A STUDY OF THE TRANSITION OF

A CONSORTIA INSTITUTION TO

A BRANCH CAMPUS

By

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

Governance structures of higher education institutions take many forms. Higher education in the United States has been delivered through a variety of structures such as land-grant institutions, normal schools, historically black colleges and universities, and community colleges. While this list is not exhaustive, it does provide a sense of the many governance structures found in higher education. Higher education institutions were initially established to educate the aristocracy who were prominent members of their communities. However, higher education became a part of the fabric of everyday life as people began to avail themselves of educational opportunities (Trow, 1988). Prior to the Revolutionary War (1775 through 1783) there were nine colleges (Trow, 1988; Bogue & Aper, 2000). By the time the Civil War began in 1861, there were approximately 250 colleges. Eight hundred new colleges were established between 1969 and 1975 (Trow, 1988). The purpose of higher education institutions evolved to become the structure through which social and economic advancement were available to all socio-economic levels of society (Bess & Dee, 2008).

Statement of the Problem

Governance structures of higher education in the United States have been conceptualized in a wide variety of ways throughout history, beginning with traditional institutions with residential students and including land grant, historically black, multi-campus, branch and consortia institutions. Consortia institutions, as a governance structure in

higher education, first appeared in Oklahoma in 1974 with the implementation of the Ardmore Higher Education Center. The intent of the consortia model in Oklahoma was to provide access to higher education in communities without four-year public institutions (Hobbs, 1981). Funding for a new institution, as well as concerns from existing institutions in and around Tulsa, influenced the final decision of the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education to create a consortia institution, the University Center at Tulsa (Hobbs, 1981; Krehbiel, 1993). With the establishment of the University Center at Tulsa, Oklahoma had four consortia institutions: the Enid Higher Education Center, the Ardmore Higher Education Center, the University Center at Tulsa and the McCurtain County Higher Education Center.

However, of the four consortia institutions established in Oklahoma, one remains today, the Ardmore Higher Education Center. The other higher education centers transitioned to a branch campus of a single institution. The exception is the University Center at Tulsa, which transitioned to several branch campus sites. In 2007 the administration of the Ardmore Higher Education Center submitted a proposal to the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education requesting that UCT become a branch campus of a Southeastern Oklahoma State University, although UCT continues to operate in 2010 (Case Study, 2007).

There are multiple studies on consortia and multi-campus systems (Bird, 2007; Burke, 1994; deGive, 1996; Dengerink, 2001). There is little in the research literature to explain the evolution of the consortia model that leads toward a single university delivery site. Multiple factors may be involved in the evolution of the consortia, including politics in the higher education system, changing demands of the community, conflict within the institutions participating in the consortia, the structure of consortia institutions—or some

combination of these and, as yet unexplored, other factors. An inductive analysis approach will allow the data collected to assist with the explanation of the evolution of a consortia institution to a single university branch campus.

Purpose

The purpose of this single site case study is to explore key organizational factors that led to the transition of the University Center at Tulsa, a consortia, to multiple branch campuses of Oklahoma institutions. While the consortia transitioned to multiple institutions, some of which became branch campuses of other systems in Oklahoma, this study will focus on the transition to a branch campus of Oklahoma State University on January 1, 1999. Organizational factors affecting the transition could include the external environment, status of the institution, values (both professional and institutional), power and authority structures, shared governance and ambiguity of institutional goals (Kezar, 2001). Political factors affecting the transition could include power struggles, formation of alliances, "strategic maneuvering and 'cut-throat' actions" (Schein, 1977). This study will seek to determine their place in analyzing the transition.

The concept of the University Center at Tulsa was to provide Tulsa and surrounding communities with access to public higher education. The University Center at Tulsa, initially a temporary model of higher education, became a consortia model linking four higher education institutions dominant in the State of Oklahoma. The consortia continued to exist until December 31, 1998 (Hobbs, 1981). Despite initial agreements with the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education to establish a four-year, freestanding institution in Oklahoma by 1984, the University Center at Tulsa existed for 15 years before it was dissolved.

Research Questions

Three research questions guided this study:

1. What factors were critical to the transition of the University Center at Tulsa, a consortia institution, to a branch campus?

2. What theory/theories help explain this transition?

3. What other realities are revealed in the data?

Definitions

The definitions below will be useful in answering the research questions. All other terms are intended to convey their usual meaning.

- Branch Campus: A branch campus is one separate from the main campus and is considered permanent. A branch campus offers courses for programs, which leads to a degree or a certificate (ACICS, 2012).

- Consortia: A consortia is described as a voluntary collaboration of institutions. It exists to serve member institutions to provide educational access to students (Christensen & Wylie, 1991; Boisvert, 2007). Consortia offer a limited number of programs or courses (Florida Board of Governors, 2006).

- Higher Education Center: A higher education center is described as an organization managed by a group of employees hired by the center, who are not part of the staff of any member institution (Flora & Hirt, 2010).

- Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education: It is the governing body of higher education in Oklahoma. The Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education establish policy and procedure related to the offering of degree programs and

courses, as well as admission and graduation criteria for colleges and universities in the state (Gary, 1975).

Methodology

This study lends itself to a qualitative research approach. Inductive analysis, the methodology to be utilized throughout this study, works well with qualitative inquiry. Inductive analysis is defined as "immersion in the details and specifics of the data to discover important patterns, themes, and interrelationships" (Patton, 2002, p. 41). This study will utilize inductive analysis to focus on a single case, the University Center at Tulsa, as it transitions to a single-site branch campus. The themes and patterns found during data collection will be compared to existing literature to identify existing theory to assist with understanding the transition of the consortia institution (Creswell, 1998). The researcher is the primary instrument for gathering, collecting and analyzing data (Merriam, 2000; Creswell, 1998). Inductive analysis utilizes a constant comparative method. The process for coding is both dynamic and fluid (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). A relationship is established with the text, and a relationship is also established with study participants (Starr, 2007). In this study, analysis of the data will be conducted in three phases, using constant comparison techniques initially developed by Glaser and Strauss (1967; and revised by Corbin & Strauss, 1990), and the development of research memoranda (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Although the study will utilize an inductive analysis approach, it is important to understand the concept of studying a "case" since the research will focus on a single case, the University Center at Tulsa.

As stated by Stake (2005), "case study is not a methodological choice but a choice of what is to be studied" (p. 443). While the study will be conducted utilizing inductive

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analysis, it will also focus on a specific case within a bounded system, the University Center at Tulsa. A case study is a study of a specific institution or organization within an established time frame about which data is collected via multiple sources of information (Creswell, 1998). A case study allows the researcher to investigate a current, real-life phenomenon (Yin, 2003). Case study research allows the researcher to conduct an in-depth study of a specific phenomenon or case in its natural context while representing the perspectives of both the researcher (etic) and the participants (emic) (Gall, 2005). Case study is "both a process of inquiry about the case and the product of that inquiry" (Stake, 2005, p. 444).

Case study relies on interviews as the primary source of data (Yin, 2003). Interviews are also the primary component of an inductive analysis study (Creswell, 1998). Creswell (1998) recommends that a researcher interview 20 to 30 participants. Interviews tell the story through participants who were a part of the program, and it allows the researcher to go into the field without predetermined categories. This permits the interviewee to tell the story in a way that is meaningful to him or her without imposing the interviewer's beliefs or interpretation. Themes and categories are emergent as a result of interviews and data collection (Patton, 2002).

As part of the data collection, the researcher will develop an interview protocol utilizing a series of open-ended questions. Interview participants, identified through criterion sampling, will consist of key participants in the University Center at Tulsa, the participating institutions, the Oklahoma legislature and the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education. Criterion sampling, defined by Patton (2002), is "picking all cases that meet some criterion" (p. 243). In this study, the criterion is membership in an organization involved with the

creation, operation or demise of the University Center at Tulsa. Each interview will have a permanent audiotape, and transcription will assist with the identification of emergent themes or issues.

Qualitative research typically involves triangulation whereby multiple sources of data are studied to validate findings (Patton, 2002). Creswell (2003) confirms the theory of triangulation and believes that to validate a study and the conclusions of a study, it is important to utilize more than one source of data. As mentioned earlier, interviews will be the primary method of collecting information for the study, which is consistent with a an inductive analysis approach. However, case study utilizes multiple sources of information such as document and media analysis (written communications), institutional documents and archival records, (minutes from meetings, letters and memoranda), administrative documents and newspaper articles (Yin, 2003; Gall, 2005). Some of the individuals involved in the creation of the University Center at Tulsa may no longer be available for interviews. It is also important to understand the University Center at Tulsa had a life span from 1982 through 1999, and it is plausible that interviewees may have forgot important events in its life cycle or considered less important than others. It will be important to augment the study with analyses of the institutional documents to assist with the process of understanding the dissolution of the University Center at Tulsa. Documents are available for review in the Oklahoma State University library archives and in the Tulsa City-County Library newspaper archives. Institutional documents, memoranda and administrative documents were collected by the researcher to assist with understanding the story of the University Center at Tulsa and its dissolution.

Significance of the Study

This study is important to other higher education institutions to understand how a consortia institution transitioned to branch campus of a public four-year institution and the factors that caused the transition, as well as the factors that led to a successful transition to a single institution.

Overview of the Study

Chapter Two provides review of literature on traditional higher education delivery models (multi- and branch-campus operations and consortia institutions), on power and on two types of organizational structures, bureaucratic and political. Chapter Three restates the research questions and discusses the methodology used to conduct the study. Chapter Four presents a narrative of the history of the University Center at Tulsa through reflection and interpretation of data collected from interviews and archival documents. Chapter Five utilizes an inductive analysis approach to identify emergent themes from the data collection.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Since the founding of the colonies in the New World, higher education has been a consistent part of the establishment of new towns and cities. Institutional governance structures varied throughout the United States and the history of higher education. Geiger (2005) outlined the ten generations of American higher education to provide an account of the development of higher education, including changes in prevailing governance structures in U.S. institutions, from 1636 through 2000 (Geiger, 2005). While it is outside the scope of this study to provide a complete overview of the changes (governance structure, student population, regulatory oversight, models of institutions, organization of curriculum) affecting higher education governance structures, it is necessary to provide some background about consortia, branch campuses, discussion about theoretical models related to organizational structures, and the role of power in higher education institutions.

Power and Politics

Organizations and individuals within organizations are dependent on each other. Dependence creates a climate for power and politics to become a part of the organization (Birnbaum, 1988). It is virtually impossible to execute power without "a degree of consent yielded to decisions and politics" because one does exist without the other. Politics is "negotiating or lobbying with power holders" (Moutsios, 2010, p. 123). Throughout this study politics will be used to describe power and politics.

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Power

Blackler (2011) describes power as an act that is "equated with coercion, force, authority, status, manipulation, resistance, persuasion and influence" (p. 729). Power is present when individuals act alone or with others (Moutsios, 2010). "Power arises wherever people act concertedly, and their concerted actions take place in the political arena" (p. 123). When individuals try to coerce others to act in accordance with their preferences power is present (Birnbaum, 1988). "Power is essential to control the activities of people and groups in universities, as it is in other organizations" (Birnbaum, 1988, p. 10-11).

Blackler (2011) differentiates between overt and unobtrusive power. Overt power, as implied by the name, is visible and others easily understand who is wielding the power. Unobtrusive power is more difficult to distinguish because unobtrusive power involves groups who accept their fate at the hands of others in power. Individuals in organizations can have power, but it may not be attributable to their job. This is personal power. In higher education institutions, departments throughout the organization have more power than other departments, e.g., the business office or the information technology department. Blackler (2011) refers to this as collective power.

Groups join with other groups to reach a compromise, which results in the achievement of a desired goal. However, groups exercising collective power cannot control other groups indefinitely because of the amount of time needed to develop coalitions (Birnbaum, 1988). Coalitions are formed to negotiate with other groups to reach a compromise that serves all groups in the best possible way. If coalitions cease to exist, power will shift to other individuals or collective groups (Birnbaum, 1988). Typically, coalitions are

not concerned with protecting the less powerful groups in an organization (Birnbaum, 1988).

"If power is defined as the ability to get others…to do what you want, politics should be

understood as the exercise of power in practice" (Blackler, 2011, p. 730).

Political Structures

People generally think of politics as an act engaged in by politicians, rulers

(presidents), and political parties (Moutsios, 2010). In fact, politics would be better defined

as the act of negotiating with those who have power in specific arenas. An example of this

would be negotiating with state legislators before new legislation is introduced prior to the

beginning of the legislative session (Moutsios, 2010). An observer in the legislative session

may view policy making as an unbiased act, but according to Moutsios (2010), "in reality it

is based on political opinion" (p. 124). A limited number of members guide the direction of

political organizations (Blackler, 2011). Revenues are allocated to higher education

institutions based on the input of a few legislators. Resource allocation is under the purview

of most legislative bodies throughout the United States. Higher education organizations

understand resource allocation decisions such as financial aid funding and operating budgets

are the result of political processes (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1974). Institutions new to the system

are "less prestigious and therefore have less power relative to external agencies, such

as…legislatures" (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1974, p. 150).

Environments impose external forces on organizations that result in competing and

conflicting demands. External forces affecting higher education include regulations imposed

by federal and state governments (McClendon & Hearn, 2003; Pfeffer & Salancik, 1974).

Federal government oversight has evolved and increased in past years due to enrollment

trends. Student enrollments increased from "3.7 million in 1960 to 8.5 million in 1970 to 12 million in 1980," which increased the need for federal financial aid and resulted in more oversight by the Department of Education (McClendon & Hearn, 2003). Allocations from the federal government meant the public demanded more oversight at both the federal and state level. Mills (2007) reminds us that change in governance structures, along with regulations, varies by state and is a direct reflection of each state's history and political process. "Institutions must be responsive to their environment to survive," and some times administrators in an organization do not understand the significance of the support needed from external constituents (Birnbaum, 1988, p. 15; Gaynor, 1998).

Bureaucratic Structures

Administrators must understand organizations do not typically have one type of structure. In many cases, organizations will have traces of the political and bureaucratic model (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1974). One of the earliest definitions of a bureaucracy is by Weber (1974) who described a bureaucracy as an organization with a fixed division of labor, hierarchical offices and a well-defined set of rules governing performance of individuals in the organization. Scott (2003) subscribed to Weber's definition of bureaucracy but expanded on that definition to include the concept that bureaucratic organizations "are structured through inequality, hierarchy, and impersonality" (p. 6). Bolman and Deal (1997) discussed four frames or perspectives of organizations, which included the bureaucratic or structural frame. Bolman and Deal (1997) utilized bureaucratic frame and structural frame interchangeably. For purposes of this paper, the type of organizational frame will be referred to as the bureaucratic frame. The bureaucratic frame encompassed "goals, specialized roles,

and formal relationships" (Bolman & Deal, 1997, p. 13), which would support Scott's argument that bureaucratic organizations are impersonal. Because of the impersonality inherent in bureaucratic organizations, informal relationships are more influential in guiding behavior than formal structures (Scott, 2003). By this definition members of an organization might have numerous loyalties and identify with various groups throughout the organization (Scott, 2003).

Because organizations consist of people with different views and behaviors, it is difficult to predict how people will act within an organization (Bolman & Deal, 1997). Bureaucratic organizations have a "set of interconnected norms" (Vasconcelos & Ramirez, 2011, p. 237). One department in an organization relies on another organization to accomplish its task, e.g., the information technology department maintains the computer network of an organization. Without a functioning computer network, tasks of other departments are negatively impacted. As organizations grow, more departments are created, which increases the specialization within each department, as well as the interconnectedness between departments. The hierarchy of the organization is affected all departments, and administrative structures become more complex due to the creation of new hierarchical levels in the organization (Birnbaum, 1988; Vasconcelos & Ramirez, 2011). As the complexity of the organization increases, it gives rise to increased conflict.

While many think of conflict as a part of the political structure, it is also a part of the bureaucratic structure. "Conflict is always present and has helped to shape the social structure" of bureaucratic organizations (Scott, 2003, p. 20). In many cases, this conflict will result in the reshaping of an organization to balance the interests of many members (Bass,

2008). "Organizational decision making has elements of political power" and this "has implications for the understanding of organizational behavior" (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1974, p. 150).

Consortia Institutions

"Over the past decade, collaborations across institutions have blossomed, in programs ranging from student achievement initiatives and faculty alliances to development of new curriculum, articulation of vocational education, and schoolwide reforms" (Altbach, Berdahl, & Gumport, 1999, p. 125). To provide educational access throughout the state, it has become necessary for institutions to form partnerships to create educational opportunities for students who will make up the workforce in future generations (Boisvert, 2007). For most higher education institutions, the formation of a consortia means the participating institutions can provide educational access to underserved populations. For the community, consortia provide a mechanism for pursuing higher education while allowing individuals to remain full-time employees in the community, thus reducing any economic impact on the community, if potential students were to move out of the community (Windham, Perkins & Rogers, 2001).

Consortia are defined as a voluntary organization made up of multiple institutions (Christensen & Wylie, 1991). A report completed by the Florida Board of Governors (2006) defined consortia or centers "as an instructional unit of a university or universities that offers a limited range of instructional programs or courses" (p. 4). Consortia institutions or centers are different from a branch campus because consortia have limited programs and courses, no resident faculty and services for students are minimal (Bird, 2007). In some cases, the governing entity of a consortia has been incorporated, e.g., Five Colleges, Inc, which is

comprised of Amherst College, Hampshire College, Mount Holyoke College, Smith College and the University of Massachusetts at Amherst (Peterson, 2002). Consortia are multifunctional and there are direct and indirect benefits associated with being a member of the consortium. If institutions do not voluntarily participate in the consortium, coordination is regulated by state legislation (Konrad, 1982). Professional staffs from the participating institutions manage the consortium (Peterson, 2002). Courses offered through consortia institutions are coordinated by a director who generally reports to a vice president of the university (Konrad, 1982). Rarely are consortia seen as an integral part of the university as a whole (Konrad, 1982).

Consortia institutions allowed member institutions to serve growing enrollments while conserving resources, especially at a time when financial allocations were being reduced (Peterson, 2007). The consortia arrangement allowed institutions to conserve money, but also share resources and expertise among members (Larrance, 2002). A consortia arrangement also provides institutions with the opportunity to collaborate in the arena of new programs and additional course offerings while sharing the risk and costs of the new initiatives (Peterson, 2007).

