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Jacqueline Brousseau-Pereira

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PLAYING THE FIELD: A CASE OF RESTRUCTURING AT THE UNIVERSITY OF
MASSACHUSETTS AMHERST

A Dissertation Presented

by

JACQUELINE A. BROUSSEAU-PEREIRA

Submitted to the Graduate School of the
University of Massachusetts Amherst in partial fulfillment
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DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

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Education

PLAYING THE FIELD: A CASE OF RESTRUCTURING AT THE UNIVERSITY OF
MASSACHUSETTS AMHERST

A Dissertation Presented

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JACQUELINE A. BROUSSEAU-PEREIRA

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DEDICATION

To all the strong women who have made a difference in my life, especially my mother,

Yvette, who taught me to be brave.

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I am truly grateful to my committee members, all of whom were patient and supportive while pushing me to do my best. Thanks especially to Ryan Wells for being a remarkable advisor, teacher, and mentor. Throughout my doctoral program, Ryan has consistently provided the support I needed right when I needed it, with feedback that was right on target and gentle nudges to keep plodding along. Mary Deane Sorcinelli, who wouldn't let me give up on myself, helped me define a project that was doable and has cheered me on from the start. Don Tomaskovic-Devey was the perfect theory consultant and provided helpful and timely feedback on various drafts.

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ABSTRACT

**PLAYING THE FIELD: A CASE OF RESTRUCTURING AT THE UNIVERSITY
OF MASSACHUSETTS AMHERST**

FEBRUARY 2018

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In 2008, the United States economy entered a rapid and profound decline. As a
result most public universities experienced decreased endowments and a decline in state
allocations. Some universities seemed to respond to this crisis by refocusing their
institutional priorities and restructuring their campuses. This study used the lens of
organizational field theory (e.g., 1993; Davis & Marquis, 2005; Fligstein & McAdam,
2012; McAdam & Scott, 2005) to analyze a decision-making and restructuring process at
the University of Massachusetts Amherst (UMass), which began in late 2008 and
concluded in 2011. The purpose of the research was to investigate the ways the UMass
Amherst restructuring process was influenced by two of the organizational fields to
which the University belongs: public research universities and Massachusetts higher
education. The research also examined the effects of the economic and political
environment on these fields, and by extension, on the actions of the University of
Massachusetts Amherst during this period.

Whereas earlier organizational field theorists (Bourdieu, 1993; DiMaggio &
Powell, 1983; Scott, W. R., 1995) primarily considered the influence of fields on actions
adopted at the organizational level, more recent research (Davis & Marquis, 2005;

Emirbayer & Johnson, 2008; Fligstein & McAdam, 2012) has begun to focus on the strategic actions of individual actors within organizations and the ways those actions can also affect organizational efforts. This study considered the actions of stakeholder groups, and this led to a richer understanding of the interplay of individuals, organization, field, and environment, and the effects of these on university mission.

Using a retrospective, descriptive case study design that included analysis of selected documents and interviews of individuals who were part of the decision-making process, I reviewed, coded, and developed preliminary constructs, which later became the themes for analysis. The findings suggested that organizational fields as well as organizational actors each influence an organization's path in various ways. Additionally, the study gave indications of shifts in mission at least on the UMass campus. This study contributes to a better understanding of the influence of organizational fields in higher education and offers suggestions for further research on shifts in university mission.

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INTRODUCTION

<u>**Introduction**</u>

In 2008, the United States economy experienced a rapid and profound decline. This predicament began in the financial sector but quickly spread, disturbing most other industries within the nation and beyond. Institutions of higher education – and public higher education in particular – were disrupted and changed by this state of affairs as endowments plummeted and institutions reliant on public funding saw further decline in their already-shrinking state allocations. Several universities responded to this crisis by refocusing their institutional priorities and restructuring their campuses or by adopting strategies that would generate more revenues to make up for those lost from state appropriations. One of these institutions was the University of Massachusetts Amherst (UMass).

In late fall 2008, after hearing from University of Massachusetts Board of Trustees that sizable budget cuts were forthcoming, then-chancellor Robert Holub proposed a restructuring of the academic units on campus. The proposal called for a reduction in the number of schools and colleges from nine to six and a realignment of several departments. Over the course of the next two and a half years, some parts of the restructuring were implemented, others changed, and some never took place. During this time of flux, Chancellor Holub (2009b) outlined his priorities for the campus in a document titled, "The Framework for Excellence." Some of the changes proposed in the restructuring plan aligned with the priorities of this framework. Campus administrators implemented other approaches that fit the goals of the Framework. One essential element

within the Chancellor's plan was a desire for UMass Amherst to move into the "cadre of the very best public research universities in the country" (Holub, 2009b, p. 1). Language comparing UMass to other institutions was prevalent throughout the framework and even stronger in the revised plan the Chancellor presented the following year in which he declared his goal for UMass Amherst to attain membership in the elite Association of American Universities (Holub, 2010).

Throughout the restructuring process, there were several instances when campus leaders intentionally compared UMass Amherst with other research universities. For example, a task force reviewed the structure of universities in a specific group of "peer universities" while they prepared recommendations for a new academic structure (Fountain, 2009). Some restructuring options were proposed to make UMass look more like its peer institutions. These connections and comparisons between and among research universities and UMass Amherst during this case of restructuring are documented in reports and meeting minutes.

Thinking about these connections, I became curious about the ways the restructuring decisions at UMass were influenced by what was happening in the broader societal context, the higher education "industry," and more specifically, in those institutions that look most like UMass Amherst – other public research universities. I also wondered whether the changes made on the UMass Amherst campus would cause a shift in the University's priorities and thus, its mission. This research study originated from that curiosity.

Through this study, I investigated how this case of restructuring at UMass Amherst was relative to the University's position among other universities and public

institutions of higher education and how decisions made by campus leaders may have

been shaped by their own positions on campus as well as the relationships among UMass

and other institutions. I examined ways that specific groups and individuals influenced

the outcome of the decision-making process. Further, I explored whether and how the

institutional priorities of UMass Amherst may have shifted during the restructuring

process and how such shifts may have resulted in a change (however slight) in the

mission of the institution.

Statement of the Problem

Research universities in the United States do not exist within a vacuum and there

is much similarity among them. At the time the leaders of UMass Amherst undertook

this restructuring, several other research universities in the U.S. did as well (Olson,

2010). In fact, restructuring was so common that conferences held sessions to help

administrators learn techniques for merging units (Council of Colleges of Arts and

Sciences, 2014), and support organizations offered webinars to help academic leaders

consider ways to appropriately restructure (Magna Publications, 2010). The prevalence

of reorganizations on individual campuses, along with the appearance of advice from

membership and support agencies on how to restructure, indicates that institutions were

most likely modeling their strategies after those at other campuses. This reciprocal

influence among universities and supporting agencies is of central interest to the case

presented here.

Organizational theorists use the term "organizational field" to refer to a group of

organizations that have a similar function and that interact with one another regularly

(e.g., Bourdieu, 1993; Davis & Marquis, 2005; Fligstein & McAdam, 2012; Scott, W. R.,

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2001; Wooten & Hoffman, 2008). DiMaggio and Powell (1983) use the following definition:

"By organizational field, we mean those organizations that, in the aggregate, constitute a recognized area of institutional life: key suppliers, resource and product consumers, regulatory agencies, and other organizations that produce similar services or products." (p. 148)

The University of Massachusetts Amherst, like all organizations, exists within organizational fields. One such field might be called "research universities;" it would include other research universities, accreditation agencies, a host of non-profit and for profit organizations that offer services and products to assist universities, and membership organizations such as the Association of American Colleges and Universities. Also within this field are media outlets like the Chronicle of Higher Education and Insider Higher Ed that provide reporting specific to higher education. Another field to which UMass Amherst belongs can be called "Massachusetts public higher education," which would be comprised of all of the public institutions of higher education within the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, along with the appropriate state governing and regulatory bodies, and many of the other organizations and actors noted in the "research universities" field.

Central to organizational field theory is the idea that members of a field have shared interests and are committed to maintaining quality and stability within that field (Emirbayer & Johnson, 2008). This is important to organizational researchers because it can help to explain when the efforts of an organization's leadership appear to be contradictory to that organization's survival (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). When seen

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through the lens of the field, actions that may at first glance seem counter to the purpose of an organization make more sense because they are aligned with field-level interests. Further, using a field-level framework allows researchers an opportunity to examine institutional phenomena from a macro perspective, helping them to understand and recognize the ways traditional practices may change when there are disruptions in the field or the broader economic or political environments (Davis & Marquis, 2005).

A second element of field theory is the concept of field position. Within each field are incumbents and challengers who compete for status and rank (Fligstein & McAdam, 2012). Incumbents are typically those organizations that have been in the field the longest and whose processes have been incorporated into the workings of other field members as standard practices (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Wooten & Hoffman, 2008). The field is designed to support and replicate the patterns of the incumbents (Fligstein & McAdam, 2012). An organization's position in the field and whether it is an incumbent or a challenger shapes the decisions it makes and practices it can adopt (Fligstein & McAdam, 2012). For example, a challenger research university might be unlikely to undertake a new program or administrative practice that an incumbent had not yet tested. A wrong decision could affect that institution's field position and ability to compete for faculty, students, and other resources. In other words, there is a careful balance between ensuring institutional survival while competing for a better position in the field and maintaining a commitment to the purpose and integrity of the field as a whole.

As fields go, higher education is well-established and has been relatively stable (Fligstein & McAdam, 2012). However, recent economic and political forces have brought a level of destabilization that may cause changes to the research university

organizational field. Innovations and newer institution types within the field (e.g. for-profit institutions and MOOCs) may be disrupting the field (Christensen, Horn, Caldera, & Soares, 2011). This combination of economic and political forces, along with potential disruptions within the field, suggests that institutional administrators have opportunities to redefine the organizational fields in which they exist. Fligstein and McAdam (2012) proposed, "Challengers who are more attuned to moments when their position might be significantly improved will work diligently to locate and exploit such opportunities" (p. 54).

Field theory allows researchers to explore the ways that participation in organizational fields influences decision-making within an organization itself. In the case of restructuring at UMass Amherst, pressures within the broader economic environment and the political climate provided the motivation for campus leaders to consider making changes on campus. At the same time, the scope of "possible actions" that UMass could take to face these challenges was likely to be limited and influenced by the position UMass occupied within the fields "research universities" and "Massachusetts public higher education."

Decision-makers at organizations like universities are also influenced by the institution's field position. At the same time, the decisions these individuals can make are affected by their own role within the university as well as by the various groups to which they belong on campus. The University can be viewed as a field on its own with various groups and individuals acting in ways similar to those of larger institutions within organizational fields. This study explored the connections and influences among organizational fields, the university, campus-level groups, and individual actors. Each of

these spheres shapes the actions of the others and influences the final outcome of a university's restructuring process and ultimately its goals, priorities, and mission.

Purpose of the Study

This study explored a decision-making process that resulted in an academic restructuring at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. The purpose of the study was to demonstrate connections between the University and at least two of the organizational fields to which it belongs (these fields are "research universities" and "Massachusetts public higher education"). I have considered the University's position in these fields and how that might have influenced the way the restructuring process took place. A related line of inquiry explored the ways in which individual actors and various groups on campus, along with the University's position in these fields, may have influenced the decision-making process. Finally, I also explored the interplay of these three spheres: organizational field, university, campus-level groups and individual actors, and how they may have influenced or shifted the mission and priorities of the University.

Research Questions

The primary research questions guiding this study are: how was the restructuring at UMass Amherst influenced by its position in and interaction with specific organizational fields? How did individual actors and campus-level groups influence the restructuring and in what ways might their roles have been influenced by their position on campus and the University's position within the organizational fields? In what ways did the restructuring indicate a possible shift in mission/priorities at UMass Amherst?

Significance of the Study

This study examined three spheres of influence in decision-making and change in a single case at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. The analysis took into account power within the following three areas: individuals and campus-level groups, the institution itself, and the organizational field, and the findings offered a nuanced look at the ways in which each of these levels was intertwined with the others. An in-depth look at the complexity of field-level influences on the choices made by leaders of an individual campus can provide rich information about current trends in the field of higher education, and in research universities in particular. At the individual, group, and campus levels, this study provides an in-depth look at the ways organizational fields can shape institutions and the ways they might not. Whereas at the field level, this case points to the ways that restructuring and other actions may be indications of shifts in the institutional mission of research universities.

Combining the three spheres of individual and campus groups, organization, and organizational field with the concept of mission is a new take on the study of organizational fields. Davis and Marquis (2005) seek to use the organization as a mechanism through which to study specific phenomena – such as the interplay between restructuring and mission, or how environmental conditions influence a change in traditional practices within a field. For the University of Massachusetts Amherst, it is important to know whether and how the restructuring may have led to a shift in the mission and priorities of the institution and the ways that the organizational field influenced (or did not influence) the shape of the restructured university. This study can also direct future researchers to consider whether university missions are being revised at

the organizational field level as a result of changes on individual campuses and in the field.

Operational Definitions

The term *restructuring* "will refer to major changes in strategy and organization" (Zajac & Kraatz, 1993, p. 83) within an institution of public higher education. *Mergers*, which are discussed in Chapter Two, refer to either intra-institutional merging of units within a single campus, or inter-institutional merging of individual institutions into one single institution.

The term *organizational field* is defined slightly differently by different scholars (e.g., Bourdieu, 1993; Davis & Marquis, 2005; Emirbayer & Johnson, 2008; Fligstein & McAdam, 2012; Scott, W. R., 2001; Wooten & Hoffman, 2008). Many scholars prefer the definition proposed by DiMaggio and Powell (1983), cited above, which refers to a field as a grouping of organizations with similar consumers, commodities, and regulations. Fligstein and McAdam (2012) used the term "strategic action fields" and provided this more nuanced definition:

> fundamental units of collective action in society…[a] mesolevel social order in which actors are attuned to and interact with one another on the basis of shared understandings about the purposes of the field, relationships to others in the field, and the rules governing legitimate action in the field. A stable field is one in which the main actors are able to reproduce themselves and the field over a fairly long period of time. (p. 9)

Fligstein and McAdam (2012) also introduced the concepts of competition and power in their discussion of fields. For the purposes of this study, I propose to combine

the two definitions above with W. R. Scott's (1995) explanation of organizational field: "a community of organizations that partakes of a common meaning system and whose participants interact more frequently and fatefully with one another than with actors outside the field" (p. 56). This combination incorporates four important concepts that are relevant to this study of organizational fields in higher education:

1. There are organizations that "in the aggregate, constitute a recognized area of institutional life" (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983, p. 148).

2. Actors within a stable field typically "reproduce themselves and the field" over time (Fligstein & McAdam, 2012, p. 9).

3. Actors in the field have shared interests and a common meaning system (Scott, W. R., 1995).

4. Organizations within a field compete with each other for a better position within that field (Fligstein & McAdam, 2012).

Overview

This study examined a case of academic restructuring at the University of Massachusetts Amherst in order to demonstrate connections among individual decision-makers, campus-level groups, the University, and the organizational fields to which it belongs. I explored the University's position in these fields, considered the notion of who may be incumbents and challengers, and how these factors might have influenced the outcome of the restructuring process. At the same time, I investigated the ways in which decisions made by individual actors at the University may have been influenced by their role on campus, by the actions and positions of various campus-level groups, as well as the University's field position. Finally, I analyzed the tensions and connections among

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three spheres: campus-level groups and individual actors, the institution, and the various organizational fields to which it belongs, in order to consider potential changes to the University's mission and priorities emerging from this set of circumstances.

With these objectives in mind, this dissertation is organized as follows: Chapter One outlined the problem and purposes of the study and provided a rationale for its significance. In Chapter Two I introduce the study of organizational fields and go on to explore how field theory can be applied to higher education – and research universities in particular. Next I explore the broader environmental conditions that institutions of higher education are currently facing. From there, because this study focuses on a case of restructuring, I investigate empirical studies of merger and restructuring in higher education as well as exploring a handful of contemporary university restructurings. I discuss the concept of university mission as it relates to the study and to organizational fields. Finally, Chapter Two closes with an overview of the study's conceptual framework and the proposed research questions.

Chapter Three details the research design and methods for data collection and analysis. This is a retrospective, descriptive case study that first reconstructs and then analyzes the decision-making process and resulting academic restructuring that took place at UMass Amherst. The research design section specifies the selection of the case, highlights its boundaries, and explains why the University is the ultimate unit of analysis. In Chapter Three, I describe the data sources and process for collection. The design relies on a review and analysis of several types of documents as well as interviews of individuals who were involved in the restructuring process. Next, I present the guiding questions and framework that will shape the coding, analysis, and interpretation of data.

Chapter Three concludes with an exploration of factors that contribute to the trustworthiness of the study, the ways in which I reduced researcher bias, and an overview of the limitations of this study.

Chapter Four provides the narrative of the case. Through an intensive review of close to two hundred source documents, I have recreated the story of what transpired at UMass Amherst during the period under study (2008-2011). The account begins with the Chancellor's arrival at UMass and the budget crisis that descended on campus shortly thereafter, through the various phases of the process, to the "final" structure in 2011 and the Chancellor's announcement of his departure.

Chapter Five includes the results of this study, beginning with an account of the ways that location in various fields influenced the actions leaders took at the University during the case under study. Next, I define and describe "local influence" at UMass Amherst. Through this research, I discovered three main organizing principles that most actors used to talk about the restructuring and to guide their views of the situation; these (budget crisis, excellence, and interdisciplinarity) are presented in Chapter Five. From there, I discuss how stakeholders utilized these organizing principles along with field-level arguments to support their positions regarding various plans and strategies for the campus. Finally, the chapter concludes with a discussion of mission, mission shifts, and the ways individuals and groups used mission as a way to support their arguments.

Chapter Six presents a discussion of the findings in relation to organizational field theory and mission and offers suggestions for future research. At least in this case, the position of the university within its various fields had an influence over some kinds of decision-making; however local logics proved to be just as important. The major changes

that did and did not take place as a result of Chancellor Holub's restructuring proposal can be seen in this light. Similar to the findings of Barrier & Musselin's (2016) research, campus leaders may aspire to fit the mold of peer institutions in the organizational field, but this may translate differently to the campus itself. Finally, Chapter Six explores the ways that mission seems to be evolving at UMass Amherst and discusses what this may mean for the organization and the field.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

<u>Introduction</u>

Restructuring in institutions of higher education is a widespread phenomenon (e.g., Curri, 2001; Gumport, 2001; Harman & Harman, 2003; Kashner, 2010; Pattenaude, 2010; Rowley, 1997; and others). Organizational leaders rationalize their efforts to reorganize their institutions in a variety of ways. They may cite changes in the external environment as a force behind the restructuring (Pattenaude, 2010). Economic and political motivations are common as are decisions to restructure that are based on keeping up with similar institutions or finding new markets to support institutional survival (e.g., Fielden & Markham, 1997; Gumport & Pusser, 1999; Harman & Roberston-Cuninghame, 1995; Pick, 2003). Contemporary organizational theory explores social phenomena such as restructuring through the lens of connection between the organization and organizational fields, as well as the larger environment (Davis & Marquis, 2005; McAdam & Scott, W. R., 2005).

Scholars of social action and behavior examine phenomena such as restructuring through a variety of levels – from a world system perspective to an individual interaction perspective (Scott, W. R., 2001). However, using an organizational field perspective with a focus on the interplay of the three spheres of field, organization, and campus-level group/individual actor, provides an opportunity to explore the complexity of macro- and micro-influences on the subject under study.

This chapter begins with a brief overview of organizational field theory, including key elements that will help to illuminate the case at UMass Amherst. Several currents of thought about the influence of external societal forces on higher education dovetail nicely

with the study of organizational fields and the next section makes the connection between these two bodies of literature. Following this is a review of various empirical studies on merger and restructuring in higher education, including an overview of five recent cases of university restructuring. This section serves to build a connection between organizational field theory and the existing literature on academic restructuring.

Because institutional restructuring may be related to shifting goals, priorities, and mission I decided to explore the historical development of university missions and to include the expectations of some scholars concerning present day and future changes to mission. University missions are not developed in a vacuum; rather they are developed through an organization's interaction with its peers within an organizational field. This study offers a unique perspective by bringing together mission, organization, and field and the chapter concludes by weaving these strands to form the conceptual framework for the study.

The Study of Organizational Fields

Institutional theorists seek to understand how organizations function and the ways in which they influence both macro-level processes and micro-level attitudes and behaviors (Scott, W. R., 2001). Scholars of institutions and organizations hail from a diversity of disciplines, including economics, political science, sociology, and anthropology. A variety of corresponding methodological approaches are used to examine organizations of different types from various perspectives. Within this mix is the study of organizational fields. Field theory looks at these "mesolevel social orders…the basic structural building block of modern political/organizational life in the economy, civil society, and the state" (Fligstein & McAdam, 2012, p. 3) and helps to explain the ways organizational-level behaviors are influenced by an organization's interaction with this larger sphere.

The study of organizational fields emerged out of economic sociology, network analysis, institutional theory, and social movement theory (Fligstein & McAdam, 2012). Several scholars utilize the concept of the organizational field. They have crafted theory to explain how organizational fields function and how they contribute to change and stability within the fields and among the organizations within them (e.g., Bourdieu, 1993; Davis & Marquis, 2005; DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Emirbayer & Johnson, 2008; Fligstein & McAdam, 2012; Martin, 2003; Scott, W. R., 2001 and 2015; Wooten & Hoffman, 2008). Whereas these theories have several common elements, each scholar has a slightly different emphasis and method for applying the theory.

Generally, organizational fields are described as "a community of organizations that partakes of a common meaning system and whose participants interact more frequently and fatefully with one another than with actors outside the field" (Scott, W. R., 1995, p. 56). A more detailed definition of the types of organizations in the field comes from DiMaggio and Powell (1983): "By organizational field, we mean those organizations that, in the aggregate, constitute a recognized area of institutional life: key suppliers, resource and product consumers, regulatory agencies, and other organizations that produce similar services or products" (p. 148). Several scholars have described organizational fields as arenas in which organizations "reproduce themselves and the field" over time (Fligstein & McAdam, 2012, p. 9). Fligstein and McAdam (2012) also introduced the concept of power in their definition of what they label "strategic action fields" (p. 3), which are described as: "constructed social orders that define an arena within which a set of consensually defined and mutually attuned actors *vie for advantage*" (p. 64, emphasis mine). For the purposes of this study, each of these definitions has something to offer and four concepts are of particular relevance:

1) Organizations within a field share a "common meaning system" (Scott, W. R., 1995, p. 56).

2) Organizations within a field comprise a "recognized area of institutional life" (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983, p. 148)

3) Organizations within a field become like one another, establish the norms of the field and reproduce the field over time (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Fligstein & McAdam, 2012).

4) Organizations within a field compete with each other for a better position within the field (Fligstein & McAdam, 2012).

In the origins of the study of organizational fields, scholars "conceptualized the organizational field as the domain where an organization's actions were structured by the network of relationships within which it was embedded" (Wooten & Hoffman, 2008, p. 131). Researchers focused on fields as a way to understand why decisions that were made at the organizational level may not have seemed to fit with the goals of these organizations. When put in the context of the field, organization-level decisions could be recognized as moving the field towards a common goal (Warren, 1967). As scholars continued to explore organizations from a field perspective, they also recognized that organizations often chose strategies that were similar to those of other organizations of similar type that were seen as successful and more legitimate (Wooten & Hoffman, 2008; DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). DiMaggio and Powell (1983) wrote extensively about institutional isomorphism in their study of organizational fields, they described it as a trend towards homogeneity among organizations within a well-established and highly-structured field.

Current research on organizational fields has focused less on ideas about

isomorphism within fields and more on the ways in which change takes place in fields and

organizations, as well as how organizations can respond strategically to changes in the field

or broader environment (Davis & Marquis, 2005; Wooten & Hoffman, 2008). Contemporary

organizational field theory is explicative rather than predictive. Davis and Marquis (2005)

argued that specific phenomena, such as a shift in organizational priorities and mission after

a restructuring, could be investigated through the mechanism of the organization and the

organizational field. Further, studying organizations and their interactions within the various

fields to which they belong can help scholars understand and observe particular phenomena

as they occur over time (Emirbayer & Johnson, 2008). Finally, field research can also help

to explain phenomena that happen within an organization by serving "as a bridge between the

macro- and micro- [level interactions] by providing detailed explanations of how field-level

interactions influence internal organizational phenomena" (Wooten & Hoffman, 2008, p.

141).

Tensions within and among Fields

As discussed above, organizational fields are collections of actors that share common

interests and relate with each other around them. Fields are not tangible in the same way that

organizations are. Field boundaries are unclear and subject to change depending on the ways

in which organizations relate to each other within the field. There are several ways to think

about how fields are established. Fligstein and McAdam (2012) contend that fields, like

organizations, are created out of a human need to create shared meaning and to define

collective identity. In this view, fields would trend towards stability as various

organizational actors work to accomplish a common goal. On the other hand, some scholars

assert that fields are defined by their power dynamics (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992; Emirbayer & Johnson, 2008). Both of these perspectives contain truth; within a field, organizations are working towards common goals, however, they are also pursuing their own individual survival.

DiMaggio and Powell (1983) asserted that as fields became more established and stable, the organizations within them began to homogenize. They identified three types of factors that influenced this trend towards sameness: "1) coercive isomorphism that stems from political influence and the problem of legitimacy; 2) mimetic isomorphism resulting from standard responses to uncertainty; and 3) normative isomorphism, associated with professionalization" (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983, p. 150). Embedded in these sources of institutional isomorphism are two types of factors: 1) those that challenge institutional survival (regulative/governmental pressures leading to coercive isomorphism, and economic and other environmental pressures that lead to mimetic isomorphism), and 2) those that help organizations work together reach their common goals (professionalization of the field). A closer look at these two categories reveals a tension between competition and cooperation among organizations in the field.

Competition occurs because organizations within the field are constantly trying to improve their standing in relation to each other (Fligstein & McAdam, 2012). This competition is apparent in the research university field, which seems to rely heavily on various ranking systems that appear in the media (Hazelkorn, 2013). "Actors who are both more and less powerful are constantly making adjustments to the conditions in the field given their position and the actions of others" (Fligstein & McAdam, 2012, p. 12). At the same time that organizations are competing for position within the field, they also share a

commitment to the goals of the field itself – or as Bourdieu described it: "an objective complicity that underlies all the antagonisms" (Bourdieu, 1993, p. 73).

Collaboration may occur within a field when there is an external, destabilizing incident that is perceived to challenge the survival of the field as a whole (e.g., an economic crisis that threatens funding to organizations within a field). Under these circumstances, organizations may come together to work towards a field-level solution. At the same time, however, such episodes of contention may instead lead to innovative solutions that challenge the position of higher status organizational actors (Fligstein & McAdam, 2012).

In a recent study from Europe, Hüther & Krücken (2016) look at the ways "nested" fields influence the organizations within them. This work acknowledged that organizations exist in multiple fields and must respond to a variety of external contexts – from the local to the global level. This range of often-conflicting influences means that sometimes institutional leaders respond by creating plans and structures that are similar to their peers (isomorphism), while at other times they adopt strategies that will distinguish them from other organizations in a field. Knowing the details of a specific case is the best way to understand which of these different influences prevailed (Hüther & Krücken, 2016).

Incumbents and Challengers

A field is comprised of various organizational actors. As noted above, same-type organizations within a field typically vie for position within that field. Most scholars divide these same-type actors into two groups: incumbents and challengers. Incumbents are often those who have been in the field the longest and therefore are able to set the standards. Challengers have less influence over field norms and often have slightly different institutional logics even if they largely conform (Fligstein & McAdam, 2012). "Those who

dominate in a given field are in a position to make it function to their advantage but they must always contend with the resistance, the claims, the contention, 'political' or otherwise, of the dominated" (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 102).

Incumbent organizations are often the first to adopt innovations that are later hailed as "best practices" and duplicated by others. Whereas the incumbents choose these strategies out of a desire to seek efficiencies, later adopters often implement them because these actions have become "normatively sanctioned" (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983, p. 148). There are often internal governance units that manage compliance within strategic action fields (e.g. in the field "state higher education," a state's department of education or the legislature would serve as an enforcer). Informal governance units, such as professional associations, may also exist. The role of these organizations is to maintain the status quo, confer legitimacy, and "reinforce the dominant perspective" (Fligstein & McAdam, 2012, p. 14) in the field. "The very presence of these units serves to legitimate and 'naturalize' the logic and rules of the field" (Fligstein & McAdam, 2012, p. 14) – often established by the incumbents. Actors who play the role of field overseer are further meaningful to incumbent organizations because they can serve as gatekeepers to new organizations that seek entrance to the field. Internal governance units may also serve as liaisons to other external fields (Fligstein & McAdam, 2012).

The relative position of incumbents and challengers may change during episodes of contention within the field. Incumbents typically appeal to the status quo and use their considerable influence to pressure official and unofficial governing bodies to assist them in returning the field to normal while challengers are more likely to try innovative action as a way to advance their own positions (Fligstein & McAdam, 2012). It is during these times,

when fields are in flux due to external challenges that fundamental changes can occur. Some organizations have more power to influence new field norms and logics and they are often referred to as institutional entrepreneurs (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Zucker, 1988). However, changes in field norms and logics will not occur without agreement among other organizations in the field.

Field Position Constrains an Organization's Actions

The scope of possible actions taken within an organization is limited by its relationships within the field. As noted above, it may be easier for incumbents to adopt new practices than it is for challengers. While striving to change positions within the field, organizations can be entrepreneurial to some degree but are more likely to follow what others have done. Earlier scholars, such as DiMaggio and Powell (1983) may have assumed that organizations implemented strategies from their peers without adjusting them to fit the unique culture of their own establishments. However, current researchers recognize that there is a process of adaptation that takes place, as Wooten and Hoffman (2008) described: "In the process of translation, the original meaning of an organizational practice changes as individual field members incorporate these items into their own organization" (p. 142). Hallet and Ventresca (2006) emphasized the fact that logics and norms in organizations and fields come from the individuals who "inhabit" these organizations. Logics are created through the interactions of individuals.

Field Level Logics and Organizational Mission

Institutional or field level logics are created from shared meaning within the field. W. R. Scott (2001) described field logics as the "belief systems and related practices that predominate in an organizational field" (p. 139). Further, they are the principles that "furnish

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guidelines to field participants as to how they are to carry out the work" (Scott, W. R., 2001, p. 139). It is important to consider the content and depth of these logics within fields and organizations, as well as the ways they are connected to other belief systems. Within a single field there may be multiple and competing logics, which are related to and help shape organizational missions (Scott, W. R., 2001).

W. R. Scott (2015) described a number of traditionally-contested logics specific to higher education. His portrayal of these logics helps to underscore current arguments about purpose and resource distribution within the field of higher education. For example, is the purpose of higher education to provide students with practical skills that are linked to specific employment or is the purpose to offer a broad-based education based on inquiry? Was higher education created to educate the children of the wealthy elite who can afford it or to expand opportunities for all? Is higher education ultimately a public or a private good? These questions are important to the ways that institutions embody their missions as well as the strategies they choose to adopt.

McAdam and Scott (2005) discussed the ways in which institutional logics can change. They used the term "bricolage" to describe the ways in which new logics are formed within a field by patching together pieces of existing logics in new ways during rapidly changing times. The authors suggest that such a recreation can "combine the strengths of the old and familiar with the advantages of the novel and unusual" (McAdam & Scott, 2005, p. 27). Campbell (2005) also referred to "bricolage" in his description of how change occurs in organizations and fields. When there is a disruptive event that prompts change, organizations will piece together strategies that are already known along with newer elements. In large,

complex organizations that are difficult to change this type of strategy can help them to move forward (Campbell, 2005).

The Role of Groups and Individuals in Organizational Fields

Within organizations are individual decision-makers who determine the path of the organization. However, these individuals are not entirely free to adopt any approach they wish. The freedoms of individual actors are tempered by the influence of the local environment, the position of relevant actors within that environment, and the position of the organization within its various fields (Fligstein & McAdam, 2012). Despite these potential constraints, Fligstein and McAdam (2012) emphasized the importance of social skills in an individual's ability to affect change or take advantage of opportunities in their organization.

Bourdieu (1984) highlighted the recursive nature of the influence of individual actors on organizations as well as the field. He used the term "habitus" to describe the ways that the economic and cultural conditions an individual experiences are imprinted on that individual who then uses his skills and actions to make decisions within an institution. This way of thinking about individuals, organizations, and the field can help to reveal the ways in which each sphere influences the others. Habitus, however, is created and replicated without conscious thought or action. "Thus, each member of an organization brings to it a habitus formed under specific past conditions" (Emirbayer & Johnson, 2008, p. 4) and through their actions, new conditions are created.

Similar to Bourdieu, Hallet and Ventresca (2006) emphasized the important role that individual actors play within organizations – it is people who make decisions, organizations do not make decisions. Their study discussed why it is problematic to decouple human interactions from institutions. The process of reification – attributing decision-making

powers to organizations rather than people – separates institutional logics from human interactions. Their review of an older institutional study (Gouldner, 1954) encouraged current researchers to look at the multiple levels within an institution, the ways in which interactions among people shape the institution, and also how the field-level context influences the institution as well as the human interactions (Hallett & Ventresca, 2006).

Fligstein and McAdam (2012) intentionally used the term "strategic action fields" to underscore the fact that individuals and groups within an organization have agency to make decisions and influence outcomes based on their own interests and in response to available resources. It is useful to consider an institution as its own strategic action field that is reacting to fields it exists in as well as larger environmental forces while at the same time being altered by the individuals within it as they vie for power. W.R. Scott (2015) stated, "Actors are both constrained and enabled by institutional frameworks, and they are capable of using them to pursue their own interests as well as challenging and attempting to change frameworks if necessary" (p. 28).

Organizations, Fields, and the Broader Environment

Many scholars who study fields also recognize the importance of the larger societal context on those fields and the organizations within them. Fligstein and McAdam (2012) noted that "the source of many of the opportunities and challenges a given field faces stems from its relations with this broader environment" (p. 3). They went on to state, "while fields can devolve into conflict as a result of internal processes, it is far more common for an 'episode of contention' to develop as a result of change pressures emanating from proximate state and/or nonstate fields" (Fligstein & McAdam, 2012, p. 19). Additionally, when

organizations within a field begin to adopt similar structures, it is often the result of state or regulatory oversight (Wooten & Hoffman, 2008).

Some researchers, such as Emirbayer and Johnson (2008) and Bourdieu and Wacquant (1992), viewed the state and the economy as fields on their own. The state is "itself a field of bureaucratic administrative agencies, a bureaucratic field" (Emirbayer & Johnson, 2008, p. 20) that can influence what happens within other fields. Emirbayer and Johnson (2008) also conceptualized the economy as a "field made up of particular organizations and configurations of organizations, [that] serve as a frequent point of origin for organizational innovation" (p. 20). Regardless of whether state and economy are fields or part of the broader environmental context, they do influence what happens in organizations and in organizational fields.

Organizational Fields and Higher Education

Institutions of higher education are constrained by their placement in various organizational fields. Because the case under study here occurred at a public research university, this section will serve to draw connections between organizational field theory and current research on changes and influences in higher education with specific focus on public research universities. Higher education scholars may utilize different terminology but they are studying the same types of effects that organizational field theorists have discovered. Change and restructuring in higher education institutions may be the result of field-level interactions and influences from the broader societal context, as well as responses by individuals within individual organizations. This section explores the ways in which politics and political accountability at the federal and state levels, the economy, and competition influence what happens at research universities.

