some of the enrollment figures in the literature conflict. For example, Becker (2009) reports that Texas A&M University at Qatar fell well short of the target enrollment after six years; whereas, Witte (2010) cites the same institution as an example of a campus that

met enrollment targets. Although enrollment numbers are an understandably common indicator of success or failure, since many IBCs are in their infancy, low numbers in the early years may not be indicative of future growth.

Academic Freedom

Faculty and administrators from systems where academic freedom is a crucial characteristic of higher education such as the United States, United Kingdom, and Australia often attempt to establish agreements with host countries to guarantee academic freedom (Kinser, 2010). However, governments of conservative countries may be hesitant to sign such agreements and, interestingly, IBCs seem to exist in a large number in conservative Muslim countries such as the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, and Malaysia. Furthermore, although IBCs might be able to negotiate academic freedom protection agreements through the host government, faculty may self-censor academic material in deference to cultural norms. In one example, an “IBC changed the name of a course from U.S. Democracy to U.S. Government to avoid unwanted attention in a nondemocratic country” (Kinser, 2010, p. 117). Academic freedom is increasingly discussed in the IBC literature and popular media; however, there is a noticeable absence of specific instances where academic freedom was challenged. The University of Warwick avoided the issue altogether by deciding not to establish a branch campus in Singapore due to concerns over academic freedom (Becker, 2009).

As evidenced above, there are many external factors that affect the strategy and structural design of international branch campuses. The complex nature of designing and maintaining IBCs along with the factors described above point to the need for extensive

research of these factors prior to deciding whether or not to establish or host branch campuses (Lane et al., 2004).

Conclusion

A number of international organizations (e.g., The Observatory on Cross-Border Higher Education, American Council on Education, and Cross-Border Education Research Team) and some individual researchers have published reports on international branch campuses. Most report on global trends (e.g., number of host countries, number of sending countries, quality assurance mechanisms) and offer basic descriptions of institutional characteristics. In-depth exploration of specific institutions and empirically derived data is scant and analyses are predominantly across a broad array of institutions, rather than at the micro level. Studies aiming for depth over breadth have the potential to help explain the intricacies of establishing and operating international branch campuses and reveal the degree to which culture and context impact the relationship between a particular institution and its host country.

Publications reveal a variety of factors motivating host countries, home countries, and students to engage in branch campus projects but conclusions are largely anecdotal and fail to effectively explore the complexities driving their development (Shams & Huisman, 2012). Literature covering strategies informing and guiding institutions through branch campus expansion is more limited, but has started to develop in the last few years. IBC structures are discussed to varying degrees and are often embedded within articles discussing other topics. The relationship among motivations, strategies, and structures—the topic of this study—is not explicitly discussed in the scholarly

literature. The following chapter describes this study and the methodology used to examine these three elements.

CHAPTER THREE. Methodology

The primary purpose of this study is to develop an in-depth understanding of motivations, strategies, and structures of international branch campuses and how they relate. This requires a thorough examination of an institution's unique context, including its history, successes and failures, goals and aspirations, political structures, and countless other factors. Case study inquiry is ideal due to its emphasis on the importance of understanding context and using in-depth exploration to analyze complex phenomena (Stake, 1995; Yin, 2014). Furthermore, a qualitative approach adequately incorporates the inevitable multiple (and possibly conflicting) perspectives of stakeholders and allows readers to make connections to their own experiences. This study utilizes a qualitative case study of a single American international branch campus, Texas A&M University at Qatar (TAMUQ).

Single Case Study

A single instrumental case study was selected based on the institution's potential to help illuminate the specific research questions at hand (Stake, 1995). In other words, an information-rich case was chosen, "which one can learn a great deal about issues of central importance to the purpose of the inquiry" (Patton, 2004, p. 230). Specifically, this study examines Texas A&M University's international branch campus in the tiny Middle Eastern country of Qatar. Established over 10 years ago in the capital city of Doha, Texas A&M University at Qatar offers undergraduate and graduate degrees in engineering. It is one of six American branch campuses in Education City, an education

hub founded and funded by the Qatar Foundation for Education, Science, and Community Development, a government-funded non-profit organization (Knight, 2011a).

Yin (2014) offers five rationales for single-case study designs, and Texas A&M at Qatar fits two of the conditions. First, the case is *common* or *representative* because many of the characteristics of TAMUQ are shared among other IBCs as shown in the literature. For instance, TAMUQ offers a select number of niche academic programs (primarily engineering), has a relatively small student enrollment, receives subsidies from the local government, and has a mix of faculty from the home campus and elsewhere (Lawton & Katsomitros, 2012). Additionally, TAMUQ is a *revelatory* case since it offered substantial access to a category of cross-border higher education that is notoriously closed-off. International branch campuses are skeptical of revealing the inner-workings of their institutions, likely due to their largely negative portrayal in popular and education media as revenue-driven endeavors that are not widely supported by faculty and struggle to reach enrollment targets.

In the interest of full disclosure, I served as an administrator at Carnegie Mellon University in Qatar, also located in Qatar's Education City, which likely contributed to receiving approval to use TAMUQ as the case study for this study. Another advantage my former work experience afforded was insight "into interpersonal behavior and motives" of branch campus personnel and a deeper understanding of the context (Yin, 2014, p. 106). Furthermore, my experience working in Education City provided a general idea of the possible institutional motivations, strategy, and structural elements of an IBC, which was helpful in developing the interview protocol for this study and served as a point of comparison during analysis. All that said, my role as an insider introduced

the potential for bias and underlying assumption that could influence various aspects of this project including data collection and interpretation. The final section on validity includes a discussion on how I addressed this issue.

Generalizability

The findings of this study have the potential to be useful to both the case study institution and to administrators and government officials considering or currently engaged in IBC projects. The latter group will find value through what Stake (1995) refers to as naturalistic generalization, a process whereby the reader synthesizes and adapts case study findings to his or her own unique context. In other words, “the researcher’s aim is not veridical representation so much as stimulation of further reflection, optimizing readers’ opportunity to learn” (Stake, 1995, p. 42). Additionally, although no two branch campuses are identical, they share a number of characteristics, thus some of the lessons gleaned from this study are widely applicable to international branch campuses. These potentially generalizable lessons will contribute to the successful design and implementation of IBCs. One cautionary note—the understandings illuminated through this study are most valuable when considered alongside the unique organizational and cultural contexts of individual institutions and host countries.

In order to foster naturalistic generalization, I infer how the findings of this study may impact other branch campuses. For instance, the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board requires approval for state institutions to open international branch campuses. Although the specific requirements are unique to the State of Texas, all branch campuses answer to oversight groups and must comply with external regulations. These regulations frequently require negotiation and adaptation, and other branch

campuses can benefit from understanding the approval process TAMUQ went through. Such implications are articulated in context alongside findings, at the end of each chapter, and on a broader level in the conclusion.

Data Sources

The data sources for this study are stakeholder interviews, documents and, to a lesser degree, direct observation. Data triangulation, or collecting data on the same phenomenon from multiple sources, adds to the validity and credibility of conclusions (Yin, 2014). Document sources used in this study include newspapers, annual reports, marketing materials, and other forms of written institutional communication. Public documents were retrieved through the Internet using a search engine and by browsing the TAMUQ website. Documents were also requested through informants and interviewees, but only a handful of documents were obtained. Documents were helpful in the following cases: 1) to verify information from interviews and other sources (i.e., triangulation); 2) to develop a record and understanding of institutional policies, admission requirements, time lines, strategic plans, and other complex pieces of information that interviewees struggled to fully recall or articulate; and 3) to discover new information requiring further investigation (e.g., an important meeting listed in a written historical timeline that could be raised during an interview) (Yin, 2014). Furthermore, beginning document collection and analysis prior to participant interviews assisted in forming an understanding of the context, informed the construction of interview questions and protocol, and helped identify participants.

As Yin (2014) states, “One of the most important sources of case study evidence is the interview,” which held true for this study (p. 110). Conducting intensive interviews

with staff and faculty allowed me to inquire “about their interpretations and opinions about people and events or their insights, explanations, and meanings related to certain occurrences,” which revealed unique contextual insights related to the research questions (Yin, 2014, p. 111).

With permission from Texas A&M University at Qatar (see Appendix B), I interviewed current and former administrators and faculty from the home and branch campus who were involved in the inception and start-up phases and those who are currently assisting in TAMUQ’s ongoing development and operation. Interviewees were selected based on the likelihood they would be able to provide insight related to the research questions. These potential participants were identified in a document covering the historical timeline of Texas A&M at Qatar (see Appendix C) and through conversations with a well-placed informant. The informant was asked to identify University and branch campus personnel involved with TAMUQ on a strategic level from any time period from the inception to current day. An initial list of 12 potential participants emerged over the course of several exchanges with the informant. He asked a fellow colleague to review the list, make comments, and suggest additional people. The final list was shared and two interviewees were removed at the informant’s suggestion. It was later revealed that these individuals were retired and in poor health.

Although travel required significant time and expense, the decision to meet participants in-person was made for several reasons: 1) Potential interviewees were more likely to participate if I made the effort to come speak with them in-person; 2) With a 7-hour time difference between Boston and Qatar, scheduling phone or Skype interviews would have been challenging; and 3) In-person interviews often lead to richer data

through the inclusion of facial expressions, body language, and other contextual factors that contribute to meaning making (Stake, 1995).

Prior to my site visits, each participant received an email requesting his or her participation along with an explanation of the research and the informed consent document (see Appendices D and E). Initially, I was only able to secure interviews with five administrators on the Qatar campus. I boarded the plane for Qatar anxious that I would not be able to reach my goal of completing 10 interviews; however, once I was on the ground, interviews became significantly easier to schedule. In addition to the a-priori list of potential participants, I used a process of snowball sampling, or asking interviewees to identify other people with insights into the discussed topics at the end of each interview, which was enormously helpful in identifying additional information-rich participants (Merriam, 1991; Murphy, 1980).

During a two-week visit to Texas A&M's campus in Doha, Qatar from late January to early February of 2014, I completed 16 interviews with 14 different people. Eight or 62 percent of TAMUQ participants worked primarily on academic matters, whether they were faculty or administrators. Due to the small nature of the campus, many academic administrators also teach classes. This group came from a range of academic backgrounds including liberal arts, engineering, and science. Five or 38 percent of TAMUQ participants were purely practitioners—two from the Department of Student Affairs, one from the IT Services, and two senior-level administrators from other areas. Seven or 54 percent of all TAMUQ participants were on the leadership team, the senior-most group on the Qatar campus and similar to a president's council in the U.S. All TAMUQ participants had worked at the campus for at least three years spanning the

10 plus years of operation, and two interviewees started in the first year. All but three participants had experience working on the main campus in Texas, and those that did not had previously worked in U.S. or Canadian higher education. During my visit to Qatar, I also interviewed one long-term staff member with the Qatar Foundation familiar with Texas A&M at Qatar. Once I returned to the U.S., I completed additional Skype interviews with one former TAMUQ staff member and an additional Qatar Foundation administrator.

During a three-day site visit to Texas in February of 2014, I completed eight interviews with faculty and administrators that had current or previous Qatar campus connections. All but one interview was held on Texas A&M's main campus in College Station. Four interviewees had worked previously on the Qatar campus, and two out of these four were senior-level administrators. Three participants were among the core team that helped with the inception of the Qatar campus, including the initial assessment, negotiation, and design process, and three others were involved in the early years of operation in a significant way. Half of the Texas-based interviewees were involved with academic matters and the other half worked in financial and other administrative areas.

Interviews were semi-structured around a set of predetermined issue-oriented questions crafted to solicit information relevant to the research questions and the three main elements of study—motivations, strategy, and structure (Stake, 1995). Specific sub-questions were developed around participants' unique roles and responsibilities and the time period of their involvement. Interview questions were developed using the research questions and theoretical framework and were framed in a manner that participants were able to easily grasp meaning by avoiding jargon and technical terms

(see Appendix F for the base interview protocol). In an effort to test the interview protocol, I conducted a pilot interview with a senior-level branch campus administrator from a different institution. Conducting an interview in advance allowed me an opportunity to practice and to seek feedback from the participant on the questions and my style.

Most interviews were scheduled for one hour. A handful of interviews went over an hour and a few participants were only available for 30 minutes. Prior to the interviews, I used other interviewees, my informant, and Internet sources such as the TAMUQ website to get a sense of each participant's background and experience with the project, which informed the focus of each interview. Not all topical areas were discussed with each participant depending on the perceived level of knowledge around particular areas. For instance, I did not ask the IT professional about student affairs-related issues. Although the interviews followed a general trajectory using the prewritten questions, they were fluid in nature, allowing time and space for emergent questions and lines of inquiry relevant to the research questions. During the interviews, I took minimal notes in order to concentrate on guiding the interview and listening, which allowed greater focus on key ideas and themes and to reflect on the deeper meanings behind participant's statements. All participants granted permission for me to digitally record the interviews, so I could retrieve missing information and details not captured in my notes, to maintain accuracy when using direct quotes, and in order to transcribe for use in data analysis.

Direct observation played a limited role in the data collection process, primarily to develop thick description of the institutional environment to assist the reader in building contextual understanding. For instance, as Yin (2014) states, details about the

physical infrastructure “may indicate something about the culture of an organization” or “be an indicator of the status of the interviewee” (p. 114). During my visits to the Qatar and home campuses, I took notes of specific observations that could contribute to a more comprehensive depiction of the unique context. Many of these observations are included in the overview of Texas A&M University at Qatar in the beginning of Chapter Four and interspersed throughout the remaining chapters when relevant.

As indicated, a range of host country motivations, strategies, structures, and environmental factors likely influence international branch campuses. For this case, relevant data concerning the host country of Qatar was collected through the use of documents, pre-existing studies, and interviews with TAMUQ faculty and staff. This study is concerned with the relationship among motivations, strategy, and structure from an *institutional* perspective, thus I was primarily interested in how TAMUQ administrators and faculty perceive the host country’s involvement in the project as those perceptions relate to the IBC’s actions. Although the primary concern of this study is the perspectives of Texas A&M University personnel, I considered that the Qatar Foundation might have opposing viewpoints; thus, as stated, I interviewed two QF staff members with relevant experience.

Analysis and Interpretation

The nature of this research called for an emergent analysis and interpretation process that occurred alongside data collection, which allowed for new directions and additional data sources (Merriam, 1991). As Merriam (1991) states, “hunches, working hypotheses, and educated guesses direct the investigator’s attention to certain data and then to refining and/or verifying one’s hunches” (p. 123). Keeping a research journal

with field notes entered throughout the data collection process assisted with this initial phase of analysis and interpretation. Analysis continued and intensified once data collection was complete. In order to organize and analyze the copious amounts of data common in qualitative research, I created a database “to preserve [my] data in a retrievable form” (Yin, 2014, p. 124). The database was developed using a computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software (CAQDAS) package called Dedoose, which housed my field notes, memos, documents, and transcripts. In order to expedite the analysis process, I paid to have the interviews transcribed. Several weeks after the interviews, I listened to each interview to immerse myself back in the data, checked for transcription errors, and noted broad themes and trends. Notes were captured in memo form and linked to the corresponding interviews.

My general analytic coding strategy followed what Yin (2014) refers to as “relying on theoretical propositions” (p. 136). I used the study’s theoretical orientation, research questions, and literature to define a-priori categories and codes. For instance, one research question focuses on areas where the institution attempted to replicate and transfer elements from the home campus over to the branch campus, so *replication* formed one category for analysis. The literature reveals several specific structures that branch campuses attempt to replicate, thus each specific type of replication formed a sub code under the broader replication category. Using Dedoose, I then read through each interview carefully and applied codes to relevant excerpts (Merriam, 1991). Additional codes emerged during the analysis process and were added to the codebook and others were modified or subdivided further. Using the previous example, different categories of replication that were not on the original a-priori list of codes were added as they emerged.

Interpretations and concepts were generated by identifying themes, trends, and conflicting explanations that emerged through analysis procedures. The research software helped spot patterns and themes, but as Yin (2014) warned, “developing a rich and full explanation or even a good description of your case...will require much post-computer thinking and analysis” (p. 134).

This analysis process did not go exactly as planned. After coding about 20 out of 27 interviews, Dedoose suffered a massive system failure that deleted over 100 hours of my coding work. This issue did not just affect me—all Dedoose users that had done analysis from March to mid-April of 2014 lost work (Kolowich, 2014). The nature of Dedoose’s Web 2.0 (cloud-based) platform did not allow for easy backup, thus my coding was not retrievable. The silver lining in an otherwise devastating circumstance was that I had reached saturation in my coding. In other words, no new codes were emerging and the main themes and categories had already formed, thus I developed a simplified codebook using broad-level categories that had emerged and eliminated codes that proved to be less important than originally anticipated. This recoding process was helpful for several reasons: 1) I reread the previously coded interview transcripts for a third time becoming more familiar with the data, 2) I eliminated non-relevant codes and themes, which allowed for a more streamlined writing process, and 3) I was able to easily retrieve participant quotes that would have been very difficult to locate had I not recoded. Ultimately, the analysis procedure described above along with the triangulation of data sources led to accurate and insightful interpretations, which informed the discussion and conclusions I pass on to the reader to help them make meaning of the case and the research questions (Merriam, 1991; Stake, 1995).

Validity and Challenges

Establishing a branch campus is a high stakes, potentially risky endeavor for both the home campus and the host country (Altbach, 2011). Both sides invest substantial resources (e.g., time, money, staff) to help make new campuses succeed, thus the consequences of failure can be significant. Most of the participants in this study were key stakeholders (e.g., current and former staff, administrators involved in inception process), thus I was initially concerned they would hesitate to openly share information perceived to be negative. Thankfully, participants were overwhelmingly forthright, sharing areas of both success and failure. In only one instance did an interviewee describe everything related to the branch campus as essentially perfect. On the other hand, and somewhat surprisingly, two participants were overwhelmingly negative. Whenever possible, these outlying perspectives were included to shape a nuanced explanation of the phenomenon under consideration. In a select number of instances, interviewees shared factually incorrect information, which was determined through a process of triangulation. Factually incorrect information was presented as such or excluded from this study.

Another challenge preventing precise analysis of branch campuses is the lack of accurate and detailed source material. Scholarly literature covering branch campuses frequently relies on information from local newspapers, which may or may not be reputable and accurate (see Wilkins, 2010). However, obtaining primary source material can be exceedingly difficult, thus in some instances, I was forced to determine which source was more credible. For example, a 2009 report from the *Observatory of Borderless Higher Education* states that 100 students were enrolled at Texas A&M at

Qatar; whereas, an official University annual report states that 271 total students enrolled during the 2007-08 academic year (Becker, 2009; TAMUQ, 2007). In this instance, the institution's annual report is a clear choice as a more reliable source.

An additional challenge to maintaining validity is the potential for bias that stems from my previous experience working in close proximity to the case study site. Though this experience undoubtedly contributed to a deeper understanding of the motivations, strategy, structure of Texas A&M at Qatar, there were likely instances where my previous experience unknowingly colored my interpretations. Nevertheless, my previous experience working at an IBC served as more of an asset than a drawback.

A final limitation of this study stems from the fact that informants were not asked to review my narrative and interpretations to ascertain if I accurately captured their remarks and whether they agreed with my analysis. Such member checks may have revealed errors in reporting or instances where participants disagreed with my conclusions (Guba & Lincoln, 1989). However, it is important to note that the goal of such a process would not be to eliminate bias—a common goal of quantitative research methods—because I approached this study from a constructivist paradigm, whereby knowledge is mutually constructed between participants and the researcher (Patton, 2001).

Overall, the use of a single instrumental case study and the aforementioned data collection and analysis process, revealed significant insights around the motivations, strategy, and structure of Texas A&M University at Qatar. Extensive interviews with 27 administrators from the home campus, branch campus, and the Qatar Foundation provided a level of depth that would be difficult to obtain through other methods. The

following seven chapters describe the findings from these interviews, along with a discussion of the analyses and implications. Chapter four offers an overview of the evolution of Texas A&M University at Qatar with in-depth explorations of the negotiation process with the Qatar Foundation and the decision-making factors leading to the campus' establishment and formation.

CHAPTER FOUR. The Inception of Texas A&M University at Qatar

After several years of contemplation and negotiation, Texas A&M University signed a contract with the Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development on May 25, 2003 to establish and operate an international branch campus in the tiny Gulf state of Qatar just outside the capital city of Doha in an education hub aptly named Education City (Knight, 2011b). Three months later 29 students began their first classes at Texas A&M University at Qatar (Texas A&M at Qatar or TAMUQ for short). Texas A&M at Qatar was one of three American universities that opened branch campuses in Qatar offering niche academic programs. Each university offers degrees with an exceptional reputation in the United States. Perhaps the least well known, Virginia Commonwealth University in Qatar, was the first to arrive in 1998 and offers degrees in visual arts and design (Witte, 2010). Four years later, Weill Cornell Medical College in Qatar, the only Ivy League institution, began offering bachelor- and graduate-level courses leading to a medical degree. Texas A&M provides bachelors of science degrees in chemical, electrical, mechanical, and petroleum engineering. Over the next six years, three additional universities established foreign outposts in Education City: Carnegie Mellon University in Qatar offers business, computer science, and information systems degrees, Georgetown University transplanted their School of Foreign Service, and Northwestern University started a Journalism and Communications program.

In addition to their American origin, these academic programs share one important thing in common; they are each considered one of the top programs in their respective areas. For Texas A&M, the link to Qatar seemed a natural one. TAMU's

Petroleum Engineering program was consistently considered among the top in the United States, and Qatar is a tiny country with vast oil and gas reserves. University publicity proclaims that “The curriculum offered at Texas A&M at Qatar is identical to the one offered at the main campus in College Station, Texas” (Texas A&M University at Qatar, 2014a).

Structurally, Texas A&M at Qatar more closely resembles a full-scale university—albeit small—than a satellite operation with a skeleton crew of staff and faculty. All the major departments one would expect to find on a college campus of a similar size are represented: student affairs, human resources, finance, operations, and information technology, among others. On the academic side, in addition to the four engineering disciplines, there are departments for science, mathematics, and liberal arts, all of which have required courses in the engineering curriculum. Across all departments, the campus employs 78 faculty at all levels (lecturer, senior lecturer, assistant professor, associate professor, and full professor) and a staff of more than 350 (Texas A&M University at Qatar, 2014a). Despite this rather robust infrastructure, the branch campus maintains a close connection to the main campus in College Station, Texas.

Texas A&M University’s flagship campus in College Station, Texas was founded as an all-male military institution in 1876 and has grown to become a research-intensive institution that now boasts a student enrollment of over 50,000 (Texas A&M University, 2014). Most Aggies—the label for someone who attended Texas A&M—would agree, the institution is one that has a unique culture that stems from its lengthy history full of military-derived traditions. A large percentage of the student population is involved in

student life and many students participate in traditions that have been passed down for generations. Academically, although the number of students enrolled in professional degree programs has increased over the years—a common trend across the United States—Texas A&M has maintained its Land Grant roots by continuing to offer strong programs in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) related fields.

Although only an infant as compared to the main campus in Texas, the Qatar campus has grown considerably since its founding 11 years ago. In May of 2014, TAMUQ celebrated its 500th graduate, and each new class consistently enrolls over 100 students (Texas A&M University at Qatar, 2014c). In recent years, the institution has spent considerable effort developing a robust research infrastructure. The impetus for TAMUQ's research growth stemmed from a new national research grant program designed around the country's most pressing needs, named the Qatar National Research Fund (QNRF). To date, TAMUQ faculty have received over \$220 million in research grants from QNRF (Texas A&M University at Qatar, 2014a, 2014b). Many of these research projects involve collaborative work with faculty from the main campus. In 2011, TAMUQ reached another important milestone when introducing its first graduate program, offering a Master of Science or Master of Engineering degree in chemical engineering.

Texas A&M at Qatar's student body consists of students from the national population (referred to as Qatari's), students of other nationalities that live in Qatar, and international students that move to Qatar from other countries to attend TAMUQ. Fifty percent of the student body are Qatari nationals and 38.4 percent are female (Texas A&M University at Qatar, 2014a). With a very generous faculty to student ratio of 20 to 1, the

institution boasts a 93.5 percent 1st year retention rate and a 88.4 percent 2nd year retention rate on average from 2003-2012 (Texas A&M University at Qatar, 2014a, n.d.-c). The institution prides itself on engagement with the community and local industry. Faculty host training seminars for K-12 teachers, arrange workshops for children to encourage STEM growth, and consult with local oil and gas companies. Community engagement reaches beyond national borders. During the 2012-2013 academic year, TAMUQ hosted ten international academic conferences.

Overall, by many accounts and according to reputation, Texas A&M at Qatar is a successful endeavor; however, the inception and development of an IBC is complex and this project, like others, has experienced successes and failures. Chapters four through seven follow the institution's chronology from inception to current day offering insights into the process with particular attention to themes that emerged from examining institutional motivations, strategies, and structures.

The Inception Timeline

The creation and development of Texas A&M in Qatar did not happen overnight. In fact, the process was quite lengthy, involved many actors, and required numerous steps. This section offers an overview of the inception timeline, a discussion of the important themes evident during the process, and the implications of these findings.

The conversation began when a member of the provost's staff was asked to review a letter sent to Texas A&M's president from the Qatar Foundation asking the University to consider establishing a branch campus in Qatar. Texas A&M receives many requests for international collaboration, but this request was unusual because the partner was offering to pay for everything, so the administration agreed to respond with a

request for additional information. This led to a visit in December of 2001 by “a three member delegation...to begin initial discussions on a partnership between Texas A&M University and Qatar Foundation” (Texas A&M University at Qatar, n.d.-a, p. 1).

Faculty and staff familiar with this early stage all agree that Texas A&M was not the first university approached to establish an engineering degree program in Qatar. Some participants shared this information based on hearsay, but others had firsthand knowledge. This administrator involved in the inception from the home campus said, “[the Qatar Foundation] had been pursuing several different universities of various different brands. I saw this because I'm tied into a national organization of all the international senior administrators.”

Although few interviewees could recall exactly which schools were approached prior to Texas A&M, there was general consensus that a large state university in North Carolina and the University of Texas (Texas A&M's biggest rival) were in the mix. Other institutions mentioned were Michigan State University, University of Michigan, University of Virginia, and University of Wisconsin. The Qatar Foundation altered their approach over time. “The Qataris originally wanted to go with one university to do everything,” said an academic administrator. He elaborated further,

I mean, in fact, we got plans that already had the colors, everything picked out, and it was not our colors. They were going to go with the Ohio State at one time and then they were going to go with North Carolina and those all fell through and so they eventually decided let's start breaking it up and looking at who's the best at different programs and going after those people.

Interviewees did not clearly delineate between institutions that were approached specifically for engineering and those that had been pitched the earlier idea of establishing a comprehensive campus.

The fact that Texas A&M was not the Qatar Foundation's first choice did not seem to deter the process from moving forward. In the summer of 2002, Texas A&M's then president Dr. Ray Bowen, authorized an eleven-member delegation to visit Qatar on a fact-finding mission. The Qatar Foundation paid for this and all subsequent visits to Qatar during the inception phase. In the fall of 2002, Texas A&M underwent a significant shift in leadership. After eight years in service, President Ray Bowen stepped down and Dr. Robert Gates became his successor. President Gates had extensive international experience and maintained a strong interest in the Qatar campus project, thus the process carried on. In November of 2002, the interim provost, Dr. David Prior, "led a 20-member delegation to Qatar to begin assessing the academic and financial needs of establishing the Qatar campus" (Texas A&M University at Qatar, n.d.-a, p. 1).

Now a year after the initial process had began, Texas A&M officially decided to pursue an agreement with the Qatar Foundation to establish a branch campus in Qatar. According to a staff member involved in the process, there were three primary conditions that had to be met in order for the project to be approved. The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board required the first two. No state money could be spent on the project and in order to offer Texas A&M engineering degrees, the curriculum had to remain the same as in College Station. The third condition related to admissions standards, which had to stay the same as the home campus. There was some concern that the Qatar Foundation might attempt to exert influence over what applicants were admitted.

In January, the “former Department Head of Petroleum Engineering of Texas A&M University, was named Coordinator of the Qatar Project and led a four member delegation to Qatar to finalize the details of the term sheet” (Texas A&M University at Qatar, n.d.-a, p. 1). This so-called “gang of four” also consisted of an administrator focused on internationalization, the Dean of Undergraduate Programs, and the Dean of Graduate Studies. It was suggested by multiple interviewees that the gang of four was the core group involved in coordinating the inception process of Texas A&M at Qatar.

After much negotiation, President Gates presented and received approval on the agreed-upon terms from the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board and the Texas A&M University Board of Regents in March of 2003. A group of seven Texas A&M representatives then met with a Qatar Foundation delegation at the St. Regis Hotel in New City to finalize the terms of the agreement. Over the next few months, a final ten-year agreement, including the previously agreed upon terms, was drafted and signed on May 25, 2003. Descriptions of the inception process revealed several important ideas about the elements necessary to successfully enter a branch campus agreement. Specific themes—highlighted below—included the cultivation of campus buy-in, elements of successful negotiation, and a number of factors listed in a model designed as a checklist universities should use when considering international engagement.

Campus Buy-in

American higher education has a strong history of shared governance (Rosovsky, 2014). In the U.S. context, governance is shared among three primary constituencies: the president, the faculty, and governing board. At some institutions, students and staff may have an influential voice though they do not typically have formal power. The core

benefits of utilizing a shared governance model include accountability through checks and balances, diversity in perspectives and ideas, and the buy-in that results from a necessarily collaborative process.

The importance of practicing shared governance principles during the inception of Texas A&M at Qatar did not go unnoticed. Many institutional stakeholders were involved in the inception process, and the lead actors believed that in order for the Qatar campus to be successful there had to be widespread involvement and buy-in among relevant campus constituencies. In particular, faculty at a number of institutions engaging in branch campus projects have been vocal about their lack of involvement. Faculty at Yale University claim there was little attempt to involve them in the decision to open a joint campus in Singapore with the National University of Singapore (Redden, 2014). Other branch campus proposals have been cancelled due to lack of faculty buy-in, such as George Washington University's proposed campus in China. Texas A&M apparently understood the importance of fostering faculty buy-in and knew it would not come easily, as evident in this statement from an administrator involved in the inception, "we had to get buy-in from the faculty, we had to get buy-in from the faculty senate who was very suspicious of this...because we had a failed attempt in Japan and that took resources away."

The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board was another key stakeholder that required attention from the planning group. Although the Coordinating Board had a set of requirements that A&M had to follow in order for the Qatar campus to be approved, several administrators implied there was a subjective element to the vote as well, which necessitated garnering buy-in with board members:

We knew we had a sales job with the Coordinating Board. We went over and did presentations beforehand. We met with sub-groups of the coordinating board before [the provost] ever went and made his official presentation to them. I remember meeting with [a member of the Coordinating Board] and when she said what do you want to do this for? We were having lunch at the coordinating board [meeting] in Austin. I said, “well to me, my personal view, it's more about people. It's bringing two cultures together.” And then she was all of sudden was like, “oh I get this idea, I see what you guys are trying to do.” And from then on it was smooth, smooth sailing with the Coordinating Board. And we brought members of the Coordinating Board over [to Qatar].

Texas A&M University has a strong tradition of student involvement in governance, so the administration also realized the importance of including student leaders in the inception process. Furthermore, the administration was concerned and sensitive to how a student population consisting of predominantly white, conservative, Christians might react to the idea of opening a campus in the Middle East. One interviewee described a students' reaction to a visit to Qatar in May of 2003,

We got our student leader group to go [to Qatar]. And it was probably the best thing we did. We got this very conservative, very Christian, on the right, [student], a student leader. About three or four went. They spent time with the Qatari students and did everything. We came back. We talked to them. [The student] said, you know? They are just like us.

Descriptions of this visit to Qatar and others indicate that one of the primary strategies behind sending delegations to visit Qatar was to generate buy-in. As one administrator

that helped with planning stated, “So the next trick we did, we started bringing key faculty or key administrative and student leaders [to Qatar]. We did it in the right way...we sent a large group [to Qatar].”

The historical period contributed to the need for fostering widespread buy-in. Administrators acknowledged the potential for pushback when proposing a Middle Eastern branch campus months after the tragedy of September 11, 2001. As one administrator stated, “We were going to the Middle East. This was after 9/11 and so we had a sales job.”

Interview participants were unanimous in agreeing that mounting buy-in among key stakeholders was an integral step in TAMUQ’s inception process; however, perceptions of how well this was executed and received by various constituencies varied considerably. Interviewees that claimed there was little pushback and widespread buy-in across campus were largely insiders. In other words, the administrators that painted a rosy picture of pervasive buy-in across the institution were those involved in the planning process and had a vested interest in seeing the branch campus succeed. This insider’s comment is a good example of this positive outlook:

There was a real excitement around [the process of establishing the branch campus] and just a positive sort of [feeling]. Oh it was and it was contagious. We took groups, big groups of people over, who were skeptics, who were like this is ridiculous, but this is a free trip, “I’ll go.” And they’d come back just like “oh, wow.”

Other interviewees, not among the core group of planners, had a different perspective. In particular, the College of Engineering felt completely disenfranchised

form the process. As one administrator from the College of Engineering stated, “This [project] is built on us and they cut us out. It's like me trying to build a basketball team and then the basketball players are secondary to the whole decision-making.” One faculty member familiar with the inception process but not in the planning group and not from the College of Engineering offered important insight:

At that time the Dean of Engineering [at Texas A&M in College Station] was a little bit unpredictable and nobody from the upper administration was quite sure how he would respond. They were kind of afraid of letting him and his Associate Dean too close to the negotiations for fear of having it screwed up. So it was largely negotiated without engineering.

Not surprisingly, the College of Engineering had a different perspective. When asked why they were excluded from the process, an administrator from Engineering responded, “Pure power grab. Pure pettiness.” This comment was representative of a larger struggle between over who should be in charge of the Qatar campus project. The College of Engineering wanted control because the Qatar campus would offer engineering degrees; therefore, from their perspective this was a branch of the College. The president viewed the Qatar project as an endeavor of the whole University because the engineering curriculum required courses from several other departments and running a true branch campus required the involvement of administrative offices from across the institution.

The College of Engineering begrudgingly agreed to participate and settled for a “dotted line” relationship on the organizational chart. Everyone agreed the meaning of this dotted line was ambiguous and likely an effort to placate frustrations. This is an instance where the president’s vision and strategy for running the branch had a direct

impact on the organizational structure. Although Engineering lost the battle for control, the College would benefit by receiving several new tenure track faculty positions and the promise of additional discretionary funds. As one administrator explained,

The Dean of Engineering saw this flow of money back to his college [in College Station] and they got his buy-in that way. Because they were hiring tenured faculty. The Dean saw it as wow, “I'm getting a whole bunch of new faculty for my college, and if that thing fails? Okay, so be it, because the university's going to cover it and cover these people, and I'm going to build my college anyway.”

The extent to which the President and other Qatar campus project coordinators attempted to involve the College of Engineering in the planning process is debatable, but the ineffective nature of their efforts is clear. The College felt disenfranchised from the project and though some benefits from involvement existed, senior administrators were unhappy with the process and the imposed organizational structure. Once the branch campus was in operation, this feeling of marginalization had negative consequences, especially during the early years. In particular, interviewees shared that faculty recruitment on the Qatar campus has suffered over the years due to this contentious relationship between the College of Engineering and the upper-administration in College Station. Faculty recruitment is explored in-depth in Chapter Six.

Negotiation

Another fundamental step in Texas A&M University at Qatar's inception process was the lengthy and often times complex negotiation process with the Qatar Foundation. Although the ten-year contract was not available for review due to confidentiality restrictions, interview participants described the negotiation process and the stipulations

each side brought into negotiations. This section describes contract non-negotiables, the influence of socio-cultural norms, and how the Qatar Foundation learned from this process.