In Massachusetts, a consortia known as Five Colleges, Inc. was formed. The participating institutions realized during the 1980s when they were being challenged to conserve resources and avoid duplicative programs that it was necessary to rely on each other to provide students with access to a diverse curriculum (Peterson, 2002). The administrators of the institutions believed it would be more beneficial to form partnerships (consortia) rather than establish a new institution and therefore, they established Five Colleges, Inc. (Peterson,

2002). Consortia institutions often create a new path for additional collaboration through expanded academic program opportunities (Larrance, 2002) as in the example of Five Colleges, Inc., which can provide students with access to a variety of academic programs. While collaboration allows expanded learning opportunities, it can also create a unique set of problems for the institutions.

Consortia are not sustained easily. Institutional cultures and traditions focus on the autonomy of the institution and while it is easy to theorize about partnerships and collaborative efforts, historically higher education institutions were not interested in partnerships or institutional collaboration (Baus & Ramsbottom, 1999). The tenure policy at an institution is an example of the lack of cross-institutional collaboration within one institution. Tenure is awarded based on the individual effort of a faculty member and not the efforts of multiple faculty members (Baus & Ramsbottom, 1999). In consortia, "members must have a shared understanding of the goals and objectives...to ensure benefits to the members and success for the organization" (Baus & Ramsbottom, 1999, p. 8). Shared understanding of goals and objectives requires a sustained effort on the part of administrators and institutional members of the consortia. "The dilemma is how to create sustainability and accountability within a framework that is essentially voluntary (Baus & Ramsbottom, 1999, p. 8). Communication becomes a vital component for members of a consortium (Peterson, 2007). Lack of financial resources, individual campus issues, faculty attitudes and lack of personnel can create roadblocks to the establishment of consortia. If institutions have not participated in consortia arrangements before, a natural distrust of the process can impede the establishment of the consortia (Larrance, 2002). Lack of institutional support, from the top

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administrator to the staff providing services to students, can affect the success of the consortia (Larrance, 2002; Peterson, 2007).

To create consortia institutions, it is necessary to have a shared vision with a specific definition of the goals and the concept of "success" clearly stated in the vision. Participating institutions must be fully engaged in the process and in most cases, a system of rewards for students, faculty and staff (although not necessarily monetary) must be established prior to the implementation of the consortia (Larrance, 2002). Rewards can include cost efficiencies for each member institution, expansion of knowledge for faculty and students when collaborating with other colleagues from member institutions, and additional training for staff in multiple functions (Larrance, 2002). Successful consortia (Kost, Wildgust, & Woods, 2010) must also establish a continuous review of educational programs through "joint curriculum meetings, didactic evaluation, analysis and course review, evaluation of methods to identify competent didactic evaluation and analysis of courses, evaluation of methods to identify competent didactic instructors and managing ongoing contemporary issues" (p. 16). At the Associated Colleges of the St. Lawrence Valley, a consortia of St. Lawrence University, the State University of New York at Canton, the State University of New York at Potsdam and Clarkson University, faculty were brought together to address concerns prior to the establishment of the consortia (Larrance, 2002). At the end of a two-day workshop, faculty realized the consortia would provide them with opportunities to network with faculty outside their institution and perhaps offer collaborative research opportunities (Larrance, 2002). Students enrolled in the consortia would have courses available from multiple faculty with multiple perspectives.

Higher Education Centers

Higher education centers (Centers) are a type of consortia. There are several common characteristics shared by Centers and consortia. Both have member institutions that offer courses in a geographic area underserved by higher education. Centers provide limited student services, a characteristic found in consortia. Centers are different from consortia in that they are managed by a group of employees hired by the Center, who are not part of the staff of any member institutions (Flora & Hirt, 2010). Centers are defined as a building where two or more postsecondary institutions offer baccalaureate and/or post-baccalaureate programs along with other credit and noncredit courses (Flora & Hirt, 2010). In 2008, at least seven states had Centers: Colorado, Oklahoma, Texas, North Carolina, Mississippi, Virginia and Maryland (Flora & Hirt, 2010). Unlike institutional departments with a history of standard policies, practices and traditions, Centers are advantageous because the organizational structure is not hindered by years of tradition, allowing the organization to be more responsive to community needs. If community members and city leaders request the addition of a specific program, or increased course offerings, it can be more easily accomplished by a Center than by institutions with a plethora of committees who must approve the request (Larson & Barnes-Moorhead, 2001). Centers can negotiate with participating institutions for additional programs, although the participating institutions need to go through levels of approval before a new program can be offered at a Center. Centers are considered more flexible organizationally because they are expected and required to "respond quickly to the needs and requirements of research patrons and sponsors" (Stahler & Tash, 1994, p. 542). In response to community needs, administrators and member institutions

of Centers may decide to eliminate programs, increase staff in a specific area or even modify their mission (Geiger, 2005).

Branch or Multi-Campus Institutions

Consortia and branch campuses differ in several ways, but the two main differences are the amount of autonomy afforded a branch campus compared to consortia and the fiscal budgets for the two entities. Branch campuses are characterized by: (1) a physical location removed from the main campus; (2) a narrow mission in relation to the main campus; (3) the main campus provides all the certification and credentials for programs and courses offered on the branch campus; and (4) governance is managed by the main campus (Bird, 2007; Nickerson & Schaefer, 2001). A branch campus may exist as part of a multi-campus institution and it may be an equal partner within this system. Dengerink (2001) defined the characteristics of a multi-campus institution as (1) the main campus is responsible for coordination of activities at the branch campus; (2) limited program offerings are available at branch campus, which are a part of the multi-campus institution; (3) branch campuses "have no direct relationship with each other, other than membership in the system" (Dengerink, 2001, p. 20). Creswell, Roskins and Henry (1985) defined a multi-campus institution as having five characteristics: (1) control of the system can be public or private; (2) a single governing board; (3) campuses within a system may consist of a single type of institution or multiple types ranging from a senior institution to a combination of junior and senior institutions; (4) the administration of the system by either the main campus administrative offices or a separate central administrative structure for each campus. Both types of

institutions were established to provide higher education access to various communities and, accordingly, the two terms will be used interchangeably in this study.

Main campus administrators and governing boards created branch campuses to accomplish specific goals. The goals may be multi-dimensional. A goal could be to provide access and opportunity to populations underserved by higher education. The creation of a branch campus might also include the goal to respond to political pressure in terms of blocking expansion in a specific geographical region by another institution (Bird, 2007). Branch campuses have also emerged as one of the mechanisms for an institution's main campus to offer degrees to meet community demands in an era where budgetary constraints prevent states from forming new comprehensive or regional universities. Budgetary constraints, coupled with demographic shifts of populations to urban areas and increased diversity among populations, paved the way for the formation of branch campus operations (deGive, 1996). An example of this is the establishment of a University of California branch campus in Washington, D.C to meet the needs of current students as well as needs expressed by prospective students. By the mid 1960s, the University of California system had nine campuses—Berkley, Los Angeles, San Diego, Santa Cruz, Santa Barbara, Davis, Irvin and Riverside. At that point in time, the system budget had severe fiscal deficits (Lee & Bowen, 1975). Many students already enrolled in the University of California system were interested in studying in Washington, D.C., while participating in internships in organizations where policy affecting higher education was being created. The University of California put forth a plan to purchase a building to hold classes and house students to meet this growing demand. This innovative approach gave students from California access to courses, but it kept tuition

revenue flowing to the University of California system. The establishment of a branch

campus creates higher education access for students. Communities continue to want the

availability and opportunity for higher education for its students. Historically, this is similar

to the establishment of Harvard College because it was established to provide higher

education opportunities to students in a specific geographic area (deGive, 1996). The place-

bound student is no longer willing to sacrifice an education (Morrill & Beyers, 1991) and the

establishment of a branch campus creates that educational opportunity. A branch campus

meets the "dynamic needs of students" (Jacobs, 2001) by providing greater access and

convenient locations to students. However, in order for a branch campus to exist, there must

be a main campus and the branch campus is dependent on its relationship with the main

campus to offer programs and provide minimal student services (Bird, 2007).

In many institutions with branch campuses the main campus governing board also

governs the branch campus (Hermanson, 1993; Nickerson & Schaefer, 2001). A branch

campus has a president who serves as the chief administrator of the branch campus (Konrad,

1982). A study of nine multi-campus institutions conducted by Lee and Bowen (1975) found

that multi-campus systems both "govern and coordinate several campuses" (p. 4). However,

Dengerink (2001) acknowledges that a branch campus could be established with the idea that

it would be independent from the main campus and have a different mission statement from

the main campus. An example of this would be the University of Washington system. The

University of Washington is comprised of three campuses: the main campus in Seattle and

two other branch campuses located in Tacoma and Bothell. The Tacoma campus expanded to

include lower, upper and graduate programs but the Bothell campus was limited to upper

division and graduate programs (Washington, 2005). An effective branch campus will have an administrator with the authority to govern its internal operations (Konrad, 1982). In a survey of two-year branch campuses, Hermanson (1993) found that the branch campus had a level of autonomy regarding internal operations, local expenditures, and the hiring, as well as tenure, of faculty. A branch campus administered centrally by the main campus may not be effective if authority is not granted to the chief administrative officer (Konrad, 1982). In this case, the branch campus would operate as a part of the main campus (Konrad, 1982).

Branch campuses are established to fill a specific niche, mainly to provide access to educational resources for students who could not take advantage of courses or programs at existing institutions (Nickerson & Schaefer, 2001; Dengerink, 2001). Fewer academic programs are offered at branch campuses in comparison to those at the main campus, which translates to a smaller budget to operate the branch campus (Mooney, 1992). "Multi-campus universities represent an exciting and effective way of responding to the educational demands of our extremely varied communities" (Dengerink, 2001, p. 29). Burke (1994) describes multi-campus systems as the means to "provide collective responses from constituent campuses [to requests from community leaders] in place of random reactions from individual institutions" (p. 41). Branch campus systems provide institutions with the ability to experiment with new programs with minimal physical and fiscal resource allocations (Lee & Bowen, 1975). Branch or multi-campus systems also provide students with the programs and/or courses they want in a location of the students' choosing.

Branch campuses provided courses in a flexible format for adult students (Greenhouse, 1997) and at a convenient location. Branch campuses were established to fill

various needs for the communities they served (Jacobs, 2001). Ideally, a branch campus would contribute to the community where it was established through not only educational access but also as a vehicle to offer cultural and social services (Jacobs, 2001; Landini, 1975). This supports Dengerink's (2001) belief that the main campus and branch campus could have different mission statements. Essentially, this means the branch campus and the main campus may be tasked with serving different populations, which would affect the institutional mission of each campus, even though administration of both campuses may be under one governing board. In some cases, conflict between students and resources may occur due to the difference in institutional (campus) mission (Konrad, 1982). However, as pointed out by Bird (2007) the success of a branch campus is dependent on how well the administrative staff of the branch campus understand who on the main campus has the authority to say yes or no.

Conclusion

Research has been conducted on characteristics and problems associated with branch campuses (Hermanson, 1993; Hill, 1985; Stahley, 2002). Multi-campus systems have been studied in the context of organizational characteristics and problems (Lee & Bowen, 1975; Wright & Hyle, 1995; Gaither, 1999). Power and politics are used in the establishment and continued operation of higher education institutions (Scott, 2003; Schein, 2004; French & Bell, 1995). A plethora of information is available on political and bureaucratic organizational structures (Birnbaum, 1988; Pfeffer & Salancik, 1974; Blackler, 2011; Moutsios, 2010).

The organizational structure of consortia and branch/multi-campus systems allowed administrators to conserve resources in an era when fiscal resource allocations were dwindling. Both types of organizational structures addressed the issue of access, which reiterates a constant theme surrounding the creation of higher education institutions since the passage of the Morrill Act of 1862. Organizations cannot survive unless they respond to their environment (Schein, 2004; Scott, 2003). There are multiple studies on consortia and multi-campus systems (Bird, 2007; Burke, 1994; deGive, 1996; Dengerink, 2001). However, there is little research available on the study of a transition of consortia institutions to a branch or multi-campus system and what makes the transition successful.

This study will utilize inductive analysis, a qualitative mode of inquiry, to analyze the transition of a consortium, the University Center at Tulsa, to a branch campus of Oklahoma State University. Brown, Stevens, Troiano and Schneider (2002) explored the use of qualitative inquiry to conduct student affairs research because qualitative inquiry allows the researcher to study complex issues (the college environment) in depth. Higher education researchers have utilized inductive analysis to study instructional innovation (Biasutti, 2011), community engagement at higher education institutions (Bender, 2008); change in higher education (Keenan & Marchel, 2007); and radical change in governance structures of higher education (Kezar, 2005). Inductive analysis is an appropriate qualitative methodology for this study because the process begins by collecting information from interview participants and sorting the information into categories and themes (Creswell, 2003). Inductive analysis allowed the researcher to identify emergent themes and apply the themes to existing theory (Creswell, 1998) by conducting interviews of participants who were part of the transition

process. Inductive analysis is derived from the theoretical framework of symbolic

interactionism and pragmatism (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). LaRossa (2005) takes this one step

further and suggests that symbolic interactionism is the theoretical framework for grounded

theorizing through inductive analysis because it places language at the center of the

analytical process and is appropriate for qualitative studies. Inductive analysis is a

methodology associated with qualitative studies. Qualitative research is used in research

studies focused on the meaning individuals attribute to a problem (Creswell, 2007). In

inductive analysis, "patterns, themes, and categories" are discovered through data analysis

(Patton, 2002, p. 453). Interviews, observations and analysis of archival documents are

conducted at a specific site or sites as opposed to a laboratory setting (Patton, 2002).

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

This study focused on a single case (Stake, 2005), the University Center at Tulsa, and its transition to a single-site branch campus of Oklahoma State University utilizing an inductive analysis approach. In an inductive study, the principal method of investigation is through inductive fieldwork instead of hypothesis testing. Hypotheses are stated prior to the collection of data, whereas inductive analysis begins with no preconceived ideas about themes and categories (Patton, 2002). "Researchers build their patterns, categories, and themes from the 'bottom-up,' by organizing the data into increasingly more abstract units of information" (Creswell, 1998, p. 38). .

Creswell (1998) maintains there are several steps involved in an inductive analysis approach: (1) interviews are conducted as a data collection step; (2) documents are a part of data collection; (3) field observations provide further information about the event being studied; (4) analysis begins at the point of data collection and continues throughout the process; (5) the constant comparative method of analyzing data provides identification of emerging themes. This study, because of the historical nature of the case, did not include field observations; it did, however, include the analysis of documents collected throughout the lifespan of the case. Since the study focused on a specific case, it is important to understand the concept of studying a case.

"Case study is not a methodological choice but a choice of what is to be studied" (Stake, 2005, p. 443). A case study is the study of a specific institution or organization within an established time frame about which data is collected through multiple sources of information (Creswell, 1998). Yin (2003) maintains that a case study allows the researcher to investigate a current, real-life phenomenon. Gall (2005) agrees with Yin's statement and posits that case study research allows the researcher to conduct an in-depth study of a specific phenomenon or case in its natural context while representing the perspectives of both the researcher (etic) and the participants (emic). The case study then becomes both an inquiry into the case and the product of that inquiry (Stake, 2005). Case study methodology relies on interviews as the primary source of data (Yin, 2003). Creswell (1998) recommends that a researcher interview 20 to 30 participants to conduct a thorough study to ensure complete saturation of the data.

This study focused on a specific case within a bounded system, the University Center at Tulsa, which existed between 1982 and 1998. The data collected during the interview process was free flowing and there were no predetermined categories established prior to the interviews. The interview process allowed each interview participant to tell his or her story without imposing the interviewer's beliefs or interpretation. Themes and categories of bureaucracy, politics and power emerged as a result of the analysis of data collected through interviews and documents (Patton, 2002).

Description of the Case

The purpose of this study was to examine the transition of a consortia institution to a branch campus and key factors that led to the transition. The site selected was the University

Center at Tulsa, which was located in Tulsa, Oklahoma. The consortia was established in April 1982 and transitioned to multiple institutions, some of which became branch campuses of other systems in Oklahoma, but this study focused solely on the transition to a branch campus of Oklahoma State University on January 1, 1999.

Research Questions

Three research questions guided this study:

1. What factors were critical to the transition of the University Center at Tulsa, a consortia institution, to a branch campus?

2. What theory/theories help explain this transition?

3. What other realities are revealed in the data?

Participants

Criterion sampling was used to select participants for the study. Criterion sampling, defined by Patton (2002), is "picking all cases that meet some criterion" (p. 243). In this study, the criterion was senior-level decision makers involved in the transition of the University Center at Tulsa to a branch campus of Oklahoma State University. Participants included members of the administrative team of the University Center at Tulsa, board members for the consortia, members of the State of Oklahoma legislature and community leaders in the City of Tulsa.

Data Collection

Data sources used in this study included interviews and archival documents (Creswell, 2003). The researcher had access to: archival records from the University Center

at Tulsa; community leaders who were instrumental in the creation and transition of UCT to a branch campus; and to organizational members of the University Center at Tulsa.

As part of the data collection, the researcher developed an interview guide (Appendix A) utilizing a series of open-ended questions. Each interview was approximately one to two hours in length. The interviews were taped and transcribed verbatim to assist with the identification of emergent themes and issues.

The study was presented to and approved by the Institutional Review Board of Oklahoma State University (Appendix B). All interview participants were contacted by telephone to request their participation (Appendix C). Participations were provided with a copy of the Informed Consent documents (Appendix D). Participants understood they were volunteering to be a part of the study. Each participant read through the document, indicated if they were willing to be named in the study and signed the form. Interview participants signed two copies of the form; one copy was retained by the researcher and the other by the participant. All interview participants, with the exception of one individual, agreed to be named in the study. The identity of the individual who did not want to be named was protected throughout the study.

Interviews

Semi-structured interviews were the primary method of collecting information for the study, which was consistent with an inductive analysis approach. The researcher developed an interview guide (Appendix A) utilizing a series of open-ended questions asking participants about the University Center at Tulsa, their role in the consortia institution, their role in the transition process and their opinion of transition process from the consortia

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institution to a branch campus. The use of semi-structured interviews allowed additional information to emerge throughout the interview process (LeCompte & Preisse, 2003).