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Politics and Public Accountability

The public and various interest groups within it are demanding more out of public higher education. Better financial aid with lower tuition and fewer student loans, remedial education, and student learning outcomes that correspond with specific career skills are all issues that are being discussed and moved into the policy arena (Schmidtlein & Berdahl, 2011). At the same time, corporate leaders are looking to state policy makers to influence curriculum in ways that will help them have access to a pool of well-trained workers. These influences drive the discussion about the purpose of higher education and whom it is intended to educate.

Public accountability to external stakeholders is increasing as education is more closely tied to economic success on the state and national levels. State legislatures and boards of trustees are expecting more from universities while they are cutting back their funding. There is sometimes an expectation for universities to restructure that is politically driven. "Recently, external forces are compelling higher education institutions to review, consolidate, and/or discontinue their programs" (Michael, 1998, p. 378). Michael (1998) described the waxing and waning of the public influence over higher education. Current public sentiment calls for more accountability and more influence on the part of legislatures over what happens in higher education.

The results of recent elections may be another important factor in terms of political influence over higher education. In 2014, Republicans gained control of governorships and legislatures across the country, which led to additional spending cuts across a variety of areas, including higher education. The 2016 Presidential election has left many public university leaders concerned about strategies for recruiting international students as planned

enrollments begin to drop. Also, perhaps for the first time, "academic freedom, civil rights, and social justice" appeared on the American Association of State Colleges and Universities (2017) top ten issues list.

At the same time that states are cutting back funding to universities, they are also seeking to improve the performance of those institutions. A variety of interested and influential parties are calling for colleges and universities to show more data on certain student outcomes, including degree progress and completion rates. Legislators and the public expect these improvements to be gained at a "reasonable cost" (Schmidtlein & Berdahl, 2011, p. 85). Stakeholders at both the state and federal levels have demanded that institutions increase their degree production and improve rates of graduation (American Association of State Colleges and Universities, 2013). The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and the Lumina Foundation, along with nonprofit groups such as Complete College America, have encouraged and supported policies that increase the number of students who graduate from college (Nash & Zaback, 2011). In 2013, President Obama pledged to increase the number of college graduates by the year 2020 and called on universities to help (The White House, 2013). It is unclear at this writing whether President Trump will attempt to follow through with this plan.

For university presidents in states that are not opting for performance funding, there is still an emphasis on increasing productivity through improved degree progress and completion. While funding may not be specifically tied to these indicators, there seems to be an unfunded mandate to apply performance measures to student learning outcomes. The impetus for this may be coming from business leaders who are looking to higher education to make sure that students gain skills that will serve them in the work force.

In Massachusetts in particular, the state legislature and the governor highlighted the importance of public higher education during the 2008-2012 period during which this case took place. The authors of Vision Project, the featured plan for public higher education in the Commonwealth, wrote, "We will produce the best-educated citizenry and workforce in the nation. We will be a national leader in research that drives economic development" (Massachusetts Department of Higher Education, 2000-2017). The project's stated outcomes are: increased college participation and completion, demonstrated student learning, alignment of some degree programs with workforce needs, minimizing gaps in achievement among diverse populations, creating informed citizens, and producing research that benefits the economy (Massachusetts Department of Higher Education, 2000-2017). The strategic priorities of the University of Massachusetts System were similar to the broader state goals. These included:

- Improve student learning experience;

- Strengthen research and development;

- Renew faculty;

- Continue a focus on diversity and positive climate;

- Maintain and improve access and affordability;

- Develop leadership role in public service;

- Increase endowment

- Improve administrative and IT services; and

- Develop first-rate infrastructure

  (University of Massachusetts, 2008, p. 1)

Economic Forces

For the last two decades and particularly since the economic crisis of 2008, public institutions of higher education have experienced a decrease in state funding. The College Board reported that after adjusting for inflation, "Total state appropriations declined by 19%, from $88.7 billion in 2007-08 (in 2012 dollars) to $72.0 billion in 2012-13, while FTE enrollment in public institutions increased by 11% over these five years" (The College Board, 2014). States have seen an overall drop in their tax revenues since the recent economic crisis, while at the same time expenses for programs and services like Medicaid, prisons, and K-12 education have increased (McGuinness, 2011). These programs require state revenues and do not have alternative funding sources, unlike public universities that use a "mixed funding model" (Hossler, 2004, p. 147).

Because universities can access other sources of revenue, including a mix of federal funds through student aid and research dollars, tuition and fees from enrolled students, private fundraising, and also some funding from grants, contracts, and various revenue generating activities, states often view appropriations to universities as discretionary (Zumeta, 2004). One result is that when state budgets decline, higher education is seen as a place where funding cuts can be absorbed. Despite the fact that state revenues are beginning to recover after the 2008 recession, it is unlikely that higher education will see an increase in state appropriations in the future (Travis, 2013). The National Association of State Budget Officers (2013) cautioned institutions to expect reforms and new financing models that may tie financial support to performance.

Two of the options that seem appropriate to campus administrators are: 1) consider how reorganization might assist in reallocating resources internally, and 2) find alternative

sources of revenue. Several administrators in the contemporary restructuring cases that will be discussed in a subsequent section, used reductions in state allocations as a rationale for their actions, stating that a reorganization would lead to economic savings. It is unknown whether these recent cases have led to long-term savings; however, in the empirical studies reviewed for this research, projected savings were typically not realized.

At the same time that state funding for higher education is decreasing, the costs of providing higher education have risen. A number of factors have contributed to this increase in expenses. One is the growth of the population of non-traditional students[1] who are enrolling in higher education. Typically, these students need more support to succeed, making their education more expensive (Zumeta, 2004). New construction, related to expanding enrollments and years of deferred maintenance, is another cause of increases in expenditures. In some cases, faculty pay raises that are higher than those in the general economy have contributed to increased overhead expenditures (Johnstone, 2011). Finally, the increased use of technology in higher education has also added to increased expenses. As more technology is used for instruction, the need for replacement and upgrades grows and there are costs associated with staff salaries for training and support of faculty who are using new technology (Johnstone, 2011)

One possible outcome of the reduction in state appropriations is a complete defunding of public higher education by the states. Travis (2013) reviewed several cases of privatization in public higher education institutions in the U.S. and came to the conclusion

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[1] Non-traditional students are defined as having one or more of these qualities: delayed enrollment into higher education, part-time students, financially independent from parents, single parents, working full time while attending college, etc. (Horn & Carroll, 1996, as cited in Advisory Committee on Student Financial Assistance, 2012)

that if the trend to cut back state appropriations continues, it will result in complete loss of state support to public higher education by the year 2059 (Travis, 2013).

Competition in the Field

The concept of competition in higher education encompasses many things. As stated above, competition occurs within organizational fields as organizations vie for incumbent status. There is also competition within a single university as units compete for scarce resources (Gumport, 2001; Scott, W. R., 2015). Competition occurs among institutions of higher education as they contend for research support offered by private and federal funders (McGuinness, 2011). Institutions often compete for the same students and faculty as a way of distinguishing themselves and improving their rankings (Gumport, 2011).

As discussed above, as state funding allocations to higher education are reduced, institutions must look for other means of support. Federal and private foundation research dollars are sources of funding; however there is a limited pool of funds and ever-growing competition for them (McGuinness, 2011; Rich, 2006). Also, there is evidence that administration of public research funding is actually costly to universities (Lombardi, Capaldi Phillips, Abbey, & Craig, 2014). As institutions seek to distinguish themselves from their peers in order to attract research funding, they also compete for the same talented faculty and graduate students (Gumport, 2011). Institutions that undergo restructuring are often doing so in an attempt to remain competitive by refocusing the core of the institution in a way that attracts more resources (Rich, 2006). Clark (2004) encouraged institutions to adopt an entrepreneurial stance so that they could be in a position to embrace change and remain competitive.

Paradeise and Filliatreau (2016), in their brief history of the emergence and proliferation of rankings systems, explained that rankings change what universities and their stakeholders consider to be important as well as what they choose to account for. Their argument is that rankings have become popular with universities because resources are often allocated based on performance indicators and rankings provide a way to "count things."

Beginning in the 1970s, the Carnegie Foundation's Classification System created a scheme that classified institutions by type, setting in motion a way of comparing colleges and universities. Following in the wake of the Carnegie Classifications, several other organizations developed their own ranking systems, most notably U.S. News and World Report and more recently the Academic Ranking of World Universities (Hazelkorn, 2013) and the Center for Measuring University Performance (Lombardi, Capaldi Phillips, Abbey, & Craig, 2014). These systems have drawn global attention to the concept of university performance. In addition to utilizing the rankings as a way to demonstrate excellence at the university level, national leaders also refer to their nation's standing in these categorization schemes as an indicator of economic strength (Hazelkorn, 2013).

However, the rankings are also a source of consternation to universities. The methods used to generate them have been the subject of much criticism. The agencies that produce the rankings use a variety of subjective indicators to compare institutions of higher education that are based on their own notions of what it important in higher education (Hazelkorn, 2013).

There is also no agreed method on what or how to measure academic or educational quality. This process ignores the fact that HEIs [higher education institutions] are complex organizations, residing within vastly different national contexts, underpinned

by different value systems, meeting the needs of demographically, ethnically and

culturally diverse populations, and responding to complex and challenging political-

economic environments. (Hazelkorn, 2013, p. 3)

A separate issue with the rankings is that they are issued annually, leaving no room for

evaluating long-range projects and further diluting the results (Lombardi J., 2010).

What does this competition do to institutions? It causes campus leaders to look for

ways to improve their standing through a constant striving for excellence (Michael, 1998)

and possibly by gaming the metrics. Allan (2007) identified "excellence" and its derivatives

as one of the most-used words in institutional mission statements. In itself, use of the word

"excellence" denotes competition in a "zero-sum" game (Charlton & Andras, 2005, as cited

in Allan, 2007) and can only be achieved by those elite institutions that can prove themselves

superior to others through some type of competition (Allan, 2007). The rankings foster this

type of competition, often to the detriment of institutions. Several scholars have argued that

competition and rankings are diminishing the public good of higher education, particularly in

research universities (Gumport, 2001; Marginson, 2011; Thelin, 2011).

As universities compete to rise up in the rankings, they may add programs and

projects designed to attract new students or new sources of funding. These new functions are

often at odds with the established mission of the organization. Gumport (2001) argued that

this "unprecedented competition" (p. 242) and responsiveness to the marketplace is

disturbing because it may serve to erode our knowledge creation "and to further stratify the

academic offerings for different segments of student populations" (Gumport, 2001, p. 242).

Another strategy universities might undertake to remain competitive is to restructure their

institutions in ways that are similar to their peers.

<u>**Restructuring Institutions of Higher Education**</u>

Cases of university restructuring in the U.S., such as the one that took place at the University of Massachusetts Amherst have been common since the 1990s; however there is not a rich body of academic literature related to this phenomenon. Indeed, much of the empirical research on mergers and restructuring has taken place outside the U.S. This section explores a variety of reports and studies. Whereas many of these studies examined situations that were different from the UMass restructuring process, there were enough commonalities among cases to be relevant.

Types of Studies

Most of the literature reviewed for this section focused specifically on inter-institutional mergers outside the United States (e.g. Curri, 2001; Fielden & Markham, 1997; Harman & Harman, 2003; Harman & Roberston-Cuninghame, 1995; Locke, 2007; Pick, 2003; Rowley, 1997; Ursin, Aittola, Henderson, & Valimaa, 2010). Mergers of two or more campuses are much more common in the United Kingdom, Australia, Canada and western Europe where most higher education is publicly funded. Often these mergers are prompted by government mandates or policies. Of the reviews of inter-institutional merger, some considered a single case (e.g. Curri, 2001; Harman & Roberston-Cuninghame, 1995; Locke, 2007; Pick, 2003) whereas the rest provided comparative studies of the merger phenomenon (Fielden & Markham, 1997; Harman & Harman, 2003; Rowley, 1997; Ursin, Aittola, Henderson, & Valimaa, 2010). Kashner (2010) and Okendu (2008) considered restructurings on a single campus in the United States. Finally, a few studies consider the influence of organizational fields in higher education. Zajac and Kraatz (1993) explored restructuring in liberal arts colleges over a sixteen year time span. Brint and Karabel (1991) discussed the

transformation of the mission and focus of the U.S. community college field from liberal arts transfer institutions to organizations that provided mainly vocational and training programs. Barrier and Musselin (2016) investigated the effects of field vs. local influence in two cases of institutional merger in France.

Several of the reports and studies of reorganization within the United States focused on incidents at single institutions. Barnard and Ferren (2001), a department chair and an administrator, provided an account of the merger of two departments at a public university. Kashner (2010) wrote a journalistic account of restructuring at Cornell which was faced with a sizeable budget deficit after losing twenty-seven percent of the value of its endowment in the fall of 2008. Pattenaude (2010), chancellor of the University of Maine, discussed a visioning process to reform that system as a result of the same economic crisis. Okendu (2008) completed a case study of change at a religious institution; he reveals how administrators were able to restructure their campus to maintain financial stability while staying true to their religious mission.

The research indicates that there are common rationales for undergoing these changes and also that the role of leaders is central to their success. With a few exceptions (Barnard & Ferren, 2001; Okendu, 2008), most of the literature is focused on change from the perspective of administrators or used the institution itself as the unit of analysis. One study focused specifically on the role of deans in institutional management and change (Carvalho & Santiago, 2010). Sullivan (2004) focused specifically on the criteria used for making decisions about restructuring. Each of these studies focused on successful mergers, with the exception of Harman and Roberston-Cuninghame (1995), who explored the failure of the merger of the University of New England in Australia and Rowley (1997) whose survey of

thirty merged institutions included a few failures. Two pieces that are largely missing from these studies are: 1) a discussion of mission and changes in mission, and 2) studies that consider university restructuring in the context of organizational fields.

Rationales for Restructuring

The studies reviewed here detail a variety of rationales for governments and campus leaders to undertake large-scale change processes. Gumport (2001) and Guskin and Marcy (2003) do not examine specific cases but they are included in this review because they provide context for the study of institutional change in higher education. Gumport (2001) discusses the political and economic realities like those detailed in the previous section that often influence decisions to restructure. Guskin and Marcy (2003) offer guidance to institutions of higher education in the United States as they decide how to face the changes in higher education as a sector.

<u>Economics</u>

As the UMass situation suggests, restructuring processes or mergers are often proposed as a way of appeasing political stakeholders or introducing economic savings through resource reallocation. Sullivan's (2004) study is based on the premise that campus restructuring occurs primarily to gain economic savings. The merger of two departments at Radford University was an example of a merger that took place to save money while keeping two academic programs intact (Barnard & Ferren, 2001). Likewise, the chancellor at the University of Maine was responding to a sizeable projected budget cut when he began a visioning process to restructure its campuses (Pattenaude, 2010).

Institutional mergers in Nova Scotia (Curri, 2001) and the United Kingdom (Fielden & Markham, 1997; Rowley, 1997) were initiated to produce cost savings, despite the fact

that these savings were not always borne out by the results. In fact, all of the mergers led to a multitude of one-time costs that may not have been expected (Fielden & Markham, 1997; Rowley, 1997). Ursin, Aittola, Henderson, and Valimaa (2010) studied four separate inter-institutional mergers in Finland that were undertaken for political and economic reasons and intended to produce cost savings. What they discovered was that the focus on structure and economic savings may have been made at the expense of maintaining or improving academic quality. Zajac and Kratz (1993) studied specific types of restructuring that took place in the liberal arts college field between the years 1971 and 1986 during a time of economic and cultural shifts in society. One discovery they made was that institutions that were worse off financially were more likely to restructure.

To Accomplish Strategic Goals

Achieving academic or strategic goals are also reasons stated for undertaking a merger or restructuring process. Rowley (1997) and Fielden and Markham (1997) uncovered a variety of reasons for the mergers they studied: improving the institution's academic profile, positioning an institution to serve a new market or geographic region, and/or to help them plan for anticipated changes in higher education. Pick (2003) discussed a merger in Australia that was carried out to improve education for the mining industry and to assist in the social and economic development in a particular geographic region.

In Brint and Karabel's (1991) recounting of the shift in mission of community colleges, the authors debunked earlier notions that the change in focus of community colleges was due to consumer demand or the influence of the business sector. Rather, they supported a view that administrative leaders within the community college field chose to make this shift

in order to carve out their own niche within the greater higher education sector, thereby

acting as challengers to the existing field of higher education (Brint & Karabel, 1991).

Lessons from the Study of Academic Restructuring

Although each case of merger or restructuring is unique, there are enough

commonalities to draw meaningful connections across the studies. The lessons learned from

these studies fall into the following categories: stakeholder involvement, the influence of

structure on institutional change processes, insights from failed merger attempts, and the

effects of leadership style and culture on merger and restructuring.

In her review of thirty institutional mergers in the U.K., Rowley (1997) explained that

there were some unexpected findings and positive benefits that emerged from higher

education mergers. For one, mergers in her sample had a higher rate of success (90%) than

corporate mergers (20 – 50%). In the same study, she reported that mergers were successful

in satisfying the plans they had hoped to achieve, included in these were academic quality

improvements, redefined focus, and providing higher education in a specific region. The

small group of mergers that did not survive failed due to poor program quality, a mismatch of

cultures, or the failure of administrators in integrating the two institutions. In other cases, the

merged institutions found that they had pleasant surprises in terms of increased academic

quality, a revitalized culture and useful staff development. However, four out of five

mergers were met, at least initially, with hostility from some of the stakeholders and only in

one third of the merger cases was there widespread consultation with stakeholders prior to

the implementation of the plan (Rowley, 1997). The rest of this section will discuss lessons

gleaned from other studies.

Stakeholders

Timing and urgency in a single campus restructuring situation affect who is allowed to participate in the decision-making process. Gumport (2001) explained:

If there is some urgency, traditional mechanisms of academic governance are bypassed by an ad hoc committee, system-level or state-level agency. In this case, faculty are unlikely to be asked to participate in deliberations over the alternatives or the likely consequences of proposed changes. If timing is not critical, academic processes can reign, including faculty committees engaged in reevaluating their charge as well as the options. (p. 241)

Gumport (2001) also stressed the fact that external pressure to restructure often creates tension and divisiveness among various factions on campus. These tensions are typically characterized as struggles between administrators who must comply with accountability demands of external governing bodies and faculty or other stakeholders who resist restructuring because it appears to undermine academic freedom. Including faculty in decision-making in these situations may help create better plans and also to reduce tensions on campus (Gumport, 2001).

Pattenaude (2010) and Kashner (2010) each reported that widespread participation of stakeholders in both planning and implementation processes made for a smoother transition to change. In each of these cases, stakeholders felt more invested in the restructuring and worked together towards successful realization of goals. Barnard and Ferren (2001) in their discussion of the merger of two departments on their campus also concluded that including affected faculty in creating a solution to a problem helped to generate solutions that benefited the campus overall.

Structure

In restructuring cases, and mergers in particular, structure plays an important role in success. Harman and Harman (2003) defined a variety of collaborative efforts on a spectrum from informal collaboration to fully-integrated merger. Mergers themselves were grouped into two categories, "federal" or "unitary" (p. 30), which have different management arrangements. A federal merger allows the merged units to maintain some of their original culture and autonomy with an organizational administrative layer to manage the new unit. Unitary mergers fully integrate the two units under one leader and allow less autonomy in the original units. The authors found the unitary style to be more effective in the success of mergers over time as federal mergers make it more difficult for organizations to set future directions and create a shared culture.

Learning from Failure

Harman and Robertson-Cuninghame (1995) detailed the case of a failed merger of several universities in Australia. In their edited volume, they asked several stakeholders who were part of the University of New England merger to discuss what worked and what did not. Overall, they discovered that the failure was due largely to the incompatibility of two of the five campuses. These two institutions had very different cultures; one was typified by a collegial style whereas the other was more hierarchical and authoritarian. On each of these campuses there were leaders with strong personalities who were not able to overcome their differences. Other issues that contributed to failure were competition for scarce resources among the units as well as conflicting ideas about academic status. Also, the researchers discovered that the motivations for the initial merger had decreased over time (Harman & Harman, 2003).

<u>Leadership and Culture</u>

       A review of institutional mergers in the U.S., U.K. and Australia offers several lessons related to leadership and culture during change processes. Harman and Harman (2003) stated that "visionary, transformational leadership that is sensitive to cultural factors greatly facilitates merger processes" (p. 40). Thoughtful leadership begins at the planning stage when leaders are responsible for developing support for merger plans among stakeholders by sharing rationales, goals, and plans. During the implementation period, Harman and Harman advised leaders to move quickly to merge once the decision has been made. They also reminded leaders to be aware of the traditions and culture of both merger partners during the transitional phase to ensure positive morale and to gain the loyalty of faculty and staff.

       Locke's (2007) experience as the consultant to two British universities undergoing merger corresponded with Harman and Harman's (2003) suggestions for success. In this case, a successful merger meant increased government resources for the participating institutions. Locke stressed the importance for leaders to identify stages in the process that would require more attention, particularly in terms of resolving tensions and uncertainty in defining new roles for staff and faculty. He also emphasized the value of understanding and managing the individual cultures of the merging institutions, beginning with a diagnosis of existing cultures, subcultures and groups. "Leaders and managers at all levels will need to act and react to direct and redirect the flow of cultural interactions, drawing on their intuition, personal knowledge and creativity" (Locke, 2007, p. 94).

Connecting Restructuring in Higher Education to the Organizational Field

There are a few studies that focus specifically on change and restructuring in institutions of higher education as they relate to the organizational field. Zajac and Kraatz (1993) studied restructuring of private liberal arts colleges in the 1970s through the mid 1980s. They investigated the factors that led some of these organizations to choose restructuring while others maintained their original mission and character. Brint and Karabel (1991) examined the shift in mission of community colleges, many of which began as two-year liberal arts colleges preparing students to transfer to four-year institutions but later shifted to focus on vocational training and connection to business. Barrier and Musselin (2016) analyzed two university mergers in France that came about as a result of national pressures and they highlighted the ways the outcomes of mergers did and did not ultimately conform to field expectations. This section will discuss these studies and also present an overview of some contemporary cases of restructuring that took place during the same time period as the one at UMass.

Zajac and Kraatz

Zajac and Kraatz (1993) completed a longitudinal study of 631 private liberal arts colleges over the period beginning in 1971 and ending in 1986. During this time, a specific set of market constraints (both external factors and field-level pressures) was affecting the survival of these institutions. The first of these was a field-level shift – students and their parents were calling for educational outcomes that were tied to economic goals, i.e. skills that would help students find jobs (Zajac & Kraatz, 1993). The second constraint the institutions faced was the increasing specialization of the labor market, which potentially meant there would be fewer jobs for students who had majored in the liberal arts (Zajac & Kraatz, 1993).

This was an external, economic challenge that affected other fields as well. A societal-level influence was that the population of college-aged students had declined in the aftermath of the baby boom generation going to college.

Facing these three constraints, many college leaders felt pressure to undergo some type of restructuring as a way to improve their chances of institutional survival. In their study, Zajac and Kraatz (1993) were testing a hypothesis developed by previous researchers such as DiMaggio and Powell (1983) that because of their position in the field, these institutions would be less likely to undergo major organizational changes and would instead be constrained by structural inertia. Their results disproved the earlier theories. Zajac and Kraatz (1993) concluded that in some instances, large-scale change was seen as the best choice for college leaders facing difficult environmental or organizational conditions. Some types of institutions were more likely to undergo restructuring than others, for example, those colleges with smaller endowments or in more difficult financial situations, colleges in the northeast where the population was declining, and larger colleges were all more likely to restructure. However, more prestigious colleges were less likely to restructure – an outcome that may be related to incumbent status (Zajac & Kraatz, 1993).

In their study, the researchers identified three separate types of restructuring: 1) offering new academic programs (in this case undergraduate majors in business), 2) developing graduate programs, and 3) changing from a single sex institution to a co-educational one (Zajac & Kraatz, 1993). What is interesting about this is that while the authors disproved the theory that some institutions were resistant to change, they did identify only three different strategies for restructuring among more than six hundred colleges. This may indicate that college leaders were constrained in their actions and only felt safe in

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adopting strategies that were implemented by other institutions. In other words, the field

may have influenced what were considered acceptable strategies. Second, Zajac and Kraatz

(1993) described the restructuring as " involving resource allocation and commitment

decisions, other significant policy changes, and often even a change in the organization's

overall strategic orientation and mission" (p. 87). This connection between restructuring and

mission shift is important to the current case and will be discussed in a later section.

Brint and Karabel

Brint and Karabel (1991) used the lens of institutionalism to explore the

transformation of community colleges from mostly liberal arts based transfer institutions to

vocationally-focused schools. They argued that this shift in the community college field

came about not out of demand from students or businesses but rather out of a need for the

two-year colleges to find their niche within a status-laden sector. In the historical account

they explored the ways that the leaders of the American Association of Junior Colleges were

advocating for this change even in the face of resistance on the part of students and faculty

(Brint & Karabel, 1991). Brint and Karabel (1991) called attention to the fact that the

choices available to the community college administrators in shifting their focus were not

unlimited. Because of their position in the larger field of higher education, strategies that

would make them look more like higher-status institutions would not be acceptable. Similar

to the private liberal arts college leaders in the study by Zajac and Kraatz (1993), the

community college administrators were constrained in the choices they could make when

deciding how they would refocus. This decision to shift the purpose and mission of

community colleges provides another example of the ways that organizational fields

influence outcomes of decision-making. Also, this study presents an illustration of the ways

that institutions may become challengers and define their own organizational type within an organizational field.

Barrier and Musselin

Barrier and Musselin (2016) investigated two instances of university mergers in France. They discovered that despite the fact that the mergers were influenced by external forces in international higher education and the institutional leaders had intended to design universities that matched "international norms" (p. 374), local influence over decision-making turned out to be more powerful. The authors described the outcome of the mergers as a "patchwork" that used ideas from the field, combined with structures and strategies that would work in the limited time they had to accomplish the mergers (Barrier & Musselin, 2016, p. 3??). The authors also point out that not all elements of the merger came together as scheduled and the new institutions were still evolving at the time of their writing. One of their conclusions highlights the ways that individuals within an institution can have a significant influence on the outcome: "While a few powerful actors used the merger as an opportunity to promote their own reform agenda, some of the key features of the two merged universities stemmed from choices by exclusion, whose primary aim was the avoidance of conflicts" (Barrier & Musselin, 2016, p. 362).

Contemporary Cases of Restructuring

In 2009 the American Association of State Colleges and Universities (an internal governance unit in the field of public higher education) published an overview of recent inter-institutional mergers in the organizational field of public higher education (McBain, 2009). This is the type of publication that administrators in institutions of higher education might read to keep up on what it happening in the field. This particular piece presented an

overview of a number of mergers under consideration, or recently completed, among public

and for-profit institutions. Primarily, the author concluded that the most mergers were

contemplated as a means to generate cost savings (McBain, 2009). The piece also included

the following caution to administrators regarding the potential for restructuring to shift an

institution's mission: "However, even during a recession, care should be taken to balance

both the budgets and unique missions—including institutional culture, populations served,

public service missions, programmatic needs and local workforce development needs"

(McBain, 2009, p. 4).

McBain's (2009) piece is helpful in providing a field-level perspective on recent

attempts to restructure colleges and universities in the U.S. After reading this and because

many of the empirical studies of merger and restructuring came from outside of the United

States and most took place prior to 2008, I decided to supplement the review of the literature

on higher education restructurings with an examination of recent cases that ostensibly

occurred in response to the same environmental conditions as the case at the University of

Massachusetts Amherst. A story in the Chronicle of Higher Education pointed out several of

these restructuring efforts (Olson, 2010) and others were found through a variety of internet

searches. Because of the contemporary nature of these cases, there are no academic studies

yet available to examine them; however, there is documentation available in the form of

reports, planning documents, faculty senate meeting minutes, and public press

announcements. The administrators who led these restructurings wrote many of these

documents; none contained a review of outcomes.

Utilizing such materials, I reviewed five cases of university reorganization in order to

provide a fuller look at this complex phenomenon. Appendix I provides an overview of each

university's restructuring. In all cases, there was evidence that the restructuring was influenced by interaction with the organizational field. Many of the planning documents used similar language and in the case of the University of Arkansas at Little Rock, campus leaders hired a consultant from Arizona State University (ASU) to help them consider how they might restructure their institution to look more like ASU.

The institutions reviewed were:

- Arizona State University

- Northeastern University

- Ohio University

- University of Arkansas at Little Rock

- University of Northern Iowa

My strategy in reading through the various planning documents and campus press announcements was to search for the stated rationales behind each of these cases, what the actual restructuring meant in terms of the campus configuration, and how the institutional leaders connected these new structures to their motivations for change. Many of the themes discussed in the restructuring section above were also present in this review. For example, these institutions were restructuring to take advantage of economic savings or to accomplish strategic academic or political goals. In addition to these, I identified other, more nuanced themes in this collection of documents. Objectives such as increasing the selectivity of admissions, developing more interdisciplinary research and teaching, utilizing higher education as a regional economic driver, creating or expanding revenue generating programs, and increasing institutional prominence are among the most salient of these. A deeper study

of these cases might have revealed whether adopting these new objectives meant a shift in each institution's priorities and mission.

Of the five cases reviewed, each institution reported experiencing similar pressures from external forces as well as field-level pressures to conform and compete with other institutions. Although there is diversity across these institutions, there is remarkable similarity in the language they used to describe the need for restructuring and their plans to move forward. For example, the term "interdisciplinary" was used across all cases, as was the concept of aligning resources to better match potential funding sources.

Themes in Restructuring

Previous studies of merger and restructuring provide a look at the mechanics of such processes as well as the rationales and some of the external forces that influence these efforts. As described above, much can be learned about leadership, strategies, and considerations of culture from these studies. Taken as a whole, this research may demonstrate that restructuring is a common occurrence in higher education. However, only one study discussed the importance of mission and just three focused specifically on the influence of the field in restructuring. Also, with the exception of Carvalho and Santiago (2010) none of these studies specifically looks at the ways stakeholders and decision-makers think about the mission of higher education. Most of these studies used the institution as the unit of analysis. For the UMass case, the institution itself is the ultimate unit of analysis; however the case will also focus on the macro- and micro-levels of the organizational field and individual actors as a way to fully explore how each of these levels influenced the process and specific outcome of the restructuring.

The Mission(s) of Higher Education

The sections above bring together the concepts of organizational field theory with the phenomenon of restructuring in institutions of higher education. Field theory suggests that when events such as a restructuring or merger take place at a university, they are not completed in isolation. The institution's participation in one or more organizational fields has an influence on the reasons the institution is choosing to restructure and also on the outcomes of the process. It stands to reason that when university leaders undertake a large-scale restructuring, they may also cause a shift in institutional goals, priorities, and mission. As Gumport (2001) stated, "Within public research universities in particular, academic restructuring entails a potential reshaping of institutional purposes" (p. 250). A university's mission is important to its existence. It provides a way for institutions "to make explicit their aims and to signal how they are distinctive and different from other universities" (Allan, 2007, p. 56).

Institutions develop university missions and mission statements in relation to their position within the organizational field. Shifts in institutional logics that can occur with a restructuring may indicate corresponding shifts in the mission of an individual university. Because of the recursive nature of change in individual organizations within fields, such shifts in mission at the organizational level may also lead to shifts within the field itself, as some scholars have suggested (Kerr, 1994; Scott, J., 2006; Marginson, 2011).

This section discusses the development of the university mission throughout history, using J. Scott's (2006) interpretation of the six missions of universities. It goes on to explore the ways mission development is connected to the organizational field. Finally, the section closes with a discussion of the ways the university mission may be changing and how change

might be influenced by globalization (Kerr, 1994; Scott, J., 2006; Marginson, 2011), privatization (Travis, 2013), or perhaps, as I expect to explore in this study, by shifts in the political context of the organizational field.

<p style="text-align:center">Development of Mission</p>

J. Scott (2006) investigated the development of university missions from medieval times through the present day and categorized six missions that exist in higher education. He described the process by which universities devised their mission and purpose in response to specific societal needs and contexts. These six missions "are often coexisting, interlocking, or contradictory in nature" (Scott, J., 2006, p. 4). University missions are not static; rather they are adjusted to mirror changes in society as well as organizational fields, shifts in the philosophy of education, and policies that affect them. J. Scott's (2006) framework refers specifically to university missions and therefore fits particularly well with this study.

Research and Teaching

The earliest identified missions are research (both pure and applied) and teaching. Both of these missions pre-date the creation of modern nation-states and the ideal of academic freedom appeared alongside them. These two missions have often coexisted and their relative weight has changed over time. Currently, the research mission appears to be more prominent than teaching (Scott J., 2006).

Service to Nation

Once nations were established, service to nation became a prominent mission in Europe and still exists in nationally-established universities throughout the world (Scott J., 2006). There are some difficulties inherent in this mission, particularly in totalitarian states where the service to nation mission can be used to make rapid changes to society as

<p style="text-align:center">51</p>

universities are exploited as engines of propaganda (Scott J., 2006). This mission also relates

to a nation's efforts to train civil service employees. In the United States, the service to

nation mission was largely absent because there is no national system of higher education

(Scott J., 2006). However, I would argue that this mission has surfaced in the last two

decades as states call upon higher education institutions to serve as a driver of their

economies.

Democratization

The democratization mission is one of two distinctly American-created missions. At

its core are the principles of individualism and self-government. This mission emphasizes

the benefits of education to all citizens. Democratization provided one of the earliest signals

for open access to higher education (Scott J., 2006).

Public Service

The public service mission arose out of the Morrill Land Grant Act. Its intent is to

provide knowledge and information that could benefit the lives of all citizens (Scott J., 2006).

The establishment of university extension services was an embodiment of this mission.

Internationalization

The sixth mission described by J. Scott (2006) is internationalization, which

incorporates the teaching, research, and public service missions into the global arena. The

increasing ease with which knowledge and information can be shared globally is noted as the

main cause of the development of this mission. From this perspective, knowledge is the most

important resource in the post-industrial era (Scott, J., 2006). The potential implications of

this sixth (and future) mission will be discussed more fully in a subsequent section.

Connecting Mission to Field

As J. Scott's (2006) exploration of mission suggests, university missions have changed over time to accommodate changes in what society needs and expects from them. His research not only makes a case for a strong connection between mission development and societal conditions, but it also assumes a connection between university mission and organizational fields. The fact that there are only six missions in J. Scott's (2006) scheme (several of which overlap within individual universities), paired with the knowledge that universities exist and interrelate within organizational fields, implies that there is field influence in the development of mission.

Societal conditions and organizational field shifts can – and do – affect mission. In J. Scott's (2006) examination, mission can be considered as "Mission" (with a capital "M"). However, there may also be smaller shifts in mission (lowercase "m") that occur over time and that lead to these greater shifts in "Mission" that J. Scott (2006) and others (Kerr, 1994; Marginson, 2011; Travis, 2013) have investigated. Phenomena such as organizational restructuring can affect the ways that "mission" shifts on a single campus. When looked at from the vantage point of the organizational field, these small shifts in individual mission may begin to add up to a larger shift in "Mission" that affect the whole field. This macro-focus on a shifting "Mission" for universities is outside the scope of this research; however, this individual case study can contribute to future research in this area.

The Future of Mission in Higher Education

Several contemporary scholars have noted a shift in the mission of higher education over time (Kerr, 1994; Marginson, 2011; Scott J. , 2006; Travis, 2013). Kerr (1994) and Allan (2007) each connected shifts in mission and purpose to the democratization of higher

education, and more specifically to expanded access to higher education that took place after World War II and the increasing diversity of the student body in more recent times. Some scholars have pointed to a trend towards privatization and the use of corporate tactics as influencing changes in higher education (Allan, 2007; Travis, 2013), while others have expressed the view that the societal shift towards globalization and greater access to knowledge is changing the mission of higher education (Kerr, 1994; Marginson, 2011; Scott J. , 2006).

