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Past, Present, Future: Times of Change for Continuing Education Units in Higher Education Institutions

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PAST, PRESENT, FUTURE: TIMES OF CHANGE FOR CONTINUING EDUCATION UNITS IN HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

by

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Chairperson

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PAST, PRESENT, FUTURE: TIMES OF CHANGE FOR CONTINUING EDUCATION UNITS IN HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

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This is a qualitative multiple case study that analyzes and compares the purpose, roles, and drivers of change for continuing education divisions in public, four-year, post baccalaureate, comprehensive higher education institutions in the United States. The research stems from a historical standpoint. This study also examined processes carried out by continuing education leadership to demonstrate quality and accountability to their higher education institutions. This investigation focuses on the distinctive drivers that have triggered and influenced changes in continuing education units within higher education institutions.

The findings from this study illuminated areas in need of development and enhancement of continuing education units. The findings also supported the creation of standards and policies for continuing education divisions in higher education. This study contributed to overcome the dearth of empirical and theoretical studies on the role and mission of continuing education units.

Month Year

Approved by Research Committee:

Gabriela Silvestre Chairperson

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Since starting this journey in fall of 2008, I have attended three 50th wedding anniversaries and welcomed a new daughter-in-law into my family. I have seen my daughters move from elementary school to high school and stood by my mother and father's hospital beds when health issues made it necessary. Even though there were many challenges during the journey, through much prayer, hard work and the support of many, this research was made possible and well worth every sacrifice.

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INTRODUCTION

Historically, the role, the mission, and the purpose of the continuing education division were to offer seminars and workshops to further the professional development of nontraditional students at different institutions. This entailed offering distance courses for those restrained by time and geographical distance that would not allow them to attend traditional, on-campus credit courses. In contrast, continuing education divisions at the start of the 21^{st} century faced new challenges and redefined their roles under the influence of different drivers such as, but not limited to, policy changes, the need for financial sustainability, introduction of new technology, globalization, and competition from private and for-profit agencies. An influential driver was the change in federal policies supporting colleges and university to allow "America to once again lead the world when it comes to college degrees" (Beaver, 2010, p. 308). The processes and trends that have influenced the growth of continuing education divisions are complex and contradictory. Continuing education divisions are expected to provide instruction that allows for flexibility, and offers ease of access required by their constituents, while existing in institutions of higher education that values convention and tradition. As higher education institutions devise ways to educate traditional residential students over a four year period, continuing education currently faces an increasing wave of nontraditional students who want to interact with faculty differently than that of the traditional on-campus classroom. Nontraditional students are typically students over the age of 23 years, who may be looking to enter a new field or gain knowledge required to continue in their current field. The mature student approaches their education with more experience and goal orientation than that of the traditional 18-22 year old student. Many are already members of the workforce and professional associations. As their professional associations aspire to gain recognition and expect specialization of their membership, they will require a greater focus on continuing education of those members (Fenwick, 2009; Merriam & Brockett, 2007).

CONTINUING EDUCATION HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

Higher education is defined as education that is occurring beyond the secondary level including tertiary or post-secondary education (Hoyert & O'Dell, 2009; Ismail, 2009). Education in the simplest sense is the acquisition of competencies or knowledge. When engaged in by those who are in a post-preparatory phase of development, it is considered continuing education. To more clearly analyze the changes that have currently occurred in continuing education, a review of its development is necessary. Indicated by Blyth (1983), the birth of continuing education for adults took place in Cambridge and Oxford in the 1870s. The creation of continuing education was considered a university's extension movement and included courses such as history, literature, and the arts. These courses were unique because they were extended to ordinary people beyond the "elites" who were commonly found in university settings (Blyth, 1983, pp. 3-4). Legislatively, support for public higher education in the United States was reinforced with the Morrill Land Grant Act of 1862 (Rohfeld, 1990; Thelin, 2004; Watkins, 1991). This act donated land to several states to further higher education study and research in a numbers of areas. While the original Morrill Act of 1862 showed legislative support, progress in higher education waned until the Morrill Act of 1890. The 1890 Act revitalized the federal support for higher education (Thelin, 2004). The government and its constituents looked to colleges to prepare students with needed skills to be successful and to contribute to society in the context of the industrial revolution. The University of Wisconsin was one of the first institutions to take up the provision of university extension courses in 1888-89 (Rohfeld, 1990; Thelin, 200; Watkins, 1991). The 'Wisconsin idea,' as it was commonly called, was a way to bring the curriculum applicable for real life vocations. Another university to embrace extension services was the University of Chicago. The University of Chicago under the leadership of William Rainey Harper opened and enrolled its first correspondence students in 1892 (Watkins, 1991, p. 6). In this context, continuing education units began to gain acceptance at their institutions of higher education. However, even with this acceptance, they did not have the size that other units had on campus nor would they be quick to see any substantial amount of recognition for their efforts. As continuing education grew over time, it was affected by a number of historical and legislative events. Continuing education was also changed by historical events like the Great Depression and the two World Wars (Thelin, 2004). Not only did continuing education units come to the aid of their institutions during these times of change, but they also tried to use this period to present themselves as an integral and essential part of the university (Rohfeld, 1990). But, as before, even with these efforts, continuing education divisions were not of equal standing to the traditional, credit divisions of higher education (Duning, 1985; Saba, 2003). The difficulty may also be found in how continuing education is defined. Different institutions define continuing education differently. Thus, it is important to identify the various categories of continuing education.

Program Types in Continuing Education

Continuing education can be categorized by four program types. Type I agencies are *independent adult education organization* privately funded with a single goal of adult education. Type II agencies are *educational institutions* whose sole purpose is not to educate only adults but people of all ages. Type III agencies are *quasi-educational organizations* that consider education to be a vital but not the only focus of their mission. Type IV agencies are *non-educational organizations* that really do not have education as their primary goal but will use "training" to help further those primary goals (Merriam & Brockett, 2007, pp. 106-107). In order to maintain proper focus on higher education, this research only refers to the purpose, mission and role of Type II agencies. Those agencies that are affiliated with post-secondary higher education institutions. By focusing only on those agencies that are housed in public post-secondary higher education accredited by the Higher Learning Commission, the study will be specific enough to provide clarity to its purpose, to determine what different drivers lead to the role and mission of continuing education units in United States public higher education institutions of the early 21st century. Approaching the topic from an analytical perspective, the study will include interviews and utilize document analysis to provide direction and outcomes. In this way, the study will best address the problem and research questions that follow.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

This study has analyzed and compared the roles and drivers of change for continuing education divisions at comprehensive universities, and research universities from a historical standpoint. Thus, different phases and historical trends were examined relevant to the current purpose, roles, and changes of continuing education divisions in public higher education institutions in the United States. This study drew upon the works of previous scholars whose research produced empirical evidence and theoretical literature relevant to governance and change in higher education. It explored and discussed the different trends, phenomena, and drivers that lead to the current roles and mission of continuing education divisions from a historical standpoint. Of importance was how these continuing education divisions met the needs of their constituents and provided accessibility to a wide range of nontraditional students.

Additionally, this study gathered information on what techniques continuing education divisions employed in order to demonstrate accountability to their higher education institutions. It examined what process and reporting these divisions require to dispel the image of lower or lesser standards as described by Saba (2003) and Duning (1985) above. The focus was on what evaluation, assessment and reporting continuing education units use to ensure that their programs are conducted according to quality standards.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study was to analyze and compare the purpose, mission and roles of continuing education divisions at comprehensive universities, and research universities from a historical standpoint. The study then examined the drivers affecting public 4-year post baccalaureate comprehensive higher education institutions of the early 21st century that are accredited by the Higher Learning Commission. This information provided evidence and information that continuing education divisions could share with their higher education institutions to be used in strategic planning and future decision making.

Continuing education has seen extensive growth in course offerings and student numbers that should demand a more in-depth examination of its purpose and mission. As it has grown, various associations have been created by their membership and legislature (AAACE, 2007). The creation of these associations demonstrated the desire of continuing education professionals to institutionalize their field. It is this hope of professionalizing that demanded a more in-depth review of where continuing education came from, where it is going, and how it needed to be structured. This body of research knowledge is lacking in breadth and depth for continuing education. This absence of information needed to be acknowledged and additional information obtained.

By performing a more in-depth analysis of continuing education units, higher education units have the information needed to influence future policies and procedures. This also demonstrated that procedures and policies are lacking in guiding continuing education units. By documenting continuing education previous purposes, roles and drivers of change and future purposes, roles and drivers of change, continuing education divisions can justify their existence and the need for further support from their institutions. This support is necessary for them to grow and put into place the policies and procedures necessary to ensure quality programs.

ASSUMPTIONS OF THE STUDY

This study assumed that:

1. Participants were representatives of continuing education divisions at public four-year post baccalaureate comprehensive higher education institutions accredited by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools located in the United States.
2. The information gained via the research methodology assumed that the individuals interviewed do so with complete assurance of confidentiality. Thus, they spoke frankly and were not concerned with any repercussions that would result due to their disclosure of information. As identified by

Merriam (2009), “qualitative researchers are interested in understanding the meaning people have constructed, that is, how people make sense of their world and the experiences they have in the world” (p. 13).

3. Most importantly, findings contribute to fill the void of research about the field of continuing education. Findings that can aid continuing education divisions in the creation of policies and procedures to facilitate their programs and the constituents they serve.