Non-Negotiables

There are two sides to every agreement, and such is the case for the ten-year contract agreement formed between Texas A&M and the Qatar Foundation. Some components of the contract were relatively straightforward requiring little negotiation, while other aspects were more difficult and not fully resolved before the campus began operations. When entering negotiations Texas A&M had three non-negotiables: 1) the branch campus must be fully-funded and not use state tax dollars, 2) the admission standards had to be the same as the home campus, and 3) curriculum content must be materially the same.

Somewhat surprisingly, these three issues did not seem to generate much disagreement. Both parties agreed that admission and academic standards must be replicated in order to maintain quality and reputation. Reputation was important to Texas A&M because they did not want to dilute their brand image. Similarly, reputation was important to the Qatar Foundation because the prestige of these Engineering degree programs was a driving factor behind their decision to invite Texas A&M to open a branch campus. One might assume that the financial terms of the contract would be a sticking point; however, interviewees involved in the negotiations indicate otherwise. This participant shared a common sentiment:

I know there are some other [branch campuses] in Qatar who asked for a lot of money. We didn't. We just wanted to provide a program. They gave a general

package...a management fee that made sense to us. We were not overly greedy. Once we decided this makes sense from the feedback from the business community, from the student groups and the faculty in general...and we figured out how we can recruit faculty...we felt like we can move forward.

In other words, Texas A&M's financial expectations were met with little, if any, resistance. A comment from a Qatar Foundation representative supports this proposition that financial terms were not a concern:

I think that on the first round of these proposals the branches got pretty much everything they wanted... Because they've got unbelievable buildings; they've got unbelievable salaries; they've got unbelievable benefits. Their packages are crazy. They're unmatched anywhere in the world. Evidence would say that the branches got what they wanted.

In essence, the Qatar Foundation agreed to cover all employee salaries, operating costs, and building expenses. The initial ten-year agreement was reportedly worth roughly \$960 million. This budget included salaries, operating expenses, and an annual \$10 million discretionary management fee paid to the main campus. Further details of the financial arrangements are discussed in the next chapter.

Other elements of negotiation did not go as smoothly. The Qatar Foundation approached Texas A&M to provide an undergraduate engineering program. As a research-intensive university, Texas A&M knew from experience that in order to set up a top-notch engineering program, they would need to recruit high caliber faculty. In engineering and the hard sciences in particular, this requires research opportunities and

graduate programs to supply research assistants. This administrator involved in the inception of TAMU sums this belief up well:

They basically wanted us to come over and teach and we said no, we want to teach and do research... We kept all of the time pushing that if you want our faculty, our good faculty, to come over they want graduate students and they want research.

He goes on to say, “they kept trying to avoid the graduate education and they kept trying to avoid the research.” Another participant shared a similar comment, “There was discussion about when we could start the graduate programs and the importance of that. I don't think they fully understood how graduate education supports the undergraduate education.” According to accounts from several A&M administrators, the Qatar Foundation did not understand the need for research and graduate programs, but Texas A&M administrators felt they had made progress in convincing the Qatar Foundation of the importance of research and graduate education. Although not formally included in the original agreement, TAMU ultimately signed the contract with confidence it could be negotiated further in the not-too-distant future. Considering how strongly A&M felt about the critical nature of research and graduate studies, it is surprising that they moved forward without QF's full support.

Socio-cultural Norms

In addition to the content of the agreement, several interviewees discussed the process of negotiation with the Qatar Foundation. The challenges experienced during negotiation were often attributed to cultural differences, as described by this TAMU administrator involved in the process, “We spent, I don't know, six to eight months of

intensive negotiation. The Qataris are tough negotiators.” Several interviewees commented on how “tough” the Qatar Foundation representatives were during negotiations, which was described as a cultural attribute:

We were exhausted after these long [negotiation] sessions. These guys know how to negotiate... The Arabs are the best negotiators in the world. They have been doing this trading and all this for thousands of years. They're really good at this... And they're persistent.

Furthermore, multiple interviewees referred to one Qatar Foundation representative in particular as Columbo—the famous fictional American detective—due to his tough negotiating style. As one A&M participant states,

[The QF representative] was like Columbo. I mean he was incredible... We had meetings once in the Saint Regis Hotel that they picked up the bill for in New York City, and we're sitting across downstairs in this room doing all this negotiating, going back and forth and we think okay, the deal is finally done, everything is done and he would go, “like, okay, ready?” “Yeah.” “Everybody understand?” And then he would say, “I have one last question.” And everything would start over again.

Another A&M staff member described how they adapted to this style,

They started out not offering that much and, basically, we had to come back, and we had to say look this is what it's going to take. And you would get them to a point that you just knew that they were going to say no but you had to be willing to walk away from the table, and they would say well that's as far as we can go sorry. And then they'd say, “okay”... We had to understand there wasn't

anything personal about that, it was just the way they do things in that country and so...you really do have to understand how they function over there because you have to work within those constraints.

The extent to which the Qatar Foundation's tough negotiation style is representative of the Arab or Qatari culture is uncertain. Nevertheless, the A&M staff involved in negotiations all concurred that the contract negotiation process was significantly different from the process they were accustomed to in the U.S. Whether this was known beforehand or learned through the process is less clear; however, those interviewed clearly indicate the need to understand and adapt to the negotiation norms of the other party. Although difficult along the way, through their willingness to adapt, A&M negotiators felt they benefitted in the final outcome.

Teaching the Qatar Foundation

Despite negotiating two prior branch campus agreements with American universities, TAMU staff perceived that the Qatar Foundation did not fully understand the key components of American higher education. One interviewee attributed this to a lack of experience with high quality tertiary education, "The only experience that the Qataris had was with Qatar University which was not a quality institution at all."

The Texas A&M negotiators described a process of teaching the Qatar Foundation these fundamentals of American higher education. Much of the need for teaching related to A&M's desire for research support and graduate education, as this participant states:

One thing we insisted on was research...A&M was not interested to go there just to develop an undergraduate program. Education has a tie with research, and we

made that clear to them and they understood that. But to get to that point took a long time. They said well, we need you to deliver the undergraduate program first before we could get the [graduate] education. We kept saying, “you don't have the research, we can't get the faculty there and there is no future for this campus.” And then we, to some extent pushed them, and as a result they developed the Qatar National Research Foundation. To some degree we provided the impetus. Suddenly they were talking about education research, so I think we had an influence.

In another instance of teaching the Qatar Foundation, participants stated that QF originally only wanted TAMU's petroleum engineering program, but after explaining the how the country could benefit from additional degrees, they eventually agreed to add electrical, chemical, and mechanical. This appears to be a clear case where the institution's academic strategy influenced structure. Texas A&M pushed to offer multiple degrees, resulting in the eventual inclusion of four engineering programs.

The extent to which Texas A&M actually introduced and convinced QF of the importance of research and graduate degrees is unknown since no data were collected from the Qatar Foundation on this topic. One could reasonably assume, however, that these same issues (i.e., graduate education and research support) arose during the negotiations with Cornell University several years earlier. Nevertheless, participants felt strongly that they contributed in a significant way to QF's eventual embrace of research and graduate education. If, in fact, A&M's push for research contributed to the establishment of QNRF then TAMU's strategy had an impact on the Qatar Foundation's structure. Tangentially related to this study, this introduces the possibility that a branch

campus' strategy can impact the host country's structure and attitude toward American higher education.

Davies Model

In an article on internationalization strategies, John Davies (1995) discusses six factors that institutions should consider to inform the decision-making and formation process. Although the model was not designed specifically for IBCs, it proved to be useful in identifying and examining the factors that informed Texas A&M's decision to open a branch campus in Qatar. In this study, these decision factors are distinguished from the broader motivations or rationale that encouraged the institution's interest in opening a branch campus. This model helped to explore and comprehend the next, more practical step, when an institution decides whether or not they have the *ability* to successfully engage in an international project of this nature.

Internal Factors

The first three factors to consider when considering a new international initiative are internal to an organization. First, an institution should contemplate how well the said project aligns with their mission. Although Texas A&M did not state a specific objective of opening an international branch campus or to engage in establishing foreign outposts, interviewees agreed that the University had a strong desire to internationalize the campus. This commitment is loosely articulated in the University's Vision 2020 strategic plan in imperative six "Diversify and Globalize the A&M Community" in the precept titled, "Encourage an Institutional Global Network" (Texas A&M University, n.d.-d). One participant also referenced an internal strategic planning document that had more specific

details on how this imperative would be achieved but, unfortunately, this document was not available for review.

Despite a lack of articulated commitment to establishing foreign outposts, the institution had already engaged in various forms of transnational higher education—some successful and some not. A study abroad center had been established in Italy, and a research center for faculty was developed in Mexico. Both outposts were described as successful. In another instance during the 1990's, an attempt to open a branch campus in Japan was shut down after a short period. Although some interviewees were employed at the University during this period, none were involved in a significant way and, thus, the details of this initiative are blurry. Based on limited information, the Japan campus seemed more like a franchise agreement where a small number of faculty from the main campus were hired to deliver the Texas A&M curriculum, far from a full-scale branch campus. The mayor of the city in Japan where the branch campus was located was the primary advocate for the partnership. Once he left office, financial support dried up and Texas A&M closed the campus after a short period in operation.

Though not all international initiatives were successful, the institution's previous engagement in cross-border higher education no doubt contributed to their willingness to consider the Qatar Foundation's invitation to open a branch campus. Furthermore, according to interviewees, the new President, Dr. Gates, had extensive international experience and appreciated the value of an international presence.

Other participants suggested that opening the Qatar campus was in line with the institution's commitment to serve the public good,

Our mission [is] teaching, research and service. Service means not just service to College Station and Bryan, not just to the Brazos Valley, but to Texas and to the United States of America and to anybody else that we can help. And so it's...part of A&M's mission, a legitimate part of the mission for us. I mean they need help over there. They're willing to pay for it... It's not going to cost us anything. So what's the problem?

Although not initiated from within the institution, Texas A&M's strategic plans and previous initiatives indicate that opening a foreign branch campus was very much in line with the institution's commitment and propensity to internationalizing the campus.

Davies (1995) goes on to suggest that institutions examine their strengths and weaknesses in current programs, personnel, and finances to decide whether they can effectively support a new international initiative. Interview data reveal that the TAMU coordinating team did not consider these factors closely, but for good reason. Unlike most international initiatives—especially those prior to 1995 when the Davies model was developed—did not have a host organization offering to fully underwrite all incurred expenses. Therefore, in this particular case, there did not appear to be much need for Texas A&M to consider whether their current programs, personnel, and finances could support a branch campus because the Qatar Foundation was offering to pay for everything. Administrators involved in the project created a staffing plan based on perceived need and a related budget to hire as many new staff as necessary and to compensate staff on the main campus working on the Qatar campus project.

In many ways this was an ideal scenario for a new international initiative; however, a number of hidden issues exist that research participants did not address.

Though the Qatar Foundation offered to pay all expenses, money cannot fully cover the impact of time spent by senior administrators engaged in the inception process. Multiple interviewees attest to the significant time the president, provost, vice president for research, and other high-level faculty and administrators spent working on this project. No matter what monetary amount QF offered to Texas A&M, no sum can cover the loss of time these individuals could have spent on other projects, perhaps more central to the institution's mission. In theory, the main campus may have suffered as a result of the extensive time spent on the branch campus project. The participants were not asked to consider this issue, so it is unclear whether the College Station campus was impacted negatively by the inception of TAMUQ.

The final internal factor of the Davies model encourages institutions to consider what departments and individuals will be involved in the project. In the case of Texas A&M, this translated to determining what departments would have a formal connection to the branch campus and what individuals would be involved. The controversial decision not to fully include the College of Engineering in the inception and operation of the campus was one important consideration. As stated, there was an ambiguous "dotted line" relationship between the College and the branch campus. Other departments had some form of connection—whether formalized or not—to the Qatar campus: College of Science, Department of Mathematics, College of Liberal Arts, the President's Office, the Provost's Office, and several finance/accounting related offices. Those offices with a more limited connection were the Office of Admissions, Division of Student Affairs, and Computing and Information Services. In some cases, these offices offered support in the initial design and hiring process and continue to act in a limited advisory capacity, but

they lack a formal connection to the Qatar Campus. Many interviewees commented on the importance of maintaining a close connection between the Qatar and main campus, so the lack of connection between some departments and offices is noteworthy. The Qatar campus' relationship to main campus departments is complex and more fully explored in the chapter titled Pleasing Many Masters.

On the individual staffing level, finding the right inaugural dean of the Qatar campus was an extremely important decision. A highly capable leader was needed to successfully navigate the often-tumultuous initial years and to set a positive tone for the future. Dr. Michael Kemp, a faculty member from the Department of Biology was selected for the job due to his experience in successfully turning around a failing domestic branch campus of Texas A&M located in Galveston, Texas. Not surprisingly, the College of Engineering was upset over this appointment because Dr. Kemp was not an Engineer. To his credit, however, Dr. Kemp did have experience overseeing several engineering programs at the Galveston campus.

TAMU administrators clearly weighed multiple options when determining which departments and individuals would be involved in the branch campus. Some of these decisions were obvious and uncontested, but others, such as the choice of dean and relationship to the College of Engineering, were met with great controversy.

External Factors

The other three factors in the Davies model are external to an institution: perceptions of image and identity, trends and opportunities in the international market place, and competitive situation. Although interviewees mentioned several techniques Texas A&M used to determine whether it could be successful at running a branch campus

in Qatar, the details of these assessment efforts were limited. The A&M delegations that traveled to Qatar prior to the signed agreement were not just about developing buy-in. Several of the groups were specifically tasked with determining feasibility. As this participant stated,

Within our first year I had made something like eight trips...So, it was an iterative process. We would report back after that first trip, for instance, and we would meet internally within the university. We would figure out what the next set of issues or questions were, and then we would go back to Qatar Foundation and get the answers to those, and those would generate more questions. But, it took quite a bit of traveling over here, and video conferencing, and so forth. But Qatar Foundation was very good in terms of being open to our questions and responding...and we were able to work through those issues fairly quickly.

In terms of perceptions of image and identity, Texas A&M was concerned with how their brand would be impacted by opening a branch campus in the Middle East but, interestingly, participants did not mention whether the institution was concerned about how Texas A&M was perceived by the branch campus' target audience in Qatar and around the Gulf. However, as this administrator noted, "Texas A&M is a good regional university with some national prominence in certain areas but [the branch campus] gives them an opportunity to internationalize," so perhaps there was an assumption that potential students and their families in the Gulf were not familiar with Texas A&M. Moreover, no participants described whether they considered how well American higher education was received in general in the region. This could have been determined by examining the number of Qatari students that study in the U.S. and by talking with the

other two American branch campuses in Education City. All that said, since the institution has one of the strongest petroleum engineering programs in the world, with many alumni working in the Gulf, individuals in the oil and gas industry were more likely to be familiar with Texas A&M. Although not discussed in the literature, one could argue that local links to industry could contribute to a branch campus' success.

Qatar's connection to the oil and gas industry was also likely perceived to be a market place opportunity. In Qatar, this sector was growing by leaps and bounds and needed well-trained engineers to fuel this growth. Furthermore, policies were in place that would essentially guarantee that many of TAMU's graduates would receive jobs. Like many Gulf countries, Qatar requires that international companies employ a certain percentage of Qatari nationals. Additionally, Texas A&M was on the forefront of the new trend of opening international branch campuses. The time period of TAMUQ's inception (from 2001-2003) marked the beginning of this growth period that would see almost 150 IBCs established over the next seven years (Becker, 2009; Verbik & Merkley, 2006). By starting a branch campus at this early stage, there was potential to gain some advantages through first-mover advantage, which had benefited universities in other countries (see Wilkins, 2010). Although participants did not specifically cite this as a consideration for opening the campus, they likely understood they would be among the small group of American institutions that operated IBCs.

The final external factor Davies (1995) suggests institutions should weigh when designing a transnational initiative is their competitive situation. Texas A&M's potential competitors were Qatar University's College of Engineering, other regional engineering institutions, and other Education City institutions. According to one interviewee, Qatar

University was low quality, and Texas A&M offered a higher quality and more prestigious alternative. Moreover, as a senior administrator from the Qatar campus stated,

The U.S. is at the forefront of engineering and science... I'm not trying to discount the other good institutions all over the world, but you will see they look at the U.S. to bring the academic leadership, to bring the science leadership...so I think the U.S. can be extremely helpful because they have achieved a lot in the last 220 years.

In terms of competition with the other American universities in Education City, one could reasonably assume the risk was low since they were offering medical and design degrees, which do not typically attract the same students as engineering. Furthermore, as mentioned, engineers are in high demand, are paid well, and are perceived to be employed in positions of prestige—all factors pointing to a positive competitive position. As one participant stated, “A&M is still a good fit here because it's engineering based, and in this part of Asia and the Middle East, engineering is one of the top professions that parents want their kids to get into.”

A final competition-based consideration was the question of whether students would prefer to attend an American institution in their home country or region, or study abroad in the U.S., UK, or other Western countries that allow a more robust cultural immersion experience, among other benefits. Although not mentioned specifically in research interviews, the literature notes that students choose to enroll at branch campuses in order to stay closer to family, for cultural reasons, to save money, and for convenience (Becker, 2009; Lawton & Katsomitros, 2012).

Although international branch campuses were hardly on the international higher education radar in 1995, Davies' model of factors to consider with engaging in cross-border partnerships was largely relevant to Texas A&M when considering an IBC. As described above, Texas A&M likely contemplated some aspects of each factor during the inception of the Qatar campus, which arguably contributed to their success. On the other hand, areas where contention existed (i.e., the role of the College of Engineering), have led to struggles and detracted from even greater success.

Conclusion

The inception of Texas A&M University at Qatar was a multifaceted process orchestrated by a handful of individuals but involved and impacted numerous internal and external constituencies. Creating buy-in among these groups was recognized as an important goal during the inception process and was successfully accomplished to a certain extent, but the College of Engineering, arguably the most important stakeholder, felt excluded and powerless. By understanding the process TAMU underwent to involve these various constituencies, other institutions considering engagement in a branch campus project can learn from their success and failure. For instance, A&M's strategy to include large numbers of faculty, staff, and students on official visits to Qatar created goodwill and generated buy-in. On the other hand, although the decision to mostly exclude Engineering from the process may have made the initial approval easier, as evident in forthcoming chapters, this decision had ongoing negative consequences.

The negotiation process is another important component of TAMUQ's inception that other institutions and host countries should consider. A&M benefitted from developing a clearly defined set of non-negotiables that made the process more

straightforward. Additionally, administrators and host country officials should acknowledge and attempt to understand cultural differences that may have an impact on negotiations. Texas A&M identified the Qatar Foundation's tough negotiating style, and pushed back harder than they normally would have when engaging with a potential U.S. partner. Next, institutions should not assume potential host countries fully understand the characteristics of their national system of higher education. TAMU's biggest struggle was convincing QF of the necessity of supporting research and graduate education at the branch campus, but after significant negotiation, A&M administrators made some headway.

Finally, Davies' (1995) model that outlines factors institutions should consider before engaging in new international initiatives proved quite relevant to the establishment of a branch campus. In particular, Texas A&M's preexisting projects and stated commitment to transnational higher education demonstrated a close connection to the institutional mission. Without this commitment, institutions may struggle to generate widespread support for such a project. Furthermore, although TAMU's situation was somewhat unusual due to the funding model, there was still a need to consider the institution's ability to support such an initiative and the potential impact on the home campus. Institutions must also consider what departments and individuals and offices on the main campus should be involved in the branch campus and whether they are capable of providing adequate support.

An institution interested in opening a branch campus must also consider several external factors. TAMU demonstrated this by considering how opening a branch campus would impact their image at home in the U.S. Other institutions should consider whether

they have a name with brand recognition among the target student population. This relates to the importance of determining whether there is a demand for a particular degree in the proposed country or region, which was quite promising in Texas A&M's case due to the growth of the oil and gas section and corresponding demand for engineers. Lastly, institutions must conduct an honest assessment of their competitive position among other national and regional universities and the potentially more alluring option of studying abroad in the West.

CHAPTER FIVE. Motivations to Branch Out

Examining the inception of Texas A&M University at Qatar before analyzing the overarching impetus driving the project may seem counterintuitive, yet in this particular case the institutional motivations were realized throughout the inception process and, thus, are better understood in context. Much of the literature makes an unstated assumption that the desire to establish a branch campus originates at the home institution (Edelstein & Douglass, 2012), yet a number of branch campuses are initiated by the host country. In other words, the host country is first motivated to invite a foreign university to open a branch campus and, once approached, said university must determine the rationale whether to engage in such a project.

Since Texas A&M was approached by the Qatar Foundation and had not—at least in the recent past—considered opening an IBC, the overarching question of why they should engage and how an IBC would benefit (or harm) the institution largely occurred alongside the inception of the campus. For purposes of this study, motivations are considered the broad rationale that drove Texas A&M and the Qatar Foundation to form a partnership.

From an institutional perspective, identifying motivations is critical because these drivers can impact strategy, organizational structure and, ultimately, the success of an organization (Chandler, 1969). Although not overtly discussed in branch campus literature, this concept that is derived from organizational theory of corporate organizations could logically hold true for IBCs. For instance, if an institution's primary motivation is to generate revenue by operating a branch campus then administrators

should determine tuition fees and design a structure (e.g., faculty to student ratio) that can support this goal. The motivations of the host country are also important to consider—especially when funding and other incentives are provided—because the host will likely have certain expectations that will impact strategy and structure. That’s not to say institutions are only looking out for their own good; indeed, one must consider altruistic motives, such as the desire to help improve education in a developing country. This chapter explores both Texas A&M’s and the Qatar Foundation’s motivations that inspired the creation of TAMUQ.

Texas A&M Motivations

The factors that ultimately led Texas A&M to sign a ten-year agreement to establish the Qatar campus are complex and multifaceted, but the majority of motivations shared by participants can be divided into four categories: international aspirations, opportunity and connections, research growth, and financial drivers.

International Aspirations

Texas A&M had international aspirations long before the Qatar Foundation pitched the idea of a branch campus. In 1982, long before the Vision 2020 strategic plan specifically outlined internationalization as an objective, Texas A&M opened a study center in Tuscany, Italy for students to study architecture abroad (Study Abroad Programs, 2007). Eleven years later, the University opened an administrative office in Mexico City to “facilitate University engagement in Mexico,” which assists with research grants, hiring Mexican faculty, and other services (Texas A&M University, n.d.-c). Although neither of these foreign outposts is large, they demonstrate a preexisting openness to global engagement.

The new president, Dr. Robert Gates, further contributed to an environment open to new international initiatives. As a high-level administrator commented, “Bob Gates...was very keen on expanding the global reach of the university.” Another participant stated, “[A&M] was already in the mode of looking more internationally and globally at outreach, [and] not just study abroad programs.” Unbeknownst to the Qatar Foundation, the climate at A&M in the early 2000’s was ripe for a new international opportunity, and the invitation could not have come at a better time. However, this project was unique. Unlike Texas A&M’s other transnational outposts in Italy and Mexico, the idea for a branch campus was initiated outside the university; whereas, the study center in Italy was established “because it fit in the curriculum of architecture, started by architecture pushing it, then liberal arts got involved...it fit into the curriculum, renaissance, architecture, history,” said one administrator familiar with the university’s international efforts.

Though the logic behind establishing a campus did not originate from within the University, study participants discussed a variety of reasons how the Qatar campus could help Texas A&M meet its global aspirations. As this main campus administrator explained:

People, students from Texas, tend to be, especially the ones coming from the main rural, white, conservative—nothing wrong with that—but their world view tends to be shaped by the distance. You can't even get out of the state in a day so why bother to go overseas, right? You don't meet that many [diverse] people, so meeting foreigners is not something you really feel comfortable with. The community tends to be more conservative, very religious, so whatever your pastor

said is right, you don't really push yourself to think out of the box, so to us this campus may offer an opportunity to broaden the perspective... It's important for A&M students to be engaged in the broader global setting so that they can become more competitive, ready to compete in a changing world. That's really to us, a driving force.

The Qatar campus had the potential to be a study abroad destination for main campus students where they could spend a semester or a year in a culture very different from their own. Furthermore, students from the Qatar campus studying abroad on the main campus could, perceivably, expose the College Station students to a new culture.

Opening a campus in Qatar was also thought to be an opportunity for global exposure, as an administrator in Qatar stated, “from the standpoint of publicity...it was [about] name recognition. I think having a branch campus in the different part of the world...it's just something cool to say.” Another Qatar campus staff member said, “Originally I think they really did it to broaden the brand. I really think they wanted to be competitive with other major universities.” Specifics on why global brand recognition was important to the University or how the institution might benefit were absent from such discussion; though, increasing international presence is widely thought to enhance international student recruitment—a common goal among institutions seeking to increase revenue through full-fee paying students. Another benefit to cultivating global brand image is the ability to form connections with new companies, thereby increasing employment opportunities for graduates.

Despite this internal perception that A&M was motivated by global exposure, interestingly, a senior-level administrator from the Qatar Foundation specifically noted TAMUQ's lack of attention to this matter:

I don't hear A&M talking much about “[we are] very internationally prominent and Qatar proves it.” You don't hear that much out of A&M, whereas some of the other branches make a big deal out of “we're internationally engaged.” That's a phrase that people will use and particularly if you look at some of the branches that are outside of Qatar, the language is very often about the home being engaged. It's not about what the branch contributes [to the home country], it's about the home [campus], and the branch is a demonstration that NYU is an international institution or whomever. NYU I use because that is their mantra and that's what they say all the time, so it's obvious what they're trying to do.

Although outside the scope of this discussion, this raises an interesting question of whether the motivations that initially encourage an institution to engage in a branch campus remain their motivations over time. In this case, after the Qatar campus opened, A&M's public rhetoric does not appear to match the initial motivation of enhancing international image. That said, what is communicated publically does not always match internal reality.

Opportunity and Connections

In some instances, the impetus for a branch campus comes from outside the institution. For Texas A&M, the proposal to open a branch campus was an unsolicited opportunity from the Qatar Foundation, as this interviewee highlights, “I don't think we envisioned having something like this until the opportunity was kind of presented to us.”

Several interview participants commented on the importance of *opportunity*. This circumstance shares at least some resemblance to A&M's other foreign outposts, as this participant made clear when discussing the Italy and Mexico centers, "each of the...oversees operations...developed because we have to meet the needs of our students and the faculty and the *opportunity exists* [emphasis added]."

Since this opportunity arose from an outside entity, this raises the question of whether A&M would have initiated such a project on its own accord? This administrator from the Qatar campus thinks not:

When I say we are over here because we are asked, I mean that in a sense that I think we needed an excuse if we were going to do what this has turned into, a true branch campus, a true international presence, not a study center, or a research collaboration or those kinds of things, but a honest to god campus. I just don't see A&M having done that without that catalyst [from the Qatar Foundation].

Despite A&M's desire to engage globally, this candid perspective implies the need for something beyond a mere desire to take on such a large project. Participants repeatedly described the importance of an outside impetus. The invitation from the Qatar Foundation also seemed to engender a sense of pride, as this former Qatar-campus administrator indicated, Texas A&M was "honored to be recognized as one of the leading engineering programs, particularly in petroleum engineering, so they wanted to accept and be there, basically, to acknowledge their eminence in that area."

In addition to the presented opportunity, many participants described the importance of having *connections* to Qatar. A Qatar campus faculty member summarizes this linkage well:

[There are] so many Aggies in Arabia—particularly working for Aramco in Saudi Arabia—that [a branch campus] was a natural. There were already thousands of Aggies that work in the area, so there were contacts to begin with. I think at the time the local CEO of Exxon Mobil was an Aggie, so it was just a very natural choice.

Furthermore, then president Dr. Gates, had connections to Qatar and the region, so from the top of the hierarchy there was a level of comfort in going to the Middle East that likely trickled down. The connections seem to go deeper. Former President George Bush Senior was reportedly involved in some capacity, perhaps stemming from his connection to Bob Gates and his longstanding relationship with Texas A&M University.

Several participants mentioned the potential political advantages of opening a campus in Qatar. Texas A&M hoped to “bring some good to that region by having an educated populace and taking American values, taking Land Grant creation values to the Middle East,” stated one administrator from the main campus. He went on to say, “We can have an impact on the philosophy and make them more democratic, in addition to educating them and making them engineers.” An administrator from the Qatar campus shared similar sentiments, “And a more noble argument was if we're over there, and we're showing freedom of speech, freedom of religion, academic freedom...how that would help them succeed, that's a real contribution to their culture.” Yet another academic administrator said the inception team imagined that TAMUQ could have a significant impact when graduates applied these newfound values in the work place and, better yet, when they became prominent leaders in the region.

Research Growth

Another reason the Qatar campus was perceived to be a good fit was due to the potential for enhanced research opportunities. In fact, a senior administrator on the Qatar campus leadership team indicated the potential for research growth was one of the most significant motivators. He commented, “The thinking was that by having this partnership with Qatar Foundation, they would open opportunities for faculty to become involved in research that they would not normally be able to engage in.” The promise for research development went beyond the potential for connections with local industry—the hope was always that the Qatar Foundation would supply money to fund research projects. IBCs across the globe are typically focused on teaching, so the fact that QF demonstrated interest in supporting research was especially attractive and supported the research mission of Texas A&M.

The perceived potential for research, however, is somewhat puzzling considering that Texas A&M and the Qatar Foundation could not reach an agreement over research support in the initial contract. Considering how important research opportunities supposedly were to faculty recruitment and the ultimate success of TAMUQ, moving forward without an agreement in this area was a risky decision for TAMU. Perhaps the Qatar Foundation knew a national research program was in the works and shared this information with Texas A&M but could not formally promise research grants in the contract. On the other hand, A&M may have let the excitement of the project and other factors overshadow the uncertain reality of research support.

Financial Drivers

Texas A&M’s motivations to consider a branch campus in Qatar went beyond the desire for an international presence, an invitation, and research growth. As this senior

administrator said, “it fits with the main campus' objectives...and then it just happened to be this great opportunity where they were going to pay for everything. It just fit.” In a time of decreasing state subsidies and increasing costs, money matters, but to what extent was Texas A&M University motivated by money when deciding to open the Qatar campus? Was it just about covering the costs, or was there a hope to generate surplus revenue? Almost across the board, this is the million-dollar question that popular media and critics of IBCs hone in on. When asked what motivated TAMU to open a campus in Qatar, almost every participant in this study raised the issue of money without prompting. Answers varied greatly, but when considered all together these perspectives help paint a nuanced picture of how money acted as a motivator.

First, in order to understand the institution's financial motivations, it is helpful to explain the formal monetary arrangements. According to multiple accounts, the Qatar Foundation covered staff and faculty salaries and benefits, all operating expenses including those on the home campus that result from work on Qatar campus matters (referred to as service-level agreements), and a \$10 million per annum management fee. This management fee was the only discretionary element of the budget and was originally managed by the president and later the provost. The University also receives a negotiated percentage of each faculty research grant to cover indirect costs associated with facilitating research projects, which is discussed further in Chapter Seven in the section on research.

When discussing the extent that money acted as a motivator, participants fell into three categories: 1) Not about the money, 2) Somewhat about the money, and 3) All about the money. As stated, a majority of interviewees discussed money when asked

about Texas A&M's motivations for opening a campus. In a few cases when participants did not bring finances up and they were familiar with the inception of TAMUQ, I asked them outright whether money acted as a motivator.

This administrator involved in the inception process sums up the first category well, "We made a little bit of money out of it. Not a huge amount. It was never about the money. It was about why should Texas A&M be doing this, and does it have a positive impact on our institution?" Another administrator on the inception team shares this perspective and is critical of the naysayers:

There is a bit of a crass attitude that, hey we have this big management fee for doing it and it's, you know, that the Qatar Foundation is paying off the university to do it and that makes it worthwhile. It is a prevalent attitude, but when you know the truth there's no way, there's no way that's the motivation. So, I think it's a much more altruistic motivation than most people would believe.

A senior-level administrator on the Qatar campus expands on this idea that money could not have acted as a primary motivator,

I know for a fact how much money goes back [to College Station] as a result of [the Qatar campus], and it can't be that. It really can't be. In the big scheme of the A&M machine and all the money that they have, it's pennies, really.

The logic behind these claims is examined further after describing the second group of interviewees, which was less pollyannish. This next group saw money as one of multiple motivating factors behind A&M's decision to open the Qatar campus, which was the most prevalent perspective shared. This participant's comment captures this group's sentiment well,

I really think that the original motives were altruistic. And I'm not sure that's the same case for some of the other institutions that are here. The fact that there were millions of dollars that then flowed from it, I think was a great benefit from that altruism, but I honestly believe that that's where that began.

After listing several non-financial motivating factors, a faculty member from the Qatar campus conceded that, "a research institution is always looking for more money and tapping into one of the wealthiest countries in the world is not without merit." Another administrator that helped with the Qatar campus budget noted rather matter-of-factly, "Anytime you can get \$8, \$10, \$12 million dollars a year with really no strings attached to that, so to speak, you gotta listen."

The final, smaller, group felt strongly that money was A&M's primary motivating factor. Somewhat surprisingly, one high-level administrator from each campus shared this perspective. The College Station administrator expounded this point-of-view by quoting an engineering faculty member, "People in Mississippi need our engineering but we are not going to Mississippi; we are going to Doha because of money. We are money critical." When asked what motivated Texas A&M to open a campus in Doha, the other administrator in Qatar stated emphatically, "Money." He added that although money was the main motivator, in reality the actual returns were not as significant as predicted. Both informants are in positions that provide them with an informed perspective on the institution's financial matters.

I was curious to know how the Qatar Foundation would react to the thought that money was Texas A&M's primary motivator, so when interviewing a QF administrator, I

asked, “Some people, not everyone, have said that money is the number one reason why the university is here. Do you see that as problematic?”

Yeah I do, and I don't think it's problematic that [money] is one of several reasons for being here but for it to be the first and/or the foremost I think is not why you want people here, and I don't know what to do with that if, in fact, that's the reason that they're coming, how do you change that perspective? How do you dig into A&M, the leadership here, the leadership back in College Station and say look, it's not a problem that you like the money, but you gotta be here for some broader purposes here and you need to do the same thing that you do in Texas which is you need to serve the public good. And if you were to go out publicly in College Station in Texas and say A&M is here to take your money, how well would that go over? Not [well]. You know, so they shouldn't be doing it here either. They should be articulating and acting on their core values which are essentially service to the community and capacity building of the citizens of Texas.

Although this is only the perspective of one QF administrator, it is safe to assume a similar mentality would be shared among most QF staff and the leadership that initiated the partnership with Texas A&M.

Interviewees made a number of additional comments, which help build a more nuanced picture of A&M's financial motivations both before and after the campus began operations. Outside President Gates' desire to expand A&M's global reach, he made a significant commitment to hire an unprecedented number of new faculty on the main campus. Multiple participants, including one significantly involved in the inception

process, specifically stated that Dr. Gates used the discretionary money obtained through the Qatar Foundation partnership to fund this initiative. This is further evidence that suggests money was at least a partial driving force behind the Qatar campus.

Perhaps the most noteworthy common thread among participants' comments on financial motivations was that the importance of money as a driver has increased over time. In other words, the revenue generated from the Qatar campus has become more critical over time and now acts as a more significant motivator than during the initial inception. This Qatar-based administrator offers a metaphor that explains why,

I was poor and then I win the lotto, I don't want to go back to being poor.... I've gotten accustomed to this amount of money coming in every month from my lotto check I don't want to see that end. And you know, the cost of everything is going up. Cost of education is going up and A&M can use that money to offset some operational costs, which makes it cheaper for the residents of Texas to get an education, which is good for Texas, which is good for everybody.

Some attributed the increased reliance on Qatar-based revenue to the dramatic increase in research grants over time in which College Station automatically takes 30 percent from each grant to cover overhead. Charging for indirect costs on research grants is the norm in U.S. higher education but, nevertheless, the Qatar grants funnel a significant amount of money into the A&M system each year. This administrator sums it up quite succinctly, "they are desperate for that money in College Station. It's not clear how they would manage without it right now."