Privatization

Several scholars have called attention to the influx of corporate ideas and strategies into universities and higher education (see for example: Allan, 2007; Slaugher & Rhoades, 2009; Travis, 2013). As it pertains to mission and mission statements, Allan (2007) emphasized the increase in business language and tactics that have entered the field of higher education, particularly in the United Kingdom. She discussed the effects of this: "Many academics have commented on how the language of business and management has been imported into the sector, as the internal structure and organisation of universities have moved towards a business model" (Allan, 2007, p. 55).

In the U.S., Travis reviewed several reports of privatization in universities and made the argument that public and political sentiments appear to have shifted away from government spending on education. He argued that the democratization mission is disappearing because universities must rely more on private revenue generation as state funding shrinks, and therefore their ability to provide access to those students from lower income brackets has been diminished (Travis, 2013). As universities continue down this path of privatization, it will become more and more difficult to expect states to reverse the trend

and increase their support of higher education (Travis, 2013). In terms of organizational

fields, privatization in higher education may be explained by the influence of one

organizational field – for-profit corporations – on another – research universities, perhaps

through the mechanism of state legislatures or trustees' oversight.

<u>Internationalization</u>

J. Scott (2006), Kerr (1990; 2001) and Marginson (2011) each have identified

internationalization as an emerging mission of universities. Internationalization as a mission

encompasses the teaching, research and nationalization or public service missions, but also

includes service to nation-states as a global body (Scott J., 2006). Evidence of this new

mission can be seen through:

> A new emphasis on international or multicultural curricula—a global education
>
> mission—and on increasing foreign student populations, international exchange of
>
> students and faculty members, and research collaborations between institutions in
>
> different nations. (Scott J., 2006, p. 32)

J. Scott (2006) warned readers of two likely detrimental effects of the

internationalization mission: 1) internationalization may come at the expense of losing other

cultures, and 2) there may be an impulse on the part of science and technology firms to

commercialize information through intellectual property rights. He also argued that this

scenario could lead to privatization of information, thereby undermining public support to

universities (Scott, J., 2006). Kerr (1990) talks the ways that knowledge has become

international because it is shared and it is not easy to control this flow of knowledge and

information. He shares J. Scott's (2006) concerns about the efforts to control access to

information (Kerr, 1990).

Whereas J. Scott (2006) and Kerr (1990; 2001) cautioned readers about the negative aspects of internationalization, Marginson (2011) presented more a positive view. Marginson (2011) described internationalization as "the antidote to status competition, one that creates space for the global public good to evolve" and "which lends itself to open, democratic collaborative forms and gives authority to knowledge from anywhere" (p. 430).

Service to State

From my own experience working and studying in the research university field, it has appeared that another new mission is emerging – or more accurately, an Americanized version of the European mission that J. Scott (2006) identified as "service to nation." However, because of our unique system of higher education, this mission might be translated as "service to state." An increase in public accountability for research universities (and most public institutions of higher education) and the expectation that colleges and universities will provide their students with marketable job skills are two aspects of this (Zumeta, 2004). After reviewing the contemporary cases of restructuring, I realized that the motivation I classified as "education as economic driver" appeared in each of the public university cases. For each of these institutions, there was an expectation that the university itself should be an active participant in revitalizing the regional or state economy – either through research or by preparing students for careers in a specific sector with a great need for employees. Although the purpose of my research in this study is not to demonstrate the existence of this new mission within the field, it has appeared as one of the motivating factors for the case of restructuring at UMass Amherst. Further, it provides a potential avenue for future research.

Conceptual Framework

The reasons organizational decision-makers give for proposing restructuring or other planning initiatives on their campuses are often in response to changes in their external conditions; for example, a state legislature may impose budget cuts in the wake of an economic crisis, or they may align funding with a specific set of institutional outcomes. In the UMass Amherst case, Chancellor Holub stated that he had to make changes to respond to the Commonwealth's economic crisis (Holub R. C., Chancellor's Message to Campus, 2009a) but he also stated in a meeting of chairs and directors from the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences that he had to respond to instructions from the University's Board of Trustees.

As described earlier in this chapter, universities are not reacting only to external conditions, but they are also influenced by the organization fields to which they belong. Organizational theorists have proposed that an organization's leaders act in ways that fit their position within a field, and this is particularly true if that field is long-established and stable, such as higher education (Fligstein & McAdam, 2012). Within fields, incumbent organizations establish behavioral norms, which are typically replicated by other actors within the field (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Fligstein & McAdam, 2012). Because organizations strive to maintain their field position, often while competing for a better one, decision-makers at these institutions may not be completely free to try experimental strategies to solve problems during times of stress or change. If these institutions were to make a sudden and untested move to solve a problem, it may cause them to lose legitimacy and therefore slip in the rankings. When institutions do wish to make changes in response to political or economic conditions, decision-makers often look to their peers for strategies that

have already been attempted. As a result, the strategic plans and mission statements of research universities look remarkably similar (Allan, 2007). A cursory review of the language in a handful of planning documents at research universities over the past five years demonstrates this similarity (e.g., Council of Presidents & Arizona Board of Regents, 2010; Northeastern University News Office, 2009; Ohio University, 2010; Toro, 2013; University of Northern Iowa, 2010).

External conditions motivate organizations to consider changes to their structure and practices. At the same time, universities exist within organizational fields that have influence over the ways they are able to make such changes. At the individual actor level, institutional position and organizational field position have an effect on organizational decision-making. Plans made by individual university administrators do not merely reflect conditions on a specific campus; they are influenced by each of the spheres that surrounds it (see Fig. 1). Movement in any of the spheres may lead to corresponding movement within another. However, the "pull" of the larger spheres is greater. During a restructuring, these various influences shape the final outcome. When an institution restructures, its priorities and institutional logics can change; this may also mean a shift in mission. I plan to explore the interplay of these various influences in the case of restructuring at the University of Massachusetts Amherst.

Research Questions

Through this research I have sought to answer the following questions: How was the restructuring at UMass Amherst influenced by its position in and interaction with specific organizational fields? How did individual actors influence the restructuring and in what ways might their roles have been influenced by their position on campus and the University's

position within the organizational fields? In what ways did the restructuring indicate a

possible shift in mission/priorities at UMass Amherst?

There is influence from one sphere to the next. What is happening in the broader environment has an influence on the field, which influences the organization and then the individual. However, there is reflexive influence among spheres. They have the ability to shape each other; shifts in one sphere affect the others. Organizational mission is influenced by the field and the broader environment, and perhaps as organizational missions shift, so does the field.

There can be movement along this continuum; as one sphere moves, it influences movement in the others.

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework Model

Conclusion

This chapter provided an introduction to the study of organizational fields, and the

ways universities participate in them. I explored the various environmental conditions such

as politics and the economy that influence what happens in higher education and how these

influences can lead universities to consider restructuring. From there I investigated empirical

studies of university merger and restructuring, including two studies that considered the

influence of organizational fields. Because restructuring can have an effect on institutional

goals, priorities, and mission, the chapter then turned to a discussion of university mission

and possible future directions. Finally, I concluded with the conceptual framework and

research questions for this study of a single case of restructuring at the University of

Massachusetts Amherst.

CHAPTER 3

DESIGN AND METHOD

Introduction

As noted in Chapter Two, previous studies on restructuring and merger in higher education focused on the rationales for merger, implications for leadership and organizational culture, and the factors that made restructurings successful or not successful (e.g., Carvalho & Santiago, 2010; Gumport & Pusser, 1999; Harman & Harman, 2003). Most of these researchers chose the institution as their unit of analysis (Harman & Roberston-Cuninghame, 1995), whereas others focused on individual decision-makers (Carvalho & Santiago, 2010) and three studies discussed the influence of the organizational field in higher education (Brint & Karabel, 1991; Zajac & Kraatz, 1993; Barrier & Musselin, 2016). What is missing from this body of literature, however, is a study that uses a single case to focus on the interplay of three levels of actors – the organizational field, the institution, and groups and individual actors within the institution – as it relates to university restructuring and mission. The purpose of this research was to use a retrospective, descriptive case study (Yin, 2003b; Street & Ward, 2010) to examine the influence of organizational fields on individual actors and institutions during a restructuring and the effects that restructuring under these conditions may have had on institutional mission.

In this chapter, I present the research design and method, followed by a description of data collection and analysis. The chapter concludes with an explanation of the study's trustworthiness and limitations.

A Retrospective, Descriptive Case Study

In order to explore the study's research questions, I used a retrospective, descriptive case study to reconstruct the episode of restructuring at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. Both Stake (1995) and Yin (2003b) emphasized the strength of using case studies to explore a specific phenomenon within its context. In this study, organizational fields are part of the context within which universities experience the phenomena of restructuring and potential mission shift. Further, the use of a case study design was appropriate in this instance because it allowed this researcher to examine process-oriented questions that ask "how?" and it allowed me to focus on a specific set of circumstances that occurred in the past and therefore could not be controlled (Yin, 2003b). Another reason to adopt a case study design was to investigate what was distinct about this specific set of circumstances, while exploring the commonalities of the case with other cases. By exploring this restructuring at UMass Amherst my goal was to contribute to the literature on university restructuring and mission shift and demonstrate the influence of organizational fields.

Thomas (2011) stated that a case study is a design frame and not a specific method. Case study utilizes multiple methods as a way of explaining a situation or event. He further asserted that case studies should be comprised of two parts: 1) clear boundaries for the event or phenomenon, and 2) an analytical or theoretical frame. For this study I have carefully considered both of these components. The boundaries of the case are explained in a later section and the theoretical framework was designed to combine organizational field theory with mission.

The label "retrospective" describes this case study design because the process I investigated had already transpired at the time I began the research and the results of the

restructuring process were already known. Street and Ward (2010) described retrospective case studies in this way:

> All retrospective case studies have three factors in common: (1) data are collected after the significant events have already occurred, (2) researchers have access to both first-person accounts and archival data, and (3) the final outcomes—which were presumably influenced by the variables and processes under study—are already known when data collection takes place. (p. 824)

I was fortunate to have access to several of the relevant actors in this case as well as public documents and other data. Retrospective case studies that are based on a set of circumstances within a single organization can offer unique insights into specific phenomena (Street & Ward, 2010).

Yin (2003b) described three purposes that case studies might fulfill: "exploratory, descriptive, or explanatory" (p. 3). An exploratory case is a pilot study in which the researcher is exploring an issue in a general way in order to determine the lines of questioning to follow in future research (Yin, 2003a). An explanatory case study attempts to show causation within a specific set of circumstances. The UMass Amherst case study can be categorized as descriptive because it used theory to frame the way the case was investigated (Yin, 2003a; Yin, 2003b). The discussion of organizational field theory in Chapter Two classified the theory as "explicative" rather than "predictive" (Davis & Marquis, 2005). The term "explicative" as it used in this sense is more closely aligned to Yin's definition of "descriptive," meaning that the purpose of the study is to understand the circumstances, rather than to predict what might happen or to show causation.

For this study, I have drawn on organizational field theory to provide the structure and focus for collection and interpretation of data. I intentionally selected this design to highlight the ways the restructuring and subsequent shifts in mission at UMass Amherst were influenced by the University's association with various organizational fields, that included considering groups and actors within the UMass field itself. These details were likely not recognized by those who were involved in the restructuring process.

Research Design

This study focused on one case of restructuring that took place at a single institution. The purpose of the research was to demonstrate connections between the university and at least two of the organizational fields to which it belongs (these fields are "research universities" and "Massachusetts public higher education"). Further, through this process, I have considered the University's position in these fields and how these positions might have influenced the specific strategies and outcomes associated with the restructuring. A related line of inquiry explored the ways in which individual actors' roles on campus, along with the University's position in these fields, may have influenced the decision-making process. I have also considered the University of Massachusetts itself as a field in which individuals and groups acted in specific ways. Finally, I explored the ways the restructuring process may have influenced or shifted the goals, priorities, and the mission of the University.

Unit of Analysis

The primary unit of analysis for this case is the University of Massachusetts Amherst. Because the purpose of the research was to examine the effects of organizational fields on an institutional restructuring and then on the mission of that institution, the focus of the study was the University of Massachusetts Amherst. At the same time, however, the study

investigated the role of individual decision-makers in the restructuring process and considered the organizational fields to which the University belongs. Each of these actors/units played an important role in the study but ultimately, the research focus was specifically on how the interactions affected the University and its mission.

Selection of the Case

Stake (1995) suggested that the first condition a researcher should satisfy in selecting a case to study is to find one that will "maximize what we can learn" (p. 4). One way to do this is to select a location that is "easy to get to and hospitable to our inquiry" (Stake, 1995, p. 4), or as Thomas (2011) described it – "a local knowledge case" (p. 514). Because I was a professional staff member at the University of Massachusetts Amherst during the time of the restructuring, I had access to relevant documents as well as individuals who were central to the situation. Also, because UMass Amherst is a public research university, many of the relevant documents were public and therefore easy to retrieve.

Site

The University of Massachusetts Amherst is a land grant institution located in the suburban town of Amherst, Massachusetts. It is a large, public research institution which the Carnegie Foundation classifies as "comprehensive doctoral" with "very high research activity" (Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 2013). More than one thousand full-time faculty members teach the more than twenty thousand undergraduates and six thousand graduate students who are enrolled at the campus (University of Massachusetts Amherst, 2017). Like many public universities, UMass Amherst has seen a decline in its state appropriations over the last twenty years and in response, the administration has begun implementing various strategies to raise new revenues. Increased fundraising from alumni

and other likely sources, efforts to attract out-of-state students, investing in the parts of campus that bring in corporate and government research dollars, and becoming a competitor in the online education market were just a few of these strategies at the time of this case.

Students and faculty at UMass have a reputation as activists. At least five labor unions were active on campus at all times. Anecdotal evidence suggested that the influence of the faculty senate as a policy making body had declined in recent years and the faculty union filled some of the void. Based on the results of a pilot study conducted in the fall of 2012, some faculty believed that the Holub administration had grown increasingly less transparent and less likely to seek input in decision-making (Brousseau-Pereira, 2012). The University's board of trustees played an important governance role because of its ability to authorize increases in student fees, which had been much sought after as a way of making up for decreases in state appropriations. Finally, the state legislature often seemed less than supportive of the University during this time (Weerts, 2008).

Fields

The University of Massachusetts Amherst is linked to several fields. For the purposes of this study, the fields explored were identified as "research universities" and "MA public higher education." While there is some overlap among these fields, there are also differences. The "research universities" field consists of public and private research universities (using the Carnegie classification of a research university) as well as various accreditation organizations, organizations that rank research universities such as the Center for Measuring University Performance, media outlets such as the Chronicle of Higher Education and Inside Higher Ed, a variety of membership organizations such as the Association of American Universities (AAU) and the American Association of Colleges and

Universities (AACU) and more specialized organizations such as the National Academic

Advising Association (NACADA) or the Council for Advancement and Support of

Education (CASE), non-profit and for-profit companies that sell products and services

specific to higher education, federal government agencies that sponsor research such as the

National Science Foundation, and more. The field identified as "MA public higher

education" would contain many of the organizations and agencies detailed above (excluding

research universities outside of the state of Massachusetts) and would also include all public

institutions of higher education in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, the state legislature,

the Massachusetts Board of Higher Education, the University of Massachusetts Board of

Trustees, and others.

I decided to designate these two fields as fields of interest for this research after

conducting a pilot study in the fall of 2012 that centered on a piece of the restructuring

process (Brousseau-Pereira, 2012). Based on the findings of that study, these fields appeared

to have had the most influence on decisions made by UMass Amherst officials, particularly

in relation to the academic restructuring that constitutes the subject of this case. UMass

Amherst itself was also considered as a field for this study, with a variety of actors and

groups having influenced the outcome of the restructuring process.

Boundaries of the Study

Yin (2003b) and Thomas (2011) explained that it is possible to design case studies to

examine various types of events, including decision-making processes. They recommended

that researchers use caution in delineating the boundaries of a case because it may be difficult

to clearly identify a beginning or ending (Thomas, 2011; Yin, 2003b). Yin (2003b) proposed

three guidelines for determining the "completeness" of the case:

1. "The complete case is one in which the boundaries of the case – that is the distinction between the phenomenon being studied and its context – are given explicit attention" (p. 162). The researcher can do this by demonstrating that he or she has reached the "analytic periphery" of the case and further investigation is less relevant to the study.

2. "The complete case study should demonstrate convincingly that the investigator expended exhaustive effort in collecting relevant evidence. This does not mean that the investigator should literally collect all available evidence – an impossible task – but that the critical pieces have been given 'complete' attention" (p. 163).

3. Researchers should be sure to design a case study that they will be able to complete in the time they have allotted (Yin, 2003b).

For the purposes of this study, the "case" is the decision-making process that took place at the University of Massachusetts Amherst beginning with Chancellor Holub's arrival at UMass in August of 2008 through the July of 2011 when Chancellor Holub officially announced his intention to step down from his position at the end of the following academic year. Setting these specific boundaries allowed me to meet the first of Yin's (2003b) criteria outlined above. To ensure that I had examined all of the relevant data sources, thereby fulfilling the second criteria, I reviewed more than 200 documents related to the case (and outlined in Appendix II) and also interviewed thirteen decision-makers who were closely involved in the restructuring process. I asked each of the participants to share any additional documents to which they had access and also to recommend other stakeholders for inclusion in the study. Finally, as a way of addressing the final concern above, I allotted sufficient time to complete the data collection and analysis.

Case Study Protocol

In order to develop the case study, data must be collected that fit the case study protocol. "The protocol is a major way of increasing the reliability of case study research and is intended to guide the investigator in carrying out the data collection from a single-case study" (Yin, 2003b, p. 67).

The design of this research had three phases. The first step was to reconstruct the restructuring process that took place at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. Chapter Four provides the details of the case, including how it is integrated with the broader economic and political contexts, and organizational fields. I reviewed close to two hundred documents; including email messages, committee reports, news media reports, and surveys to assemble the basic facts of the case. Appendix B provides a list of the data sources used to compile the case, organized chronologically. This review of documents not only allowed me to recreate the basics of what happened during the restructuring process but it also informed the design of the interview protocol used for the second phase of data collection, which will involved interviewing thirteen individuals who were part of the restructuring process. The data collection phase was intended to be iterative and therefore the third phase included a review of additional texts along with a deep reading of some of the more important documents that were identified during the first two phases of data collection.

Data Sources and Collection

Stake (1995) reminded researchers that data collection ought to be guided by the research questions they have set out for their studies. Yin (2003a) suggested that scholars utilize two levels of questioning: the first are questions that guide the data collection and help set the boundaries of the case, and the second are more specific questions that serve as the

basis for interview protocols and document analysis. I used this guidance to formulate the plan for data collection.

Documents

I have compiled a catalog of the various documents I used as evidence for this case study (see Appendix B). Throughout most of the restructuring process, and particularly at the beginning, the Chancellor sent detailed email messages to the campus regarding his plans and the progress of the task force that was examining the proposal. Each of these messages is public and available. Several committees explored aspects of the restructuring proposal and they documented their process with meeting minutes and reports. These reports are public and I was able to gain access to the majority of the meeting minutes from participants on these committees. The Faculty Senate also has a public collection of minutes, memoranda and reports, which I was able to access for this research. At the time the restructuring was proposed and during the decision-making process, the student-run newspaper, The Daily Collegian, both of the local newspapers, The Daily Hampshire Gazette and The Springfield Republican, as well as The Boston Globe published stories related to the process. These, along with regular reports from the UMass Office of News and Media Relations, were helpful in reconstructing the case. Finally, I located minutes from meetings of the Board of Trustees, as well as the University of Massachusetts Annual Report of Indicators. Both of these sources were useful in providing context for the case. Through interviews I was also able to gain access to a few more documents, primarily regarding the Provostial Committee process.

There were several sources of data that were used to supplement those detailed above. During the restructuring process, both the faculty union and the faculty senate conducted

surveys to gauge the support of faculty for the proposal. I analyzed the results of both of these to provide evidence of faculty sentiment and influence in the case. I skimmed other documents, such as the bylaws of the faculty senate and the processes for on-campus mergers to understand details of the case study.

Reconstructed Observation

As an employee of the University of Massachusetts Amherst during the time of the restructuring, I developed my own understanding of the events. Additionally, I kept notes from various meetings in which I took part. In some instances, I had already analyzed and reconstructed certain meetings and events for other pieces of research. To do this, I carefully considered the various perspectives of the actors involved, the meanings individuals attached to the processes, and the ways in which topics were discussed – including what was omitted from the conversation (Charmaz, 2006). As I worked on this project, I endeavored to be thorough in reconstructing meetings and events – using notes and memory as well as getting corroboration of these views from the original participants. These reconstructed observations were useful in rebuilding parts of the restructuring process that I was able to witness firsthand.

Individual Interviews

I conducted interviews with thirteen campus decision-makers who were involved in the process that shaped and informed the restructuring. This selection represents a "purposeful sample" of individuals who had important information about the process and how it unfolded (Patton, 1990). Appendix C provides a list of individuals who were interviewed, some have allowed me to use their names, others have not. In cases where they do not want their names used, they are referred to by category of actor. Not all of the

individuals on this list were in favor of the reorganization. Through these multiple

interviews, I looked for evidence that was common across participants and also sought out

contradictions across the narratives (Seidman, 2006). In the end, I was able to build a sample

that represents the various stakeholder groups involved in the restructuring process, including

some from the upper administration, including former Chancellor Holub. Three of the deans

from the colleges that were involved in the merger process were interviewed as were

representatives from the faculty senate and the faculty union. At least two department chairs

who were involved in various negotiations were part of this sample. I was not, however,

successful in reaching members of the University's Board of Trustees.

<u>Interviewing Elites</u>

Most of these interview participants are considered "elites" and at times it was

challenging to schedule ninety-minute interviews with them (Rubin & Rubin, 2005).

Seidman (2006) cautioned researchers about the difficulties of interviewing elites; because of

their position of power, they may try to take over the interview or may be uncomfortable if

someone in a position of lesser power is trying to lead a conversation. I did not find this to

be the case.   I believe that I was able to respect their positions but also hold them

accountable for providing an accurate portrayal of their experiences in the restructuring

process (Rossman & Rallis, 2003). Some participants were more easily scheduled than

others but most of the interviews took place over the summer of 2015 and summer is often a

time when academics have more availability. I began by interviewing participants with

whom I had an established relationship so that I could ask them to make an introduction to

the next potential participant if necessary. Overall, most participants were willing to meet

with me without an introduction from a peer. I am even optimistic that many of the

participants found the interview experience to be rewarding and some appeared to appreciate being able to tell their version of the story.

Interview Consent and Protocol

The interview consent document along with a protocol can be found in Appendices D and E. The protocol was used to guide each of the conversations but I did not follow it dogmatically as some avenues of questioning were richer with one participant or another. Because this is a retrospective case and much of the documentation I analyzed was publicly available, I asked participants if they would be willing to use their own identity for this case study or if they preferred to be referred to in another way. For the interview protocol, I developed several categories of participation and offered these to interviewees: 1) descriptive title, 2) specific category of actor, or 3) anonymity. The consent form explained that it would be difficult to guarantee anonymity in the final account because of the circumstances of the case.

Each interview was approximately 90 minutes in length and each participant permitted the interviews to be recorded. As mentioned above, the interviews were semi-structured and the interview protocol in Appendix D served as a guide (Yin, 2011). Prior to each interview, I sent participants a timeline of reconstructed events of the case to help them recall a situation that had begun several years ago. Participants found this timeline useful during our discussions. Most interviews began with a conversation about the participant's history and current role at UMass Amherst. After this, we began to reconstruct their participation in the restructuring process and to discuss interpretations of the situation. In some interviews, participants spoke about the ways they keep up with developments in higher education. At times the conversations focused on the various rationales for

restructuring, the ways the case might have been related to plans at other institutions, the role of the state legislature or the Board of Trustees in influencing the situation, and myriad other things which are discussed in Chapter Five. With each participant, I asked about their impressions of the mission and purpose of higher education in general and for the University of Massachusetts in particular. Conversations also focused perceptions of a shift in mission or priorities at UMass Amherst during the time of the restructuring.

Role of the Interviewer

As someone who experienced parts of the restructuring process, I have my own bias regarding what took place and its implications. This insider status might have been beneficial for some interviews as participants might have been more comfortable talking with me about this event. I did not sense that my status made interviews more difficult, although there was tension on a few occasions. I had anticipated that some of the Chancellor's former leadership team might have been more guarded in speaking with me because they knew I had worked in one of the colleges where most faculty and staff were opposed to merger but this did not seem to be the case (Yin, 2011).

Another possible problem related to insider status is the dilemma of taking too much for granted when interviewing people with whom a researcher shares common experiences. Insider status may unintentionally lead to the misrepresentation of a community or culture because it can be difficult to publicly admit to negative aspects of one's own culture (Dominguez, 2000). My goal in each interview was to be an active listener and to allow participants to tell their stories without judging their motives or assuming that I understood their perspective before they had a chance to provide their view of the events that took place. I strove to ask clarifying questions and to probe more when I felt I was getting too

comfortable. More strategies for minimizing bias and attending to accurate data collection and analysis will be explored in a later section (Role of the Researcher).

Data Coding, Analysis, and Interpretation

This study included several types of data: interviews, committee documents and reports, electronic messages, meeting minutes, survey results, observations and various institutional documents. Each data source was carefully examined and document review began before the interview process, although the process was iterative. This allowed me to reconstruct the case using the conceptual framework for this study and also to craft a timeline of the decision-making process to use during interviews.

Case level questions	• How was the restructuring at UMass Amherst influenced by its position in and interaction with specific organizational fields? • What roles did individual actors have in shaping the restructuring and how were they related to organizational fields? • In what ways did the restructuring indicate a possible shift in mission/priorities at UMass Amherst?
Questions to guide the review of texts and interviews	• What motivated the restructuring? • Is there evidence of connection to organizational field? • Is there language in documents/ interviews that is common across other institutions? • How did the participant's role in the restructuring process influence the outcome? • Is there evidence of shifts in institutional logics through the reorganization? What are the "code words" that tell us what the mission should be?

Adapted from Yin (2003b).
Figure 2: Questions to Guide the Study

In analyzing the various data sources, I explored connections to the organizational fields to which UMass Amherst belongs in order to discover how those connections had potentially influenced the outcome of the decision-making process. I also sought proof of any shift in the University's goals, priorities, and mission during the time of the restructuring.

Through interviews with individual decision-makers who led the restructuring efforts, I explored the ways that field influences may have affected the decisions they made about the restructuring and explored how these decisions may have changed institutional logics, and therefore shifted the mission of the University.

The analysis was guided by questions about the ways the University and its mission were affected by the restructuring process. Figure 2 divides the guiding questions into two levels: case level questions are overarching inquiries that guided the overall research design, and the second level of questions provided a more specific way to analyze the data (Yin, 2003b).

Analyzing the various documents required time and attention. I used the documents catalogued in Appendix B as primary sources and also for corroborating the interview data. I examined the content as well as the structure of many of the documents and utilized the series of questions presented by Charmaz (2006, pp. 39-40) and reproduced in Appendix F to gain a deeper understanding of the purpose and importance of the primary texts. In order to analyze the interviews, I gained permission from participants to create a digital recording, which was transcribed soon after the completion of each interview. I shared the transcribed text of each interview with its participant and asked for clarifications and feedback, which many of the individuals provided. I completed a preliminary analysis of each interview transcript as a way of informing future interviews. For both the documents and the interview transcripts, I utlized the constant comparison method outlined by Thomas (2013) to review, code, and develop preliminary constructs from the data. These first level constructs were further refined by a second and third review of the data until there was enough evidence to identify reliable themes (Thomas, 2013). Appendix G offers a list of codes and themes.

Role of the Researcher

During the restructuring process at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, I was a professional staff member in the Dean's Office in the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences and I also served on one of the committees that was asked to consider the merger of the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences and the College of Humanities and Fine Arts. Because of my role, I was able to closely observe parts the reorganization and also to collect data in the form of notes from observing meetings, official meeting minutes, committee reports, memoranda from various faculty to the Chancellor and the Faculty Senate, and each of the email messages sent out to the campus by the Chancellor. My proximity to this case can be viewed as both a strength and a limitation.

Using recommendations from Reinharz (1997), I reflected on the different roles I might have brought to the interviews I conducted. During each interview, I disclosed my relationship to the case and discussed strategies for minimizing bias. I focused on being an active listener during these conversations and asked for clarification of statements rather than assuming shared meanings for the same set of circumstances. In most cases I asked interview participants to reflect on their experience of the interview to ensure that they felt heard. I also sent them transcripts of the interview to allow them to check for misunderstandings or misinterpretations. Utilizing the constant comparative method of data analysis, which looks for themes and constructs that are reinforced throughout the entirety of the data, allowed for consistency in the findings (Thomas, 2013). Each of these steps was planned to minimize the effect of potential bias on the data collection and analysis.

Trustworthiness

Lincoln and Guba (1985) advised researchers to establish the reliability of their research by ensuring that participants will recognize it as a true representation of their reality. As stated above, I shared individual transcripts with each participant after completing and transcribing interviews. To the extent feasible, I have offered to share the results of this study with participants prior to publication (Rossman & Rallis, 2003). In this case, I am confident that credibility was achieved by prolonged engagement, persistent observation, trust building with participants and attending to any possible unintended distortions of participants' stories (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Triangulation of data was useful in guarding against misrepresentations and was accomplished in a few ways (Rossman & Rallis, 2003). First, interviewing thirteen people allowed me to verify consistency of themes and stories across interviews. When participants offered diverging views in their narratives of the process, it provided an opportunity to consider the negative case and further check my assumptions (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Finally, because of the wide number of primary source documents for this case, it was relatively easy to verify participants' historical reconstruction of events, as these were not entirely reliable.

Limitations

Because this study provided an in-depth look at one case at one university, the specific results are not transferable to another setting. However, the results may be used as a means of illustrating how a variety of contemporary issues discussed in higher education today are emerging on one particular campus. Because this situation occurred in the past and I did not take notes at every stage and opportunity, it is possible that my recollections of what happened are not entirely accurate and the same limitation held true for interview

participants; I asked them to revisit an event that began at least seven years prior to our conversations.

Conclusion

This study presented an opportunity to focus on a single case of university restructuring and to investigate how this event may have shifted the goals, priorities and mission of that university. The research design incorporated and explored the interplay of three levels of actors – the organizational field, the institution, and campus-level groups and individual actors – as this related to university restructuring and mission. By investigating this one case deeply and focusing on the ways the macro-influences of the organizational fields and micro-influences of groups and individual decision-makers were able to influence the outcome of the reorganization, this study adds to the knowledge on how university leaders make decisions about change on their campuses. Also, this study may lead to further exploration of the ways in which restructuring and other campus-based strategies may influence the organizational fields and the mission of the university.

CHAPTER 4

A CASE OF RESTRUCTURING AT UMASS AMHERST

<u>**Introduction**</u>

In this chapter I have presented a chronological narrative of the case under study, beginning with Chancellor Robert C. Holub's arrival on campus in the summer of 2008 and continuing through the spring semester of 2011, when it became evident that further plans to restructure the academic side of campus would be put on hold indefinitely. An archive of historical documents (presented in Appendix B) provided the basis for this account; this archive also provided documents for analysis in this study and it includes for example, campus-wide email messages sent from the Chancellor's Office; news reports from the UMass News Office, The Massachusetts Daily Collegian (the UMass student-run newspaper), and other news outlets; and minutes and reports from the UMass Faculty Senate, as well as several task forces and committees convened throughout the process. I chose to include this account as its own chapter to provide the reader with context for the upcoming analysis and discussion sections. Exploring the case in rich detail allowed me to call attention to the variety of actors in the case as well as the interconnectedness of the three spheres of influence that are present: field, organization, and groups/individuals.

I began drafting this chapter prior to interviewing participants. After completing the interviews and starting the analysis of both interview transcripts and other source documents, I returned to Chapter Four to continue writing it. The work I had done in the

interim allowed me to bring a more nuanced perspective to the chapter – in part utilizing the perspectives of the participants to highlight specific events.

A New Chancellor Arrives

On August 1, 2008, Chancellor Robert C. Holub arrived at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. On behalf of the search committee that recommended Holub's nomination to the UMass Board of Trustees, UMass President Jack Wilson stated that Holub was "a distinguished scholar, a proven administrator…" who was "driven by a desire to make UMass Amherst one of the premiere public universities in the nation," (UMass News Office Report May 1, 2008). Chancellor Holub's academic career began at the University of California, Berkeley where he was a full professor and scholar of German. At Berkeley, Holub served as Chair of the German department and later for three years as dean of undergraduate education within the College of Letters and Science. Dean Holub left Berkeley for a the job of Provost at the University of Tennesee, Knoxville, where he served for two years prior to coming to UMass Amherst as the twenty-sixth Chancellor. The University of Tennessee, Knoxville is similar in size to UMass Amherst, with an undergraduate population of approximately 20,000 undergraduates and 6,000 graduate students.

From the time he interviewed on campus and in most of his public addresses and written pronouncements, Chancellor Holub proclaimed the following plan:

> Perhaps my most important task as Chancellor will be to take UMass Amherst to a higher level. [UMass] Amherst cannot be content excelling among publics in New England. In my view, it should seek to compete with the best public institutions across the country (UMass News Office, May 5, 2008).

During his first public address at the annual Community Breakfast on August 28, 2008, and also at the first University Convocation on September 12, 2008, he reiterated that "the Amherst campus of the University of Massachusetts should be more than a regional power; it should aspire to the upper echelon of national public universities" (UMass News Office, September 12, 2008).

Chancellor Holub highlighted further ambitions at the fall Convocation of faculty, where he stated:

> To be a more effective administration, I believe that we should undertake a number of modifications in our present central administration, either to emulate best practices of the finest public research institutions in the country or to align units for greater effectiveness (Office of News & Media Relations, UMass Amherst, September 12, 2008).

In each of these statements, he acknowledged UMass Amherst's participation in the wider field of research universities. This continued throughout his time on campus.

He described eight areas of campus that he believed required improvement in order to reach his goals, including: research, fundraising, communications, administration, graduate education, undergraduate studies and general education, facilities, and faculty hiring. (Office of News & Media Relations, UMass Amherst, September 12, 2008). While the Chancellor's remarks seemed to be foreshadowing the restructuring proposal he announced several months later, at the Convocation, he was not anticipating the challenging economic difficulties that lay ahead.

Budget Woes

Over the last few weeks, there has been a great deal of focus on the global economic crisis, and the effect it will have on all of us personally, and on the university community as a whole. In times of crisis, there is much speculation and misinformation. There is no shortage of concern, or even pessimism, and there have been many viewpoints shared about how we as an institution will weather this storm. (Chancellor Holub email to campus, October 23, 2008)

Shortly after the September Convocation address discussed above, Chancellor Holub received word from the office of Massachusetts Governor Deval Patrick that a drop in state revenues would precipitate a mid-year budget cut to the campus. Addressing the UMass Faculty Senate on the following day, the Chancellor announced that despite the anticipated budget cut, his goal was to continue investing in faculty and working to improve general education for undergraduates. He called on the faculty to help solve the problem, stating: "Nothing is new at any university. How do good universities deal with these issues?" (Office of News & Media Relations, September 23, 2008). In this statement, the Chancellor appeared to suggest that the answer to this state higher education field crisis might be found by exploring strategies in the research university field.

By mid-October of his first semester, Chancellor Holub learned that the governor was planning a mid-year cut of $12 million. Despite the difficult budget forecast, the Chancellor's message continued be about striving for a better position among institutional peers: "While it is clear we face difficult financial circumstances, we must remain committed to making the strategic choices necessary to help UMass Amherst

compete as one of our nation's best public research universities" (Holub email to campus, October 15, 2008). After the Governor's announcement Chancellor Holub installed a budget planning task force comprised of faculty, staff, and students and charged them with investigating strategies that would increase revenues to campus. By December 2008, this group was meeting regularly to consider revenue-generating strategies that were seen as best practices at other research universities.