DESCRIPTION AND SCOPE OF THIS RESEARCH

The study included continuing education divisions in higher education institutions in the United States. It examined the purpose, roles, and drivers of change for these divisions to explore what causes continuing education divisions to move in these directions. There is a lack of information and dearth of studies that are solely focused on continuing education divisions in higher education. For a field that has grown extensively through the inclusion of on-line education and international partnerships, there is a need to focus on the function and role it serves in higher education. In addition, there is a question as to whether continuing education units are guilty of “mission creep” and if they offer low quality programming and courses. Because of these allegations, it was also the intent of this study to ascertain what continuing education divisions do to ensure program quality, accountability and assessment.

The study used two forms of data collection. The first was a complete review and analysis of related literature, including university policy documents. By understanding continuing education history as it is related to higher education institutions, a timeline of events was constructed. This timeline identifies external and internal drivers that influenced the purpose, mission and role of continuing education units and caused past change. It should be noted that within the continuing education literature, the terms adult education and lifelong learning were used interchangeably with continuing education. The second source of data stems from interviews conducted with higher education administrators and staff, and documentation collected as a result of these interviews.

To collect current data on drivers of the early 21st century, an interview instrument was created to obtain information from continuing education divisions that exist in four-year post baccalaureate comprehensive higher education institutions accredited by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools located in the United States. The selection of who was interviewed was based on criteria described in detail in the methodology chapter. The ability to add valuable information to limited literature is one of the benefits of any evidence based research. As stated by Wolcott (2009) in *Writing up Qualitative Research,* “case study is better suited if it, like all other ways of organizing data, is regarded as a genre for *reporting* than as a strategy for *conducting* research” (p. 85).

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study answered the following research questions:

Q1: What drivers have influenced the purpose, mission, and roles of continuing education divisions in comprehensive universities, and research universities in the United States' throughout history?

Q2: What current drivers function as a catalyst of change for continuing education divisions within higher education institutions in the United States?

Q3: What procedures do continuing education leaders employ to ensure that their programs meet the standards and quality acceptable to their higher education institutions and students?

By understanding what motivates continuing education administration to move in the direction of the current purpose, mission and roles, this study hopes to answer the question of where continuing education "fits" into the broader mission of the higher education system and what processes need to be included to ensure a quality learning experience for their students.

DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study was focused on the mission, role, and drivers of change in continuing education units within comprehensive universities, and research universities in public higher education institutions located in the United States. The study did not examine the mission, role or purpose of for-profit, independent, quasi-educational or non-educational organizations.

Because of the use of qualitative methodology, the results provided insight from those consulted, but they were descriptive of only those specific institutions studied. Thus, some of the information obtained was a reflection on events by the individuals interviewed.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Adult Education–Adult education is the process by which men and women (alone, in groups, or in institutional settings) seek to improve themselves or their society by increasing their skill, knowledge, or sensitiveness; or it is any process by which individuals, groups, or institutions try to help men and women improve in these ways (Houle, 1996, p. 41).

American Association for Adult and Continuing Education (AAACE)–The AAACE was organized by the Carnegie Corporation in 1926 and is dedicated to the belief that lifelong learning contributes to human fulfillment and positive social change. The AAACE's mission is to provide leadership for the field of adult and continuing education by expanding opportunities for adult growth and development; unifying adult educators; fostering the development and dissemination of theory, research, information, and best practices; promoting identity and standards for the profession; and advocating relevant public policy and social change initiatives (AAACE, 2007).

Andragogy–Any intentional and professionally guided activity that aims at a helping adults learn (Knowles, Holton, & Swanson, 2005; Knowles & Shepherd, 1984).

Continuing Education (CE)–Continuing education is a lifelong learning process that builds on and modifies previously acquired knowledge, skills, and attitudes (Knowles & Shepherd, 1984, p. 312).

Distance Education–A course or program delivered to students away from the home campus. An encompassing term, distance education can mean off-campus (extension) programs, online, correspondence, interactive television, and hybrid delivery models (Moore & Kearsley, 1996).

E-Learning–Refers to any use of Web and Internet technologies to create learning experiences (Horton, & Horton, 2003). The nature of e-learning as an instructional medium, however, differs from face-to-face teaching as it requires new approaches to curriculum development, online course administration, subject methods, delivery, assessment and feedback (Gunga & Ricketts, 2008, p. 296).

Higher Education–Education occurring above the secondary level including tertiary or post-secondary education. Higher education by a traditional student is pursued full-time (12-18 credits per semester) immediately after high school between the ages of 18-23. Higher education by a nontraditional student is pursued after the age of 24 on a part-time, weekend, night, or online courses (Hoyert & O’Dell, 2009; Ismail, 2009).

Lifelong Learning–Embraces the socially institutionalized learning that occurs in the educational system, that which occurs beyond it, and that individual learning throughout the lifespan, which is publicly recognized and accredited (Jarvis, 2004, p. 65).

Online Education–Education provided through online courses where at least 80% of the course content is delivered online and occurs independent of time and place. Effective courses involve everyone in the learning activities, are well organized, offer flexibility, provide meaningful and practical connections between theory and practice (Sloan Consortium, 2008; Young, 2006).

University Continuing Education Association (UCEA) –Founded in 1915, the University Continuing Education Association (formerly the National University Continuing Education Association) is among the oldest college and university associations in the United States. As the principal US organization for continuing higher education, the Association assists institutions of higher learning and affiliated nonprofit organizations to increase access through a wide array of educational programs and services. UCEA also provides national leadership in support of policies that advance workforce and professional development. Since its inception, the Association has been committed to making higher education available to everyone, as well as to ensure that programs and services address societal needs and economic trends. In addition, UCEA works with counterparts abroad to foster professional exchange and better international understanding of continuing higher education (UCEA, 2009).

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RESEARCH

As continuing education units strive to move forward and become integral contributors to the higher education institutions they exist in, they have yet to achieve equal status and recognition as the traditional side of the institution. Even when continuing education courses are carried out by very reputable faculty, continuing education units have difficulty ridding itself of the step-child image (Duning, 1985; Saba, 2003). In many ways the lack of institutional support and recognition to continuing education is not deserved. Continuing education has contributed to their institutions by providing essential services to the nontraditional students that seek them and, in many instances, help alleviate or lessen the financial burden state funded public higher education institutions have during times of diminishing allocation. In addition, continuing education has a long, rich history with a number of success stories to accompany it. Nevertheless, when one reviews the small amount of literature available on the study of continuing education, leadership would have little to base this support and recognition on.

That is why I believed that continuing education divisions in higher education institutions, given the opportunity, are able to validate their purpose and role (existence) within their higher education institution and how it furthers that institution's purpose and role. The sharing of this information may result in a re-examination of the directions we have taken and what we should pursue in the future. This information may also aid in the creation of policies and procedures that will allow assessment and improvement of the programs created by continuing education units within higher education institutions.

An underlying assumption within higher education institutions is that continuing education programs are not created or performed with equal rigor as the traditional side of higher education institutions. Continuing education units need to dispel the image of producing a lower quality instruction and educate their higher education institutions on what techniques they employ in order to ensure quality. Identification of the processes used by continuing education divisions may help dispel the image of the lower quality as described above by Saba (2003) and Duning (1985).

The significance of this study was to analyze and compare the purpose, mission and roles of continuing education divisions in comprehensive universities, and research universities in public higher education institutions in the United States from a historical standpoint. It was also significant because it was one of the few studies that were conducted solely on continuing education in higher education institutions. Research that clarified what purpose and roles continuing education played within these higher education institutions and what possible external and internal drivers have influenced continuing education to arrive at its current state. The results should be of interest to those who lead continuing education to better guide and assess those programs that are included in their unit.

SUMMARY

Continuing education includes many areas such as adult learning, distance education, workforce development and lifelong learning. Each area has had its theories and concepts reviewed with a number of studies performed. But, the literature based solely on continuing education is limited. As the study moves to Chapter 2, the review of this limited, related literature and a chronological analysis of continuing education will be detailed in one concise chapter. As we move into Chapter 3, methodology, I will describe and explain the methodology used to collect and document the information included in the study. Chapter 4 presents the results and findings in an effort to bring clarity to what purpose, mission and roles continuing education divisions find themselves in public four-year post baccalaureate comprehensive higher education institution in the United States, what has influenced that direction and what assessment they use to ensure quality programs for their constituents. Chapter 5 provides concluding remarks and suggestions for future research.

Chapter 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

DESCRIPTION OF STUDY

As noted in Chapter 1, the role, mission, and purpose of continuing education divisions have changed over time. Several so called drivers have been the catalyst of change for continuing education divisions. Examples of the drivers that have affected continuing education divisions include, but are not limited to, policy changes, the need for financial sustainability, introduction of new technology, globalization, and competition from private and for-profit agencies. The intent of this study was to review those various drivers and how they impacted the roles and purposes of continuing education divisions of comprehensive universities, and research universities in public higher education institutions in the United States over time.

Sources used to review the relevant literature are various peer-reviewed journals and books pertinent to the topic studied. Of particular use are the works, research, and publications from various professional associations that include continuing education members, leaders, and administrators. The subject matter explored includes a past look at continuing education divisions through a historical or chronological lens. The review of literature then examines how present continuing education divisions' role and purposes were affected by those drivers. Key to this section of the review was the inclusion of information critical to research question two, "How has the purpose and roles of continuing education divisions in comprehensive universities, and research universities in public higher education institutions in the United States' been influenced by different drivers throughout history?" Information on what catalyst drove change within continuing education divisions in higher education institutions within the United States will be surveyed in the literature.