Another thread of responses from interviewees indicated that while the main campus cares about the money, those at the branch campus do not. This high-level Qatar administrator explained,

So does the main campus care about money? Certainly. We don't see any of that that goes back to the main campus, so for us it's a moot point. Whether it's one dollar or ten million dollars, it doesn't really affect us directly, other than that money that goes back helps pay parts of salaries that helps me. That helps us.

A Qatar Foundation administrator was asked to react to this idea of a division, where the main campus was motivated by money, but the branch campus was driven by more altruistic motives. He responded,

The decision-making that College Station administration, the processes that they undertake and the primary goals are going to be tainted by that kind of perspective, and it depends on how effective the leadership is here [in Qatar]...I think that it's incumbent of the local leadership here to really push back..."I will try to contribute as much as I can through grants, tuition generation and that kind of thing, but that's not my primary reason for being here." I think a Dean would say that in College Station, so I think that's what they have to be saying here too.

The Provost Office in College Station maintains a significant degree of power over the Qatar campus, and though the Qatar administrators have become increasing savvy in managing their relationship with the main campus, the QF administrator's concern is not improbable. If the upper-administration in College Station is, in fact, principally motivated to continue the Qatar campus for financial gain, the Qatar campus strategy would likely be influenced.

While popular media and scholarly literature tend to focus on the surface-level motivations driving international branch campuses, the reality is far more complex. At Texas A&M, institutional actors had varying perspectives on what motivated the institution to engage in the Qatar campus project and continue to operate for over ten years. Even the core decision-makers in the inception process listed different motivations. This is most likely not a sign of inaccuracy but an indicator that the reasons why Texas A&M decided to open a campus were at times both diverse and individual. Varying degrees of involvement in the project and unique interpretations of the rationale behind decisions would naturally lead to individual constructions. In a complex system, like Texas A&M, where leadership shifted during the inception of TAMUQ and various actors have changed throughout the process, the likelihood of a universal agreed upon set of motivations that led to the establishment and continued operation of the Qatar campus is unlikely. Despite a system of shared governance, institutional decisions are motivated by different reasons depending on the individuals involved. Complex organizational decisions and projects are never made in a vacuum, and the same can be said for TAMU's branch campus in Qatar.

Qatar's Motivations

On top of Texas A&M's motivations for engaging in a branch campus project, one must consider why the Qatar Foundation decided to open Education City and why they approached Texas A&M in particular. QF's rationale behind these decisions undoubtedly has an influence on the branch campuses in Education City and, conceivably, the strategy and structure of Texas A&M. Although participants raised multiple motivations, the two most common and logical categories were the Qatar

Foundation's quest for a top-quality program and the need to change the current higher education system to meet the needs of a developing knowledge economy.

Reputation, Prestige, and Quality

In order to understand why the Qatar Foundation sought high profile American institutions, one must first understand that Qatar is a country seemingly obsessed with quality, reputation, image, and prestige. Qatar is a tiny country of less than 2 million people, but its leaders have used the money generated from its vast natural gas reserves to garner global attention. The pursuit of recognition is evident in multiple sectors and started well before the founding of Education City. Qatar has hosted numerous high-profile diplomatic negotiations over contentious issues, organized prestigious international conferences, established the influential Al Jazeera news network, and even won the bid to host the FIFA World Cup in 2022.

In a similar regard, attracting brand name universities from the U.S. to establish outposts in Qatar was perceived by study participants to be yet another way for Qatar to associate with prestigious institutions that would enhance their global image. An interviewee explains how the process works, "Qatar is getting name recognition because there are a lot of people in Texas talking about that little country [after establishing the branch campus]." He goes on to describe how this strategy has worked in another capacity, "Why did [Qatar] spend \$10 billion to build a [U.S.] air force base here? An army base here?...That's a pretty darn good investment. They get protection and they get known worldwide as pro-West, pro-great place. It's good PR."

Unlike other education hubs (e.g., Dubai, Singapore), "Not everybody can come here on his own or her own.... No, they are invited because [the Qataris] are extremely

selective,” said another TAMUQ academic administrator. Beyond reputation and prestige, interviewees described the Qatar Foundation’s strong desire to host academically strong institutions, and they aimed for the top tier of American institutions. Similar to the country’s goal of enhancing reputation by hosting prestigious events and organizations, their desire for quality is evident in all walks of life. This quote from a Qatar Campus administrator explains how this is evident on an individual level,

Qataris, in general, are highflying people, look at the lifestyle, look at the stores in the Pearl, look at the cars that some of them they drive, some of the stores in Villagio [Mall]... That basically tells you... that people in this region understand quality... Why do they want to buy Rolex? Why do they want to buy Louis Vuitton? Why do they want to buy... a Mont Blanc pen and all those things? It basically shows they understand quality. The reason that they came after Texas A&M, the reason that they came after Carnegie-Mellon, the reason that they came after Georgetown, Northwestern, Cornell, it basically means there is some element of the quality there.

Texas A&M is certainly not at the same level as Cornell University in terms of overall prestige, so how did QF equate TAMU with prestige and quality? None of the A&M interviewees knew for sure, but most attributed it to their petroleum engineering program. As this academic affairs administrator on the Qatar Campus stated,

Texas A&M historically has a top-five petroleum engineering school, and I think that was probably the thing that worked the best in our favor... our petroleum engineering department’s prominence in the world. With the idea that Qatar needed petroleum engineers, so that gave the entree to our campus.

Another senior-level official from the Qatar Campus shared a similar perspective, “Texas A&M consistently has the top-rated petroleum engineering program in the U.S., so they came to us.” A Qatar Foundation staff member agreed, “I think it's somewhat opportunist. I think [QF] could have gone with any number of engineering programs and could have done very well with it, but ultimately A&M's the one who took the bait. And the petroleum piece was probably key in this too.”

As evident in the above statements, several participants mentioned rankings as an indicator that the Qatar Foundation used to determine quality. Although the interviewees in this study did not state with certainty that QF used a particular ranking indicator, the U.S. ranking systems like U.S News and World Report's *Best Colleges* publication were already popular by the early 2000's, so it is highly likely that QF was aware of how Texas A&M fared in these rankings. It is worth noting that the first popularized attempt at global university rankings (i.e., the Academic Ranking of World Universities or the Shanghai Rankings) did not yet exist in 2001 when QF first approached Texas A&M.

Another important question is why the Qatar Foundation was only interested in American universities? After all, other Western countries enjoy a reputation for high-quality tertiary education. A staff member at TAMUQ familiar with another branch campus in Education had the opportunity to ask a high-level QF representative this question,

Why an American college, why not something local or something that would maybe be more familiar with the mores and values, and Arabic-speaking, and she said, basically the “American universities [are] much more entrepreneurial, more so than the British.”

This quest for quality and prestige may also explain the rationale behind inviting multiple institutions to offer niche degree programs. Recall that QF initially hoped to find one American university to host a multi-disciplinary branch campus, but “they discovered that no university was uniformly high quality across the board in all academic programs, so then they decided... ‘we want to be selective for high quality, specific programs within an institution,’” said one representative from the Qatar Foundation.

Need and Speed

To help build a knowledge economy, the State of Qatar is investing substantial amounts of money into education (Witte, 2010). Prior to the establishment of Education City, Qatar University (QU) was the only tertiary institution in the country and could not keep up with the increased demand for higher education. Furthermore, QU’s academic programs did not have a good reputation for quality. Reforming such a large public institution would have been difficult and highly political. Creating an institution from the ground up might have been feasible but would take many years to become a high-quality institution with a top-notch reputation. Moreover, sponsoring students to study abroad was also problematic due to the risk of brain drain and the fact that, culturally-speaking, many parents were uncomfortable sending their daughters to live alone overseas. An academic administrator explains the rationale behind Education City and how TAMUQ has filled the need,

It’s the only way that the State of Qatar could have made great strides in higher education in a short period of time, and I’m guessing Her Highness knew that. That [she couldn’t] reform an organization that’s been here for years, that’s huge.... In the region you have serious brain drain, where a student goes to the

US, gets a degree from Penn State. They may or may not want to come back.

[Education City] gives them an opportunity to stay here. Especially for girls who can't go culturally to another campus, [they] can come here [to] get an engineering degree.

In a conservative society, Education City was also an opportunity for Her Highness Sheikha Moza to introduce some progressive new ideas. For instance, Qatar University was split into male and female campuses, but Education City would offer a co-educational environment. Education City also houses a K-12 international school where boys and girls learn side-by-side.

In the early 2000's, the oil and gas sector in Qatar was booming, and based on the vast size of oil reserves, government officials knew the industry would continue to grow. There was a lack of qualified engineers in the region, and oil companies had to rely largely on human capital from outside the country. Therefore, put simply, "QF approached A&M because the state of Qatar need[ed] more engineers," said a TAMUQ administrator.

Qatar clearly saw a need to add high quality, high prestige postsecondary programs. Education City was their answer, and Texas A&M—although not the first university considered—accepted the invitation. As this administrator stated, QF followed a similar pattern with each university, by "identifying a need, identifying an outstanding institution, and try[ing] to go into negotiations."

Conclusion

The motivations that encouraged Texas A&M University to open a branch campus in Doha, Qatar are diverse, complex, and not universally agreed upon. Certainly,

the institution's leadership had a propensity towards internationalization and openness to new opportunities for global engagement. Furthermore, the timing of the Qatar Foundation's proposal for Texas A&M came at an ideal time with a new president that had experience in the Middle East, and the institution already enjoyed many connections to the Gulf through the petroleum engineering program with alumni working regionally in the oil and gas industry. All in all, Texas A&M was poised and ready to accept the Foundation's offer.

Financially, as a public institution, Texas A&M could not spend any state money on a foreign branch campus, and the Qatar Foundation agreed to cover all expenses. Furthermore, there was the promise of additional revenue through an annual management fee and other arrangements. Opinions on the degree to which money acted as a motivator for opening the Qatar campus varied among study participants, but a majority believed that money was one of many factors. Yet, as state funding has decreased over time, the institution's reliance on the revenue generated from the Qatar campus has seemingly increased over time.

An institution considering whether to open a foreign branch campus should explore the totality of motivations that would benefit their institution and the host country. Furthermore, they should be realistic about the degree to which the motivations will become a reality. For instance, if an institution is motivated by money, administrators should thoroughly consider the financial arrangement with the host country or organization and be conservative when assessing the opportunity for revenue. There are many hidden costs associated with establishing a branch campus, such as the significant expense of recruiting and retaining faculty and students. Finances are

particularly important in the majority of cases—unlike Texas A&M—where the host country only covers a portion of expenses or offers seed money during the first few years of operation. Internally, institutions must assess whether they are ready and willing to engage in such a massive undertaking. An important component of readiness is identifying individuals that can successfully design and lead a branch campus. Moreover, the role of presidential leadership and support should not be underestimated in a project that requires complex inter-university cooperation among functional areas and academic departments.

The Qatar Foundation was motivated to invite Texas A&M to open a branch campus by an entirely different rationale. The leadership of Qatar recognized a need for higher education reform and determined that inviting foreign universities to set up campuses was the quickest way to build high quality capacity. Texas A&M University offered the prestige they sought through a top-ranked petroleum engineering program and filled a need for well-trained local engineers that could feed demand in the oil and gas industry. Though Texas A&M and Qatar Foundation's motivations to collaborate differed, these driving forces were mostly complementary. Institutions considering whether to establish a branch campus should move beyond their own needs and desires and consider whether the host country partner's motivations align. Put another way, if both parties' expectations are not met, the likelihood for success is low.

A final warning—Institutions should be aware that the excitement of a new international opportunity may overshadow the many difficulties that branch campus projects face. The motivations to engage in such a project should be strong and thoroughly assessed to determine feasibility.

CHAPTER SIX. The Wild West Period and Faculty Recruitment

The somewhat rushed inception of Texas A&M University at Qatar discussed in Chapter Four was followed by an even shorter and more chaotic period of staffing and setting up the Doha campus. The initial group of five staff and seven faculty had just over three months to prepare for classes between the time when the ten-year agreement was signed with the Qatar Foundation in May of 2003 and when the students showed up for classes in September 2003 (Texas A&M University at Qatar, n.d.-a). This was no easy feat for a startup team largely unfamiliar with Qatar and wholly inexperienced in establishing an international branch campus. The initial group of Qatar campus personnel was hired from the main campus. Despite many challenges, familiarity with University policies and procedures provided the foundation necessary to recruit an inaugural class of 29 students and to set up the basic operations and student services required to open the new campus in a very abbreviated timeframe. The Qatar Foundation provided additional assistance helping to arrange facilities and other operational functions.

The months leading up to the opening and the years to follow were marked by a sense of excitement, entrepreneurialism, and autonomy that led staff and faculty to refer to this period as the “Wild West.” Staff across the institution with a sense of pride, but the early days were not without difficulty. The Wild West approach created tension with the main campus. Recruiting faculty proved significantly more challenging than anticipated and struggles would remain despite various fixes. After nearly six years in operation—a period focused on developing the basic functions of a university—a new

phase of forward-thinking strategic planning began.

Spirit of the Pioneers

The excitement from the inception of TAMUQ carried over into the initial years of operation. The early faculty and staff—or pioneers—recalled this honeymoon period with great fondness. Building, developing, and innovating were common adjectives interviewees used to describe their work—descriptions reminiscent of a startup firm in Silicon Valley, rather than a university. Furthermore, many of the constraints troubling the main campus were less prevalent or, in some cases, non-existent in Qatar. Unprompted, many of the pioneers shared comments about the meaningful nature of their experience in a very personal manner. A main campus administrator working in finance who helped extensively on the Qatar project sums up this period well,

For all of us, that was a really a great adventure in our life. To be given the opportunity for an educational experiment with no strings attached but just [to] focus on quality. How often can one have that experience in higher education? For that reason I think we've all been very blessed...So, I have no regret for my involvement.

For some, this satisfaction stemmed from a sense of greater purpose. One pioneer fondly reflected on the impact the Qatar campus would have on Qatar, “we produced the graduates they needed. You watch the graduates walk on the stage, some of them are women, and think...one of these days they will wear a hard hat along with a male breaking through the social order.” Staff and faculty felt as though their contributions would make a positive difference, not just for individual students but for the entire State of Qatar.

Somewhat paradoxically, part of the excitement and satisfaction was derived from the difficulty of the work. In other words, staff and faculty faced challenges without simple technical solutions. One Qatar campus staff member had little patience for the newer personnel that complained about the challenges of working in Qatar:

I hear people that come in that bitch and moan and complain about how hard, how rough, and how everything. I don't [have] sympathy, and I think you'll find when you talk to a lot of the people that were here the first and second year, I think you'll find that sentiment echoed quite often.

Another Qatar staff member working in an academic program describes the satisfaction derived from difficult work:

[Product] orders would take us a year to get in when we first started. A year...But working with vendors, working with the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of the Environment, customs, trying to, hey, can we help you do this? Can we help you focus? Can we help you minimize the time, the waste, stuff like that? That was actually a lot of fun, and it really was, especially when we moved over to this building and we started to move everything over. That was an enormous satisfaction.

There was little history to guide their work, which required considerably more creativity and innovation than in their previous work on the main campus. In addition to the challenging nature of the work, a sense of community and a common purpose existed that further contributed to the excitement. This Qatar campus staff member captures this sentiment well:

We all had a common goal... At first it was, "can make this happen? Can we do

this?” We didn't even know that, but everybody had skin in the game, so to speak, in the sense that not only did we want to prove that ‘yes we can do this,’ we wanted it to be great. Not good. Not average. Great. So, you had people that were willing to step out of their box... We had to do everything that we needed to do to get the job done.

He went on to share an example that occurred the week before classes began. Almost the entire group of faculty and staff came together to prepare the library, so it would be ready in time for the students to arrive the next week. Part of their satisfaction came from a shared purpose found in creating the best possible environment and experience for students. “We knew it was important for [students] to walk in there and see that we were prepared to give them the quality of education that they deserved,” said one of the staff members present during the initial years. This staff member came from a technical area not directly linked to an academic function and that required little student interaction. Nevertheless, he described a connection to and ethic of care for the students—a common theme among early staff.

A main campus academic administrator that worked on the Qatar campus during the early years had great nostalgia about this period in his life. Although he has been working back in College Station for some years, when someone approached him about going back to Qatar to teach, he felt very enthusiastic about the opportunity. Another staff member in a similar situation on the operations side said that she would go back to the Qatar campus in a heartbeat.

Was the Qatar campus really the Camelot that early faculty and staff recalled, or had their memories undergone selective perception over time? The spirit of the pioneers

was important—it gave them the willpower and energy to persevere during a challenging time, but the Qatar campus startup period was not as perfect as the above descriptions suggest. The next section uncovers how early faculty and staff acted alone and created tension with the main campus.

The Wild West

“It was wild. It was a lot of fun, but it was a lot of work,” said an administrator describing the early years working at the Qatar campus. Participants widely used the phrase “Wild West” to portray the initial three to four years during the start-up period. This section describes why participants perceived this period to be wild, what occurrences and norms aligned (and did not align) with this categorization, and begins to explore the implications.

Entrepreneurism and Flexibility

One aspect of the so-called “Wild West” early years of the Qatar campus was a sense of entrepreneurism and lack of rules and standardization. This staff member summarizes this well,

The theory is that when startup organizations begin the leadership of those organizations and the way things are run is very much entrepreneurial, you have a lot of very creative minds. When there are no rules people make their own rules as they go forward. You start with the idealists that come in who are incredibly creative and don't want anyone to give them any rules whatsoever, just get the job done.

This startup environment that embraced creativity and a “do whatever it takes” mentality attracted a specific type of staff and faculty. “The initial people are more entrepreneurial,

they're risk takers. You didn't have anyone over there saying, 'I've done this before, this is what you do.' You had to discover it," said one senior-level administrator.

A member of the leadership team in Qatar conceded that early decisions were seemingly good decisions at the time and were driven by issues of an immediate nature. There was a general lack of strategic planning and long-term vision driving decisions but, as many participants suggested, everything was new, so there was virtually no previous knowledge on how to start such a project. It would take nearly six years before anyone started to develop a formal strategic plan for the Qatar campus, which is described later in this chapter.

Unsurprisingly, some early decisions would prove to be shortsighted and carry unanticipated consequences. One staff member shared an example involving employee benefit packages:

[Qatar campus staff] didn't know what they were doing. They were implementing this tax policy in those early days and nobody really even knew...enough to know what they were doing, and we weren't getting outside advice, so for a long time we were doing this tax policy that was way way generous. Not illegal, it was all legal because we had the PwC or whoever involved with this, but it was very, very generous to the extreme and then Qatar Foundation made us get back in line. If you look back and you talk to people about the discussions back then I just don't think they looked at the full impact of this.

There was also a lack of connection to the main campus in the early days. TAMUQ personnel had little top-down oversight and main campus policy and procedures were often ignored, but this was not an intentional act by those in College Station. As

one liberal arts faculty member stated, “in the beginning we who were the cowboys absolutely 100 percent ignored anything that anyone on the main campus had to say.” According to one account from a senior-level administrator, this lack of connection and control from the main campus stemmed from early leadership challenges on the Qatar campus. The first dean, Dr. Charles Bowman, served in an interim capacity for eight months and traveled back and forth between Texas and Qatar. The inaugural full-time dean, Dr. Michael Kemp, had family troubles arise shortly after being hired and was forced to spend considerable time traveling as well. The dean was intended to be the chief link to the main campus and had a primary responsibility to encourage collaboration and compliance with policy. Ultimately, these leadership challenges during the first two years of the Qatar campus led to a rocky relationship with the main campus because Qatar campus personnel largely made decisions without collaborating with the main campus and with little consideration for University policy and procedures. Some staff and faculty attributed this lack of compliance to the difficulty in understanding how main campus policy and procedure pertained to the Qatar campus. As one senior-administrator explained,

See part of what [College Station] couldn't understand...is why a group that was less than 20 people for the entire university administration [in Qatar] couldn't become aware of every single issue in the policies manual and every single procedure for doing things. And that was an issue that I think needs to be clearly understood by any organization that's trying to start one of these things. The first couple of years this is a startup. It's not an established department, and it's going to have a lot of things that look just like any startup business.

A staff member from the main campus that was involved with the Qatar campus in the early years provided an alternate perspective. She explained that administrators from the main campus with a thorough understanding of University policy and procedure were traveling to the Qatar campus regularly and willing to help, yet the Qatar campus staff insisted on starting from scratch and doing it their own way. This is consistent with the idea that the type of personnel attracted to a start-up would embrace the entrepreneurial spirit and desire independence.

The early years may not have been quite as wild as many descriptions suggest. This upper-level administrator from the Qatar campus painted a more nuanced picture:

You had the people who were coming from the main campus and trying to do it as much in compliance with the main campus but then shifting things a little bit wherever they needed to here, but then not always connecting back to, or documenting how we've done it different.

This participant suggested that at least some staff were following main campus policy and procedures, but they made adjustments along the way without documenting or communicating the changes back to the main campus. Like the personnel operating almost entirely independent from the main campus, this approach also proved problematic because several years later, once the Qatar campus started aligning more closely with the main campus there was a lack of documentation explaining why decisions and processes were made and modified.

Cross-Functional Generalist

Early faculty and staff took on responsibilities that extended beyond their position descriptions and in many cases outside their functional areas. This staff member shared

fond memories of the variety of responsibilities he took on during the first year:

We all took on every possible role. Not only was I involved in preparing to teach classes, but I was also going to the airport, picking people up, helping them as housing coordinator, showing people where the grocery stores were. We were a committee of the whole. We ran the university as kind of a Greek democratic society. There wasn't really a boss. There was a kind of CEO, but we all worked together in a very much of a family kind of unit with the same squabbles and the same tears that would go with a family. But we knew each other intimately because there was just a small number.

This image of the early faculty and staff as a family unit seems appropriate. The pioneers were not operating in the typical functional silos so common to higher education. They made decisions jointly, worked alongside one another regardless of title, and pitched in wherever necessary. Another participant suggested that hiring staff and faculty open to taking on a variety of roles is essential to the start-up of a branch campus,

Who's the right person to start [a branch campus]? I think that somebody that's...kind of the Renaissance man who can do a lot of things because you're usually short staffed and most people, if you're bringing people from America, they've never done it before.

Interestingly, duties typically perceived to be beneath one's pay grade were described in a positive manner. Early faculty and staff seemed genuinely committed to the success of the Qatar campus and were willing to contribute in any number of ways, stretching well beyond what they were hired to do.

Faculty Recruitment

The Texas A&M administrators involved in the inception of TAMUQ predicted that faculty recruitment would be a challenge. In fact, that is why they pushed for research funding and graduate education from the very beginning. In other words, the formula for attracting high quality faculty needed to mirror the main campus. However, recruiting qualified faculty for the Qatar campus would prove even more challenging than anticipated. Study participants openly discussed these difficulties. This section begins with an overview of the evolution of Texas A&M at Qatar's faculty employment model and then discusses the challenges and areas of success. Without question, the struggles outweigh the achievements and remain an area of contention today.

A primary strategic goal of the Qatar campus was to maintain the academic and student experience as close as possible to the main campus. An important factor in this equation was to hire faculty from the main campus. An administrator from the Qatar Foundation explains the logic, "having faculty from the home campus assures quality more than hiring regional people to play those roles." Hiring faculty from the main campus was an area of strong agreement between Texas A&M and the Qatar Foundation in the inception and early years. When asked whether it was important to hire faculty with main campus experience, a high-level administrator from the College of Engineering in College Station stated, "Very important, very important, very important...see the whole idea was to take American higher education there."

The initial hiring model was to bring main campus faculty to Qatar on a rotating basis for a semester or year at a time and to hire a core group of faculty (as many as possible from the home campus) that would stay in Qatar for a longer term. The long-

term core faculty would provide the consistency and continuity necessary to create the highest quality educational experience possible. If faculty were constantly rotating, they would not develop a commitment to the Qatar campus' mission, and students would not have the opportunity to build consistent, ongoing faculty connections. This participant goes on to describe the importance of having faculty with main campus experience:

For the betterment of students and their experience, how would you be able to say if your faculty [in Qatar] was primarily hired regionally and never set foot on the A&M campus, how would they know how to create an Aggie experience? They can't do it, and so you've got to have—and...it has to be a significant number.

In reality, A&M's faculty model has panned out quite differently than originally planned, as this administrator described,

Our [faculty recruitment] model has been to have a balance between the people from main campus who come here for 2-3 years and people who we hire permanently here. They have some A&M experience—maybe they graduated from A&M, or collaborated with A&M, but [they] are thinking long-term.

For a variety of reasons—explored in this chapter—attracting faculty from the main campus has proved more difficult than originally anticipated. TAMUQ has relied heavily on hiring faculty without teaching experience on the main campus, which has caused some discontent for both A&M and the Qatar Foundation. As this faculty member explains,

Over time what happens is that [TAMUQ] start[ed] looking for hired guns. People with no relationship [to] the university but are looking for a nice post. We do have quite a number of staff who have had some main campus ties, but almost

no faculty anymore who have main campus ties.

An administrator from the College of Engineering on the main campus described the issue, “Once you start just hiring international faculty they may be teaching the same course but they're not, it's not the same cultural affect.” The lack of faculty on the Qatar campus with main campus experience clearly concerned him from an academic quality standpoint, “[the College of Engineering] is responsible for hiring faculty there and providing faculty from here to there periodically, so that we maintain the faculty standards.”

The proportion of faculty with main campus experience required by the initial agreement is unknown, but what is clear from participant interviews is that the Qatar Foundation wants TAMUQ to increase the number. Currently, only 15 percent of the TAMUQ faculty have experience on the main campus, and in the new ten-year agreement, QF added a goal of 50 percent. According to one senior-level administrator an increase this significant would be almost impossible; however, QF is offering financial incentives to TAMU for every new faculty hire with main campus experience.

The benefit of hiring faculty with main campus experience goes beyond understanding Texas A&M’s culture. On a broader level, it is about understanding the American model of education. Faculty from other high-quality systems outside the U.S. are not sufficient according to one participant involved in faculty hiring:

I don't want to have faculty with Ph.D.'s [from] Germany and Britain and places like that...One of the things that is unique to [American] doctoral education is that we have coursework, and we have a rigorous qualifying exam and then we have a prelim[inary] exam, and we have a final defense. And in those places they

go work with the person on a narrow project and write a thesis and then they get out. And on an average the quality of Ph.D.s from Europe is under par. And to bring those people who never experienced American education, what are we accomplishing?

There are many challenges to hiring faculty with main campus experience. The significant themes from participant interviews are described below. There have been some successes along the way as well, which are explained in the following section.

Financial Incentives

“There's no reason for somebody [from the main campus] to go over there aside from being really intrigued personally,” stated a faculty member with experience on both campuses. Texas A&M attempted to create incentives to attract faculty beyond personal intrigue. The primary incentive was a salary increase of 30 percent, which proved successful in some cases and not in others. A correlation exists between the importance of this salary increase and academic discipline.

The first two years of the Engineering curriculum consists of general education requirements, which only necessitated liberal arts and science faculty. They proved fairly easy to recruit. Back in the U.S., liberal arts faculty (e.g., mathematics, history, English) across the nation were facing increasingly difficult times—budget crises led to cuts in tenure track positions and higher numbers of adjunct positions. A member of the liberal arts faculty discussed the attractive nature of a position in Qatar:

For those of us in English, Political Science, we're glad to be here. My salary is probably three to four times higher than it would be in the United States...so you find people who are seeing the advantage of going overseas. You have to be a

little bit crazy. You have to have the adventurous spirit, but that is why the liberal arts people are here is because it is such a better opportunity than on the main campus. Eventually they drift away because of cultural needs, but for those of us who teach English as a foreign language, which is the poorest paid job in academia (in the United States), that's why we are here.

Monetary incentives were not as successful in recruiting engineering faculty to teach upper-level courses, as this upper-level administrator with faculty hiring experience described:

Here was a mistake in perception that the 30 percent salary increment would attract people...for a successful faculty person that isn't nearly enough because of the long term impact on your research and professional abilities. And what would have made a huge difference is to have taken a small part of that management money and made it available as what now we would call startup research support funds for faculty. Both upon going and upon coming back so that the person could do this and be a little bit more seamless in terms of what happens to your own research group and professional progress.

The professional success of engineering faculty relies heavily on their ability to conduct and publish research. Engineering research is expensive, requires physical equipment and a laboratory, and a team of graduate students; whereas, as a general rule, liberal arts faculty from the main campus were either primarily focused on teaching or had research agendas less constricted by location and requiring less funding. Another exception that was easier to hire were science faculty with theoretical research topics, which only require computers and not traditional laboratories that require significant time and

resources to set up.

It would take years of negotiation with the Qatar Foundation to develop agreements for research grants and graduate programs, so for engineering the 30 percent salary increase just was not enough to compensate for the risk of negatively impacting their research production. A number of participants expanded on this challenge, including a senior-level administrator from the Qatar campus:

It's darn hard to get engineering faculty to come here for a significant period of time. We would love to get somebody to come for a year, or two, or three, but an engineering faculty, especially one that we want to get to come here, are going to be those that are very active teachers but also very active researchers and so they can't pull up stake and leave their laboratories [in College Station], and we can't really make it possible for them to bring their students here.

Another Qatar campus administrator shared a similar perspective and discussed the importance of establishing graduate programs and research support:

Having a graduate education or a research program is very essential for us because the faculty that we have are top caliber. So they need to do research and they need to be engaged with graduate students. So for us to retain our faculty we have to make sure that they have good research programs and this is why we need the graduate programs.

Unfortunately, the evolution of the research program and graduate-level programs was slow and has only helped incrementally with faculty recruitment. The development of research and graduate programs is explained in the next chapter.

The tenure structure and career path of engineering faculty are additional factors

contributing to ineffectiveness of financial incentives, as this Qatar campus staff member from the leadership team explains:

Usually when you get a job as an assistant professor [in engineering], your first five or six years are establishing your lab, creating a research agenda, getting enough research done, getting grants/money to fund your lab so that you can get promoted. Your mentors would say it's a bad idea to give up that and go as an assistant professor [to Qatar]. So when you become an associate professor, you're established, you've probably got five to twenty post docs working for you.

You're established and things are cranking, that's also a difficult time to move.

A former Qatar campus administrator with experience hiring faculty had a similar point-of-view,

It's not particularly feasible for untenured faculty [to go to Qatar] because the tenure bars are so high now that any little bit, any impediment at all to getting accomplished what you need to accomplish to be granted tenure really can't be tolerated, so the constraints and limitations and things with that, without making a wise thing to do for an untenured faculty. With a few rare exceptions.

Other incentives such as housing, car allowances, private schooling for children, annual airfare back to the U.S., and tax protection proved equally unsuccessful in convincing engineering faculty to consider long- or short-term appointments in Qatar, as this main campus administrator from the College of Engineering stated, “[engineering faculty] don't want to be disturbed. Even though there are lots of incentives—30 percent bonus, car allowance—the bonus incentives are there, but I don't have many people raising their hands to support it.” Qatar campus faculty also receive “resource funding”

that can be used on travel for professional development or research related purchases. Again, this incentive is seen as important to liberal arts faculty but less meaningful to engineering faculty. All in all, the effectiveness of financial incentives is mixed. An administrator with experience hiring faculty on the Qatar campus sums this up well, “No amount of money can beat getting people to come if they’ve already got a comfortable life and a research program started.”

Cultural Motivations

Another roadblock to hiring faculty from the College Station campus is the actual and perceived cultural differences between the United States and Qatar. A former Qatar campus administrator bluntly explains:

How many people do you know, whether they're faculty or not, that would go to the Middle East and just live there? I mean it's hot, it's barren, full of religious fundamentalists, and you're going into a culture that not only is so different from yours, in many ways it's antagonistic to yours. So you're looking for a special breed of cat. You're looking for somebody who's looking for an adventure.

Unfortunately, it is difficult to find faculty up for that adventure, as this participant from the Qatar Foundation stated, “They need to have some faculty that are here for the long term, and I think just from a practical point of view that's not going to be Americans because Americans just don't do that very much.”

There are many misconceptions about life and culture in Qatar. Americans have a tendency to view the Middle East as one homogeneous region when, in reality, the stability, safety, and development of countries varies tremendously. Fighting these stereotypes in faculty recruitment has proven difficult, as this Qatar campus participant

explains:

You can tell [faculty] it's the second safest country in the world, you can tell them at no point have I ever felt unsafe here, you can tell them you can walk the streets at night, you can tell them you can go to McDonald's and Chili's, [that] there's no sense of culture shock anymore. Trying to get those people here is really difficult. They only know one thing about the Middle East, and it's the wrong thing.

Alternatively, faculty with ties to the region may see the opportunity as attractive, as this faculty member reported, “offering more money and all other kinds of incentives is not motivating people from main campuses to come over unless they have some kind of familial tie to the region.” He goes on to say, “People want to be close to family and if they’re only a four hour plane ride from home that’s fine. If they’re a 24 hour, 36 hour plane ride from home, it’s harder to get people to come.”

End of Career and the Unwanted

The Qatar campus has experienced success in hiring another demographic of faculty—those nearing the end of their career. The financial incentives and opportunity for an adventure has proven attractive to these near retirees. They do not face the same constraints as faculty in the tenure process or those engaged in complex research projects with expensive labs and numerous graduate students. “It’s easier to recruit end-of-service type people. People who [say], ‘I’m winding down my labs, I’m not as involved, this would be a really great opportunity for me to go teach somewhere else for awhile,’” said an administrator involved in faculty recruitment on the Qatar campus. Another Texas A&M faculty member who was previously in a similar position had the same perspective, “The best demographic in age for faculty to go [to Qatar] are those who

could retire when they finish. Because that way...you don't have to worry about transferring a research program, bringing it back.”

Aside from individual motivations for faculty to consider working at the Qatar campus, there is the question of whether departments on the main campus encourage and support faculty in considering a stint in Qatar. One pessimistic Qatar campus administrator asked, “Why would a department head over there encourage one of his *[sic]* strong faculty members to go over to Qatar? I mean, what incentive is there?” In other words, sending faculty to Qatar could weaken a home campus department, so Deans would likely protect their faculty and not encourage them to go overseas. It was unclear through this study whether the main campus departments receive financial incentives or bonuses for recruiting faculty to work on the Qatar campus.

There is one category of faculty that main campus departments do encourage to consider a Qatar campus appointment. Several participants explained that some departments use the Qatar campus as “a dumping ground for under performing or unpopular faculty, those without a place in [College Station].” Another Qatar campus participant described this practice from the point of view of the home campus: “we're going to send you this guy we don't want anymore. Let's take this guy and just push him over here and hope to god he just stays.” Obviously, the Qatar campus is not interested in hiring this category of faculty, despite the fact that they bring much desired main campus experience. In addition to the issues that these unwanted faculty would likely bring with them to Doha, the Qatar campus administrators want to avoid building a reputation as the dumping ground for underperforming or difficult faculty. A senior-level administrator in Qatar acknowledged this practice but downplayed the frequency in

which it occurs and implied that the Qatar campus has the ability to detect and decline these unwanted transfers. Detecting problematic faculty is likely a fairly simple process thanks to the high number of personal connections that exist between Qatar and main campus faculty and staff. The Qatar campus has the right to “veto” faculty transfer requests from the main campus, though the organizational structure may make this process difficult. Program coordinators (PCs)—similar to department heads on the main campus—are responsible for leading each academic program on the Qatar campus. Although they technically report to the Dean of the Qatar campus, each program coordinator has a dotted line relationship to the department head of their respective home campus department, which creates a power dynamic. If a main campus department head wanted to encourage an unwanted faculty member to consider teaching on the Qatar campus, he or she could strongly suggest or persuade a TAMUQ program coordinator to accept the transfer.