Throughout the 2008 fall semester after learning about the Commonwealth's cuts to the campus budget and it became clear that the nation was in a serious economic crisis that would affect state appropriations for a long time to come. Chancellor Holub continued to talk about his plans to propel UMass Amherst forward. In an email message to alumni on November 24, 2008, he stated, "Yes, these are difficult times, but even in the face of such adversity, we remain committed to our core mission and to our goal of becoming one of our nation's best public research universities." Later in the same message he declared, "This budget downturn gives us the opportunity, however, to develop a long-range strategy that will align the assignment of faculty positions with campus priorities…" (Holub email to campus, November 24, 2008).

Over the course of the next few years, the campus was threatened with significant cuts to its state appropriation. Chancellor Holub sent regular updates to the UMass community that provided updates on the budget situation. Early in the spring semester of 2009, the Chancellor shared the news that he was anticipating a $45 million cut in the state's appropriation to campus. This figure represented approximately ten percent of the overall campus budget. Despite having faced significant budget cuts over several years, this financial crisis was more severe than anything in recent memory. After several

months of anxiety, the campus community learned that federal stimulus funds would largely cover the lost appropriations but until that was clarified, faculty, staff and students existed in a state of dread over the potential negative changes to the University. This budget situation is an example of the influence of the MA public higher education field.

<u>**Restructuring**</u>

Within the economic and campus budget context described above, Chancellor Holub began to talk about restructuring in various corners of campus. In an email to faculty, staff, and students on December 16, 2008, the Chancellor described cuts he was planning in the Offices of the Chancellor and Provost to help alleviate the budget cut the state predicted. The email described the ways the Chancellor and Provost would merge and share functions among their offices. Other money saving strategies outlined in that message included: deferring maintenance and planned renovations, instituting energy efficiency measures, and cutting expenses for travel, advocacy (lobbying), and events. Chancellor Holub later explained that his goal in making cuts to the executive area was to "protect the core mission of campus and keep the faculty strong" (Holub interview, June 29, 2015). When interviewed for this research, Chancellor Holub mentioned that his restructuring efforts during this time also included reorganizing of the Student Affairs units.

While Chancellor Holub enacted the budget cutting measures described above, he also began conversations with the college deans, indicating that there would likely be restructuring within the academic units. Email exchanges between the Chancellor and the dean of the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences (SBS) at that time provided evidence of an informal meeting of Deans with the Chancellor in mid-December wherein

they discussed potential restructuring of schools and colleges. It was clear that the Chancellor anticipated some resistance to his proposals, particularly from faculty in the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences. In an email to SBS Dean Janet Rifkin, he wrote, "I recognize that there is resistance to change; ironic in some sense that the greatest resistance to change comes from the putatively most radical spots on campus" (Email between Holub and Rifkin, December 17, 2008). This statement could be considered an acknowledgement of the power and influence of campus-level actors.

In December, 2008, the first versions of a proposal to restructure schools and colleges began to circulate among faculty. These plans were initiated by the Chancellor and included reducing the number of colleges from nine to six by merging the College of Natural Sciences and Mathematics with the College of Natural Resources and the Environment, merging the College of Humanities and Fine Arts with the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences, combining the School of Nursing with the School of Public Health and Health Sciences.

Also in these early versions, Chancellor Holub suggested that the departments of Polymer Science and Engineering and Computer Science be relocated to the College of Engineering. Despite eliminating this plan from his proposal early on, the Chancellor urged the chairs of the two departments to continue exploring the possibility of moving their programs into the College of Engineering. In interviews for this research, several participants pointed out that it is common for Research 1 universities to house the Departments of Polymer Science and Engineering and Computer Science within their Colleges of Engineering. During an interview with Chancellor Holub, he explained that increasing the size of the College of Engineering could be helpful in improving the

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standing of UMass. Ultimately, however, through the strong influence of faculty leaders in these two departments, this aspect of the proposal was permanently dropped.

<div align="center">**Merger Part One – Spring Semester 2009**</div>

On January 13, 2009, Chancellor Holub stated in an email to campus that he was anticipating a $45 million cut in the state budget appropriation to campus. In that message, he remarked that he had asked the Budget Planning Task Force to consider a number of options for "reducing expenses and increasing revenues." He included "reorganization of the schools and colleges" among these options. Later that month, Chancellor Holub encouraged the UMass community to provide comments and suggestions on a public webpage set up by his office to gather feedback on the budget issues. It transpired that the Budget Planning Task Force was not the appropriate committee to work on a restructuring plan, but by the end of January, the Chancellor's decision to restructure had become public.

On January 29, 2009, at a special meeting of the Faculty Senate, requested by Chancellor Holub and by a petition of the faculty, the Chancellor discussed the seriousness of the national economic crisis and asked that members of the campus community face the challenge as a united front. His address began a campus-wide conversation about the restructuring of schools and colleges, which, in his view, would save money through cuts in staffing and the elimination of dean positions. Chancellor Holub's stated goal was to preserve faculty positions, and he claimed that there was an expectation on the part of off-campus stakeholders that cuts should be made to campus:

> Elimination is something that we have to do in order to preserve other things on the campus. It's something that is almost expected of us because this is the way

that one handles these kinds of crises. I'm thinking in particular of our donors, the Board of Trustees and the politicians who control our other sources of revenue. (Faculty Senate minutes, January 29, 2009)

During his presentation, Chancellor Holub did not explicitly describe his favored model for academic reorganization, although he did begin to describe his ideas for restructuring. Specifically he mentioned that it would be beneficial to consolidate the life sciences and that the plan being considered might eliminate three colleges. He stated that the professional schools would not be affected by restructuring because changes in their administration and autonomy could potentially lead to accreditation difficulties. He planned to release his restructuring proposal within a few days of this meeting and explained his anticipated timeline for reorganization, which included: continued information gathering, drafting a proposal, seeking the Faculty Senate's recommendation for the proposal, and implementing a restructuring by July 1, 2009 – less than six months away. In his estimation, the attitude of the faculty and their willingness to participate in carrying out a reorganization would strongly influence the success of the plan.

Following his presentation, several faculty members asked Chancellor Holub questions about his plans, including what other alternatives besides restructuring were considered, how the reorganization might increase the profile of campus, and how the administrative staff came up with the envisioned $1-2 million in savings that would be realized from a reorganization. Finally, some faculty called for the Chancellor to create a committee that would look specifically at the restructuring proposal. Chancellor Holub addressed some of these issues before the meeting ended with a plan to continue the discussion on February 9, 2009.

Before the Faculty Senate could reconvene, Chancellor Holub shared the first official version of the proposed reorganization on February 3, 2009. The specific proposal eliminated 4 colleges: Humanities and Fine Arts (HFA), Social and Behavioral Sciences (SBS), Natural Resources and the Environment (NRE), & Natural Sciences and Mathematics (NSM) and created two: the College of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences (CHASS) and the College of Natural Sciences (CNS). The proposal kept most of the departments in their respective colleges during the mergers, but the Department of Landscape Architecture and Regional Planning was shifted from NRE (to be CNS) to the CHASS and the Department of Psychology moved from SBS (to be CHASS) to CNS. The Department of Resource Economics was scheduled to move to the Isenberg School of Management. This proposal also maintained the autonomy of the School of Nursing (there would be no merger) but it proposed a shared administrative structure between Nursing and the College of Public Health and Health Sciences. The original proposal also added the Department of Communication Disorders to the CHASS. The Chancellor asked the Faculty Senate to deliberate and make a recommendation on the proposal by the end of the spring semester so that the plan could be implemented on July 1, 2009.

Faculty Senate Meeting Part 2

The special meeting of the Faculty Senate that began on January 29, 2009 was resumed on February 9, 2009, after Chancellor Holub released his reorganization proposal to the wider campus community. At that meeting, Chancellor Holub spoke about the federal stimulus bill, which campus constituents were hopeful might be used to fund higher education and which was being discussed in Congress at that time. Faculty members and the Chancellor also continued their discussions of the academic

restructuring. Sensing discontent, Chancellor Holub cautioned faculty to keep budget and restructuring discussions "internal to campus" rather than to air grievances about the campus restructuring in the press.

Also at the February 9 meeting, Faculty Senate secretary, Ernest May, explained the process the restructuring proposal would have to go through in order to move forward. Over the course of the spring, each of the six councils of the Senate would generate a report about the Chancellor's restructuring proposal. The Rules Committee would be responsible for aggregating the reports and presenting them to the Chancellor, along with a "rational response and a political response" to the restructuring. The Faculty Senate planned to vote on the restructuring proposal later in the spring semester and their recommendation would be sent to the UMass Board of Trustees who were responsible for the final approval. In fact, the vote of the Faculty Senate was only advisory to the process.

Task Force on Reorganization

In the days that intervened between the meeting on January 29 and its conclusion on February 9, 2009, Chancellor Holub announced that he had convened a Task Force on Reorganization (TFR, later known as the RTF) to address concerns from faculty that there was a need for more study of the reorganization proposal. The task force was comprised of 16 tenure-track faculty members, all but two of whom were from colleges that were being considered for merger. The TFR had one month to complete their assignment; which was to "provide advice about a proposal on college reorganization, and to explore as well the possibility of a College of Arts and Sciences, or any other alternative organizational structure that it finds appropriate for campus" (TFR

Preliminary Report to the Chancellor, March 6, 2009, p. 2). The Chancellor expected a

final report of the task force's findings by March 6, 2009.

Table 1: Evaluation Criteria for Academic Reorganization

- Efficiencies in administration: immediate and longer term
- Demonstrated responsiveness to the economic crisis
- Minimizing disruption to strategic planning or implementation processes already in progress
- Strategic opportunities/positioning the campus for the future. Potential effect of a reorganization alternative on the ability to position the campus to increase excellence in research, teaching and engagement.
- New research and engagement opportunities for collaboration and partnership within and across departments, schools and colleges and with other universities and research organizations
- New education and outreach opportunities for collaboration and partnership within and across departments, schools and colleges and with other universities and research organizations
- Other strengths/weaknesses

(Source: Task Force Preliminary Report, p. 5)

Over the course of February and into early March, 2009, the Task Force on

Reorganization collected suggestions and opinions to gauge the interests and concerns of

their colleagues. They collected campus-level data from the UMass Office of

Institutional Research. They developed a list of peer institutions to which they compared

UMass Amherst (note: this was a comparison of institutions in the research university

field). This list included the thirty four public universities that were members of the

AAU, as well as ten universities that UMass campus administrators considered to be

"peer institutions," and another set of twelve universities categorized in the same way as

UMass in the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education: "very high

research, [with] no medical and veterinary school." The task force studied the

organizational structures of each of these peer institutions and discovered that 75% of the

public universities in the AAU had a College of Arts and Sciences structure, and the

percentage among private universities was even higher. Finally, task force members established a set of criteria by which they could evaluate several different restructuring proposals (See Table 1 for a list of criteria).

By February 24, 2009, the task force established an online forum that offered faculty and other members of the UMass community a space to comment publicly on the Chancellor's restructuring proposal and their task of studying it. Twenty one responses appeared in that forum, almost all (19) were from tenure-track faculty, and an overwhelming majority (15) were from faculty affiliated with either SBS or HFA, many of whom were writing in opposition to the proposed merger of the College of Humanities and Fine Arts with the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences. Two professors from the sciences wrote to support a restructuring that would bring together the physical and life sciences, stating that such a move would be beneficial in attracting and supporting increased research dollars. Several commenters requested that the Task Force examine a re-establishment of a College of Arts and Sciences – a structure that existed at the University until 1993.

The Task Force on Reorganization provided a draft report to Chancellor Holub on March 6, 2009, in advance of the March 12 meeting of the Faculty Senate. The report contained five primary recommendations. The first of these urged the Faculty Senate and the Chancellor to consider the two proposed college mergers as separate plans because, "the considerations and logic of each of these proposed mergers are completely different" (TFR, Preliminary Report to the Chancellor, March 6, 2009, p. 2). The second recommendation was to move forward in merging NSM and NRE into a College of Natural Sciences, with the further suggestion that deans and faculty who would be

affected by departmental moves be consulted by the administration prior to crafting any implementation plans. The third recommendation was for the University to work toward an ultimate goal of re-establishing a College of Arts and Sciences, which would contain "the core scholarly research departments, as well as related applied research units" (TFR, Preliminary Report to the Chancellor, March 6, 2009, p. 2).

The fourth and fifth recommendations addressed the strong opposition of many faculty members to the merger of the colleges of Social and Behavioral Sciences and Humanities and Fine Arts. As an alternative to the College of Arts and Sciences model, TFR recommended creating a seven-college model that would bring together the life sciences while maintaining the autonomy of the arts and humanities and the social and behavioral sciences. The seven-college model could serve as an interim step in moving toward a CAS model but would keep HFA and SBS separate until that time. The final recommendation was even stronger, the TFR, "strongly recommend[ed] against a merged college combining HFA and SBS" (TFR Preliminary Report to the Chancellor, March 6, 2009, p. 3). Task force members reasoned that the logics of the colleges were so different that such a merger would work "against strategic advancement of research, education and engagement for the campus" (TFR Preliminary Report to the Chancellor, March 6, 2009, p. 3).

The Task Force on Reorganization described their report as "one contribution at the outset of a longer, broader process of transformation on the campus during a period of acute economic scarcity." The report went on to state that in their deliberations, the TFR wanted to, "protect the core missions of the campus – research, education, and outreach,

while also working to position the campus over the longer run for strategic growth in the present and future" (TFR Preliminary Report to the Chancellor, March 6, 2009, p. 4).

Chancellor Holub's Reorganization Plan Announced

In the afternoon of March 12, 2009, Professor Jane Fountain, as head of the Task Force on Reorganization, presented the committee's findings and recommendations to the UMass Amherst Faculty Senate. Following this presentation, Chancellor Holub thanked Professor Fountain and the rest of the task force for their work and then provided the details of his proposed academic restructuring plan – as he had also done in a campus-wide email that same morning. The Chancellor directed the creation of a College of Natural Sciences to take place by fall 2009. Along with this merger, Holub again urged the chairs of the departments of Polymer Science and Engineering and Computer Science to enter into discussions with the Dean of Engineering with the goal of bringing those two departments into the College of Engineering. The proposed merger of the Colleges of Social and Behavioral Sciences and Humanities and Fine Arts was postponed because of strong opposition to it. However, the Chancellor asked the deans (one an interim to be named) to study the concerns and work toward a merger. Another part of the restructuring brought the administration of the School of Nursing into the College of Public Health and Health Sciences (PHHS), although Nursing was to maintain its own dean. Also in this plan, the Department of Communication Disorders was transferred into the College of Education from PHHS, the Department of Resource Economics moved from the College of Natural Resources and the Environment into the Isenberg School of Management, the Department of Landscape Architecture and Regional

Planning was transferred into the College of Humanities and Fine Arts, and the Department of Psychology moved to the College of Natural Sciences.

Chancellor Holub also spoke to the Faculty Senate about his concerns regarding a return to a College of Arts and Sciences model, which was the structure supported by the TFR. He believed that creating a College of Arts and Sciences (CAS) would produce a great imbalance of power on campus because most of the faculty and resources of the University would be included in the CAS, which would disadvantage the professional schools.

Following Chancellor's Holub's restructuring announcement, he tried to address various concerns of the faculty regarding a perceived inequity of funding between the north and the south ends of campus. For many faculty, this distinction between the north and south represented a conflict between the sciences and engineering (perceived as the resource-rich entities in the "north end") and the humanities, arts, and social sciences, which had fewer resources and were located in the southern part of campus. This situation fueled some of the mistrust around reorganization. Among some faculty in the social sciences, humanities, and arts, there was the notion that the mergers would offer more advantages to the sciences than to a newly created CHASS. To address these concerns, Chancellor Holub announced some initiatives that would help to fund travel and research expenses for departments in the Humanities and Social Sciences. His plans also included creating a minimum startup fund for all tenure-track faculty who were hired in the future; this was a way of balancing perceived inequities between expensive lab sciences and areas where research was less expensive.

Faculty Senate and Faculty Union Continue Discussions

Following the report from the TFR and after Chancellor Holub announced his

restructuring plan, the councils of the Faculty Senate released their own reports on the

reorganization proposal. Over the course of the 2009 spring semester, these reports were

released and discussed. On March 26, 2009, the Faculty Senate held an open meeting to

discuss the reorganization plans. At that meeting, Senate Secretary Ernest May detailed

his interpretation of the seven actions that the Senate would need to vote on in order to

move any recommendation from the Faculty Senate to the UMass Board of Trustees:

- The closing of the College of Natural Sciences and Mathematics,

- The closing of the College of Natural Resources and the Environment,

- The establishment of the College of Natural Science,

- The relocation of the Department of Communication Disorders from Public
  Health and Health Sciences to the School of Education,

- The relocation of the Department of Resource Economics from the College of
  Natural Resources and the Environment to the Isenberg School of Management,

- The relocation of Landscape Architecture and Regional Planning from Natural
  Resources and the Environment to the College of Humanities and Fine Arts, and

- The relocation of the Department of Psychology to the College of Natural
  Sciences. (Faculty Senate Minutes, March 26, 2009, pp. 1-2)

Professor May was clear to state that the Faculty Senate was only serving in an advisory

capacity and that the Trustees had the final say on the restructuring.

Also at the March 26, 2009 Faculty Senate meeting, Randall Phillis, President of the Massachusetts Society of Professors (MSP)[2] spoke out about the need for more faculty to participate in Chancellor Holub's plans to restructure the schools and colleges. He was dismayed at the lack of involvement by faculty members who were not department chairs and he discussed the efforts of the faculty union to ensure that the restructuring would not negatively affect the personnel processes for faculty tenure and promotion. Phillis urged the faculty to take their time in deciding whether the reorganization plan was a good one; he explained that Massachusetts Governor Deval Patrick announced that same week that there would be federal stimulus money available to keep the campus afloat until the 2011 fiscal year. Professor Phillis also recommended that any decision to reorganize should be made based on "scholarly and academic value" and without rushing (Faculty Senate minutes, 3-26-09).

In early April 2009, the Faculty Senate released a number of reports from the six Senate councils[3]. Across all reports, there was higher support for the merger of the College of Natural Resources and the Environment with the College of Natural Science and Mathematics than there was for the merger that would bring together the Social and Behavioral Sciences with the Humanities and Fine Arts. The Academic Priorities Council stated specifically that they were in favor of returning to a College of Arts and Sciences model or creating a seven-college model that would merge NSM and NRE and be in line with the Massachusetts Life Sciences Initiative. However, they were not supportive of merging SBS and HFA. Other concerns the councils raised included:

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[2] This is the union that represents UMass Amherst faculty and librarians.
[3] The councils named after their focus on the following issues: Research, General Education, Academic Priorities, Public Services and Outreach, and Academic Matters

questions about how any reorganization might affect recruitment of faculty and graduate students, suggestions about preserving interdisciplinarity in teaching, requests that any reorganization could help distribute responsibility for teaching general education courses more evenly across campus, and recommendations that newly named deans be educated about the differences among various academic programs for the purposes of research and tenure decisions.

Faculty Senate Vote

On May 14, 2009, after much discussion and debate, along with some modifications by the Chancellor to the original reorganization plan, the Faculty Senate approved five motions:

1. That the Faculty Senate approve the establishment of the College of Natural Science

2. That the Faculty Senate approve the transfer of the Department of Psychology to the College of Natural Sciences

3. That the Faculty Senate approve the transfer of the Department of Resource Economics to the Isenberg School of Management

4. That the Faculty Senate approve the inclusion of the Department of Landscape Architecture and Regional Planning in the College of Natural Sciences for a period of one year to allow the Department to assess the new administrative structures of the Colleges that will result from reorganization, to conduct planning meetings with allied departments, and to present a proposal for the permanent location of the department that will best support its research and educational missions.

5. That the Faculty Senate approve the closing of the College of Natural Sciences
   and Mathematics and the College of Natural Resources and the Environment…
   (Faculty Senate Minutes, May 14, 2009, p. 6)

Once the Senate voted, the next step was to seek the approval of the UMass Board of
Trustees at their next meeting on June 10, 2009.

Opposition and Opinion Polls

There was, over the course of this process, opposition to the Chancellor's
reorganization plans. Faculty in SBS and HFA were the ones to most publicly voice their
disapproval to the proposed creation of a College of Humanities, Arts and Social
Sciences with the faculty in SBS playing the role of most outspoken critics. At the same
time that the Task Force on Reorganization was exploring possible reorganization
structures and the Faculty Senate committees were drafting reports, groups of faculty
were meeting informally to discuss their thoughts about the merger proposal and what
might be done to stop it.

Department heads and chairs in SBS met often and also discussed their
disapproval of the Chancellor's plan over email. Some of their opposition centered on
the lack of evidence that such a restructuring would save a projected $1.3 – $1.5 million.
Several faculty members in SBS had posed questions on the blog created by the Task
Force on Reorganization, asking for more proof that the restructuring would indeed save
money. As mentioned above, another common argument was that a restructuring would
lead to an unequal distribution of resources across the campus with more support going to
the sciences (located on the North side of campus) than to the humanities and social
sciences (on the South side of campus). Some even speculated that the restructuring was

intended to strengthen research in the sciences while undercutting support for research in the humanities and social sciences, which would then be expected to teach a greater proportion of general education courses. One faculty member articulated the argument in this way:

> Regrettably, this plan will divide the university into a research campus in the north end and a teaching campus in the south end. I foresee the flight of considerable talent from the south if this is so, which would surely hurt cutting edge interdisciplinary initiatives such as Science, Technology and Society (STS). The loss of research talent in the southern campus will surely affect student perceptions of the quality of faculty and teaching at UMass, especially since these disciplines attract the most undergraduate majors. (LaRaja, TFR blog comment, February 26, 2009)

It was apparent from comments like this that there was anxiety around a merger of HFA and SBS. While many faculty publicly cited the issues above as their reasons to oppose the merger, it also seemed that much of the dread was related to the unanswered question of who would become dean of a merged College of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences. At the time of the Faculty Senate's vote in May of 2009, the much-beloved Dean of the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences was on the verge of retiring and the Dean of the College of Humanities and Fine Arts was relatively new to campus. Many SBS faculty expressed concern that the HFA dean would not manage the new college in ways that would benefit the work they were doing. In particular, resource allocation in each of these two colleges was managed quite differently; in SBS budgets

were allocated to individual departments and programs, whereas in HFA resources were managed centrally and expenditures required approval at the dean's level.

Opposition to the creation of a College of Natural Sciences seemed to be less pronounced. There were few comments on the TFR's blog regarding the merger of NRE and NSM but those were relatively supportive of a merger. The only issue that was somewhat publicly contentious was Chancellor Holub's original proposal to move the departments of Computer Science and Polymer Science and Engineering into the College of Engineering. Faculty in both of those departments objected to this move because they claimed that the cultures were too different. In the end, their resistance urged the Chancellor not to proceed with this plan to increase the size of the College of Engineering.

The public opposition to the restructuring on the part of faculty in SBS and HFA encouraged the Faculty Senate to seek the opinions of all faculty on campus regarding the proposed reorganization. In May, the Faculty Senate arranged for the UMass Student Assessment, Research and Evaluation Office (SAREO) to conduct an opinion poll that was distributed to all campus faculty. The purpose of this poll was to assess the levels of support for various aspects of Chancellor Holub's proposed merger. The questionnaire was crafted and launched online on June 2, 2009, after the Faculty Senate had voted to support parts of the restructuring plan. Table 2 provides a summary of the results, including a break down of responses by the school or college to which each participant belonged.

Overall, participation in the poll was higher among faculty in the colleges that would be affected by a reorganization (See Table 2). Sixty one percent of faculty in the

College of Natural Resources completed the poll and overall these faculty members were less supportive of creating a College of Natural Sciences (31% in favor/52% opposed) than their counterparts in the College of Natural Sciences and Mathematics (50% in favor/32% opposed, with 56% participation). A vast majority of respondents from both

Table 2: SAREO Survey Results: All Faculty

Process: Administered online to 1,484 tenure stream faculty, lecturers, and librarians from June 2-8, 2009		Response Rate = 40%, N=601	
Item	Support*	Neither support nor oppose	Oppose
Create a College of Natural Sciences	44%	25%	31%
Create a College of Arts and Sciences	30.5%	13%	56%
Create a College of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences	28%	21%	50%

*This combines the totals for "supports strongly" and "supports somewhat"
(Source: SAREO Faculty Survey)

of the science colleges opposed the creation of a College of Arts and Sciences (75% opposed in NSM and 75% opposed in NRE), whereas faculty in HFA and SBS were more likely to be supportive (at 41% and 47% respectively).

Regarding the creation of a College of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences, a vast majority of faculty respondents in the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences opposed it (80% overall, with 69% "strongly opposed"). A majority of responding faculty from the College of Humanities and Fine Arts were also opposed to the creation of a CHASS (63% opposed overall, with 38% "strongly opposed" and 25% "somewhat opposed"). Faculty respondents from the other colleges did not have these levels of opposition to the creation of a CHASS, indicating a measure of indifference to this structure.

Table 3: SAREO Survey Results: Response Rates, By College

College	Total Faculty in Fall 2008*	# survey responses	% response to poll
Natural Resources and the Environment (NRE)	123	75	61%
Social and Behavioral Sciences (SBS)	190	110	58%
Natural Sciences and Mathematics (NSM)	244	136	56%
Humanities and Fine Arts (HFA)	275	131	48%
Public Health and Health Sciences (PHHS)	53	23	43%
Engineering	92	35	38%
Education	67	24	36%
Management	92	30	33%
Nursing	23	7	30%
Commonwealth Honors College	11	n/a	0%
Other**	10	30	
TOTALS	1180	601	51%

* Total faculty numbers as reported by the UMass Office of Institutional Research (Factbook Academic Year 2008/09)

** This discrepancy is likely due to the fact that UMass librarians, as MSP members, would likely have responded to the survey but would not be accounted for in the faculty totals in the Factbook.

Creation of CNS

On July 1, 2009, the College of Natural Sciences (CNS) opened for business under the leadership of Dean Steve Goodwin and Executive Associate Dean Jim Kurose. The two men previously served as deans of the College of Natural Resources and the Environment and the College of Natural Sciences and Mathematics, respectively. The College of Natural Sciences also became the new home of the Department of Psychology, which voted to move from its previous position in the College of Social and Behavioral

Sciences because several faculty (particularly those in the behavioral neuroscience track) felt that a connection to the life sciences was a better fit for research collaboration.

Over the course of the next year or two, the Deans worked diligently to bring together two distinct college cultures, to integrate the staff in the CNS Dean's Office and retool most of the individual job descriptions, to craft a personnel policy for the hiring and promotion of faculty, and to tweak systems and spaces to oversee the work of the college. Conversations with each of the deans indicated that there were several challenges inherent in this merger and that it resulted in some upfront costs that were not anticipated. There were also, however, new opportunities for research collaboration and some efficiency by bringing together a number of graduate programs.

A New Provost Arrives

In October 2008, soon after Chancellor Holub's arrival, UMass Amherst Provost Charlena Seymour announced that she would step down from the position she had held since 2001. There was speculation that the Provost decided to leave because her work style conflicted with the Chancellor's; however, this version of the story was not substantiated in the public record. Provost Seymour's departure was planned for the end of the 2008/09 academic year, which gave Chancellor Holub approximately nine months to find a replacement.

Over the course of the spring semester, campus administrators conducted a national search for a new provost. In May 2009, three finalists came to campus to meet various stakeholder groups. One month later, on June 4, 2009, the Chancellor's Office announced the hiring of James V. Staros as Provost. Staros joined the UMass Amherst

campus on August 2, 2009 from Stony Brook University where he had served as the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. The official announcement read, in part:

> As dean [of Stony Brook], Staros led the college's efforts to increase undergraduate retention and graduation rates through an aggressive program of matching resources with student needs to reduce unmet demand and by careful coordination of student advising within the college and units outside the college. These improvements have contributed to the recent improvements in Stony Brook's undergraduate retention and graduation rates and to the concomitant rise in Stony Brook's ranking for undergraduate programs (National Universities) in U.S. News & World Report, which has improved 21 places in the past five years. (UMass Office of News and Media Relations, June 4, 2009)

Provost Staros came to campus ready to support Chancellor Holub's restructuring plans. In an interview for this research, he spoke about his belief that larger colleges were more effective than smaller ones. He imagined it was possible to work towards the recreation of a College of Arts and Sciences model. Provost Staros also supported Chancellor Holub's desire to see UMass Amherst invited into the American Association of Universities. A UMass news story on October 19, 2009, chronicled this:

> Despite the current difficulties facing the campus, Staros said the administration's actions are aimed at positioning the institution for membership in the Association of American Universities, an invitation-only organization of leading research universities. "There is nothing the [C]hancellor and I would like better than to lead UMass Amherst to the AAU," he said.

It is worth noting in these statements the references to research university field and prominence.

Merger Part Two – Fall 2009-Spring 2010

In the fall of 2009, after the College of Natural Sciences was created and the new provost was installed, conversation turned once again toward merging the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences with the College of Humanities and Fine Arts. Chancellor Holub had tasked Provost Staros with combining the two colleges. On May 14, 2009, when the Faculty Senate voted to recommend the creation of CNS and other pieces of the reorganization, Chancellor Holub asked HFA Dean Joel Martin and Robert Feldman, the interim dean of SBS to take the 2009/10 academic year to review the various reports and come up with a plan for merging the two colleges.

In early November, 2009, Deans Feldman and Martin named faculty and staff from SBS and HFA to a College Reorganization Study Committee, which was tasked with examining the prospect of merging the two colleges. Provost Staros attended one of the first meetings of the committee. He explained that he supported a merger because in his experience, larger colleges were stronger. He cautioned the committee to keep the academic mission at the center of a merger, while also considering the importance of budgetary realities. College of Natural Sciences Dean Steve Goodwin also attended this meeting. He responded to questions about the challenges and surprises he encountered while overseeing the merger of NRE and NSM. He remarked that at that time the merger had not increased interdisciplinarity nor did it bring in more research money, as most units spend more money to support the research enterprise than it generally brings in. "The dean spends more money supporting research in the college than is realized from

RTF. So RTF doesn't really support other aspects of the college," he said (CHFA-CSBS Reorganization Study Committee minutes, November 17, 2009).

After this information gathering meeting, the committee began its work in earnest in December 2009. The deans of the two colleges advised the group to focus on the costs associated with merger (both economic and human resources) and asked for a final report by April 2010. Committee co-chair, Elizabeth Chilton explained:

> In our original charge we were supposed to look at the costs and benefits, but in our meeting it seemed like the Provost and Chancellor see the benefits already, so it should be up to us to focus on the costs, since that's something they haven't been focusing on. (Committee minutes, 12-9-09).

Once the committee has its charge, members devised a plan for crafting the report. Several subcommittees were formed to examine a variety of aspects of merging colleges; these included: personnel and finance, advising, development, personnel, curriculum teaching loads, and research support. Faculty members headed up the subcommittees dealing with issues that were more pertinent to faculty whereas staff led the others.

Over the course of December 2009 and January 2010, subcommittees collected data on the workings of the two colleges, met with faculty and staff from the College of Natural Sciences to hear about their merger experiences, and drafted initial reports that detailed the financial and human/personnel costs that merging would require. In March, 2009 the committee met and the subcommittees reported out their findings. The chairs of the College Reorganization Study Committee explained that they felt their job was to

create a concise report that addressed the costs of a merger since the Provost had already presented the benefits.

On March 21, 2010, the College Reorganization Study Committee submitted a final draft of its report to its members and the deans of the two colleges. The report presented input from faculty and staff, and used data from the report produced by the Task Force on Reorganization. Overall the committee recommended against merging the two colleges. Some of the reasons for opposing the merger included: faculty in the affected colleges were strongly opposed to the creation of a CHASS, a merger would take time and energy away from the various revenue-generating efforts that colleges and departments were undertaking, a merger would be expensive both financially and in terms of lost productivity and morale, and regarding the balance of power on campus, the committee reasoned that it might be beneficial to have two deans to support the humanities, arts, and social sciences rather than just one. A final argument against merging the two colleges was that it would create a unit that was an anomaly among peers:

> Finally, we want to underscore that no major research university in the U.S. has a College like the proposed College of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences: at a minimum it would need to include the Department of Psychology in order to be viable both intellectually and financially. (CHFA-CSBS Reorganization Committee Final Report, p. 18)

In April, 2010, Deans Feldman and Martin brought the committee's report to the Provost. After laying out the Chancellor's reasons to merge, they described what they considered to be three types of costs: 1) start up costs, associated with moving staff and

records, 2) rebranding costs associated with creating a new website, stationary, etc., and

3) opportunity costs from staff and faculty who would be spending much time and energy

on creating a new college in addition to the work they were already expected to do. In

the end, the deans presented four potential options and outcomes for moving forward:

> **Option 1.** Merge without Structural Investment
>
> Outcome: Merger damages already stressed colleges and damages the campus
>
> **Option 2.** Merge with New Structural Investment
>
> Outcome: Merger yields benefits to college and campus and creates conditions for
>
> excellence
>
> **Option 3.** Do Not Merge and Do Not Invest
>
> Outcome: Undermine potential excellence
>
> **Option 4.** Do Not Merge but Do Invest
>
> Outcome: Avoid short-term costs and create conditions for excellence
>
> (Memorandum to Provost from Deans Martin and Feldman, April 30, 2010, p. 6)

The Provost and the Chancellor were dissatisfied with the results of this

committee's report, however they did not force the colleges to merge. In May 2010,

following the release of this report, Provost Staros met with the Academic Priorities

Council of the Faculty Senate. The Council had been working on its own report

regarding the creation of a CHASS. The Provost asked the Council to postpone the

release of their report until the fall, so that he would have more time to consider the best

structure for advancing the University.

<u>Merger Part Three – Provostial Working Group – Fall 2010-Spring 2011</u>

The following September (2010) Provost Staros explained to a student reporter from The Massachusetts Daily Collegian that he planned to convene another committee to consider the merger of SBS and HFA. The Provostial Working Group would be comprised of department heads and chairs from the two colleges. Provost Staros planned to chair the working group himself and to ask the participants to begin to envision a new college structure. "Staros said that he envisions a possible merger where the two schools no longer resemble their current selves, where he feels last spring's committee approached the issue believing the two colleges in their entirety needed to be preserved" (Daily Collegian, September 21, 2010).

The Provost appointed this working group early in the fall and they met bi-weekly over the course of the fall semester to sketch a vision for a combined college. In a memo to the Faculty Senate in January 2011, members of the group described their process:

> At the first few meetings our discussions centered on a potential structure and possible motivations for considering a new college. In late November we were asked to take on a visioning process for a potential new college that would include all or most of the current departments in SBS and HFA. A consultant joined our meetings on 11/30 and 12/10 to help us (1) brainstorm what we saw as some of the key trends in the academy over the next five years, and (2) formulate themes that could be used in working towards a vision statement for a potential new college. Following those meetings the Provost appointed a subcommittee of three of us to draft a vision statement based on the notes from those brainstorming meetings.