A characteristic of the literature reviewed was that it included different types of scholarly, peer reviewed works. Opinion pieces were only included if supported by empirical research of a scholarly origin. Nevertheless, it could be argued that there is a dearth of research literature on this subject. The challenge was to locate literature that was empirically based, from research supported, peer reviewed sources, and solely referencing or focusing on continuing education divisions in higher education. A number of articles were found that contained information about various higher education drivers imbedded within its narrative but its information was not limited to continuing education divisions. This literature review brings together those various pieces of literature in one location and be of aid to others who also have discovered this dearth of literature on the topic of continuing education in higher education.

DRIVERS THAT CREATE CHANGE IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Prior to examining what the literature identifies as the drivers of continuing education in higher education, it is important to understand the difference between a "driver" and a critical changing event. To truly be considered a driver, the event should result in a profound change in how business is conducted. In this case, the drivers resulted in a profound change in continuing education units. Accordingly, a number of scholars identify various events that caused organizational change in higher education institutions in the United Kingdom (Middlehurst, 2004; Shattock, 2008). Middlehurst (2004) specifically identifies how "growth in competition" led to change in higher education and policy development. The literature review that follows presents events considered "drivers" that are not fleeting moments in time. These drivers lead to change that affected how continuing education divisions focused their efforts and changed their organizational structure. Next we see how the various organizational frames were used to assist continuing education divisions in making change take place.

HIGHER EDUCATION ORGANIZATIONAL THEORY USED BY CONTINUING EDUCATION DIVISIONS

As we examined the literature, continuing education divisions can be seen to draw upon a wide variety of organizational frames. Bolman and Deal (2008) identify a number of frames used in the reframing of organization. Examples of these frames include: human resource, structural, political, and symbolic frames. By understanding the theory behind these organizational frames, continuing education divisions can demonstrate why it is useful to rely upon an organized approach for the study of change within their divisions throughout history. A difficulty that these units need to overcome is the ability to create opportunities and services within the restrictions and limitations of public institutional governance and policy. Higher education institutions need to embrace a new level of flexibility and accessibility for nontraditional students (Harper & Quaye, 2009). Entry that is typically more restricted in the traditional sector of the university need to be examined based on the nontraditional student characteristics. Along with various factors that complicate their ability to attend continuing education events (work and family obligations, logistical issues), nontraditional students are also typically more mature than students entering from high school (Harper & Quaye, 2009). Thus, they view the decision to continue their education with a different lens than that of the 18 or 19 year old. Adopting new policies and structures that will support the nontraditional student does not happen quickly, but it is a process that continuing and adult education units must approach with higher education administration, legislature and constituents. A coalition must be formed in order to move forward with new concepts, entrance assessments, and policies (Bolman & Deal, 2008). Without this coalition, higher education will be left to trail others who are more flexible and able to attract this potentially lucrative market segment. So along with creating the classes and related policies, institutions also need to consider other policies related to controlling the differences between in-class and on-line classes. Policy of attendance, grading performance, program completion all need to be evaluated and created carefully with the on-line platform in mind. To do so, continuing and adult education units need to approach the process from a structural frame (Bolman & Deal, 2008). It will need every fact and figure at their disposal to put forth a convincing argument for the need for a specific policy. To identify the need for a more flexible policy for continuing education units, it is important that they specify those drivers that are requiring higher education policy to change. A historical review of various drivers is essential to situate both the context and changes ensued by different drivers.

HISTORY OF CONTINUING EDUCATION

The Inception of Continuing Education

As indicated in Blyth (1983), the birth of continuing education for adults took place in Cambridge and Oxford in the 1870s (pp. 3-4). The creation of continuing education was considered a university's extension movement and included courses such as history, literature, and the arts. What was unique about these courses was that they were extended to ordinary people beyond the "elites" who were commonly found in university settings (Blyth, 1983, pp. 3-4). Thus, the literature identifies as the driver the desire to extend instruction to the common people who were not included in the past. In 1873, the United States joined this movement when John H. Vincent organized a lyceum program in western New York named the "Chautauqua". Anna Ticknor also created the Boston-based "Society to Encourage Studies at Home," which offered educational opportunity to women of any class (Morton, 1953; Watkins, 1991; Woytanowitz, 1974). Thus, what the English started in Cambridge and Oxford, the Americans would continue as university extension or adult education. Eventually, the work of early entrepreneurs' would be recognized. There are several historic landmarks that support the development of continuing education units. The first of which was the Morrill Land Grant Act of 1862.

1862–Morrill Land Grant Act

Legislatively, support for public higher education in the United States was reinforced with the Morrill Land Grant Act of 1862. This act donated land to states that were still in the union in order to further higher education study and research in a numbers of areas, and in particular, the study of agriculture and the mechanic arts. The Morrill Act was one of the first major departures from the initial colonial model and could be considered an influential driver for higher education at the time. As declared by Thelin (2004), "the Morrill Act of 1862 stands out as path-breaking legislation that signaled the entrance of the federal government into public policy dealing with creation of the land-grant colleges" (p. 74). While the original Morrill Act of 1862 showed legislative support, it was the Morrill Act of 1890 that would revitalize the federal support for higher education and "consolidated the public image of land-grant colleges as a collective idea" (Thelin, 2004, p. 137). The government and citizens of the United States were looking to colleges to prepare students with needed skills to be successful and to contribute to society in the context of the industrial revolution. Beyond the traditional focus on liberal arts, the public wanted higher education to create curriculum applicable for real life vocations. Because of this effort, the Departments of Agriculture, Interior, and War became working partners with higher education (Rohfeld, 1990; Thelin, 2004). Because of their expertise in working with nontraditional populations, continuing education divisions were sought as the educational partner. As identified next, agriculture allowed continuing education to demonstrate value.

University Extension Courses

The University of Wisconsin was one of the first institutions to take up the provision of university extension courses in agriculture in 1888-89 (Rohfeld, 1990; Thelin, 2004; Watkins, 1991). The 'Wisconsin idea', as it was commonly called, was a way to bring the curriculum applicable for real life vocations to the people of Wisconsin. The University of Wisconsin applied research-produced knowledge to various spheres of human life (Merriam & Cunningham, 1989; Watkins, 1991; Woytanowitz, 1974). Another university to embrace extension services was the University of Chicago. As indicated in *The Foundations of American Distance Education*, the University of Chicago under the leadership of William Rainey Harper opened and enrolled its first correspondence students in 1892 (Watkins, 1991, p. 6). The University of Chicago's focus was less on the selection of the curriculum to be delivered and more on the method of delivery. Dr. Harper saw a need for an alternative to attending college. In order to make higher education a possibility for more people, course materials were designed to allow completion without coming to campus. In this context, continuing education units began to gain acceptance at their institutions of higher education (Rohfeld, 1990; Watkins, 1991). Because of this recognition, campuses assigned the continuing education unit names such as adult education, adult learning center, workplace learning center, or even lifelong learning division. They did not have the size that other units had on campus nor would they be quick to see any substantial recognition of their efforts. But, continuing education units were just emerging as a division and a recognized area of higher education institutions (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983, p. 148).

Early 1900s–Smith-Lever Act, the Great Depression, and the World Wars

As continuing education grew, it was influenced by a number of historical and legislative events. As described in the introduction of this chapter, the difficulty with the literature was that there was little detail on what causes were catalysts of change in the area of continuing education. But, the continuing education (university extension) movement did continue to progress so that by 1913-1914 a number of universities were appropriating funds toward extension work. This infusion of funds was a driver to keep the movement alive and active. Even though the 1862 Morrill Act allowed the extension of agricultural knowledge, it was not until the 1914 Smith-Lever Act that a formal system of adult education was created for the agricultural community. Strategically, this created an alternative system of knowledge distribution in higher education that was known as the cooperative extension service (Kerr, 2001; Merriam & Cunningham, 1989; Rohfeld, 1990).

The next driver for the educational landscape described in the literature was the historical event of World War I (1914-1918). During War World I, there was an increased demand for the technical and mechanical skills (Rohfeld, 1990; Thelin, 2004). Junior colleges arrived early in the 1900s, but it was in the 1920s that their numbers grew (Altbach, Berdahl, & Gumport, 2005). After the war, the return of soldiers, whose plans included achieving higher education goals, caused a spike in postsecondary enrollments. Along with increased activity on the credit side, the workers' education movement created a flood of "training" or educational requests to the university extension divisions. At the 1923 conference of the National University Extension Association, Spencer Miller, Jr., secretary of the Workers Education Bureau of America stated, "Workers' education represents the logical outcome of the democratization of higher education. It is the democratization of extension education for the industrial worker and for organized labor" (Rohfeld, 1990, p. 49). Soon after this speech, in 1926, the Carnegie Corporation expansively promoted adult education. It was that year the Carnegie Corporation facilitated the organization of the American Association for Adult Education (AAAE), financed the AAAE's administrative operation, and used it as a funding agency for the Carnegie Corporation's study, research and demonstration projects (Merriam & Cunningham, 1989; Rohfeld, 1990). This was a time of much focus on adult and continuing education. But just as higher education continuing education divisions were set to meet these demands, the Great Depression descended upon the United States. The Depression disrupted most households' plans to send their children to college, but extension courses of various types provided alternatives to traditional, residential options (Rohfeld, 1990). University extension units partnered with government agencies in the development of federal program opportunities and, as a result, programs such as the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) and the Works Progress Administration (WPA) (renamed as the Works Progress/Projects Administration in 1939) were created (Kerr, 2001; Rohfeld, 1990; Watkins, 1991). But these programs did not have much time to flourish, for in 1941, World War II began for the United States.