The University Center at Tulsa had a life span of 17 years from 1982 through 1999, and the researcher discovered interviewees had forgotten important events in the life cycle of the institution. Gathering data involves various techniques (Creswell, 2007). The researcher created a graphic elicitation (Appendices E1-E4), sometimes referred to as a concept map, which assisted with the data collection process. "Diagrams are able to make conceptual relations more visually explicit and this allows researchers to present their ideas, hypotheses or theories in a simple and coherent manner" (Crilly, Clarkson & Blackwell, 2006a, p. 258). The participants historically produce graphic elicitations, not the researchers. Graphic elicitations provide additional data that otherwise would not be collected during a verbal exchange between the researcher and the interview participant (Crilly, et al., 2006a, 2006b). To assist with the development of the graphic elicitation, the researcher solicited input from a group of peers (peer debriefing technique) knowledgeable about the University Center at Tulsa (Creswell, 2003, 2007).

The use of peer debriefing groups "enhance the accuracy of the account" (Creswell, 2003, p. 196). The researcher asked four members of the OSU-Tulsa organization, who had worked for the consortia or who were members of the community and had intimate knowledge of the campus and its transition to participate in the peer group. The researcher developed the graphic elicitation from archival documents and then presented it to the group. The peer debriefing participants were asked to review the information and discuss key aspects that were not represented on the graphic elicitation. The group met for approximately

two hours during which times revisions were discussed in the context of their importance to the interview process. Following the meeting, the researcher modified the graphic elicitation and sent it to group participants for final review (Appendices E1-E4). The graphic elicitation was presented at the beginning of the interview process and participants were asked to review the information. When the participants indicated they were finished reading the document, they were asked if any modifications needed to be made to the document. One change was suggested and it was handwritten on the original document. The graphic elicitation provided a frame of reference for individuals during the interviews. In many cases, as questions were asked, participants referred back to the timeline to establish specific dates/times when actions or discussions were held in connection with the transition of the University Center at Tulsa to individual branch campuses.

Document Collection

Qualitative studies utilize multiple methods of data collection. Documents are identified as written communications (emails), institutional documents and archival records, (minutes from meetings, letters and memoranda), administrative reports and newspaper articles (Corbin & Strauss, 1990; Gall, 2005; Yin, 2003). Documents and artifacts provide a "rich source of information about many organizations and programs" (Patton, 2002, p. 293) and are useful in studying the specific organization.

Newspaper articles, administrative documents from the University Center at Tulsa and the participating institutions, as well as written communication from Tulsa area organizations and individual community leaders, were additional sources of data used to further inform the study. These documents were available for review in the Oklahoma State

University library archives and in the Tulsa City-County Library newspaper archives. The researcher also collected institutional documents from Oklahoma State University, in addition to memoranda and administrative documents from the University Center at Tulsa. The Tulsa Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce also provided documents to the researcher to assist with understanding the transition of the University Center at Tulsa to a branch campus.

Data Analysis Procedures

"The backbone of qualitative research is extensive collection of data, typically from multiple sources of information" (Creswell, 2007, p. 43). After the data is collected, it is analyzed through an inductive process to generate themes or categories (Creswell, 2007). The analysis does not begin after data collection has ended. Patton (2002) describes the process as beginning with an initial description, moving to an ordering or categorizing of the data and finally developing a theory based on the categories. Patton (2002) suggests a process that moves from one point to another. Other researchers believe data is not collected and then analyzed but rather analyzed during the data collection process (Bryant & Charmaz, 2010). The following paragraphs provide a brief description of steps involved in analyzing data.

Constant Comparison Method

This study was conducted through an inductive analysis approach. Inductive analysis utilizes a constant comparative method. The process for coding is both dynamic and fluid (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). A relationship is established with the text, and a relationship is also established with study participants (Patton, 2002). In this study, analysis of the data proceeded in three phases, using constant comparison techniques initially developed by

Glaser and Strauss (1967; and revised by Strauss & Corbin, 1990), and the development of research memoranda (Strauss & Corbin, 1998).

In the first phase, open coding was used to examine interview transcripts and documents to begin the process of identifying categories of information confirmed by the text. Open coding is the point at which analysis begins (LaRossa, 2005). This is the point where the text is uncovered to reveal ideas and meanings contained in text.

Next, using axial coding techniques, the researcher identified specific categories from the data collected. The central phenomena identified during phase one became the focal point of the second phase of analysis. The researcher returned to the data collected and reviewed it multiple times throughout data collection. The purpose of this process was to look at the information to develop additional categories (or subcategories) established during open coding (Corbin & Strauss, 1990). Subcategories refer to categories related to the central theme or category and not categories created as a subset of a category (LaRossa, 2005). Creswell (2007) defines axial coding as the phase in which further identification of specific categories, established during the open coding process, are developed that relate to, or perhaps explain, the central phenomenon identified during open coding. In effect, the data was reduced to specific categories to make the data more manageable (LaRossa, 2005). All data was reviewed for "context, strategies (action/interaction), and consequences" (Corbin & Strauss, 1990) to fit into a category. LaRossa (2005) compares this approach to developing a hypothesis in a scientific study, or in simpler terms, a statement about relationships between variables. To differentiate the activity in the two phases of the constant comparison approach, LaRossa (2005) suggests the first phase is the process through which the researcher

"develops variables" (p. 11). The second phase during is the process whereby the researcher examines "the relationship between or among variables" (p. 11).

Finally, research memoranda were prepared to further reduce categories into specific theories that emerged from all data collected (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Memoranda or field notes were used as a part of the data analysis. This is the process where the analyst (researcher) created notes about the data in terms of what data "fit" together, the problem identified by the study participant, similar experiences the researcher encountered and how the researcher reacted to those experiences. "If data are the building blocks of the developing theory, memos are the mortar" (Stern, 2007, p. 119).

Memos (Corbin & Strauss, 1990) are the researcher's method of keeping track of categories and questions that are derived during the analytical process. Research memos are a record of the "theorist's analytical conversations with him/herself about the research data" (Lempert, 2007, p. 247). After the initial categories have been developed, the researcher identifies a single category prevalent throughout the interview, memos and documents. Corbin and Strauss (1990) concur and posit this is where the data "earns its way into the theory" (p. 7). This category becomes the central area of interest (Creswell, 2007).

A research memorandum was developed for each interview, which assisted with the identification of prevalent themes. The research memoranda became a list of the themes identified during the interview process. Each research memorandum was reviewed to collapse the themes into major categories. The major categories identified the theory applicable to the study of the transition of the University Center at Tulsa.

Document Analysis

Documents collected were used in several ways throughout this study: (1) to develop the timeline or graphic elicitation presented to interview participants; (2) as an information source for the historical narrative contained in Chapter Four (Appendices D.1-D.4); and (3) to substantiate information obtained from the interviews to assist with the identification of emergent themes and categories.

Researcher Reflexivity

The researcher was employed by the consortium, the University Center at Tulsa, and worked there as a mid-level manager throughout the transition process. Daily interactions occurred with some of the individuals interviewed for this study. However, the researcher did not have any decision-making authority in the transition of the consortia institution to a branch campus and was merely an observer of the process that took place during the transition. This study was conducted to understand how the transition occurred, and even to some extent, why it occurred. The study contributed to the scholarship related to the transition process from a consortia institution to a branch campus. Acknowledging that the researcher was the primary tool for data collection and analysis, great care was taken to document the research process and preserve interviews and documents utilized throughout the study to validate the findings and conclusions.

Trustworthiness

Qualitative research typically involves triangulation whereby multiple sources of data are examined to validate findings and establish trustworthiness (Patton, 2002). To validate the conclusions of a study, it is important to utilize more than one source of data (Creswell,

2003). Credibility is one of the most important factors to establish trustworthiness in a study

(Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Erlandson, Harris, Skipper & Allen, 1993). Multiple sources of

information become increasingly critical to studies grounded in data because they are

"understood/interpreted as both constitutive of and consequential for the phenomena we

study" (Clarke & Friese, 2007, p. 369).

Interviews were the primary method of data collection in this study; other sources of

data were utilized to establish trustworthiness (see Table 1; Erlandson, et al, 1993).

Table 1

Trustworthiness Table

Technique	Results
Triangulation	•Multiple sources of data were used (interview notes, archival documents and research memoranda)
Peer debriefing	•Formal discussion with peers to develop graphic elicitation device utilized in interviews •Formal discussion with peers to review historical narrative
Member checking	•Interview transcripts sent to participants to verify information and identify/correct discrepancies
Research memoranda	•Memorandum developed for each interview •Used to identify emergent themes and categories
Criterion sampling	•Used to identify senior-level decision makers involved in the transition of the consortia

Case studies utilize multiple sources of information such as institutional documents and

archival records (Yin, 2003; Gall 2005). Documents were obtained from the Oklahoma State

University library archives and the Tulsa City-County Library newspaper archives.

Institutional documents, memoranda and administrative documents were collected from

historical files on UCT by the researcher to assist with understanding the story of the University Center at Tulsa. Data from these archival documents supplemented information gathered through interviews, providing additional details and serving to confirm the accuracy of historical details provided by participants.

The use of peer debriefing groups is also a part of validating findings. Researchers have "some responsibility for the validity of the readers' interpretations" (Stake, 2005, p. 453). To this end, peer debriefing groups assisted the researcher with ensuring events were reported accurately in the study. Four peer members were asked to assist with the development of the graphic elicitation device described above. The four peer members consisted of directors who worked for the University Center at Tulsa prior to and during the transition to Oklahoma State University-Tulsa. Because the timeline provided an abbreviated historical narrative of the University Center at Tulsa, the same four peer members were asked to review the accuracy of the expanded historical narrative contained in Chapter 4.

Summary

This study employed an inductive analysis methodology by conducting interviews of participants of the University Center at Tulsa and reviewing documents related to the transition of the consortia. Memos were created after interviews were conducted to begin the process of developing ideas surrounding the transition of the consortia. As the interview process continued, the researcher consistently reviewed data collected (constant comparative method) to elicit new ideas about the transition process. Interview transcripts were sent to the participants to ascertain veracity of the transcripts. No follow-up interviews were necessary.

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All of the steps listed above are part of the process established in previous studies (Corbin & Strauss, 1990; Creswell, 2007; LaRossa, 2005).

Chapter Four presents a historical narrative of the life of the University Center at Tulsa from its inception in 1982 until it transitioned to a branch campus of Oklahoma State University in 1999. Chapter Five provides an inductive analysis of the data examining the emerging significance of the political frame and power for understanding the transition. Chapter Six, the final chapter of this study, presents conclusions, implications, and recommendations for additional research.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE BIRTH OF AN INSTITUTION

The study explored key organizational factors that led to the transition of the University Center at Tulsa, a consortia, to a branch campus of Oklahoma State University on January 1, 1999. Higher education institutions are complex organizations (Bolman & Deal, 1997). The structural organization of the University Center at Tulsa, a consortia institution, was one of the most complex educational organizations in Oklahoma. The story of the transition is one of power and politics at the macro (state) level and micro (institutional) level; a brief history of higher education in Oklahoma is necessary to understand how politics in Oklahoma has influenced higher education. Historical narratives provide an account of events that happened by sorting them in chronological order to tell a story (White, 1973, p. 284). The historical information will be intertwined with data collected through interviews and information from archival documents to highlight the political nature of the story of the transition of the University Center at Tulsa to a branch campus of Oklahoma State University.

The establishment of higher education institutions in Oklahoma has been fraught with conflict. *The Story of Oklahoma*, a book by Baird and Goble (1994) provides a brief overview of Oklahoma's history. Prior to statehood, Oklahoma was divided into two sections. The eastern half of the state was called the Indian Territory; the western half of the state was called the Oklahoma Territory. The state government established two higher

education institutions in the Oklahoma Territory. One institution was established in Norman 1890 and the other was established in Stillwater that same year (Baird & Goble, 1994). The Oklahoma Territory government also established several "normal schools to train elementary school teachers in several of its towns" between 1890 and 1897 (Baird & Goble, 1994, p. 342; OSRHE, 2012). Unfortunately, the territorial government did not immediately establish any educational institutions in the Indian Territory and "the fight to locate some [institutions] in the eastern part of the new state caused bitter feelings" (Baird & Goble, 1994, p. 342).

Eventually, the two territories were combined into the State of Oklahoma in 1907 (Baird & Goble, 1994). The first Oklahoma legislature established two colleges in 1908, "the Industrial Institute and College for Girls at Chickasha" and the "School of Mines and Metallurgy at Wilburton" (OSRHE Overview, 2012, p. 2). Three normal schools were established in Tahlequah, Ada, and Durant and all of these areas were rural towns in Oklahoma (Workers, 1941). The establishment of higher education institutions in rural areas is an important point in the context of politics in Oklahoma. Prior to 1960, the majority of Oklahoma's population lived in rural areas, and rural communities elected a majority of the legislative delegates. In essence this meant politics in Oklahoma were dominated by legislators representing small town/rural Oklahoma. Even as the population of Oklahoma began to shift in the 1960s to more metropolitan areas like Oklahoma City and Tulsa, the legislature continued to be dominated by representatives from rural communities (Baird & Goble, 1994). As one might imagine, political tensions between the metropolitan cities and rural towns grew throughout the years until legislative districts were redrawn. "The 1907 constitution…instructed future legislatures to redraw legislative districts to take account of

population changes after every succeeding federal census" (Baird & Goble, 1994, p. 438),

but this did not happen until 1964, which gave testament to the amount of power the rural

legislators wielded in Oklahoma. Between 1907 and 1964 several governors, Robert Kerr,

Roy Turner, and Raymond Gary, did not confront the rural legislators. Even Johnston Murray

could not put an end to the "rural domination [and] he moved to Texas and joined the

Republican Party" (Baird & Goble, 1994, p. 441). Baird & Goble (1994) stated, "more than

the governor, the state legislature dictated what the state would do, and usually it did what

rural Oklahoma and its representatives preferred" (p. 439). Ironically it was not politicians

who put an end to the state-dominated politics by rural area leaders, but a federal judge who

ordered the redistricting of Oklahoma. The actions by legislators between 1907 and 1964 set

the stage for adversarial relations between the rural and metropolitan areas of Oklahoma.

By the 1930s Oklahoma ranked 24th of the 48 states in proportion of high school

graduates entering institutions of higher education (Morgan & Morgan, 1982). Oklahoma

ranked 43rd of the 48 states in the 1950s in proportion of high school graduates entering

institutions of higher education (Morgan & Morgan, 1982). In the 60s, the city of Tulsa had

four higher education institutions: Oral Roberts University (Harrell, 1985); the University of

Tulsa (Logsdon, 1977); the University of Oklahoma Medical School; and the Osteopathic

College of Medicine and Surgery (OSU-CHS, 2012), but no public higher education

institutions had been established to serve students interested in completing a bachelor's

degree. In 1967, Oklahoma State Senate Bill No. 2 called for the establishment of junior

colleges in Oklahoma City and Tulsa, the state's two largest metropolitan areas (Krehbiel,

1993; Henderson 1969). To put this into context, Tulsa and Oklahoma City had a combined

population of more than 500,000 in 1960. The next largest populated area was Lawton, Oklahoma, with fewer than 100,000 (Census, 2010). The closest public higher education four-year institution to Tulsa was located in Stillwater. Oklahoma City, however, had access to several public institutions such as Oklahoma State University and the University of Oklahoma, which were in close proximity to the city. The Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education's answer was the establishment of Tulsa Community College in 1970 (Krehbiel, 1993).

Another significant step in providing public higher education options for the city occurred in 1977 when the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education created the Langston Urban Center in Tulsa (Krehbiel, 1993). Langston University was originally established in 1897 under the provisions of the Morrill Act of 1890, and named the "Colored Agricultural and Normal University" in 1897 (OSRHE Overview, 2012). The population of Langston University was predominantly African American in 1977. "Oklahoma was trying to satisfy a federal order to bring more whites into the historically all-black school" by creating the Langston Urban Center in Tulsa (Krehbiel, 1993). In 2006 the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education reported 22% of the student population at Langston University was Caucasian, which indicates the Urban Center of Langston University was successful in creating an avenue for integrating the university (OSRHE, 2012). Although Tulsa legislators believed the creation of the Langston Urban Center in Tulsa would address the public higher education concerns expressed by members of the community, the Metropolitan Tulsa Chamber of Commerce (MTCC) did not share this belief (S. Harris, personal

correspondence, 2011). Accordingly, the MTCC submitted a request to the Oklahoma State

Regents to conduct a study on higher education needs in Tulsa (OSRHE, 1980).

In July 1980, the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education conducted a study at

the request of the MTCC. The study outlined existing concerns for higher education in

Oklahoma (OSRHE, 1980) and acknowledged Tulsa's need for higher education

opportunities at the upper-division and graduate levels (OSRHE, 1981, p. 25). In 1980, Tulsa

was one of the most populated geographic areas in Oklahoma and yet less than 37% of

students in Tulsa County were enrolling in college when compared to the student population

of Oklahoma City, which was 60% (OSRHE, 1981). The report concluded with a list of

seven possible models to meet Tulsa's needs for higher education. The Metropolitan Tulsa

Chamber of Commerce publicly endorsed the "establishment of a free-standing, state-

supported institution to provide third- and fourth-year higher education" (Leslie, 1981, ¶2);

Tulsa did not get a freestanding institution. It did obtain a consortium institution named the

University Center at Tulsa.

Figure 1.0 The Birth of an Institution
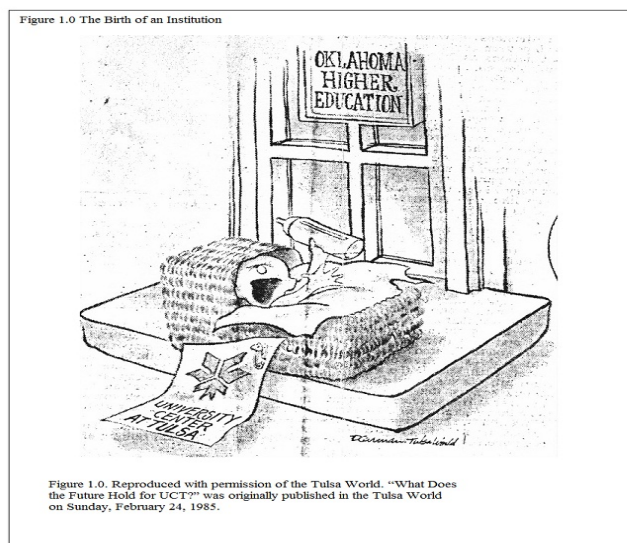
Figure 1.0. Reproduced with permission of the Tulsa World. "What Does the Future Hold for UCT?" was originally published in the Tulsa World on Sunday, February 24, 1985.