The provostial working group spent several months debating and discussing various ideas, many of which were examples from other research universities. In the end, a subcommittee drafted a vision statement and delivered it to the Provost. He, in turn, presented it to the Faculty Senate on January 20, 2011 as a full-fledged plan to merge HFA and SBS into a College of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences (CHASS), effective on July 2011. In a nine-page introduction to the vision statement, Provost Staros expressed his reasons for wanting to create a CHASS. He detailed various changes in campus circumstances since the original plan to merge SBS and HFA and suggested that these would support the creation of a CHASS. Some of these changes included: the formation of the College of Natural Sciences which prevented the return to a College of Arts and Sciences structure; with the financial standing of the University finally stabilized, a merger at this time would be for academic and organizational reasons; there had been an energetic push towards revenue generation and interdisciplinary work that could be further supported by a merger; and there was an interest for more collaboration among the liberal arts. In the Provost's proposal, budget savings were no longer a rationale for merging. He presented the connecting theme of the newly merged college: to investigate "what it means to be human" from a variety of disciplines. Staros also wrote about the need to create "bridging mechanisms" that would help connect faculty and research in all of the arts and sciences.

Several members of the Provostial Working Group were not pleased that the Provost sent this document as a proposal to the Faculty Senate. In a memo to the Faculty Senate, the SBS-affiliated members of the working group explained the origin of this proposal. Their letter explained that the proposed reorganization was based on a

visioning exercise undertaken by the working group, that it was drafted by a subcommittee, and it was not endorsed by the entire group. In the memo, the writers pointed out that the Provost's proposal did not contain any implementation plan. Finally, this memo clarified that the Provost had submitted the proposal to the Faculty Senate after giving working group members less than twenty-four hours to comment on it. "The Working Group was not asked to further comment on, vote on, or otherwise ratify the proposal that was submitted to the Faculty Senate on January 20, 2011" (SBS Working Group memo January 27, 2011).

Further opposition to the Provost's merger proposal came from the collected department chairs and heads, as well as the program directors of the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences who also submitted a memo to the Faculty Senate on January 31, 2011. Their communication spelled out their opposition to the Provost's proposal, stating that it did not "reflect the previous efforts of faculty committees to spell out the costs and benefits of the proposed merger, nor does it propose an administrative structure or financial plan for the merged college. Since the faculty have previously voted in opposition to the proposed merger and the current proposal ignores legitimate concerns and faculty preferences, we cannot support the proposal before the Faculty Senate."

In an effort to gauge faculty sentiment about this merger, the Massachusetts Society of Professors initiated an online opinion poll that was sent to all faculty and librarians on campus on February 14, 2011. The brief poll asked only two questions: "Do you support the Provost's proposal for a merger of CHFA and CSBS" and with which college respondents were affiliated. The results of the survey showed that ninety-four percent of respondents from HFA and almost ninety-five percent of respondents from

SBS were opposed to the merger. Of the smaller number of respondents from other colleges, almost eighty percent opposed the merger.

While faculty members disputed the proposal, it continued to work its way through the Faculty Senate's process. Faculty Senate Secretary Ernest May sent the document out to the nine Senate councils for consideration and asked them to report back to the full Senate by April 1, 2011. On March 3, 2011, in a campus news story, Provost Staros announced that he would soon name two interim deans to head the colleges of SBS and HFA and that they would be charged with addressing the implementation of a plan to merge the colleges. "Staros said the existing colleges will continue to operate through 2011-12 while the deans lead discussions on issues such as combining efforts in the area of research support and administrators address solutions to housing a CHASS dean's office" (UMass Office of News and Media Relations, March 3, 2011). He also stated that he and the Chancellor believed that merger of SBS and HFA would help the University get closer to its goal of attaining a position in the AAU because the merged college would be part of a campus structure that was more similar to those at AAU institutions.

Despite the forward momentum on the merger, by the end of March, 2011, Provost Staros withdrew his proposal for a merged SBS and HFA and instead tried a new strategy. He reappointed Julie Hayes and Robert Feldman as interim deans of HFA and SBS respectively and announced the appointment of Linguistics Professor John McCarthy as Special Assistant to the Provost. Provost Staros pointed to his own experience at Vanderbilt where he served in a similar capacity:

That is why I have adopted a "troika" arrangement that combines the trusted

current leadership of the two colleges and a respected faculty member from a

social science department that is located in HFA. I myself was a participant in

such an arrangement at the departmental level at Vanderbilt, and I can attest that it

worked very well. (Staros email message to university leaders naming interim

deans March 2011)

This remark appears to represent an acknowledgement of the influence of the research

university field.

The Deans and Special Assistant McCarthy were charged with working within the

colleges to decide how to best implement a merger. They began having conversations

with faculty and staff in the two colleges to come up with a plan that the Provost would

submit to the Faculty Senate in the upcoming academic year. Special Assistant

McCarthy wanted to maintain the momentum from the Provostial Working Group's

meetings. The members had considered several examples from the field of research

universities that would allow interdisciplinary exploration and partnerships, such as the

creation of a Center for Liberal Arts. Professor McCarthy's draft of the implementation

issues contained several references to connection to the research university field:

A range of academically coherent undergraduate majors and graduate programs in

the social sciences and humanities that (1) lead national conversations about the

state and future of their fields; (2) contribute distinctive specialties to those fields

against a backdrop of broad student preparation; (3) enable interdisciplinary

linkage with a minimum administrative obstacles; and (4) recruit and encourage a

sustainable number and broad range of graduate and undergraduate students,

broad from the perspective of ethnic, national and economic background, form of academic preparation, and academic competencies. (Draft, CLASS Implementation Issues, 2011)

During a brief few months there was a lot of activity around the creation of a College of Humanities Arts and Social Sciences. A joint committee with participation from various councils of the Faculty Senate discussed the potential impacts of the merger on undergraduate education. A separate and unofficial proposal to create a School for the Arts surfaced, only to be rejected by a task force that investigated peer institutions where fine arts departments were combined into a performing arts unit. Their verdict was that this would require substantial investment and this was not the appropriate time. The Office of Research Development began to investigate new opportunities for bringing research dollars into the future CHASS. Meanwhile, as all of this planning was taking place, Chancellor Holub's job performance was being reviewed.

The Chancellor's Review and the End of Restructuring

Over the course of the spring semester in 2011, an evaluation committee with representatives from UMass faculty, alumni, and Trustees reviewed Chancellor Holub's performance in advance of the end of his three-year contract. The committee's purpose was to recommend whether the Chancellor's contract be renewed. In a May 22, 2011 article in the Boston Globe, sources tipped off reporters that the evaluation committee was planning to oppose a continuation of Chancellor Holub's tenure. The article discussed a variety of perceived flaws that led to the committee's negative decision, and it also presented the successes of Chancellor Holub's tenure. The case of academic restructuring that is the subject of this research was not mentioned in the story. The

author hinted that the Chancellor might soon be in negotiations with President Wilson about the terms of his departure.

Although no official statement had yet been made to the wider campus community, Provost Staros announced at a meeting of the Dean's Council in early June that Chancellor Holub was planning to step down. At that moment, it was unclear whether the Chancellor would remain on campus for another year or if the University would be under the leadership of an interim chancellor. Because of the uncertainty, Provost Staros decided that it would not be prudent to go ahead with a merger of SBS and HFA.

Shortly after the Provost's announcement to the deans, Special Assistant to the Provost John McCarthy sent an email message to several individuals in the two colleges who had spoken with him about the potential merger. It read:

> A short while ago at the Deans' Council meeting, Provost Staros said that a period of interim leadership for the campus would not be the right time to proceed with a merger. If in the coming weeks the campus gets an interim chancellor, the merger of HFA and SBS will be taken off the table and searches for permanent deans of these colleges will begin early in the Fall semester. (McCarthy email, June 7, 2011)

On July 1, 2011, Chancellor Holub announced officially that he would step down at the end of June 2012. With that message, the era of restructuring came to a close.

Stimulus Funds Save the Day

Throughout the period under study, warnings and updates about the budget situation were both common and alarming. From early in the fall 2008 semester,

Chancellor Holub communicated frequently with the campus community, sending regular

budget updates over email. In the spring of 2009, there was preliminary information

about the ways that the federal stimulus funds, also known as the American Recovery and

Reinvestment Act (ARRA), might be used to shore up higher education across the

country. Even when it seemed certain that the stimulus funds would allow UMass

Amherst to avoid draconian budget cuts, campus administrators continued to plan for the

worst. The expression "the fiscal cliff" was a refrain that echoed throughout this period

of financial instability and it referred to the time after the stimulus funds had been

expended when campus leaders anticipated a return to the enormous deficits that

followed reductions in the state's appropriation.

Throughout the spring 2009 semester, campus leaders waited to hear about the

distribution of ARRA funds. On March 24, 2009, Chancellor Holub emailed campus

with the news that the Commonwealth of Massachusetts would likely receive $1.88

billion in federal stimulus funds over two years to bolster funding for preschool, K-12,

and higher education. At that point, Governor Patrick proposed awarding $81.6 million

to the UMass system for fiscal year 2010, with approximately half coming to the UMass

Amherst campus. The Chancellor reported that if the stimulus funds came through, they

could be used in part to rebate increased student fees.

Much of the rest of the semester was spent waiting for the state legislature to

decide how the stimulus funds would be dispersed. In an April 2009 message from

Chancellor Holub, he shared the opinions of the Governor and Speaker of the House

when he recommended that the campus community not rely on stimulus funds to fix a

difficult situation. Instead, he intended to go ahead with budget-cutting plans,

anticipating that there would be a larger cut down the road even if stimulus funds were available to patch things together in the current period.

Finally, in the summer of 2009, the Massachusetts legislature approved its budget, which allowed gap funding for the next two years to support higher education at a level close to what was intended prior to the economic crisis. Despite this restoration of funds, UMass continued to live under the shadow of difficult economic times. The state of the budget and the unknowns about what would happen once the stimulus funds were gone was an ongoing conversation. Chancellor Holub's frequent email updates provided a lot of information on the process, which perhaps contributed to the level of anxiety on campus.

In the end, the stimulus funds did save the day and UMass was spared from drastic cuts that would have been devastating to all parts of campus. The Chancellor's revenue generating plans also served to bolster the UMass budget and the threat of falling off the "fiscal cliff" was never realized.

Campus Survival Strategies and the Framework for Excellence

During this period of budget crisis and reorganization, University leaders recognized that they would have to find new approaches that would contribute to the economic survival of the campus. At the same time that campus leaders were struggling to raise revenues, the Chancellor was also speaking about the ways that he would move UMass Amherst into the upper echelons of public research institutions. While it may seem unachievable to advance in the rankings while experiencing significant reductions in state appropriations, Chancellor Holub continued to pursue both of these aims over the course of his tenure. He alternately used the reorganization of the academic side of

campus as an example of both: it could be a way to achieve savings in the budget crisis, and it could be a way to reposition the University to achieve greatness.

One of the approaches Chancellor Holub took at this time was to appoint an ad hoc Budget Planning Task Force to look for ways to save money and raise revenues for the campus. While this group was initially asked to explore the possibility of restructuring schools and colleges in order to save money, it became clear in early 2009 that such a project was beyond their scope. Instead, the task force came up with a variety of plans to bring new revenues into campus. They looked to peer institutions to see what kinds of approaches had successfully bolstered campus funding. Over the course of two years, the University adopted a number of the strategies recommended by the Task Force, including: increasing the number of out-of-state and international students who would pay higher tuition; reforming general education so that all courses would be four credits rather than three; increasing online course offerings and developing certificate and degree programs through the Division of Continuing and Professional Education (because the different revenue structure meant more money would stay on campus), developing programs to serve the Massachusetts Life Sciences Initiative, and establishing a number of five-year combined bachelors-masters degrees. The Budget Planning Task Force also looked into a variety of new fees that might be imposed on students as well as ways to increase the overhead earning on grants.

Chancellor Holub himself signed a contract that would bring the UMass men's football team into Division I competition. This move angered many faculty but was anticipated to bring in revenues over time. He also began to investigate an alliance with Bay State Medical Center in Springfield for the purposes of evolving into a medical

school in the Pioneer Valley. Both of these strategies were intended to make UMass appear more like an AAU institution.

The strategies mentioned above were not only intended to increase campus revenues, some were also intended to help with the Chancellor's goal of raising the profile of UMass Amherst. In the spring of 2009 and again in the spring of 2010, Chancellor Holub shared with the campus community his "Framework for Excellence." This document provided the Chancellor's vision for moving UMass up in the rankings with the eventual goal of being invited into the AAU.

<div align="center">**Conclusion**</div>

This chapter presented a detailed narrative of the decision-making process upon which this research is based. I have introduced the major actors and their relationships to each other as well as their roles in the series of events that took place on the UMass Amherst campus during this period. This section also provided a preliminary look at the ways that individuals and groups at UMass reacted to the challenges created by the economic crisis and the ways that the state government officials and Board of Trustees responded to that crisis. Finally, in this chapter, I discussed strategies that leaders at UMass planned and adopted in order to continue along a trajectory to remain competitive with their peers. The next chapter offers findings and analysis from an in depth examination of several documents as well as a series of interviews with participants in this case.

CHAPTER 5

FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

Introduction

This chapter presents the results of data analysis for this study. The literature review provided an opportunity to explore theoretical connections between organizational field, restructuring, and mission in higher education. This chapter first explores the various fields to which UMass Amherst belongs and the ways interaction with those organizational fields influenced decisions that were made during the case of restructuring at UMass Amherst. Considering UMass Amherst as its own field provides a useful way to look at the influence of various individuals and groups. Next, I discuss the ways that field-level influences factored into the strategies adopted by university leaders during the time of this case. Following this, I present findings related the possibility that the restructuring process was indicative of shifts in missions and priorities over time at UMass Amherst. Finally, several motivations for restructuring were revealed through the research, however three central organizing principles emerged with frequency from almost all sources. I describe these organizing principles along with ways various stakeholders in the restructuring process utilized them in support of their own interests and preferences. One surprising result was that individuals and groups used field – and mission-inspired rhetoric to support their positions – even when those positions were at odds with others.

Research Questions

This study began as a search to answer the following questions:

1. How was the restructuring at UMass Amherst influenced by its position in and interaction with specific organizational fields?

2. How did individual actors influence the restructuring and in what ways might their roles have been influenced by their position on campus and the University's position within the organizational fields?

3. In what ways did the restructuring indicate a possible shift in mission/priorities at UMass Amherst?

Presentation of Findings

The data sources for this study consisted of close to two hundred documents related to the university restructuring that were written or recorded during the period under study (see Appendix B for this list) as well as interviews with 14 individuals from the UMass Amherst campus (interview participants are described in Appendix C). During the time of the restructuring, each of the interview participants had an administrative role on campus – some were college deans, some were administrators in the Provost's or Chancellor's Offices, others were department chairs or program directors. I was also able to interview Chancellor Holub. As discussed in Chapter 3, participants were asked during their interviews whether they would be willing to allow the use of their name in this study or, if they preferred, they would be given a different designation. Because some of the participants did not permit the use of their name, I have decided to use participant numbers for this section, with a few exceptions. It would be very difficult to disguise Chancellor Holub's identity in this case because his was a singular role. In a few other instances, I have disclosed a participant's identity when it best served the purpose of the study, and only when the participant has provided consent.

As I reviewed and analyzed the documents and interview transcripts, I began to outline themes from the findings. Also, I determined that not all of the sources should be taken at face value, particularly the interview transcripts since participants were operating with their own biases and were recalling their thoughts and actions after a considerable amount of tine had passed. Therefore, I compared multiple interview transcripts as well as original source documents to verify statements and recollections as much as possible. While I have not given equal weight to all of the participants' claims, I have presented quotes that best support the findings and are reinforced by multiple sources. I have made an effort to avoid opinions and assumptions that seemed to be outliers.

Fields and Influence

The findings affirm that actors at UMass Amherst situate themselves most strongly in two fields, both of which contain at least two subfields. These are: 1) national public research universities, with the subfields AAU institutions (specifically public universities) and Carnegie classified "Research 1" institutions; and 2) higher education in Massachusetts. The Massachusetts higher education field includes at least three specific subfields: elite or selective institutions including MIT, Harvard, Boston University, Northeastern, etc; as well as public institutions of higher education in Massachusetts along with the legislature and Department of Education; and the UMass System controlled by the UMass Board of Trustees. Finally, as mentioned above, UMass Amherst can be considered its own field, which consists of a variety of groups and actors who vie for position and scarce resources.

Important to situating an organization within a field is the idea that an organization will be compared (or compare itself) with others like it. The UMass System

Report on Annual Indicators identifies a peer group against which the University of

Massachusetts Amherst should benchmark its goals, outcomes, and actions:

> The Top American Research Universities … identifies nine performance
>
> indicators as measures of academic quality to evaluate the comparative
>
> performance of 160 research universities. These public and private institutions
>
> generate over $40 million in federal research annually. Included in this group are
>
> ten public research universities with a Carnegie classification of very high
>
> research activity (RU/VH) with which the Amherst campus is comparing its
>
> progress on these and other indicators. All but two of the peers, the Universities
>
> of Connecticut and University of Delaware, are among the 63 members of the
>
> Association of American Universities (AAU), which are recognized for their
>
> excellence in research and education. Hence, the benchmark for the Amherst
>
> campus is quite high, and its performance is generally lower than its peers. (2006,
>
> p. 14)

These criteria, adopted by the UMass System Office, situate UMass Amherst in

the public research university field, and the authors observe that the campus is positioned

somewhat lower than the institutions to which it compares itself. It is interesting to note

that this list was developed by another player in the field, The Center for Measuring

University Performance, a research center at Arizona State University. The Center for

Measuring University Performance defines itself as a "research enterprise focused on the

competitive national context for major research universities" (Center for Measuring

University Performance, 2017). As such, they are also part of the organizational field of

research universities and might be considered a governance unit in the sense that they set expectations and establish norms for that field (Fligstein & McAdam, 2012).

Chancellor Holub and members of the UMass Amherst administration were largely in agreement with the list of peers identified by the UMass System Report. In Chancellor Holub's 2010 Framework for Excellence, he explained his thoughts about the field in which UMass should consider itself:

> Our campus matches the excellence of the public universities that are members of the prestigious Association of American Universities (AAU). We are the Commonwealth's flagship campus and the citizens of Massachusetts regard us as their flagship institution. (Holub R. C., 2010, p. 1)

The statements above describe UMass actors' affiliations with the public research university field. Sources also described the campus' alliance with the field of MA public higher education and MA politics. The UMass System Report (2006) spelled out the audience for its research: "trustees, legislature, and state-level policy makers" (p. 1). However, the authors also stated:

> Depending on the indicator, data for the UMass system are compared with Massachusetts private universities, Massachusetts demographic data, New England public universities, or (for the financial indicators) a small group of public university systems in other states (2006, p.1).

This provides two different views of the Massachusetts higher education field. One refers to the leadership, the trustees and legislators who make decisions about policy and funding, whereas the other outlines the institutions those leaders should be considering when comparing the campuses of the UMass System to peers. That this

comparison group contains private institutions in the Commonwealth is important to the ways that actors at UMass Amherst perceive and react to the Board of Trustees, the governor, and the legislators and perhaps how those leaders perceive them.

It used to be common for administrators on the UMass Amherst campus to compare the institution with the most selective private research universities in the state because they were using the example set by the UMass System Reports. However, during the Holub administration, a branding effort intentionally changed the institutions to which the Amherst campus compared itself. In an email to campus in January 2010, Chancellor Holub explained:

> Previous positioning efforts were based on validating our academic strength in direct comparison of those private universities located primarily in Boston. Given the extremely competitive higher education market in Massachusetts and a prevailing perception that private universities are stronger academically than public institutions, simply asserting our academic excellence against these privates does not work. Rather, we must change the terms by which UMass Amherst is judged. Instead of defining ourselves in comparison to private colleges and universities in both the state, and New England, we must clearly articulate our unique strength as a public research university and the flagship of the Commonwealth thus removing ourselves from a side-by-side comparison of private institutions and opening up the possibility of defining ourselves through our own real advantages.

Through this effort, leaders at UMass Amherst were attempting to identify more closely with the public research university field, rather than a field within Massachusetts that included selective and very selective private institutions.

Placement in the Field(s)

In terms of field placement, UMass actors indicated that they believed the University was ranked somewhere lower than it ought to be in the field of public research universities, as demonstrated by Chancellor Holub's consistent message about "moving into the upper echelon of public research universities," and his desire to "get to the doorstep of the AAU." Other faculty shared this view. One participant in particular stated:

> We're just not quite where we ought to be in terms of reputation. We have some incredibly great programs. We have some incredibly great faculty. We do a lot of good things as a campus and yet, somehow, we're not quite there in reputation. (Participant #4)

For the most part, the actual position of UMass Amherst in various ranking systems such as the U.S. News and World Report correspond to what UMass actors perceive they should be. During the Holub administration, upper level campus administrators adopted language about bringing campus into the "upper echelon" of public research universities. Each year, these leaders selected a group of peer institutions (some were considered close peers and others were considered aspirational) so that academic and other units on campus would be able to benchmark their outcomes alongside these peers in an effort to become more competitive and earn a better place in various ranking systems.

Between 2008 and 2015, U.S. News and World Report ranked UMass Amherst in the top 50 public national universities several times. Table 4 below shows the movement in rankings according to this source.

Table 4: UMass Amherst Rank Among Public National Universities

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Top Public National Universities	#45	#50	#52	#45	#42	#42	#40	#30
Best National Universities	#96	#102	#106	#99	#94	#97	#91	#76

Sources: *U.S. News & World Report; UMass Amherst News Archives

In the 2011 Report on Annual Indicators for the UMass System, the authors revealed that the University of Massachusetts System had been ranked nineteenth in the world on the Times of London's World Reputational Rankings list, perhaps adding international research universities to the list of fields in which the University might consider itself a player. The individuals I interviewed for this study acknowledged the importance of rankings for the success of the University as well as the influence of the field on University decision-making.

Participant #3 stated:

Every flagship public university in the country aspires to be in the top 20. That requires more than one institution that's currently in the top 20 to decline in quality. This is a zero-sum game – getting into the top 20 – and there just isn't a lot of permeability in the top 20. Michigan is not going to fall apart next year and create a space for somebody else, and Wisconsin isn't and Virginia isn't and Berkeley isn't and UCLA isn't. The places of most of the institutions in the top 20 is [sic] secure.

Participant #12 had this to say about moving up in the rankings: "Your plan is based on your moving and everyone else standing still, so to change the game, you have to do something radical."

Participant #12 also discussed Chancellor Holub's intention to move UMass Amherst into the prestigious Association of American Universities (AAU), an organization that would be classified by Fligstein and McAdam (2012) as a governance unit in the field of research universities. The AAU has created a list of measures that universities must reach before they would be invited to become a member. This organization is viewed by leaders in the research university field as an organization that sets and upholds standards of excellence in the field. In addition to their stated standards, Participant #12 reported that there were also unstated criteria, such as geographic location that were important to AAU membership. Regarding his thoughts about whether UMass Amherst would be admitted to the AAU, he said:

> There are institutions in the AAU that we are as good as and …that we are really
>
> quite comparable to, but they are already there. And the fact that we're as good as
>
> some institutions that are in the AAU is not a reason that the AAU lets you in.

Fields and Environmental Forces Influence Actions

The way that campus administrators and state-level policy makers perceived the position of UMass Amherst in its fields had an influence on decision-making. As described in Chapter 2, a key piece of field theory is that organizational decision-makers will adopt strategies that are in line with their peers for a number of reasons. They may be undertaken to meet a goal such as the one Chancellor Holub declared early and often: "moving UMass Amherst into the upper echelon of public research universities in the

country." Other strategies were undertaken because they helped the University align with political and economic pressures in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. This section will explore these responses to field pressures.

<u>Why a Restructuring?</u>

Leaders at the University of Massachusetts Amherst were primarily responding to the economic crisis of 2008 and the accompanying cuts to the state allocation when they began considering a restructuring effort. In other words, this was a response to the political and economic realities of the Commonwealth and the Massachusetts higher education field. Chancellor Holub was clear that he was looking for any area of campus where he could make cuts and find savings that would not damage the primary foci of the University – research and teaching. He stated on multiple occasions that he was most concerned with hiring and retaining excellent faculty because they are the foundation of a strong university.

The restructuring as originally proposed would purportedly have saved the campus one and a half to two million dollars. For many campus-level actors, this did not seem like enough of a gain for them to support the plan. In the end, only the merger of the science colleges took place, along with the movement of a few departments to other colleges. The specifics behind the failure of the proposed merger of SBS and HFA are discussed at length throughout this chapter. In part, the fact that the merger that created the College of Natural Sciences proceeded with very little resistance can be explained by the influence of environmental actors, in particular federal and state agencies that fund research in the sciences. This Participant #11 explained the influences of these actors:

One of the things that was happening at the time was sort of the ascendancy of the importance of life sciences and…personalized medicine…It was a time when the NIH research budget was doubling…so [there was] a lot of emphasis on the life sciences and there were schools that were forming life sciences institutes or colleges.

Chancellor Holub also spoke about this:

I was hoping in that kind of restructuring with the sciences, that it would be – that we would be better able to compete for large grants, whether they be Massachusetts grants or federal grants, that's what I was aiming at or would hope to be one of the outcomes.

Because the coalescence of life sciences in the field of science research had been happening prior to the 2008 budget crisis, it is no surprise that conversations about bringing the life sciences together at UMass Amherst had already been happening. Former CNS Dean Steve Goodwin mentioned this in his interview:

Some years before [the restructuring] there was an attempt to explore the possibility of creating a College of Life Sciences…They brought in a pretty distinguished outside panel – Rita Caldwell, who became the director of the National Science Foundation actually was one of the people on it – to look at that possibility, but it just, it kind of fell apart, quite frankly, not too dissimilar from the SBS/HFA portion of this restructuring.

Other participants believed that the CNS merger was easier to accomplish because science faculty had been having these conversations prior to the 2008 situation.

Strategies for Advancing in the Public Research University Field

As discussed above, the academic reorganization at UMass Amherst appears to have been inspired mainly by two factors: 1) the economic crisis of 2008 and resulting budget cuts to the University, and 2) by a trend in the sciences, particularly among organizations that funded research, to organize the life sciences. However, because it was also the desire of Chancellor Holub, the UMass Systems Office, and the Board of Trustees to raise the status of the University of Massachusetts Amherst, several strategies were developed and implemented during the time of this case that were intended to bring in additional revenues in response to the budget cuts and the trend of decreasing state allocations. The rationale was that generating revenues in these ways would allow UMass to be able to afford to take the steps it would need to move up in the rankings. Most of the approaches discussed below were also taking place at peer institutions during this same time.

The Budget Planning Task Force that was convened during the fall of 2008 had the charge of drawing up plans to bring additional revenues into the University. Their approach was to survey other public research universities to learn what strategies they had employed to bring in revenues. The primary sources of new funding that emerged from this task force were: 1) increasing the population of out-of-state students, including international students, 2) boosting the number of online courses the University offered, 3) diversifying and expanding the number of master's programs offered at the University, and 4) increasing enrollment fees for specific, high-interest programs. Participant #12 remarked on how these initiatives would aid in moving UMass Amherst up in the rankings.

Here is what I understood to be the plan… We set these goals and then we would

bring in a significant amount of money from out-of-state students… We would use

that to hire additional faculty, because that's how you do it. Because you have to go

out and hire good faculty and wait for them to be productive and you have to be

strategic... in the investments that we make. So you are ...thinking about when

we're working on how to make the most impact and on having a top ranked

graduate program... In the realm of what the AAU cares about, you need a war chest

and you need the will to do it.

The specific actions discussed in this section were put in place at UMass during the time

of this case. Despite the fact that they are not related to the restructuring under study,

they are tied to the ways that UMass administrators responded to pressures increase

revenues and maintain their position in the field of public research universities.

Other study participants corroborated the evidence above. Many participants said

something similar to Participant #9 who stated: "the fiscal stresses caused us to

reorganize other things like how we recruit students and one of the things [we were]

charged with doing was figuring out a successful policy for recruiting out-of-state

students."

Participant #10 highlighted the University's online education strategy: "The big

ramp up to online education…already existed in certain sectors of the campus but in HFA

we went from…well under $200,000 a year in revenue to well over $1 million in revenue

in about three years."

Chancellor Holub recalled with pride the strides made to diversify the revenue

stream:

We generated, I think, $22 million in new funding, new recurring funding, not one-time funding, which doesn't do you much good at a university, but new recurring funding. And most of these revenues came from an increase in the nonresident population.

The strategies detailed above were intended to increase revenues to allow UMass Amherst some latitude its decision-making. At the same time, some participants highlighted other efforts that were put in place to help UMass Amherst garner a better place in the rankings and to look more like an AAU institution. Participant #13 stated:

The exceptional merit [pay increase system for faculty] was simply an effort to try to raise the average salaries of the faculty because we looked bad in the rankings. That if you looked at where we stood with the average salary of full professor, associate, assistant professor, that we were well below our peers and that cost us in the rankings. So instead of just doing across the board raises or whatever to try to raise everybody up, he created this exceptional merit system, which was very controversial… There was a vote of the faculty that came out 55-45 or something in favor. It just barely passed… That was simply his mechanism of raising average salaries. The average was computed by great big salaries on top pull up a lot. So he knows how to do the math or at least Jim Staros did.

Some of the strategies that Chancellor Holub explored and undertook at that time were not about revenue generation but instead were about making UMass look more like other institutions that were in the AAU. As he said in our interview:

I knew that for UMass to become a better institution, we had to address the decaying infrastructure and the more than $2 billion in deferred maintenance. So

I forged ahead. I also moved football from FCS to FBS, a move that was also controversial and not meant to please all constituencies. But my reasoning was that all public flagships in the AAU had football teams playing at the FBS level, and we needed to be the pride of MA and compete with the best. I also explored the possibility of medical education in Western Mass with Baystate [Medical Center], something that aroused the ire of many people throughout the state. Had this initiative gone forward, it would have altered UMass Amherst and Western Mass in very positive ways...everything I did was done to make UMass better...

Massachusetts Field Influence: Trustees, Politics, and Economy

There are a few ways to consider Massachusetts-specific field and environmental influences at UMass Amherst during the time of this case of restructuring. One component is the role and power of the Board of Trustees, which hired Chancellor Holub, and is the governing body that oversees all University of Massachusetts System operations. The Massachusetts State Legislature controls the state allocation to the University System, as well as the rest of public higher education in the Commonwealth, and during this time of widespread economic crisis, there was a lot of fear on campus that there would be a sizeable cut to the higher education budgets. Separate from what was taking place at the University, state leaders at this time were investing in specific initiatives to encourage economic development and the dire economic conditions in the state and the nation formed the backdrop for this situation.

By several accounts, when members of the Board of Trustees hired Chancellor Holub prior to the economic crisis, they did so with the intention of moving UMass Amherst up in the ranks of public research universities. Holub himself stated:

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It was right up front in the position description, and it said that my job would be

to move the flagship campus into the top tier of public research universities… So

I saw my charge from that advertisement as moving the campus in that direction,

and that thought probably guided...my activities while I was Chancellor.

Other participants corroborated Chancellor Holub's views that the Trustees had brought

him in to raise the stature of the Amherst campus. Participant #12 stated:

He seems to have come here with this vision [to get into the AAU]. They [Pres.

Wilson and the Trustees] hired a guy who, though he wasn't coming straight from

there, he was coming from Berkeley… Somebody had in mind that we could do

that and the flagship campus was somehow going to really take off and elevate the

system and by hiring this guy who would come in and bring us the Berkeley

vision or something like that.

However, changing politics in the Commonwealth may have derailed the

Trustees's plan for Chancellor Holub to create a Berkeley-like institution. As Chancellor

Holub pointed out, when he was appointed to his position, the Trustees were mainly

appointees of former Republican Governor Mitt Romney. Over the period of time that he

was in his role, the composition of this body changed as Democratic Governor Deval

Patrick appointed new Trustees. According to Holub, the new members and members of

the state legislature did not have the same desire to move UMass into the "upper echelon

of public research universities," which was his charge when he was hired. He stated:

I believe there was some sentiment on the Board of Trustees, which was in a

period of change. There were elected officials who also did not believe that this

was the case [that UMass should try to move up in the ranks]...They don't see

UMass Amherst as having those same kinds of ambitions that I had for the campus.

In addition to the expectations around the selection of Chancellor Holub, the UMass Board of Trustees was also influential in the restructuring process. However, it is unclear how much of this was perceived rather than actual influence. Despite my efforts, I was not successful in gaining an interview with any of the Trustees from this time period, therefore results in this section stem from interviews with other participants as well as analysis of various documents.

Several faculty and administrators at the level of the college deans believed that members of the Board of Trustees told Chancellor Holub that he had to restructure campus during the economic crisis or they would not approve an increase in student fees. Notes and documents from the time of the restructuring show Chancellor Holub alluding to the ways that he had to act to appease the Trustees in order to maintain funding for campus. For example, in a January 2009 meeting with SBS chairs and directors, when talking about why SBS and HFA should merge, Chancellor Holub stated that the Trustees tended to think about budget reductions in terms of what the campus was going to stop doing in order to same money. He also remarked that, "These people control a large portion of our purse strings," and we "have to show them we are serious with making changes." Individuals at this meeting took the Chancellor's words to mean that he was being told to restructure campus.

However, in our 2015 interview, he stated strongly that there was no political pressure on him to restructure:

Many external stakeholders saw restructuring as something very positive and

encouraged me to proceed with it. However, I did not proceed in order to

'appease' any stakeholders. I believe my record shows that I was not someone

who sought to appease external stakeholders. I always did what I considered was

in the best interests of the campus, even if external stakeholders saw things

differently.

Also in reference to the Trustees, Chancellor Holub stated:

But you know, [the restructuring] was something they could relate to better than,

'Well, I'm gonna cut $2 million out of Student Affairs.' That doesn't mean

anything to them, but, 'I'm gonna restructure.'? [they think] 'Oh yeah, a lot of

businesses have done that. Oh, Jack Welch did that over at GE.' or, you know,

that was the way that they thought about it.

Others who were interviewed for this study reported that they believed that the

Chancellor was proposing the mergers in response to pressures from the Board of

Trustees. For example, Participant #11 stated:

But I was absolutely convinced that the initial motivation was…the Chancellor

felt that we needed to respond to public… you know, primarily manifested

through the Board of Trustees, 'What are you doing given the financial crisis?

The crisis is a financial thing and so what are you doing financially?'

and he later said, "despite what the Chancellor said, I can't believe there wasn't …

implicit pressure to show in a very short term what you're doing in reaction to the new

reality…And a reorganization is just sort of the natural thing..."

Massachusetts Life Sciences Initiative

At the same time that UMass was responding to the state-level pressures brought about by the budget crisis, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts was launching the Massachusetts Life Sciences Initiative. This effort brought together public and private interests to collaborate on Life Sciences research and find projects that would spur economic development. The creation of this state-level initiative was also consistent with shifts in the larger field of science research mentioned above. Merging the Colleges of Natural Resources and the Environment and Natural Sciences and Mathematics into the College of Natural Sciences brought together all of the life sciences departments and served to align CNS with both the Mass Life Sciences Initiative and action in the larger field. Conversations at the time of the restructuring and later interviews confirmed that there had been an earlier (failed) attempt to bring the life sciences into the same college at UMass Amherst. One of the rationales used to help faculty accept this transition was that this merger would position UMass researchers well for future funding. As Participant #13 stated:

> I think the Mass Institute for Life Sciences was a political creation by the state legislature largely driven by their observation of the life science industry in the Boston area. So it became an obvious point of investment for the state and then UMass, of course, properly latched on to as much as they could and took some ownership of it, but I think that was a political decision that has had great benefit.

Participant #7 highlighted the ways that this initiative connected with the University administration's goals to rise up in the rankings:

And because we got this $95 million capital appropriation for a life science

building… in terms of national rankings that really could help because the

facilities are there now, you can attract good faculty, you have a strong dean, you

have a strong sense of support. And that could attract some serious federal money

and industry money as well, which could help them through those kinds of

rankings.