Just as World War I was a historical driver, World War II changed the educational landscape more drastically in the 1940s. In 1944, Congress passed the Serviceman's Readjustment Act (GI Bill) (Altbach, Gumport, & Johnstone, 2001; Altbach et al., 2005; Kerr, 2001; Thelin, 2004). The Bill guaranteed the servicemen "a year of education for 90 days' service, plus one month for each month of active duty, for a maximum of 48 months. Tuition, fees, books and supplies up to $500 a year would be paid directly to college or university (at a time when private universities charged about $300 per year tuition and state universities considerably less)" (Thelin, 2004, p. 262). Continuing education divisions were again driven from an external situation to react to this demand. While meeting the need of their constituents and institutions, continuing education units also used this period of increase in demand to present the continuing education unit as an integral and essential part of the university (Rohfeld, 1990, p. 89). As World War II ended, higher education saw a surge in enrollments that was unprecedented (Altbach et al., 2005; Kerr, 2001; Thelin, 2004). By "1946, the GI Bill college enrollments surpassed one million" (Thelin, 2004, p.

263). This new found popularity also brought challenges for higher education leaders to meet the varied expectations of the students. In order to meet these expectations, the credit side of the house was to focus on the traditional student population, while the university extension, or continuing education division, was called upon to meet the needs of the nontraditional, adult learner (Rohfeld, 1990; Watkins, 1991). But, as before, there is little literature on the projects or efforts continuing education was involved with.

Late 1900s–Access, Equality and Life-Long Learning

As the United States entered the 1950s, it was propelled into consumerism, and expanded its international efforts (Rohfeld, 1990; Watkins, 1991). Working adults sought increased educational opportunities. Professional associations also saw an increment in numbers. Because of this phenomenon, organizing of large conferencing events began to develop as a major continuing education focus (Rohfeld, 1990). Conference events combined all the skills continuing education had in the area of organizing educational experiences. Higher education institutions built centers that provided optimal conferencing and learning environments. One such center was the Kellogg Center for Continuing Education that opened in 1951 at Michigan State University (Richardson, 1996; Rohfeld, 1990). The year 1951 also saw the creation of the Fund for Adult Education established by the Ford Foundation (Edelson, 1991; Fund for Adult Education, 1962; Rohfeld, 1990; Shilen, 1961). The Fund for Adult Education's key responsibility was to provide grants for "that phase of education which begins when schooling is finished" (Rohfeld, 1990, p. 96). One such grant went to the Association of University Event Colleges (AUEC) to create the Center for the Study of Liberal Education for Adults (CSLEA). CSLEA provided the continuing education opportunity that allowed adult students to complete their degree, acquire professional credentials, participate as more informed citizen, or pursue a new-found interest or hobby (Belth & Schueler, 1959; Rohfeld, 1990). By end of the '50s there were a large number of extension services and an even larger number of adults participating in continuing education. It also saw the creation of a new higher education funding term, soft money. As stated by Thelin (2004), soft money was meant to distinguish transient external funding from the hard money of permanent institutional operating budget (p. 278). The drivers of a separate funding source and increased participant numbers were such that continuing education divisions organized in 1954 as the American Association for Adult and Continuing Education (AAACE). AAACE was a non-profit organization created by members dedicated to the belief that lifelong learning contributes to human fulfillment and positive social change (AAACE, 2007, *Who we are*). One of the AAACE's first commissions organized in 1955 was the Commission of Professors of Adult Education (CPAE). The CPAE provided adult education professionals a forum to discuss important issues related to the academic preparation of adult educators (AAACE, 2007, *Commissions*). A key advocate for adult education was Malcolm Knowles. Having started his career in the 1930s, he started publishing on the subject starting in 1950. In 1968, he decided he needed a name for the study of adult learning and found the Yugoslavian term, andragogy, which he introduced in 1968 (Houle, 1996; Rachal, 2002).

Access and equality. The 1960s saw Sputnik, the National Defense Education Act and the entrance of the baby-boomer generation into universities and public community colleges (Flynn, 1995; Rohfeld, 1990; Thelin, 2004). The need of industries and corporations for a trained workforce caused a surge in continuing education technical and professional skills training (Altbach et al., 2005; Rohfeld, 1990). The year 1960 also saw a resurgent focus on minorities. Many minorities were still excluded from campuses (Thelin, 2004). The Economic Opportunity Act of 1964, along with other legislation, was passed in hopes of fighting the War on Poverty, which primarily affected minorities (Altbach, et al., 2005; Minnesota Department of Human Services, 2009; Rohfeld, 1990). Funds became the driver for a number of new educational training and employment programs. University extension services were asked to respond with community development programs. The intent was to develop programs that would allow higher education institution to reach those who had not benefited in the past. One such program was the Head Start program started during the Johnson administration in 1965 that trained teachers for a new pre-school program. This action brought together the National University Extension Association (NUEA), universities, the federal government and local Head Start programs to accomplish a critical task (Rohfeld, 1990; Vinovskis, 2005). With the recognition of the Head Start program in 1969, NUCEA took offices in the National Center for Higher Education in Washington DC.

Life-long learning. Having a seat at the table and proximity to legislative decision-makers allowed continuing education leaders to form the linkages to the federal government on behalf of its member colleges and universities (Rohfeld, 1990, p. 120). As stated by Bolman and Deal (2008), "A coalition forms because of interconnections among its members, they need one another, even though their interests may only partly overlap" (p. 196). This allowed NUCEA to remain visible when legislators saw the need for continuing education's expertise and knowledge. These linkages proved valuable given that the 1965 Higher Education Act included Title I that provided funding for lifelong learning programs ("Higher education act of 1965," 1965; Rohfeld, 1990). The lifelong learning movement secured acceptance when Minnesota Senator Walter Mondale proposed the Lifelong Learning Act in 1975 (Jarvis, 2004; Rohfeld, 1990). This Act was incorporated into the Higher Education Act and was signed into law with the reauthorization of the HEA in 1976.

Along with this change taking place; technology was leading to great innovation in course delivery which in turn had a huge impact on the developments and nature of continuing education units. During the 1960s, continuing adult education was expanded through the use of radio and television by educators to reach their audience. Indicative of this development was the creation of a Joint Committee on Educational TV by one of the United States' leading educational organizations, the

American Council on Education (ACE) whereas, “by 1962, 62 educational stations were on the air” (Rohfeld, 1990, p. 102). By the 1970s, the use of public television by universities to reach students had expanded along with the use of closed-circuit systems. But this expansion did not come without its problems, since many of the courses offered via distance did not have faculty support or provide credit; the concept did not see much success. Without support, various correspondence study programs were in jeopardy of closing with the most significant being the University of Chicago where the movement had originated in 1892 (Watkins, 1991; Woytanowitz, 1974). But, as indicated by Thelin (2004), higher education in general faced difficult times during the 1970s and 1980s. It was a time of scrutiny and accountability. Business and higher education had literally traded placed with business receiving federal government exemptions and incentives and higher education subjected to increased regulation and procedures.

Another trend in the 1970s and 1980s was a decline in overall university enrollment, while two-year community colleges and technical institutes’ enrollment increased. Community colleges also accounted for the large variety of certification and continuing education courses produced for business and professional fields (Thelin, 2004). During this time, independent study enrollments of continuing education units also increased (Watkins, 1991). But, even with this surge in enrollments the linkage between continuing education and government was not strong enough to endure the next Higher Education Act reauthorization. Higher Education Act reauthorization of 1980 unfortunately brought an end of funding for Title I

(Rohfeld, 1990; Watkins, 1991). It was during this time that NUEA membership voted to change its name to the National University Continuing Education Association (NUCEA). NUCEA members wanted their name to reflect that they were involved with *all* forms of continuing education courses (Rohfeld, 1990; Watkins, 1991). It was also during this time that NUCEA reached out to groups that were currently not included in great numbers in its membership. One group that was underrepresented in NUCEA was African-American professionals. So as NUCEA entered 1984, it established the Task Force on Black Concerns in hopes of attracting more African-American professionals in to the membership (Rohfeld, 1990).

At the same time, President Reagan signed the Higher Education Act of 1986 with a new version of Title I. Even though it included less funding than the HEA of 1965, it greatly expanded student aid programs to part-time learners (Rohfeld, 1990). This expansion was due in part by pressures put on legislatures by continuing education associations and indicates a strengthening between government and continuing education. The next significant change in education was the new Montgomery GI Bill passed in 1984 and made permanent in 1987. This bill included a significantly larger federal contribution toward the cost of higher education. The year 1987 also saw focus on higher education's institutional response to the older adult, especially in continuing education. As affirmed by Shoemaker (1998), "with a society that is living longer and with many jobs and several career changes predicted for working adults, 'going back to school' is a 'must' and not an option" (p. 5). The

NUCEA took advantage of this focus and established a separate division on Continuing Education for Older Adults (Rohfeld, 1990, p. 182).

As we enter into the 1990's, with fiscal control as a driver, higher education became involved in blended learning with the introduction of technology in their courses (McCormack, 1996). These were times of intense change with much of the change impacted by introduction of the World Wide Web and technology improvements. As indicated by Gumport and Chun (2005), "The influence of technology on the everyday life of higher education can hardly be overestimated" (Altbach et al., 2005. p. 393).

This was also a time that continuing education divisions needed competent professionals running their programs. The introduction of technology brings opportunities and challenges that continuing education leadership and professionals need to consider the limitations and costs to select the correct technological resources to meet the goal at hand (Houle, 1996; McCormack, 1996).