Current State and Future Plans

Participants openly critiqued the current state of the faculty on the Qatar campus. Despite the many challenges and roadblocks to hiring the best and brightest, they described several pockets of success, as evident in comments from two administrators who were otherwise quite pessimistic about the state of the Qatar campus. The first, from Qatar said,

We have several world-class faculty members. We have two departments that if you pluck somebody out of this department, and put them in the corresponding department in College Station, that department would at worst stay as good as it is. We have other departments if you plucked somebody out, it would get worse,

but chemical and electrical here have world-class faculty, several of them. The College Station administrator said, “Electrical...have hired very good faculty, world class researchers and they are doing well. They are comparable to what we have here. Chemical, yeah, but mechanical and petroleum? No.” These accounts support one another and suggest that the electrical and chemical programs have strong faculty, at least equivalent with the quality in College Station, while the mechanical and petroleum departments struggle to match the faculty stature of the main campus. One participant explained that petroleum engineering faculty are in high demand in the U.S., which makes them especially difficult to recruit. Unfortunately, no additional explanations were offered as to why some departments had been more successful with faculty recruitment than others.

As discussed, participants agreed that the most important factor to consider when hiring faculty was that as many as possible had experience teaching on the main campus; however, it is important to note that the majority of faculty and administrators interviewed for this study had spent time working or teaching in College Station, which might have influenced their perspective. Nevertheless, the Qatar Foundation demonstrated their desire for TAMUQ to increase the number of faculty with main campus experience by introducing financial incentives in the new ten-year agreement. In order to increase this percentage, a member of the leadership team developed an innovative plan that would allow the Qatar campus to hire qualified faculty from the region regardless of whether they had experience teaching at the main campus by sending each new hire to College Station for a semester to a year. This idea generated excitement among the Qatar campus leadership team and was seen as a viable solution to increasing

the percentage of faculty with main campus experience. At least one main campus administrator from the College of Engineering agreed this idea had potential:

[Sending new faculty to College Station] would be very helpful. It would be very helpful. If they come here what I really want is to practice onboarding...they need to understand and appreciate, they will be brainwashed because they spent a semester here would be very helpful. They need to understand and appreciate the American system.

Unfortunately, U.S. government tax regulations may stop the new plan before it ever starts. The tax implications for sending non-Americans to the United States to work for a short duration are significant and would be a significant deterrent to hiring good candidates. As of February 2014, Qatar campus administrators were not hopeful they could find a solution. This is yet another example of the many external factors that can hinder branch campus strategies and make them difficult to implement.

On the positive side, though the Qatar campus struggles to hire the best and brightest faculty, those that do come tend to stay, as this administrator involved in hiring stated,

We find once we get somebody here they like it. See, if we can get them here they tend to stay. Because I think even if they didn't initially buy the vision they begin to like the work atmosphere, they like what we're doing and they begin to buy into it, so recruiting faculty is a lot of work, and you really have to work at it because, and you know, all schools in this region struggle with that. But also world wide.

Strategic Planning Process

Prior to 2009, Texas A&M at Qatar did not have a formal strategic plan. When asked what guided their actions during this nearly six-year period, participants cited a number of guiding forces. In the early years, staff focused on establishing the basic university operations in their respective functional areas such as setting up classrooms, purchasing mechanisms, technology infrastructure, and student enrollment services. When asked what type of strategic planning existed in the early years, a member of leadership team said, “There was no strategic planning...they were just managing day to day and pulling it together, writing, not even writing policies, just developing practices.” Although it might not have been identified as such, some form of strategic planning occurred due to external requirements. As this participant remarked,

The closest thing that the University had to a strategic plan in the early days was really the business plan and the requirements that the Qatar Foundation had for us was to develop a business plan that projected out for the next five years. Frankly, in the early years the projections were really based on growth of faculty—well students and faculty and staff. Honestly, I don’t think there was a lot of strategic thought because there was just more focus given to making sure that we had an institution that ran and functioned well.

Participants cited at least three additional factors that guided the direction of the Qatar campus in the early years. Some staff and faculty had a strong desire to build and improve higher education in the State of Qatar. In several instances, participants also commented on the underlying importance of and commitment to the University’s

tripartite mission of teaching, research, and service that drove much of the decision-making in Qatar:

Teaching, research, and service on the main campus, those are the three pillars.

Same for over here, so even though there wasn't a guideline set out or a strategy set out all of those we were on a really good path in all those areas.

Additionally, a high-level staff member believed that the accreditation requirements of the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (ABET) and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) along with the signed agreement with the Qatar Foundation influenced planning during the early years:

I think until the formal [strategic plan] came up it was more working off what we needed for accreditation purposes in terms of ABET accreditation for engineering programs to be compliant with SACS because that's who accredits us as an institution both in Texas and here and the memorandum of agreement. So those would have been the drivers that would have determined mission, vision and all those things that underpin a strategic plan.

The formal strategic planning process began under the leadership of Dean Mark Weichold in 2009. He hired a new chief of staff (who would eventually become the chief operating officer) to facilitate a formal strategic planning process to inform the future direction of the Qatar campus. According to one participant, the process of establishing a formal strategic plan corresponded with a shift away from the "Wild West" period to fall in line with main campus policies. Participants did not specify whether this was a specific goal of the strategic planning process, a suitable and opportune time, or just a coincidence, though Dean Weichold's other actions indicate it was likely intentional.

The new chief of staff hired an outside consultant to lead the executive team and student leaders through a process of identifying the significant areas where the campus needed to devote attention moving forward. The group was as inclusive as possible, which was “time consuming, but at the end of it everybody kind of feels like they're part of it,” recalled a Qatar campus administrator that was part of the group. Not surprisingly, some faculty and staff exhibited resistance and questioned the necessity of such a process. A faculty member suggested that some of the early Qatar campus personnel that embraced the “Wild West” mentality were generally uncomfortable with increased direction from the upper-administration. The Dean supported the development of a formal strategic plan, however, and as an engineer he was respected widely, so the initial process was generally perceived as successful. The process took two years and resulted in eight strategic areas. Working groups were created that would be responsible for each area. Approximately once a semester the groups now report progress to the COO’s Office. The eight strategic areas are as follows: teaching and learning; student life experience; research; community service and engagement; institutional excellence in teaching, research and service; development; working life environment; and shared governance. The working groups all come together for occasional retreats to discuss strategy across focus areas. The last full group meeting occurred prior to the mid-term report that was released in the fall of 2012.

In addition to facilitating growth and development in the eight strategic areas, the goals and results produced by each working group are used for internal and external marketing purposes. Internally, strategic planning documents were distributed so faculty, staff, and students are aware of the broader institutional goals and have a sense of where

the University is headed across functional areas. Externally, the strategic plan and progress report was distributed to key stakeholders such as the Qatar Foundation and industry representatives. Most recently, a spinoff report was published for Her Highness Sheikha Mozah to illustrate how TAMUQ's strategic plans align with Qatar's 2030 national vision. According to an administrator involved in this project, the process of aligning goals did not change TAMUQ's strategic plans but reinforced that TAMUQ was on the right track and showed Qatar how the institution was contributing to the country's goals.

Visionary or Reporting?

It was clear from participants that the strategic plan and progress report were used for public relations and accountability purposes, so was strategic planning created for reporting purposes or was it a visioning exercise that impacted the institution's future? Opinions were mixed. On one extreme, an administrator openly shared his pessimism about the usefulness of the strategic planning process and felt it was primary for reporting purposes,

No strategic plan pushes anything in any direction. Strategic plans in College Station are primarily budget documents, strategic plans in general are just something administrators do to show their plans...Most people would say no, strategic plans are very necessary. It's not. It's just a waste of time.

Another member of the executive team had a similar perspective and reported that the plans for his department would be the same with or without the strategic plan. A different staff member questioned whether the working group could truly be visionary because the assessment results were shared publically. She stated, "the bars aren't being

set high enough. People put pretty easy soft balls out there that are very easy to achieve instead of those larger visions with a little bit more.”

The other category of faculty and staff felt more positive about the outcomes of the strategic plan working groups. One administrator shared that “we all think about [working groups] as part of an exercise to keep us on task and knowing where we stand, but it’s all colored by these longer range ideals.” Another academic administrator felt confident that the process had positive outcomes:

It's good that everyone is on board, on the same page, of where we should be in the next five years, or ten years, and every year we meet and we discuss what we have achieved. I think it's a very positive impact.

On both sides of the debate, many participants shared ideas about how to make the process more effective. Two administrators discussed the influence of individual personalities in the process. In some instances strong personalities can heavily influence the outcome of a strategic focus area. An administrator involved in the strategic planning process commented on this issue, “Knowing the personalities of the people who are in the different groups, I can see some of them saying, ‘this is what we're doing, is everybody going to be okay with it?’” However, other groups have strong consensus builders that strive to make the process collaborative. Finding individuals who can do the latter would lead to more effective outcomes.

A structural issue may also negatively impact the strategic planning process. In some cases department heads serve as the chairs of working groups related to their respective functional area, which creates a power dynamic where the other members of the group may feel uncomfortable challenging ideas or raising new ones.

The benefits of the planning process extend beyond the creation of strategy, assessment measures, and the reporting of results. Including staff, faculty, and students across the University develops buy-in on the future direction of the institution. An administrator involved in the process expands on this benefit:

You have people who are going to come to that table who look at this process as stupid, “we don't need this, we're doing all of this anyway, you know, this is just a reporting activity.” But, you know, I can think of one individual in particular, he would say, “I could have picked those eight categories without any of this work that we did. I could have written this whole document by myself.” But I don't believe that's true. I do believe...it's not rocket science. It's teaching, service, and excellence, and work life environment, and student life...but some of the ideas, if somebody in an ivory tower writes those down, they're not invested in it. Like let's get the people who are all the way down to the student and the staff member who is supporting the activity to say, “yeah, that would get us to that goal, and we can do this.”

Whether the strategic planning process impacts the future direction of the institution or serves primarily as a means of reporting progress is a matter of perception. One participant shared that the Dean considered the reports from each working group when making institution-wide decisions, “Mark is the type of leader that listens to all of that and takes it into consideration for the big picture, and it helps guide him or guide what he does.” Another member of a working group felt confident she was able to impact the direction of the University, but said that budgets were not adjusted accordingly to support revised plans.

Regardless of people's perceptions, there is widespread awareness of the strategic planning process and the strategic priorities. A staff member attributed this to the Dean's support:

[The] Dean talks about it all the time, and it's embedded in his speeches to the campus at the beginning of the year, at the end, so it's part of the vocabulary now. People are aware of it. Whether they've actually studied it and know it, obviously at different levels it's going to be different, but it's definitely part of the culture now.

With the 2010-2015 strategic planning period coming to a close, the next process will likely begin soon, but at the point when interviews for this study were conducted for this study, those responsible had not determined whether the institution would follow a similar process. Moreover, the Chief Operating Officer who oversaw the process resigned in April of 2014, further raising doubts over the direction of TAMUQ's next strategic planning process.

Conclusion

The early years of Texas A&M at Qatar were described as exhilarating and attracted staff and faculty with an entrepreneurial spirit and willingness to be flexible and work across functional areas. Qatar campus personnel did not collaborate closely with the main campus during this period and ignored many of the University policies and procedures. This was a product of early leadership challenges and the need to find quick solutions for pressing issues. Universities developing staffing plans for international branch campuses should consider the type of faculty and staff that are best suited to a start-up campus. TAMUQ administrators felt that the initial group of personnel should

be flexible, creative, and adventurous. At the same time, institutions should work hard to build and maintain a close working relationship between the main and branch campus. Close collaboration does not come naturally and requires strong leadership. Furthermore, the very type of staff that is well suited for a start-up campus (i.e., the creative, entrepreneurial type) may resist following main campus policies and procedures.

Faculty recruitment was difficult from day one and continues to be a challenge for Texas A&M at Qatar. Any number of incentives, including salary increases and other benefits has helped recruit liberal arts and some science faculty from the main campus but has been of little help in luring qualified engineering faculty. Engineers require expensive and difficult to set up labs and large teams of graduate students. TAMUQ has experimented with various staffing models and innovative ideas to increase the percentage of faculty with main campus experience, but they have mostly come up short. Universities hoping to recruit a significant number of faculty from their main campus to work on a branch campus should set realistic expectations. Many factors, including discipline and the region of the world where the branch campus operates, will impact recruitment success. Universities should also be aware that home campus departments might try to export unpopular and problematic faculty to the branch campus. Branch campuses face significant challenges in the early years. Adding unwanted faculty to the mix will only exacerbate these issues, so mechanisms should exist to prevent such transfers. The next chapter discusses how two of the most significant elements in faculty recruitment—research and graduate-level programs—have evolved on the Qatar campus.

CHAPTER SEVEN. The Long Road to Research and Graduate Programs

From 2006 to 2014, Texas A&M at Qatar invested considerable time and energy in developing research and graduate programs with mixed success. Strategically, the administration hoped developing these programs would enhance faculty recruitment. Some faculty and staff felt that the resources devoted to research and graduate programs detracted from undergraduate programs. This chapter explores these significant areas that have consumed much of TAMUQ's recent organizational history and explains how the University has undergone a period of increased bureaucratization. The final section explores how Texas A&M's Land Grant-inspired service mission translates to a campus in Doha, Qatar.

Research: A Surprising Success

Texas A&M at Qatar's research program has exceeded expectations by all accounts. Globally, most branch campuses are primarily teaching institutions (Kinser, 2010), but TAMUQ and the other IBCs in Education City have managed to develop robust research programs. The main campus personnel involved in negotiating the initial agreement took a risk in trusting that the Qatar Foundation would follow through and develop a national research program. It would take eight years for Texas A&M and QF to sign an official research agreement, but the numbers indicate it was worth the wait. In actuality, TAMUQ faculty started applying for grants long before the formal agreement was signed. Qatar developed two primary research grant programs open to faculty, the Qatar National Research Fund (QNRF) and the National Priority Research Program (NPRP). Awards are granted based on well a proposed project supports the Qatar

National Research Strategy (QNRS), which stemmed from key national priorities.

Over the past ten years, Texas A&M has been awarded over \$160 million in research grants through these national programs. This funding covered 190 research projects involving 150 researchers, including faculty, full-time researchers and post-docs (Texas A&M University at Qatar, 2014a). Grants are typically awarded for three-year periods. Most of the TAMU participants in this study agreed with this faculty member's perspective:

The research opportunities [in Qatar] are second to none and at a time in the world when everybody's shrinking their research funds, they've just opened this gold mine of research. So, I'm starting to see people from all around the world shifting their gaze to this part of the world, which was really once sort of ignored. Certainly for the engineering school, and for a public engineering school, these types of funds are way up there.

QNRF is Qatar's flagship research program and funds about 90 percent of TAMUQ's research projects. An administrator involved in the inception of the Qatar campus felt strongly that Texas A&M contributed to the development of QNRF. This aligns with other participant's comments that A&M sent frequent and consistent messages to the Qatar Foundation about the importance of supporting research efforts for the branch campuses. Qatar campus faculty are encouraged to collaborate with faculty on the main campus on research projects and often apply for Qatar Foundation research grants jointly.

The financial arrangements are similar to other grant programs, like the National Science Foundation (NSF), where a certain portion of each grant is deducted to cover

indirect costs. For the Qatar Foundation grant programs, Texas A&M negotiated a 20 percent indirect cost rate, which is lower than the industry standard for foundation grants. The Qatar Foundation's rationale for a lower rate is that they already cover facility-related costs, which would normally be included in indirect costs. Several TAMUQ participants expressed concern over the low rate. Since many of the grants are for collaborative projects between the Qatar campus and College Station-based faculty, Texas A&M feels that the indirect cost percentage does not account for the use of TAMU owned and operated facilities on the main campus. In fact, according to one participant familiar with grant administration, some branch campuses in Education City have refused to allow faculty to apply for Qatar Foundation research grants over indirect cost concerns. As a public institution, however, Texas A&M has a stipulation in their contract with the Qatar Foundation that no state money can be spent on the Qatar campus, so if the 20 percent is insufficient or QF attempts to reduce the amount further, TAMUQ can fall back on their original agreement. A TAMUQ administrator familiar with research funding explained,

From the outside [other branch campuses] may say, "I don't see how you're operating like that, with that reduced [indirect cost percentage], we can't do that."

But we were able to negotiate, because by law we can't spend any money at the main campus to the benefit of Texas A&M at Qatar.

It was unclear whether TAMUQ had in fact negotiated an increased indirect cost percentage or was concerned they would need to in the near future.

Based on the significant number of grants and faculty involved, Texas A&M at Qatar's research program is a clear priority. A TAMUQ staff member not focused on

research commented on the increase of facilities designated as research space as an indicator of the institution's priority on research. TAMUQ is arguably the most successful branch campus in Education City in terms of research grants and production, as this administrator noted, "the research program here is extremely robust. For instance, we have [received] like 30 percent of all of the QNRF awards. And we've published more than 50 percent of the papers that [have] ever been published from QNRF funds." As some of the other branch campuses begin to restrict their faculty from applying for Qatar Foundation grants due to the low indirect cost percentage, TAMUQ's research program will likely continue to grow. The only other public institution in Education City is Virginia Commonwealth University, which is focused on design and communication. The Weill Cornell Medical College in Qatar is actively engaged in research and also applies for a significant number of grants through the Qatar Foundation. From a disciplinary point-of-view, as an institution focused on engineering and science, Texas A&M has a natural advantage over most of the other branch campuses due to the importance of securing grant money in the tenure and promotion process for STEM faculty. Furthermore, since the Qatar Foundation grant programs are designed to support national priorities, science and engineering proposals, especially those related to oil and gas, are an easier sell than other areas. Medical development is another focus area for the State of Qatar, so Weill Cornell is likely TAMUQ's biggest competition for grant money.

The Long Road to Success

As evident above, Texas A&M at Qatar's research program is thriving. The numbers indicate outstanding success; however, a number of challenges exist and many remain unresolved. Study participants indicated several areas of difficulty, including

restrictions around collaboration with the main campus, balancing faculty research interests with Qatar's national priorities, business process and compliance issues with Qatar's grant programs, export control, and intellectual property.

Collaboration. Despite the tension between the Qatar campus and main campus College of Engineering, research collaboration between faculty appears to be mutually important and attractive. According to a main campus administrator from the College of Engineering, "as a part of the startup package they send the [new Qatar campus] faculty to the U.S. for a week here to interact with the faculty," which is an opportunity to start forming research partnerships. In theory, research collaboration is a win-win for both campuses because faculty on the Qatar campus benefit from the equipment, labs, and expertise from the main campus, and the main campus faculty benefit from the Qatar Foundation's grant money. The College of Engineering clearly profits as well. After the NSF, the Qatar Foundation is the number two provider of grants to the College of Engineering in College Station. However, as one administrator familiar with the Qatar research process explained, this looks impressive on paper in terms of overall grant size, but the figure is misleading due to a requirement that 65 percent of all QF grant money be spent in the State of Qatar. Thus, the actual amount from each grant that is spent in College Station is much lower than the total award amount.

The 65 percent rule was implemented to protect Qatar's best interests; however, according to several administrators, it is often a roadblock and slows down the research process. For instance, "if it takes one month to three months to set up a lab [in College Station], it could take six months to set up a lab [in Qatar] because of the import/export rules or import bureaucracy."

Faculty Balance. As explained in the pervious chapter, some faculty come to the Qatar campus from the main campus for short durations (i.e., one semester to a year), while other faculty are hired directly to the Qatar campus with the hope they will stay for many years. The long-term faculty are integral to the stability of TAMUQ's research program because engineering and science related research requires considerable start-up time, according to one Qatar campus administrator.

Since QNRF is the primary supplier of grants to the Qatar campus, when recruiting faculty Qatar campus leadership must consider whether candidates' research agendas align with the Qatar Foundation's national research priorities. TAMUQ's strategic plan progress report referred to this as "focusing on fields of local importance and unique TAMUQ competencies" (Texas A&M University at Qatar, 2012, p. 17). At the same time, administrators must hire faculty with areas of expertise that qualify them to teach the courses required by the various engineering program curricula. One administrator that hires faculty on the Qatar campus explains this tension:

It's great [for Qatar] to focus [on strategic research priorities], so [they] can make an impact, so [they] can align resources in these areas. Universities cannot do that. I cannot hire everybody in electrical engineering or mechanical engineering to do energy research, because that impacts other things in the university—teaching, interaction among faculty... So, what I think to do is to have strength in this area, but not to overdo it, not to hire everybody in this area, and say "oh, Qatar is going to go to this topic, let's go." You cannot change the university to fit a strategy. You want to align with it, you want to be a good partner and work with it, but you cannot have all your resources for that.

In other words, TAMUQ cannot position itself to be solely at the mercy of Qatar's national research priorities. Doing so will adversely affect course offerings and, ultimately, student learning. The Qatar administration must find faculty that meet the needs of the institution and that will also qualify for Qatar grant money. Considering the difficulties surrounding faculty recruitment, this is no easy feat.

Determining how well faculty research interests align with the Qatar National Research Strategy (QNRS) is not straightforward. Although the strategic pillars are defined, they are quite broad. This was generally seen as an advantage for TAMUQ because most faculty were able to adequately justify how their research interests supported Qatar's priorities. Even in situations where the alignment was not completely logically, proposals were still often accepted. In other instances, faculty adjusted their research focus to align more closely with national priorities to increase their likelihood of approval.

Research Administration and Compliance

From Texas A&M's perspective, setting up the business process to administer Qatar Foundation research grants has been an immense challenge. In theory, the process should have been quite simple because the main campus has a team of individuals devoted to administering research grants:

From pre-proposal all the way through to post-award and they basically they do all the reporting...a project administrator that's in touch with [the principal investigator] on a regular basis and letting you know of deadlines and reports and things like that, all those deliverables that you have in that contract.

Unfortunately, QNRF will not allow these College Station administrators to report into

their system and requires that an administrator in Qatar handle these matters. This has led to the need for a robust research support group in Qatar. The challenges do not end there. Communication with grantees on the main campus is complex. For instance, if a main campus faculty member wants to change travel plans and airfare was covered by a QNRF grant, he or she must communicate the change to the Qatar campus research support group, who in turn has to negotiate a contract modification with the Qatar Foundation. The Qatar support group also has to communicate alterations to the budgeting team in College Station. In theory, business processes become routine over time; however, according to one administrator, the QNRF grant requirements have become more stringent over time, so challenges persist.

An administrator from the main campus familiar with research funding offered a helpful comparison between U.S. and Qatar grants:

[M]ost of your [U.S.] federal grants are fairly uniform. Meaning they follow A21, they're pretty uniform in terms of administering them... [QNRF] requires much greater detail than typical. Let's say you and I were co-PIs on something and you had two trips you were going to take to the U.S., and I had one. [But], we ended up, I was going to take two and you were going to take one. Well, we have to go back and get permission from QNRF to change it even though there's still three trips total.

The increased complexity of administering Qatar Foundation grants was yet another reason Texas A&M—and likely other branch campus in Education City—are dissatisfied with the lower-than-average indirect cost percentage. The amount of time and effort (and therefore money) required to administer a grant was perceived to be considerably more

than a typical U.S. grant on the main campus. That said, it is important to note that the Qatar Foundation pays the salaries of the entire research administration group in Qatar, so from QF's perspective that would justify a lower percentage.

Export Control

Participants on the Qatar campus and in College Station universally agreed that export control was a significant hindrance to research progress. Export control can be defined as government imposed barriers on trade across national borders. The United States has strict export control laws that “controls exports of sensitive equipment, software and technology as a means to promote [U.S.] national security interests and foreign policy objectives” (Department Of State, 2011). As an American institution, Texas A&M at Qatar must follow U.S. export control laws. This has proven especially tricky and frustrating for TAMUQ faculty and administrators.

A significant percentage of TAMUQ's faculty and staff are not U.S. citizens and many of them use or have access to American equipment and technology that is classified as sensitive by the U.S. government, which makes the campus susceptible to the “deemed export” rule. In response, Texas A&M must follow a lengthy application process to obtain special licenses that permit foreign nationals access to technology that is considered sensitive. In practice, export control causes significant delays in purchasing technology, chemicals, and other supplies, which can negatively impact research projects with limited grant periods. Additionally, faculty rely on technology and laboratory supplies in the classroom, which can be difficult to obtain within a reasonable amount of time. Export control applies to all American branch campuses in Education City, but the

impact is even greater on Texas A&M due to the sensitive nature of engineering and science related technology and equipment.

Several Qatar campus participants were unsatisfied at the way the main campus approached export control. According to several upper-level administrators, the U.S. Congress exempts certain aspects of export control for university research intended for publication. Nevertheless, the legal counsel—which operates from the main campus—exercises an “over abundance of caution,” as stated by one Qatar campus administrator. The lawyers approach appears to correspond with the trend of American institutions to take conservative stances on legal issues to avoid potentially costly legal battles.

Intellectual Property

The increasingly commercial nature of university research has amplified the need to reevaluate policies related to intellectual property. Texas A&M has negotiated an agreement with the Qatar Foundation that proved controversial with the other branch campuses in Education City. Texas A&M essentially agreed that intellectual property resulting from projects funded by Qatar Foundation grants would become property of QF. In turn, the Qatar Foundation offered to pay for patent protection and share a percentage of royalties with TAMUQ and the faculty inventor. To be exact, the inventor would receive 37.5 percent of the net income generated from intellectual property, TAMUQ would keep 29.2 percent to reinvest in research programs, and 33.3 percent would stay with the Qatar Foundation.

The upper-administration is convinced that this agreement was a good deal for Texas A&M because QF will take on the burden of protecting and marketing the product, and the faculty inventor will still take home a decent portion of the proceeds.

Furthermore, Texas A&M takes the position that the agreement “reflects the partnership between the Qatar Foundation and TAMUQ” because “without QF there would be no TAMUQ; QF provides facilities, salaries, and support; and TAMUQ provides the intellectual resources” (McConnell, 2013). In other words, as one senior-level administrator on the Qatar campus stated, “they're paying for everything, why shouldn't they own it?” The same administrator said that College Station agreed that this was a good deal because, historically, patent applications and enforcement costs the university a significant sum of money and more often than not do not generate a profit.

Faculty, of course, would likely have a different perspective. By accepting a grant from the Qatar Foundation, TAMUQ faculty essentially agree that their discovery will be property of QF, which means they will lose control over how their innovation is used. For instance, if QF determines an invention is not commercially viable, they would likely decide not to pursue patent protection and licensing, and the faculty member may have no say in the matter.

As described in this section, there are a number of significant challenges to TAMUQ's research program. Nevertheless, as this member of the leadership team noted, it is important to maintain perspective:

[Qatar is] a country that's trying to do the right thing for their people and for the region [by] promoting research. It's very exciting, and it's working! In spite of [this], we keep looking at the negative side and the frustrations and “this is not doing well.” Well, this [program] doesn't have 200 or 300 years of research culture or appreciation of research and education, so we have to give them a

chance. Sometimes we are too harsh of judging the experience of Qatar. We're impatient. We want it to work in five years. It doesn't—It takes generations. The same administrator acknowledged that patience must go both ways and hoped the Qatar Foundation would stay committed to investing in research and realize there are benefits to conducting research that go beyond resolving short-term problems:

The challenge for Qatar is to keep doing what they [are doing]. Keep doing it – don't give up...research doesn't pay off in a year or two or five. That's actually the problem here. People do research for three years and [QF] says, "what did you do for us?"... We publish papers. Qatar's name is all over the world now. We go and present [Qatar] like ambassadors in conferences, but they cannot show you tangible things, cannot show you a company that is a spinoff [that is generating] so many millions because we did research in Qatar. It's going to be a while before that happens.

Graduate Programs: An Evolving Struggle

In addition to undergraduate engineering and research, Texas A&M's original agreement with the Qatar Foundation called for graduate-level education. Similar to research support, the faculty and administrators involved in the inception of TAMUQ pushed for graduate education because they knew it was necessary in order to supply a steady stream of graduate students to support faculty research. As discussed, the goal of offering research and graduate education was to recruit qualified faculty.

Graduate programs have taken considerably longer to establish than anticipated, but not for a lack of effort on TAMUQ's part. An upper-level administrator explained that "In our initial agreement [with QF] it says that we will have a graduate program by

the time our first class are juniors or something like that. It was really early on.” The first class of undergraduate students began their junior year in the fall of 2005, but the graduate program agreement with QF was not signed until the fall of 2010—five years longer than anticipated. Since then, TAMUQ has only managed to establish a small chemical engineering master’s program. Participants did not discuss whether this program was successful in achieving the initial goal of supplying graduate students to assist faculty in research. A Qatar campus administrator commented that a majority of the master’s students were recent graduates from TAMUQ’s undergraduate programs who may have already been engaged in research projects with faculty.

Participants from TAMUQ’s leadership team were clear that the institution hopes to establish more graduate programs but struggles to get approval from the Qatar Foundation. Since the inception period, participants from the main campus and in Doha felt that QF never really understood why graduate programs were necessary to support undergraduate programs, as this member of the Qatar campus leadership team explained, “graduate programs are a necessity. We would benefit from more graduate programs because then you have grad students that can help with research. You bring in faculty that can teach at the graduate level. It just improves everything all around.” The College of Engineering in Texas would benefit from additional graduate programs in Qatar as well through additional research opportunities.

Conflict with Hamad Bin Khalifa University

Participant interviews did not reveal details regarding why the Qatar Foundation hesitated to support graduate education. More recently, however, QF shifted strategies when they announced a new Education City umbrella organization called Hamad Bin

Khalifa University (HBKU). HBKU was the new education division of the Qatar Foundation that would oversee the branch campuses. The creation of HBKU came as a surprise to the branch campuses and, understandably, they wondered how this would impact their future. Would the branch campuses eventually become HBKU, or would HBKU start their own academic programs? According to various participants the mission and vision for HBKU was unclear until several years after the initial announcement. HBKU would establish itself as a graduate school and offer its own degrees. This undoubtedly created anxiety for Texas A&M and the other branch campuses with aspirations of introducing graduate programs. Moreover, what would this mean for their current chemical engineering master's program? A TAMUQ administrator's comment clearly indicates the future is uncertain, "I wonder in my own mind how this is going to play out with HBKU establishing itself as a graduate school? To what extent are they going to keep funding or allowing us to do what we're doing?" This staff member goes on to discuss the likelihood of adding new programs:

[W]e've got chemical and as soon as we can demonstrate demand in the community, apparently, they'll let us offer another [graduate degree]. I think that's—between you and me—a bit of a game. Like how do you demonstrate [need] if they won't let us recruit?... I think they're holding off because they want to be the grantor of all graduate type degrees.

Someone from the Qatar Foundation confirmed that HBKU will "want to have exclusive involvement with the graduate degrees," but he did not go so far to say HBKU wanted to be the sole provider of degrees. In other words, HBKU is open to collaborative arrangements.

Without revealing details multiple participants from TAMUQ and HBKU mentioned that Texas A&M was currently discussing the possibility of creating a dual-degree graduate program in collaboration with HBKU in which graduates would receive a degree from each institution. Designing and implementing dual-degree programs carries a host of challenges (Institute of International Education, 2011). TAMUQ can add any graduate program already offered on the main campus; however, introducing new programs would require approval from the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. Furthermore, the Qatar campus would be required to use the same admissions standards as the main campus, which would likely exclude many prospective students with non-American undergraduate degrees in engineering.

As a new institution with a short history and evolving vision, HBKU is in a position to be flexible and creative. A dual-degree program could be quite advantageous for HBKU, as this Qatar campus administrator on the leadership team explained:

I mean just from a practical point of view, how do you get Hamad Bin Khalifa University started? Well, you do it like the master's in energy resources where you get three [branch] campuses together and they all offer their best stuff. The participant went on to say that HBKU has an “absolute right” to offer a degree because QF pays for everything. From his perspective, the branch campuses might supply the faculty and curriculum, but the opportunity would not be available without QF's generosity.

Another challenge (or opportunity—depending on who you ask) is that HBKU hopes to offer interdisciplinary graduate degrees. A QF administrator felt that HBKU would be in a unique position to make this possible:

Everything HBKU will do is supposed to be interdisciplinary and literally none of our branches is in a position to be deeply interdisciplinary. They might be able to do a little bit, but not in the same way that HBKU would be able to in terms of pulling different partners together, create a program, create a degree...and that becomes interdisciplinary, and HBKU is the catalyst.

One TAMUQ administrator questioned the need for and value of interdisciplinary graduate degrees:

If you get an interdisciplinary graduate degree, I'm not sure it makes you more marketable. If you get a masters in electrical engineering that makes you very marketable. So we feel like the best thing to do would be to allow these universities to do their own.

Nevertheless, TAMUQ has demonstrated interest in a partnership if HBKU heads in this direction. If HBKU decides to offer interdisciplinary degrees, they would be the sole conferrer of the degree, and Texas A&M would only contribute by supplying faculty to teach in the program. The future of HBKU and what types of degrees they will offer is uncertain, but it seems clear that HBKU will be involved with graduate education, which will have an impact on Texas A&M.

Don't Forget the Undergrads

Developing TAMUQ's research and graduate programs is a high priority, as evident through the interviews in this study. The message from upper-level administrators was clear—to succeed as an institution research and graduate program are a must. Nonetheless, some participants claimed that the attention on research and graduate education has been at the expense of A&M's undergraduate education.

A Qatar campus administrator that works closely with undergraduate students admitted that opinions on this matter were mixed. She stated,

The people on the academic side of the house will say [undergraduate education] is fantastic. The people that are on the non-academic side of the house will probably not report the same thing... You know it's a love hate thing because [the academics] do wonderful work. They've gotten all this funded research but when you operationalize it, it does tax everything else and the undergraduates are not benefitting from all this research to the extent that they should.

The administrator went on to provide examples of how the institution was “taxed” by graduate education. Departments providing services to students were expected to assist graduate students without additional staffing or budget increases.

Many—but not all—participants on the academic side felt strongly that the undergraduate education benefitted from research and graduate programs. An academic administrator on the leadership team emphasized this point:

To retain our faculty we have to make sure that they have good research programs and this is why we need the graduate programs. But that doesn't mean that we are going to neglect or push the undergraduate education to the back burner, no.

Another member of the leadership team shared a similar point of view:

I can tell you our best researchers are our best teachers (most of the time). But if you look at the superstars in every program, they're superstars in the classroom, they're superstars in research, they're superstars across the board... You eliminate the grad program and the research and our best people leave. Then what happens to your undergrad program? We have undergraduates who are involved in

research. The opportunities here are much greater because we have research graduate programs.

In fact, 81 percent of undergraduates are involved in research according to a participant with access to such information. An academic that works directly with students expanded on the benefit to undergraduates, “The research money pays for so much other stuff, gives us the opportunity to have instrumentation, equipment, and experience that we wouldn't have that we can bring to the undergraduates.” In summary, these administrators believe that graduate programs and research are necessary to recruit top faculty, which ultimately enhances learning opportunities for undergraduate students.

An upper-level administrator on the operations side took a neutral perspective on the debate but was able to shed light on why non-academic staff felt that the undergraduate education at TAMUQ was suffering:

From an operations perspective and a financial perspective the undergraduate program did suffer a number of years because we didn't have the [research] agreement signed. So we were ramping up our research program. We were ramping up preparing for the graduate program to start on the back of the academic budget.

In other words, TAMUQ used money from the academic budget, which was originally allocated for undergraduate programs, to fund research. Faculty began to receive grant approval as far back as 2006, but the research agreement, which included financial conditions such as indirect cost percentages, was not signed until 2011. Thus, A&M was not receiving grant money from QF during this interim period, but administrators felt strongly that they needed to start supporting research, so they used money in the budget

allocated for undergraduate education. As a result, departmental budgets were cut, a hiring freeze was implemented, and no promotions were offered during this period.

Funding research prior to the signing of the agreement with QF unquestionably had negative implications, which helps explain why some TAMUQ personnel felt that supporting research was at the expense of undergraduate education. Another debate regarding the principal mission of TAMUQ emerged during interviews. Several administrators believed that Texas A&M at Qatar was founded to be a strong undergraduate teaching institution and that adding research and graduate programs was straying from the original mission. One faculty member explained that “we began strictly with the vision of being a good teaching institution. As the researchers began to come it became all about getting those research grants.” A staff member shared a similar perspective, “I don't think we were hired to be a research group. From my standpoint, I feel that...we've went [*sic*] from being an academic facility or institution, that does research to being a research facility that happens to teach some courses.” Yet another staff member shared a similar comment regarding graduate education:

Graduate education is sexy and the academics, honestly, they're elitist. I've always seen that our prime function here is to provide an outstanding undergraduate engineering education and once we started to work on the graduate side of that, it's like the tail is wagging the dog. You walk around this building and there are so many people who are here just for research.