Chancellor Holub's Restructuring: Bridging Two Fields

Chapter Four provided a look at the restructuring plan Chancellor Holub

presented to campus in January 2009. This initial plan seemed to represent what he was

aiming for: reducing the number of colleges from nine to six in an attempt to provide

certain economic benefits that would help the campus weather the economic crisis while

he focused on activities that would position UMass Amherst to be invited to the AAU.

The idea to restructure as a result of what was happening in the state higher education

field, and specifically in reaction to the economic crisis of 2008, appears to have been

influenced by the Chancellor's prior experiences on other campuses and his knowledge of

the public research institution field, as well as his interactions with the trustees and

members of the legislature who represent the Massachusetts higher education field.

In his interview, he spoke about a similar restructuring that he had experienced

when he was a professor at the University of California, Berkeley:

I lived through some restructuring at Berkeley. The biological sciences were

totally restructured during the time I was there. We changed the administrative

structure at Berkeley from a two-Provost structure. There was a Provost for the

professional schools and colleges and a Provost for arts and sciences, so it was

about 50-50 in terms of the faculty members on campus, and made one Provost. There was a savings there.

He went on to explain the ways this restructuring and others he had read about informed his thinking as it related to the circumstances at UMass Amherst:

I'd lived through restructuring, and lived through restructuring also in my department... And I'd read about these things all over the country but you can't take a model from another campus and just put it onto a bit of different set of circumstances, places with a different history and different needs.

In other words, the Chancellor was clear that he would not be able to craft a restructuring at UMass Amherst simply by using the models other institutions had.

When asked why he had attempted his proposed reorganization, he spoke about the need cut costs wherever he could in order to protect what he saw as the most important asset of the University – its faculty. He said:

My emphasis was always the same, 'I'm looking to save on administrative costs, because if I don't save on administrative costs, I have to save somewhere else, and it's probably going to come from faculty.' And I didn't want it to come from faculty. I'd rather it come from administration, so that was the kind of bottom line argument that I had.

He also stated that he knew the restructuring and cuts to administrative offices in the upper administration would not cover all of the predicted budget cuts the University was expecting the state legislature to impose. He explained his proposal in this way:

Again, this wasn't a solution to – I mean, you know, the understanding that this was going to bring us out of the financial crisis, that was never the plan, and I

never thought it would. But I was looking to save anywhere that I could save, and

this seemed to be a place where I could save a half million dollars, let's say. A

half million dollars, I'm thinking when I hear a half million dollars, I'm thinking

five faculty positions in social sciences...

Chancellor Holub's reorganization proposal might have been a reaction to what

he perceived as external pressures from the Trustees and state-level decision-makers

during the time of the budget crisis. As mentioned above, in 2009, Chancellor Holub

spoke at a meeting of chairs and directors in the College of Social and Behavioral

Sciences, informing them that the Trustees and the legislature were expecting changes on

campus and if the restructuring did not happen, "we endanger funding we get from

outside" because the University had to "build up structures we need to be more

competitive."

Despite the strong language above and the impression he made on many of the

participants in this study that the restructuring was not just being supported by but

actually forced upon the University by state-level overseers, Chancellor Holub expressed

his views differently in our 2015 interview. At that time, he reported that the Trustees

probably appreciated the restructuring, although they did not encourage him to do it:

I'm sure that there were people on the Board [of Trustees] and people in

government, since most of these people have business backgrounds, who thought

that restructuring was a good way to deal with the financial crisis. So I'm sure that

there was an appeal to them – that restructuring appealed to them for that reason.

Through analysis of the findings, it is apparent that there were multiple rationales

behind Chancellor Holub's specific restructuring plan and that it likely stemmed from the

influences of two separate fields. The economic crisis meant that the University was potentially facing unprecedented budget cuts, and at that time two deans (in SBS and NSM) were poised for retirement. Mergers with these particular colleges would mean that the salaries of two deans would be saved. It was convenient that the state was creating the Massachusetts Life Sciences Initiative at this time, and it likely helped that conversations about bringing the life sciences departments together at UMass had already taken place. The shift in research funding for the sciences would support the kinds of research UMass faculty could do more easily if these colleges were combined, and this dovetailed with the Commonwealth's desire to cash in on public-private partnerships that might lead to economic development opportunities. As the heading of this section suggests, evidence indicates that Chancellor Holub's merger plan was influenced by a variety of aspects within both the Massachusetts higher education field and the public research university field, yet it resulted in a restructuring outcome that was specific to the UMass Amherst field.

The next section will specifically address the ways that individuals and groups on the Amherst campus worked to influence the reorganization process. However, it is worth mentioning here that Chancellor Holub's influence over this process, while considerable, did not override the power of other actors on campus.

It seemed to many of the interview participants that Chancellor Holub did not appear to seek the opinions of other members of campus when he was developing his restructuring plan. When I asked with whom he had consulted, he said:

Restructuring was something that…we discussed with the senior staff, something
I conferred with the Provost about, first Provost Seymour…and then Staros when

he was appointed. I conferred with the Deans. I got a lot of the input back from faculty members and chairs in the various colleges. The topic came up frequently in discussions with the Academic [sic] Senate, with the faculty union. I listened to what people had to say on the topic, and as I said, I responded personally to every email that I received on this.

Emirbayer and Johnson (2008) and Fligstein and McAdam (2012) highlight the importance of social skills in the ability to make change in an organization. While Chancellor Holub stated that he did consult with individuals on campus, interviews revealed that Holub was not perceived as a good listener, and was not seen as persuadable on the topic of the restructuring.

At the same time, Chancellor Holub reported that individuals on campus were not always able or willing to see the bigger picture of what was happening on campus in order to understand what he was trying to accomplish. In an interview, one of the members of Chancellor Holub's leadership team stated that faculty seemed to make up their minds about the kind of reorganization they wanted and then they pointed to specific research universities that had the structure they were looking for and then they used that example to support their case.

This perspective aligns well with W. R. Scott's views about the ways strategic action fields operate. As he wrote, "Actors are both constrained and enabled by institutional frameworks, and they are capable of using them to pursue their own interests as well as challenging and attempting to change frameworks if necessary" (Scott, W. R., 2015, pp. 28-29).

Local Influence: The UMass Amherst Field

The University of Massachusetts Amherst can be viewed as its own field, within which various groups and actors interact (Emirbayer & Johnson, 2008). As Barrier & Musselin (2016) discussed, sometimes university decision-makers have an idealized version of what they want their university structure to look like based on what are considered to be successful models, however, local conditions within the university prevent leadership from carrying out these plans fully. This is where local influence and considering the institution as its own field can be useful in understanding outcomes. This section focuses on the ways in which local influence played a role in this case. It explores that parts of the restructuring process that were brought into a campus-wide dialogue while others were decided at more local levels. Further, I discuss the ways campus groups and actors utilized arguments related to field concerns in order to support their positions on the restructuring and other actions taking place on campus. This section provides evidence that the local field can be more influential than the environmental or organizational field.

Participant #11 spoke about the ways groups and individuals influenced the process during the restructuring. He quoted a colleague from another campus who explained: "You know, everything that happens in terms of academic structure is a product of the local ecosystem and there are going to be people who don't get along…" He went on to say, "I mean if you want to start talking about what happened in life sciences here...so much of that has to do with the individual personalities, it's not an intellectual argument about what's right or wrong."

Participant #3 spoke about the way that individuals on campus used field-related arguments to debate the validity of the mergers Chancellor Holub was proposing. This participant's view corresponds to W. R. Scott's (2015) description of the ways that stakeholders sometimes use models to support their own beliefs.

Group Influence and Perspective in the UMass Field

One interesting finding was the degree to which various campus groups and individuals considered the issues and had influence over the outcome of this case. Chancellor Holub understood this and seemed frustrated by it when he stated: "People look at themselves as part of interest groups who are advocating for something rather than people who are trying to solve problems together." This section explores the roles of particular groups on campus and the ways they understood and influenced what happened in the UMass Amherst field. It is of note that these groups are primarily comprised of faculty members. Participant #11 stressed the importance of having faculty buy in whenever large-scale changes are being proposed on campus:

> I feel that with faculty it's gotta be bottom up and you can't really move the needle unless you've got faculty on board…Chancellors can say what they want and provosts and deans can say what they want but if you don't have the goodwill and belief of the faculty behind you, it's going to be incredibly hard.

Faculty Senate

Most of the individuals I interviewed for this research spoke about the role of the Faculty Senate in the case of restructuring. However, not all participants were in agreement about the group's position and influence. Some believed that the Faculty Senate served as a support for the positions of the majority of the faculty at UMass, while

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others reported that the Faculty Senate was primarily used by administrators as a rubber stamp and therefore did not have the capacity to change any decisions made by those at the top.

Several participants reported that they viewed the Faculty Senate as a group without much power. Participant #1 stated:

> I said, 'This should be called the administration senate' because whenever there's an important vote, the Chancellor and the Provost would make sure all the deans were there and all the administrators would show up and they would outnumber the faculty and the faculty didn't want to disagree with them anyway...

Participant #13 agreed, calling the administration's consultation of faculty into question when he stated, "The Faculty Senate is an advisory board, it is the sounding board for the administration to at least make an appearance of consulting the faculty about decisions that are made."

In reference to the Faculty Senate vote that approved the creation of the College of Natural Sciences, Participant #11 reported that deans and other administrators were expected to attend that meeting:

> You know in the Faculty Senate meeting where the [CNS] merger was approved, it was by one vote if I recall. All the deans were told [by the administration] that we have to go and vote… I'd never seen that before, where the administration says, 'You're allowed to vote at faculty meetings [senate] and you can vote your conscience...'

On the other hand, Participant #12 believed that the Faculty Senate's actions did help to slow down the merger of SBS and HFA because the majority of faculty members were opposed to the plan:

Oh, I think the Senate made it impossible to merge HFA and SBS just by fiat. The fact is that the Chancellor had the authority to do that [merge without a vote]…So in a way, the vote of the senate is always advisory…But it's still important, right, and to have done it over the opposition of the senate would have been enormously expensive and would have led to lots of questions from the trustees and President's Office and so on.

In 2011 during the second attempt to merge the Colleges of Humanities and Fine Arts and Social and Behavioral Sciences, Provost Staros presented another proposal to the Faculty Senate. That plan was quickly tabled by the Faculty Senate. Several participants believed that the Senate membership understood that the plan, as written by the Provostial Committee, was not intended to be a full proposal.

It is difficult to know precisely what the influence of the Faculty Senate was in this case given the various, and sometimes contradictory, statements. However, looking at the evidence, it is true that the CNS merger occurred after the Faculty Senate's vote in May of 2009 whereas the plan to merge SBS/HFA was postponed with a recommendation for further study. When the SBS/HFA merger plan resurfaced two years later, the Faculty Senate again delayed action on it and it never took place. The Faculty Senate approved other parts of the original proposal in 2009 without much discussion e.g., the move of the Department of Resource Economics to the Isenberg School of Management, and the blending of the administrative functions of the Schools

of Nursing and Public Health and Health Services. Some parts of the original proposal never made it to public forums, such as the plan to move the Departments of Polymer Science and Computer Science into the College of Engineering. This particular situation will be discussed later in this section.

<u>Faculty Union</u>

The Massachusetts Society of Professors (MSP) represents faculty and librarians at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. The union's official role is to negotiate labor contracts, represent members in grievances against the administration, and serve as an advocate for public higher education. At the time of this case, the MSP leadership had quite an adversarial relationship with Chancellor Holub and created for themselves an expanded role in response to the restructuring proposal. One of the MSP members reported that the union dubbed itself the "conscience of the university," saying:

> …a lot of us were kind of involved in changing the union and talking about, 'We want a better UMass. You know, we care about students, we care about teaching, we want to do our research.' All of those things are not necessarily typical of faculty unions – they don't negotiate them into contracts.

This participant spoke about the decision of MSP leaders to initiate a survey of faculty in 2010 that would ask about their views on the proposed merger of SBS and HFA:

> The MSP really didn't have any jurisdiction over college mergers, but that never stopped us from working on issues. And I think once it was clear that it was such an overwhelming majority of the faculty [who were opposed] then we felt like we could and should say something about it...we certainly publicized the results [of the faculty survey] like crazy.

Another participant affiliated with the union spoke about the ways that the union could influence decision-making, despite the fact that the union had no authority over administrative decisions like restructuring:

Even though we couldn't bargain whether or not an administrative structure A or B was invoked by the Chancellor, we certainly could rally the faculty to express their views and collect and organize their opinions and present them effectively. I think that's a reasonably fair thing and it drives the administration nuts because we're doing something 'the union shouldn't be doing' or doesn't have to do...

None of the other individuals who were interviewed spoke about the role of the union in the same way that the two union-affiliated participants did. Participant #7 (a non-union employee) mentioned that she recalled that union members spoke to the press about the on-campus issues. Chancellor Holub's only mention of the influence of the union was when he mentioned the various groups that he had met with to talk about how to deal with the economic crisis. In my interview with him and throughout his abundant correspondence with campus, the influence of the union was not a topic of discussion.

Participant #13, an active union member also talked about the ways that the work of the MSP and the Faculty Senate complemented each other:

We actually, the union, joined with the Faculty Senate rules committee and tried … to find the cost savings. The transition costs of going through the reorganization event were probably more substantial than any savings that we could see going forward… So in that sense I think the union and the Faculty Senate were nicely complementary because the union was not going to be able to do the administrative committee work, consider all the issues that were engaged

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by the Faculty Senate and the Faculty Senate was certainly not going to do the organizing required to have people's voices heard.

Similar to the discussion of the influence of the Faculty Senate, the findings are not definitive and the evidence is mixed that the actions of the MSP members influenced the outcome of the restructuring at UMass, but it does seem likely that there were some effects as a result of their advocacy, particularly as they related to the SBS/HFA merger.

<u>SBS/HFA Heads and Chairs</u>

Chairs of departments in the Colleges of Social and Behavioral Sciences and Humanities and Fine Arts were vocal about the proposed merger of their two colleges. Particularly in SBS, department chairs were actively stalling the merger. Participant #7 reflected on her belief that the SBS chairs influenced the Chancellor's decision to create the first task force to look at the restructuring proposal:

> But then the SBS chairs got together and we wrote a memo together … to the Chancellor saying, 'These are the reasons why [we shouldn't merge with HFA].' So there was that leadership level among the chairs… As a result of that there was enough pushback that then Jane Fountain's group was asked to write the first study, whether or not we should do the merger.

There is no ambiguity in the data regarding the sentiment of faculty and chairs in the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences. From the start they were opposed to merging with the College of Humanities and Fine Arts. The findings regarding faculty and chairs in HFA are less clear-cut.

Participant #12, who represented HFA faculty reported that some of the HFA chairs were not opposed to the merger the way their colleagues in SBS were:

And that's where it became very clear that the SBS faculty were – the SBS chairs – were quite content [with SBS in its current form] and saw this as a real threat. And that the HFA chairs just didn't, which I thought was very interesting.

The views of the rank-and-file faculty, however, did not seem to match this view of the HFA chairs' position. As mentioned above, the MSP conducted a survey of faculty in February, 2011 as Provost Staros and Chancellor Holub were continuing to urge the SBS/HFA merger. Ninety-four percent of HFA faculty and ninety-five percent of SBS faculty who responded were not in favor of a merger. This survey seems to confirm Participant #13's views that the faculty were not in favor.

Science Faculty

Because the merger that created the College of Natural Sciences took place more quickly than the process that kept the SBS/HFA merger on the table for so long, there is less evidence about the views of faculty from the sciences. There was discussion about specific issues, such as changes in personnel decisions for faculty and reconfiguring job descriptions for staff in the dean's office within the merged college. However, there was not much indication of dissent among faculty. Participant #8 reported that the merger of the Colleges of Natural Sciences and Mathematics and Natural Resources and the Environment was more favored by the NRE faculty:

So when we talk about the creation of CNS, that was mostly driven by the life science departments in NRE…and NSM – they were trying to get together. Chemistry and physics and the other ones were just along for the ride. If there was going to be such a college, they were sure going to be in it but they weren't driving the train.

Participant #11, who was affiliated with NSM had a more nuanced view:

> …with NSM, I think people generally felt – and I'm talking about the department
> chairs here – generally felt that the unification of the life sciences would be a big
> plus and also uniformly felt that being part of the bigger college would be a
> downside. I think those were the two major things that I would say pretty much
> everybody felt. And we talked about it a lot.

Generally, there seemed to be agreement that the CNS merger was not contested and in
fact, there is evidence that the faculty were mostly in favor of this merger.

Polymer Science and Computer Science Faculty

In Chancellor Holub's original draft of the restructuring plan, the departments of
Computer Science and Polymer Science and Engineering were projected to move to the
College of Engineering. Findings indicate that this proposed move was related to the
Chancellor's desire to increase the size of the Engineering College and therefore begin to
look more like the AAU institutions against which the University was benchmarking
itself. Participant #11, who was closely involved in this situation, spoke about the
Chancellor's aspiration to increase the size of the College of Engineering:

> We have a very small School of Engineering here…at the time we had maybe 90,
> 92, [or] 93 faculty members there, and if you look at the top 20 engineering
> schools, they typically have a lot more than that. You know, Rice has a smaller
> number, Cal Tech has a smaller number, but generally bigger is better, right? And
> we're all worried about rankings because students look at rankings and things like
> that...and the Chancellor felt, correctly, I think that...our engineering school

simply wasn't big enough given the importance of Engineering ...to the Commonwealth, to the nation, for students who want to be an engineer.

The Chancellor's plan to quickly add faculty to the College of Engineering was not successful, however, because the faculty in the two departments designated to move resisted and Chancellor Holub backed down. This appears to be the only instance in this case where the Chancellor was convinced to change his mind that was not related to issues of accreditation (as had been the case with the original proposal to merge Nursing and Public Health). It was pressure from faculty in the Departments of Computer Science and Polymer Science and Engineering that quickly and quietly stopped the proposed move from taking place.

Interview participants who were close to the situation reported that the faculty and leadership in these departments were ranked at the top in their field and were very effective in bringing millions of research dollars to the University. Participant #4 stated, "I would say there was a lot of pressure applied to the Chancellor…I think the fact that they were as highly rated as departments as they are, certainly helped them to have enough clout to…[stop the move]."

Participant #13 explained it this way:

The guys in Polymer Science said, 'No, we're not doing that and you're not gonna make us or we'll all leave,' or whatever they threatened...They have tens of millions of dollars in funding and are world leaders and the Polymer Science department here has long been known as one of the best in the country. So the notion that he's [Holub] gonna mess with that or not, yeah, that was not gonna happen. They have a lot of clout.

Reorganization Task Force

Over the course of the case being studied, three separate committees were set up to explore various aspects of the reorganization process. The first of these was the Reorganization Task Force (RTF) created by Chancellor Holub in February of 2009. The Chancellor charged this twelve-member ad hoc committee to consider his proposal to reorganize campus and make recommendations for other potential structures.

Reorganization Task Force members were effective at using field-related rhetoric to argue for what seemed to be the part of the plan that was most acceptable to the majority of faculty, the creation of CNS, while arguing against other options such as the creation of a CHASS. They also used this language to support keeping Computer Science and Polymer Science and Engineering in the College of Natural Science and Mathematics, or in a combined College of Natural Sciences, and to stop the Departments Food Science and Landscape Architecture and Regional Planning from being shifted to places that their faculty members did not want to go. One of the strongest recommendations of their report was to (re)create a College of Arts and Sciences. They employed all of the three top organizing principles (discussed below) as they made their argument. They also made arguments based on comparisons with other institutions in the public research university field.

Here are some examples from the RTF final report that specifically consider the ways other institutions were structured:

> The fact that there are no Food Science Departments in Schools of Public Health
> in the U.S. is likely due to the major differences in these fields. While Food

Science supports the consolidation of the Sciences, it sees no benefits and many

detriments in joining the School of Public Health.

and, "Although Computer Science is housed in a College of Engineering on many

campuses (through alignments made mostly in the 1980's and 90's), on many others it is

housed in a College of Arts and Sciences."

The RTF also referred to field position, and specifically to public universities

within the AAU and other UMass peers, when they recommended the creation of a

College of Arts and Sciences as the ultimate structure for reorganization. Their argument

was:

We base this recommendation on a detailed examination of the four colleges

involved and on a benchmarking process which examined the organizational

structures of the 34 public universities who are members of the American

Association of Universities, a group of ten peer universities developed by campus

administrators, and the universities categorized by the Carnegie Foundation for

the Advancement of Teaching as having 'very high research, no medical and

veterinary school.'

The Reorganization Task Force strategically compared the University of

Massachusetts Amherst to other universities in order to make its case. The

recommendations of the Task Force report did end up mirroring, in part, the results of the

restructuring.

CHFA-CSBS Reorganization Committee

The CHFA-CSBS Reorganization Committee was the second group convened to

consider aspects of the Chancellor's reorganization. This group was formed after the

merger of the College of Natural Sciences and its goal was specifically to look at the proposed merger of the College of Humanities and Fine Arts with the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences. In their final report, committee members explained the purpose of their work:

> The committee was charged by the deans to determine how merging these two Colleges would affect the work of faculty, staff, and students, to estimate what challenges and costs a merger would entail, and to discover what lessons we might learn from the merger last year of [the College of Natural Sciences and Mathematics] and [the College of Natural Resources and the Environment].

As discussed in Chapter Four, this committee did not recommend the merger of the Colleges of Humanities and Fine Arts and Social and Behavioral Sciences. Similar to the Reorganization Task Force, the Reorganization Committee also utilized field-level arguments in making their case:

> We want to underscore that no major research university in the U.S. has a College like the proposed College of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences: at a minimum it would need to include the Department of Psychology in order to be viable both intellectually and financially. Thus, we also recommend that if a merger is deemed necessary, that other models be considered, such as a College of Arts and Sciences.

In addition to these field-level arguments, this group also called upon traditional research university missions to support their case. They presented reasons why a merger was not conducive in terms of the importance of research: "In a Research 1 University, maintaining the research productivity and reputation in all departments should be one of

the central priorities shaping any reorganization of units." They argued that creating this particular combined college would not meet this standard. The authors were also concerned that the merged college would jeopardize research by placing too much emphasis on teaching: "The other chief challenge posed to research by reorganization is the danger of creating a chronically underfunded research faculty within a 'teaching' or 'service' college."

The authors of the CHFA-CSBS Reorganization Committee report referred to the dangers of reinforcing North/South division of campus through the proposed merger:

> Failing to redistribute RTF, at the same time as student revenues are effectively redistributed institution-wide, means that teaching activities by faculty in CSBS and CHFA are subsidizing research activity and lower teaching loads in other Colleges while reinvestment in CSBS and CHFA research activities is lagging and lacking.

Similar to the Reorganization Task Force, members of this committee also referenced field and mission when it benefited their perspective. While Chancellor Holub and the campus leadership used this kind of rhetoric to support a merged College of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences, these two groups used it to oppose this proposal.

Provostial Committee

After these two previous committees did not support the merger of HFA and SBS, Provost Staros convened one more group in an attempt to reconsider the creation of a College of Humanities Arts and Social Sciences. The Provostial Committee was comprised of chairs from the Colleges of Humanities and Fine Arts and Social and

Behavioral Sciences. When discussing his motivation for bringing this group together as well as the end result, Provost Staros said:

> I felt … that you can't do these things [restructuring] without faculty buy-in. There had been this reaction on campus to the initial push. It was very negative and I thought, 'Well, why don't I set up a forum without too tight an agenda where people get to know each other and start and see if they can discover the benefit to doing this.' And it didn't work. I think the whole thing had been too poisoned.

The Provost hoped to use his influence to gain the goodwill of the chairs at the table so that he might be able to merge the colleges after all. The Provost's motivations for merging SBS and HFA will be discussed further in the section on organizing principles.

One member of the Provostial Committee spoke about her role in the process and how it may have been effective in blocking the merger of SBS and HFA for the third and final time:

> There was that third group where it was just – the Provostial group – where I felt like I had to really try to push to have our charge clear, which it never really was. And I felt that that was important because I didn't want to go on record as being one of the chairs who helped the merger happen without being asked whether we thought it was a good idea or not.

In the end, this committee drafted a vision statement at the request of the Provost, who used the statement as part of a proposal presented to the Faculty Senate in the spring of 2011. Members of the Provostial Committee wrote a memo to the Faculty Senate clarifying that they had not endorsed the Provost's plan and their work had been taken

out of context. The result of these actions was that the Faculty Senate tabled the proposal. This committee, along with the Faculty Senate, was able to further postpone a merger that most faculty and staff in the affected colleges believed was inevitable.

Mission

One of the research questions for this study asked how the restructuring might have had an effect on the mission and priorities of the UMass Amherst campus. I suggested that changes in fields might influence the mission and priorities on the UMass Amherst campus. Moreover, because of the ways that fields operate, organizations influence one another within fields, therefore it seemed likely that changes in mission and priorities on one campus could eventually have the effect of influencing the field. The results are not definitive and it would be difficult to generalize from one case study, however it is thought provoking to consider the shifts in priorities that were taking place at UMass Amherst during this time and compare them to changes in the fields to which the University belongs.

This section first discusses the ways that participants used mission-based rhetoric to support their particular versions of the restructuring proposal. Later, I present evidence of the different shifts in mission and priorities that developed out of the data analysis. The significance of possible new missions or mission shifts will be explored further in Chapter Six.

Research, Teaching, and Service

The findings of this study proved that for faculty at UMass Amherst, the traditional university missions of research, teaching, and service were paramount. In his discussion of university missions, J. Scott (2006) reported that the research mission is

currently the most prominent of these three and this claim rings true in this study as well. References to the importance of research were ubiquitous in interviews, the UMass System reports, and reports from Faculty Senate and ad hoc committees. Participants used the rhetoric of the traditional missions of research, teaching and service in order to support their arguments for or against parts of the proposal with particular emphasis placed on the research mission. Sociology Professor Donald Tomaskovic-Devey's comment on the blog created by the Reorganization Task Force sums up the sentiment of many faculty:

> If I were to set out core principles for the University it would be to support faculty research and teaching, support student's education, and create structures that favor investments in excellence and strategic opportunities across the various disciplines which make us a University.

The Reorganization Task Force plainly stated the traditional tripartite mission as a guiding force for their work to consider the appropriate structural model for campus:

> The deliberations of the task force are guided by the importance of gaining economic efficiencies in order to protect the core missions of the campus – research, education, and outreach – while also working to position the campus over the longer run for strategic growth in the present and future.

Using Mission to Rationalize Choices

Several committees and individuals supported arguments for their own vision of the restructuring by framing their opinions in terms of mission. This statement from the CHFA-CSBS Reorganization Committee Report provides a good example, "In a

Research 1 University, maintaining the research productivity and reputation in all departments should be one of the central priorities shaping any reorganization of units."

The faculty in SBS and HFA seemed to use this strategy frequently as a way to support their desire not to merge the two colleges. Minutes from a February 2009 meeting of the Academic Priorities Council where SBS Dean Janet Rifkin and other SBS faculty were present discuss the importance of the research and teaching missions and present the account as a way of opposing the SBS/HFA merger. In this statement the authors present why the merger is bad for teaching students:

> What hasn't been talked about is what it means to run two colleges that have huge majors. In the two colleges, there would be close to 8,000 majors. Meeting the needs of those students will require more adjuncts and part timers, and improved advising, all of which would suck up additional resources.

The Academic Priorities Council also discussed why the merger could disadvantage faculty research:

> There also needs to be a climate for research opportunities. Both colleges [SBS and HFA] are research oriented but they are not thought of in those terms…Faculty in SBS indicated that Dean Rifkin has been instrumental in taking SBS on a path of increased and transparent funding for research. Concern was expressed that the reorg will destroy this accomplishment. An SBS-HFA merger will result in this unit being the poor unit on campus.

For faculty in the former Colleges of Natural Resources and the Environment and Natural Sciences and Mathematics, the importance of the research mission was used to support the merger well. The following rationale for the CNS merger, written by the

Reorganization Task Force, reflects both the importance of the research mission as well as the influence of the research university field:

> The 'revolution' in the life, information and nano-sciences have led several universities to attempt to build greater coherence within and across research groups to facilitate new scientific advances, research environments that reflect current challenges, and collaboration required to bring together scientific expertise.

Shifting Missions

In addition to the references to the traditional missions of higher education discussed above, there was also evidence of shifts in the mission, goals, and priorities at UMass Amherst during this time of restructuring. These are likely not new missions at all, but rather the evolution or modernization of already familiar missions. Below, I discuss each of these in more detail:

- Reframing the Land Grant Mission

- Interdisciplinarity, and

- University as Driver of the Local Economy

Each of these shifts in mission seems to correspond to the direction of the larger field of higher education in the U.S. The first of these missions, Reframing the Land Grant Mission, is related both to the way science is viewed in the public research university field and also to the reaction of the MA higher education field as the agrarian economy in the Commonwealth continues to contract. The second mission, Interdisciplinarity, corresponds to the progression of higher education and the ways those in the field look at problems. Funders at the national level have begun to seek out

projects that use a multidisciplinary approach. Statewide fields of higher education are the primary influence behind the third mission, Public Education as a Driver of the Economy. In this this case, it is a response to the Massachusetts legislature's call for public-private research partnerships as well as the expectation that students be trained to accumulate job skills that will allow them to be prepared for employment. At the same time, because the goal of economic development is echoed at other institutions across the country, many universities within the field are looking to their peers for examples of strategies they can adopt. The next section will explore these new missions in depth.

Reframing the Land Grant Mission

The mission of the Massachusetts Agricultural College, a.k.a. Mass Aggie, originated from the Morrill Act and is described by J. Scott (2006) as the public service mission of universities, particularly in the U.S. Originally this land grant mission meant that it was important for an institution to give back to the local community by helping farmers figure out the best planting techniques, etc. However, as agriculture in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts continues to decline and the ways that science is practiced change, this mission has shifted.

While Chancellor Holub's restructuring did effectively dismantle the old Agricultural School at UMass Amherst, the shift in the ways science research is carried out predates his tenure on campus. Prior to his arrival, the broader field of science research was already moving in the direction of life science consolidation and state leaders saw this as an opportunity for economic development through research, and particularly biomedical research. As Participant #13 said about this shift toward the life sciences:

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It probably is the modern era's version of applied science stuff. It's now, 'how do we apply life science?' It's not in better planting or plowing techniques. It's now in, 'how do we do tissue engineering?' or 'how do we develop pharmaceuticals better?' or that sort of stuff.

From this perspective, the creation of the College of Natural Sciences is a complicated response to shifting missions and priorities in multiple fields. Nationally, science research has shifted over the past few decades to a life sciences approach. At the state level, a biomedical industry has developed in the Boston area and beyond. In response, the state legislature created the Massachusetts Life Sciences Initiative as a way of encouraging economic development through research; and they began to provide funding to support research. UMass responded to this political and economic motivation, which made it easier to create CNS because faculty and administrators were already thinking about how to capitalize on these changes and had explored the possibility of bringing the life sciences together prior to 2008. This demonstrates the recursive nature of field influence on mission.

Chancellor Holub agreed that the conditions were right for this merger and championed a move away from the initial vision of the land grant mission, "I think you could do it in Massachusetts. You'd have a lot more trouble doing it in Iowa where agriculture has a much bigger investment in the university."

Participant #11 felt that the old Mass Aggie mission was not going away quickly enough. His preference was to focus the public service mission on something very different. He stated, "I've got this university and what can it do for the Commonwealth

in terms of the kinds of outreach to the community that we could do? I would say, 'Well you know, Massachusetts is driven by a knowledge economy.' " (p. 19)

Interdisciplinarity

Throughout the case, there were multiple references to increasing interdisciplinarity and the benefits that would bring to UMass Amherst and the wider field of research universities. The concept served as a way to support bringing together the sciences to create CNS. Chancellor Holub spoke about the need to create the appropriate structure to support interdisciplinary research:

> There are changes that go on at universities and that there's more of a recognition that the kind of interdisciplinary research that has been promoted by federal agencies and that has been favored by a lot of industries…that this kind of research is something that has to be built into your academic structure rather than something that comes afterward.

Provost Staros and Chancellor Holub both tried to use the idea of bridging disciplines as a way to make the merger of SBS and HFA more appealing to faculty. The following quote is from the Provostial Working Group's vision statement for a College of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences:

> CHASS supports the integrity of its constituent disciplines while at the same time fostering transdisciplinary connections and interactions that expand knowledge and understanding. The College is dedicated to making a significant contribution to research, teaching, policy, creativity, and outreach in the social sciences, fine arts, and humanities; it serves as a model of engaged scholarship, academic rigor,

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interdisciplinarity, and innovative research; and it articulates its broader impacts to a wide group of stakeholders.

Campus leaders went as far as to create specific incentives for SBS and HFA faculty to work together by creating "cluster hires" that would allow a faculty line to be created, but only if it spanned disciplines and the proposing departments were able to make a case that the faculty hire would be doing research in an innovative, interdisciplinary way that would build bridges across departments in the two colleges.

All of the committees that were convened to discuss the merger proposals during this time cited the importance of interdisciplinarity to the core purpose of the University. The Reorganization Task Force members used this mission as a rationale for supporting the creation of a College of Arts and Sciences:

> Colleges of arts and sciences are the core of the university. An organizational structure that fragments departments into separate administrative units to balance resources and enrollments serves no strategic purpose, is likely to be unproductive and counter to the promotion of interdisciplinary research and teaching… It is imperative that we reorganize in order to build on strength – the CAS model clearly achieves that objective in an efficient and integrative manner.

The General Education Council of the Faculty Senate remarked about the importance of the interdisciplinary mission of the university in relation to undergraduate education. As minutes of their March 2009 meeting reported, "Developing a student's abilities to think across disciplines, to bring different disciplinary perspectives together in thinking through a problem, to forge interdisciplinary syntheses, and to write across the curriculum, are the core goals of General Education."

In both documents and interviews, mention of interdisciplinarity as it relates to all aspects of higher education was ubiquitous. There is also evidence that funders such as the National Science Foundation and National Institutes of Health value interdisciplinary work in the research grants they support. The creation of the Massachusetts Life Sciences Initiative also encouraged research across disciplines. The pervasiveness of this concept indicates that it has permeated the mission of the research university, not as a mission that is separate from research, teaching, and service, but instead as an integral part of those components.

University as Driver of the Economy

This particular mission shift might also be considered an extension of the public service mission of the university, or it may be comparable to the nationalization mission seen in Europe (J. Scott, 2006), or perhaps it is a blend of these two. The concept of University as a Driver of the Economy is expressed as an expectation on the part of state government and also UMass officials that public higher education should have a positive effect on the state or regional economy. This economic impact might be derived through training students to be employed by businesses or by adding economic value to the region through research and public/private partnerships.

Individuals on the UMass Amherst campus referenced this mission in interviews. Participant #2 stated: "economic development is a high priority for lots of…especially public institutions, mainly public institutions." Participant #4 agreed that contributing to the economic development of the region was a way for UMass Amherst to prove itself as an institution. Chancellor Holub spoke directly to this purpose of University-prompted economic development when he stated, "I wanted UMass to be among the premier public

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institutions in the country. It also had to serve an increasingly diverse student body and provide economic development for the state, and especially Western Mass." It was also stated as one of the core values in the 2010 Framework for Excellence:

Economic development and global competitiveness. Supporting the economic development of the Commonwealth by providing assistance to small business and industry; encouraging technology transfer; undertaking research in areas of economic importance; and providing the language instruction and other tools necessary for participation in the global economy.

Finally, when asked in 2015 whether universities were expected to provide economic development for the states from which they receive funding, Chancellor Holub responded, "I think that's something that increasingly public institutions have been charged with and I don't think it's unfair to charge institutions with that."