The Many Drivers in the Twenty-first Century

As we move into the 2000s, continuing education divisions of higher education include an extensive variety of technology platforms and international opportunities (Scott, 2006). Changes were taking place at a fast pace. In this context, continuing education divisions were challenged to be flexible and tap more resources and creativity from its staff. Shoemaker (1998) brought light to this challenge faced by these units explaining, "creativity is often stifled and innovation frustrated" (p. 21). It was also during this time that private, for-profit competitors such as University of Phoenix and others entered the race to provide online educational offerings (Altbach et al., 2005; Deckelbaum, 1999). These changes all come at a time when state and public higher education institutions were striving to stay afloat with less tax payer dollars to fund education (Boyd, 2005). As in the past, finances, budget and funding modifications were again driving change. Different from the previous experiences was that as costs of providing college increased, the percentage of state subsidies decreased on a per capita basis between 2000 and 2005 (Ebersole, 2004; SHEEO, 2006; Spellings, 2006; Thelin, 2004). Thus, it was the desire of higher education administrators to pursue revenue streams that were not at the discretion of the state legislature and would provide a diversified funding arrangement (Gellman-Danley & Fetzner, 1998; Schuetze & Slowey, 2002).

Along with the need for a state-independent revenue stream, the characteristics of higher education's students also changed. Current demographics indicate that students rely less on buildings and tables and chairs, and more on the internet, and a more flexible class schedule (Altbach et al., 2005; Collis, 2001; Ebersole, 2004). The new majority was categorized as nontraditional students (Sandeen, 2004; Schuetze & Slowey, 2002). Because of the need for a flexible schedule and the increase in part-time, nontraditional students, distance education gained popularity and became the new driver of continuing education divisions (Basu, 2005; Reich, 2006; Shadle, 2004). Along with the idea that distant education was meeting a demand, it was also seen as a way to increase revenue which of course was very influential at times when funds were continually being cut (Altbach et al., 2005; Ebersole, 2004). This entailed a time of scrutiny, review, and assessment of online education. Demand for quality of online offerings was great and the need to educate the educators was necessary. Along with ensuring quality in their offerings, continuing education saw the need to provide best practices in online instruction to its faculty (Ebersole, 2004; Fish & Wickersham, 2009; McNabb, Hardy, & Rees, 2005; Reich, 2006). With the steady increase of for-profit enrollment and competition from entities such as the University of Phoenix, non-profit higher education institutions needed to differentiate themselves. Maintaining a strong quality, continually assessing and improving course offerings, and providing ongoing faculty support were ways continuing education divisions could do just that (Crow, 2007; Ebersole, 2005; Fish & Wickersham, 2009; McNabb et al., 2005).

Similar to the change in technology, continuing education divisions were experiencing a change in the location they offered courses. Continuing education students and locations were becoming more international (Kohl, 2006; Reich, 2006). The world was truly becoming flatter (Friedman, 2006). Because of the ability to connect world-wide, educational pursuits no longer need to be limited by location and geography. As continuing education divisions in other countries became connected to those in the United States, stories were shared (Carter, Dougherty, Wilson, & Campbell, 2008; Forster, 2006; Pearman, 2007; Roffe, 2007). Soon, interest was turned into action and partnerships were created (Messelaar, 2006; Shinagel, 2008; Steinberg, 2007).

CHALLENGES AND CONCERNS OF 2010 AND BEYOND

There was the question as to whether continuing education units were moving their divisions in ways that infringed on the missions of other traditional departments within their higher education institution (Martin, 2005, p. 17). As described by Kassiola (2007), "this alleged 'mission creep,' according to critics, subordinates and dilutes the institutional goal and support for undergraduate teaching resulting in its diminution in quality" (p. 140). Without understanding if or why mission creep takes place within institutions of higher education, it was difficult to be proactive in determining if the mission creep of continuing education was a problem that institutions of higher education needed to deter. External influences such as public demand for convenient access played an enormous role in the development of a problem of "mission creep" (Martin, 2005, p. 17). Another concern that plagued continuing education divisions at higher education institutions of 2011 was that of quality, accountability and assessment. Even when continuing education courses were carried out by very reputable faculty and include extensive review processes, they did not share the same level of respect as the courses conducted within traditional departments (Watkins, 1991, p. 112). Continuing education courses did not develop parity of esteem with the so-called traditional form of teaching and learning and were portrayed as a step-child of a higher education (Duning, 1985; Saba, 2003).

Other concerns that affected continuing education divisions included changing demographics, use of technology, and generating revenue while maintaining quality.

In the area of demographics, a swift increase in the older population from 2010 to 2030 along with a significant increase in the immigrant population caused most of the change (Passel & Cohn, 2008; Reich, 2006; Schaefer, 2010; U.S. Census Bureau, 2005). These changes affect continuing and adult education units because the worldwide nontraditional student numbers were growing. It was up to the members of continuing and adult education units to determine how to provide services to this new majority in new and innovative ways (Sandeen, 2004; Schuetze & Slowey, 2002). The next driver continuing and adult education units were facing was the changing technology. Since the advent of the World Wide Web, the internet had become the focus of many who saw it as convenient and easy mode of delivering information, and students of all kinds demanded courses and programs offered via the web (Finnegan, 2006;McCormack, 1996; Reich, 2006; Sloan Consortium, 2005). As numbers increased, to meet the demand of tomorrow we needed to invest in the technology. Beyond investing funds, higher education institutions must consider quality assurance of the courses created. The ultimate goal of all course creation was achievement of student learning (Carnevale, 2007; McCormack, 1996).

This brings us to our third consideration for continuing and adult education divisions, how to maintain quality but still generate revenue. Continuing and adult education's revenue streams were not under the same legislative control as the state higher education's allocation funds (Schuetze & Slowey, 2002, SHEEO, 2007; Spellings Commission Report, 2006). Since revenue was not provided under the scrutiny of a legislative body, there was a concern that the programs were of lower standards and the higher education units providing them were not being held accountable (Duning, 1985; Saba, 2003). These were the ongoing challenges that these continuing education units faced.

SYNTHESIS OF THE DRIVERS FOUND IN THE LITERATURE

As we review the findings of the literature, we see drivers arise. In chronological order, the drivers that occurred were charted as identified in Appendix A. The resulting eight drivers can be combined as follows:

1) Providing Education to the Masses (Non-elites)
    a. Legislative Involvement
2) Historical Events
    a. Great Depression
    b. Wars
    c. Advent of Technology
    d. Globalization
3) Revenue Source
    a. Source of External (Non-Government) Funding
    b. For-Profit and Private Competition
    c. Quality and Accountability

As a result, the eight drivers become three primary drivers or themes with various subthemes under each. Each could also be considered a driver of higher education continuing education divisions. First, as with all higher education in general, continuing education was driven to provide education to all United States citizens. Along with this desire to educate the masses, constituents also involved their elected legislative officials. This action resulted in the various act and bills created by government (1962 & 1890 Morrill Land Grant Acts; 1914 Smith-Lever Act; 1965 Higher Education Act; and the Lifelong Learning Act of 1975). Another theme or driver that was discerned from the literature was that as events take place in society or history, higher education and its continuing education divisions responded. As society looked to educate the masses, continuing education created an opportunity for those who could not attend traditional classes. As a great number of servicemen arrived at the doors of our higher education institutions, continuing education created options for those who did not desire traditional classes.

A driver that has been very influential between 1980 and beyond has been the development of technology and the World Wide Web (WWW). Because of the ability to instruct whenever and wherever the internet was available, students demanded the flexibility and higher education directed continuing education to seize the opportunity. This opportunity then lead the another theme or driver of globalization and internationalization. As the world became flatter, the ability to partner with such distant lands as India and China became a reality. As with most higher education seed programs, continuing studies was ask to be proactive and examine the potential to exchange faculty, knowledge and students.

Underlying all these events was the final driver of continuing education that of providing their institutions of higher education an alternative revenue stream. As allocations steadily decline, higher education must depend on the continuing education entrepreneurial effort to deliver funds that are market driven and not tied to allocations (Schuetze & Slowey; 2002). Along with this opportunity soon followed competition for those dollars. Thus, to fend off the competition of for-profit, private institutions, public higher education must demonstrate accountability and quality. The concern of accountability and quality is another ongoing challenge (Duning, 1985; Saba, 2003).

SUMMARY

As indicated in the literature review above, continuing education included many areas such as adult learning, distance education, workforce development and lifelong learning. The role and purpose of continuing education divisions have changed over time. As drivers have influenced, and been the catalyst of change for divisions of continuing education, those divisions have evolved. Examples of the drivers that have affected continuing education divisions include, but not limited to, policy changes, need for financial sustainability, introduction of new technology, globalization, and competition from private and for-profit agencies. Chapter 2 identified how, in the available literature, various drivers have historically impacted the role and purposes of continuing education divisions of community colleges, comprehensive universities, and research universities in public higher education institutions in the United States. Also revealed in Chapter 2 was that the literature based solely on continuing education was limited. As we move in to Chapter 3, the methodology, I will describe and explain the methodology used to collect and document the information included in the study that added to the scholarly knowledge in this relatively unexamined subject.

Chapter 3

METHODOLOGY

INTRODUCTION OF THE RESEARCH DESIGN

A qualitative, multiple-case study methodology was used to examine what current drivers are impacting the role, mission, and purposes of continuing education divisions. What follows is an overview of the research methodology employed in this study, including the rationale and key concepts of the methods, information related to study population, data collection procedures, identification of the research design used, description of the data analysis procedures, the strategies for the protection of human subjects, and the time schedule used for the completion of the research.

Overview and Rationale of Qualitative Research as a Methodology

Qualitative research has been examined and described in detail by various scholars (Creswell, 2009; Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Merriam, 2009; Wolcott, 2009). Merriam (2009) describes qualitative research as determining "how people interpret their experiences, how they construct their worlds, and what meaning they attribute to their experiences" (p. 5). Denzin and Lincoln (2005) further expand this definition with an extensive list of terms used to describe various qualitative research traditions.