The result of the 1980 study was the creation of a consortia institution in 1982 to be known as the University Center at Tulsa. Senate Bill 480 directed the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education to "establish a university center to make additional programs of public higher education available to citizens in the Tulsa metropolitan area" (Senate Bill No. 480, 1982, p. 1; 70 O.S Sections 4601-4605). The consortium could contract "with existing institutions to provide upper division and master[s] level courses at a facility, to be paid with state funds" (MeCoy, 1982, ¶4). The State Regents approved the proposal "after they received a guarantee [from the Oklahoma legislature] that a freestanding university would be established in Tulsa by 1984" (MeCoy, 1982, ¶3). The consortia could offer undergraduate programs at the third and fourth year, and it could also offer graduate programs of study leading toward a master's degree (Senate Bill No. 480, 1982, p. 2; 70 O.S Sections 4601-4605). The University Center at Tulsa consisted of five participating institutions who offered courses: Oklahoma State University, the University of Oklahoma, Northeastern State University, the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center and Langston University. The Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education allocated a start-up budget of $1.2 million for the first year of operation (Vieth, 1982). The budget included two administrative-level positions, director and associate director of the consortium (Foltz, 1982). One year after the consortia began operating, there was still a limited administrative infrastructure to operate the consortium, but that would change in October of 1983 (Foltz, 1983).

One year after the consortium began operating, there was still a limited administrative infrastructure to operate the consortium, but that would change in October of 1983 (Foltz,

1983). On October 27, 1983, the *Tulsa World* reported the Oklahoma State Regents for

Higher Education created and funded an administrative level position to oversee the

University Center at Tulsa operation (Foltz, 1983). The State Regents hired Charles Evans as

the associate vice chancellor for education outreach. Evans had "responsibility for three

higher education center programs: the University Center at Tulsa, the Ardmore Higher

Education Program and the McCurtain County Higher Education program in Idabel" (Foltz,

1983, ¶3). In the subsequent three-year period more administrative changes would occur for

the consortium.

Enrollments were growing at the University Center at Tulsa and the current location

of the consortium in the State Office Building on South Houston was not spacious enough to

accommodate the increase. By 1984 a new facility was needed for the consortia (Roberts,

1984). In 1984 several sites were considered for the location of a permanent facility to house

the University Center at Tulsa. By December 1984, the board of UCT agreed to a location at

700 N. Greenwood Avenue; the State Regents approved the proposal provided the City of

Tulsa donated the land for the site (Foltz, 1984). The land was donated and accepted by the

University Center at Tulsa board in 1985 (Carrier & Roberts, 1985). The facility would be

built at a cost of approximately $15 million, which would be funded with gifts and an

"extension of the third-penny city sales tax" (Carrier & Roberts, 1985, ¶6). While the

University Center at Tulsa's board and the State Regents were planning for and funding a

new facility, an assessment study had been conducted and the results were being reported by

the *Tulsa World*.

An evaluation team conducted an assessment of the University Center at Tulsa in 1985, just three years after the first courses were offered by the consortium institutions. The purpose of the evaluation was to identify strengths and weaknesses of the consortium and discuss the findings with the presidents of the participating institutions (Foltz, 1985). However, a *Tulsa World* article dated May 29, 1985, reported students enrolled at the University Center at Tulsa were not satisfied with course offerings from Langston University and the students were quoted as saying "Langston University officials did not seem to have a caring attitude in dealing with students" (Foltz, 1985, ¶1). Foltz (1985) also quoted Charles Evans as stating "the evaluation team was very positive about the administration of the consortia and three of the four participating institutions, Northeastern, Oklahoma and Oklahoma State universities" (¶5). By 1986, issues related to budgetary concerns were being reported in the *Tulsa World*.

The Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education allocates state appropriations annually for the operation of the consortium. The operating budget for the consortium is used to reimburse consortia institutions for "instructional salaries, rent, counseling, library services, and transportation costs. However, expenditures such as secretarial support, equipment, furniture and telephone expenses are shouldered by the home campus" (Foltz, 1984, ¶32-33). Budget deficits at the main campus meant expenses at the consortium would have to be cut and one administrator was quoted as saying "if a hard choice must be made between whether a dollar is spent at UCAT or whether that same dollar is spent on the home campus, the home campus will win out" (Foltz, 1984, ¶35). A previous paragraph of the same article reported that "money and talent are being siphoned from home campuses to be

gobbled up at a distant city…gains made at UCAT are made at the expense of the home

campuses" (Foltz, 1984, ¶28). Regardless of budget concerns, plans continued for the

expansion of the University Center at Tulsa.

In 1986 the University Center at Tulsa hired an executive vice president, Charles

Evans, and a president, Arthur MacKinney (Foltz, 1986a; Foltz, 1986b). The *Tulsa World*

reported on May 26, 1986 that a request was submitted to the State Regents by UCT's board

to take over control of the fiscal budget of the consortium, although the State Regents denied

the request (Martin, 1986). On December 10, 1986, an article in the *Tulsa World* reported the

Oklahoma Task Force for Higher Education recommended the Oklahoma State Regents for

Higher Education allow the consortium to "handle its own money and contract for programs

from any college—public or private—in the state" (Martin, 1986, ¶1). The request would be

repeated throughout subsequent years but it would take the passage of House Bill 1544 in

1988 to give the University Center at Tulsa authority to control its own budget (Ford, 1988).

The year would prove to be beneficial to the consortium; the operating budget of the

consortium increased to $4.4 million and the new campus opened in August 1988 (Foltz,

1988).

Between 1988 and 1992, numerous events occurred that affected the operation of the

consortium. The new campus was dedicated in a public ceremony on October 23, 1988

(Foltz, 1988). Effective July 1, 1992, the University Center at Tulsa became a full member of

the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education system. Evans stated, "we contract our

degree programs from existing faculties but otherwise participate in all aspects of the higher

education system." With the passage of Senate Bill 957, the University Center at Tulsa's

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Board of Directors now controlled the direction of the consortium. In 1992 the new

University Center at Tulsa board selected Rodger Randle as the second president of the

consortium.

"Rodger Randle's selection…as president of the University Center at Tulsa sends a

signal that more changes are ahead for UCT" (Foltz, 1992, ¶1). Rodger Randle and the

University Center at Tulsa governing board wanted institutional status for the consortium.

According to Charles Evans institutional status meant you had to have core functions

associated with a higher education institution such as grades, academic records, accreditation,

and autonomy to operate the institution (C. Evans, personal correspondence, October 14,

2011). Randle believed the consortia would be stronger if it was granted institutional status

because the institution could then contract with other providers, as well as control the budget.

Between 1992 and 1995, the physical location of the campus expanded to include four news

buildings: an academic classroom building, auditorium, administrative building and a

building for the campus bookstore. Although the physical facilities of the campus changed,

other issues remained the same.

On April 9, 1996, Nancy Feldman, trustee for the University Center at Tulsa, sent a

letter to Chancellor Hans Brisch outlining continuing concerns for the consortia, e.g.,

academic advising, accreditation, and increased use of adjunct faculty (N. Feldman, personal

correspondence, April 9, 1996). The consortium had institutional status, but concerns

surrounding the ability of the consortium to contract with other providers kept surfacing at a

point of contention in the consortia. In February 1998, the Contracting Matrix was adopted

by institutions participating in the consortia. The intent of the document was to clarify the

reimbursement for the current provider institutions, as well as outline reimbursements for new providers. The continued push for the ability to contract with other providers and the independence for the Tulsa campus was probably the beginning of the legislative battle for control of the institution (R. A. Randle, personal correspondence, October 17, 2011). Randle's actions became the catalyst for new discussions surrounding the fate of the campus. By 1997, there were numerous reports and battles being fought behind the scenes for administrative control of the consortia.

Hinton and Greiner (1997) reported in *The Sunday Oklahoman* members of the Oklahoma legislature were concerned about plans under consideration for the future of the consortia. A primary concern was reduction of funding for other colleges and universities, the same concern that led to the creation of the University Center at Tulsa. The concerns expressed in the article related to the recent plan unveiled by the Oklahoma State Regents of Higher Education to move the University Center at Tulsa's board to Claremore. The plan relinquished control of the former site of the University Center at Tulsa to the University of Oklahoma and Oklahoma State University (Hinton & Greiner, 1997). Krehbiel (1997) reported in the *Tulsa World* the board of trustees for the consortia expressed concerns the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education plan would not work. Phase one, as reported by Krehbiel, would reduce the constitutional authority of the consortia board of regents to during the reorganization of the campus. The second phase of the proposal would require passage of state legislation and would transfer the Tulsa campus to the University of Oklahoma (OU) and Oklahoma State University (OSU) (Krehbiel, 1997). Eventually, the full implementation of the proposal would mean that all degrees offered on the campus would be

conferred through OU or OSU (Krehbiel, 1997). As discussions about the fate of the campus

continued, the Metropolitan Tulsa Chamber of Commerce on behalf of city leaders began

negotiations with the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education to transition the campus

to another entity.

In December 1997, the MTCC were critical participants in the development of an

agreement between OSU and OU to jointly operate the Tulsa campus. On December 12,

1997, the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education

charged the University of Oklahoma and Oklahoma State University to

develop a plan for OU/OSU's Collaborative Research/Graduate Education

Center in Tulsa and to work with participating institutions on a plan in which

OU and OSU would serve as lead institutions for the delivery of higher

education services to Tulsa (OSRHE, 1998).

Before execution of the agreement, George A. Singer, Chairman of the Metropolitan Tulsa

Chamber of Commerce sent a letter dated December 15, 1997, to Robert McCormick,

Chairman of the State Regents indicating the Chamber supported the role of OSU and OU

but also suggested the existing model needed certain protections. The MTCC asked the

Regents to seek a resolution that provides students with a "broad range of high quality

classes from which to choose" (G. Singer, personal correspondence, December 15, 1997). In

an attempt to further clarify the position of the MTCC, MTCC board members John

Gaberino, Jr., and Clyde Cole and Tulsa business leader Edward Keller sent a memorandum

to Robert McCormick, chairman of the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education. The

memorandum stated the MTCC did not support the establishment of a freestanding, four-year

institution in Tulsa. The MTCC instead called for a consortium comprised of Oklahoma State University, the University of Oklahoma and the University of Tulsa (Keller, Gaberino & Cole, personal communication, January 8, 1998).

The 'Commitment to Deliver Higher Education to Tulsa' was executed on January 14, 1998, by David Boren (president of the University of Oklahoma), Larry Williams (president of Northeastern State University), Dean Van Trease (president of Tulsa Community College), James Halligan (president of Oklahoma State University) and Ernest Holloway (president of Langston University), along with the Chancellor of the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education, Hans Brisch. All of the presidents of institutions listed above participated in the development of a plan to delivery higher education in Tulsa. The agreement "charged the University of Oklahoma and Oklahoma State University…to work with participating institutions on a plan…for the delivery of higher education services to Tulsa" (OSRHE, 1998). A few weeks later, the University of Oklahoma (OU), Oklahoma State University (OSU) and the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education issued a joint news release. The news release stated OU and OSU presented a plan that day explaining how they would jointly deliver higher education in Tulsa (Hefty, Watkins, Callahan, 1998). An article in the *Tulsa World* reported parts of the proposal, specifically the plan to turn over the reigns of the consortia to OU and OSU, would be decided by the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education. The University of Oklahoma and Oklahoma State University would decide who managed the campus (Krehbiel, 1998). The administration of the University Center at Tulsa continued to fight the proposal.

"Randle rallied the leadership of Tulsa" and they made everyone aware that Tulsa

was the largest metropolitan area without a significant state supported university with

research capabilities (R. White, personal communication, November 17, 2011). Randle said

he wanted a freestanding institution in Tulsa and he continued to push the State Regents to

make a decision in his favor. Harris indicated the MTCC had concerns about a new start-up

institution in Tulsa (S. Harris, personal correspondence, October 25, 2011).

Accreditation was an integral key for the community leaders in Tulsa. If the

institution did not have North Central Association accreditation, community leaders or

prospective employers would not value programs offered by the institution. Additionally,

Harris stated the Chamber did not believe the Tulsa leaders would wait for the multi-year

accreditation review process to take place. Tulsa leaders wanted instantaneous accreditation

and did not want to wait for an accrediting team to come to Tulsa and the review process to

begin. Oklahoma State University could ask the North Central Association to extend

accreditation to the Tulsa campus, thereby providing a quasi, instantaneous accreditation for

the campus (S. Harris, personal correspondence, October 25, 2011). White believed a

thoughtful decision was made to have a branch campus of OSU in Tulsa based on OSU's

academic history and accreditation (R. White, personal correspondence, November 17,

2011). Halligan and James Hess, vice president for administrative operations for the

University Center at Tulsa, felt the discussion of accreditation was a pivotal moment in the

transition process because so many people wanted an accredited institution in Tulsa (J.

Halligan, personal correspondence, November 3, 2011; J. D. Hess, personal correspondence,

October 19, 2011). In fact, during the last few hours of the legislative session leading up to

the final bill, Halligan's "mantra became one university with two campuses", which would mean that program accreditation would extend to the Tulsa campus via the Stillwater accreditation review process (J. Halligan, personal correspondence, November 3, 2011). However, a critical incident occurred before passage of the final bill.

The Chancellor of the State Regents for Higher Education, Hans Brisch, had a meeting in Tulsa with Randle. During the return drive to Oklahoma City, the Chancellor called Halligan and said he wanted to meet with Halligan. During that conversation, the Chancellor made it clear the State Regents wanted OSU to take over the campus in Tulsa. The Chancellor was frank with Halligan in his conversation. He told Halligan the State Regents would not "lead the charge", but they would support all OSU efforts to assume the supervision of operations in Tulsa (J. Halligan, personal communication, November 3, 2011). The State Regents did not want to be the political catalyst to transition the campus, but they would support OSU behind the scenes. "The legislative battles were fought by the Halligan and White, but the State Regents never put up any road blocks to prevent the transition" (M. Keener, personal correspondence, October 28, 2011). The transition, however, would require a great deal of effort by all parties involved.

Up through March 11, 1998, it appeared the campus would become a joint operation between OU and OSU. An article in the *Tulsa World* reported Tulsa area legislators believed OSU would not bring a substantial amount of new programs and courses under the proposed model and felt the citizens of Tulsa expected more from OSU (Ford, 1998). Another *Tulsa World* article reported there was movement by the Metropolitan Tulsa Chamber of Commerce to stop the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education from shifting

governance of the Tulsa campus to Oklahoma State University and the University of

Oklahoma (Krehbiel, 1998). Randle sent a memorandum to Ed Keller, a Tulsa community

leader, stating his opinion "that the 'contract model' will not work as it is currently operated

but the contract model *could* work if allowed to function in a true free market manner with

the support of the State Regents" (R. Randle, personal communication, March 25, 1998;

emphasis in the original). Randle was not in favor of releasing control of the consortium to

OU and OSU. He continued to work with Tulsa legislative delegates to obtain an alternative

that kept the consortium intact but gave the administrative staff authority to contract with

other institutions. He was not alone in this effort.

The *Tulsa World* quoted Betty Boyd, a state representative, as saying "the primary

problems of centralized student services and more class offerings could be solved tomorrow

without legislation if the state regents and the four schools cared more about the Tulsa

students than their own turf" (Ervin, 1998, ¶11). In fact, the Tulsa legislators sent a letter to

the Metropolitan Tulsa Chamber of Commerce board members stating,

> The role of politics: Some have said, 'we need to get this out of politics'. We
>
> respectfully remind you that the only reason we have any higher education in
>
> Tulsa is due to politics. The state regents have always resisted locating any
>
> facilities here. In particular, OSU was the primary obstacle to the bill in 1982
>
> establishing UCT. (S. Adkins, B. Boyd, J. Bryant, R. Roach, C. Ford & P.
>
> Williams, personal correspondence, March 15, 1998)

In that document, the legislators also indicated they wanted a better alternative for the

campus, which did not include control of the campus "75 miles down the Turnpike," the

main campus at Stillwater (S. Adkins, B. Boyd, J. Bryant, R. Roach, C. Ford & P. Williams,

personal correspondence, March 15, 1998). The proposal from Rodger Randle for expanded

control or a freestanding institution they believed would not resolve the issue of

accreditation.

 As a counter measure, the MTCC staff worked with OSU and Tulsa area legislators to

convince the State Regents that OSU was the choice to operate the campus.

The Chamber solicited community and business leaders to meet with the State Regents in an

open forum on March 16, 1998 (Harris, personal correspondence, March 13, 1998). Before

the meeting, the Chamber met with the group and discussed talking points for the forum. The

Chamber evaluated the participation of potential speakers based on the intended outcome of

the forum (Patterson, 1998). The Chamber's exertion of power to gather community leaders

together resulted in revised legislation. The Oklahoma Senate approved a new OU-OSU

Tulsa bill, which required OU and OSU to offer a minimum of 25 degrees with a minimum

of 25 enrollments in each course supporting the degree (Ervin, 1998, ¶6). However, all of the

issues about the operation of this new entity had not been resolved between the University of

Oklahoma and Oklahoma State University.