As Chancellor Holub implied, it likely that this new calling for institutions to consider economic development as one of their goals has evolved from the governing bodies and legislatures that provide appropriations, as opposed to an idea that has emerged from faculty. That this mission exists is clearly spelled out in annual reports from the UMass System Office. There is a category within the report itself called "Service to the Commonwealth." The authors of the reports define this to mean that the UMass System exists in part to provide education for people in Massachusetts, but they also consider the UMass System's "contribution to an educated citizenry and *workforce*" (emphasis is mine). More specifically, the 2006 Report on Annual Indicators stated:

As part of that unique mission, UMass is transforming students' lives, shaping the future of our Commonwealth and addressing key state needs. We provide an

accessible and affordable education to more than 65,000 students, the vast majority of whom are sons and daughters of the Commonwealth. We conduct more than $489 million in research that leads to groundbreaking discoveries and spins-off companies that create jobs and fuel economic growth. And, our graduates remain in Massachusetts, entering the workforce in critical fields such as nursing, primary care medicine, computer science, the life sciences and teaching.

To further support the idea that universities and the greater public have accepted this new mission, the UMass Donahue Institute, a research organization within the UMass System, publishes an annual report that details the economic impact of UMass on the Commonwealth.

The Interplay of New Missions

There is evidence that these three evolved missions complement each other within the university. During the time of this case, the administration at UMass constructed a series of new buildings on campus to house interdisciplinary research teams that were working on life science research projects that could potentially spin off small businesses or patented research. As Participant #9 stated:

> The Life Sciences laboratories were not gonna be ceded to any school or college. They were going to house interdisciplinary research groups. They were gonna be organized in a completely different way…Nobody had ever tried to mix people in groups that had more than one department, more than one college in the same research group, same research cluster. And it seems to be working in the sense that it's quite productive in terms of research grants coming in and so forth.

This particular quote demonstrates the ways that the three new missions presented here almost merge into one. Interdisciplinarity as a mission – together with the changing land grant mission – blend to become the University as Driver of the Economy mission. What Participant #9 has described above is the way that the campus was striving to bring in interdisciplinary research grants in the life sciences that would help seed public/private research partnerships.

Organizing Principles for Restructuring and Decision-making

Similar to the ways that individuals used mission to fortify their positions in regards to the restructuring, I uncovered three distinct organizing principles that were also used by many actors to support their thoughts and opinions about the process. Some stakeholders used these organizing principles to justify or oppose specific parts of the restructuring proposal or to evaluate other strategies that were being utilized on campus during this time. Other individuals, including Chancellor Holub, utilized all three of these organizing principles at different times as rationales for the restructuring. I noticed, as did many of the participants I interviewed, that the stated motivations for the mergers seemed to change over time. The more I analyzed the data, the more I came to see these three distinct rationales: 1) budget crisis, 2) interdisciplinarity, and 3) striving for excellence, which I have come to call organizing principles. This section defines and explores each of these and considers the ways they were used by various actors.

Budget Crisis

The organizing principle "budget crisis" is defined as the rationale used to support or oppose the reorganization or any part of it due to the need to save money or cut budgets during the national economic crisis that began in the fall of 2008. This is the

most utilized organizing principle throughout the restructuring process. Chancellor

Holub was the originator of this organizing principle and it is the one he referred to the

most frequently. He first mentioned the idea of reorganizing the colleges to a campus-

wide audience in an email dated January 13, 2009. In this message, he presented the idea

as one possible strategy to deal with the budget crisis:

> To deal with this fiscal crisis, we have formed a Budget Planning Task Force
>
> composed of faculty, staff, and students, and this group has been meeting
>
> regularly to develop advice and recommendations for me in dealing with this
>
> serious situation. In November I asked this group to consider a broad range of
>
> options for reducing expenses and increasing revenues and also, specifically, to
>
> look at reorganization and consolidation of academic administration, including the
>
> possible reorganization of the schools and colleges.

Reflecting back on the case, Chancellor Holub reiterated the dire straits he

believed the campus to be in during those early days of the financial crisis. During our

2015 interview he stated:

> I was looking to save money where I could… Restructuring was never conceived
>
> as a solution; it was one small piece of a solution. You don't get $35M from just
>
> one place; you need a series of actions that reduce expenditures and generate
>
> revenues. Restructuring was possibly a $2+ [million] piece of this larger puzzle.

Chancellor Holub was not the only actor to utilize the budget crisis as an

organizing principle. Because the case of restructuring took place during an economic

crisis, reference to the budget crisis was ubiquitous in documents. Also, each of the

interview participants referenced the budget crisis as a motivation for the reorganization

proposal as well as other activities the University had undertaken to raise revenues during this time. Some stakeholders used the budget crisis as a rationale to support restructuring, others declared that the budget crisis was not the Chancellor's true motive, and still others used this organizing principle as a rational to oppose specific parts of the merger proposals.

Some of the participants believed that the budget crisis was the impetus for the restructuring. Participant #5 was convinced that the restructuring was due to budget constraints. He stated:

I think the impetus was definitely financial. I really don't think that it was the idea that this was going to be educationally the best thing ever. I really think that if we hadn't had a budget crisis, I doubt if we'd have a restructuring because most of the arguments were made in terms of [the idea that] it's going to save us money.

Similarly, Participant #3 stated, "He [Holub] wanted to take as much as possible of the cuts by cutting administration…his next target was administration within Academic Affairs, and that's when he developed the idea for consolidating and combining some schools and colleges." This interviewee continued, saying that the academic restructuring was: "Originally motivated … by the idea that we could save administrative costs that way…I really don't think any of this would have happened in the absence of the budget cuts."

Other participants felt that the budget crisis was used by Chancellor Holub as a pretense for something else that he wanted to do. For example, Participant #11 believed that the budget crisis was a false motive used by the Chancellor and that the real rationale was a need to respond to the Board of Trustees:

Initially it was, 'Oh, we're going to save a lot of money.' and …the amount of

money that would be saved was just so miniscule, maybe 2 level 26

administrative positions I think, right? But I was absolutely convinced that the

initial motivation was the Chancellor felt that we needed to respond to

public...you know, primarily manifested through the Board of Trustees [asking],

'What are you doing given the financial crisis?'

Participant #10 was also dubious about the budget crisis as a motive for restructuring.

She pointed out that while it was announced as a means to save money, the

reorganization did not result in significant cost savings:

So it was very clear when it was announced in 2008-09 that this was about cost

savings, right? And so I mean certainly that was one of the effects of the second

task force was… so there weren't going to be any cost savings.

Participant #12 believed the Chancellor had decided to reorganize parts of the

University prior to his arrival in Amherst:

I don't actually think, by the way, that the origin of the reorganization is in the

financial crisis. The origin of the reorganization is in a decision that I think

[Chancellor Holub] had made before coming here and that was to get rid of NRE.

And I think everything flows from that... And that's just a fact, he told them. He

met early on with the faculty of NRE and said – I wasn't there... I heard it said

that he said that they were an anachronism or something like that.

Participant #4 corroborated this account when he described the August 2008 meeting

between Chancellor Holub and faculty from the College of Natural Resources and the

Environment:

One of the things that he [Chancellor Holub] said at that meeting was, 'One of the things we'll have to ask ourselves over the course of the next year or so is whether we really need a College of Natural Resources and the Environment.'

The various committees that were convened to look at aspects of the Chancellor's restructuring plan also used the budget crisis organizing principle to express their views. For example, the guidelines set up by the Reorganization Taskforce stated that their goal was to preserve the mission of the research university while also looking for ways to save costs. In their words:

> The deliberations of the task force are guided by the importance of gaining economic efficiencies in order to protect the core missions of the campus – research, education, and outreach – while also working to position the campus over the longer run for strategic growth in the present and future.

On the other hand, the CHFA-CSBS Reorganization Committee used "budget crisis" as a motive against merging:

> We believe that any potential benefits are vastly outweighed by the need to focus on revenue generation and the creation of new programs and activities in response to the current and continuing fiscal crisis. Further we believe that there would be base budget costs to such a merger that do not have clear long term benefits.

In the Provost's proposal to the Faculty Senate, written in the spring of 2011, he conceded that the budget crisis was no longer a rationale for merging SBS and HFA. Instead, his motivation was increased collaboration, also identified here as the organizing principle "interdisciplinarity."

Interdisciplinarity

The organizing principle "interdisciplinarity" is also called out as one of the new missions discussed earlier in this chapter. I have elected to include this concept in both sections because it is used as both a mission, in the sense that it is a goal that administrators were hoping to achieve; yet it also served as a rationale for much of the proposed restructuring. Interdisciplinarity as an organizing principle refers to the ways that Chancellor Holub, Provost Staros, and others spoke about faculty in various parts of the campus coming together to do research that spanned disciplines. Chancellor Holub did not use this organizing principle often in relation to the restructuring but he did mention it in his interview while discussing the creation of CNS and adding the Department of Psychology to that college:

> I thought that there was a good chance of producing synergies by having all the bench sciences together. I did something that hasn't been done, I believe, at any other university in the country, and that's move Psychology into the Natural Sciences, which is something that I thought I could do at UMass because of the large number of people who were working on neurosciences in psychology.

Participant #3 believed that Chancellor Holub came to see interdisciplinarity as a secondary reason to restructure:

> I think he also came to believe over time that there were also sensible academic reasons. And I mean, he wouldn't have…forced a merger…he believed that while the primary motivation clearly was saving money, that there also would be some academic benefits – that there would be increased research collaboration in disciplines that seemed right for collaboration.

Participant #11 agreed with Chancellor's Holub's use of interdisciplinarity specifically in relation to the creation of CNS. He stated:

> I think everybody thought that…the department chairs [and] the dean's upper administration [in the life sciences], felt that bringing life sciences together would help people in life sciences work better, and that life sciences was going to be an important area.

> In the case of restructuring at UMass, however, the primary champion of the interdisciplinarity organizing principle was Provost Staros who said:

> My interest in doing it is because there are disciplines which span the borders and one obvious one that came into play was Psychology. Psychology spans the gap between the Social Sciences and the Natural Sciences. So to me, the best thing to make…to work on these mismatches [where various departments ended up historically]: Linguistics, Communications, Journalism, History, was to try to make a college where those would span the borders. And so that's why I advocated for CHASS. It was secondarily to save money, if we can do that.

Provost Staros hoped that his enthusiasm for interdisciplinary research would inspire other stakeholders to support the SBS/HFA merger:

> So you don't save a lot but you do have efficiencies of connection… And so I came into this with the idea that, 'Well, there's a different argument and maybe that would go down better if people saw the actual benefit...'

In the end, Provost Staros' vision was not adopted by the faculty in SBS and HFA and some of the faculty in those colleges used the organizing principle to oppose the merger.

The Reorganization Task Force utilized this organizing principle in a number of ways. In the example below, they support the creation of a College of Arts and Sciences by detailing how merging SBS and HFA without the sciences would not lead to the kinds of interdisciplinarity faculty wanted:

> Both HFA and SBS have begun to build infrastructures and trajectories that support different strategic directions for growth. Consequently, consolidating HFA and SBS into a college separate from the sciences is viewed as inconsistent with – and doing harm to - the current and future education and research functions of these faculties.

The RTF also referenced interdisciplinarity as a reason not to move the Departments of Computer Science and Polymer Science and Engineering into the College of Engineering when they wrote, "The polymer communities within physics, chemistry, and biology are large and expanding. These connections must be preserved. The polymer efforts within the engineering subcommunity are smaller and less connected." And, "The positioning of [Computer Science] on our campus within a science college has been a facilitating factor in establishing multi-disciplinary activities, both in research and teaching."

Finally, the RTF used interdisciplinarity as a reason to reorganize into a College of Arts and Sciences:

> Colleges of arts and sciences are the core of the university. An organizational structure that fragments departments into separate administrative units to balance resources and enrollments serves no strategic purpose, is likely to be unproductive and counter to the promotion of interdisciplinary research and teaching… It is

imperative that we reorganize in order to build on strength – the CAS model

clearly achieves that objective in an efficient and integrative manner.

Participant #10 pointed out that the interdisciplinarity motive seemed to gain

popularity when it seemed evident that the other motives for the SBS/HFA merger were

not working:

And so then suddenly [after the budget savings motive didn't work out] the needle

moved and they [the Provost and Chancellor] said that it was going to be about

intellectual collaborations and that sort of thing. And then I think people were

pretty skeptical about that partly because this was a new rationale when the old

rationale didn't work out so well.

Participant #1 struggled with the emphasis the Holub administration placed on

interdisciplinarity because she believed that different kinds of cross-disciplinary research

were valued more highly than others:

[Interdisciplinarity] is also a code word for bringing in federal grants because if

you can be the kind of social scientist that works with 'real' scientists, that can

bring in huge amounts of money, then that's a good way to do cross-discipline but

in the humanities, interdisciplinary work is not valued.

Striving for Excellence

The organizing principle identified as "excellence" or "striving for excellence" is

the rationale used to support, or oppose, plans that would raise the status of the UMass

Amherst campus in terms of the various ranking systems. I also coded items as

"excellence" when they referred to plans to position UMass Amherst for an invitation to

the AAU and in relation to specific kinds of benchmarking, and in particular when

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comparisons were made to institutions UMass leaders considered "aspirational peers." Chancellor Holub mainly used this organizing principle in relation to revenue generating efforts and other plans for which he was advocating. He used it less often in relation to the proposed reorganization, although he would say that moving UMass Amherst to the "upper echelon of public research universities" was the overarching goal for all of his championed plans.

From his first comments when he was appointed chancellor to his responses from our 2015 interview, Chancellor Holub always considered himself responsible for moving UMass Amherst up in the rankings. In 2015, he wrote:

> I believed – and still believe – that UMass Amherst has great potential, that with the proper support and strategic moves, it can become an AAU institution. I saw my charge as moving the campus in that direction, and that thought guided all my activities while I was chancellor.

Even in 2015, when he was a faculty member at another institution, he still remembered:

> In the U.S. News and World Report, I believe when I came in, we were 52nd and when I left we were 42nd. And because all of the changes that I put in, I think we continued to drop. I think UMass was in the 30s but it's very difficult to get further than that with the kind of funding that we have and with the kind of campus that we have.

Chancellor Holub's preoccupation with the rankings motivated him to draft the Framework for Excellence, about which Participant #12 said, "The Framework for Excellence is basically just a list of things that you would…need to do to get into the AAU – and without any consideration of resources that would be required to do that."

Participant #7 also spoke about the ways that the Chancellor's proposals sometimes seemed like they were not accomplishing what they promised:

> There was this sense that he was doing this [restructuring] to look like an AAU [or] to show the legislature he was doing something to make it look like it was cost-cutting when we knew that it really wasn't going to accomplish any of these things.

Each of the three committees that were tasked with looking at the reorganization also used the "striving for excellence" organizing principle in their discussions of the best path forward for the campus. The Restructuring Task Force used "excellence" as an organizing principle when it argued not to move the Department of Polymer Science and Engineering (PSE) into the College of Engineering: "Because the PSE Department curriculum is widely recognized as world leading and has been built over the last thirty years PSE faculty believe it is important to maintain the integrity of this program." They also used it to argue for the University to adopt a College of Arts and Sciences structure:

> In the American Association of Universities, which is a membership organization by invitation only for research universities, 75 percent of the public university members are organized using the arts and sciences model. Among the private universities, the percentage is even higher.

The CHFA-CSBS Reorganization Committee argued in many sections of their report that a merger of these two colleges would have negative effects on excellence in research and teaching. Conversely, the CHASS merger proposal that Provost Staros sent to the Faculty Senate at the conclusion of the work of the Provostial Committee refers to the way that this new college would enhance the reputation of the University:

Creation of a College organized on the principles proposed here would send an

important message across the campus and to the broader community. It would

signify that we are actively engaged in thinking about our role in tackling the

important questions relating to the human condition.

At least one participant pointed out that the search for excellence as an organizing

principle pre-dated Chancellor Holub's arrival on campus,

[Chancellor] Lombardi started with the benchmarking and that felt like the

beginning of the shift to me where everything was about defining out peer

institutions and measuring. And then suddenly everything in comparison to some

other universities that were supposed to be better than us and how could we be as

good as them? ... We have competition and we're placing ourselves and trying to

rework ourselves to match our competition.

Participant #1 also pointed out that striving for excellence and trying to get into

the AAU were incongruous with the reorganization plan, "I think the hardest thing was,

[Chancellor Holub] couldn't point to all these great AAU universities and say, 'They

have this SBS/HFA thing – the CHASS.' "

Where You Sit is What You See: Position Influences Views on Restructuring

One of the research questions for this study was: How did individual actors

influence the restructuring and in what ways might their roles have been influenced by

their position on campus and the University's position within organizational

fields? Above I discussed the findings regarding the influence of specific groups. In this

section, I will explore the ways that individual actors and groups viewed the restructuring

based on where they were on campus and how they used field-inspired rhetoric and

organizing principles to support their arguments regarding the outcome of the

Chancellor's proposal. It seems that individuals and groups used their knowledge of the

field to support their already existing opinions. As Participant #3 stated:

> Everybody looked to see how things were done nationally, but people did that
>
> after the fact, basically to buttress their respective cases and there are so many
>
> models nationally that you could find anybody with any model, could find a
>
> handful of other places around the country that did things their way. There are a
>
> lot of Colleges of Arts and Sciences around the country.

The viewpoints of these stakeholders were influenced by their position on campus and

perhaps their inability to see things from a variety of perspectives. Chancellor Holub

explained it like this:

> There seemed to be a lack of understanding for the crisis that the campus was
>
> going through and that what I was trying to do was to try to deal positively with
>
> that crisis and trying to do the best for faculty, really. Very often, I've learned that
>
> … people look at things from a kind of a parochial perspective that they don't
>
> take into account the larger campus and what is going on there and what has to be
>
> done.

Chancellor Holub's Bird's Eye View

Of all stakeholders, Chancellor Holub may have been the one with the broadest

perspective of the campus. He arrived at UMass in the fall of 2008, having worked at

two other public research universities. In his position, he reported to the UMass System

President and the Board of Trustees, both located in Boston rather than Amherst, and

therefore providing an external viewpoint. Chancellor Holub was responsible for the

well-being and survival of the entire campus and in his written correspondence as well as our interview, he reported that he was trying to carry out his charge of bringing UMass into the upper echelon of public research universities. His actions, and the rationales for them, appeared to arise from this particular perspective. Because he did not have a connection to or history in a specific unit on campus prior to becoming Chancellor, his interests were not tied to a specific department, group, or discipline. He saw what he was trying to accomplish as a solution that was best for the campus as a whole under the circumstances.

When the budget crisis first hit and Chancellor Holub proposed a reorganization of the academic units on campus, he primarily used the budget crisis organizing principle to support his proposal to restructure the campus. Several examples of this are given in the section on organizing principles above. During the 2008-09 academic year, Chancellor Holub sent close to twenty emails to the campus community to discuss the budget situation and potential reorganization. In these he most often used the organizing principle of budget crisis, he referenced striving for excellence less frequently, and interdisciplinarity hardly at all. During this period, Chancellor Holub was, by all documented accounts, primarily focused on managing the budget crisis at UMass Amherst, a situation that was most closely related to the MA higher education field. It is unsurprising then that he used field logics that were related to MA higher education, as well as larger environmental concerns regarding Massachusetts' economy and politics, to support his decisions. The early emails to campus were mainly about the condition of the state budget, estimates concerning how much money would be cut from UMass Amherst by the legislature, and how the various units on campus might have to make substantial

cuts in order to deal with the difficult budget situation. In his proposed reorganization

plan, which was formally presented to the Faculty Senate in May 2009, he used two

organizing principles to support his project – budget crisis and excellence:

> I believe we will need to proceed beyond the proposed structure, if we are going
>
> to compete with the top public research institutions in the country. In addition,
>
> depending on the financial crisis and its course over the next few years, we may
>
> have to revisit entities within colleges, propose consolidations of their operations,
>
> and thereby further eliminate administration... While none of us would choose
>
> this route, the financial picture may force these actions.

It is possible that Chancellor Holub utilized the organizing principles of striving for

excellence and interdisciplinarity to support the restructuring plan because faculty

members were more willing to be persuaded by these kinds of arguments rather than

financial ones.

Occasionally, Chancellor Holub utilized multiple organizing principles to make

his case for the restructuring, such as in this email message to campus in February 2009:

> I believe that the structures I am proposing make the most sense for the campus at
>
> this particular time. They will provide efficiencies in administration, considerable
>
> monetary savings [budget crisis], minimal disruption of faculty, programs, and
>
> departments, as well as the potential for exciting new collaborations in research
>
> and teaching [interdisciplinarity]. They will also demonstrate that we are taking
>
> the financial crisis seriously and that we are managing the campus effectively
>
> [budget crisis]. I know that not everyone will agree, but I hope that faculty will
>
> put aside their personal preferences and work within the proposed structure

toward the goal we all want: moving UMass Amherst into the upper echelon of public research universities in the country [striving for excellence].

Whenever he spoke about the budget crisis, it was in reference to the restructuring or the plans UMass administrators had put in place to generate more revenues. Also, the budget crisis was most closely tied to the MA higher education field since it was the state field that controlled the appropriations coming to campus. The striving for excellence or interdisciplinarity organizing principles, on the other hand, were generally used as a way to talk about strategies that would help UMass Amherst to move up in the ranks and these were more closely related to the public research university field.

After the stimulus funds and various revenue generating strategies were used to stabilize the campus and after the College of Natural Sciences had been created, Chancellor Holub was able to turn his attention toward moving UMass toward excellence. His planning document, the Framework for Excellence provided strategies toward his goal of bringing UMass Amherst into the upper echelon of public research universities. Whereas the 2009 version did reference the need for savings because of the budget crisis, the 2010 version did not focus on this. The entire document revolved around the organizing principle identified as striving for excellence. One of the core values of the report is: "Excellence. Maintaining a range of academic offerings and outputs comparable in quality to those offered at public AAU universities." Chancellor Holub equated membership in the AAU with the kind of excellence that the campus should embody.

An Alternative Perspective on the Chancellor's Intentions

While Chancellor Holub described his intentions for UMass Amherst as being in the best interests of the campus, other campus stakeholders had a different view of the Chancellor's motives. Some interview participants reported that they believed the Chancellor was reorganizing UMass as part of a plan to make changes that would allow him to compete for a more prestigious job in the public research university field. Participant #13 stated it this way:

> Because it's always been the case that administrators come and go. They waltz in. They spend their five years someplace. They muck up the works and then they move on. They've got their CV all padded with their fabulous accomplishments that the rest of us are left dealing with once they're gone.

Chancellor Holub vehemently denied these claims during his tenure at the University. He also mentioned during our interview that he found these kinds of accusations, which were raised while he was still at UMass, to be an affront to his service to the campus.

Other Stakeholder Perspectives

While Chancellor Holub had the bird's eye view of campus, most other stakeholders did not. Only a few of the participants interviewed for this study had positions that required them to think about the campus in a holistic way. Stakeholders who worked in specific units on campus perceived Chancellor Holub's goals for the restructuring in different ways depending upon where they were located. Also, their connection to their unit and what the restructuring might mean for it seemed to limit their ability to take a broader view.

Faculty who posted responses on the Reorganization Task Force's blog, as well as the participants I interviewed, typically used field-related arguments to support what they believed to be the best strategy for UMass. It was not uncommon for the same arguments to be used to support opposing ideas about what should be done on campus. It is evident from their comments that individual faculty were speaking about their own departmental or college interests and not thinking about the issues from the perspective of the university as a whole. Below are examples of this:

Participant #7 referenced the Chancellor's organizing principle of striving for excellence when speaking about the reasons why it would not make sense to remove the Department of Psychology from the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences:

I think taking psychology out of SBS was a bad move, in part because it doesn't make us look at all like AAU institutions and research-intensive social science colleges have psychology. Even social science/HFA merged colleges tend to have psychology. So it makes us look a little weird. So I don't think [the reorganization] met that goal of having us look like other research intensives.

Scott Auerbach, Professor of Chemistry in the former College of Natural Sciences and Mathematics was in favor of the creation of the College of Natural Sciences. His post on the RTF blog indicates a perspective that is tied directly to recent developments in science at the environmental level and a shift to a life sciences mission regionally and also as it supports the campus research mission. He wrote:

In general, I favor bringing together elements to create a College of Life and Physical Sciences. Here's why… We now know that fields that blend bio/chem/physics are providing the seminal breakthroughs elucidating the

machinations of proteins, cells, and beyond, providing "rational design" of new treatments for disease … We put ourselves in a /uniquely competitive position/ for future development – fundraising, faculty recruitment, center grants – by rebundling Life and Physical sciences together.

In her comment on the blog, Joya Misra, Professor of Sociology, employs all three organizing principles used by Chancellor Holub but she does this with a different strategy in mind – not merging SBS/HFA. Utilizing the budget crisis organizing principle, she explained why would not make sense to merge the colleges under the current conditions in 2009. She also made the point that the Colleges of HFA and SBS were intellectually different and therefore it would be difficult to maintain that difference in a merged college. She wrote, "While under a merged structure, 'mini-deans' could be created, such an approach does not appear to be the best cost-saving measure." Second, she referenced interdisciplinarity, noting that if the campus did not want to jeopardize this quality, it should not change the structure. She provided the example of the interdisciplinary Center for Research on Families and how it was nurtured in SBS and that if it were to move to CNS, it might receive less funding from the dean of the new college. Finally, in response to the motive of striving for excellence, Professor Misra reported that merging SBS and HFA might interfere with those goals:

> At this moment, our Sociology department is poised to move into the very top tier [of] Sociology programs in the country. Our research strengths have clearly been supported effectively and efficiently by the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences. I have doubts as to whether these programs will be supported as effectively under a different administrative structure.

Elizabeth Chilton, Professor of Anthropology used two of the organizing

principles to support her claim that HFA and SBS should not merge. Responding to the

budget crisis, she wrote:

> The timing is not right for college mergers in the coming academic year. We are
>
> facing a very serious budget crisis…and the current academic leadership (i.e.
>
> Deans) and administrative structures have best prepared us to deal with these
>
> budget crises.

She also referred to the public research university field in her comment: "There might be

good reasons to merge colleges, but if we look to other institutions that have undergone

such mergers, it is clear that there are initial costs, not immediate savings." Finally, she

referenced interdisciplinarity as a means to provide support for the creation of a College

of Arts and Sciences rather than a College of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences:

> Because anthropology really straddles/defies the biological-cultural, and
>
> scientific-humanistic boundaries, there may be some benefit to our particular
>
> department to moving to a College of Arts and Sciences that includes the current
>
> departments in HFA and at least some of the departments in NSM. From a
>
> strategic and academic perspective, I do not see any downside to such a college,
>
> and there would be perhaps more opportunities for a true marriage of the arts and
>
> sciences in our teaching and research.

John Kingston, professor of linguistics, argued that creating a College of Arts and

Sciences would be good for the budget and promote interdisciplinarity:

> First, a common administrative staff…would be smaller and thus less costly than
>
> the sum of their staffs. Moreover, it would remove those barriers to cross-college

cooperation that other posters to this blog have complained of. Second, the

authority granted to the executive dean would be great enough and the term long

enough to make the position appealing, but it would not be so grand as to

duplicate the provost's role... Third, by pooling the RTF that would ordinarily go

to the individual colleges, the new CAS would have the resources and the

flexibility to use them necessary to ensure the success of all constituents.

In the semester prior to taking a vote on the Chancellor's reorganization proposal,

the Faculty Senate leadership requested a report from each of the senate councils

regarding the impact of the proposal on their area of expertise. Through these reports, the

senate councils found ways to utilize organizing principles and field-type rhetoric to

support their favored outcomes. In these reports, it is evident that the councils were

operating from the perspective of their committee's singular focus rather than from an

overall view of what might be best for the entire campus.

The Academic Priorities Council used all three organizing principles in their

support of either a College of Arts and Sciences structure or a seven-college model. In

reference to the budget crisis and interdisciplinarity, they wrote: "An organizational

structure should encourage efficient use of resources, break down barriers that inhibit

multidisciplinary research and study, allow units to take advantage of synergies, and

foster a sense of community and shared purpose." They continue to apply the

interdisciplinarity principle in supporting a CAS structure: "This structure was viewed as

potentially superior in encouraging cross-disciplinary use of resources and collaboration

to meet the needs of the general education curriculum." Finally, they referenced striving

for excellence when they wrote, "We should build a structure that will have the 'potential

to foster external funding and investment and build our national and international reputation.' "

The General Education Council was most concerned about the budget crisis and whether there would be enough resources for the University to continue to support the General Education Requirement if the restructuring took place:

We have learned from hard experience, when confronted with earlier reorganizations, to look at the practical bottom line and to note that the question of resource support for General Education is generally not addressed as an important consequence of reorganization...Will there be some redistribution of resources to insure the integrity and quality of General Education, as the responsibility for providing faculty and TA resources moves from one Deanship to another?

The Program and Budget Council commented on the potential savings from Chancellor Holub's original restructuring plan but refused to comment on whether the plan would position the campus for excellence. The International Studies Council supported the Chancellor's desire for excellence: "Our aim is, like the Chancellor's and the Provost's, to ensure that we move 'into the upper echelon of public research universities in the country.' " They were specifically concerned with striving for excellence as it related to internationalization. In their report, they state:

Any reorganization must be done with an attentive eye to maintaining and increasing the global diversity on campus and in developing international study experiences as integral parts of undergraduate education.

Conclusion

This chapter presented findings of this study based on analysis of the data. The first part of the chapter described the ways that UMass Amherst's position in two organizational fields: public research universities and Massachusetts public higher education, influenced the actions taken by campus leaders and shaped the way campus stakeholders considered the circumstances of this case. Various groups and individuals on campus had specific ideas about the way the University should have responded to the economic crisis it was facing and they typically couched their interests in rhetoric that was related to one or both of these fields.

The next section discussed the progression of mission at UMass Amherst as it was related to the case. For the most part, on-campus stakeholders viewed the mission of UMass as the traditional three-part university mission of research, teaching, and service, in keeping with the original land grant mission of the University. However, there was evidence of a shift in this mission, imposed from outside the campus itself, as state economies struggled to remain solvent during this period. Following the 2008 economic crisis, many states, including Massachusetts decreased funding for higher education and expected that institutions would be able to generate revenues to fill the gaps. At the same time, state leaders continued to put pressure on institutions to find ways to contribute to local and regional economies. In Massachusetts, where agriculture had declined as part of the state economy, biomedical research began to fill that void. Campus and state leaders encouraged the consolidation of the life sciences to meet the demands of shifts in science research and also to find ways to expand public/private partnerships and

economic development. These types of strategies were also being used at the restructured campuses I reviewed in Chapter Two.

Also in this chapter, I presented the three common organizing principles that UMass stakeholders used to support their positions on the reorganization. These three concepts: budget crisis, interdisciplinarity, and striving for excellence, were used by most groups and individuals across campus as rationales for the plans they championed during the restructuring. It was not uncommon for people who had very different ideas about the outcome of the restructuring to use the same rationales when they presented their arguments. In addition to the organizing principles, I found that campus actors also co-opted rhetoric from the fields explored here as well as notions of mission in order to build arguments that would support their chosen outcome for the reorganization.

Chapter Six discusses implications of this study for policy, mission, and practice in higher education in general and the University of Massachusetts Amherst in particular.

CHAPTER 6

DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

<u>**Introduction**</u>

This study examined a case of academic restructuring at the University of

Massachusetts Amherst. On its face, the restructuring appeared to be a response to the

severe economic crisis faced by universities and industries alike beginning in the fall of

2008. However, looking at the case through the lens of organizational field theory

provided a more nuanced view of what happened at UMass Amherst during this time.

Chapter Five presented findings to support the influence of multiple fields and actors on

the eventual reorganization that took place at UMass Amherst. The findings also

uncovered indications of potential shifts in the mission and priorities at UMass Amherst.

Using the framework of organizational field theory, it seems likely that the battles over

structure and the shifts in mission discussed in Chapter Five are not isolated to one

campus, but rather, they are present in the larger field of public research universities.

This chapter presents a discussion of possible implications of these findings for

the future of public research universities. In particular, three main topics inspired deeper

reflection:

1. This study revealed the ways that individual and group influence on campus
    conflicted with field-level pressures during the process of campus
    reorganization.

2.   Incumbents and challengers on campus used various strategies to influence
    the Chancellor's plans. There were specific power dynamics on campus that
    led some faculty to perceive a North versus South divide.

3. This study highlighted certain shifts in university mission that may have implications for UMass as well as other universities in the United States.

The Interplay of Multiple Fields and the Environment

Organizations operate in multiple fields simultaneously and their leaders may make decisions that are influenced by one or more of these fields at the same time. Also, organizations and fields are subject to fluctuations in the wider environmental context. For example, shifts in the political or economic landscape make a difference in institutional decision-making. While it is sometimes difficult to pull apart the distinct threads of field and environmental influence, this case at UMass Amherst provided an example of what this interplay may look like. A recent study of universities in Europe referred to this condition as "nested fields" (Hüther & Krücken, 2016, p. 53). The researchers discussed the ways that influences from regional, state, and national fields may lead to either isomorphism or differentiation in a university setting. In European universities, the results of regulation and access to resources from national, state, and regional governments are intertwined with increased competition among universities (Hüther & Krücken, 2016).

Chapter Five explored the ways that different fields exerted pressure on University leadership. Similar to Hüther and Krücken's (2016) study, the responses to the various fields were related to regulation and resources as well as competition with peers in the research university field. In the UMass case, state budget cuts meant a reduction in resources within the Massachusetts state higher education field. Strategies to bring in additional revenues, although influenced by the budget crisis, were generally "borrowed" from the public research university field, as were the strategies to achieve

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excellence. The interplay of nested fields is not a neat and tidy occurrence but instead results in complex outcomes making it difficult to identify how much influence originates from any particular corner to result in actions or changes on campus. The conceptual model proposed at the outset of this research now appears too simplistic in light of the study's findings and therefore a new model is introduced in the pages to follow.

There are implications here for university leaders to recognize what is happening in the environment and fields around them so that they can better plan for change. Although campus leaders are not able to exert much direct influence on environments, depending on where they are positioned in the field, they likely will be able to effect some of the actions of their institutional peers. In any event, the place where university leaders have the most influence over outcomes is on their own campuses; however, they must be able to recognize who holds power and to work with them accordingly.

Fligstein and McAdam wrote about the ways that skilled leaders are able to operate between the field and individual actors in order to make change: "Action depends on both the structural position and the opportunities actors have and their ability to recognize how they can mobilize others in order to maximize their chances for both narrowly instrumental and broader existential gain" (pp. 48-49). In the UMass Amherst case, it appeared that Chancellor Holub was not always skilled at recognizing the sources of power on campus and mobilizing others towards accomplishing his goals.