The list includes such “traditions” as “foundationalism, positivism, postfoundationalism, postpositivism, poststrucuralism and the many qualitative research perspectives, and/or methods connected to cultural and interpretive studies” (p. 2). Creswell (2009) agrees that “in qualitative research, the use of theory is much more varied” (p. 49). Thus, as the list of definitions continues to be expanded, in the purest form, qualitative research expresses the desire of the researcher to understand as others understand what she or he is examining and bring clarity to the phenomenon where there is ambiguity. With each project, the use of the constructivist investigative strategy allows the researcher “not to find knowledge, they construct it” (Merriam, 2009, p. 9). They also “stress the socially constructed nature of reality, the intimate relationship between the researcher and what is studied, and the situational constraints that shape inquiry” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p. 10).

Qualitative research includes different genres or types. One form or genre of qualitative research is the case study (Creswell, 2009; Merriam, 2009; Wolcott, 2009). For the case study to be effective, its focus needs to be of a bounded system or phenomenon, bound by time and activity (Creswell, 2009; Merriam, 2009; Wolcott, 2009). This methodology was relevant to this study for several reasons. The lack of empirical knowledge available on continuing education divisions in higher education institutions as previously explored in the literature review provided a justification for the development of this study. Stories on what has taken place historically can be found but an in-depth understanding of why continuing education divisions and their leaders took the actions they did have not been attempted. There has yet to be more empirically based work written on this specific topic. Because of this lack of knowledge, it was important to perform the investigation needed, give continuing education divisions the opportunity to tell their story, and perform an in-depth analysis of the data collected. Second, along with providing the opportunity for continuing education division participants to tell their story, themes across and within each institution were identified and they can provide a further historical record for continuing education divisions and higher education administrators. By doing so, these divisions and administrators will have a richly descriptive, scholarly work that identifies the common themes and connects them to the driving forces of higher education continuing education in the United States. The relevance of using a qualitative case study approach was particularly applicable to this research study. Merriam (2009) defines a qualitative case study as “an in-depth description and analysis of a bounded system” (p. 43). Yin (2003) elaborates this definition with the following detail: “A case study is an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life content, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident” (p. 13).

The continuing education participants interviewed in this study represent bounded systems being studied in order to provide the depth of information from interviews and document analysis. Unlike an experiment, which intentionally ignores contextual conditions, the case study researcher chooses to include the phenomenon and all the various conditions included. The case study methods allowed us to gain a detailed story from each of the participants interviewed and acquire a depth of information not possible with a survey method (Yin, 2003). This method of data collection allowed me to understand these programs from a broad perspective, and the qualitative nature of the study allowed me to use an inductive process or funnel approach that resulted in a richly descriptive, scholarly view (Creswell, 2009; Merriam, 2009; Wolcott, 2009).

DESCRIPTION OF THE POPULATION

Since it was the desire of this qualitative multiple case study to analyze and compare the roles and drivers that catalyze change for continuing education divisions in a public, four-year, post baccalaureate, comprehensive higher education institution in the United States, it was deemed essential that the continuing education leader were actively serving higher education students for ten years or more. The rational for only including continuing education leaders with ten or more years of higher education experience was, without that length of service the leader would not have the experience or history necessary to adequately answer the interview questions. It also allowed use of a “homogeneous sample, the purpose of which is to describe some particular subgroup in depth” (Patton, 2002, p. 235). I used this criterion from which to start the search.

The query also included only those institutions that were accredited by the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools (NCA), Higher Learning Commission (HLC). The HLC, an independent corporation, was one of two commission members of the NCA. The NCA was founded in 1895 as one of six regional institutional accreditors in the United States. The accreditation process certified the higher education institution met the HLC's Criteria for Accreditation, which ensured a high level of quality and accountability (The Higher Learning Commission, 2011). At the time, more than 1,000 institutions were affiliated with the Commission (The Higher Learning Commission, 2011). As with other accrediting bodies, it was understood that the institutions were accredited using equal criteria and allowed me to assume a commonality that could not be assumed with institutions lacking this accreditation. Along with NCA-HLC membership, an additional criterion was membership within the University Continuing Education Association (UCEA). Since 1915, the UCEA had served as the principal United States organization for continuing higher education and assists institutions of higher learning and affiliated nonprofit organizations to increase access through a wide array of educational programs and services (UCEA, 2009). Membership of the UCEA identified that the institution and its leadership valued continuing education.

Selection of the Sample Institutions

As noted above, in order for the case study to be effective its focus needed to be of a bounded system (Creswell, 2009; Merriam, 2009; Wolcott, 2009). In order to stay consistent with this definition, each interview was defined as a bounded system itself. As identified by Merriam (2009), "If the phenomenon you are interested in studying is not intrinsically bounded [connected], it is not a case" (p. 41). As indicated above the criteria used to select the participant to be interviewed in the study was as follows, including the rationale for their inclusion:

- A public higher education institution located in the United States

  Rationale: Because state funds were used to support public institution, strict policy governs the allocation of those funds. There was also much scrutiny on use of public funds to support any programs outside of the traditional, credit program (Callahan, 2002; Lingenfelter, 2008; Reindl & Brower, 2001). Because of this, nontraditional continuing education divisions must enter new instructional ventures carefully to remain self-supported and viewed as a potential revenue stream for their institutions. A review of public higher education institutions by this study would provide those units with scholarly, research-based information to guide their instructional decision-making.
- A 4-year, post baccalaureate, comprehensive higher education institution

  Rationale: 2-year postsecondary programs saw much of their history in the creation of the technical, junior college model (Rohfeld, 1990; Thelin, 2004). As a result of their orientation toward vocational coursework and for providing “credit” toward certificate programs, their approach toward continuing education differed from that of 4-year, post baccalaureate, comprehensive higher education institution.

- A higher education institution that included a continuing education leader that had been actively serving higher education students for 10 years or more.

  Rationale: As the study was examining divisions of continuing education within higher education institutions, this criterion was important and allowed homogeneous sampling. A continuing education leader with less than 10 years might not possess the longevity needed to properly answer the questions included in the interview protocol.

As noted above, the number of institutions that met the criteria of membership in the NCA-HLC was 16. Of those 16, only 12 were members of the UCEA. It should be noted that of those 12 institutions, one of those institutions listed was in the midst of a continuing education division leadership transition and did not have a current principal administrator to contact. Thus, of the remaining 11 institutions, each was contacted and requested to participate in the study. The invitation was directed to the continuing education division's principal administrator. They were asked to contact and suggest other staff members who could provide an in-depth understanding to the inner workings and decision making processes that take place on a daily basis. These additional staff members were contacted to determine if they could add to the rich information needed for the study. By doing so, I was able to use a common form of sampling referred to as "snowball sampling" (Merriam, 2009, p. 79). Key to the findings of these interviews was the determination of what drove the decision making process of these continuing education divisions. Since continuing education divisions can vary in size and depth, it was important to work closely with the site contacts to ensure a manageable number of participants.

DESCRIPTION OF THE INSTRUMENTS AND DATA COLLECTION

Because qualitative case studies are descriptive and heuristic in nature, the research instruments used must be able to facilitate those characteristics. It is also a common characteristic of qualitative research that "the researcher is the primary instrument for data collection and analysis" (Merriam, 2009, p. 15). It was for this reason that I also chose to be the primary instrument and chose to conduct interviews for the data collection. To add to the information collected during the interviews, any documentation provided or suggested by those interviewed and by my own decision was deemed relevant and supported the data was also collected. Interviews were conducted following this procedure. First, I inquired with the interviewees what technical functionality they had available at their location. I had various technologies available at my disposal, such as Interactive Television Videoconferencing (ITV); Adobe Connect™; and Skype™ that provided the ability to record the audio (voice) and the visual (picture) of the interviews. Because of the availability of these various technologies that provided these abilities, along with bridging the miles that existed between interviewee and interviewer, I opted to use Adobe Connect technology to conduct the interviews. This technology allowed the ability to record both audio and picture. A fact that was very beneficial during the transcription process. Those being interviewed found the process convenient and effective. As one interviewee stated, "It is like you are sitting across the table from me" (S072109). To ensure that no unforeseen technical problems would arise during the interview, an email was sent that provided guidance to the interviewee on how to set up the technology. If needed, a test session was conducted to ensure a quality product resulted. Thus, the interviewee was notified and provided date range in which to select from for the official interview and an inquiry about whether a test session was desired. In order to facilitate the arrangement of the actual interview, I relied heavily on the various interviewees to coordinate with other selected members of their staff to arrange their availability for each interview. Each interviewee was giving the opportunity to interview individually. By including those site contacted and applying the necessary amount of rigor, concerns of validity and reliability could be minimized.

One of the limitations of qualitative case study research is the generalizing that can take place if only one case study is performed (Merriam, 2009, p. 51). I admit that by limiting the case studies to potentially ten, generalization could still be an issue but by including the criteria above, the insights from each case allowed an in-depth understanding of the cases. Efforts to limit reliability issues required various steps. First, because the information was recorded, I was able to review the transcription several times. Transcripts could not include obvious errors. I created a qualitative codebook to aid in this process. Finally, I worked closely with my dissertation chair for the analysis of transcripts. This allowed my codes to be cross-checked for consistency (Cresswell, 2009; Merriam, 2009). Compared to the concerns of reliability, validity is the strength of qualitative research (Cresswell, 2009; Merriam, 2009). Done properly, qualitative case study research should result in an accurate, trustworthy and credible account of the interviewees' reality.