 The *Tulsa World* reported that John Gaberino, Jr., Chairman of the Metropolitan

Tulsa Chamber of Commerce Urban Development and Resources Committee, outlined the

Chamber's position as supporting a compromise on the governance of the campus. Under this

plan, the A&M Board of Regents, the governing board for Oklahoma State University, would

also become the governing board of the Tulsa campus. Courses would continue to be provided by the current participating institutions of the consortium but admissions and degree requirements would be those of OU or OSU (Krehbiel, 1998, ¶11). OU President David Boren sent a letter to Senator Charles Ford outlining conditions that would be required for OU to support a branch campus of OSU in Tulsa. The conditions outlined in the letter requested the University of Oklahoma be legislatively authorized to chair the Graduate Center and have the power to appoint a provost (D. Boren, personal correspondence, May 14, 1998). The Graduate Center Boren referred to was officially titled the Research and Graduate Education Center; a new entity established on the Tulsa campus, which would be a "joint research consortium including OU, OSU and the University of Tulsa…under the direction of the governing board of the Graduate Center" (D. Boren, personal correspondence, May 14, 1998). The governing board would consist of nine members appointed by the Governor of Oklahoma and confirmed by the Senate. While it is not clear what transpired between March 1998 and May 1998, Harris, Halligan and White agreed OU pulled out of the negotiations to operate a branch campus in Tulsa (J. Halligan, personal correspondence, November 3, 2011; S. Harris, personal correspondence, October 25, 2011; R. White, personal correspondence, November 17, 2011). Nancy Feldman speculated that perhaps Boren was already aware the Schusterman Foundation was going to make a gift to OU of the previous BP Amoco site at 41st Street and Yale Avenue, which meant OU would continue to have a presence in Tulsa, thereby continuing to offer educational programs in Tulsa (N. Feldman, personal correspondence, November 8, 2011).

At this point, just a few weeks before the end of the 1998 legislative session, the fate of University Center at Tulsa was unknown. It could have become OU-Tulsa, OSU-Tulsa or a freestanding institution, Rogers State University. Harris believed an agreement had been reached for Oklahoma State University to obtain the Tulsa campus, but the next day there was a strong indication no agreement had been reached.

On May 20, 1998, a press release from the State Regents stated a compromise had been reached and an OSU-Tulsa branch, along with an OU/OSU Graduate Education Center would be implemented in Tulsa (Governor, 1998). Due to a lack of agreement among all of the participating institutions, it appeared Senate Bill 1426 would not be passed, e.g., Ernest Holloway, President of Langston University, sent a letter to two legislators on May 28, 1998, stating that Senate Bill 1426 "said bill will not be in the best long-term interest of Langston University. It does not guarantee funding for non-duplication of programs offered by Langston University in Tulsa" (Holloway, personal correspondence, May 28, 1998). However, an event occurred changing the fate of the bill. During one of the legislative sessions, Governor Frank Keating told all of the presidents of the institutions participating in the consortia he needed "a thumbs up or a thumbs down on SB 1426 (J. Halligan, personal correspondence, November 3, 2011). He asked all the presidents to think carefully about their vote, explaining that additional higher education appropriations were riding on the vote. Halligan and White felt all of the institutions had to be winners if Senate Bill 1426 was going to be passed in the legislature. As it happened, there were many positive outcomes resulting from the legislation creating Oklahoma State University in Tulsa. Langston University acquired a four-lane highway named after Ernest Holloway, which made the campus more

easily accessible. Northeastern State University acquired land in Broken Arrow and developed a branch campus. Rogers State College in Claremore originally lost a two-year college during the merger with the consortium. Senate Bill 1426 created a four-year accredited institution, Rogers State University, in Claremore. Oklahoma State University acquired the Tulsa campus and on January 1, 1999, opened the OSU-Tulsa branch campus. The University of Oklahoma was given the BP Amoco building and associated lands by the Charles and Lynn Schusterman Family Foundation, and opened the OU-Tulsa Schusterman Center in 1999. With the University Center at Tulsa consortium disbanded, a new era began for Tulsa higher education, one that promised to provide the community with access to an accredited institution with decades of academic history.

Consortia institutions continue to exist in other states but in Oklahoma, consortia institutions transitioned to another delivery vehicle, mostly in the form of a branch campus operation. There are a few potential explanations for the transition from consortia institutions to branch campuses of existing institutions in Oklahoma.

CHAPTER FIVE

FRAMING HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

The use of the constant comparison method of data analysis (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss & Corbin, 1990) resulted in the identification of two emergent themes: (1) higher education as a bureaucracy and (2) higher education as a political system or structure. These themes reflect two different ways in which participants in this study made sense of the history of the transition of the University Center at Tulsa to a branch campus of Oklahoma State University. In this chapter, the transition process is examined first as an example of organizational behavior (Bolman & Deal, 1997), and subsequently, using theories of organizational structure (Birnbaum, 1988; Scott, 2003).

Organizational Behavior in Higher Education

Bolman and Deal (1997) "consolidated major schools of organizational thought" into four frames (p. 12): structural frame (more commonly referred to as bureaucratic frame), human resource frame, political frame and symbolic frame. Throughout this study the bureaucratic and political frames will also be referred to as bureaucratic systems and political systems, respectively. Two of the four frames, bureaucratic and political, are of particular interest in this study and they are used to frame the theories discussed in more detail in subsequent sections. Bolman and Deal described the bureaucratic frame in the context of a "factory or machine" with policies and procedures (1997, p. 15). Bureaucratic systems have a "blueprint for the pattern of expectations and exchanges among internal players" (Bolman &

Deal, 1997, p. 38). Administrators increase productivity and efficiency through assignment of specialized tasks to individuals within the organization (Bolman & Deal, 1997). Bureaucratic systems have a stated mission that is shared by members of the organization. In the political frame, organizations do not have a shared mission; individuals within a political system have their own goals, which sometime collide with the goals of other members of the organization (Bolman & Deal, 1997). The main concepts surrounding a political system are "power, conflict, competition and organizational politics" (Bolman & Deal, 1997, p. 15). The political system is described as a "jungle" (Bolman & Deal, 1997, p. 15) in which internal coalitions bargain and negotiate for critical resources. In a political system, the coalitions limit activities of other groups, which forces a compromise among all of the groups (Birnbaum, 1988).

Higher Education Institutions as a Bureaucracy

Bolman and Deal's (1997) bureaucratic frame "emphasizes goals, specialized roles, and formal relationships" as the main characteristics of an organization's structure (p. 13; Morgan, 1997). One of the earliest definitions of a bureaucracy is by Weber (1947/1974) who described a bureaucracy as an organization with a hierarchical administrative structure, a fixed division of labor, and a well-defined set of rules governing performance of individuals in the organization. In a bureaucracy, precisely defined jobs are organized in a hierarchical manner through precisely defined lines of command or communication (Morgan, 1997, p. 18). Operations are "routinized" (Morgan, 1997, p. 13). Bureaucratic organizations set up a hierarchical structure for coordination between subsystems within the organization, and to provide a plan specifying who has the authority to make decisions for the organization

(Bolman & Deal, 1997; Morgan, 1977). Goals and objectives are developed for higher education institutions each year to ensure decisions are being made to positively affect the organization (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1974; Bolman & Deal, 1997).

Institutions are organized in a manner that leads "to predetermined goals with maximum efficiency" (Scott, 2003, p. 33). The University Center at Tulsa (UCT) had a hierarchical organizational structure with an "advisory board of citizens…to provide ready counsel and advice on behalf of the Tulsa community with regard to…the selection of courses and programs to be offered" (Senate Bill No. 480, 1982, p. 2; 70 O.S Sections 4601-4605). Senate Bill 480, authorizing the establishment of UCT, included a budget for two administrative-level positions, director and associate director of the consortium (Foltz, 1982). However, further clarification of the role of the UCT would be needed before it could begin operations.

Prior to the opening of UCT, the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education published a report titled *The Developmental Aspects of the University Center at Tulsa*, which set forth "guiding principles for determining the responsibility by level for the academic instruction" (OSRHE, 1982, p. 4). *The Developmental Aspects of the University Center at Tulsa* (OSRHE, 1982) outlined planning procedures indicating how the University Center at Tulsa should operate. The document stated the purpose of the center was to "provide needed courses and programs" of higher education to the Tulsa community (OSRHE, 1982, p. 29). The hierarchy of the consortia was solidified by the document, but it did not establish procedures for day-to-day operations.

"The structural [or bureaucratic] frame is not the whole truth for either corporate or collegial organizations. The men and women of an organization give voice and meaning to its missions" (Bogue & Aper, 2000, p. 37). The University Center at Tulsa consisted, essentially, of branch campuses, each acting as an extension agent of a participating institution's main campus. Although faculty and administrators from the four institutions were housed in a common building, they were isolated from each other due to the difference in institutional rules and regulations. The isolation makes the rules and regulations "the important mediators of interaction and administrators become specialists in distinctive areas" (Birnbaum, 1988, p. 107).

In 1985, bylaws for the University Center at Tulsa (UCT) were created to further delineate the responsibilities and roles of the Board of Trustees for the UCT. "[The] Board of Trustees shall have full responsibility and authority…to govern, control, and administer the University Center at Tulsa" (UCT, 1985, p. 1). In that same year, the Education Issues Team Institute conducted an evaluation of UCT at the request of the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education. Evaluators expressed concerns in the final report about the "ambiguity and lack of clarity about UCT's role and institutional mission" (Blake, Hodgkinson, Lynton, & Usdan, 1985, p. 4). The report acknowledged the "State Regents…have delineated a logical and clear division of labor" (Blake, Hodgkinson, Lynton, & Usdan, 1985, p. 6). The division of labor prevented conflict between the consortia institutions and established "a legitimate structure and process" for the operation of UCT (Blake, Hodgkinson, Lynton, & Usdan, 1985, p. 7), a characteristic of a bureaucratic system (Bolman & Deal, 1997, Birnbaum, 1988).

Bureaucratic systems emphasize specialized roles in the organization (Bolman &

Deal, 1997). In 1986, an Executive Vice President and President were hired by the University

Center in Tulsa to assist with defining the role and institutional mission for UCT and the

consortia institutions, but the Board wanted more authority, which came about through

another legislative act. Senate Bill 304 increased the strength of the University Center at

Tulsa through the creation of a "nine-member Board of trustees." Prior to Senate Bill 380,

UCT had an advisory board of citizens; the advisory board could offer advice, but had no

authority to make decisions that impacted the operation of UCT. The Board now had the

authority to "act as the administrative agency for UCT." (MTCC Report, 1987, p. 3). Senate

Bill 304 provided the bureaucratic infrastructure necessary to accomplish the mission and

goals of UCT (Birnbaum, 1988). The Board had the authority to negotiation with institutions

for courses and programs, hire staff and administer budgets. Essentially, the Board had the

authority to "perform the duties of a governing board" (MTCC Report, 1987, p. 3). The

University Center at Tulsa, however, still did not have full institutional status in the

Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education system.

The Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education published "Directions for the

Future: The University Center at Tulsa 1987-2007" in 1987. The report presented two new

ideas which would be significant in the evolution of the University Center at Tulsa (UCT)

and its eventual transition to a branch campus of Oklahoma State University: agency status,

and the establishment of a 'free-standing' institution. Bureaucratic organizations become

more efficient when processes and authority structures are established (Birnbaum, 1988;

Morgan 1997) because structure increases the efficiency of the organization by reducing

anxiety and uncertainty (Schein, 2004). Participants in this study, representing both UCT and community organizations, considered the achievement of institutional status for UCT as the best solution to administrative problems within the consortia because it would increase the efficiency of the consortia's operations. Institutional status would provide UCT with the authority to govern the daily operation of UCT, develop budgets, establish payroll for UCT staff, and independently enter into contracts with other parties. Bureaucratic organizations are usually established to achieve a specific goal (Morgan, 1997) and rarely are they "established as ends in and of themselves" (Morgan, 1997, p. 13). This was the case with UCT: the 1987 *Directions* report is significant in that it documents the desire of three key groups—the evaluators, Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education officials, and UCT administrators—to see a 'free standing' university emerge from UCT (OSRHE, 1987). UCT leaders Rodger Randle and Charles Evans saw the establishment of UCT as a part of the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education system as a way to gain access to all the "rights and responsibilities" associated with an institution.

Supporters had been struggling to achieve this goal for many years before the initial feasibility study for the University Center at Tulsa (UCT) was conducted by the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education (OSRHE). The 1981 feasibility study specifically positioned UCT as a temporary measure until a new institution could be authorized by the Oklahoma legislature (Hobbs, 1981). Evans outlined the concerns of opponents of this approach: a freestanding four-year institution would "raise the ire of the existing 26 institutions in Oklahoma because they were worried about their fair share of the pie [referring to state appropriations]." Furthermore, a freestanding institution would be a problem for

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other institutions because there was a "substantial philosophical difference [between UCT administrators, the consortia institutions and the OSRHE] that had its root in the protection of individual interests of the four participating campuses." The institution could control its own future in the context of budgetary resources, faculty, institutional mission, and activities. Evans noted the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education and the Oklahoma legislature had one set of problems related to the court mandate to keep Langston University afloat with enrollment and integrated with Caucasian and African American students. The citizens of Tulsa, though, had another problem: the need for public higher education in Tulsa. "The trick," Evans said, was to find something that would satisfy both sides, perhaps not completely, but at least in a workable way.

The passage of Senate Bill 957 made the University Center at Tulsa a full member of the OSRHE system (Senate Bill 957, 70 O.S 1991) and represented an important step toward institutional status for UCT. This legislative bill gave UCT administrators the right to submit operational budgets to the State Regents on an annual basis, rather than simply administer a budget developed for them by the State Regents. Another, and arguably equally important, event occurred prior to the authorization of Senate Bill 957, which would ultimately affect the transition of UCT to a branch campus. The way that leaders are chosen, either through a selection or promotion process, provides an insight into the basic assumptions held by an organization (Schein, 2004). In December 1991, Dr. Arthur MacKinney, resigned his position as the first president of the University Center at Tulsa. Dr. MacKinney, described by Charles Evans as "a gentle and lovely man," had minimal interaction with elected officials by choice; "he was not a strong leader and he didn't have any inclination or talent to be a very

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effective politician." The board," according to Nancy Feldman, former trustee, "felt they needed someone with political visibility and political experience to lead the institution."

The choice of MacKinney's successor suggests the organizational behavior of administrators and community constituents of the University Center at Tulsa was political in nature. In July 1992, just two months after Senate Bill 957 was enacted, the role of president was assigned to Rodger Randle. Randle was not unfamiliar with the legislative process or politics in Oklahoma, nor was he unfamiliar with UCT. Randle was the former Mayor for the City of Tulsa; the third-penny sales tax funding the construction of the University Center at Tulsa physical facilities was passed during Randle's tenure as mayor. Randle described himself as the "independent leader of the Senate." He helped push Senate Bill 480, enabling legislation for the creation of UCT, through the Senate and House of Representatives. Even though most people perceive higher education as a bureaucratic structure, organizations are not strictly bureaucratic and typically have some element of another organizational design (Moutsios, 2010). In this instance of the University Center at Tulsa during the transition to a branch campus of Oklahoma State University, political relationships are also a salient point of examination (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1974). Bolman and Deal's (1997) political frame outlines the second theme emerging from the data in this study. The following discussion of UCT as a political system begins with their work and moves on to other scholars' discussion.

Higher Education as a Political System

Political organizations, as defined by Bolman and Deal (1997) have five elements: (1) coalitions exist within the organizations at the individual or group level; (2) coalition members have different beliefs and values, as well as different perceptions of reality; (3) the

allocation of scarce resources guide important decisions made by the organization; (4) differences between members of the organization cause conflict to be central to the organization; and (5) goals of the organization are established as a result of bargaining and negotiation between members.

UCT as a political system. The complexity of bureaucratic systems increase when more than one institution or organization is involved, and it is at this point the organization moves into a political arena (Bolman & Deal, 1997). The adoption of the *Contracting Principles for the University Center at Tulsa* (UCT, 1993) exemplified many of the elements of a political organization as outlined by Bolman and Deal (1997). Many participants in this study described UCT in its early years using language consistent with the bureaucratic frame, per the previous discussion. The political frame becomes a more salient lens through which to consider the organization's behavior as UCT, and its relationships with the consortium members evolved. In this section, the transition process is examined through three examples of UCT functioning as a political system: transcripts, academic program offerings and accounting practices.

Transcripts for courses offered at UCT. Political organizations consist of coalitions and conflict among the coalitions is a characteristic element of the relationships among these groups (Bolman & Deal, 1997). The UCT consortia represented a coalition of institutions and conflict was present among the participants, as in the disagreements about the reimbursement rate discussed earlier. The conflict was being managed somewhat effectively during the presidency of Art MacKinney. However, the situation changed shortly after Rodger Randle was named second president of the consortium, and under his leadership, the goals and

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objectives of the consortia changed. Schein (1992) suggests that when change of this nature

is introduced, instability within the organization will occur. Indeed, instability emerged in

relationships among the participating institutions when Randle's desire to begin the transition

from a consortium to a freestanding institution became widely known. Charles Evans, during

the interview process, described an occurrence shortly after Rodger Randle was hired by

UCT; he remembers the hiring of a registrar as the most controversial action of Randle's first

months in office. Randle intended that UCT would issue grade reports and transcripts for

courses at UCT, instead of the member institutions. The consortia institutions resisted this

effort, but Randle felt this was an important step toward institutional status. Establishing a

registrar's office represented a difference in the values of Randle's administration and the

member institutions, and perpetuated the conflict in already fractious relationships (Bolman

& Deal, 1997). The issuing of grade reports was one source of conflict; an additional conflict

centered on the offering academic programs by consortium members in Tulsa.

Academic program offerings. Degree and course offerings were assigned to specific

institutions in the consortia as described in *The Future of UCT: A Position Paper by the*

Board of Trustees (UCT, 1988), but institutions could propose and offer additional courses

and programs, if approved by all parties. In her interview, Penny Williams, one of the

legislators instrumental in the creation of the University Center at Tulsa, criticized OSU for

failing to provide enough courses and academic programs on the University Center at Tulsa

campus to assist students with degree completion. Williams' goals for OSU and UCT seem

to be at odds with both the member institutions', and the consortium's, goals. "Conflict over

goals" of this nature are prominent in higher education institutions (Bolman & Deal, 1997, p.

53). Marvin Keener, former Executive Vice President for Oklahoma State University (OSU), remembered OSU as wanting to "do more in Tulsa." Funding mechanisms at the state level, and accounting practices at the consortium level presented a significant challenge in achieving the goal of increasing program offerings for all four consortium-member institutions. Identifying and offering courses in academic programs to meet the needs of students in Tulsa was one issue; funding the cost of instruction for these courses presented another issue that generated conflict between UCT administrators and the consortia institutions.