A Reconsideration of the Conceptual Model

The conceptual model originally designed for this study and presented in Chapter Two now appears too simplistic to capture the nuances of multiple fields, the influences of various stakeholders, and the shifts of a few different missions. The findings of the

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study have led me to rework the model in order to capture a more detailed depiction of the interactions among the different levels of organization as well as the shifts in mission. Figure 3 presents this new model.
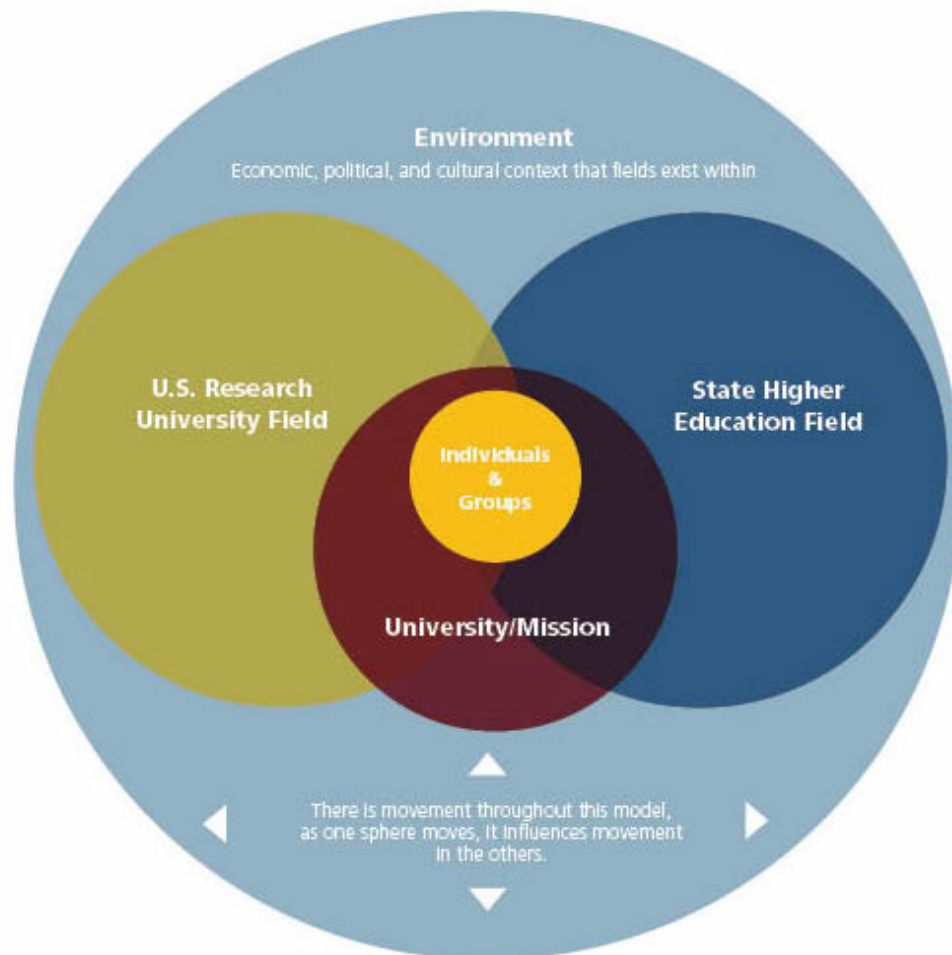
Figure 3. Updated Conceptual Model

This updated model attempts to demonstrate the reflexive influence among the various levels of organization. The broader economy and political environment influence all fields, which in turn influence the organizations within them. Groups and individuals within these organizations also respond to what happens at these external levels. At the same time, there is also reflexive influence and tension among each of these spheres. They have the ability to shape each other; shifts in one level of influence affect the

others. This study found that tension among organizational fields can lead to different levels of pressure on organizations therefore influencing decision-making in complex ways. Also, groups and individuals within the organization exert varied pressures on leadership, resulting in further tensions. Finally, each of these levels influence and shift the organizational mission and perhaps as organizational missions shift, so does the field.

UMass Amherst as an Organizational Field within the Larger Context

In the case of the restructuring at UMass Amherst, some elements of Chancellor Holub's original proposal were carried out while others were not. In this study, I elected to look at these outcomes through the lens of organizational field theory in order to make sense of what happened. Traditional organizational field theory (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Zajac & Kraatz, 1993; Scott, W. R., 1994) might have anticipated a different outcome for this situation as these scholars focused more heavily on the pressures of organizational fields and considered organizational actors less important. For example, they might have expected UMass Amherst to adopt a College of Arts and Sciences model since this is the structure adopted by most public research universities, and UMass peer institutions in particular.

However, considering UMass Amherst as its own organizational field functioning within the fields of public research universities and MA higher education while also being influenced by larger economic and political forces allows emphasis to be placed on the strategic actions and power of individual actors and groups within the organization (Emirbayer & Johnson, 2008, Fligstein & McAdam, 2012; Scott, W. R., 2015). In this case, environmental influence, field-level pressures, and power dynamics among campus

actors all exerted pressures that contributed to the final outcome of the reorganization process.

The financial crisis served as a destabilizing event which Chancellor Holub and other campus actors saw as an opportunity for change. Chancellor Holub was compelled by the UMass President's Office and the legislature to reduce budgets at the University in the wake of this crisis. Pressure came mainly from the Massachusetts political environment and MA higher education field, however the specific plan to use restructuring as a way of cutting costs may have originated in the public research university field. Many institutions were restructuring in the aftermath of the financial crisis and Chancellor Holub himself had lived through a restructuring at his home campus of UC Berkeley. The Chancellor's senior leadership team likely influenced the specific restructuring proposal that determined where each of the colleges and departments would settle. To best understand the various levels of influence, it helps to consider three phases of the restructuring separately.

The Creation of CNS

The creation of the College of Natural Sciences may be viewed as the most successful outcome of the reorganization proposal – at least in terms of the parts of the original proposal that were accomplished. From a field theory perspective, this merger can be viewed as the result of an alignment of fields, a welcoming environment, and the cooperation and acceptance of strategic actors on campus.

In the research university field and the economic environment, there was already a shift underway in how scientific research was being carried out and sponsored. Participants in this study confirmed that funding from the major research institutions such

as the NSF and NIH were focused on projects that brought the life sciences together. The creation of CNS was aligned with this field-level shift.

Within the MA higher education field and the larger environment of MA politics and economy, the Massachusetts Life Sciences Initiative was created to support efforts that would provide research and economic development through biomedical research. Bringing together all of the life sciences departments at the University of Massachusetts Amherst aligned with this field-level activity and allowed UMass to be better able to accept state-level grant funding.

Finally, at the local level, in the UMass field, there was sufficient support or at least disinterest enough to allow this merger to happen without difficulty. The participants interviewed for this research indicated, as did the documentation from the time of the restructuring, that faculty members in the Colleges of Natural Resources and the Environment and Natural Sciences and Mathematics were not opposed to the merger of their two colleges and some were very much in support. Faculty did not organize to block this merger and this may have been because the idea of merging the life sciences had been part of the campus dialogue prior to this time and also because faculty saw the benefits of this merger.

The Little Merger that Couldn't

The proposed merger of the Colleges of Social and Behavioral Sciences and Humanities and Fine Arts lingered in a state of "about to happen" for two and a half years. For the interview participants who were closest to this proposed merger, the drawn-out process was oftentimes uncomfortable. Faculty and staff continued to oppose the merger through three different committee processes convened by university leaders

who seemed intended to force the issue, regardless of the opinions and preferences of those in the two affected colleges. In the end, this merger did not happen and looking at the situation from various field levels may provide insight about what stopped it.

In the public research university field, there was no shift in disciplines or research that related to this kind of configuration as there was for the CNS merger. Also, almost none of the AAU institutions to which UMass Amherst compared itself had something like the proposed College of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences; most had a College of Arts and Sciences.

In the MA higher education field and the larger environment of MA politics and economy, there was no related statewide initiative or focus on the social sciences, humanities, and/or fine arts that would lead to a merger like this. Finally, at the local level, in the UMass field, there was very little support for this merger. The vast majority of faculty in both of these colleges strongly opposed the merger and through the workings of three committees, they were able to postpone action on the proposal. By the time Chancellor Holub announced his resignation in 2011, the campus leadership team had lost momentum and recognized that it would not be beneficial to continue to pursue the merger. It would seem that the absence of campus-level support coupled with a lack of corresponding urgency from organizational fields or the broader environment served to stop this merger from taking place.

The faculty in SBS and HFA presented a more-or-less united front against the Chancellor's wish to merge them but this did not seem to make an impact initially. Over time and through their on-campus influence, with the help of the Faculty Senate and the union, and by getting the merger timeline extended on several occasions, the faculty in

HFA and SBS were able to stop the merger of their colleges. This outcome was due to action and influence within the UMass field with very little influence from either the research university field or the Massachusetts public education field.

Power and Status in Computer Science and Polymer Science and Engineering

Early in the decision-making process, Chancellor Holub proposed moving the Departments of Computer Science and Polymer Science and Engineering into the College of Engineering. The Chancellor quickly retracted this part of the proposal without it getting much attention from the rest of campus. He did ask for the Dean of the College of Engineering to continue talks with the chairs of these two departments to consider keeping this possibility open. From an organizational field theory perspective, this particular outcome seems to be a reaction to multiple influences, with the defining one coming from the local level with a reflection in the larger research university field.

At the public research university level, there was precedent for these departments to join the College of Engineering because that was the case for more than half of the Departments of Computer Science in the top 20 according to Participant #11. However, faculty in Computer Science argued that their discipline, like the department at UMass Amherst had an outward-facing, interdisciplinary focus and worked toward making connections with other programs on campus, whereas the culture in the College of Engineering was more internally focused and therefore not a good fit.

At the MA higher education/state politics level, it is unclear whether there was support for these departments to move into Engineering. The UMass System Office reports highlighted the importance of the University's impact on the workforce in the

fields of computer science and engineering but this does not suggest support or opposition to a departmental move.

At the local level, in the UMass field, influential actors in these departments refused to move. Both of these departments bring millions of dollars in research funding and prestige to campus because they are top-ranked in the research university field and the individual faculty members are well-known. Therefore they were able to use their clout to oppose to this move. Ultimately, the outcome of this part of the Chancellor's proposal was based on the local power and national standing of the individuals and the programs they represented.

As this discussion indicates, it is useful to consider the power dynamics among actors and groups when considering organizations within their fields and also as organizational fields in their own right (Emirbayer & Johnson, 2008). Wherever there is a field, there are power dynamics at work. In this case, because the faculty in Polymer Science and Engineering and in Computer Science had high status on campus and in the research university field, the Chancellor seemed more willing to respect their wishes to stay within the College of Natural Sciences and Mathematics – and later the College of Natural Sciences.

North vs. South: Incumbents and Challengers

Throughout the data gathering and analysis, it became clear that there were groups and individuals on campus who believed that there was stratification between the science disciplines and the humanities, fine arts, and social sciences. This discrepancy became evident as faculty from SBS and HFA departments claimed that they received fewer resources than their counterparts in the sciences. Because the sciences primarily

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occupy the north end of campus and the SBS/HFA departments the southern part of campus, this state of affairs was referred to as the "North-South divide."

On the blog that the Reorganization Task Force set up to allow faculty to comment on the proposal and the process of reorganization, this reference to the North-South divide was a frequent topic of discussion. In a comment on the blog that the Reorganization Task Force created, John Kingston, Professor and Chair of Linguistics, clearly articulated the fears of the faculty in SBS/HFA and their sense of being disadvantaged by this situation:

> Our history has been one of repeated economic challenges, which have left us wounded but not mortally. The wounds have not been mortal because we have not been divided during tough times into winners and losers. However, I fear that if the Chancellor's proposal for reorganization (Plan B) is adopted, it will at last inflict that mortal wound, by bringing about the division we have escaped before now. It would do so in two ways. First, it joins units that want to be together into the new CNS, while forcing units that don't want to be together into the new CHASS. Second and equally corrosive, it concentrates the wealthy into one college and the impoverished into another.

Using a field theory lens, this situation can be considered an encounter between incumbents and challengers within the UMass field. W. R. Scott (2015) used the term "excluded actors" to describe the ways that the SBS and HFA faculty might have considered their position during this time and he remarked on the ways actors such as these might be mobilized. In this case there is evidence that the faculty union and

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department chairs galvanized the SBS and HFA faculty to resist action they did not want to happen.

If the challengers were the SBS and HFA faculty, the incumbents were faculty in the College of Natural Sciences who seemed to get what they wanted with a minimum of disruption. Also, faculty in the Departments of Computer Science and Polymer Science and Engineering were able to avoid being moved without having to organize a protest because they brought more resources to campus and represented power through their rank in the public research university field.

Shifting the Mission of the University

In addition to considering the ways that field theory can be applied to the UMass Amherst restructuring, I also used this study to contemplate the ways that mission might be shifting in the University and if this is happening, how organizational fields may be part of these mission changes. Three shifts in mission at the University of Massachusetts Amherst were identified through this study and I have dubbed them: University as Driver of the Economy, Reframing the Land Grant Mission, and Interdisciplinarity. These shifts appear to be linked to each other and influenced by both of the fields as well as the broader environmental context discussed here. Further, while is it not possible to generalize results from one case study to all public research universities, it would be interesting future research to investigate whether other institutions are facing similar shifts in mission. Such a discovery would appear to support the premise behind the conceptual framework for this study, which surmises that there is a reflexive connection among fields and organizations so a shift in an organization's mission is both influenced by and influences the fields to which it belongs.

Each of the mission shifts mentioned above was discussed in detail in Chapter Five. This section will offer further consideration of the connections between these evolved missions and where the field of public research universities may be heading. J. Scott (2006) provided an in-depth discussion of the evolution of the missions of the university. Two of these missions, democratization and public service, were specific to universities in the United States. The evolution of mission at UMass Amherst might be considered an evolution of both of these. Other scholars have pointed to privatization as an emerging mission of higher education (Allan, 2007; Slaugher & Rhoades, 2009; Travis, 2013). Tension between an emerging privatization mission and the traditional democratization and public service missions may be one way to interpret the results of this study. Labaree (1997), Thelin (2011), and others have written about the shift from higher education as a public good to a private good at a time when political and economic environmental influences change the ways that public universities do business; according to these scholars, universities are becoming more business-like.

As discussed in Chapter Two, democratization as a mission derived from the founding of an independent nation that valued individual rights and the ideals of self-government (J. Scott, 2006). This mission has evolved over decades to represent increased access to higher education for individuals at all socio-economic levels and an opportunity for social mobility. The public service mission originated with the Morrill Land Grant Act and a vision that universities would provide services to support the public in their local regions (Scott J., 2006). At the time, the United States was supported heavily by an agrarian economy and public service typically meant assistance with agricultural techniques and methods. This mission has shifted in more modern times to

include community service in urban areas and partnerships that are intended to work toward solutions to social problems.

Travis (2013) wrote about the challenges to public university survival if the current trend of shrinking appropriations continues. One of the strategies that universities are increasingly using as state funding to public higher education decreases is privatization of some services and generating revenues from other sources. These strategies are reinforced within the public research university field as institutions compete with each other. As discussed in this case, universities like UMass Amherst have relied on similar approaches to bring in more funding; some of these include: increased enrollment of out-of-state and international students who can pay higher tuition, development of new master's programs, more online course offerings, and research with corporate sponsors that leads to patents and business spinoffs.

Travis (2013) argued that this path leads to increased stratification of higher education, less access for people in lower socioeconomic groups, and therefore the loss of another mission – democratization. He also raises concerns about "diminishing commitment to public service" as ties to corporate entities have increased along with the call to focus on workforce development and the bottom line (Travis, 2013, p. 7). Other scholars (Gumport, 2011; Marginson, 2011; Talburt, 2005) are also concerned with the dangers of adopting market-based strategies in higher education as a way to remain competitive with peers and in the rankings, and they see this trend as an adoption of neoliberal values in public higher education.

Through this analysis I am suggesting that the democratization and public service missions may have been compromised by an encroaching privatization mission and now

constitute a newly evolved mission that can be described as University as Driver of the Economy. When discussing the University and its relation to the economy in Massachusetts, Chancellor Holub and other participants, including reports from the UMass System Office, have stated that the University should be trying to contribute skilled employees to the workforce, particularly in specific industries such as "computer & information sciences and health (bachelor's level), natural sciences and engineering (master's level) and education and natural sciences (doctoral level)" (University of Massachusetts, 2006, p. 3). This workforce development charge can be viewed as a new take on the democratization mission, which was intended to provide benefit to individuals. Rather than developing an educated citizenry for the sake of participating in the democratic process, perhaps this new mission is now focused on providing individual citizens with marketable skills to stimulate the economy.

In terms of the public service (land grant) mission that once provided farming communities with new procedures for planting, the neoliberal public service mission appears to be about developing new public/private partnerships through research with corporate sponsors. The Reframing of the Land Grant mission appears to be a subset of the University as Driver of the Economy mission as they are tied together in many ways.

I have discussed previously the possibility that public research universities are adopting a version of the European-style nationalization mission, which has been utilized to provide students and research that would serve the interests of their countries. In the U.S. some states' departments of higher education are ratcheting up expectations for public universities to do more work to benefit local and regional economies through contribution of skilled workers (graduates) to the local workforce as well as research and

service that can bring financial benefits to the state and the region (Zumeta, 2004). These governmental actors are reinforcing the idea of the university as an economic engine.

Where does this conversation leave the new mission of Interdisciplinarity? Based on this study, interdisciplinarity appears to have its connections in the research university field and the greater scientific research environment. This mission is likely also connected to the political environment through shifts in funding support for specific kinds of research. More directed study is needed to determine the ways that interdisciplinarity might be viewed as a mission of its own or perhaps as a framework for the traditional research, teaching, and service missions.

Implications for Policy and Practice

Because the study of higher education is interdisciplinary and applied, research is intended to contribute to policy and practice. This study can provide guidance for university leaders when considering how to best approach campus-level changes. Furthermore, the findings from this study provide insight for policy-makers at the state and federal levels to reconsider the goals and mission of higher education while setting policy and considering funding models.

Consideration for Campus Level Changes

The discussion above raises implications for university leaders to recognize the interplay between broader environmental influences such as the economic, political, and cultural climate; the pull of organizational fields; and the culture and power dynamics within the organizational field that is their own campus. This is particularly important when there is a challenge to the stability or survival of the campus (internal or external). Within the organization as field, there are actors who have more obvious power than

others and they will move to use their power to serve their interests. Despite the fact that other actors on campus may not have the appearance of power, they nevertheless may be able to influence situations in their favor. In the UMass Amherst case, actors used field-level rhetoric and the organizing principles introduced in Chapter Five as frames to support their interpretation of and proposed solutions for the situation. Had Chancellor Holub and Provost Staros recognized more fully the ways that campus-level actors would react to the proposed reorganization, they might have approached the process differently.

Barrier and Musselin (2016) learned from the cases they studied that presenting efficiency and cost savings as rationales for merger was less successful than considering the academic mission of the institutions. It appears that this also happened in the UMass Amherst case as the creation of CNS, one of the only pieces of the original plan that was carried out, was seen as aligned with the research mission of the sciences. Much of the opposition to the HFA/SBS merger was presented in terms of a lack of connection of that merger to an academic mission. Also in the Barrier and Musselin (2016) cases, some reorganizing decisions were based on actions that would take the least amount of time and be the least disruptive to the campuses. Knowing that these are influential factors might affect the ways that university leaders choose to present their arguments for change.

Rethinking the Goals and Funding of Public Higher Education: The Noxious Effects of Constant Competition

The discussion of shifting missions above brings into consideration the viability of public higher education in the future. The concerns raised by Travis (2013), Marginson (2011), Gumport (2001), and Labaree (1997) are shared by several scholars of

higher education. The downward trends in funding for public universities do not appear to be reversing, which leads institutions to continue to create new strategies for institutional survival, fueling the endless competition for rankings and resources. Although not a direct result of this study, questions can be raised about the institutional search for excellence and the constant competition this entails. As other scholars have pointed out, the focus on rankings is eroding the democratization mission of higher education (Gumport, 2001; Marginson, 2011; Thelin, 2011), making higher education, particularly at competitive universities, less accessible to students who come from lower income backgrounds and under-resourced school districts.

My initial recommendation for this challenge was to call on university presidents and trustees, heads of state departments of higher education, and political leaders to convene to talk about new ways to fund higher education and restore the previous democratization and public service missions to our universities. Truthfully, I do not believe this will happen. There has been some movement, mainly at the community college level, to make higher education more affordable. What organizational field theory demonstrates is that no one level of organization will achieve change on its own. It would require pressure in the same direction from each of the levels of organization discussed here. There would need to be influence from the broader environment, shifts at a few incumbent institutions within the public research university field (most likely those who are secure enough in their positions and are located in states where the economy has fully recovered), along with continued pressure from stakeholders within the institutions themselves to make these kinds of changes. If incumbents in these fields begin to shift, contender organizations with the right kinds of financial support may be able to follow.

Perhaps it requires a revolt against the rankings systems that most institutional leaders criticize as flawed even while they continue to try to influence their position in them. At one time, it was thought that online education and massive open online courses (MOOCs) might serve as a disruptor to challenge the current model of higher education. So far, this prediction does not seem to have come to fruition.

Directions for Future Research

This study explored one case of restructuring in an attempt to consider environmental and organizational field influences as well as local influences on a specific decision-making process. As previously stated, findings from a single case cannot be generalized to an entire area of study but they can point to areas for additional research. This section offers suggestions for potential topics of future investigation.

Field Shapes Mission Shapes Field

While the recursive nature of mission and field seem like a logical notion, there is not enough evidence from this one case study to fully support this idea. Future work should consider the development of mission through the lens of organizational field theory. A historical review of mission and planning documents from multiple institutions within a specific field over a long time period is one suggested approach for this work. Another way to learn about what is important to a university is to investigate its budget. Most organizations use their financial resources to support their core functions. A longitudinal study of changes in university budgets and funding sources, or in the ways budgets are allocated would also indicate shifts in mission and priorities.

Consequences of Competition

Another perception that arose out of this research was that access to higher education, mainly at public research universities, may be decreasing. Without a continued focus on diversity and access at universities, the constant competition and pressure to perform better in the rankings may have the consequence of making it more difficult for students from diverse backgrounds, and particularly those from more difficult economic circumstances, to access higher education. At UMass Amherst and other institutions where there was restructuring after the economic crisis of 2008, many universities began to increase enrollment of out-of-state and international students in order to generate more revenues for campus survival.

In the UMass Amherst case, Chancellor Holub frequently boasted about the increased SAT score and high school grade point averages of incoming students. However, there is evidence of a connection between academic achievement and SAT performance and family income, and that this disproportionately disadvantages Black students (Dixon-Roman, Everson, & McArdle, 2013). A study that took a longitudinal look at the demographic shifts of college enrollment, particularly by race/ethnicity, socioeconomic, and first generation status, alongside institutional movement in rankings like the annual U.S. News and World Report might be a first step in investigating this area of research.

STEM as Driver of Field or Local Priorities?

The creation of the College of Natural Sciences represents the piece of the UMass restructuring process that seemed to have the most support from those who would be affected by it. Another aspect of the proposed restructuring that did not take place but

was handled quickly and without rancor was the transfer of the Departments of Polymer Science and Engineering and Computer Science to the College of Engineering. Powerful faculty in these departments dismissed this proposal and the Chancellor did not continue to pursue it. Each of these actions happened relatively quickly compared to the protracted circumstances that personnel in the Colleges of Humanities and Fine Arts and Social and Behavioral Sciences endured. In each of the former cases, the stakeholders belonged to the STEM disciplines. As described above, the perception of these circumstances on the part of faculty from the social sciences, humanities, and fine arts was that science faculty were given greater campus resources than their SBS/HFA counterparts. Using field theory language and the SBS/HFA faculty interpretation to describe this situation, researchers in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics fields (STEM) appeared in this case as the incumbents whereas SBS/HFA faculty saw themselves as challengers who had to work harder for resources while teaching more than their fair share of students. The answer to who had more resources is difficult to ascertain but the North vs. South saga of campus was certainly salient for many campus stakeholders.

The perceived importance of STEM disciplines goes beyond the UMass Amherst campus. Recently, there has been increased attention paid by government and businesses to the STEM disciplines in higher education, with an emphasis on the ways that science research can affect the larger society (and the economy) and also a call to encourage students from diverse backgrounds to major in STEM fields. Important grantmakers in higher education have provided funds to attract more women and students of color to study STEM disciplines. A study that explored whether STEM fields are seen as more

valuable across the research university field than other disciplines would be interesting, particularly as it may relate to shifts in the land grant mission and an increasing emphasis on market-driven strategies. In addition, looking at trends in student enrollment in various disciplines over time in the context of environmental and field priorities would be informative to the study of higher education.

Conclusion

This study brought together organizational field theory with the mission of universities by means of a deep investigation of one university's attempt at restructuring. The results offer a look at the interplay of environment, organizational fields, and local actors and how interactions among them can influence the intended transformation of a campus. University leaders should be able to gauge the various influences from the external environment, understand their institution's position within organizational fields, and at the same time recognize the various cultures and challenges among stakeholders on their own campus before embarking on a change process. Thinking about the university as its own organizational field can be useful in considering the different types of power and influence that exist within individuals and groups on a campus. It may be useful to recognize which organizing principles resonate with different facets of the campus community and which will do not.

This study hinted at possible shifts in mission on this particular campus and these shifts may be reflected in the field of public research universities as well. The research presented here offers thoughts about changes to policy and practice that could lead to improvements on individual campuses as well as in the field of higher education itself.

Finally, I have offered some avenues for further research into a number of areas that came to light.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

CONTEMPORARY CASES OF RESTRUCTURING AND THEIR RATIONALES

University	Type/Demographics	Stated rationales/discourses	Structural changes	Select quotes & connection to the field/external forces
Arizona State University	• comprehensive public research university • admissions=moderately difficult • undergraduate enrollment=59,000 (Tempe campus)	1) Budget cuts 2) Increased efficiency/effectiveness 3) Increase interdisciplinary focus 4) Enhance research to attract new funding 5) Branding and competition 6) Economic development (for the state) 7) Growth of university =changing mission	Proposed a number of college mergers to reduce administrative overhead. They did not propose cutting any tenure track faculty but they did cut staff.	"All these things would improve the quality of academic programs and better prepare students to enter the workforce and pursue fruitful careers." (Arizona State University, 2008, p. 2)
Northeastern University	• selective private research university • admissions=very difficult • 2012 acceptance rate was 31% • undergraduate enrollment= >16,000 students	1) Competition/ Selectivity 2) New structure supports new hybrid management and budgeting system 3) Enhance research focus to attract research funding 4) Expanding its market (globalization) 5) Increase interdisciplinary focus	The College of Arts and Sciences (CAS) was divided into three smaller colleges	"As Northeastern elevates its overall research profile, the University has both a challenge and an opportunity to establish stronger external identities for research programs... Bringing into closer alignment programs that have natural affinities in the research arena—from infrastructure needs to the potential for interdisciplinary collaboration—will heighten the visibility of these programs and their colleges to key research audiences, including graduate applicants, potential faculty hires, and research funding agencies" (Northeastern University, 2009, p. 1)

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University	Type/Demographics	Stated rationales/discourses	Structural changes	Select quotes & connection to the field/external forces
Ohio State University	• public research university • first university established in Ohio and ninth oldest public university in the U.S. • admissions= moderately difficult • 2012 acceptance rate 77% • undergraduate enrollment= >22,500 students	1) Enhance research focus to attract research funding 2) Economic development (for the state) 3) Increase interdisciplinary focus 4) Competition and striving for prominence 5) Economic development (for the state)	Several parts: Refocused the College of Health Sciences and Professions, moved some departments into the Patton College of Education, and established a multidisciplinary Academic Health Center.	"The expansion of the college also will permit it to become even more entrepreneurial in its approach to serving the state of Ohio and meeting the needs of local communities." AND "Each of these programs [within the newly reorganized college] will contribute significantly to the new college's potential for national prominence." (p. 2)
University of Arkansas Little Rock	• public research university • focus on online education • 2012 acceptance rate 96% • admissions=minimally difficult admissions • undergraduate enrollment=10,300	1) Economic development (for the state) 2) strategically increasing enrollment by reaching out to underserved populations 3) increased expectations of public accountability 4) Competition 5) Take advantage of retirements in several leadership positions	Proposed restructure • merging student affairs into academic affairs • VP for Research position changed to Vice Provost for Research, Innovation, and Economic Development • New position Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Programs and Institutional Effectiveness	"The university faces changing student demographics, declining state support, changing accreditation standards, a call to double the number of graduates by 2025, performance funding, frequent legislative mandates, more competition from both public and private universities, increasing technology demands, and persistent political turbulence in Washington, D.C." (Anderson, 2013, p. 4) AND "There are many external forces and threats affecting UALR. The institution is facing competition from both in-state and out-of-state universities including public, private and for-profit institutions." (Toro, 2013, p. 3)

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University	Type/Demographics	Stated rationales/ discourses	Structural changes	Select quotes & connection to the field/external forces
University of Northern Iowa	• public university and former normal school • 2012 acceptance rate was 77% • admissions=moderately difficult • undergraduate enrollment=10,655	1. Competition/ Selectivity 2. Economic development (for the state) 3. Increase interdisciplinary focus	1. They combined the College of Natural Sciences with the College of Humanities and Humanities and Fine Arts, 2. They also cut out one administrative division (Marketing and Advancement), and 3. The merged the English department into the Dept. of Modern Languages	**From their strategic plan:** **Goal 1.** Be a leading undergraduate public university that provides a strong liberal arts foundation **Goal 2.** Provide rigorous and relevant graduate education that meets the needs of graduate students, the university, and the community **Goal 3.** Lead the state and nation in pre K-12 education **Goal 4.** Create and maintain an inclusive educational environment that prepares students to thrive in a diverse global environment **Goal 5.** Enhance the economic, social, cultural, and sustainable development of the state **Goal 6.** Ensure accountability, affordability, and access

Sources: Academic Restructuring Task Force, 2013; Anderson, 2013; Arizona State University, 2013; Arizona State University, 2008; Arizona State University Senate, 2010; Benoit, 2009; Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 2013; Northeastern University, 2009; Northeastern University News Office, 2009; Northeastern University, 2013; Northern Iowa Student Government, 2010; Ohio University, 2010; Ohio University, 2013; Peterson's, 2013; Toro, 2013; University of Northern Iowa, 2013; University of Northern Iowa, 2010; Watson, 2008

APPENDIX B

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Holub reviews accomplishments, Office of News and Media Relations, UMass Amherst, February 4, 2011.

MSP CHFA/CSBS Merger Poll results, February 14, 2011.

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Faculty Group Supports CHASS, The Daily Collegian, UMass Amherst, February 15, 2011.

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Provost to name interim deans to advance merger discussions, Office of News and Media Relations, UMass Amherst, March 3, 2011.

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Minutes, Faculty Senate, March 24, 2011.

Provost memo regarding reappointments of Hayes and Feldman, March 24, 2011.

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45 separate emails from Chancellor Holub to campus community from 2008-2011.

APPENDIX C

LIST OF INTERVIEW PARTICIPANTS

Former Chancellor Robert Holub

Staff from the Provost's or Chancellor's Area (3 individuals)

Deans or former deans (5 individuals)

Department chairs/program directors or former chairs (4 individuals)

APPENDIX D

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

The purpose of these questions is to get at the following issues:

- Evidence of influence from organizational fields

- Information about the participant's role in the restructuring process and how they believe
  they influenced the outcome

- Evidence of shifts in institutional logics/mission through the reorganization

Tell me how you came to be at UMass?

What was your role at the time of the proposed restructuring?

How do you keep up with changes in the field of higher education?

Where did ideas for the restructuring come from?

What were the motives for the restructuring?

What did the final restructuring look like? What was it supposed to look like?

How was the new structure supposed to match these motives? (What problem were we trying to solve?)

What do you think the restructuring was supposed to do? What problem was it trying to solve?

Who are we competing against? Which institutions do you look to for guidance on what to do next? Was there a specific model for the merger?

Where were you trying to go with the restructuring? What did you think the best model looked like? What got in the way of accomplishing that?

What is the most important thing for UMass to accomplish?

How much do we need to respond to calls from the state to be an engine of economic development? What does that look like for UMass? How important is this? What does it mean for us? How might it shape how we do things?

It seemed that the chancellor really wanted all of the parts of the restructuring to happen but it didn't. Why do you think it turned out the way it did? What factors influenced the "successful" creation of CNS? What factors got in the way of merging SBS and HFA? Where there other pieces that were proposed that "should" have happened?

Questions should get at how much of the action was field-related and how much was individual actor influenced.

How did your position/role influence the part you played in the restructuring process?

Who was in charge? Who was able to get things done? Why?

In what ways were you able to influence the outcome of the reorganization? In what ways do you wish you had influenced the outcome of the reorganization?

Who else should I talk to?

APPENDIX E

INFORMED CONSENT

UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS AMHERST
CONSENT FOR VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION

I volunteer to participate in this qualitative study and understand that:

1. I will be interviewed by Jacqueline Brousseau-Pereira who will be following an interview guide.

2. I will be asked questions related to the body of public documents regarding the academic restructuring of the University of Massachusetts Amherst during the tenure of Chancellor Robert Holub (2008-2011).

3. I understand that the primary purpose of this research is to study the restructuring process in its entirety – specifically the ways in which the restructuring may have been influenced by the University's relationship to other institutions and the state. I further understand that the researcher is considering how restructuring might influence university mission.

4. The interview will be digitally recorded to facilitate analysis of the data.

5. I have the option of selecting how I would like to be represented in this study (please choose one):

   ☐ I will allow the use of my name and job title

   ☐ I will allow the use of a descriptive title, e.g. upper-level administrator, professor, faculty union representative, faculty senator, trustee,

   ☐ I prefer to be classed as a specific category of actor, e.g. witness, decision maker, etc.

   ☐ I prefer to remain anonymous, use a pseudonym and disguise my position.

6. I may withdraw from part or all of this study at any time.

7. I have the right to review material prior to any publication or sharing of findings. I understand that a copy of the transcript from this interview will be provided to me.

8. I understand that results from this interview will be used in this doctoral study.

9. I am free to participate or not to participate without prejudice.

10. Because of the small number of participants, approximately twelve, I understand that there is some risk that I may be identified as a participant of this study even if I have chosen to remain anonymous or disguised.

_____   _____
Researcher's Signature   Participant's Signature

_____   _____
 Date   Date

APPENDIX F

QUESTIONS TO GUIDE PRELIMINARY ANALYSIS

- How was the text produced? By whom?

- What is the ostensible purpose of the text? Might the text serve other unstated or assumed purposes? Which ones?

- How does the text represent what is author(s) assumed to exist? Which meanings are embedded within it? How do those meanings reflect a particular social, historical, and perhaps organizational context?

- What is the structure of the text?

- How does its structure shape what is said? Which categories can you discern in its structure? What can you glean from these categories? Do the categories change in sequential texts over time? How so?

- Which contextual meanings does the text imply?

- How does its content construct images of reality?

- Which realities does the text claim to represent? How does it represent them?

- What, if any, unintended information and meanings might you see in the text?

- How is language used?

- Which rules govern the construction of the text? How can you discern them in the narrative? How do these rules reflect both tacit assumptions and explicit meanings? How might they be related to other data on the same topic?

- When and how do telling points emerge in the text?

- What kinds of comparisons can you make between texts? Between different texts on the same topic? Similar texts at different times such as organizational annual reports? Between different authors who address the same questions?

- Who benefits from the text? Why?

Source: (Charmaz, 2006, pp. 39-40)

GUIDING QUESTIONS AND PRELIMINARY CODING STRUCTURE

Questions for Reading Interview Transcripts and Texts

- What is this person's role or influence?

- What is this person's understanding of the motives for restructuring?

- Did this participant have a motive for restructuring or not restructuring?

- How does this person use field-level strategies to support their vision for campus?

- Where do I see evidence of field? Which field?

- What groups did this person belong to?

- What was their influence in this case?

- Where is there evidence of mission and priorities? Shifts in those?

- What is the common language that is used to talk about this case?

- What are common strategies in higher education?

Codes Used for Data Review and Analysis

The following codes were developed through a systematic review of data, using the constant comparison method.

Relates to environment:

- Massachusetts politics

- Massachusetts economy

- U. S. economy

Relates to field:

- Research university field

- Massachusetts higher education field

- UMass field

Relates to motive:

- Budget crisis

- Interdisciplinarity

- Excellence

Relates to mission:

- Research

- Teaching

- Service

- Economic driver

- Interdisciplinarity

- Mass Aggie

- Land Grant

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