Of course, to ensure accuracy of the findings, I incorporated various strategies. As indicated above, the results may include any potential bias that I bring to the study. As a member of a continuing education division, interpretation of the findings may be affected by this membership. To ensure consistency, I utilized an interview protocol to guide the questions asked and information covered with each interview. Peer debriefing and member checking validated that the resulting transcripts, themes and analysis were accurate. Beside the transcript analysis, policy documentation provided by those interviewed, along with additional documentation I deemed important, was collected to expand the relevant information and data concerning the continuing education divisions of each interviewee. As a result, triangulation was performed by reviewing the documentation provided against the transcript data. By using multiple sources of evidence, data could be triangulated or cross-checked. Triangulation could also be performed by using different evaluators [investigator triangulation], perspectives to the same data set [theory triangulation], or methods [methodological triangulation] (Yin, 2003). The resulting themes from the various interviews and documents collected would validate the results.

Finally, providing a thick, rich description of the findings allowed validation of the results (Cresswell, 2009; Merriam, 2009; Wolcott, 2009). The interview protocol was developed from the information gained from the literature review. The protocol was piloted within my own institution and other institutions not included in this study to confirm that the terms used and questions asked were accurate and not confusing.

ETHICS AND CONFIDENTIALITY

With all research, there must be consideration of any effects on the subjects involved in the study. Great attention by authors of qualitative research methods has been placed on the ethics of conducting research (Brinkmann, 2009; Cresswell, 2009; Kvale & Merriam, 2009; Wolcott, 2009). Emphasis on the use of reliable and valid techniques, along with serious self-reflection of the researcher conducting the study is an important component of any project. Rigorous methodology must be supported by a strong ethical foundation for the study to receive the credibility of trusted qualitative research project. As stated by Merriam (2009), “we have to trust that the study was carried out with integrity and that it involves the ethical stance of the researcher” (p. 229). Since we have noted above that I was the primary instrument in collecting data, establishing trust and credibility was critical. To ensure data was given freely without concern for risk associated with the sharing of information, steps toward confidentiality were included. First, to ensure adherence to any institutional safeguards set by my institution, this study followed the guidelines set forth by its Internal Review Board Process (http://www.stcloudstate.edu/irb/process/default.asp). Each site’s contact was requested to gain approval to be included in the study by their institutional leadership and adhere to their specific Internal Review Board Process. Also, while complete confidentiality is typically difficult to guarantee, steps were taken to conceal each institutions identity from the other institutions being studied. Data from each institution was analyzed on an individual case basis and in aggregate. A systematic naming convention was used to identify each institution to include an interview number (corresponding to the date and time the interview took place) and each staff member listed by only a pseudonym of their actual first name. Documentation acquired for each interview performed used the same naming convention along with a dash (-) and capital D. I only knew the specific information to protect the anonymity of the institutions, individuals, and roles in the study to all others. A consent form was obtained that outlines the above and includes the following (Creswell, 2009, p. 89):

- Identification of the researcher
- Identification of the sponsoring institution
- Identification of how the participants were selected
- Identification of the purpose of the research
- Identification of the benefits for participating
- Identification of the level and type of participant involvement
- Notation of risks to the participants
- Guarantee of confidentiality to the participant
- Assurance that the participant can withdraw at any time
- Provision of names of persons to contact if questions arise

Also, as interviews were transcribed, I performed the transcription and maintained confidentiality at all times. Line numbers were added to the transcript to aid in the retrieval of data and aid in the maintenance of confidentiality. Upon completion of the study and award of my doctorate, all materials would be securely stored and maintained.

DESCRIPTION OF THE RESEARCH DESIGN

It was decided to use a qualitative case study method because of its richly descriptive and heuristic characteristics. An important reason for carrying out this study was to add to the scholarly information available on the drivers affecting public, four-year, post baccalaureate, comprehensive higher education institutions of the early 21st century that are accredited by the United States' Higher Learning Commission. The data collection techniques of qualitative case study methodology will be particularly useful in answering the three research questions:

Q1: What drivers have influenced the purpose, mission, and roles of continuing education divisions in comprehensive universities, and research universities in the United States' throughout history?

Q2: What current drivers function as a catalyst of change for continuing education divisions within higher education institutions in the United States?

Q3: What procedures do continuing education leaders employ to ensure that their programs meet the standards and quality acceptable to their higher education institutions and students?

As noted in Chapter 1, by understanding what motivates continuing education administration to pursue the direction of the current purposes, roles, and drivers, this study answers the question of where continuing education fits into the broader mission of the higher education system and what processes need to be included to ensure a quality learning experience for their students. By taking the opportunity to interview early 21st century higher education continuing education administrators and staff, not only have we answered these questions, added to the limited scholarly literature available, but also provided valuable information to be used by myself and others to guide their continuing education divisions in the future.

A foreseen research problem was the inability to generalize the information gathered to other institutions. Because of the use of qualitative methodology, the results provided insight from those consulted, but they are descriptive of only those specific institutions studied. Thus, some of the information obtained was a reflection of events by the individuals interviewed and may not be applicable to other institutions. On a more positive side, by applying the rigors of qualitative research methods and instruments described above, those who decide to use the information for future decision making, can be assured by the validity and reliability of the study.

DESCRIPTION OF THE DATA ANALYSIS

Upon collection of the data from document collection and interviews, the data was analyzed using an inductive process or funnel approach (Creswell, 2009; Merriam, 2009; Wolcott, 2009). The inductive approach does not start with a specific hypothesis or theory in mind, rather it builds toward theories and hypotheses from information gathered from being in the field. Interviews, observations, and documents were merged and analyzed "into larger themes as the researcher works from the particular to the general" (Merriam, 2009, pp. 15-16). I started with little or no preconceived notion of what theory laid before me but, as clarified by Patton (2002), what was generated from the fieldwork was "theory that emerges from the researcher's observations and interviews out in the real world rather than in the laboratory or the academy" (p. 11). This is common when "there is a lack of theory or an existing theory fails to adequately explain a phenomenon" (Merriam, 2009, p 15). "Concepts are developed inductively from the data and raised to a higher level of abstraction, and their interrelationships are then traced out" (Punch, 2005, p. 196).

From the lengthy and varying responses provided during the interview, the data was analyzed using a coding system. Coding is a systematic way of organizing the data into segment or category that can lead to a common theme or thread (Creswell, 2009; Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009; Merriam, 2009). The steps to code the data were (Merriam, 2009, pp. 178-193):

1) Construct Categories–Interviews were transcribed verbatim. Interviews and relevant documentation was then imported into a qualitative software (NVivo). Once imported into the software, the interviews and documentation was re-read, jotting notes, comments, and observations within parentheses and creating memos where applicable. Codes were then assigned to them (open coding). Like comments were grouped together, notes and codes were grouped together (analytical coding). Patterns and regularities become "nodes" or "categories".

2) Sort Categories (nodes) and Data–Using the qualitative software, each "node" was labeled with category name (each unit of data placed in the "node" included the original source including interview date and the location of the excerpt).
3) Name the Category (nodes) using the following criteria:
    a. Categories (nodes) should be responsive to purpose of research
    b. Categories (nodes) may or may not be mutually exclusive
    c. Categories (nodes) should be sensitizing (i.e. "time" is not the same as "time management")
    d. Categories (nodes) may or may not be conceptually congruent and make sense together
4) Review Number of Categories (nodes)–Should be manageable. May start with 25 or 30 and narrow to five or six themes.
5) Review Current Categories (nodes) and be More Theoretical – Determine if relationships make sense, explain the phenomenon, and answer the research questions.
6) Steps 1 through 5, individually, were repeated until research questions were answered and a rich, thick description resulted.

As indicated above, it is important to understand that even though the list above is in sequence, the process was not sequential. Upon review of a third or fourth document, I returned to the first document and reconstructed the coding. Along with coding, memoing was used to capture my thoughts and ideas during analysis. As illuminated by Punch (2005), "These memos can cover many things. They may be substantive, theoretical, methodological or even personal" (p. 201). The process was very fluid and derived from the data. Throughout the activities of coding and categorization, themes were determined. This took place during the analysis of each individual case or, as stated by Merriam (2009), a "within-case analysis" (p. 204). The process then continued to include all cases and was considered a "cross-case analysis" of the data (Merriam, 2009, p. 204). From this analysis the study provided the rich description of the findings.

When conducting a multiple-case study, each case serves as an individual study, and each additional case in a multiple-case study serves as a replication of the original case. To allow the analysis of the information I gathered across the cases, the case study should constitute a bounded system (Creswell, 2009; Merriam, 2009, Wolcott, 2009). In order to remain consistent with this definition, I needed to identify characteristics and boundaries of the continuing education divisions that would allow them to be defined as a bounded system. Merriam (2009) explains, "If the phenomenon you are interested in studying is not intrinsically bounded [connected], it is not a case" (p. 41). The features of the bounded system examined in this research study were:

- Continuing education divisions in a public higher education institution located in the United States,
- Continuing education divisions in a four-year, post baccalaureate, comprehensive higher education institution,

- Include only those institutions that are accredited by the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools (NCA), Higher Learning Commission (HLC).
- Members of the University Continuing Education Association (UCEA).

As explained earlier, 16 institutions that met the above criteria were within the scope of the NCA-HLC's accreditation. Of those 16, 12 were members of the UCEA. Of those 12 institutions identified, one of those included on the list was in the midst of a leadership transition, and did not have a current principal continuing education administrator to contact and invite to participate in the study. Of the remaining 11 institutions, the continuing education division's principal administrator was contacted and invited to participate in the study.