Accounting practices. UCT's ability to meet its goals for expanding academic program offerings, and the subsequent adoption of the *Contracting Principles for the University Center at Tulsa* (UCT, 1993) exemplified many of the elements of a political organization as outlined by Bolman and Deal (1997). In organizations, "most important decisions involve the allocation of scarce resources" (Bolman & Deal, 1997, p. 163). The *Contracting Principles for the University Center at Tulsa* established two procedures: the funding mechanism for UCT and the consortia institutions, and a quarterly schedule for reimbursing the institutions. Institutional status for UCT changed the flow of budget dollars; funds would now be allocated by the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education directly to UCT, rather than to the consortium member institutions. The problem became the method by which the member institutions would be paid for the delivery of programs and students services on the Tulsa campus (A. Brown, personal correspondence, April 22, 1996). The *Contracting Principles* also established a reimbursement rate for the consortia institutions, but it took more than a year to finalize the agreement because of the disparity in funding rates

for comprehensive institutions versus the regional universities in Oklahoma. The first argument centered around a UCT proposal to reimburse the member institutions at different rates, according to the state's funding formula. Representatives of the regional institutions refused to accept this approach. Eventually UCT administrators and individuals representing the consortia institutions negotiated one rate for all delivery methods based on the type of faculty teaching, regardless of the institution offering the program. The second process identified in the *Contracting Principles* was the schedule for reimbursement, which also triggered another political debate around the allocation of scare resources.

Politics are "more salient and intense in difficult times" (Bolman & Deal, 1997, p. 164) The schedule for reimbursement was critical to the operation of the main campuses of the consortia institutions: Essentially, by operating on a reimbursement model, UCT was asking the member institutions to fund up front the cost of UCT academic offerings and student services for which the members would be reimbursed only after the expense had been incurred. As stated in the *Report of a Study to Determine the Need and Feasibility of Establishing a State-Supported Institution or Branch to offer Upper-Division and Graduate Programs in Tulsa* (OSRHE, 1981), funding was limited in Oklahoma when UCT was established, and this continued to be the case throughout the lifespan of the consortium. The reimbursement approach compromised the ability of the member institutions to work with what they considered to be already limited resources, given reductions in the total funding of higher education going on in the state at this time. The main campuses of the consortia institutions objected to what they saw as UCT taking money away from main campus

operations. In political structures, conflict such as this is inevitable and the differences in perspectives among administrators intensify the conflict (Bolman & Deal, 1997).

Changing goals and objectives. Political organizations consist of coalitions and conflict among the coalitions (Bolman & Deal, 1997). The UCT consortia represented a coalition of institutions; conflict was present among the participants on a variety of issues including those discussed above. The conflict was being managed until Rodger Randle assumed the presidency in 1993, and the goals and objectives of the consortia changed. The changes reflected Randle's desire to move forward in transitioning UCT to a free-standing institution, first by establishing registrar functions and then by achieving institutional status with approval from the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education, and legislative action. He championed this approach because he, like the MTCC, felt that UCT was not meeting the needs of Tulsa. His ideas about how to resolve this issue were, however, quite different than those of MTCC, or the member institutions. Schein (1992) suggests that when change of this nature is introduced, instability within the organization will occur. Indeed, instability emerged in relationships among the participating institutions when the new objectives became widely known.

James Halligan was hired as the President of Oklahoma State University in 1994. OSU had been a part of the consortium since it was established by Senate Bill 480 in 1982. During the interview process for this study, Halligan described a conversation he had with a member of the A&M Board of Regents, OSU's governing body, early in his tenure as president. The regent asked him to attend Metropolitan Tulsa Chamber of Commerce (MTCC) meetings "in the event that something happened." The A&M Regents, or at least

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this individual, seemed to expect that MTCC might at some point in the future begin to lobby

for changes beyond expanded program offerings. Through regular representation at the

Chamber meetings, Oklahoma State leaders could remain abreast of community concerns and

expectations for higher education in Tulsa. Halligan did not offer any other specifics about

the regent's request during the interview; absent that information, two possible

interpretations of this request present themselves. The decision to become more involved

with MTCC may have been linked to the internal politics of the consortium. Both Langston

and OSU are governed by the A&M Board, but OSU is the lead institution in that group.

Following Bolman and Deal's (1997) description of the internal workings of a political

system, Halligan would have been able to use the information gathered at the meetings to

inform particular actions by a coalition of consortium-member institutions and thereby shape

the outcome of future efforts to restructure higher education in Tulsa. Halligan's presence at

the MTCC meetings was clearly the result of an intentional decision on the part of some or

all of the members of the Oklahoma A&M Board of Regents.

By directing the president of the lead institution to begin building a relationship with

this particular organization, the regent(s) recognized and further affirmed the significant

influence of the Metropolitan Tulsa Chamber of Commerce on the higher education

landscape of northeastern Oklahoma. Much of the emphasis of this analysis has been on the

political aspects of internal actions by UCT administrators, focusing primarily on the

negotiations between various coalitions within the organization. Creating an intentional

linkage between a member institution and MTCC suggests that the organizational behavior of

OSU administrators must be contextualized in a broader, more open space which includes

higher education leaders, political appointees (and thus state government structures), and influential community organizations.

Higher Education Institutions as Open Systems

As changes occur -- e.g. constricted resources, increasing competition -- institutions will be affected by the political processes in each state (Mills, 2007). The result is higher education institutions will become open systems interacting with their environment. Higher education institutions were originally treated as closed systems (Birnbaum, 1988), operating without influence from the external environment. Closed systems have defined boundaries and those boundaries are difficult to penetrate (Weick, 1995; Birnbaum, 1988). Participants in the system can be easily identified (Scott, 2003). Bolman and Deal (1977) described higher education institutions as bureaucratic structures operating as a closed system. Established institutions "should be able to function effectively using closed-system logic and bureaucratic structures" (Birnbaum, 1988, p. 46; Bolman & Deal, 1977).

As UCT member institutions negotiated conflicts, organizations external to the consortium were paying close attention to the impact of these talks. One such organization, the Metropolitan Tulsa Chamber of Commerce (MTCC), had a particular idea about what constituted the bottom line: Increasing the number of degrees granted to (prospective) employees in the greater Tulsa area, and the associated impact of this increase on workforce development and the region's economy growth. The close attention paid by MTCC to higher education issues in Tulsa, and their eventual involvement in decisions affecting UCT and its transition to a branch campus of OSU, suggests the consortium may be more appropriately understood as operating in an open system.

Universities have tried to "insulate themselves from the direct control of external

agencies" (Altbach, Berdahl, & Gumport, 1999, p. 27). However, the growth of higher

education institutions, and expenses associated with that growth, created increased

accountability for institutions, particularly from the government (Altbach, et al, 1999).

Increased oversight by the government lead to increased political pressure for institutions

(McClendon & Hearn, 2003). The higher education sector began to grow and consume more

resources in the context of federal funds for financial aid and academic pursuits and this

opened the door for external political forces to become involved in the higher education

arena (McClendon & Hearn, 2003). External environments became part of the higher

education system. As described by Scott (2003), every organization exists in an

"environment [that] is … a pervasive influence, affecting every organizational actor and

structural feature" (p. 23).

Open systems feature interdependent, interconnected and interrelated elements both

within and outside organizational boundaries that constitute a whole (French & Bell, Jr.,

1995). Morgan (1997) identifies three key elements of an open-system orientation to

organizational behavior: "(1) emphasis placed on the environment in which the organization

exists; (2) organizations [are understood as being composed of] … interrelated subsystems;

(3) attempts are made [by administrators] to establish congruencies or *alignments*" (emphasis

in original, pp. 39-41) between parts of the system. The organizations operational structure is

derived from its environment, described by Scott (2003) as "the ultimate source of materials,

energy, and information, all of which are vital to the continuation of the system" (p. 101). If

open systems or organizations are to survive, the goals and purposes of the organization have

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to be aligned with the environment (French & Bell, Jr., 1995). Organizations must plan for the future, which "entails scanning the environment to determine the demands and expectations of external organizations and stakeholders (French & Bell, Jr., 1995, p. 93).

Because colleges and universities vie for the same resources, conflict is inevitable and is always present (Scott, 2003). "Colleges and universities are just as surely 'political' in their character as other organizations because in any college or university we will find conflict over its purposes and processes, conflict over resource allocation, and conflict over different levels of personal influence" (Bogue & Aper, 2000, p. 37). In many cases, this conflict will result in the reshaping of an organization to balance the interests of many members (Bass, 2008).

Summary

Higher education institutions are complex organizations (Bogue & Aper, 2000; Bolman & Deal, 1997; French & Bell, Jr., 1995; Scott, 2003). In past studies, higher education institutions have been studied as bureaucratic, closed systems (Bolman & Deal, 1997). Birnbaum (1988) defined a closed system as one that does not interact with the environment. Higher education institutions are also open systems. Open systems are "dynamic and nonlinear" (Birnbaum, 1988, p. 35) and interact with the environment in a manner that affects the organization at all levels (Scott, 2003).

The transition of the University Center at Tulsa, as described by the participants of this study, suggests higher education institutions are open systems influenced by the actions and agendas of external parties such as chambers of commerce, business leaders and politicians. Organizations have politics, but when politics exist in an organization, power is

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also present (Bolman & Deal, 1997; Moutsios, 2010). The role of power and politics will be

discussed in the final chapter of this study.

CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION

This study involved a single-site case study of the transition of a consortia institution to a branch campus of a single institution. To answer questions about the evolution of a consortia to a branch campus, we must situate the story of the University Center at Tulsa and the transition to Oklahoma State University-Tulsa at the nexus of two bodies of theory: organizational behavior in the context of power and politics and organizational structure in the context of bureaucratic and open systems.

When we look at the University Center at Tulsa as an organization operating in an open system, what becomes obvious is the important role politics played in this transition. In this chapter I draw on theories of power/politics to frame key moments in the transition process in a way that helps us see the impact they had on the transition of the University Center at Tulsa to Oklahoma State University-Tulsa. Implications and recommendations for research, theory and practice are presented at the end of the chapter to assist with understanding the transition process.

Summary of the Study

Governance structures of higher education in the United States have been conceptualized in a wide variety of ways throughout history, beginning with traditional institutions who have

residential students and including land grant, historically black, multi-campus, branch and consortia institutions. Consortia institutions, as a governance structure in higher education, first appeared in Oklahoma in 1974, with the implementation of the Ardmore Higher Education Center. The intention of the consortia model in Oklahoma was to provide access to higher education in communities without four-year public institutions (Hobbs, 1981). Insufficient funding to create a new freestanding four-year institution, as well as concerns from existing institutions in and around Tulsa, influenced the final decision of the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education to seek legislative approval to create a consortia institution, the University Center at Tulsa (Hobbs, 1981; Krehbiel, 1993). With the establishment of the University Center at Tulsa, Oklahoma had four consortia institutions: the Enid Higher Education Center, the Ardmore Higher Education Center, the University Center at Tulsa and the McCurtain County Higher Education Center.

This qualitative study focused on the transition of one of the HECs in Oklahoma, the University Center at Tulsa, to a single branch campus of Oklahoma State University. The primary method of data collection was semi-structured interviews conducted between October and November 2011. Interview participants were identified by virtue of their role as senior-level decision-makers in the transition process. Interview participants were contacted via email and telephone to solicit their participation in the study. Interviews were scheduled at a time and place convenient for the participants and were approximately 1.5 hours in length.

A secondary method of data collection was the use of archival documents collected throughout the span of this study. Archival documents included newspaper articles, personal

correspondence and memoranda, minutes of meetings and reports developed in connection with the operation of the University Center at Tulsa. The archival documents provided a rich description of events leading up to the transition and assisted with understanding sentiments expressed during the interview process. An inductive analysis approach to the data collected assisted with the explanation of the evolution of the consortia institution to a single university branch campus. Many studies explored the administrative for consortia and multi-campus systems (Bird, 2007; Burke, 1994; deGive, 1996; Dengerink, 2001). Branch campus faculty and the relationship between the branch campus and the main campus were explored by Nickerson and Schaefer (2001). Consortia arrangements were popular because funding for higher education was decreasing (Altbach, Berdahl, & Gumport, 1999) but consortia have begun to transition to other entities. The scholarship does not address the evolution of these entities to branch campuses or to a single university delivery site. In Chapter Five, the organizational structure and behavior of the University Center at Tulsa was analyzed through the lens of bureaucratic structures, political structures and open systems theory.

Power and Politics in Higher Education

Decisions made in higher education institutions are based on politics (Morgan, 1997). Moutsios (2010) describes organizational politics as "negotiating or lobbying with power holders to influence decisions made by policymakers" (p. 123). Power is synonymous with action in a political arena (Moutsios, 2010, p. 123); as a result, politics should be viewed in the context of the behavior and the relationships associated with a particular act. Blackler (2011) puts it more directly: Power is the "ability to get others to do what you want" and "politics is the exercise of power" (Blackler, 2011, p. 730). Power and politics are similar

because "both relate to getting one's way" (French & Bell, Jr., 1995, p. 307). "Politics and politicking," synonymous terms for Morgan (1997), may be an essential aspect of organizational life" (p. 154) in that they are experienced in the daily operations of an organization.

Power and politics have a symbiotic relationship and one cannot exist without the other (Moutsios, 2010). The exercise of power draws on an organization or individual's "authority, status, . . ., persuasion and influence" (Blackler, 2011, p. 729). Administrators can be said to be engaged in politics, or the exercise of power, when they are "negotiating or lobbying with power holders or the management of interest groups" (Moutsios, 2010, p. 123). Building on these definitions, I will examine several episodes from UCT's transition to a branch campus to provide examples of the intersection of politics/power in the transition process. In each instance specific actions advanced the agenda to transition the University Center at Tulsa to a branch campus of Oklahoma State University. Without the actions of particular people at these given moments, it is unlikely that the transition of UCT would have unfolded in the specific direction that it did.

Two sets of stories give us a picture of an administrator engaged in political behavior: higher education leaders' efforts to build coalitions; and James Halligan's relationship-building activities in Tulsa. The third incident, a public hearing orchestrated by the Metropolitan Tulsa Chamber of Commerce, provides insight into the exercise of power in a political arena.

Management of Interest Groups

The exercise of power is defined as an activity equal to the use of "coercion, force, authority, status, manipulation, resistance, persuasion and influence" (Blackler, 2011, p. 729). Coalitions are negotiated and to maintain the coalition, negotiations are ongoing (Birnbaum, 1988). Groups forming coalitions must engage in two activities: (1) they have to negotiate with representatives of the other group to find the most "advantageous outcome or compromise that can be achieved; and (2) negotiations within the group are necessary to clarify goals and discover if all parties are willing "to accept potential outcomes" (Birnbaum, 1988, p. 142). Below are two examples that provide an account of the use of politics in influencing interest groups: (1) the attempt to gain a freestanding institution; and (2) the role power and politics played in Oklahoma State University's entry into the Tulsa higher education market.

A freestanding institution. Politics begins the process of questioning the "directions, projects, laws and institutions of a society" (Moutsios, 2010, p. 123). During the lifespan of the University Center at Tulsa, "there were a number of axes being ground," on a daily basis between the consortia institutions and the UCT administrators and Charles Evans remember that "the legislature was where all of this was taking place." Many people, including White, felt that, because Tulsa had the second largest population in the State of Oklahoma, it should also have its own four-year institution. He justified this by describing Tulsa as having the "most commercial activity, the most business growth" in the state. Halligan remembers that Randle "rallied…the leadership of Tulsa" around this line of argument, and moved the

political process forward by building what Halligan referred to as "community interest" in a four-year research institution.

Randle wanted a freestanding institution in Tulsa and pushed the State Regents to make a decision. Marvin Keener's explanation of this period resonated with others: Randle, as the former Mayor of the City of Tulsa and a former senator in the Oklahoma legislature, had the political prowess to negotiate with the legislature. Randle did not, however, have any experience in higher education. Keener believed this very negatively impacted Randle's ability to obtain a freestanding four-year institution in Tulsa.

Despite Randle's efforts and public opinion in Tulsa, the University Center at Tulsa did not transition to a freestanding public institution. Formal structures, according to Scott (2003), sometimes serve as a "decorative façade concealing the 'real' agenda" (p. 28). Institutional status, as identified by Evans, was the *agenda* being advanced by UCT:

> The master plan that was in the back of minds [sic] of some people, and
> which I thought was the right way to go, was to get institutional status…
> because that seemed to me at least to be a way station on the way to becoming
> a comprehensive public higher education institution. Not a branch campus, not
> a consortium, but an institution we could use to evolve into something like a
> Wichita State.

Multiple parties were involved in the transition of the University Center at Tulsa: the University Center at Tulsa administrators wanted a freestanding institution and the community wanted a branch campus of Oklahoma State University. The priority for the community was the transition of the University Center at Tulsa to a branch campus of

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Oklahoma State University, as evidenced by the actions of the Metropolitan Tulsa Chamber

of Commerce (MTCC) and James Halligan, President and CEO of the Oklahoma State

University system at the time of the transition.

OSU's entry into the Tulsa market. "A lack of clarity and agreement on

institutional goals and mission has equally important effects on an organization" (Birnbaum,

1988, p. 11). Although Halligan had the support of the Metropolitan Tulsa Chamber of

Commerce and the State Regents, he felt "there was definite a shadow over the prestige

associated with OSU in relation to OU and TU." White also described Tulsa as a place that

was "not really an OSU town." For example, the University of Oklahoma (OU) already had

an established campus, the OU Medical School, in Tulsa. Oklahoma State University offered

extension courses in Tulsa, but not "for credit" courses. However, in the mid 1980s when the

Tulsa area legislators asked the OU Medical School to help with producing primary care

doctors instead of specialists, OU was not really interested in helping from White's

perspective. The above example demonstrates a lack of agreement on the mission and goals

of the OU Medical School in Tulsa and the Tulsa community. The Tulsa community needed

primary care doctors and a solution was found: the independent College of Osteopathic

Medicine was created to provide doctors in rural areas of Oklahoma. And, when the College

of Osteopathic Medicine began having financial difficulties, a legislator approached OSU to

help the osteopathic college. White said, "without much fanfare a bill was passed handing

over the reigns of the College of Osteopathic Medicine to OSU." While it is unclear if the

Metropolitan Tulsa Chamber of Commerce played a role in the acquisition of the College of

Osteopathic Medicine, it is very clear the Chamber played a significant role in the transition

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to OSU-Tulsa. The MTCC could be considered as a power holder in the city of Tulsa because they negotiated issues on behalf of business leaders in the city.