Based on all accounts from faculty and administrators involved in the inception of Texas A&M at Qatar, graduate education and research were a priority from the very beginning. So, where did these staff and faculty get the idea that A&M was designed to be a teaching

institution? One interviewee claimed that the original Dean and CEO's vision was to build a great teaching university. The Dean was not part of the negotiations with QF, so perhaps he shifted the vision away from that of the inception team.

The idea that TAMUQ was originally intended to be an undergraduate institution may also stem from the fact that teaching-focused faculty comprised a majority of the original staff. Research faculty were not hired in substantial numbers until they were needed to teach upper-level courses, which created some animosity with the teaching faculty who claimed they were not focused enough on students. The idea that TAMUQ should be a teaching university—whether true or not—lives on. This fundamental disagreement could harm the institution. For instance, if faculty and staff are skeptical of research and graduate programs, they are unlikely to support institutional leadership in supporting the strategic direction of the University.

A high-level administrator that was open about the value of graduate-level programs and research believed that people pushing for a singular focus on teaching do not understand the nature of Texas A&M University. He downplayed any concerns, though, claiming that one would hear the same complaints on the main campus. Somewhat surprisingly, a Qatar Foundation staff member assumed the undergraduate programs would suffer to a certain extent as the focus on research and graduate programs increased and did not seem concerned:

The typical model of most research universities is that the more you have faculty that are motivated by the research agenda and publications and so forth, the less interested they are in undergraduate students. That's the American problem. Because we've got American institutions, I kind of assume that they're going to

bring that issue with them because that's just who the faculty are. The faculty are trained in Western models [and] their motivations are going to be aligned with the way that they were trained.

Increased Bureaucracy and Leveling Off

When asked how TAMUQ had changed over time, a Qatar staff member working in operations since the early years said, “I've got a lot more rules. A lot more rules. Really.” He described the shift as a natural progression of a growing organization, but felt that there had been a fundamental shift in the mentality of the leadership and newer staff. Comments from upper-level administrators confirmed this shift, “You start looking more like a bureaucracy over time. There’s not a bigger bureaucracy in the world than Texas A&M, or any of the big state schools, [like] Penn State, they’re all big bureaucracies.”

Other participants, like this long time faculty member, shared similar comments, “As the organization develops over time you have the accountants and the other kinds of administrators that come in. You get more layers and layers and layers of rules.” As discussed in the previous chapter, most participants attributed this shift to Dean Weichold’s leadership. His appointment in 2007 marked a turning point of bringing “order to this bigger system,” as one administrator noted. Several years later, the growth of the institution began to level off and systems were largely in place. One participant claimed this point of stabilization occurred around 2012:

We couldn't really grow much more. So now we're leveling out... People were focusing their time and their energy on growing, building, [but] everything was

built at this point. So now people are focusing their time on making things run a little bit better.

Other participants felt similar about the current state of the University, using descriptors like “steady state” and “maintaining.” Some staff and faculty that spearheaded the institution’s growth during “Wild West” period become uncomfortable in a more organized system. One faculty member claimed that people that came in the very beginning were now unhappy because they “have a different mindset about how to run the organization.” An upper-level administrator agreed that the so-called “renaissance” people that were necessary in the early years became less helpful over time. He stated that “some people are good maintainers and some people are visionaries, both are equally important. It’s when they come along in the cycle [that matters].” The builders are less comfortable with rigid policies and procedures and felt stifled during the leveling-off period. Staff that were accustomed to being “jacks of all trades” were forced to concede to more narrow job responsibilities. As one long term administrator stated, “Used to be where a person would do ten things, now because we’re bigger and more people they maybe do three things.”

The excitement of the early years described in the previous chapter faded over time. In the latter years, as TAMUQ reached steady state, enthusiasm faded both internally and on the main campus, as this participant from the Qatar leadership team described:

Excitement tends to wane. At first it’s a lot of excitement, the newness. Well, the newness wears off... I think that what you see now that we’ve finished almost 11

years, we're not an exciting new entity for the main campus anymore. We're established in their mind.

Difficulties in Scaling

Operational challenges thwarted TAMUQ's ability to reach steady state as quickly as desired. Participants openly admitted that early staff failed to account for future growth, as this member of the Qatar leadership team remarked:

One of the things that they did not do well is plan for scaling this place. There wasn't enough time, they were reacting to... "we've gotta teach this many students this semester and next semester we have to put on these courses and how are we going to get the people here." They weren't really looking at, "okay if we implement this policy now for these 10 employees that we have, how is that going to look when we have 500?"

The newer staff cleaning up the issues that carried over from the early years were sympathetic to the challenges faced by their predecessors, as this senior-level staff member noted,

In defense of the early days, I think they were so consumed with just expanding. I think the decisions that were made at the time were good decisions and were driven by things of a more immediate nature rather than a long-term strategic nature.

Participants offered various accounts where "scaling up" proved particularly difficult. During the inception phase, the Qatar Foundation required that TAMUQ provide a five-year projection on personnel requirements. Their prediction for the number of faculty (and distribution across disciplines) was quite accurate; however, the staff estimate was

way off. Several participants involved in the inception and early years admitted they were unaware how functional areas would differ between the main and branch campus. For instance, on the Qatar campus human resources takes on a variety of additional responsibilities. HR staff in Qatar helps employees find housing, assists families in selecting schools, and advises on the immigration process. TAMUQ eventually had to revise the staffing plan and ask for additional positions from QF. This is an insightful occurrence where Qatar campus strategy was driven by preexisting structures on the main campus and failed to address the branch's unique needs.

In another example, the initial benefits package was quite extensive and not sustainable as the campus grew. According to one account, the administrators were quite worried about being able to attract faculty and staff in the early years, so they implemented a tax policy to protect American employees that was overly generous:

They were implementing this tax policy in those early days and nobody really even knew...enough to know what they were doing, and we weren't getting outside advice, so for a long time we were doing this tax policy that was way, way generous. Not illegal, it was all legal because we had PWC or whoever involved with this but it was very, very generous to the extreme, and then Qatar Foundation made us get back in line. If you look back and you talk to people about the discussions back then I just don't think they looked at the full impact of this. You know we only have seven faculty, we only have seven Americans over here and we have a huge budget, [so] it's not that big of a deal, but now you have 150 Americans over here and the tax bill is high.

Cutting back on benefits is never popular. Over the past several years, the operations

staff has had the difficult task of redesigning benefits packages “without appearing to take stuff away from faculty and staff.” Personnel that have been at TAMUQ since the early days have been through several benefits adjustment periods. One administrator involved in making these alterations described the process as “very painful.” Staff become “disgruntled” and feel that the upper-administration is trying to “screw us.” Another administrator involved in implementing such changes understood why this “chipping away” at benefits was so difficult for staff to accept, but emphasized that the current benefits package was still very generous when compared to the package main campus staff receive.

Community Engagement

American Land Grant institutions, like Texas A&M University, understand the importance of serving the public good. In the State of Texas, A&M has a rich history of contributing to industry through research and producing civically minded graduates. Opening an engineering school in Qatar, with a substantial local oil and gas industry, seemed like a natural opportunity to extend A&M’s service mission. Tertiary institutions in the Middle East do not share the same service mission so, initially, some Qataris were skeptical as to why Texas A&M was interested in engaging in the local community. As one administrator present during the early years put it, “That was mind boggling in some ways to people that were there because any experience they'd had with universities before seemed to be much more in the ivory tower and ‘stay out of it.’”

The Qatar Foundation was even surprised at Texas A&M’s interest in engaging in the local community. In fact, a senior-level administrator shared,

[T]hat Texas A&M for years had far better relationships with the local community

than Qatar Foundation itself... [QF] was perceived by the locals as an elitist group that was for ex-Pats and doing things only for ex-Pats. I think we had a large role in breaking that down.

A Qatar Foundation staff member agreed that TAMUQ understood the value of community engagement as an extension of their “public identity”; whereas, he said the private schools in Education City “don't quite have that in their value stream structure to the same degree.”

Faculty from the main campus already buy in to the value of community engagement thanks to their experience in College Station. A Qatar campus dean said that the other group of faculty caught on quickly:

They're pragmatic enough to realize that the local industry, the ministers can be very helpful to us, and we can reach out to them and work as partners in solving problems and pressing issues. I think the faculty also, from a research perspective, liked the idea of engaging with the community because, say I am working with Qatar Petroleum or something like that. That's when you learn [to address] very relevant, real-world problems.

Texas A&M at Qatar does community outreach in several strategic areas through local schools, continuing education, and research with industry.

Local Schools

TAMUQ faculty engage with local middle- and high-school students and teachers in several capacities. Generally speaking, students from local public schools are underprepared to succeed in Texas A&M's engineering program, so for seven consecutive years TAMUQ has arranged a summer program for 10th and 11th graders and

a summer camp for middle school students concentrated on filling this gap. In a related program, TAMUQ has partnered with the Supreme Education Council (SEC) to help train secondary school math teachers. A Qatar campus explained the theory behind these outreach initiatives:

[Teachers] are better equipped [in] the classroom and ultimately they can influence the students. [TAMUQ is] also working with the student during the summer time, so basically it would be like a full circle and [we] are closing the loop...making sure that [students] will be ready when they come to engineering.

Two administrators stressed the importance of working alongside the Supreme Education Council. Texas A&M understands the math and science skills necessary to succeed in American higher education, and the SEC understands the local school system, cultural dynamics, and how teachers are trained. Most recently, the SEC asked TAMUQ to consider adding workshops for science and physics teachers, which is a sign that Texas A&M is now a trusted partner. The obvious advantage of Texas A&M being involved in local schools is increased enrollment of local students. An administrator involved in student recruitment and admission explained that TAMUQ “can’t just sit back and blame the secondary schools for not producing good Qataris...so we’ve gotten involved in the community.”

TAMUQ also partners with other branch campuses in Education City to train high school counselors on how to assist high schools students in completing U.S. college applications, including crafting a personal essay and SAT and ACT test preparation. Participants were open about how TAMUQ benefitted from engaging in local schools. There was no attempt to sell their programs as otherwise, though they did acknowledge

that the students benefit regardless of whether they apply to Texas A&M. Many Qatari students choose to study abroad in the U.S.

Local Industry

In addition to working with local schools, Texas A&M recognizes the importance of connecting with local industry, which they accomplish by offering continuing education courses, organizing conferences, and engaging in research to address local issues. For continuing education, TAMUQ talks with local engineering companies to identify their needs and offers courses relevant to their employees. TAMUQ also hosts international conferences that pertain to local industry. During the 2012-2013 school year, TAMUQ hosted ten international conferences—a number that seems far beyond their capacity relative to the institution's size (Texas A&M University at Qatar, 2012). This is an indication that the staff and faculty involved in these initiatives are devoting a significant amount of time to local outreach.

Texas A&M also collaborates on research projects alongside local industry. Companies were initially skeptical of TAMUQ when they offered to assist with research, as this administrator explained,

As we started to establish research relationships with industry [but] they really had no concept...because the local concept was to buy technology from somebody else and use it... Their understanding of us...is [that] we were consultants...not from the idea of research funded by them that would lead to new ideas as opposed to just solving a short-term problem. So it was a long-term education process to make that work.

Additionally, TAMUQ grants special permission for industry partners to use their

laboratories and specialized engineering equipment that are otherwise not available in the country.

Additional Benefits to TAMUQ

Community engagement is an opportunity for TAMUQ to increase and expedite its impact on the State of Qatar. As this member of the leadership team explained, merely educating students is not sufficient:

If we don't engage with the community [our] impact becomes very slow because...you graduate 400 engineers in ten years. That's great, but that takes a while for everybody in Qatar to see it. But, if you are in the news or offering short courses, open[ing] your facilities, doing open houses, bringing students from schools to see the campus, you can make the impact quickly because Qatar [has] a small population. Actually, you can, in Qatar, reach every family. It's not hard. I mean how many people, 300,000? You can reach every family, if you wish.

Put simply, TAMUQ believes community engagement activities benefit the institution and the State of Qatar. The advantages to Texas A&M go beyond the immediate (e.g., increased student enrollment). Administrators acknowledged that the University's ability to effectively demonstrate their value to the community has had a direct influence on the long-term sustainability of the institution. Rhetoric used in reports available to the public reflects this notion: "TAMUQ is populating the workforce with world-class Aggie engineers and leaders, training researchers to solve critical problems and providing continuing education opportunities that serve local industry and the State of Qatar" (Texas A&M University at Qatar, 2012, p. 5). This message was continuously communicated during interviews as well. One participant from the Qatar campus

leadership team stated,

You look at the universities that fail in the region, it's because they didn't have that relationship where they could make people believe that everybody's winning here. That's part of our engagement struggle is to make sure that we can tell the story of why it's important that Texas A&M is here. It's beyond giving degrees. Or, as this faculty member articulated, "It's all about embedding... further into the community and making it indispensable. You have to make sure that [QF] can't just bring in another engineering school, you have to show you've done something to make yourself graft totally into the environment."

The Qatar Foundation now seems to understand the importance of branch campus engagement in the community. One TAMUQ staff member felt this was a result of pressure from the local community that was increasingly discontent with Education City, which costs a substantial sum and does not produce many graduates relative to Qatar University. Put candidly, QF faces "tremendous pressure to show engagement," said one Qatar campus administrator.

Conclusion

From 2008 to 2014, TAMUQ leadership focused on bringing vision to fruition. The robust research and graduate programs that TAMUQ's founders envisioned slowly became a reality. Once the Qatar Foundation grant programs were operational and TAMUQ signed a research agreement, the research program exploded. The research funding and administration process is complex, so the success of TAMUQ's program has come with several challenges, such as navigating compliance with Qatar Foundation regulations, intellectual property sharing, and strict U.S. export control laws. Graduate

programs, on the other hand, have not enjoyed the same level of success. Although TAMUQ managed to start a chemical engineering master's program, the future of graduate education is uncertain due to Hamad Bin Khalifa University's newly determined focus on graduate studies.

The Texas A&M faculty and staff that helped design and negotiate the Qatar campus' strategic direction were confident that it was possible to recreate a miniature version of the home campus with undergraduate and graduate programs and a robust research infrastructure. For a number of reasons, including roadblocks from the sponsoring organization, the latter two have been a struggle. Some participants from the Qatar campus stated that QF always intended for TAMUQ to focus solely on undergraduate education. The truth on this matter is unknown, but the lessons for other universities considering IBC partnerships is clear. Misunderstandings over key strategic issues should be expected and do not assume the terms of initial agreement are a guarantee. Furthermore, having a partner that is willing to foot the entire bill for a branch campus operation is important, yet an institution following this model, inevitably, has less control over strategic-level issues and its future.

The arrival of a new Dean corresponded with a push to follow main campus policies and procedure. Many long-term faculty and staff showed discontent with the shift and some of the excitement from the early days began to fade. Additionally, decisions made during this early period seemed appropriate at the time, but led to long-term scalability issues, such as benefits packages that were impossible to sustain. The faculty and staff necessary during the start-up and early years of an IBC may not be a good match for an institution that has become more stable. Additionally, decisions made

during these early years have long-term implications and an institution's growth trajectory should be thoroughly considered when making important strategic decisions like designing staffing plans and compensation packages.

Texas A&M boasts several forms of community outreach including continuing education courses, STEM programs for students and teachers at local secondary schools, and research partnerships with local industry. These forms of engagement support Texas A&M's service mission and make them a valued partner in the community. Texas A&M benefits through increased student enrollment and a stronger relationship with their funder and industry partners. The relatively small number of graduates from branch campuses may cause the public to question how they add value to society. Public and private IBCs alike should devote the resources necessary to engage in local communities. It's a win-win for the institutions and the host countries. The next chapter assesses the level of autonomy the Qatar campus has from the main campus and explores other entities that influence institutional strategy and direction.

CHAPTER EIGHT. Pleasing Many Masters

“I’ve never been in a job where I’ve felt like I have so many bosses,” said a senior-level administrator at the Qatar campus, “the main campus, the Qatar Foundation, State of Texas, the Feds, the State of Qatar laws, it’s crazy.” A number of interviewees shared this sentiment that a large number of entities had control or heavy influence over Texas A&M at Qatar. Another staff member said, “we joke [in Qatar] it’s like having three masters if you will, bosses, you have to keep multiple people happy and connect what you’re doing with their sometimes seemingly three distinct visions or understandings or more challenging processes.” The language used to identify these relationships varied—bosses, masters, and stakeholders—but the descriptions typically revolved around the challenges of answering to the multiple entities that have a vested interest in TAMUQ. This chapter discusses these various groups, the extent of their influence, and how they have shifted over time.

The two “masters” discussed most frequently by Qatar campus participants were the main campus and the Qatar Foundation. Both were described as having significant control over TAMUQ in various areas. Further analysis revealed complex dynamics between each. Other entities with important but less overall influence included state and federal governments, local industry, governing boards, and accreditation agencies.

Main Campus

The main campus has formal power over TAMUQ through several linkages, but the two primary groups are the Dwight Look College of Engineering and the main campus upper-administration (i.e., the President, Provost, and Vice President for

Research). The Dean of the College of Engineering and the four departments represented on the Qatar campus (i.e., Electrical, Petroleum, Chemical, and Mechanical) “have a lot of curriculum control” and evaluate faculty and programs, according to a Qatar campus administrator on the leadership team. Specifically, each department has a curriculum committee that approves any changes to the Qatar campus curriculum, approves new faculty hires, and has a formal role in the tenure and promotion process. Additionally, another senior-level administrator in Qatar reported that the four departments represented on the Qatar campus did a significant amount of work during the inception and early years of TAMUQ to develop curricula and start building research laboratories.

As explained in chapter one, during the inception process, the College of Engineering lost the battle for control over the Qatar campus to the Provost. The Provost won ultimate authority over TAMUQ and, subsequently, gained control over the \$10 million annual discretionary fee paid to Texas A&M by the Qatar Foundation. Despite the heavy workload in the early years, the four Engineering departments offering degrees in Qatar were not initially offered any of this management fee. Overall, in the early years, the College of Engineering tolerated the Qatar campus but did not go out of their way to ensure the project’s success because, as an administrator from the College of Engineering stated, “we don’t have ownership and when you don’t have ownership you only do so much.” He shared an example of this might impact the Qatar campus, “If a faculty member [on the main campus] needs a wet lab and we don’t have it, I will be up late all night trying to figure out how to make it happen.” In contrast, without ownership there is no incentive for him to do more than required for the Qatar campus.

The main campus was broadly described by participants as an entity with control over the Qatar campus, yet further analysis of specific main campus areas and individuals revealed that the degree of control varied greatly. For the reasons described above, TAMUQ's relationship with the College of Engineering is most complex. Generally speaking, the Qatar campus is treated as a separate college, rather than an extension of the College of Engineering. The Dean of the Qatar campus is seen as a peer to the Dean of Engineering. "As such, a Dean doesn't interfere with another Dean's operations," said a former main campus administrator. An academic administrator from the College of Engineering explains the resulting tension and how the Qatar campus responds:

Put yourself in [the Dean of the Qatar campus'] shoes. You like to be captain of your ship, you don't like to be told what to do, you want to be independent, but at the same time you need [the College of Engineering's] validation. So [the Qatar campus] play[s] fast and loose. When they need our validation they come to us and they identify with us. And, when they don't need our validation they behave indifferently.

That said, over time, the relationship between the College of Engineering and TAMUQ has improved according to an upper-level Qatar campus administrator:

The new Dean...and her team [are] all really engaged with us and now things are really turning around with doing joint centers and joint workshops to facilitate collaborative research, so I think there's a shift in the leadership in engineering now, and we're seeing a lot of momentum there... I think she's just real innovative, and she sees the value in leveraging what we have over here.

This comment and other participants' stories indicate that the College of Engineering does not have as much power over TAMUQ as Qatar campus participants often suggested. TAMUQ treats the College of Engineering more like a peer and less like a superior. Although Engineering does have some formal power, in practice, the Qatar campus operates mostly autonomously. For instance, even though curriculum changes must be approved through the main campus curriculum committee, engineering curricula in the United States are largely standardized, thus there is not much wiggle room for curriculum modification in the first place. Other academic decisions such as faculty course loads, student appeals, and academic dishonesty cases are all made on the Qatar campus.

Similar to the College of Engineering, the Texas A&M central administration's degree of influence and control has varied over time. As explained previously, the President, Provost, Vice President for Research were heavily involved in the inception of the Qatar campus, including the development of the initial strategy, but once the campus was up and running their involvement declined. There are a number of explanations. First, the early staff was entrepreneurial in nature and acted independently from the main campus. The power struggle between the College of Engineering and central-administration was also partially to blame as this Qatar campus administrator explained:

[I]f you had an issue you couldn't really come back [to the main campus] and ask because no matter which person you asked the other two were upset because they weren't asked, and so it was easier to function autonomously in a sense, a little bit as an insurrection, than to try to deal with it... There was no way to get an answer from [College Station] in any reasonable length of time when decisions had to be

made.

Additionally, the initial Directors of Finance and Human Resources were both hired from outside Texas A&M, and according to one Qatar campus administrator, they frequently operated outside the main campus policies and procedures, which degraded relationships with staff in College Station and created institutional distance. Finally, since TAMUQ primarily operated as a teaching-focused institution the first few years—without the research grants—there was less of an incentive for the main campus to be involved. Once the research program started to develop and then eventually grew quite successful, the central-administration has willingly and necessarily become more involved.

On an individual level, the Dean of the Qatar campus reports to the Provost, thus the Provost has the highest level of formal power over the Qatar campus. Additionally, in recent years, the Provost has increased oversight and involvement with the Qatar campus, as this Qatar campus administrator on the leadership team reported:

[The Provost] is very, very actively involved with everything over here. Why? I don't know. There was that finance director that [TAMUQ] had so we started some financial things that were a little bit questionable. Now he is no longer in the position and we got those things cleaned up, but I think because of that she has an extra eye on us because she just wants to make sure that things are going to be okay. I think that they are, but there's a little bit more micromanagement of us until she can get more comfort and back off a little bit. So it really has nothing to do with strategy or we're interested in this because I want to do this or that. I don't think it has anything to do with that.

Qatar campus participants did not discuss specific examples of how the Provost had

increased involvement over the past few years, so it difficult to assess the degree of influence she has actually had. Nevertheless, her position within the organizational structure and exclusive control of the management fee indicate the “master” designation by Qatar campus participants is quite appropriate—significantly more so than for the College of Engineering.

Scholarly literature suggests that any number of additional entities from a home campus may have formal or information connections to a branch campus (Lane, 2011a). Three additional Qatar campus departments were analyzed to determine connections to the main campus: the Department of Student Affairs, the Office of Admissions, and Information Technology Services (IT). Staff from each area reported that their departmental counterparts on the main campus had little to no control or involvement with the Qatar campus operations.

Campus life and co-curricular involvement is a significant component of the undergraduate experience in College Station. A large portion of the student body is involved in student organizations, Greek Life, the Corps of Cadets, volunteer service, and other means of engagement that supplement the traditional academic experience. The Division of Student Affairs on the main campus is substantial. The professional staff work alongside students to facilitate learning through co-curricular involvement. They also support minority student groups and students with disabilities, offer psychological services, manage crisis, and organize the student conduct process. Considering the importance of student affairs support on the main campus, it is peculiar that the Qatar campus Department of Student Affairs was established completely void of oversight and assistance from the main campus.

During the startup phase, an individual from the main campus was hired to set up and operate all student affairs related services. Interestingly, this inaugural Director of Student Affairs did not work in the Division of Student Affairs on the main campus, though he did have experience working with student leaders hosting events on campus. It was not clear who was responsible for the hiring process and why someone was not transferred from the Division of Student Affairs. The Director was given no particular stipulations or guidance around how to structure campus life and student services. The main campus offered to be a resource if needed, but no formal relationship or control existed. The lack of involvement from main campus Student Affairs persisted over the years. A current student affairs professional from the Qatar campus stated that “Student Affairs in College Station has nothing to do with what we do.” This lack of a relationship is difficult to reconcile considering the main campus’ rich history of student engagement and professional staff support. The next chapter considers the extent to which the Qatar campus has attempted to recreate the ethos of the main campus through campus life and student engagement.

Admissions and recruitment is another area where the relationship between the main and branch campus was assessed for this study. Interview participants from a variety of functional areas noted that admission requirements on the Qatar campus are the same as on the main campus, yet the admissions office in College Station has no formal reporting line and little interaction with the Office of Admissions in Qatar. That said, the first admissions staff member in Qatar did come from the main campus admissions office, bringing an understanding of the system and requirements. A Qatar campus

administrator commented on the current relationship to the main campus admissions office:

[College Station has] nothing to do with how we operate our admissions other than we use the same student information system. And we use the same criteria, but how we go about recruiting and admitting, all those decisions are left to us. Considering that interviewees emphasized the importance of maintaining the same admissions standards as the main campus, it is surprising that the main campus does not have a formal connection to the Qatar campus admission's staff. For instance, how can the Qatar campus be certain that the students admitted to the Qatar campus are of a similar caliber to those admitted to the College of Engineering in College Station? A Qatar campus staff member working in admissions indicated that they rarely correspond with main campus admissions, even on an informal level.

Qatar's Information Technology Services (IT) had a similar startup story to the Office of Admissions. A staff member from the IT department on the main campus was sent over to develop the technology infrastructure and serve as IT support for faculty and staff. When asked about the relationship with the main campus IT office, a Qatar campus administrator present in the early years said, "we were on our own." Also like Admissions and Student Affairs, IT continues to operate almost completely independent from the main campus. Outside of ensuring that they follow the policies and procedures developed on the main campus, one Qatar campus interviewee claimed that the main campus had little influence over them. The technology infrastructure was developed separately from the main campus, so from a technical perspective there are few linkages that might otherwise encourage collaboration with the main campus.

Importance of Connections

Regardless of the actual or perceived power dynamics between the Qatar and main campus, participants agreed that it was important to cultivate and maintain close connections. A financial administrator with experience on both campuses suggested that Qatar campus staff with experience on the main campus were more likely to have the relationships and knowledge necessary to help the Qatar campus succeed:

I'd been at A&M for 18 years or whatever, so I had good relations. I knew who to call, who to ask questions of in the finance area because I had been around so long... We had people that went into that position [later] that didn't have connections on campus... Not knowing who to call, who to contact, not being aware of what A&M is like, that created a distance.

Additionally, in instances where Qatar campus staff members lacked main campus experience and connections, they were less apt to comply with University policy and procedure. The main campus policies and procedures were perceived to be rigid and not designed to accommodate Qatar's unique environment, so it is not surprising that Qatar campus staff with little understanding of these regulations would be less likely to follow them. For instance, vendors in Qatar are accustomed to being paid in cash versus a university purchase order, which is standard in the United States. In another example, the payroll department on the main campus struggled to figure out a way to pay locally hired Qatar personnel because direct deposit was not available into foreign bank accounts. A Qatar campus administrator with experience and knowledge of the main campus has an easier time helping navigate such issues. Furthermore, personnel on the main campus are more likely to trust the Qatar campus administrators with experience working in College Station and those with whom they share a personal relationship. A former campus

administrator that had extensive experience on the main campus said that College Station-based colleagues would go out of their way to help with Qatar campus issues, even on weekends and at night; whereas, a Qatar campus staff member without main campus experience had a contrasting opinion:

I feel like a little sibling of the main campus. That's a terrible analogy, but we're always the one compromising. That, of course, on my weekends and nights, that I would be the one that would do the calling or that it would be a part of my personal life but...it would be incomprehensible to ask someone [from the main campus] to work on a Friday night or to do a conference call on their Sunday (a religious holiday).

An upper-level administrator from the Qatar campus felt that it was only necessary for certain positions to have main campus experience. Specifically, she felt that the head of finance and human resources need to have main campus experience; whereas, the heads of information technology and other functional areas can be from anywhere. She explained:

There's just too much bureaucracy from the main campus for somebody to come into those two roles and kind of learn the financial system and all the rules that go around with it and the HR systems, and also a really critical piece is those relationships that you have back there.

Similar to the strategy practiced with new faculty, higher-level staff from the Qatar campus without experience on the main campus are encouraged to visit College Station and meet with their counterparts. Conversely, staff from the main campus are often urged to visit the Qatar campus, so they can meet face-to-face with their counterparts and

develop a better understanding of and appreciation for the Qatar campus.

Qatar Foundation

Texas A&M's Provost might control the annual management fee once it is received, but the Qatar Foundation decidedly holds the purse strings. The Qatar Foundation fully funds and approves TAMUQ's annual budget and as one participant stated, "he who has the gold makes the rules." In reality, the Qatar Foundation only exerts control over TAMUQ in particular areas, primarily those that impact their bottom line. For instance, QF dictates how many students TAMUQ can admit, financial aid distribution, and the number of full-time faculty and staff positions. Additionally, they cover all costs related to facilities and equipment. On the other hand, "they are very hands off when it comes to the academic programs," according to an upper-level Qatar campus administrator. QF shares a similar relationship to TAMUQ as the Texas Legislature does with the main campus. The Qatar campus administration must negotiate their budget with QF every year and justify any increases. Unlike the Texas Legislature in recent years, one senior-level administrator claimed that QF has "been very very accommodating to budget requests." He went on to say, "[the budget] always has a back and forth, but my experience is that if I can make a good, solid case, they'll pay for things." In exchange, they expect TAMUQ to uphold the quality of the main campus, which is why maintaining the same admissions requirements and curricular standards as the home campus is so crucial. The process of transferring quality is not as straightforward as it sounds and is explored in the next chapter.

Participants in academic and non-academic positions described contentious aspects of the relationship between TAMUQ and QF, like this Qatar campus liberal arts faculty:

Qatar Foundation people come in and say why are you spending this kind of money on this? So part of what's going on here is that there's not just a main campus versus branch campus struggle, there's also an incredibly serious underground fight that goes on between those who are giving the money, the client and those who are executing the contract. And, you know, there's a famous saying from the New Testament. It was difficult to serve two masters and that's exactly the position that we are in.

Several of the challenges of working with the Qatar Foundation were highlighted in previous chapters. For instance, the significant delay in funding research and ongoing inability to start graduate programs are a direct result of QF's lack of approval.

In other instances, QF's expectations conflicted. For instance, TAMUQ faces increasing pressure from the Qatar Foundation to admit a higher percentage of Qatari students, but there is a lack of Qatari students that meet the admissions standards that QF insists that A&M follow. Although TAMUQ participants across functional areas continually described their relationship with QF as a partnership, without question, they feel like the lessor partner, as this upper-level administrator noted:

We're partners with them, but we're definitely the weaker partner, and we never play up or take advantage of the impact that we're having in this country and they need us. Even in every negotiation they make us feel like we're the worst partner in all of Education City. We're the only ones not doing, where everybody else is

already complying with this or that, it's just not true. There are enough of us talking at all different levels to know that we're the ones that give in all the time. And so, sometimes I believe that our administration locally and back on the main campus should take a stronger stand... We never push. We figure out a path around to get it, and it's slower and more frustrating. So, I think that we really should take more advantage of our position here in the country.

Another Qatar campus administrator on the leadership team agreed that TAMUQ “could push back more” and attributed their inferior status to a lack of international experience. At the same time, TAMUQ has become savvier in working with and sometimes working around areas of disagreement with QF. TAMUQ’s desire for a Ph.D. program is a good example. As part of the push for graduate programs, Texas A&M at Qatar has attempted to start a Ph.D. program—a request that QF has denied. Yet, the institution feels strongly about the need for Ph.D. students to achieve their strategic goals, so they developed a creative solution for the main campus to “accept more Ph.D. students on behalf of Qatar,” explained a participant. She goes on,

They're going to be Texas A&M University students located at the Qatar campus. There's plenty of funding to fund those students and there's faculty, there's plenty of faculty. I guess maybe that's having to adapt, but in order to get something that [QF] want[s] to be the same as the...main campus. So, we're having to do workarounds.

Another challenge in working with the Qatar Foundation is their lack of stability and consistency. Due to frequent leadership changes and shifting priorities, QF’s expectations tend to shift year to year. A Qatar campus administrator explained:

What we did for them last year they may want something different this year.

They make a promise, then new people come in, they don't remember that promise. So, you have to be quick on your feet to work with them because they're always changing.

In other words, QF can be a fickle master, which makes strategic planning a challenge.

As a former senior-level administrator stated, "if they really had a nefarious scheme you could probably figure it out and counter it, but if there's no scheme at all, it's going to be random trouble... And so you just, you can only react." The evolution of Hamad Bin Khalifa University (HBKU) is a good example (see Chapter Seven for details). TAMUQ previously had an agreement in place to establish four graduate programs and since HBKU was established and decided to focus on graduate programs, the TAMUQ's previous agreement is in jeopardy.

The Qatar campus is essentially caught in the middle of a highly complex organizational structure, which this administrator from the main campus College of Engineering summarizes well:

It's not about personalities. It is a structural issue. There is really a structural issue. Take an example. General Motors sets up a plant in Beijing, they are only there for three months and if it doesn't make money or there are problems, the person [in the U.S.] picks up the phone and calls it off. But [with TAMUQ] that's not the case. Here the complexity is they're using our brand, we have a dotted line [to the Qatar campus] if you will. There is some connection, but the funding is coming from another agency. So, if I were [the Qatar campus Dean], whom do I listen [to]? Do I listen to the Provost because she is the one who controls my

appointment and the whole campus? Do I listen to Qatar Foundation, which are benefactors? Or do I listen to the Dean of Engineering in College Station, who is an intellectual leader? That's very simple, the intellectual leader takes the third seat.

Other accounts supported this ranking of power. First, The Qatar Foundation, as the financier, is viewed as the owner and active manager. As one interviewee stated simply, "This is a branch campus but only because Qatar Foundation has allowed us to be here." Second, the provost technically supervises the Dean of the Qatar campus and controls the annual management fee, which puts her in a position of power, albeit less so than QF. Finally, the College of Engineering had more influence in the early years and less so over time as the mere "intellectual leader." The College of Engineering's level of involvement with the Qatar campus has reflected more of a peer relationship in recent years.

Government Regulation

Study participants from the main and branch campus indicated that the State of Texas, United States government, and Qatari government exert influence and control over TAMUQ. The State of Texas regulates many areas of public higher education ranging from financial allocations, academic program approval, curricular requirements, and employment standards. TAMUQ is subject to the same rules and regulations that apply to the Texas A&M main campus. The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board regulates academic requirements for state institutions. Texas A&M had to seek approval from the Board in order to open the branch campus in Qatar. According to participants who were involved in the inception, as a pre-condition for approval, TAMU had to agree that the Qatar campus would not use any state money. With full funding

from the Qatar Foundation, avoiding the use of state money seemed reasonable, but an example demonstrates why this is a complex issue. A main campus administrator explained, “If I’m paying [a College Station staff member] \$100,000 and 5 percent of [his or her] time is spend on Qatar [work], I need to make sure I get \$5,000 back from Qatar. Otherwise, I’m violating the state law.” Many employees on the main campus spend time working on Qatar related issues. Calculating an accurate estimate of what percentage of time each staff members spends on Qatar campus work is challenging because responsibilities vary from year to year and salaried employees do not track working hours.

State policies impact a number of academic related areas as well. State law mandates that TAMUQ offer certain courses, whether or not they are applicable to Qatar campus students and the local context. This senior-academic official from the Qatar campus explained:

State law requires that we give our students six hours of American history and six hours of political science. Three hours of that emphasizes federal [government] and U.S. constitution and three hours of political science that emphasizes state and local Texas constitution. There’s no way around that, so we have to teach those courses. But we have adopted them to be, for instance in the case of state and local government, a comparative discussion instead of what we typically do at College Station.

State law also dictates faculty workload matters, including teaching hours and research productivity requirements that the Qatar campus must follow. Interviewees did not provide further details on specific requirements, but did share examples of other policies

that apply to all Texas A&M personnel including human resource related matters like the number of annual holidays. One administrator explained that the Qatar campus is,

obligated to observe the same number holidays or limited to observe the same number of holidays, but we don't have to observe them in the same way. So, for example we have 13 days in a given year, well 3 of those will be for Eid al Fitr and three of those will be for Eid al Adha because those are required by Qatar. And then, our faculty and staff will expect to have some kind of winter break, so that's five days, and then Qatar law again requires a national day and now a sports day so you burn through 13 days pretty quickly, but it's an example of how something is defined...in Texas...but then adapted to the reality of here.

This is an interesting example of where TAMUQ had to navigate seemingly contradictory laws of Texas and Qatar and came up with a satisfactory solution.

Other Qatari laws and norms are less simple to reconcile against Texas and U.S. federal laws. For instance, in Qatar is common to “differentiate employee benefits on the basis of gender,” according to a senior-level administrator. “So, a female would get something different, less than a male. The Qatar Foundation, as the funding organization, may desire to follow the local custom of paying females less money, which is permitted by local law. The administrator went on explain how TAMUQ resolved the issue, “The agreement that we have with Qatar Foundation basically says that these are all Texas A&M employees, and we...have to make sure that we abide by state and federal laws having to do with employees' and workers' rights.” This is an interesting occurrence where the state and federal laws of the home country were used as leverage not to follow an undesirable practice common in the host country.

Qatari laws have an impact on TAMUQ research as well. Qatar has health and safety regulations that must be followed in laboratories, which were not described as unreasonable. Additionally, the State of Qatar has a requirement that researchers must seek local institutional review board (IRB) approval, which has proven to be a significant burden on TAMUQ. Texas A&M does not have a biological expert, which is needed on an IRB focused on engineering and science projects, so they are forced to pay Georgetown—another institution in Education City—to facilitate every IRB approval. This is very expensive and time consuming.

Local Industry

As described in a previous chapter, Texas A&M at Qatar partners with local industry to assist in exploring research questions and by bringing professionals together through conferences and symposia. These efforts support the University's service mission. TAMUQ has another, arguably more important, link to industry through student sponsorship. Local companies provide full scholarships to all of Texas A&M's Qatari students. This role creates an unequal power dynamic between TAMUQ and the sponsorship organizations. A Qatar campus administrator on the leadership team acknowledged that local industry has "a lot of influence." He went on to say,

They don't influence what we do academically, but they are major stakeholders, and we have to keep them happy and so it is somewhat unique in that way.

[Industry has] much more [influence] than you would find on a main campus in the U.S.

In addition to the significant investment companies spend sponsoring Qatari students' tuition, TAMUQ needs them to hire their graduates. Qatar is a small country with

relatively few companies that are considered desirable by TAMUQ engineering graduates, so administrators must maintain good relationships with local industry and ensure that graduates are meeting their needs. Without good jobs from these companies, TAMU would no longer be an attractive option for prospective students and application numbers would suffer.

There are other reasons TAMUQ must appease local industry. As part of the Accreditation Board for Engineering Technology (ABET) requirements, TAMUQ has an industrial advisory board who examines each program and determines whether the curriculum covers topics relevant to local needs. Additionally, Texas A&M at Qatar relies on industry to fund external programs such as the STEM outreach program with middle and high school students. An upper-level academic administrator clarified that local industry does not have direct influence over TAMUQ, but they are important stakeholders that must be appeased. Or, as he put it, “if you’re unwilling to play you’re going to get hurt.”

Governance Boards

Texas A&M at Qatar technically answers to two governing boards: the Board of Regents that oversees the main campus and the Joint Advisory Board (JAB), the local governing board for the Qatar campus. Although the Board of Regents approved the initial contract between Texas A&M and the Qatar Foundation for the establishment of TAMUQ, they are not involved in the ongoing strategy or management of the Qatar campus in any significant way. That said, as one Qatar campus administrator warned, the Board of Regents “has ultimate control over us” and could technically get involved and “say no to anything that we wanted.”

The Joint Advisory Board is a requirement of the agreement signed between Texas A&M and the Qatar Foundation. Broadly speaking, the JAB approves the annual budget and discusses strategic-level issues such as student and faculty recruitment. TAMUQ's website states that the JAB is "primarily responsible for ongoing review and evaluation of the success of Texas A&M at Qatar" (Texas A&M University at Qatar, n.d.-b). Although the exact composition of the JAB shifts, it always consists of individuals from the main campus, the Qatar Foundation, and outside representatives. The Board meets twice a year and TAMUQ faculty members prepare a lengthy report that includes information such as budget expenditures, student enrollment trends, program updates, and future projections.

According to various upper-level administrators, however, the JAB does not have the same degree of influence and formal power over the Qatar campus as a typical governing board has at a U.S. university. Most of these participants described the JAB as an advisory board rather than a decision-making body, and the university's website says the JAB was established to "provide advice regarding the management and operation of Texas A&M at Qatar, the Dean and CEO, and to Qatar Foundation" (Texas A&M University at Qatar, n.d.-b). One senior-level administrator could not recall an instance where the JAB made an actual decision. He stated that the JAB's feedback typically consists of praise and suggestions. For instance, "You did a good job with Qatar national recruiting, and our advice would be to take it from X percent to X.5 percent." Another interviewee said that the JAB's role reflects the standard in Qatari business society:

I tell a faculty member or anybody who comes doing business here, to understand doing business in Doha, symbolism is more important than substance. So,

symbolically we have a board but, in reality, they're not. I think what you see here is exactly what you see in so many places [in Qatar].

Despite the JAB's lack of actual decision-making power, TAMUQ seems to realize the importance of demonstrating progress on strategic-level issues. It is important to realize that the Qatar Foundation does have influence and formal control over TAMUQ in certain areas, as previously explained; however, the JAB is not where this control is exerted. At the same time, the JAB always has high-level Qatar Foundation staff rotating in and out as members. Interestingly, one participant noted that the role of Joint Advisory Boards differs among each Education City branch campus—some JABs exert greater levels of control and influence.

Accrediting Requirements

Texas A&M at Qatar answers to two accrediting agencies and interview participants involved in academic matters were clear that accreditation was crucial to the success of the institution. The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) accreditation is the general accrediting body for Texas A&M University, so as a foreign branch campus, SACS also requires an independent accreditation process for TAMUQ. The second accrediting organization is the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (ABET), which provides discipline specific accreditation for the College of Engineering on the main campus and also requires separate accreditation for the Engineering programs on the Qatar campus. Both accreditation processes occurred several years after the opening of TAMUQ in 2003—ABET will not accredit schools until they have graduates.

Although the SACS and ABET accreditation reviews did not occur for several

years after the campus began operation, their influence was evident all the way back to the inception. Those involved in the inception and early years were well aware of the SACS and ABET accreditation requirements and acknowledged that they influenced various strategic decisions. The Qatar Foundation understands the importance of accreditation as a mark of quality and included a requirement in the contract with Texas A&M that they must receive accreditation for TAMUQ. Furthermore, like in the U.S., the accreditation process is a continuous cycle. SACS does a review after five years and a full-accreditation evaluation every ten years; whereas, ABET requires renewal every six years. Due to this continuous cycle, the influence of SACS and ABET is ongoing. Although the accreditation processes are independent from the main campus, SACS and ABET require that certain operations on the branch campus do not deviate far from those on the main campus though specific examples were not shared. The main campus is also invested in ensuring that TAMUQ receives accreditation. If TAMUQ fails to meet accreditation requirements, the reputation and perhaps even the accreditation status of the University and the College of Engineering could be in jeopardy.

TAMUQ received both SACS and ABET accreditation, but not without some challenges along the way. Although details were not provided, one academic administrator briefly mentioned that one of the academic programs struggled to meet the requirements for ABET accreditation due to a faculty related issue.

The State of Qatar does not currently require that TAMUQ participate in any form of local accreditation. Other countries in the Gulf, like the United Arab Emirates, do require that foreign institutions comply with local accreditation requirements (Kinser, 2011), so TAMUQ administrators are aware that Qatar may implement such a

requirement in the future. One administrator shared that TAMUQ had heard rumors of a regional accreditation body that would eventually be required by foreign campuses. Local or regional accreditation requirements could conflict with SACS or ABET standards, which is yet another instance where TAMUQ's "masters" requirements might conflict.

Conclusion

"Jokingly, I kind of dubbed it the two wife system," stated a Qatar campus administrator "because we've got College Station and we've got Qatar Foundation...you've gotta love them both the same, [and] be accountable to both of them." This participant is referring to a custom in the Gulf where some Muslim men marry more than one woman. Although of questionable cultural sensitivity, the metaphor is helpful in understanding TAMUQ's relationship to the main campus and the Qatar Foundation. The main campus and the Qatar Foundation are the two entities that participants perceived to have the most power over TAMUQ, but interactions described by faculty and staff revealed that these relationships often reflected somewhat equal partnerships. When it works well, TAMUQ's relationship with the main campus and the Qatar Foundation reflects that of an ideal married couple, where everyone's unique needs are addressed and concessions are made along the way that help maintain the overall wellbeing of the family. This type of relationship was evident during the negotiation of the agreement between Texas A&M and the Qatar Foundation to establish TAMUQ. Also, just like in a marriage, disagreements are inevitable, and some are handled more successfully than others. Texas A&M managed to successfully negotiate a robust

research partnership with QF, while the graduate programs are an area of continued struggle.

Interviewees revealed a number of additional entities that have formal and informal control or influence over the institution—far more than a typical college or university in the United States. From the main campus, the Division of Student Affairs, Office of Admissions, and Information Technology Services, had very little involvement with the inception, development, and ongoing operation of the Qatar campus, as did the Board of Regents from the main campus and the Joint Advisory Board in Qatar. There are certainly advantages and disadvantages to this model versus establishing tighter connections. Institutions involved in or considering IBCs should consider how to structure these relationships and the resulting implications.

For TAMUQ, local Qatari industry, state and federal laws, and accreditation requirements all had a moderate degree of influence over their strategic direction and operations. Like the relationship with the Qatar Foundation and main campus, the key for TAMUQ was to understand and meet each partner's expectations, while at the same time, advancing their own. The next chapter discusses these expectations in more depth with a focus on the degree to which TAMUQ attempts to adapt versus replicate the home campus academic elements, co-curricular experience, and admissions process.

CHAPTER NINE. Adaptation Versus Replication: A Complex Tension

Texas A&M University at Qatar is intended to be a derivative of the home campus. Many elements of the main campus were transferred to Doha. TAMUQ graduates even receive the same diploma that is granted in College Station. During the inception of the Qatar campus, the A&M planning team and the Qatar Foundation agreed that the experience of a Qatar campus student should reflect that of a main campus student. Conversations during the negotiation revolved primarily around replicating the same academic quality as in College Station, yet the details of how that would be achieved were largely left out of initial discussions. This makes sense because Texas A&M was the expert in higher education, so the academic elements were left to their own devices.

There is one rather significant challenge however—Qatar is not Texas, so how would the A&M experience translate in another culture? It turns out, as the literature suggests, that TAMUQ faced a series of complex issues that boil down to the tension between adaptation and replication (Shams & Huisman, 2012). Participants in this study were asked to describe which aspects of the home campus were replicated versus adapted to the Qatar context. A majority of responses related to the academic experience, but interviewees also frequently discussed student affairs and undergraduate admissions—all of which ultimately influence what students describe as the Texas A&M at Qatar experience.

Teaching and Learning

A majority of participants who described the academic elements of the Qatar campus claimed they were identical to the home campus. These interviewees frequently cited the humorous example that Texas history is required on the main campus, so the students in Qatar

must take it as well. In-depth discussions with two upper-level academic administrators, however, revealed that some academic components of the Qatar campus do in fact differ from the main campus. In other words, there is some degree of adaptation to the local context. This section explores the various components of the TAMUQ academic experience, namely the engineering program curriculum, individual course content, and faculty pedagogy. Furthermore, the Qatar campus student population is explored to determine how well their background prepared them to be academically successful at TAMUQ.

Curriculum

“It’s part of the agreement with the Qatar Foundation that we will offer the same curriculum that we have on the main campus,” noted a Qatar campus academic administrator. Similarly, an administrator from the main campus stated emphatically that the Qatar campus curriculum was identical to the main campus. These claims are misleading and to fully understand the TAMUQ curriculum requires a close examination at exactly how the curriculum is implemented on the Qatar campus. In actuality, the agreement with the Qatar Foundation states “that the [TAMUQ] degree [requirements] will be *substantially* [emphasis added] the same” as the main campus. Participants used a variety of phrases to express similar meaning, such as “the curriculum is materially the same” and “TAMUQ maintains the same curriculum standards.”

The precise meaning of a curriculum that is “materially the same” was not shared and is rather ambiguous; however, the following examples shared by participants offer some insight. Based on the demands of local industry, the chemical engineering program determined that students did not need the life science courses required in College Station, so they were removed

from the Qatar curricular requirements. This is a helpful example how the Qatar campus has accounted for the local context, as this senior academic administrator explained:

We looked at the most typical job placement for a chemical engineer [in Qatar], and it is not going to be in a field, say, in pharmaceuticals or food processing or anything like that. A chemical engineer is probably going to do more things, here, along the traditional oil and gas chemical engineering track than the counterpart would in College Station. In College Station, that department has to cover a much bigger spectrum [of potential careers]. In other words, they have to do oil and gas chemical engineering, but they have to appeal to somebody who might want to go into pharmaceuticals [or] food processing. So, we do have that freedom to adjust.

The Qatar campus does have the freedom to make this type of change but not independently. They must receive approval from the main campus through the chemical engineering curriculum committee. The process this committee goes through to approve curricular changes was not shared with the researcher.

Participants familiar with the institution's curriculum did not indicate that curricular changes needed to be approved through the Qatar Foundation, but comments suggested that TAMUQ's contractual agreement to keep the curriculum "materially the same" was a consideration when making alterations. This contractual stipulation conflicts with TAMUQ's accreditation standards, which require that faculty have certain "levels of freedom...and autonomy to make curriculum decisions" like the decision to drop life science courses, said a Qatar campus administrator. Related to the previous chapter, this is an example of an area where different partners or masters have conflicting expectations of TAMUQ, which creates tension within the institution.

Curriculum adjustments were also made in response to the unique learning needs of students on the Qatar campus. Since Qatar campus students struggle more with writing in English than speaking in English, a required public speaking course was substituted for a technical writing course. The upper-level academic administrator that shared this example emphasized that this substitution “still meets the spirit of where we’re going,” so the change is easily justified. In contrast, as a public institution Texas A&M is required by Texas state law to offer several courses, which must be available on the Qatar campus and cannot be substituted. These four courses include the infamous Texas History course, which is part of a requirement that public institutions in Texas must offer two courses in political science (one state and one federal) along with two courses in U.S. history. Though these courses cannot be substituted for a topic more relevant to Qatar campus students, faculty are encouraged to engage students in comparative discussions.

Adjustments to the curriculum were an exception rather than the norm. There are a limited number of courses that are excluded or substituted from the home campus curriculum. So, what do these examples suggest about a curriculum that is “materially the same” as the home campus? A majority of TAMUQ’s course requirements mirror the main campus, and modifications must be accompanied by a strong rationale such as the need to offer courses relevant to local industry demands.

Course Content and Pedagogy

Curriculum modifications occur through a centralized process, but adjustments to course content and pedagogy are mostly left up to individual faculty. Participants offered a number of anecdotes from a variety of courses that revealed trends in how faculty adapt courses to the Qatar campus.

In terms of course content, most faculty and academic administrators reported that the concepts covered in classes were the same as on the home campus, but the illustrations used to explain these concepts were adapted for the local context. Some illustrations were adjusted to align with local industry. For instance, a senior Qatar academic administrator shared that a classes covering energy related topics would likely focus on the process of converting natural gas to liquid, which is the primary petrochemical operation in Qatar. Similarly, certain learning illustrations that would be helpful for American students may not be understood by Qatar campus students. Humorously, one faculty member was surprised to discover when sharing a classroom illustration that his students had never heard of income taxes because the State of Qatar does not have federal, state, or local income taxes. Another participant felt that explaining engineering concepts required less adaptation than other disciplines because the focus is on teaching technical knowledge and processes that are largely the same whether in the U.S. or Qatar. In contrast, a business administration course taught in Qatar would likely need significant modifications in order to reflect the local business mores.

From a pedagogical perspective, faculty modified their teaching in a variety of ways. One faculty member in science that taught in the early years of TAMUQ said that he slowed down and covered topics in more detail than he did on the main campus. He explained that the first few cohorts of students had a disadvantage because they did not have upper-class students or graduates to look up to and seek advice from. In other words, the early students were not convinced that anyone could survive the program, so this professor wanted to ensure students felt confident with the concepts he was teaching, which required a slower than normal approach.

Another faculty member in social sciences with significant teaching experience in Qatar said that certain adjustments were necessary since English was most students' second language.

He explained that “what would take an average U.S. kid an hour or two to read would take [Qatar campus students] four or five hours.” In order to keep the workload manageable in courses with heavy reading, this lecturer provides more direction regarding the concepts he wants students to focus on. That being said, the faculty member has “always given the same exams, or the same quality of exams and the students’ results from those are pretty much the same distribution that [he] found in the United States.” A faculty member in engineering who had experience teaching in the U.S. and Qatar also adjusted course assignments to better suit the local audience, though details of the changes were not provided. He stated, “you need to cover certain subjects for the course according to the syllabus, but how you would like to examine the student, that is up to you.”

Unlike the above examples, in science courses the laboratory experiments for students are mostly the same on both campuses. Experiments are designed by faculty on the main campus and passed down to the appropriate faculty on the Qatar campus. Some experiments are modified due to logistical issues such as certain chemicals not being available in Qatar.

Not all participants believed that courses and pedagogy should be adjusted for the Qatar context. When asked whether faculty should adjust their teaching for Qatar courses, this academic administrator and associate professor responded, “Never, never ask anyone to do something like this. We want them to teach as if they were on the main campus.” This perspective is in clear contrast with other faculty who felt it was both necessary and responsible to modify course content and pedagogy for the sake of student learning. These dichotomous perspectives indicate that faculty on the Qatar campus approach teaching adaptation in fundamentally different ways.

A second faculty member in Liberal Arts expanded on the challenges of teaching second language learners in Qatar. He was accustomed to teaching international students from East Asia on the main campus:

[East Asians] learn [foreign languages] the way Americans do. You get a book, you study the language, you learn to read the language, but you don't have very good speaking skills. It was completely the opposite when we came [to Qatar], so the way we all had to approach our teaching was much different than we had done before. We were used to Chinese and Korean students who could read our textbooks but couldn't explain anything in class. They could read the books, they could do their work in the chemistry labs, but they could not say a word to us. But here they could talk, but they could not read a thing.

Over time this faculty member began to rely less on textbooks and more on classroom instruction and condensed readings. Without discussing the details, this lecturer acknowledged that the classroom experience and environment was different as a result. When students are told to focus on certain concepts within readings they may miss the depth of learning that results from reading the full text. Furthermore, when instructors tell students explicitly what they should grasp about concepts, they may be less likely to develop critical thinking skills.

Some departments' courses aligned more closely with the home campus than others. According to an academic staff member, a course called Chemistry for Engineering is "exactly the same" as on the home campus. He explained that they were expecting a visitor from the main campus who meets with faculty to make sure "everyone's teaching the right thing." This visit indicates some degree of oversight and quality control from the Department of Science on the home campus, although the level of rigor and frequency of such assessments was not

mentioned. The faculty member did say that there was a greater effort to ensure quality and sameness in the early days, but that “nowadays [the home campus department] knows what we're doing.”

In contrast, a lecturer from Liberal Arts said, “I was allowed to teach [my course] however I wanted to teach it, and I don't think anybody's looking at it.” The means and degree of quality control seems to vary by academic program. Additionally, each Education City branch campus has a different approach to academic quality assurance. A liberal arts faculty member familiar with Weill Cornell Medical College in Qatar said that “they would have someone from the branch campus come over to [the main campus in New York] to watch how it was being taught to make sure it was up to the same standard and to make sure it was being taught the same way.” In general the faculty member perceived that Texas A&M at Qatar was “a bit more relaxed” about ensuring that courses were the same as on the main campus.

Academic freedom is another concern that has the potential to impact the classroom experience at foreign branch campuses. A common criticism of American IBCs is that university officials cannot guarantee the same degree of academic freedom as on the main campus (Kinser, 2010). This is certainly a potential issue in Qatar where laws exist that restrict freedom of speech. A long time TAMUQ administrator claimed that the subject matter of the engineering programs offered in Qatar was generally less controversial and so academic freedom was not an issue: “we probably get a pass because most of our stuff is science and technology whereas other schools [in Education City] would struggle more with that.” For example, an art instructor at Virginia Commonwealth University in Qatar must decide whether to use historically important artwork that would be potentially controversial with students and families. Also, Georgetown's School of Foreign Service in Qatar has more potential challenges to academic

freedom due to the sensitive nature of international affairs. For instance, criticizing Qatar's royal family could lead to serious consequences for an individual faculty member and the institution.

Though no examples of government interference were shared, participants stated that students had raised cultural and political concerns in the past that TAMUQ administrators had to address. In an engineering ethics course, for instance, students opposed the idea of being taught ethics because their Islamic faith defines ethical values. TAMUQ responded by explaining that the institution was not trying to change students' religious values, but universal professional guidelines exist that engineers are expected to follow. In other words, they explained to students that engineering ethics is not about morals; it requires understanding the "rules of appropriate behavior for engineers in the professional context... and [students] can figure out how you make your social customs and your religion fit into that scenario." Apparently, it took considerable time to help students understand this concept, but it is no longer an issue.

In another case, an academic administrator on the leadership team said students complained about a discussion on gender roles in an Anthropology class, but he insisted, "Teachers [are permitted to] teach what they want." When students push back against faculty, the administration may defend faculty's right to "teach what they want," but pressure from students or faculty's own sensitivities to local laws and customs may persuade them to adjust how they explain certain concepts (at best), or convince them to drop entire subjects (at worst). In other words, although the administration supports faculty's right to teach, individual faculty may decide to self-censor, which is arguably an infringement on academic freedom.

Student Learning, Development, and Support

Students' English reading and writing proficiency was the most prominent issue related to teaching and learning raised by TAMUQ faculty and staff, yet a number of other issues exist.

On a broad level, a Liberal Arts faculty member from the Qatar campus articulated why student success is such a challenge at the branch campuses in Education City:

They come into these programs expected to have an American academic habitus in place. [The Universities are] assuming that they can hit the ground running as an American style student, but the reality is that they're coming to these programs with different skill sets, a different language base. You know they're the top students from their [high school], but they were top because they were good at certain things. Their whole education system is different. Then they come here and they're expected to be active learners, not be passive learners. They're expected to question profs.

Qatar campus students are generally underprepared for the academic expectations of an American University. The same lecturer goes on to expand on how students' struggle with reading in English is a crucial roadblock to success:

They're expected to read everything in English, and the English thing is kind of like a domino or a house of cards. For instance, their math and their sciences are fine. They're on par with their American peers, but when you are doing something like biology or something that is really heavy on the literature [that's] taking them like six hours to read through, that has an effect on how much time they have to do their physics assignment and how much time they have to do mathematics homework...and that's eating up into time that is then affecting their social life, which doesn't seem like a big deal, but it is in this culture because you can't go and visit grandma every week anymore, you don't have time to go to weddings anymore, you don't have time to be on that circuit where you were still visible to your community.

As this comment suggests, student learning is connected to cultural expectations. A majority of Qatar campus students—Qatari and non-Qatari—live with their families and in a culture with strong familial values, students face strong pressure to participate in family related activities such as weddings and other social gatherings. Families are often quite large, which leads to greater number of potential commitments.

TAMUQ's student demographic consists of a variety of nationalities and Qatar has a range of schooling options with different curricula, norms, and levels of quality. Many families send their children to international schools that follow the same curriculum as their home country. For instance, Indian families send their children to Indian schools and Egyptian families send their kids to Egyptian schools. Indian schools are typically considered high quality, and according to a Qatar campus instructor their graduates are usually well prepared to succeed at an American institution like TAMUQ. Students that attend international schools with international curricula such as the International Baccalaureate (IB) also fare quite well at TAMUQ. The same faculty member offered a basic breakdown of how he perceived students' academic preparedness, "You have the exceptional students who come from good school systems. You have the pretty good...students in the middle and then you have some marginal students on the bottom who come into the university under special circumstances."

As part of Texas A&M's agreement with the Qatar Foundation, they must admit a certain percentage of Qatari students, which is currently around 50 percent. Fulfilling the quota requires admitting some students that are not sufficiently prepared to be successful at TAMUQ, so the institution developed the Aggie Gateway Program, which is a bridge program designed to supplement students' secondary education. These students "come in with a contract that if they don't pass their courses they will be dismissed from the university," stated a liberal arts faculty

member. He went on to suggest that a small number of students do not fulfill all the program's requirements but still manage to gain full admission. These instances likely result from the challenges and pressure TAMUQ faces to reach the target percentage of Qatari students. Some students "self select out" of the Aggie Gateway program because they realize they do not have the language ability or mathematical skills to succeed in engineering. Provisional admission programs are not new to Texas A&M. Multiple participants drew a connection between the Aggie Gateway Program and similarly structured provisional programs on the main campus that help prepare disadvantaged students to enter Texas A&M, but he noted one fundamental distinction; Provisional programs on the main campus target disadvantaged minority students, but in Qatar "it's different to bring in students whose families are all millionaires and call them the disadvantaged."

TAMUQ students have an extensive network of academic support structures at their disposal. There is a centralized tutoring operation called the Office of Academic Supplemental Instruction Services (OASIS) that provides students free access to professional- or peer-tutoring assistance. Additionally, courses have significantly more teaching assistants (TAs) than on the main campus "because of the need to support the second language learner," said an administrator familiar with student academic support. He went on to say that TAMUQ never "envisioned the fact that we would need these academic support units to the degree that we had. But that was learned over time." This is an instance where a revised strategy has dramatically impacted the institution's organizational structure. Numerous staff and students are required to run the various academic support outlets.

Another important distinction between U.S.- and Qatar-based students is their developmental maturity, according to a Qatar campus staff member:

[For] an 18-year-old coming to College Station you would say, “I want this done,” and it gets done or [they] face consequences. Here you kind of have to hold hands a little bit more. You have to keep on telling [students] “this is what I expect from you,” and a lot of times they say, “that's not what we're used to,” and you say, “well that's what you're about to get used to.”

With this idea in mind, this staff member suggested that faculty tend to give TAMUQ students a little more leeway in the beginning to give them time to become familiar with the expectations of a U.S. educational environment. But, he was careful to note that leeway was not given on academic requirements, though it was not clear what those expectations were. Perhaps he was referring to assignments and exams and how they are graded. Students' lack of experience may also stem from their privileged backgrounds. Somewhat comically, a participant from the science program told a story about a chemistry experiment that required students to make a cup of tea in order to extract certain chemicals. Even though it is common for students to drink multiple cups of tea in a day, most of them did not know how to brew a cup of tea because they had domestic helpers at home that did tasks of this nature.

Students' privileged upbringing and Qatar's social stratification leads to other more serious issues. In Qatar, social stature is strongly correlated with nationality. Qataris are typically the most privileged, followed by Western expats. Arabs from less wealthy countries and most expats from South Asia work in jobs that Qataris and Westerns generally would not consider taking (e.g., service or manual labor jobs). Not surprisingly, problems arise in the classroom when faculty come from nationalities that students consider “lower class.” A staff member working in an academic department expanded on this issue:

you bring in people from countries where [in Qatar] those people are considered laborers, they are a lower class of people...then you put them in a position of power over students, the students don't respect it, so the students walk all over them.

The participant goes on to suggest that students in classes taught by these non-American faculty tend to get their way. In other words, a high percentage of students end up with A's. A different faculty member stated that "there's a lot more race and ethnicity issues that play into the teacher student relationship than we give credit for, and this region is a bargaining culture." Reportedly, mechanical and petroleum engineering had a high percentage of non-American faculty a few years ago, which presumably led to inflated grades. Supposedly, some students were transferring to these programs because they heard "it was easy for them to pass." This is especially concerning because these two programs are considered to be among the most difficult on the main campus. Even non-American faculty with Ph.D.'s or teaching experience from U.S. institutions struggle with student/teacher relations at TAMUQ, but a high-level academic administrator claimed that "the more time that any faculty member has in the U.S.... they do better here. Because our program is Western based...it helps to have that Western experience."

Despite all the challenges in adapting the Texas A&M academic experience to the unique Qatar campus learner, participants shared multiple accounts of graduates thriving in the workplace. An academic administrator that worked on both campuses stated that when compared to the main campus, TAMUQ students have "the same level of confidence, ability to work independently, and the willingness to work [hard]." He went on to say that a human resources representative from a local company shared that "[the company] could see the difference between Education City graduates and local graduates, and it was primarily the independent thinking and the ability to work independently."

Although some outliers existed, the TAMUQ faculty and leadership team shared a similar message about the areas of academic replication and adaptation. Students' needs necessitate minor modifications in the curriculum and more moderate adjustments to teaching methods and classroom illustrations, but graduates acquire the same conceptual knowledge and achieve the same learning outcomes as students on the main campus. Put simply, a majority of participants believed that the process of developing Aggie Engineers is slightly different in Qatar, but the outcome is the same.

Teaching Development

Though not all faculty agreed, most indicated that certain pedagogical adjustments should be made in order for students to successfully navigate Texas A&M at Qatar's engineering program. That said, the institution made little effort to support faculty transitions to Qatar. Teaching faculty and academic administrators were specifically asked what training faculty new to Qatar receive to help modify their teaching styles to the Qatar context. Several faculty mentioned a cultural awareness session and brochure provided to all faculty and staff. One faculty member said,

When I came [to Qatar] they sent me a brochure in terms of what is...publicly accepted and what is not publicly accepted, and I'm sure that you noticed that here, people—they don't shout...they are careful not to make any gestures because it is prohibited by law.

A number of similar responses from other faculty focused on local laws and cultural competences, or as this Qatar campus senior-level academic administrator stated, Human Resources "let[s] you know what you can do and what you cannot do." Very few responses had anything to do with teaching training and adapting the classroom experience. When an upper-level academic administrator was pressed to expand on the topic he replied,

Well, on our main campus we have the Center for Teaching Excellence, which offers regular seminars, those types of things. You know, we're not that big [in Qatar] and most of our hires, very few of them have not taught before, so you would expect them to have some classroom expertise because they're not new faculty. We have a few, but not that many. Most everybody was a faculty member somewhere else before they came here.

This participant assumed that faculty's previous experience equipped them to successfully adapt their teaching to the Qatar campus. The problem is that outside a select group of liberal arts faculty with expertise in second language learning, faculty are unlikely to be familiar with the latest research that can inform their transition to a new learning environment (Leask, 2008). As this high-level administrator from a non-academic area noted, "there's a whole body of literature around second language learners and how to adapt a classroom. Why do we think because someone has a doctoral degree that they can teach?" An important characteristic of American higher education is that faculty are permitted to run their classrooms free of outside interference, and therefore this same approach should apply to an American branch campus overseas. As this member of Qatar campus leadership team stated, faculty coming from the U.S. "probably do have a little more natural sense of how to teach a student in North America," but in Qatar "everybody's learning their second or third language, [so] that's going to create problems."

Not everyone thought Texas A&M at Qatar faculty had sufficient teaching training. "[TAMUQ doesn't] do any teaching and learning stuff, which we should," noted an administrator on the leadership team; "the expectations for faculty are not clearly explored before people come." Faculty coming from other parts of the world to teach at TAMUQ would benefit from teaching development as well. Without experience teaching in the U.S., this group of faculty is unlikely to understand the norms of a classroom environment on the main campus.

For instance, in a U.S. college classroom students are often expected to ask questions, engage in dialogue, and be active participants, while many other parts of the world subscribe to a more traditional model where the teacher imparts knowledge to his or her students through a one-sided lecture. A Qatar high-level campus administrator also explained that faculty without U.S. teaching experience do not fully grasp the institution's definition of academic integrity since this often varies by country. For instance, academic writing expectations differ around when and how to cite ideas from other authors. Moreover, these faculty often lack the experience necessary to prevent student academic integrity violations and to enforce University standards.

Currently, all new TAMUQ faculty must rely on other faculty or their program chairs if they have questions or need advice on teaching. One participant in a teaching role noted that a colleague gave him helpful cultural advice on what to expect in the classroom. Someone else suggested that a more formal mentoring program within each program would be helpful. Though potentially useful, the challenge of a mentorship program is that even most experienced faculty at TAMUQ are not experts on teaching second language learners. Ill-informed advice not based in scholarly research may be passed down and adopted by new faculty, which may make matters worse. Apparently, TAMUQ offered some form of faculty orientation in the earlier years, but since only a handful of new faculty are now hired each year, there are not enough to justify a full orientation. Participants did not offer details on what topics were covered at the early faculty orientations.

An administrator on the Qatar campus leadership team admitted that TAMUQ should consider offering faculty development opportunities but argued that it would be difficult to achieve due to the small size of the institution. He said that the branch campuses in Education City have discussed the idea of opening a joint center on teaching excellence, but the Qatar

Foundation funding model would prohibit this from occurring because budgets are allocated to individual branch campuses and would prohibit hiring someone to work across campuses. In spite of budget challenges, in practice, a joint center of teaching excellence would be difficult to establish due to each institution's varying expectations around teaching and learning.

Student Services and Campus Life

Another important aspect of traditional American higher education and Texas A&M University in particular is student involvement in co-curricular activities. As discussed in Chapter Eight, the Qatar campus was left to structure student affairs independently from the main campus. Unlike the academic side of TAMUQ, student affairs did not face the same pressures to replicate the student experience outside the classroom. Thus, the story of designing and structuring student affairs and campus life is heavy on adaptation. This section focuses on where and how students affairs has been adapted to met the needs of the Qatar campus.

The founding Director of students affairs worked at Texas A&M but not in a traditional student affairs capacity, which likely served as both an asset and a liability. On the one hand, he lacked the full knowledge of the main campus student affairs philosophy and functions. On the other hand, he did not come to the job with preconceived notions of how student affairs should be structured. The Director and early staff approached their roles and the direction of student affairs with an open mind. An early student affairs staff member said:

We wanted it to be an A&M experience and introduce [students] to all the traditions and customs of Aggies. One had to do that very slowly. I was warned to be aware of [students] feeling like we were pushing our culture—both Western and Aggie culture—onto them.

The institution's strategic priorities in the first few years were heavily focused on building up the academic programs, so this slow and thoughtful approach was likely welcome by the TAMUQ leadership team. Additionally, a majority of the leadership team came with purely academic administration experience, so they may not have fully understood or appreciated the value of student affairs. Although the Qatar Foundation wanted TAMUQ to recreate the same quality and rigor of the main campus, the student affairs side was not on their radar in the early years. Neither of the two other Education City branch campuses that existed at the time—Virginia Commonwealth University in Qatar and Weill Cornell Medical College in Qatar—had robust student affairs operations.

TAMUQ's first student affairs Director spent time meeting with every student to explain the uniquely American concept of student affairs and the value of extra-curricular involvement. He told students about the history of Texas A&M and the popular student traditions. Most of all though, he spent time getting to know them personally and listening to the types of issues they faced in order to design programs and services that met their needs. During the first year, student affairs worked alongside the academic administrators and faculty to ensure students were sufficiently supported. The first student affairs run program was new student orientation, followed by the establishment of the first student body government.