Negotiating or Lobbying with Power Holders

Power and politics have a symbiotic relationship and one cannot exist without the other (Moutsios, 2010). Politics is the "exercise of power in practice as people try to influence decisions" (Blackler, 2011, p. 730) involves the act of "negotiating or lobbying with power holders or the management of interest groups by politicians prior to the introduction of governmental decision" (Moutsios, 2010, p. 123). "The exercise of power is impossible without a degree of consent yielded to decisions and politics" (Moutsios, 2010, p. 129). Below are three examples of negotiating or lobbying with power holders: that provide an account of the use of power and politics in: (1) Halligan's commitment to Tulsa; and (2) the establishment of a branch campus in Tulsa.

Halligan's commitment to Tulsa. Politics is characterized by "viewing situations in win-win terms as much as possible" (French & Bell, Jr., 1995). An issue throughout the transition of UCT was accreditation, which would eventually generate a "win-win" for both Halligan and the Tulsa leaders. Susan Harris of the Metropolitan Tulsa Chamber of Commerce explained the importance of accreditation from MTCC's perspective: UCT as a freestanding institution did not have North Central Accreditation, community leaders or prospective employers would not value programs offered by the institution. Successfully completing the initial accreditation process takes several years and Harris did not believe the Tulsa leaders would wait for the accreditation review process to take place, an idea confirmed by Marvin Keener, former Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs for

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Oklahoma State University at the time of the transition. Keener put it this way: Tulsa leaders wanted instantaneous accreditation and did not want to wait for an accrediting team to come to Tulsa and the review process to begin. Oklahoma State University could ask the North Central Association to review its existing programs and extend accreditation to the Tulsa campus, thereby providing a quasi "instantaneous" accreditation. According to Robert White, "a thoughtful decision was made" by community leaders to have a branch campus of OSU in Tulsa, based on OSU's academic history and Halligan's willingness to ask the North Central Association to extend OSU's program accreditation to the Tulsa campus.

Power is very compelling and is at its peak during times when people think they are doing "ordinary" work (Blackler, 2011, p. 732). Halligan was performing his "ordinary" duties as the President of Oklahoma State University when he made a commitment to work with the NCA on accreditation for the Tulsa campus. Halligan, as he described during the interview, was asked to assist Oral Roberts University with a "small" (ordinary) issue and this was another example of his commitment to Tulsa.

Halligan assisted Richard Roberts, the president of Oral Roberts University, with an accreditation problem. Halligan and Roberts attended MTCC board meetings and became friends. Roberts encountered some difficulty in obtaining accreditation for ORU's engineering program. Halligan, a former chemical engineering faculty member, had served on several accreditation review teams and offered to help ORU with moving the accreditation process forward. Tulsa leaders wanted to keep ORU operational because the citizens of Tulsa felt there would be a negative economic impact on the city if the campus had to close due to a lack of accreditation. In his interview, Halligan downplayed both of these incidents as well

as his role in the process. Nonetheless, this routine activity would have long-term benefits. Halligan's action, as viewed by members of the legislature and the Metropolitan Tulsa Chamber of Commerce, signified his commitment to Tulsa and his interest in the final outcome of public higher education in Northeast Oklahoma.

A branch campus in Tulsa. Politics are the actions of rulers, politicians and political parties including those who help them take office, such as community leaders (Moutsios, 2010). Halligan interacted with Tulsa community leaders and the Metropolitan Tulsa Chamber of Commerce, interest groups and power holders, to effect the transition of the consortia institution to a branch campus of Oklahoma State University. The MTCC acted on behalf of the community of Tulsa with legislators to introduce a new bill to establish a branch campus of Oklahoma State University in Tulsa. Susan Harris, Vice President for Community Betterment at the Metropolitan Tulsa Chamber of Commerce, said at one point during the transition "we thought we had everything locked up" but the following day it appeared "all was lost." Halligan helped the Metropolitan Tulsa Chamber of Commerce "turn the tide at the ninth hour."

Many people within the organization can make decisions, but "what actually happens will be steered more by some people than others" (Blackler, 2011, p. 730). In political organizations "politics take place around questions of priorities, policies and practices" (Blackler, 2011, p. 730). In this instance, Chancellor Hans Brisch of the State Regents would influence the request to the Oklahoma legislature for institutional autonomy for UCT, and he did not support the establishment of a freestanding institution. In 1997, Chancellor Brisch had a meeting in Tulsa with Randle, and rather than going back to Oklahoma City, Brisch

called Halligan and said, "I'm coming to see you." Keener remembers Halligan calling him to let him know the Chancellor was coming to the Stillwater campus and asked Keener to attend the meeting. Brisch told Halligan, "we want you to take over the campus in Tulsa." Keener indicated the Chancellor was very frank and told him and Halligan the State Regents will not lead the charge to transition the Tulsa campus to a branch campus of Oklahoma State University. Halligan will need to do that, but the Regents will support his efforts. The State Regents did not want to be the "political catalyst" to transition the campus, but they would support OSU behind the scenes. The State Regents were true to their word according to Keener. While White and Halligan fought the legislative battles, the State Regents never put up any "road blocks" to prevent the transition, although the transition would require a great deal of effort by all parties—the Tulsa community, Oklahoma State University and the Metropolitan Tulsa Chamber of Commerce.

The Exercise of Power

In an organizational setting, talk of *politics* often has a negative connotation; members of the organization sometimes consider political behavior to be akin to "demagoguery, intrigues, [and] manipulation of public opinion" (Moutsios, 2010, p. 123). In the instance of the Metropolitan Tulsa Chamber of Commerce's role in influencing the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education, and the decisions about the outcome the UCT transition, politics effected very positive change.

Power is the "ability of humans to act and to act with others…in this respect it does not belong to a single person but to a group" (Moutsios, 2010, p. 123). The Metropolitan Tulsa Chamber of Commerce (MTCC) exerted collective power to gather community leaders

together, which resulted in revised legislation to transition the consortium to a branch campus of Oklahoma State University. The members of the MTCC met with community leaders and coached the leaders on what to say in a meeting with the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education, all in an effort to ensure the consortium would transition to a branch campus of Oklahoma State University. The MTCC, in their use of coalition power, negotiated with representatives of the Tulsa community to reach a favorable outcome to the solution of higher education in Tulsa.

The Metropolitan Tulsa Chamber of Commerce (MTCC) acted on behalf of the Tulsa business community and was a defacto voice for the city government. As Susan Harris said, the city is involved in municipal issues, but higher education issues have been under the purview of the MTCC for many years. As community concerns escalated about academic programs and courses, the MTCC took note of their concerns. On June 18, 1997, the MTCC issued a statement endorsing a report from the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education (OSRHE); the report reviewed higher education in Tulsa and the current status of research activity and quality of academic programs. The MTCC, in its statement, urged the OSRHE to give UCT "freedom of choice in contracting for programs" and establish "research facilities" in Tulsa (MTCC, 1997).

Clyde Cole, Chairman of the Metropolitan Tulsa Chamber of Commerce, received a faxed memorandum from Robert McCormick, Chairman of the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education in November 1997. The memorandum provided an outline of alternatives to higher education in Tulsa to be discussed at the MTCC's offices in Tulsa the following week. The following month Cole received a letter from McCormick stating a program

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addressing higher education concerns in Tulsa had been developed based on the input and

counsel received from the MTCC. The letter also included a reference to a public hearing in

Tulsa to be scheduled in mid-January 1998 for additional input from the community to refine

the OSRHE proposal (R. McCormick, personal correspondence, December 4, 1997). As

discussions continued about the outcome of higher education in Tulsa, the MTCC began

contacting community leaders to assist with the "action call" (MTCC, 1998).

On March 13, 1998, a document, outlining talking points for a meeting with the

ORSHE, was sent to multiple business leaders in the Tulsa community. The meeting took

place on March 16 and "company after company" said "we must have access to higher

quality business programs" because the lack of access to quality academic programs was

adversely affecting the "viability of…[our] economy" (E. Keller, J. Gaberino, C. Cole,

personal communication, April 3, 1998). We see in this story evidence of MTCC's power,

and the effective exercise of that power to influence proposals and decisions made about

higher education in Tulsa. Blackler (2011) says: The exercise of power draws on an

organization or individual's "authority, status,…, persuasion and influence" (p. 729). The

MTCC acted on behalf of the business community in its support of proposals to provide

research activities and quality academic programs in Tulsa. The Oklahoma State Regents for

Higher Education valued the opinion of the MTCC, as evidenced by the solicitation of input

from the MTCC in November 1997.

Power and politics are symbiotic in nature (Moutsios, 2010). The transition of the

University Center at Tulsa would not have taken place without the use of both power and

politics by the MTCC, Halligan and White. Halligan and White used overt power to affect

the outcome of the negotiations for the transition of the University Center at Tulsa to a branch campus of Oklahoma State University.

Further, power and politics are everyday aspects of an organization's life (Morgan, 1997). The University Center at Tulsa was established through a political action, the passage of Senate Bill 480. The daily operation of the organization was conducted through negotiations with the consortia institutions and the Tulsa community, characteristics of coalition power. The Metropolitan Tulsa Chamber of Commerce (MTCC) exemplified the use of coalition power in their interactions with the Oklahoma legislature and the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education; both entities had the ability to affect the outcome of the University Center at Tulsa.

Conclusion

To understand organizational behavior, it is necessary to acknowledge that organizational decision-making, internal or through the external environment, has elements of politics and power (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1974). As government oversight broadens for higher education institutions, new organizational structures "are needed to cope with the new environmental conditions" that result from constricted resources and increased accountability demanded from the public sector (Mills, 2007, p. 162). Governance structures vary in each state and will "reflect the unique contexts of the history and the current pressures of each state" including state political agendas (Mills, 2007, p. 162). Higher education institutions will be required to interact with their environments as an open system due to the additional oversight. Theories of power and politics become salient as it becomes necessary for higher education institutions to operate in an open environment.

Implications and Recommendations

Politics and power played an important part in the operation and transition of the University Center at Tulsa to a branch campus of Oklahoma State University. The paragraphs below discuss implications of these findings for research, practice and theory related to organizational structure and behavior.

Research

Inductive analysis of participant narratives positioned the transition as a political process. The University Center at Tulsa (UCT) was created through a political process, the passage of Senate Bill 480. Over the life span of UCT, there were seven more pieces of legislation that shaped the organization's operation. Policy-making of this sort is often viewed as a "neutral" activity, but "in reality it is based on political opinion (Moutsios, 2010, p. 124). Legislative acts, in the context of UCT, required negotiation between community leaders, legislators and the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education. Many individuals view negotiation as an act of politics (Blackler, 2011; Kolb & Putnam, 1992); it can also be seen as an example of the use of power (Moutsios, 2010).

Power involves the establishment of relationships. Organizations interact with external constituents by "establishing favorable relationships with those they are dependent upon and with alternative sources of [power]" (Kotter, 1979, p. 89). Power becomes an important part of the process for deciding which organizational objectives are achieved and which are considered less important (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1974). In the example of the University Center at Tulsa, the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education and the Metropolitan Tulsa Chamber of Commerce had the power to affect the outcome of the

consortium. This study focused solely on the transition of the University Center at Tulsa to a branch campus of Oklahoma State University and was from the perspective of senior-level decision makers who were members of public higher education institutions and involved in the transition process. No input was sought from the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education. Expanding the study could lead to the identification of additional factors influencing the transition of consortia in Oklahoma, e.g., front line staff of the University Center at Tulsa.

There is an "invisible group" (Szekeres, 2004, p. 8) of staff in higher education institutions who were also not consulted in this study. Arguably, though, the actions of an organization can be best understood in the offices of front line staff; the staffs are the street-level bureaucrats of the organization (Michael Lipsky, 1980, p. 13) who provide support services to students, in human resources and other activities in the institution. This group of individuals has not been included in previous higher education administration research; because they provide valuable services for the organization, it would also be important to look at the transition through their eyes. An expanded sample could lead to the identification of new factors influencing the transition process. The new factors might in turn suggest other theories to assist with understanding the transition of consortia.

Several studies about the organizational structures of higher education institutions include bureaucratic and political structures (Birnbaum, 1988; Schein, 2004; Moutsios, 2010). Studies have been conducted about politics and power in organizations (McClendon & Hearn, 2003; Mills, 2007; Blackler, 2011; French & Bell, 1995). Power and politics in education studies have been conducted by Pfeffer and Salancik (1974, and Dawkins, 1991).

Consortia institutions were thought to be cost-saving measures in the literature reviewed. However, most of the consortia institutions in Oklahoma disappeared and became branch campuses of other institutions.

Recommendations:

1. Conduct additional research on the transition of all Oklahoma consortia to branch campuses to ascertain how the transition occurred and if there are additional theories that could be applied to the transition process.

2. Expand the scope of the study on the University Center at Tulsa to include members of the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education and other individuals involved in the transition process

3. There a multiple studies on consortia and multi-campus systems (Bird, 2007; Burke, 1994; deGive, 1996; Dengerink, 2001). The studies did not involve the transition of a consortium to a branch campus. Studies on consortia need to be updated to determine if they are still a viable alternative to branch campuses, particularly in light of state funding constraints. Additional studies would have better informed the study of the transition of the University Center at Tulsa.

4. Make mid-level managers/administrative staff aware of the political structures, and how those affect the growth of the institution. Higher education administrators are aware of the implications federal and state budgets have on enrollment and revenue growth (Mills, 2007; Cohen, 1998).

Theory

Power and politics are related; one cannot exist without the other (Moutsios, 2010). The extent to which politics is important in the operation of higher education institutions will differ by state (Mills, 2007). There were four frames of organizational concepts for higher education, which were an aggregate of organizational models and theories, presented by Bolman and Deal (1997). This is too simplistic a view from which to study organizational structure and behavior. Higher education is not a closed system (Bolman & Deal, 1997; Birnbaum, 1988); it is an open system and as such is affected by its external environments (Scott, 2003); this fact was abundantly clear in the study of the University Center at Tulsa and its transition to a branch campus of Oklahoma State University.

Recommendations:

1. More overt discussion of Bolman & Deal of underlying theories irelated to frames.

2. Discussion of positive aspects of politics in the work of Moutsios (2010).

3. Expand the work of Blackler (2011) to higher education by addressing the effect politics has on higher education. Unlike Organizations in the private sector, higher education institutions are affected by government funding, which is ultimately a political decision.

Practice

Political process in each state affect changes in the governance structures of higher education institutions (Leslie & Novak, 2003; Mills 2007). Political power has "implications for the understanding of organizational behavior" (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1974, p. 150).

Political power is an important factor in obtaining critical resources for the operation of the institution. As resources become more constrained by federal and state budgets, units within the organization compete against each other for those resources (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1974; Blackler, 2011). Decisions about the allocation of those resources are a "political process" (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1974, p. 139).

Organizations work well when the environment is stable (Morgan, 1977), but environments are changing due to increased oversight by federal and state governments. As bureaucratic systems become more open, it is essential that organizations understand the environment in which they reside (Scott, 2003). When individuals work together to implement a specific action, a coalition is formed and this is a characteristic of both power and politics (Moustios, 2010). James Halligan's involvement in the Tulsa community positioned him as a member of the coalition making decisions about higher education in Tulsa. Because power and politics are so intertwined with each other, higher education administrators need to be aware of how power and politics affect the operation of the organization. Based on the research of literature and the data collected as a part of this study, I would recommend the following:

Recommendations:

1. Political processes vary by state and should be studied in the context of their effect on higher education institutions.

2. Higher education institutions are open systems and the community is a part of the environment. As such, community involvement is essential. Involvement in

the community will provide access to coalitions who are a part of the political process in the community.

Final Reflection

Sense making, as discussed by Weick (1995) is "the making of sense" (p. 4). The University Center at Tulsa transitioned to Oklahoma State University on January 1, 1999; however, members of the organization continue to try to understand what happened during the transition. Retrospective discussions are one of the "most distinguishing characteristics" of sense making (Weick, 1995). The idea of retrospective sense making is derived from Schultz's (1967) analysis of meaningful lived experience. It is the past tense to capture the reality that "people can know what they are doing only after they have done it" (p. 24). Discussions about the transition of the University Center at Tulsa to a branch campus of Oklahoma State University also provided participants of the study, e.g., peer debriefers and interview participants, with an opportunity to make sense of the transition.

One interview participant, James Hess, attended the oral defense and commented that although the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education was involved in the transition process in the context of the governance of higher education, the authority to open and close higher education institutions in Oklahoma resides with the legislature. Indeed, from the perspective of all interview participants in this study, the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education were not critical to the transition of the University Center at Tulsa to a branch campus of Oklahoma State University. Hess stated that as he participated in the interview process for this study, he was able to make sense of events that occurred during the transition process.

Peer debriefers were also at the oral defense for this study and one person discussed how the narrative contained in Chapter 4 assisted her with understanding the transition process. Louis (1980) believes "sense making can be viewed as a recurring cycle comprised of a sequence of events occurring over time" (p. 4). All members of the peer debriefer group were "street level bureaucrats" as described by Michael Lipsky (1980, p. 13). As data was collected for this study, information was discovered that heretofore had been unknown by the peer debriefer group, particularly the political process that affected the transition. "Participants selectively attend to their environments and then, in interaction, make collective sense of what is happening" (Scott, 2003, p. 99).

As a member of the University Center at Tulsa during its transition, the researcher was a street level bureaucrat and interacted with members of the peer debriefer group on a daily basis. At the beginning of this study, the researcher thought of the University Center at Tulsa as the death of an organization. During the course of data collection, the researcher discovered it was not a death, but a transition. This discovery led to a revision in the interview guide and how documents were analyzed; data had to be reviewed in the frame of a transition rather than a death of the organization.