By the second year, more traditional student affairs functions and programs started to pop up. During the second new student orientation, Student Affairs brought over student leaders from the main campus to encourage TAMUQ students to interact with main campus students and expose them to what campus life was like in College Station. During the second year, student affairs staff planned the first short-term student exchange where a group of Qatar campus students spent their spring break on the main campus and then a group of students from College

Station came to Qatar. Spring break student exchanges would become an annual occurrence. Two new staff members were hired in the third year, which supported the addition of formal counseling services, intramural sports, and a more formal student organization process. The Student Affairs team had continuous discussions about what additional services and programs they should offer.

The fourth year (2006-2007) was a period of significant change under the leadership of newly appointed Dean and CEO of the Qatar campus, Mark Weichold. According to a former student affairs staff member,

Mark had a very active role on the main campus in student affairs. He was the first Dean that really understood the significance and importance of student affairs, so Mark—much more so than the previous Deans—[was] a little bit more hands on. He was certainly more interested in and met more regularly with [student affairs staff].

The new Dean went so far as to recommend programs and traditions that Student Affairs should consider adding and encouraged them to set goals and develop strategic plans. It was during this time that student affairs really started to consider what aspects of the main campus experience they wanted to adapt to the Qatar campus, as this senior academic administrator described:

Each school [represented in Education City] has their distinct culture and that's something that's much much harder to pick up and transplant [to Qatar]. So what [TAMUQ] did was we looked at the values that the university identified as being core values and looked at how those were part of what made the culture unique in College Station and then tried to transplant that here.

An important way to expose Qatar campus students to A&M culture was to introduce main campus traditions, which was not a straightforward process. Most of Texas A&M's student

traditions were derived from its military history, many of which would not be culturally appropriate or meaningful, and potentially controversial on the Qatar campus. Therefore, student affairs administrators needed to decide which traditions to encourage and how to adapt them, all while honoring their original meaning. There are a series of important questions to consider, according to a current student affairs staff member, “Can we adapt it? Is it respectful? Is it meaningful to people? Will [students] be engaged?”

One of the first traditions that began on the Qatar campus was Muster, which is a program held once a year on the main campus and anywhere in the world where Aggies are within 100 miles of one another to honor fellow students and alumni that have passed away in the past year (Texas A&M University, n.d.-a). This is arguably the most important tradition at Texas A&M, so in that sense it was natural first tradition for TAMUQ. Student affairs staff faced several cultural and political challenges when implementing this program in Qatar. First, it is uncommon for Muslims to hold memorial services for the deceased, and Muster is essentially a public memorial service. To address this issue, student affairs staff framed the concept of Muster in a different way. Aggies value and emphasize loyalty, support, and connections within the community, so Muster was reframed as an opportunity to honor lost Aggies that were part of the “Aggie family.” Another challenge was deciding which fallen Aggies to honor during the ceremony. The staff decided to include Aggie servicemen, Aggies that Qatar campus faculty and staff knew personally, and current students from the main campus. The staff was nervous about reading off the names of military personnel because the war in Iraq was going on at the time and was unpopular with many Qatar campus students; however, they never received any negative feedback. Nevertheless, the staff struggled to recruit student volunteers in the first year and struggled for many years to gain widespread support for the tradition among current students.

Other traditions from the main campus required less adaptation. Like many colleges and universities in the U.S., students have the option to purchase a class ring upon graduation. At Texas A&M purchasing an “Aggie ring” is a very important tradition and a majority of students buy a ring. The rings are worn religiously by Aggies even after they graduate. Aggie rings serve as a visual reminder of students connection to Texas A&M and make it easy to spot other Aggies for networking purposes. Unlike Muster, it did not take much convincing for Qatar campus students to buy in to this tradition; however, there was one minor technicality that required adaptation. Aggie rings are made out of gold, and Muslim men do not wear gold. The Student Affairs staff in Qatar sought special permission to have the rings produced in platinum, which was a well-received solution.

This approach to introducing and refining student affairs programming and services would continue into the middle and latter years even after the initial Director of Student Affairs was long gone. A current staff member not present in the early years describes this ongoing mentality that informs student affairs work in Qatar:

For Student Affairs, I think we were always very clear that our goal was to create a student life that replicated that which existed on the main campus but was respectful of the context. So how can you create Aggieland in Doha? And that was always our plan, so we took what we had in College Station, almost everything that we had, and said okay, how can we do this there? Is it appropriate? How can we morph it? And so we continued on those traditions and just incorporated what we could, given our limitations in terms of staff.

Some participants shared skepticism over whether it was possible to recreate the “real” Aggie experience in Doha. Could the ethos of the main campus that took nearly 140 years to develop

and refine really be transplanted in another culture? This Qatar campus staff member shared his doubts, “Are we really making [Qatar campus students] feel like they are part of the Aggie family to where 10, 12, and 20 years from now [they will] sit back with pride in having been a part of A&M?” A Student Affairs staff member shared that it was sometimes difficult to convince main campus alumni that traditions should be modified. There is a large contingency of TAMU alumni in Qatar working in the oil and gas industry that volunteer to help with various TAMUQ events. The local alumni club—consisting largely of main campus alumni—helped coordinate some of TAMUQ’s traditions and was often “a tough sell” on any suggested changes. Additionally, Qatar campus faculty and staff who previously worked on the main campus were sometimes a bit pushy with their suggestions about which traditions should be brought to Qatar and how they should be implemented.

Student Diversity

The diverse nature of the Qatar campus student body is an ongoing challenge for the student affairs staff. In comparing the Qatar and main campuses, a student affairs administrator points out an ironic dichotomy, “The main campus has a horrible history when it comes to diversity. That’s why they work so hard on diversity efforts; whereas, here our problem is too much diversity.”

The diverse nature of the Qatar campus is based on nationality. “Each year as our student enrollment grew our most active [students] continued to be not the Qatari students,” said a student affairs staff member, “Our most active students were the Indian students or the other Arab students.” Though a select number of Qatari students did get involved in campus life, the majority did not. This trend would continue over the years until today. One former student affairs administrator was not certain why Qatari students were the least involved nationality, but

he suspected it related to culture and religion. Qatari students have especially demanding family commitments that may not permit time to be involved in co-curricular activities. Additionally, many Qatari families are religiously conservative, so the prospect of men and women interacting together on evenings and weekends—a frequent meeting time for student organizations—is uncomfortable and frowned upon. Classrooms are mixed gender as well, but attendance is necessary for academic success; whereas, involvement in campus life is optional and thus discouraged. Furthermore, the percentage of Qatari women who participated in co-curricular activities was lower than men. A student affairs staff member offered an explanation:

the Qatari females, their expectations were—go to class and come home, and when you come home...you're home and you're home to help with the family and/or do homework but there was—at least my understanding—not only was there lack of support but actual support against the female Qatari students coming back to campus and being involved in any way.

In addition, a Qatar campus administrator shared, “the conservative families in Doha, really did not welcome or perceive Education City as a good place for their students to go because of the Western influence.” Presumably, these families were willing to tolerate the Western influence in order to provide the best possible education for their children.

Shared Services

Texas A&M at Qatar does not coordinate all the student services and engagement opportunities available to students. Hamad Bin Khalifa University has an Education Division (HBKU) that also houses student affairs functions. Some Education City student affairs services are solely offered and coordinated by HBKU such as housing and residence life, the student center, and the student employment program; whereas, other areas overlap with TAMUQ's

student affairs structure. HBKU's goal is to coordinate services and programs open to students across all branch campuses in Education that encourage student interaction across the universities. In contrast, Texas A&M at Qatar Student Affairs only supports TAMUQ students. In some instances, very similar programs and student organizations exist within each organization. For instance, both TAMUQ and HBKU offer alternative spring break trips, student governments associations, and career services.

Since its inception, Education City students have identified more strongly with the branch campus they attend rather than the Qatar Foundation (or now HBKU), but that has started to shift in recent years according to a QF participant. The opening of the student center in 2011 provided a space for students across Education City to gather, which has enhanced student interaction between campuses. Additionally, HBKU has developed a team of student affairs professionals with master's degrees from U.S. student affairs preparation programs and a training program for Qataris interested in student affairs. This has improved operations and encouraged stronger Education City-wide engagement. HBKU staff work alongside the branch campus student affairs staff to collaborate on programming and services, though some tension exists. A TAMUQ student affairs staff member asserted that HBKU staff sometimes tries to absorb their programs in order to offer them across Education City. Ultimately, she claimed, it comes down to a "tension over who has control over which programs and what's [HBKU's] domain versus ours."

There are some services that TAMUQ and the other branch campuses happily allow HBKU to operate solo. For example, the branch campuses likely do not have the staffing or desire to run individual residence life or student employment programs, and they benefit significantly from these operations. Branch campuses need student workers to fill clerical jobs,

positions as teaching and research assistants, and a variety of other roles. HBKU coordinates the hiring and payroll process, which would be a burden on the branch campuses.

Admissions and Recruitment

The Qatar campus undergraduate admissions process is coordinated autonomously in Doha without involvement or oversight from the main campus, or as an admissions representative stated, “the final decisions, they’re all made in house.” Nevertheless, applicants must meet the same requirements as students applying to the main campus. This is specified in the agreement with the Qatar Foundation and is a requirement for ABET and SACS accreditation. “If we violated the rules, like dropped the SAT requirements or said ‘no you don’t need grade 12 physics’ then...we would get in trouble with our SACS accreditation and with our ABET accreditation,” explained a participant familiar with the admissions process.

Students admitted to the Qatar campus do meet the same minimum admission requirements as the main campus, but there is more to the story. The minimum requirements for admittance to Texas A&M University are set by the State of Texas Uniform Admission Policy, which applies to all public institutions in the State of Texas (Texas A&M University, n.d.-b). The state mandated standards are quite low (e.g., 1500 out of 2400 on the SAT), and all applicants that meet these requirements are eligible for admittance to Texas A&M as “review admits” (Texas A&M University, n.d.-b). In this “holistic review process,” Texas A&M considers SAT or ACT scores, high school courses, personal achievements, and essay responses to determine which candidates are “most competitive for admission” (Texas A&M University, n.d.-b). Since TAMUQ’s admissions review process is independent from the main campus, only applications from other Qatar campus applicants are considered when determining whether a candidate is competitive. Considering that the state requirements for admission are quite low

and the Qatar campus' pool of applicants is much smaller than the main campus, merely stating that Qatar campus students meet the same admission requirements as the main campus has little meaning.

Since the technical requirements for admission are quite low, a more meaningful comparison would be between the qualifications of Qatar campus students and main campus students. Specific data are not available publically and were not shared by participants, but comments from Qatar faculty indicate that TAMUQ students are less qualified than their main campus peers. One Qatar campus faculty member said,

If [TAMUQ students] were having to compete directly with the students who are in the engineering program at Texas A&M University main campus, I think most of them would not be admitted to the program. They just don't have the background.

Furthermore, despite having met the admissions requirements, newly admitted students struggle. They lack the mathematics background and strong study habits necessary to succeed in a rigorous engineering program, according to the same faculty member. "The honest truth is that the students who come here are for the most part kind of junior college quality students," he said. An admission representative discredited such criticism:

I get very angry when I hear faculty complaining about their students, like, "who are you admitting?" You know what? The standards for our admission are the same as College Station and the profile of our Freshman class is superior to the overall average in College Station, so don't tell me that they're not capable, they're just learning differently, and if you want to teach here you have to learn to adapt to that.

The meaning behind this administrator's claim that the profile of the Qatar "freshman class is superior to the overall average in College Station" is unclear. In Texas, students who graduate in

the top 10 percent of their high school class gain automatic acceptance into any state institution (Texas A&M University, n.d.-b). Students who graduate in the top 10 percent do not necessarily have high academic qualifications and test scores, so it is not unreasonable for the Qatar campus to have higher “overall average” admission standards than College Station. Nevertheless, Texas students in the top 10 percent are not automatically admitted to their major of choice, and the College of Engineering on the main campus is highly competitive. Thus, a more useful comparison would be between Qatar campus students and main campus College of Engineering students, which was not provided.

TAMUQ also has local requirements that impact the admissions process. They are obligated to fulfill an enrollment quota of Qatari students, which is somewhere around 50 percent. Per the agreement with QF, Texas A&M can admit up to 100 students *total* per year. This means that TAMUQ only has to recruit 50 Qatari students a year, but as this administrator from the leadership team said, “There’s not that many out there, so we have to really work at it.” In fact, it has been so difficult that TAMUQ created the Aggie Gateway Program for Qatari students who were close to fulfilling the admissions requirements, but missed the cutoff. The program offers developmental math and English courses to help students get up to par. Part of the struggle is that Qatari students come from a system that places them at a disadvantage, as this administrator familiar with the admissions process explained, “They’re not trained from a young age how to take TOEFL tests or how to write all sorts of SAT exams and stuff like that.”

TAMUQ faces significant competition for the small number of Qatari students that are qualified for admittance. Many of the highest achieving Qatari students prefer to go abroad to study in the United States or Europe. Additionally, the six Education City universities compete for these potential students, as this academic administrator noted, “we’ve spent a tremendous

amount of money making sure there are Qataris in our school. We fight over the best ones.” Though these institutions offer different academic programs, many students and families are more concerned with receiving a degree from a high quality American institution than going into a particular field. In this instance, Texas A&M at Qatar may not fare well against more prestigious institutions like Cornell, Georgetown, and Northwestern. The choice of academic program does matter to some students, however, and TAMUQ has an advantage in that area due to the popularity of engineering, which is perceived to be a high status field among the Qatari community. Despite rather significant challenges, TAMUQ does well in competing for Qatari students when compared to the other branch campuses within Education City.

Student recruitment for Qatari and non-Qatari students is a shared responsibility between TAMUQ and HBKU, contrary to how the process was portrayed by TAMUQ participants familiar with the process. A Qatar Foundation staff member acquainted with student recruitment shared,

admissions is the branches' sole responsibility, [but] the actual recruitment is very significantly done by QF/HBKU, and I would say that at least half of the cultivation because it wasn't the branches that were going down to 9th and 10th grade level. It was the HBKU recruitment staff that was going out to the high schools and trying to promote, and they would drag the branches along. They didn't particularly want to go but their recruitment people said no, “we've got to get out there. People have to know what we're doing and you have to relate to people”... So, at the same time that the branches are being pushed by the foundation to increase Qatari involvement, I believe that through the HBKU recruitment team we also got into this hand-in-hand [with the branch campuses] and worked very, very hard to try to make sure that there was a cultivation effort that

helped students actually have the experience and know how to get themselves admitted to the branches. That's been very, very important.

Since TAMUQ participants did not discuss this shared role of recruitment it is unclear exactly why they have resisted the HBKU's assistance. This resistance might be explained by a general skepticism regarding the Qatar Foundation's ability to plan events and offer services up to TAMUQ's standards.

Conclusion

During the inception and early years of Texas A&M at Qatar, administrators from across the University faced a series of decisions about whether to modify certain elements from the main campus. Academically speaking, administrators stuck closely to main campus program curricula, but allowed for minor modifications when warranted by local industry expectations or the needs of local students. Despite these modifications, TAMUQ maintains a strong rhetoric of sameness regarding their curriculum, which supports the public image they hope to portray—that the Qatar campus offers the same education that students would receive if they enrolled at the College of Engineering in College Station, Texas.

Course content and pedagogy differed more significantly than the curriculum. Faculty and administrators explained the need to modify class assignments and teaching styles for the local context. Qatar campus students, primarily consisting of second language learners, come from educational backgrounds that differ quite significantly from the United States and often left them underprepared for a traditional American classroom experience. A small number of faculty rejected the idea that faculty should adapt their teaching, implying that students should receive the exact same experience as on the main campus. The other larger group of faculty who did describe some form of classroom and teaching modification struggled to articulate exactly what

differed. This may stem from a lack of teaching development opportunities for faculty to learn about effective methods to teach second language learners in a unique cultural environment.

Positioning a curriculum on the replication/adaptation continuum is a crucial component of institutional strategy for an international branch campus. Administrators must balance the pressure for sameness with the need to responsibly adapt to the unique educational context. For an American branch campus, faculty can maintain the freedom to design their own syllabi and choose their own teaching methods, but academic administrators should not assume faculty can navigate the transition without assistance. New faculty orientations, mentoring programs, teaching centers, and other developmental opportunities may be helpful.

Texas A&M had a proud history of student engagement outside the classroom, which has been heavily modified in Qatar to align with the unique needs of students. In order to create a similar institutional ethos, student affairs staff modified main campus student traditions—some proved more successful than others. The main campus was not involved in this process, which likely contributed to a more straightforward adaptation process. When designing student services and involvement opportunities, universities opening foreign campuses may benefit from resisting the urge to drop someone in from the main campus that can recreate an identical structure. This requires a willingness to relinquish a certain degree of control but will encourage student services and programs that are more responsive to the branch campus cultural context.

Similar to Student Affairs, TAMUQ's Office of Admissions operates autonomously from the main campus, but administrators must uphold the same admission standards. The minimum admission standards are quite low, however, and faculty feedback indicates that Qatar campus students are generally less qualified than students from the main campus College of Engineering. A number of factors require Qatar campus personnel to adapt the admissions process. The Qatar

Foundation requires that TAMUQ accept a certain percentage of Qatari national students, and admissions representatives struggle to recruit enough qualified students. TAMUQ created a bridge program that allows borderline students a year to improve and meet the minimum requirements. Other branch campuses funded by local governments and foundations may face similar pressure to admit local students. Institutions opening IBCs should look beyond basic admission standards and carefully assess whether they can recruit the caliber of students admitted to equivalent programs on the main campus. Had TAMUQ completed a more thorough assessment during the inception phase, they may have realized that recruiting qualified Qatari students would be an ongoing challenge.

CHAPTER TEN. Conclusion: Developing International Branch Campuses

A close examination of the motivations, strategy, and structure of Texas A&M University at Qatar revealed important insights regarding the inception and operation of international branch campuses. This chapter first offers a summary of critical findings concerning the primary elements of analysis: motivations, strategy, and structure. The findings are then translated into recommendations for institutions interested in or already operating IBCs. Recommendations are divided chronologically and only the most critical to IBC success were included: generating buy-in; upholding non-negotiables; market research; funding; startup structure; recruiting home campus faculty; adaptation and replication; and sustainability. Finally, I offer suggestions for future research along with a few concluding thoughts.

Summary of Findings

Motivations

This study highlights the multiple and disparate motivations of a university and host country that drove them to engage in the creation of an international branch campus. For Texas A&M University, the rationale for engaging in such a project was not universally decided on in advance nor agreed upon by all organizational actors. Institutional readiness, proclivity to international engagement, presidential support, and happenstance also play a role.

Unlike several other American institutions approached by the Qatar Foundation (QF), Texas A&M was poised and ready to accept the invitation to operate a branch campus in Doha, Qatar. TAMU had a president and a central administration that prioritized internationalization and personnel with experience opening and operating other variations of foreign outposts. The

institution had significant ties to the Gulf region through the oil and gas industry and academic programs that could produce graduates with skills that directly aligned with Qatar's needs (i.e., chemical, electrical, mechanical and petroleum engineering).

Several additional motivations persuaded Texas A&M to accept QF's offer. Financially, the Qatar Foundation agreed to cover all expenses, which was especially important because public institutions in Texas cannot spend state money outside the state. Furthermore, the Qatar Foundation would pay a \$10 million annual management fee, which the president originally used to fund new faculty positions on the main campus. The Qatar Foundation also indicated they would fund faculty research, which was another important motivator for TAMU.

Institutional motivations are likely to change over time with new leadership and shifting priorities. In Texas A&M's case, the annual management fee became increasingly important over time. What was initially seen as an annual bonus to help develop the main campus became a critical component of the Provost's annual budget. Increased reliance on the money generated by the Qatar campus puts the main campus in a potentially risky position if QF ever decides to close the campus or reduce the management fee.

The State of Qatar developed Education City and recruited Texas A&M in particular in a quest for prestige and academic quality. Rather than reforming their national university or starting an institution from the ground up—both of which could take decades—Qatar imported prestigious universities to expedite the development of Qatar's knowledge economy. Although Texas A&M University does not enjoy the same stature as an Ivy League institution, its petroleum engineering program is considered one of the best in the United States, and with a burgeoning oil and gas sector, Qatar needed well trained engineers to enter the workforce.

Strategy

Once Texas A&M decided to pursue an agreement to open a branch campus in Qatar, a core group of administrators engaged in a process of developing support among key constituencies. The tragedy of September 11, 2001 was still fresh in people's minds, so generating buy-in to open a campus in the Middle East took some convincing. The Qatar campus planning group consisted of two current academic deans, a former engineering dean, and an administrator focused on internationalization strategy. This so-called "gang of four" identified three core stakeholder groups—the faculty, students, and the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. Key representatives from each group were invited to Qatar—all expenses paid—which proved to be an important strategic move to generate widespread support for the project. One seemingly important stakeholder, however, was left out of the process—the College of Engineering on the main campus. Despite the fact that the Qatar campus would solely offer engineering degrees, the College of Engineering was given no formal authority, which would carry long-term consequences.

At the same time the Qatar campus planning group garnered internal support, it had to negotiate a ten-year contract with the Qatar Foundation. Per the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board's requirements, three important non-negotiables were added to the agreement: 1) no state money could be spent on the branch campus, 2) the curriculum had to remain materially the same as the home campus, and 3) student admission requirements could not be altered. Both TAMU and QF agreed that maintaining admissions and curricular standards was an essential component of a quality academic experience and necessary to build a good reputation. Furthermore, QF was willing to invest significant sums of money in faculty, staff, and infrastructure to support these goals.

Other aspects of the negotiations did not go as smoothly. Texas A&M felt it was necessary to offer research funding and graduate programs to attract top-caliber faculty. The Qatar Foundation did not fully appreciate the importance of developing research and graduate programs to support undergraduate education, so the planning group helped teach the QF representatives about the essential components of a U.S. research university. QF conceded to TAMU's requests but only to a certain extent. The exact terms of how QF would support research were not stipulated and, subsequently, it took many years before TAMUQ faculty would receive research funding. Socio-cultural norms influenced the negotiation process as well. QF negotiators were perceived as tough, and TAMU administrators hesitated to push back based on their own cultural norms.

The startup nature of a new branch campus attracted an entrepreneurial group of staff and faculty with a sense of dedication to creating a high-quality student experience. These early personnel had little history to guide their work, found satisfaction in solving difficult issues, and worked across functional areas. Along with this pioneering spirit came the desire for independence from the main campus. Early decisions were made with little regard for main campus policies and procedures, which led to the first few years of operation being labeled the "Wild West." Some decisions made during these early years carried long-term negative repercussions. For instance, certain components of faculty and staff benefit packages were overly generous and not sustainable as the institution grew.

A new Qatar campus dean was appointed in 2007, which marked a turning point toward a maturing organization. He pushed for enhanced connections with the main campus and formalized a strategic planning process, which led to increased bureaucratization. Early staff members felt less comfortable operating in this environment. Qatar campus personnel disagreed

whether the formal 2010-2015 strategic plan served as a reporting document for accountability purposes or a visioning exercise to help define the future direction of the institution.

One strategic objective that presented many challenges for the Qatar campus was recruiting high quality faculty with experience teaching on the main campus. Administrators employed a variety of incentives to entice faculty, including a 30 percent salary increase, research funding, and other financial allowances. These incentives proved successful in recruiting liberal arts faculty and some science faculty, but few engineering faculty were persuaded to leave behind already established laboratories and teams of graduate students. The Qatar campus has experienced recruitment success in a few key areas including faculty with ties to the Middle East and end of career faculty with fewer constraints. In some instances, the Qatar campus has been treated as a dumping ground for unwanted home campus faculty, but TAMUQ administrators can typically detect these cases and reject requests for transfer. Due to these challenges, TAMUQ has resorted to hiring a significant number of faculty from the region who often do not understand the norms of American higher education and struggle to gain the respect of students.

Despite years of delays, the current state of grant funding and research development on the Qatar campus is widely perceived as successful. TAMUQ faculty receive a significant amount of research funding through the Qatar Foundation, which allows for collaborative projects with main campus faculty and has resulted in an impressive number of publications. QF grants do present some unique challenges for the Qatar campus—the indirect cost percentages are lower than desired, faculty research foci must align with Qatar national priorities, grant restrictions pose compliance issues, and export control laws cause project delays.

Unlike the largely successful research program, TAMUQ has struggled to develop graduate programs. Despite a stipulation in the ten-year agreement with the Qatar Foundation, TAMUQ has only been permitted to offer a chemical engineering master's program. QF's recent unanticipated decision to make Hamad Bin Khalifa University the sole overseer of graduate programs within Education City may prevent the development of additional programs, though TAMUQ is considering new opportunities to develop collaborative graduate programs. In order to fulfill the original goal of supplying graduate students to support faculty research, TAMUQ is experimenting with creative workaround options such as admitting Ph.D. students through the main campus who will study on the Qatar campus.

Over the last five years, TAMUQ has focused extensively on engaging with the local community. Faculty work with local K-12 schools to improve teaching, encourage students to consider STEM fields, form research partnerships with local industry, and offer continuing education classes. Texas A&M at Qatar is fulfilling its public service mission, enhancing their public image, and preparing local students to succeed in college—their motives are both self-serving and altruistic.

A final strategic-level issue that TAMUQ faces is the tension between adaptation and replication. Replicating the home campus experience is important in order to build legitimacy, fulfill the agreement with the Qatar Foundation, and meet the requirements of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. Nonetheless, the unique cultural environment in which the institution operates and students' diverse schooling backgrounds necessitates adaptation. Publically, TAMUQ maintains a strong rhetoric of replication on academic matters, but in reality the curriculum is modified in certain instances and many faculty alter their course content and pedagogy. The admissions process is another area where the institution publically states that its

standards are the same, yet TAMUQ faculty believe Qatar campus students are largely underprepared compared to their main campus peers. Though both groups meet the university's minimum admissions requirements, this discrepancy can likely be attributed to main campus students' experience in an American educational environment and more suitable academic preparation.

Structure

A number of entities have formal control or influence over the Qatar campus. The central administration from the main campus (i.e., President, Provost and Vice President for Research) was heavily involved in the inception of the Qatar campus, but the group's involvement declined during implementation. The Provost, however, maintained a formal role and now supervises the TAMUQ Dean and CEO. In recent years, the Provost was described as being "actively involved," which may stem from the Qatar campus' earlier lack of compliance with main campus policy. The Provost has full control over the annual \$10 million management fee and determines how it is allocated.

The main campus College of Engineering has less influence over the Qatar campus since they lost the battle for control during the inception—the Dean of Engineering settled for an ambiguous dotted line relationship to TAMUQ. The College of Engineering does have some formal authority; they approve curricular changes, faculty hires, and faculty tenure and promotion. Nevertheless, until recently, the College of Engineering only did the bare minimum because there was not much to gain from their affiliation with the Qatar campus. The other Qatar campus departments examined in this study—the Department of Student Affairs, Information Technology Services, and the Office of Admissions—had no formal ties or reporting relationship to their counterparts in College Station.

As the sole funder of the Qatar campus, the Qatar Foundation is another organization with formal authority over TAMUQ. QF is primarily concerned with the elements of the Qatar campus that impact the budget, including student enrollment and the number of faculty and staff positions. The Qatar Foundation demonstrated its power over TAMUQ by not approving the additional budget necessary to start new graduate programs. In general, however, TAMUQ's relationships with QF and the main campus may be less one-sided than some TAMUQ faculty and staff described. In several instances, these relationships seem to reflect a partnership between equals, rather than a traditional hierarchical relationship.

Other entities such as the main campus Board of Regents and the Qatar Campus' governing body, the Joint Advisory Board (JAB), had varying degrees of influence. The Board of Regents has ultimate authority over the Qatar campus but is not involved in strategic planning or day-to-day operations. The JAB acts primarily in an advisory capacity and lacks the formal authority and degree of involvement of a traditional governing board. The State of Texas has indirect influence over TAMUQ through the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board that dictates certain aspects of the curriculum and faculty workload requirements. Local industry in Qatar is a close partner with TAMUQ because they fully fund the tuition for Qatari students and employ a majority of Qatar campus graduates. Finally, the Qatar Campus must answer to the same accreditation organizations as the main campus College of Engineering—the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) and the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (ABET). Accreditation requirements have a strong influence over the strategic direction of TAMUQ.

Relationship Among Motivation, Strategy, and Structure

The conceptual framework for this study was in part derived from organizational theory that discusses the importance of establishing a link between organizational strategy and structure (Chandler, 1969; Mintzberg, 1990). This theory provided an effective foundation from which to examine the inception and development of an international branch campus from an institutional perspective. Furthermore, it offered a useful way to organize the findings of the study.

Examining each element individually across the institution's lifespan and from a cross-section of functional areas unveiled important organizational building blocks of TAMUQ that contributed to its success. The relationship among motivations, strategy and structure also proved to be an important consideration, though the case study did not fully reveal the originally intended depth of understanding about these linkages. Nevertheless, there were a number of instances in the evolution of Texas A&M at Qatar where strategy drove structure; structure influenced strategy; and motivations informed strategy and structure. A variety of external environmental factors also affected the relationship among these elements.

A connection between strategy and structure was evident in the evolution of TAMUQ's research program. Research development was a strategic priority for TAMUQ since the inception, which heavily influenced the type of faculty the institution recruited (i.e., research faculty). Since Qatar Foundation's grant programs support national research priorities, TAMUQ must ensure that faculty research agendas align with these priorities in order to be eligible for funding. QF's grant requirements are an external environmental factor that influenced the connection between strategy and structure. Interestingly, Texas A&M's strategy to develop a robust research program also influenced the Qatar Foundation's structure through the eventual development of the Qatar National Research Fund (QNRF).

In another example of strategy driving structure, the Qatar campus had a strategic goal to increase the number of Qatari students; however, fewer than anticipated Qatari students were academically prepared to succeed in a rigorous engineering curriculum, so TAMUQ modified its support structure by adding a significant number of tutors and teaching assistants. Additionally, they started a yearlong provisional bridge program to help students reach the admissions standards required for acceptance. When strategies were not clearly defined during the inception, TAMUQ developed structures on their own, independent from the main campus. The main campus Division of Student Affairs was uninvolved in defining and implementing the strategy for student engagement on the Qatar campus, so TAMUQ's Student Affairs staffing structure developed organically alongside the needs of the students in Doha. In a final example, a lack of strategic forethought led to an insufficient structure. The Qatar campus inception team failed to identify the need for additional Human Resource functions and faculty administrative support, so they grossly underestimated the number of staff positions needed to support the Qatar campus. This made the early years very difficult, and it took many years to get an adequate number of positions approved by the Qatar Foundation.

Conversely, there were instances where structure drove strategy. The existing structure of the Qatar Foundation influenced the strategy of TAMUQ. The QF staff handled all housing and residence life related functions, so there was no need to create TAMUQ positions in this area. Texas A&M's organizational hierarchy influenced strategy in several ways as well. Since the Provost has ultimate authority over the Qatar campus, the main campus maintains some degree of control over the broad strategic direction of TAMUQ. In contrast, the College of Engineering's lack of formal connection to the Qatar campus contributed to faculty recruitment challenges on the Qatar campus, which was an important strategic priority.

The influence of institutional and stakeholder motivations on the strategy and structure of TAMUQ is evident in the inception phase and less apparent after the campus began operation. On a basic level, Texas A&M's desire to increase their international presence—among other rationale—pushed them to accept the invitation to open a branch campus in Qatar. Moreover, the Qatar Foundation's motivation to host prestigious American institutions drove them to provide unprecedented budgets to support the creation and development of TAMUQ. In response, Texas A&M spared no expense to develop a full-scale miniature version of their home campus along with a rather significant number of faculty and staff required to run such an operation.

A number of instances revealed connections between strategy and structure in both directions. Additionally, there was evidence that motivations influenced strategy and structure. Generally speaking, Texas A&M at Qatar seemed to benefit when a logical link among motivations, strategy and structure existed; whereas, when these connections were ignored, difficulties often arose. It is worth noting that the use of Chandler's theory as a lens to examine TAMUQ may have resulted in a self-fulfilling prophecy of sorts, whereby the concept that a relationship should exist between the three elements resulted in me singling out these connections. The instances where connections were observed among motivations, strategy, and structure did not reveal enough detail to make conclusive judgments about how or when these elements should be aligned. Perhaps the more important outcome that resulted from utilizing this framework was the foundation it provided to identify and describe vital considerations for administrators to contemplate when designing and implementing an IBC. The next section offers detailed recommendations on how to successfully design and implement IBCs, which were

derived from the themes that emerged from examining the motivations, strategy, and structure of TAMUQ.

Recommendations: Lessons for Success

In the Observatory on Borderless Higher Education's report *International Branch Campuses: Markets and Strategies*, the author offers the following cautionary note:

In this report it is not possible to give tailored advice to universities that are interested in establishing a branch campus abroad in terms of the country where such a campus could be successfully established and which programs should (or should not) be offered there. Such institution-specific advice is strongly dependent on the providing institution's particular mission, strategic plan, strengths and financial resources, among other aspects... It is possible, however, to outline a series of general strategies, which higher education institutions need to bear in mind when planning or establishing a campus abroad." (Becker, 2009, p. 19).

Similarly, this section offers considerations around motivations, strategy, and structure for institutions interested in opening IBCs, but recommendations are based on the experience of Texas A&M University at Qatar and should not be applied directly in other circumstances without consideration for the unique institutional and host country objectives. Nevertheless, international branch campuses do share some organizational characteristics, thus several of the themes that emerged in this study are potentially generalizable. This section highlights key takeaways garnered from this study that are broadly applicable to institutions interested in or currently operating IBCs.

Generating Buy-in

The importance of mounting widespread buy-in during the inception of a branch campus should not be underestimated. Seeking the approval and support of faculty and other important stakeholders will take time and may not always go as planned, but the effort will pay off in the long run. Administrators should resist the urge to ignore potentially controversial topics (e.g., academic freedom) and, instead, openly engage with faculty, staff, and students on such issues. The process of generating buy-in is lengthy and will likely require multiple encounters with the same individuals and groups. The planning team responsible for an international branch campus should develop a strategy for how to reach out to relevant campus constituencies and track progress along the way. It would be impossible to achieve 100 percent buy-in across an institution, thus administrators should focus their attention on vocal critics and the individuals considered to be crucial to the successful implementation of an IBC.

The Texas A&M central administrators wisely engaged with the Faculty Senate, pertinent staff, and student leaders. They went so far as to invite key individuals on official visits to Education City, which generated significant excitement and buy-in. In contrast, Texas A&M's central administration intentionally left the College of Engineering out of the inception process rather than engaging in a potentially continuous discussion over who would oversee the project. While this may have made the initial implementation of TAMUQ easier and quicker, the negative implications were significant and long lasting. Ultimately, if a branch campus project faces significant resistance from key continuances, administrators should consider whether the potential benefits outweigh the possible damage to these relationships. Cancelling a project all together may actually be easier and more beneficial in the long term than dealing with the negative repercussions of going against the wishes of important stakeholders.

Upholding Non-negotiables

Prior to entering formal negotiations with a host country sponsor, institutions should identify non-negotiables and strategic priorities. For public institutions, this list may include regulatory requirements such as the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board's condition that TAMUQ's curriculum and admissions standards mimic the home campus. Luckily, the Qatar Foundation agreed that these issues were important to uphold, but this may not always be the case when negotiating with host countries and sponsoring organizations. Administrators should be ready and willing to walk away from a potential IBC project if their non-negotiables cannot be fulfilled.

Strategically, Texas A&M believed research and graduate programs were necessary to recruit quality engineering faculty. QF agreed to pursue both to varying degrees, but specifics about how they would be implemented were largely void. Although TAMUQ has experienced great success with research, it took significantly longer than expected for QF to establish grant programs and other aspects of the organization suffered in the meantime. Graduate programs also took longer than expected to fund, and QF has only permitted TAMUQ to start one master's program. In addition to developing a clear list of non-negotiables and sticking with them, to the extent possible, institutions should push for specific details to be included in branch campus agreements. Moreover, institutions must reasonably determine the likelihood that the sponsor will support their priorities. Texas A&M's experience with research funding and compliance should have been a clue that starting a grant program would require establishing complex processes and a significant amount time. Institutions should also be realistic in acknowledging that certain components of an agreement may never come to fruition. Host country priorities and circumstances change, which can hinder well-meaning commitments.