The University Center at Tulsa was established as a consortium to provide higher education access to the Tulsa community. The Oklahoma legislature established the consortium as a temporary measure and this became clear throughout this study. The transition to a branch campus of Oklahoma State University-Tulsa continues to serve the initial purpose of the consortia, to provide higher education access to the Tulsa community.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Interview Guide

Interviewee:_____ Date:_____

Location:_____

As I begin to ask you questions about your experiences with the transition process of the University Center at Tulsa to OSU-Tulsa, please understand that you are not required to share any information that might be considered confidential. If I ask a question you do not want to answer, feel free to indicate this during our interview.

1. Please describe where you work and your position within the organization.

2. I'm going to show you time line of the transition of the institution. Using this time

    line as a reference:

a. When did you get involved?

b. Tell me about your role or involvement in the initial transition   process?

c. Would you describe the communication channels during the transition?

d. What are the most significant moments in the process and why were those

    significant?

e. What is missing from the time line?

3. Are there other individuals you would suggest I interview who were involved

in the transition process?

Oklahoma State University Institutional Review Board

Date: Thursday, August 18, 2011

IRB Application No   ED11135

Proposal Title: A Study of the Process of the Transition of a Consortia Institution to a Branch Campus

Reviewed and   Exempt
Processed as:

Status Recommended by Reviewer(s): Approved   Protocol Expires: 8/17/2012

Principal
Investigator(s):

Susan Johnson   Tami Moore
700 N. Greenwood   2439 Main Hall
Tulsa, OK 74106   Tulsa, OK 74106

The IRB application referenced above has been approved. It is the judgment of the reviewers that the rights and welfare of individuals who may be asked to participate in this study will be respected, and that the research will be conducted in a manner consistent with the IRB requirements as outlined in section 45 CFR 46.
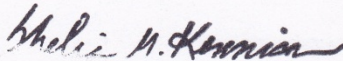
☒ The final versions of any printed recruitment, consent and assent documents bearing the IRB approval stamp are attached to this letter. These are the versions that must be used during the study.

As Principal Investigator, it is your responsibility to do the following:

1. Conduct this study exactly as it has been approved. Any modifications to the research protocol must be submitted with the appropriate signatures for IRB approval.
2. Submit a request for continuation if the study extends beyond the approval period of one calendar year. This continuation must receive IRB review and approval before the research can continue.
3. Report any adverse events to the IRB Chair promptly. Adverse events are those which are unanticipated and impact the subjects during the course of this research; and
4. Notify the IRB office in writing when your research project is complete.

Please note that approved protocols are subject to monitoring by the IRB and that the IRB office has the authority to inspect research records associated with this protocol at any time. If you have questions about the IRB procedures or need any assistance from the Board, please contact Beth McTernan in 219 Cordell North (phone: 405-744-5700, beth.mcternan@okstate.edu).

Sincerely,

Shelia M. Kennison

Shelia Kennison, Chair
Institutional Review Board

Sample Script to be used during initial telephone conversation with study participants:

> I am requesting your participation in a 60-120 minute semi-structured interview, which I will record using a tape-recording device. I will be asking you to tell me stories about the transition of the University Center at Tulsa from a consortia to a branch campus of Oklahoma Statement University.

> I would like to schedule an interview with you, at your convenience, to ask you questions about the transition process of the University Center at Tulsa to a branch campus of Oklahoma State University. I would also like to present you with a graphic elicitation in the form of a time line to provide a visual stimulus on the transition process.

> If you consent to participate in this research study, I will send you two copies of an Informed Consent document prior to the interview. One copy will be for your records and one copy will need to be sent back to me via fax at (918) 594-8023 or via email at susang.johnson@okstate.edu. I will need your contact information to assist with this process.

> The interviews will be recorded and transcribed and sent back to you for review. The graphic elicitation will be revised during the interview process and sent back to you for review. If ideas are identified during the interview process, you may be asked to participate in a follow-up interview. Participating in this study does not require any commitment beyond the initial interview, and you may decline to participate in the additional activities, if you wish.

> You may withdraw from the study at any point for any reason.

> What information can I provide as you consider this request?

> Is there a day and time we could schedule for the interview?

> Thank you for your time and I look forward to meeting with you.

Project Title: A Study of the Transition Process of a Consortia Institution to a Branch Campus

Investigator: Susan G. Johnson, Ed.D. Candidate, Higher Education

Purpose:
The purpose of this single site case study is to explore and describe key the transition process of the University Center at Tulsa, a consortia, to a branch campus of Oklahoma State University.

Procedures:
I am requesting your participation in a 60-90 minute semi-structured interview, which I will record using a tape-recording device. I will be asking you to tell me your stories about the University Center at Tulsa and your involvement in the creation of the University Center at Tulsa and the transition process of the consortia to a branch campus of Oklahoma Statement University. I will be transcribing all the interviews, and I will analyze this data and use it to prepare a written description of the various factors that influenced the transition of the University Center at Tulsa to a branch campus of Oklahoma State University. After the interviews are completed, I will contact you again to ask you to review this description and the diagram and provide feedback about what I have written. Participating in this study does not require any commitment beyond this interview and review of the transcript and diagram. You may also withdraw from the study at any point for any reason.

I will be asking questions about your involvement in the transition process of the University Center at Tulsa. Some participants might find these questions difficult, particularly if they have stories of difficult personal interactions, which trigger unpleasant memories. To minimize the risk of such a situation occurring in your interview, I have structured the questions I will ask you as to allow you to share only the stories or anecdotes which you are comfortable with sharing. Should you feel uncomfortable with any question, you are welcome not to answer it.

Risks of Participation:
There are no known risks associated with this project, which are greater than those ordinarily encountered in daily life.

Benefits:
There are no expected benefits to the participants involved in the study.

Confidentiality:
All interviews will be recorded on a cassette tape. Research records will be stored securely and only researchers and individuals responsible for research oversight will have access to the records. It is possible that the consent process and data collection will be observed by research oversight staff responsible for safeguarding the rights and well being of people who participate in research. Research records will be kept for five years.

Because the University Center and Tulsa and Oklahoma State University are the focus of this study, they will be intentionally identified as part of the discussion of transition of the University Center at Tulsa to a branch campus of Oklahoma State University. The information you provide will be used to create an understanding of the transition of the University Center at Tulsa. You will have an opportunity to read the interview transcripts. The research involves a single site, the University Center at Tulsa, and the role you played in the creation and transition of the University Center at Tulsa will be critical to the study. It may be necessary to intentionally identify you as a participant in the study, depending on the nature of your role in the transition of the University Center at Tulsa. You may specify if you agree to be identified if appropriate or if you would prefer that the information provided not appear directly in the written descriptions of the transition of the Center. Further, if you would like to withdraw from the study at any time for any reason, all data pertaining to your participation in the study will be destroyed.

<u>Please indicate how you prefer that I treat the information you provide to me by initialing the appropriate paragraph below:</u>

       ____   I agree to be identified by name and position/role in the transition of the University Center at Tulsa at Oklahoma State University-Tulsa as necessary in the final written analysis of the data I provide in this study.

In choosing this option, I understand that the researcher with allow me to review any documents in which I am intentionally identified before the final draft is completed. I can withdraw this consent to be identified at any time. If I do so, the information I provide will be used only as background information. While I may be quoted directly in the text, I will be identified only as "a member of an organization involved in the transition" or "someone at the university".

       ____   I do not agree to be identified by name and position/role in the transition of the University Center at Tulsa at Oklahoma State University-Tulsa.

In choosing this option, I understand that the information I provide will be used only as background information. While I may be quoted directly in the text, I will be identified only as "a member of an organization involved in the transition" or "someone at the university

Compensation:
No compensation will be provided if you agree to participate in this research study.

Contacts:

Susan G. Johnson	Tami L. Moore, Advisor
700 N. Greenwood Avenue	700 N. Greenwood Avenue
Tulsa, OK 74106-0700	Tulsa, OK 74106-0700
(918) 594-8102	(918) 594-8107

If you have questions about your rights as a research volunteer, you may contact Dr. Shelia Kennison, IRB Chair, 219 Cordell North, Stillwater, OK 74078, 405-744-3377 or irb@okstate.edu.

Participant Rights:
You may elect to withdraw from this study at any time without reprisal or penalty. If you have already been interviewed and decide that you do not want your information included in the written description of the transition of the University Center at Tulsa, all data pertaining to your participation will be destroyed.

Signatures:
I have read and fully understand the consent form. I sign it freely and voluntarily. A copy of this form has been given to me.

_____   _____

Signature of Participant   Date

I certify that I personally explained this document before requesting the participant sign it.

_____   _____

Signature of Researcher   Date

Appendix E.1: Graphic Elicitation

Oklahoma higher education: Planning for the 1980's
July 1980

Traditional college-age student enrollments will decline; nontraditional student pool will increase; Oklahoma County population 554,400; Tulsa County population 440,500

Request for a study
May 6, 1981

The Oklahoma Senate called for the OSHRE to study the feasibility of a four-year college in Tulsa

"Study to determine need & feasibility of a state-support institution in Tulsa"
December 1981

A study authored by Dan Hobbs in response to the request of the Oklahoma Senate. The report recommended higher education opportunities at the upper-division and graduate levels

Negotiations for higher education in Tulsa continue
March–April 1982

The Oklahoma legislature continued negotiations with the OSRHE to provide higher education in Tulsa; discussed establishment of an OSU extension governed by the A&M Regents but outcome resulted in agreement to establish a consortium university

SB 480
April 12, 1982

The University Center at Tulsa is created with participating institutions identified as Langston Univeristy, Northeastern State University, The University of Oklahoma, OU Health Sciences Center and Oklahoma State University.

University Center at Tulsa opens
August 23, 1982

First courses offered at the State Office Building on Houston and at the Oklahoma College of Osteopathic Medicine and Surgery

"Changes at University Center at Tulsa needed to keep Tulsans in control"
February 12, 1985

Tulsa World article - creation of provost position; creation of UCAT board to generate and sign contracts; non-credit programs

SB 304
May 13, 1985

Outlines role of the University Center at Tulsa within the OSRHE system

Control of the University Center at Tulsa

November 1985 – November 1987

Numerous requests were made to the OSRHE for control of budgets and authority to contract for programs.

Langston University
February 1979

Langston University Urban Center offers courses in Tulsa

President of University Center at Tulsa hired
1986

Dr. Arthur MacKinney hired as first president of the University Center at Tulsa

| 1978 | 1979 | 1980 | 1981 | 1982 | 1983 | 1984 | 1985 | 1986 | 1987 | 1988 | 1989 | 1990 | 1991 | 1992 |

Appendix E.2: Graphic Elicitation

"Universities making Tulsa offers: OSU, Langston, NSU match OU proposal"
May 16, 1987

Tulsa World - President Frank Horton offered to operate an OU campus in Tulsa; President Lawrence Boger reminded OSU proposed a campus in 1981; President Roger Webb offered to operate NSU-Tulsa campus; President Ernest Holloway has wanted to set up a Langston-in-Tulsa campus since 1979

Metropolitan chamber of commerce report: Higher education task force
July 1, 1987

Recommendations included: (1) Intermediate future: UCAT evolves to full institutional status, accredited by NCA; develop research programs, and (2) long-term Future: establish a third comprehensive university in Oklahoma; increase public awareness of institution

The future of University Center at Tulsa: A position paper by the Board of Trustees
May 3, 1988

Continuation of the consortium; agency status; academic program review process implemented; establish degree granting entity under the governance of UCAT trustees

A state university system
May 4, 1988

Tulsa Tribune - UCAT trustees endorse Metropolitan Tulsa Chamber of Commerce proposal that UCAT should evolve into a comprehensive urban university

Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education establishes University Center at Tulsa Operating Principles and Procedures
June 27, 1988

Budgets controlled by OSRHE; all personnel are employees of the Regents; board authorized to accept gifts, donations, prviate funds.

HB 1544
July 1988

The University Center at Tulsa Board of Trsutees are authorized to expend monies allocated to the Center; the Board authorized to enter into contracts and adopt rules and regulations for acquiring real and personal property. Note: The Ardmore Higher Education Program was given cntrol of operating funds and accounts.

University Center at Tulsa campus opens
August 1988

The Main Hall opens on Greenwood and courses are offered beginning with the fall 1988 semester

Official university name changed from UCAT to UCT
1989

1988	1989	1990

Appendix E.3: Graphic Elicitation

Change of president at the University Center at Tulsa

December 1991 – July 1992

President MacKinney resigned December 11; Dan Hobbs elected as Interim President in January 1992; Rodger Randle hired as president in July 1982

SB 957
May 3, 1992

UCT becomes a full member of the OSRHE system and could submit an operating budget to the Regents annually and contract for programs and courses with participating instituitons

University Center at Tulsa campus expanded
January 1995

Four new buildings opened for business on the UCT campus: (1) bookstore operations; (2) auditorium; (3) classroom building and (4) an administration building

Merger plans revealed
December 1995

President Rodger Randle revealed plan for UCT merger with Rogers State University in Claremore

SB 1162
April 1, 1996

UCT and Rogers State College become one institution (operations combine but names remain the same)

Memo from Nancy Feldman, UCT Trustee, to Chancellor Brisch
April 9, 1996

Issues re: academic advising, adjunct faculty, accreditation reports

HB 2164
May 24, 1996

UCT and Rogers State College, as one institution, receive name change to Rogers University

A combined campus
June 13, 1996

Summer 1996 semester includes course offerings at the Claremore campus, at the Greenwood campus and in satellite locations in Pryor and Barlesville

Rogers University Contracting Principles
February 1998

OSRHE and participating institutions of the consortium agreed to methodology for reimbursement of courses offered on the Tulsa campus.

| 1991 | 1992 | 1993 | 1994 | 1995 | 1996 | 1997 | 1998 | 1999 | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 |

Appendix E.4: Graphic Elicitation

"Higher education in Tulsa at crossroads"
February 10, 1997

Tulsa World - committee is debating whether Rogers
University and Tulsa Community College should
somehow be linked

"Regents, chiefs of OU, OSU convene"
February 25, 1997

Tulsa World - representatives from Rogers, OSRHE, OU
and OSU met in Stroud to decide how to divide Rogers'
degree programs offered in Tulsa and on its other three
campuses

**"Rumors of Rogers University takeover denied:
Commitment to consortium"**
March 8, 1997

Tulsa World - Anne Morgan, chairwoman of OSRHE,
reaffirmed the regents' commitment to consortium
amidst rumors of OU/OSU take over

Assessment of higher education needs in Tulsa
July 31, 1997

OSRHE report finds no new programs needed, provide
programs already in existence; greater visibility of OU/
OSU; clarity of mission; greater role for LU; improve
policies

SB 1426 passed
June 1998

Rogers University becomes two institutions, Rogers State
University and OSU-Tulsa; OU/OSU RGEC also created
and housed on the OSU-Tulsa campus; Northeastern
State University moves to NSU-Broken Arrow campus;
LU moves to a site to be determined

President resigns
December 1998

Rodger Randle resigns as president of Rogers Univerity

A celebration of a new beginning
December 31, 1998

New Year's Eve celebration held in Main Hall at Rogers
University to celebrate the end of the consortium and the
beginning of Oklahoma State University-Tulsa

OSU-Tulsa became effective
January 1, 1999

Dr. James Halligan became interim president of OSU-
Tulsa.

Lack of agreement
November 6, 1996

The participating institutions, Langston, Northeastern,
OU and OSU, fight about course/program offered at
Tulsa and reimbursement for courses/programs offered.

New president for OSU-Tulsa
September 1, 1999

Dr. Gary Trennepohl became the president of OSU-
Tulsa.

| 1997 | 1998 | 1999 | 2000 | 2001 |

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VITA

Susan G. Johnson

Candidate for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

Thesis: A STUDY OF THE TRANSITION OF A CONSORTIA INSTITUTION TO A BRANCH CAMPUS

Major Field: Higher Education

Biographical:

Education:

Completed the requirements for the Doctor of Education in Higher Education at Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma in May, 2012

Completed the requirements for the Master of Human Relations in Human Relations at the University of Oklahoma, Norman, Oklahoma in May, 1993

Completed the requirements for the Bachelor of Science in Office Administration at Oklahoma Baptist University, Shawnee, Oklahoma in May, 1980

Experience:

Oklahoma State University-Tulsa
Director of Academic and Enrollment Services, August 1989 to present

Hall, Estill, Hardwick, Gable, Golden & Nelson, P.C., Tulsa
Legal Secretary, April 1988 to August 1989

Cassidy School, Oklahoma City
Registrar, September 1986 to April 1988

Professional Memberships:

Phi Kappa Phi Honor Society
OSU Tuition Appeals Committee
OSU Enrollment Management Council
OSU Director of Student Academic Services Council
Oneok, Inc., Scholarship Committee

Name: Susan G. Johnson   Date of Degree: May, 2012

Institution: Oklahoma State University   Location: Tulsa, Oklahoma

Title of Study: A STUDY OF THE TRANSITION OF A CONSORTIA

INSTITUTION TO A BRANCH CAMPUS

Pages in Study: 122   Candidate for the Degree of Doctor of Education

Major Field: Higher Education

Scope and Method of Study: This study used a qualitative, case study methodology. The purpose was to identify key factors in the transition of the University Center at Tulsa to Oklahoma State University-Tulsa.

Findings and Conclusions: An inductive analysis approach to the data collected assisted with the explanation of the evolution of the consortia institution to a single university branch campus. Many studies explored the administrative for consortia and multi-campus systems (Bird, 2007; Burke, 1994; deGive, 1996; Dengerink, 2001). Branch campus faculty and the relationship between the branch campus and the main campus were explored by Nickerson and Schaefer (2001). Consortia arrangements were popular because funding for higher education was decreasing (Altbach, Berdahl, & Gumport, 1999) but consortia have begun to transition to other entities. The scholarship does not address the evolution of these entities to branch campuses or to a single university delivery site. The results of the study identified two organizational theories that were important to the transition: political and power theories. The consortium was established through legislative action. Politics continued to affect the organization vis-à-vis members of the Tulsa community and institutions participating in the consortium. Power, as suggested by many researchers, is always present when politics are in use and this was evidenced throughout the lifespan of the University Center at Tulsa.

ADVISOR'S APPROVAL: _Dr. Tami L. Moore_____