Other factors are important to consider during negotiation. The extent to which a host country is funding a project impacts an institution's negotiating power. The more funding a host sponsor offers, the more influence they will expect. That said, more prestigious universities likely have more sway during negotiations. For instance, as an Ivy League institution, Cornell University probably had more negotiating power with QF than Texas A&M.

Understanding the cultural norms of host country can prove advantageous during negotiations. Had Texas A&M realized that the Qatar Foundation representatives were accustomed to pushing back during negotiations, they would have been less hesitant to disagree and advocated more firmly for top strategic priorities. At the same time, it is important that institutions realize that each side has unique motivations and some concessions will be necessary to adequately address both parties' expectations. Investigating the motivations of the host country in advance will make the negotiation process smoother and help inform the design and implementation of the branch campus. Institutions should expect lengthy negotiation periods that span a period of months or years. Not all negotiation occurs in a formal setting with all organizational representatives present. Texas A&M's "gang of four" handled a bulk of the negotiations with QF and consulted with other TAMU administrators when necessary. The process occurred over a one-year period through various formal and informal means of communication. Formal meetings may be only be necessary periodically and in certain circumstances, perhaps to discuss the most significant strategic priorities or contentious issues.

Market Research

This case study highlights the importance of conducting accurate feasibility assessments when determining whether to pursue an IBC project. Two crucial components of Texas A&M at Qatar's strategy was the ability to recruit faculty with main campus experience and to admit a

sufficient number of qualified Qatari students. TAMUQ has struggled in both areas. A more thorough assessment during the inception period may have revealed evidence to suggest that engineering faculty would be very difficult to recruit and that the State of Qatar did not have enough qualified Qatari's to support the agreed upon student quota.

Institutions interested in IBCs should work with local education experts to understand the proposed market they hope to enter. Experts can help determine the demand for particular degree programs, local students' level of academic preparedness, how competitive the institutional brand name will be, financial aid availability, incentives to study locally versus internationally, and numerous other factors that would influence their student stream. Regarding faculty recruitment, institutions can determine demand by distributing faculty surveys on the main campus or working with the deans of related academic departments. TAMUQ's experience reveals that faculty from certain disciplines may be easier to recruit than others and some regions of the world may be more attractive to American faculty than others. When developing strategies for faculty recruitment, administrators should seek feedback on proposed incentives to accurately gauge their potential for success.

Funding

The funding model for an IBC is critical to success and should be determined based on an institution's unique objectives. For Texas A&M at Qatar to be sustainable as a small engineering school with high overhead costs and state legal restrictions prohibiting the use of public funds abroad, full funding from a sponsor organization was the only viable financial model.

Institutions should note that fully funded IBCs still burden the main campus in non-monetary ways. For instance, during the inception process, high-level administrators spend significant time negotiating with the host country and making internal adjustments to support the branch campus,

which steals attention away from other important main campus projects.

Allowing a host country to fully fund an IBC means that an institution must give up a certain degree of control, and as one TAMUQ administrator aptly stated, “He who has the gold makes the rules.” Fortunately, the Qatar Foundation has been quite accommodating with budgetary requests and provided TAMUQ with sufficient resources throughout the campus’ history but, as discussed, they have delayed and withheld funding for select initiatives such as research and graduate programs respectively. This senior-level academic administrator from the home campus offered useful insight:

If you look at international higher education branch campuses across the world, the funder is always a bully. They want to get the most they can for as small as possible.

But, your bank is a bully if they’re loaning you money for your company. The borrower is always subject to the whims of the lender.

Nevertheless, he goes on to defend the fully funded model:

If you look at successes and failures in this region in higher education, the Qatar Foundation has the model that’s successful. It’s a very expensive model, but it works.

All [the Education City] campuses are successful. [If] you look at the ones that failed, the model was bad. [QF] created a model that’s workable.

Institutions hoping to engage in branch campus projects should realize that funding agreements are complex and many hidden costs exist. For instance, calculating the amount of time personnel on the Texas A&M main campus spend on Qatar campus matters was not straightforward and needed annual modification as the branch campus grew. Additionally, the inception team woefully underestimated the number of staff required to successfully support the Qatar campus. For example, Human Resources provides housing location assistance, processes immigration

paperwork, and offers a number of other services not necessary for personnel in College Station. TAMUQ had to request a significant increase in the number of full-time equivalent positions as compared to the original staffing plan. Hidden costs appear in other forms such as providing attractive incentives for personnel and unanticipated challenges in recruiting sufficient student numbers.

Startup Structure

During the inception process of an IBC, institutions should pay particular attention to defining main campus connections and hiring personnel with relevant experience and appropriate mindsets. Texas A&M identified staff and faculty that embraced the ambiguity of a startup endeavor and had the creativity and flexibility needed during the early years of an IBC. By maintaining sufficiently loose reins, administrators can empower branch campus faculty and staff to make context appropriate decisions in an efficient manner. Furthermore, by hiring some branch campus personnel with main campus experience, administrators can ensure that critical academic elements and institutional procedures are upheld. Though each institution's situation will differ, TAMUQ could have avoided significant issues by hiring directors of finance and human resources with main campus experience. Staff with main campus experience should fill administrative positions that require extensive knowledge of main campus policies and procedures. The downsides of transferring personnel from the main campus are the additional costs involved in enticing someone to leave their current post and that many will lack experience working on a branch campus and in a foreign country. Additionally, staff from the main campus may be more rigid about replicating everything from the home campus and less open to adapting institutional elements to the local context.

From a departmental standpoint, areas that are critical to the branch campus' core strategy and mission should have close connections or formal ties to the home campus. Main campus departments can play a variety of roles ranging from complete oversight to advisors. In TAMUQ's case, they struggled to establish effective connections to the main campus in several areas. The dotted line relationship between TAMUQ and the College of Engineering was ambiguous and has caused animosity for many years. A lack of clear delineation of main campus and branch campus relationships can lead to lengthy and confusing decision making or approval processes. In TAMUQ's case, administrators resorted to making decisions on their own and avoided the main campus altogether. Over time, once a branch campus stabilizes and departments have developed a healthy routine, administrators might consider curtailing main campus oversight. Increased autonomy will improve efficiency and encourage creativity.

In addition to the main campus, a branch campus must answer to a variety of other entities including the host country sponsor, governing boards, accreditation organizations, and local industry. Participants identified the Qatar Foundation as a master that used its authority to influence TAMUQ strategy. The way TAMUQ administrators perceive their relationship with QF may actually encourage this top-down relationship because they expect interactions to occur in this manner and, therefore, do not approach the Qatar Foundation as an equal partner. This study revealed that many facets of TAMUQ and QF's relationship are mutually beneficial, thus the relationship should be viewed as an equal partnership in which TAMUQ has an active voice. Both entities have needs and compromises that should be made in order to adequately satisfy the goals of one another. Other IBCs will benefit from viewing their relationships with comparable entities (i.e., the host country sponsor) in a similar light—a partnership to take advantage of, rather than an authority or master that dictates their future.

Strong Leadership

A theme present throughout the history of Texas A&M at Qatar is the importance of strong leadership to support and guide the inception and development process. In the early days, Texas A&M's two presidents that served during the inception of TAMUQ were highly supportive of the project. In general, presidents with widespread support among campus constituencies will carry considerable weight when endorsing international branch campuses. Selecting an appropriate leader for the branch campus is crucial to success as well. During the early years of TAMUQ, the interim Dean that helped start the operation and the inaugural Dean struggled to build strong connections with the main campus. In 2007, the new Dean, Dr. Mark Weichold, "brought order to the broader system." His background in engineering and preexisting relationship to the main campus College of Engineering provided the credibility and connections necessary to build a trusting relationship with the main campus. Furthermore, he initiated a strategic planning process that pushed the Qatar campus towards greater alignment with the main campus policies and procedures. Dr. Weichold had the skills and vision necessary to help TAMUQ shift from a startup institution to a mature bureaucratic organization.

Despite the fact that Dr. Weichold has an academic administration background, he recognized the need to focus on other areas within the institution as well. He helped shape the direction of student affairs and provided the support necessary to build a healthy campus life. Dr. Weichold also understands the importance of engaging with the local community and is respectful of local culture. As a result, he has earned the trust of local business leaders and the broader community. TAMUQ's experience demonstrates that selecting the right leader for a branch campus is critical to success.

The importance of a president's endorsement and selecting a strong leader to guide an international branch campus cannot be overstated. The leader of an IBC must develop and maintain healthy relationships with internal faculty and staff, main campus officials, the sponsorship organization, and the local community, amongst others. A leader's credibility is enhanced when he or she comes from a disciplinary background that is well respected among branch campus faculty and main campus academic administrators.

Recruiting Home Campus Faculty

Much has been said about faculty recruitment, but the bottom line is that TAMUQ has struggled. Hiring faculty with main campus experience is necessary to uphold academic standards and maintain credibility for all IBCs. Institutions should be realistic about the challenges involved in recruiting faculty from their home campuses. Academic discipline clearly has an influence. Lower paid faculty from the home campus with fewer research constraints may find the financial incentives of a branch campus attractive. In contrast, faculty who are content in their current situation (for any number of reasons) will prove difficult to recruit. In Texas A&M's case, the liberal arts faculty were in the former category and the engineering faculty in the latter. Establishing a close relationship with the home campus departments from which a branch campus needs to recruit faculty is essential. Due to struggles over ownership of TAMUQ, the main campus College of Engineering leadership had little incentive to encourage their faculty to consider spending time on the Qatar campus, which contributed to recruitment challenges. In addition to offering incentives, barriers should be removed. For instance, if the rigors of tenure and promotion hinder faculty recruitment, administrators may be able to extend the tenure clock or make other concessions.

Institutions are unlikely to find enough faculty from their home campus to fully staff an IBC and will need to hire outside faculty. IBC administrators should first consider faculty with experience teaching in or with a degree from the sending country. These faculty will bring at least a basic understanding of the home country teaching and learning expectations. Despite this experience, faculty will benefit from formal teaching development opportunities that assist in adapting course content and pedagogy to the needs of the branch campus student population. When hiring faculty without experience in the sending country, institutions should consider creative means of providing them with main campus experience. For instance, although TAMUQ has yet to remove all the barriers necessary to move forward, administrators designed a program whereby faculty without main campus experience can go to College Station to teach for a brief period.

Adaptation and Replication

When developing branch campus strategies and structures, administrators should consider where they should position institutional elements on the adaptation/replication continuum. When an institution wants to develop branch campus elements that mimic the home campus closely replication is important; whereas, if the goal is to design elements relevant to the host country and local student population, adaptation is necessary. Most likely, branch campuses will face competing forces that push for varying degrees of replication and adaptation in different areas. The academic components of TAMUQ are a good example. The institution faces pressure to demonstrate that the academic rigor is the same as the main campus, so it replicates most of the curriculum. Yet, local industry has unique needs and students come from different schooling backgrounds, which requires adapting the curriculum and pedagogy. Despite these modifications, publically, TAMUQ maintains a strong rhetoric of sameness regarding the

academic components of the institution. Administrators are wise to consider how students and families will react to the replication and adaptation of various institutional elements. In other areas—specifically those less critical to the institution’s core academic mission—TAMUQ leans more heavily on adaptation. For instance, despite the fact that student affairs administrators have attempted to duplicate some of the main campus student traditions, the bulk of student services were tailored specifically around the needs of Qatar campus students. When administrators consider where and how to modify various elements of a branch campus, these key questions shared by a participant with extensive experience provides a useful model for adaptation, “Can we adapt it? Is it respectful? Is it meaningful to people? Will [students] be engaged?”

Sustainability

Although slightly outside the scope of the original research questions for this study, an important consideration for international branch campuses is sustainability. Interviewees provided insight into whether Texas A&M at Qatar was sustainable in the long term. Not surprisingly, marketing materials suggested that TAMUQ would continue to operate for generations:

As we look toward 2015 and beyond, we are confident that Texas A&M at Qatar will continue to be the premier provider of engineering education in the region, a valuable contributor to knowledge internationally and a valued resource to the State of Qatar.

(Texas A&M University at Qatar, 2012, p. 5).

A senior administrator from the Qatar campus echoed this sentiment:

Well, I’d like to see Texas A&M stay just as long as possible... Given the leadership that we have right now in Qatar Foundation and the State of Qatar, I’m not seeing any

indication for the direction to change. With that said, I'm prepared for it. We are here at their pleasure.

In order to make the campus sustainable, TAMUQ administrators have sought ways to embed themselves into society and to make an impact in the local community. With only 100 graduates a year, these administrators understand they must do more than produce a small cohort of well-trained engineers to convince the Qatar Foundation and the broader population of the institution's worth. Administrators hope to make TAMUQ indispensable through community engagement and industry links, or as one high-level administrator put it, "we're trying to become part of the community not a service provider to it." Developing meaningful community engagement is not a straightforward process because the general public in Qatar is skeptical of Education City. They fear the influence of Western education and feel the high cost could be better spent in other areas. Establishing trust is a lengthy process and the current staffing model relies heavily on transient expats that stay for a few years and then move back to their home countries. To avoid this issue, branch campuses should aim to hire expats interested in longer stints. This is especially important for the senior-level leaders who are the face of the university and interact with the public and industry representatives frequently. These leaders should be able to effectively tell the story of how the institution is making a positive impact in the community. In other words, do not assume efforts will be noticed. Like institutions in the U.S., branch campuses should consider hiring marketing and public relationship professionals to help craft and distribute these messages.

A study participant from the Qatar Foundation felt that TAMUQ's strategy of making itself indispensable was smart. He said,

The key variable is whether A&M can continue to reengineer itself so that it becomes more and more valuable to Qatar. I don't think it's about Qatar making a decision to unplug A&M. I think it's how well does A&M work and how hard does it work to make sure that it is connected and that it is bringing so much value that Qatar would never consider the possibility of letting it go. That's what A&M ought to be doing... The only reason that Qatar Foundation would pull the plug is if it felt as if the investment was not worthwhile; that there was a lack of responsiveness and it was too expensive for the value.

While TAMUQ participants agreed that it was important for the institution to broadly contribute to the public good, they were skeptical whether the long-term vision of the Qatar Foundation would include foreign branch campuses. Some participants felt that Hamad Bin Khalifa University (HBKU) would eventually commandeer the branch campuses, as this administrator stated: "I think in 2022 when the helicopters fly over [Education City] they're going to say, 'this is Hamad Bin Khaifa University, our flagship university for the state of Qatar.'" A Qatar Foundation interviewee working at HBKU who interacts with high-level administrators on a regular basis said that he has never heard any mention of such a plan.

Nonetheless, QF could very well decide to end their relationship with Texas A&M and the other branch campuses at any given time. Without significant subsidies, an IBC like TAMUQ is not sustainable. Institutions that operate branch campuses should be realistic in this regard and prepare contingency plans and exit strategies in the event that a host country decides to terminate an agreement. There are many unknowns that could jeopardize the longevity of a branch campus. Even though the State of Qatar is committed to developing a knowledge economy, in the event of a dramatic decline in oil and gas revenue or a shift in the country's

leadership, the Qatar Foundation may have no choice but to close Education City. Likewise, Texas A&M may decide they no longer want to support the branch campus in Qatar, which is another reason to design contingency plans.

Future Research

This in-depth examination of Texas A&M at Qatar's strategy and structure revealed many important elements that institutions should consider when designing and implementing an international branch campus. Although many of the elements described in this study are relevant to other branch campuses, a broader cross-section of institutional types and diverse rationale for considering a branch campus would yield valuable insight. For instance, the fact that TAMUQ has a host country sponsor that is fully funding the operation is unique. Similar in-depth case studies of IBCs with only partial or limited-term funding and those that are tuition driven or for-profit may reveal important distinctions that impact strategy and structure. Additionally, Texas A&M is a public institution which influenced many aspects of their strategy and structure—a private school would have a host of different considerations.

Although a comparative study with a variety of institutions would be useful, researchers should consider that countless other variables (e.g., host country cultural norms, host country strategy, accreditation requirements) will also impact the evolution of a branch campus; thus, the goal of a comparative study should not be to predict how certain categories of institutions and host country situations will impact strategy and structure, which is an impossible feat. Rather, the value of examining multiple branch campuses would be to help administrators appreciate the range of approaches available when developing branch campus strategies and structures and to consider the potential implications of each approach.

The Davies' (1995) model was helpful to explore the factors that Texas A&M considered when deciding whether to move forward with the invitation to open a branch campus in Qatar; however, the model was intended to cover a much broader range of internationalization modalities and was developed prior to the rise of IBCs. A narrower model focused on the internal and external factors that an institution should consider when determining whether to open an international branch campus would prove more relevant.

This study primarily focused on the institutional perspective of establishing an IBC. A similar study from the perspective of the host country would help inform governmental decisions regarding the import of foreign education providers. Such research would inform funding decisions and policy formation. Examining institutional trends across a variety of sending countries may also uncover important insights. Finally, this study covers a broad range of topics related to international branch campuses. An in-depth study of any given theme (e.g., adaptation versus replication, faculty recruitment, forming effective partnerships) would be a valuable contribution to the literature.

Final Thoughts

International branch campuses are extremely complex to design, implement, and operate successfully. The excitement of expanding overseas is alluring and can lead to rash decisions. Universities can achieve internationalization and revenue generation goals through numerous forms of cross-border and international education. Many branch campuses fail or underperform, thus other modalities of internationalization should be thoroughly considered prior to committing to an IBC.

Nonetheless, as evident through this case study of Texas A&M University at Qatar, IBCs can succeed and have the potential to help institutions and host countries achieve their intended

objectives. The institutional motivations to engage in such a project should be significant, clearly defined, and reasonable. Furthermore, the goals of both the home campus and host country should be sufficiently supported; otherwise, the project will be short lived. Thorough research should be conducted prior to establishing an IBC to determine whether the defined project objectives are attainable. Once the decision is made to move forward with an IBC, the process of setting up and growing a campus will take many years and require widespread involvement with actors from across the university. Careful attention should be paid to which departments and individuals are included in the process. I hope that this study is used as a resource to inform institutions' decisions of whether or not to establish international branch campuses. For institutions that decide to open IBCs, the insight revealed through Texas A&M's experience should contribute to their successful design and implementation.

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Appendix A. U.S. providers and programs abroad: A proposed cross-border framework

(Eckel et al., 2007, p. 147-48)

- 1) Location: In what country is the program offered?
- 2) Extensiveness of activity. Is the degree program a
 - a. Stand-alone comprehensive campus?
 - b. Set of degree programs?
 - c. Single degree program?
- 3) Partners: Is the program offered by a sole provider or in conjunction with one or more providers?
 - a. If collaborative, are the partners accredited colleges or universities?
 - b. If collaborative, are other types of partners (corporate, government, non-profit) involved?
- 4) Legal Status: Is the program/campus recognized as in the receiving country as
 - a. Private, non-profit
 - b. Private, for-profit (propriety)
 - c. Public
- 5) Accreditation Status: Is the program accredited?
 - a. In the home country?
 - b. In the receiving country?
- 6) Program Level: Is the program offered at:
 - a. Pre-collegiate program
 - b. Undergraduate/First-Degree Level
 - c. Graduate
- 7) Degrees Awarded: What degree is awarded?
 - a. Associates
 - b. Bachelors
 - c. Masters
 - d. Doctorate
 - e. Professional
- 8) Field of Study: In what field of study?
 - a. Business
 - b. Computer Science
 - c. Education
 - d. Engineering
 - e. Health
 - f. Humanities/Fine Arts
 - g. Law
 - h. Liberal Arts
 - i. Medicine
 - j. Natural Sciences
 - k. Religion/Theology
 - l. Social Sciences
- 9) Curriculum Content: To what extent is the curriculum developed specifically for this site (versus imported from the home institution)?

- a. Completely developed
 - b. Completely imported
 - c. A mix of imported and especially developed
- 10) Faculty/Academic Staff: Are the academic staff employed by the receiving country (off-shore) site or are they members of the home institution's faculty/academic staff?
- a. All home (U.S.) institution
 - b. All non-U.S. program
 - c. Mixture
- 11) Students:
- a. How many students are enrolled?
 - b. What are their countries of origin?
- 12) Facilities: Does the parent (U.S. institution) own, lease or borrow (via partnership) the site's physical facilities?

Appendix B. Letter of Permission to Conduct Research at Texas A&M University at Qatar

November 19, 2013

Boston College Institutional Review Board
Office for Research Protections
140 Commonwealth Avenue, Waul House
Chestnut Hill, MA 02467

Dear Boston College IRB:

On behalf of Texas A&M University at Qatar, I am writing to grant permission for David A. Stanfield, a doctoral student at Boston College, to conduct his research titled, "International Branch Campuses: Institutional Motivations, Strategies, and Structures."

I understand that Mr. Stanfield will recruit and interview approximately 20 administrators and faculty from the Qatar campus and home campus in College Station, Texas over the next 5 months. The research plan will include the following principles:

- Individual participation will be voluntary and at their own discretion.
- Participants will be given an informed consent document before commencing the research activities.
- Data collected will remain entirely confidential and may not be provided to anyone besides the principal investigator.

Additionally, Mr. Stanfield he has permission to use the institution name, Texas A&M University at Qatar, in published materials. We are happy to participate in this study and contribute to this important research.

Appendix C. A Historical Timeline of Texas A&M at Qatar

December 2001	Dr. Fathy Saoud, Member of the Board of Directors for Qatar Foundation, led a three member delegation to Texas A&M University to begin initial discussions on a partnership between Texas A&M University and Qatar Foundation
June 2002	Dr. Ray Bowen, Former President of Texas A&M University, authorized Dr. Ronald Douglas, Former Executive Vice President and Provost, to lead an eleven member delegation to Doha, Qatar, to learn more about Qatar Foundation's proposed plan.
September 2002	Dr. Robert Gates, Former President of Texas A&M University, and Her Highness Sheikha Mozah Bint Nasser Al Missned signed a Memorandum of Understanding.
October 2002	Qatar Foundation provided a Planning Grant for Texas A&M University to carry out assessment and planning.
November 2002	Dr. David Prior, then Interim Executive Vice President and Provost, led a 20 member delegation to Qatar to begin assessing the academic and financial needs of establishing the Qatar campus.
December 2002	TAMU decision to begin to pursue the terms of an agreement with Qatar Foundation.
January 2003	Dr. Charles Bowman, Emeritus Professor and former Department Head of Petroleum Engineering of Texas A&M University, was named Coordinator of the Qatar Project and led a 4 member delegation to Qatar to finalize the details of the term sheet.
January 2003	The Term Sheet for the establishment of Texas A&M University at Qatar was signed and executed by Texas A&M University and Qatar Foundation.
March 2003	Dr. Gates presented the Qatar Project to the Board of Regents of The Texas A&M University System and received approval to enter into a ten-year agreement with Qatar Foundation.
April 2003	A seven member team, led by Dr. Bowman, met in New York City to review and prepare the final ten year agreement for the establishment of the Qatar campus.
April 2003	Dr. Gates presented the Qatar Project to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board and received approval to establish the Qatar campus.
May 2003	Dr. Prior led a 20 member delegation to Qatar to finalize the 10-year agreement with Qatar Foundation.

May 2003	Texas A&M University signed a 10-year agreement with Qatar Foundation to establish the Qatar campus.
June 2003	Dr. Bowman was named Interim Dean and CEO of TAMUQ and served until February 2004.
July 2003	Institutional members of the Texas A&M University at Qatar Joint Advisory Board were appointed. The board includes three representatives from Qatar Foundation and three representatives from Texas A&M University. Three independent external members will be appointed at a later time.
September 2003	The inaugural class began with 29 students, of which 24 were Qatari and 15 were females. Seven faculty members provided academic instruction and five staff members provided support
October 2003	The Opening Ceremonies of TAMUQ and Inaugural Academic Convocation were held.
October 2003	The inaugural Joint Advisory Board meeting was held in Doha, Qatar.
December 2003	Her Highness Sheikha Mozah Bint Nasser Al Missned, Chairperson of Qatar Foundation, was invited by Dr. Gates to give the commencement address for the graduating engineering and education students at Texas A&M University. Her Highness was also given an honorary degree from Texas A&M University.
January 2004	TAMUQ moved into the Liberal Arts and Science Building at Education City, a temporary space, until the TAMUQ Engineering Building is completed in the Spring of 2007.
February 2004	Dr. Michael Kemp, Professor of Biology of Texas A&M University and Vice President of the Texas A&M University Galveston campus, was appointed Dean and CEO of TAMUQ and served until May 2006.
March 2004	The Joint Advisory Board meeting was held in Doha, Qatar.
September 2004	The Class of 2008 consisted of 61 freshmen, 22 females and 39 males. Faculty increased to 13 and staff over 40.
October 2004	Investiture of the Dean and CEO of TAMUQ, Dr. Kemp. and 2004 Academic Convocation was held.
October 2004	A Research and Business Roundtable meeting was held in Doha, Qatar. with participation from industry and governmental agencies to discuss needed themes that address strategic issues facing Qatar and guiding principles of the TAMUQ research center.
October 2004	The Joint Advisory Board meeting was held in Doha, Qatar.
February 2005	The Joint Advisory Board meeting was held in Doha, Qatar.

- March 2005** Doha/College Station Student Leadership Exchange Program began. Ten students from TAMU visited the TAMUQ campus and the following week, ten students from TAMUQ visited the TAMU campus.
- May 2005** Appointments were made for the three independent external members to serve on the Joint Advisory Board.
- July 2005** Six TAMUQ students joined 34 students from TAMU College Station for the Champe Fitzhugh Student Leadership Institute at TAMU's Santa Chiara Study Abroad Center in Italy.
- September 2005** The Class of 2009 consisted of 63 freshmen from 12 countries, 38 are Qatari and 33% are female. Faculty increased to 28 and staff over 60.
- November 2005** The Joint Advisory Board meeting was held in Doha, Qatar, including participation of the three independent external members.
- March 2006** The Joint Advisory Board meeting was held in College Station, Texas.
- May 2006** Dr. Bowman was named Interim Dean and CEO of TAMUQ and served until December 2006.
- July 2006** Eleven TAMUQ students spent the summer semester studying at the College Station campus.
- August 2006** 2006 Academic Convocation and Aggie Ring Ceremony was held and six TAMUQ student received the first Aggie Rings.
- September 2006** The Class of 2010 consists of 55 new freshmen from 15 countries and total student body of 183. Faculty increased to 46 and staff over 100.
- November 2006** The Joint Advisory Board meeting was held in Doha, Qatar.
- January 2007** Dr. Mark Weichold, former Dean of Undergraduate Programs and Associate Provost for Academic Services at Texas A&M University, was appointed as Dean and CEO of Texas A&M University at Qatar.
- January 2007** The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) gave final approval on the accreditation for the TAMUQ branch campus.
- March 2007** Celebration Ceremonies for the new TAMUQ Engineering Building, Investiture of the Dean and CEO of TAMUQ, the second Aggie Ring Presentation and the Joint Advisory Board meeting were held in Doha, Qatar.

Appendix D. Sample Participant Recruitment Letter

Dear [Participant],

[A TAMUQ Administrator] suggested I contact you. I will be visiting TAMUQ from January 26 to February 6, 2014 to conduct research for my PhD dissertation. My study focuses on the institutional strategy and structure of TAMUQ. As someone who has been significantly involved with TAMUQ on a strategic level, I would appreciate an opportunity to discuss your experience.

Would you be available for a 60-minute interview during the week of January 26, 2014?

This study has been approved by [TAMUQ] and the Boston College IRB. The consent form attached to this email contains more information about my research and explains if should you agree to meet with me, your participation in this study is entirely voluntary. I will ask you to sign a copy of this form when we meet. I am happy to discuss my research and to answer any questions you might have.

I very much look forward to my visit and hope that I will have an opportunity to talk with you.

Best Regards,

David

Appendix E. Informed Consent Form



Boston College Consent Form

*Boston College Educational Leadership and Higher Education
Informed Consent for Participation as a Subject in
"International Branch Campuses: Motivations, Strategies, and Structures"
Researcher: David A. Stanfield*

Introduction

- You are being asked to be in a research study to understand the motivations, strategies, and structures of international branch campuses.
- You were selected to be in the study because of your involvement in the inception and development of Texas A&M University's branch campus in Doha, Qatar (TAMUQ).
- This study is under the supervision of Dr. Philip Altbach, the Director of the Center for International Higher Education at Boston College.
- Please read this form. Ask any questions that you may have before you agree to be in the study.

Purpose of Study:

- The purpose of this study is to explore the relationship among three elements:
 1. Institutional *motivations* that drive the establishment and continued operation of international branch campuses
 2. *Strategies* necessary for their successful implementation
 3. Institutional *structures* that support international branch campus goals
- People in this study are from TAMUQ's administration and faculty, along with some administrators from the main campus in College Station, Texas. The total number of participants is expected to be 20.

Description of the Study Procedures:

If you agree to be in this study, I would ask you to do the following:

- Participate in a 60 to 120 minute interview either in-person (in Doha, Qatar or College Station, Texas, USA), or from a distance (via Skype or over the phone).
- Answer questions about the motivations, strategies, and structures of Texas A&M University at Qatar. I'm interested in your experiences and perceptions.
- Allow me to audio record the interview.
- Be available via email for follow-up questions (if needed). Additionally, you may be asked to review a written account of our conversation or a draft of the research findings for accuracy and to provide feedback.

Risks and Discomforts of Being in the Study:

- This study has the following risks. Interview questions might remind you of uncomfortable or difficult memories. This study may include risks that are unknown at this time.

Benefits of Being in the Study:

- The benefits of participating in this study are that the interview questions may allow you to reflect on the institutional strategic planning processes and identify ways to improve your professional practice.

Payments:

- There will be no payment for participating in this study.

Costs:

- There is no cost to you to be in this research study.

Confidentiality:

- The records of this study will be kept private. In any sort of published report, I will not include any information that will make it possible to identify a participant. There may be rare instances where a participant's job title is significant to the findings. In such cases, job titles will only be included in published reports with participants' express permission.
- All electronic information will be coded and secured using a password-protected file. Access to audio files will be limited to the interviewer, a transcriptionist, and my dissertation committee members, Dr. Philip Altbach, Dr. Karen Arnold, and Dr. Lauren Saenz at Boston College. When the interview is done being transcribed, the audio file will be erased from all locations.
- Access to records will be limited to the researcher and dissertation committee members; however, please note that regulatory agencies, and the Institutional Review Board and internal Boston College auditors may review research records.
- I will make every effort to keep your research records confidential, but it cannot be assured. Records that identify you and the consent form signed by you, may be looked at by the Boston College IRB or Federal Agencies overseeing human subject research.

Voluntary Participation/Withdrawal:

- Choosing to be in this study is voluntary. If you choose not to be in this study, it will not affect your current or future relations with the University.
- You are free to quit at any time, for whatever reason.
- There is no penalty or loss of benefits for not taking part or for stopping your participation.
- The researcher can withdraw a participant when it is in the subject's best interest or when a participant does not comply with the study requirements.

Contacts and Questions:

- The researcher conducting this study is David A. Stanfield. For questions or more information concerning this research you may contact him at +1-979-255-0202 or david.stanfield@bc.edu.
- If you have any questions about your rights as a person in this research study, you may contact: Director, Office for Research Protections, Boston College at (617) 552-4778, or irb@bc.edu.

Copy of Consent Form:

- You will be given a copy of this form to keep for your records and future reference.

Statement of Consent:

I have read (or have had read to me) the contents of this consent form. I have been encouraged to ask questions. I understand the possible risks and benefits of this study. I have received answers to my questions. I give my consent to be in this study. I have received (or will receive) a copy of this form.

Signatures/Dates

Study Participant (Print Name) : _____ Date _____
Participant or Legal Representative Signature : _____ Date _____

Permission to Audio Record Interview

Signature : _____ Date _____

Appendix F. Semi-Structured Interview Protocol

Opening

1. When did you join TAMU?
2. What aspects of TAMUQ's initial design, approval, and development are you familiar with?
3. On a broad level, how would you describe your role with Texas A&M during this process?

Motivations

1. From your perspective, what initially motivated TAMUQ to open an IBC?
2. If at all, how have these motivations shifted over time?
3. From your perspective, why did (does) the **State of Qatar** want TAMUQ to operate an IBC? (Possible prompt: Why TAMUQ specifically and not another prominent engineering school?)
4. What were the most critical factors/considerations when **deciding** whether to engage in the project? Was everyone on the same page?
Possible factors: alignment with internationalization mission/goals, assessment of strengths and weaknesses in degree program, personnel, and finances; assessment of leadership and support structures AND external perceptions of image and identity in Qatar, trends and opportunities in market place, and competitive situation.
5. I understand TAMU had an internationalization strategic plan? How did opening a branch campus align (or not align) with this plan?

Strategy Formation and Plan of Action - I'm interested learning about how the process unfolded after the decision was made to move forward.

1. Describe the process/steps that occurred between approval and implementation.
2. Was a formal or informal strategic plan developed? From your perspective, what were the significant decisions made during this process?
3. Tell me about your role in this process.
4. Who else was involved in this phase? In hindsight, was there anyone else who should have been included?
5. Were the original motivations you mentioned considered during this process? Were they modified in any way?
6. What influence did a desire for recreating the home campus experience play in the planning process (e.g., curriculum and admissions standards the same as home campus)? In what areas?
7. At what points were there significant revisions to strategy and what were some of the shifts or focal points of each new strategic plan?

Structure

Now I would like to discuss how the strategy was actually implemented.

*Please comment on the areas that you are familiar with.

Teaching and Learning:

1. Were the curricula identical to the home campus for each major? If not, what changes were made?
2. What were/are the considerations around teaching and learning for the Qatar campus? Were faculty offered training or guidance on adapting teaching practices?
3. Who was responsible for these issues (curricula design and teacher training)?
4. In your opinion, to what extent—if at all—did these academic structures align with the strategy you previously described? Did they align with the original motivations?

Staffing/Personnel:

Faculty

1. In what areas has *replication* been an important consideration? In what areas has *adaptation* been an important consideration?
2. What was the initial approach to hiring faculty? What percentage came from the home campus, the US, and abroad? How did the plan pan out in practice over the initial years? How has it changed over time?
3. Possible prompt: Was there an initial policy on tenure and promotion for IBC faculty? How did this policy align with broader strategic goals? Has it changed over time?

Student Affairs and Student Services

1. In what areas has *replication* been an important consideration? In what areas has *adaptation* been an important consideration?
2. What was the initial organizational structure for student affairs and student services? How has it evolved?
3. What was the initial staffing plan for student affairs and student services? What percentage came from the home campus, the US, and abroad? How has it changed?

Support Services (HR, IT, Finance)

1. In what areas has *replication* been an important consideration? In what areas has *adaptation* been an important consideration?
2. What was the initial organizational structure for support services? How has it evolved?
3. What was the initial staffing plan for support services? What percentage came from the home campus, the US, and abroad? How has it changed?

Research:

1. What were the initial considerations around faculty research? (Possible prompt: How did the institution support/accommodate existing research projects? Used as a recruitment tool?). How has this shifted over time?

2. What expectations did the Qatar Foundation have around research production?
Possible prompt: Did they expect it to be linked to national priorities?

Governance & Reporting Lines:

1. Areas of oversight:
 - a. Main campus
 - i. What bodies/individuals on the home campus have an influence over TAMUQ structures (e.g., Board of Regents, College of Engineering, Provost)? In what areas do they have influence/control/oversight?
 - b. Qatar Foundation
 - c. Qatar campus
2. What is the role of the JAB? How was the joint-advisory board initially formed? (governance board with Qatar Foundation and TAMUQ representatives). How has the JAB evolved? Do all members have an equal voice?

External Factors:

1. What external factors (foreseen or unforeseen) impact the strategy and structure of the Qatar campus?

(if not mentioned, ask about the following)

- a. Accreditation requirements
- b. Student demand or qualifications
- c. Academic freedom
- d. Culture/Norms
- e. Local laws