The invitation to participate was carried out through direct calling to the continuing education administrator's office and was repeated up to four times to ensure that the administrator was offered the opportunity to participate in the study, if she or he was interested and if time allowed. The continuing education principal administrator was also given the opportunity to suggest other staff members who may provide an in-depth understanding of the inner workings and decision making processes that take place within the continuing education division. Only one administrator chose to include another staff member. The remaining administrators indicated she or he were the first contacts of their institutions for the continuing education division and that she or he possessed the knowledge and had access to the information to answer the questions pertaining to continuing education within their institutions. In the end, ten participants from nine different higher education institutions agreed to be interviewed.

THE QUALITATIVE SOFTWARE: NVIVO BY QRS INTERNATIONAL

NVivo by QRS International is a qualitative software that allows you to manage all the elements of your research project in one location. The version of NVivo used in 2011 was NVivo 9. Thus, NVivo had gone through a number of upgrades to possess the tools to assist me in streamlining the analysis process. What follows is a description of the tools NVivo possessed that assisted in the analysis this research project.

A key feature was that NVivo possessed was the ability to upload and analyze source materials such as documents, PDFs, spreadsheets, databases, audio, video or pictures. It also had the ability to record analytical thoughts which could be included in the analysis of the project. Once imported or created, these various sources of information were easily accessible on the NVivo workspace. The ribbon of the NVivo workspace allows you to access all the NVivo commands (File, Home, Create, External Data, Analyze, Explore, Layout, View, and Help). The Navigation and List View allows organization of project materials into folders (Sources, Nodes, Classifications, Collections, Queries, Reports, and Models) and the ability to view the content of those folders at any time (QRS International, 2011).

Key definitions within the NVivo software are (QRS International, 2011):

- Sources–the collective term for research materials including documents, PDFs, datasets (for example, spreadsheets), audio, video and pictures.
- Nodes (categories)–containers that let you gather related material in one place so that you can look for emerging patterns and ideas. You can create and organize nodes for themes, people, organizations or other cases. You can also create nodes to gather evidence about the relationships between items in your project.
- Classifications–descriptive information about your sources, nodes and relationships.
- Collections–views (or groupings) of project items that are stored elsewhere in your project–for example a set made up of sources you need to review or Search Folders for frequently used searches.
- Queries–search criteria that can help you to find and explore patterns in source text or coding. Queries can be saved and rerun as the project progresses.
- Reports–reports and extracts that you can use to track your progress or make your data available for use in other applications.
- Models–shapes and connectors that provide a way of visually exploring or presenting the data in your project.

The NVivo software allows you to create Nodes as you code your Source material. Thus, as I reviewed the interview transcripts and relevant documentation of this project, as patterns and themes arose, nodes were created to "categorize" those patterns and themes. If a node seemed to contain sub-themes or patterns, a 'child' node can be added and a node hierarchy created. Once coding was complete, I was able to see what was coded in a source by turning on the coding highlight and coding stripes. Another way NVivo is able to pull out patterns and themes is by Queries. For example, by performing a top similar word query, I was able to identify those words similar to the word 'need' appeared in the interviews 173 times. By performing a top exact words query for the words need or needs the counts were 32 and 25, respectfully. Visually I could create a chart or graph to display the results of my project. By utilizing the capability of the NVivo software, the process of coding and analyzing the data was streamlined. But, as noted earlier, the key tool was my ability to make sense of the themes and patterns that resulted (QRS International, 2011).

PROTECTION OF HUMAN SUBJECT

Emphasis to protect the rights of all involved with this study was critical to ensure data was given freely without concern for risk associated with the sharing of information. As noted above, I assured adherence to institutional safeguards set by my institution, St. Cloud State University; and follow the guidelines set forth by its Internal Review Board Process (http://www.stcloudstate.edu/irb/process/default.asp). Each interview contact was requested to gain approval to be included in the study by their institutional leadership and adhere to their specific Internal Review Board Process. I only knew the specific information to protect the anonymity of the institutions, individuals, and roles in the study to all others. A consent form was obtained from each participant involved.

TIMELINE FOR COMPLETION OF PROPOSED RESEARCH

The following is the proposed schedule for this research study:

- Defense of Dissertation Study Proposal–April 2011
- Receipt of Proposal Approval and Complete Revisions on Chapters 1, 2, 3–May 2011
- Pursue Institutional Review Board approval–May 2011
- Send Invite Letter and Consent Form–end May 2011
- Collect Data and Perform Interviews–June-November 2011
- Transcribe Interviews and Review Transcription–June-November 2011
- Member Check Transcription–July 2011-November 2011
- Analyze Data and Write Chapters 4 and 5–June 2011-January 2012
- Complete and Defend Dissertation–January 2012

SUMMARY

As indicated above, a qualitative, multiple-case study methodology was used to examine what drivers were impacting the role, mission, and purposes of continuing education divisions in the summer of 2011. This chapter included an overview of the methodology for this study including the rationale and key concepts of the methodology, information related to study population, data collection procedures, identification of the research design used, description of the data analysis procedures, the strategies for the protection of human subjects, and a time schedule for the completion of the research. Chapter 4 includes the results and findings in an effort to bring clarity to what purpose, mission and roles continuing education divisions find themselves in public 4-year post baccalaureate comprehensive higher education institution in the United States, what has influenced that direction and what assessment they used to ensure quality programs for their constituents.

Chapter 4

RESULTS

At the start of the 21st century, continuing education divisions at public, 4-year, post baccalaureate, comprehensive higher education institutions within the United States faced new challenges and had to redefine their roles, under the influence of different drivers. As it was afore mentioned, the intent of this study was to analyze and compare the purpose, mission, and roles of continuing education divisions at United States' comprehensive universities, and research universities from a historical standpoint. This research aimed to examine the drivers affecting public 4-year post baccalaureate comprehensive higher education institutions of the early 21st century located in the United States and identify procedures used to ensure that continuing education programs met the standards and quality acceptable to their constituents and institutions. It was my hope that the findings from this study would illuminate areas in need of development and improvement of continuing education units, support the creation of standards and policies for continuing education divisions in higher education and contribute to overcoming the dearth of empirical and theoretical studies on the role and mission of continuing education units.

The data collection techniques of qualitative case study methodology were followed while exploring the three guiding research questions:

Q1: What drivers have influenced the purpose, mission, and roles of continuing education divisions in comprehensive universities, and research universities in the United States' throughout history?

Q2: What are the current drivers that function as catalysts of change for continuing education divisions within higher education institutions in the United States?

Q3: What procedures do continuing education leaders employ to ensure that their programs meet the standards and quality acceptable to their higher education institutions and students?

The next section will detail each case study and describe continuing education units as "bounded systems".

RESEARCH DESIGN REVIEWED

Upon collection of the data from document analysis and interviews, data were analyzed using a comparative and inductive process or a "funnel" approach (Creswell, 2009, pp. 63-64; Merriam, 2009, pp. 15-16; Wolcott, 2009, p. 95). Compared to the deductive process where the hypothesis or theory is predicted prior to the start of the study, the inductive process does not start with a preconceived notion of a theory or hypothesis. The results of an inductive process are based on the themes or recurring patterns of the data analyzed (Merriam, 2009).

This qualitative research study utilized the case study method. Additionally, since the study explored the environment that existed in multiple locations, it could be, as described by Punch (2009), a “collective case study” (p. 119). As defined in Chapter 3, the features of the bounded system examined in this research study were:

- Continuing education divisions in a public higher education institution located in the United States,
- Continuing education divisions in a four-year, post baccalaureate, comprehensive higher education institution,
- Include only those institutions that are accredited by the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools (NCA), Higher Learning Commission (HLC).
- Members of the University Continuing Education Association (UCEA).

Another measure for selecting which institutions to invite participants to be interviewed was that a higher education institution included a continuing education leader that had been actively serving higher education students for ten years or more. The rationale for this decisive factor was as follows: As the study was examining divisions of continuing education within higher education institutions, this condition was important and allowed homogeneous sampling (Patton, 2002; Punch, 2009). A continuing education leader with less than ten years may not possess the longevity, or years of service needed to properly answer the questions included in the interview protocol. Granted, a participant with less than ten years could yield similar results but adding the condition of ten or more years should provide a measure of added credibility to the interview. In the end, ten participants from nine different higher education institutions agreed to be interviewed. As indicated in Appendix E, the longevity of those participants interviewed range from 13 years to 44 years in continuing education within a higher education institution.

Each transcribed interview, along with the documents collected from those interviewed, defined a case. Because each interview was a self-report from those who participated, it was important that other institutional documentation provided or suggested by those interviewed or by my own decision was deemed relevant and supported the data was obtained to further triangulate what was said by those interviewed. As stated by Wolcott (2005), “validity asks whether a researcher has measured what the research purports to measure” (p. 160). Triangulation of literature, interview transcripts and institutional documentation supported validity as defined above. Examples of the institutional information collected can be found in Appendix H with various excerpts of this data referenced in the dialog that follows.

As mentioned in Chapter 3, NVivo by QRS International, a qualitative software, was used to assist in the management of the various source materials of this research project by locating them in one workspace. By utilizing the capabilities of the NVivo software, I was able to conveniently organize, store and systematically code the data collected. But, as with the collection of the information, the key tool was my ability to make sense of the themes and patterns that resulted (QRS International, 2011). In this study, the phenomenon that was researched was the continuing education divisions’ drivers and indicators of assessment and accountability.

OVERVIEW OF PARTICIPANTS ("MINI" CASES)

As indicated in Appendix E, the role of the continuing education division staff who participated in the study ranged from coordinator to executive director and from dean to vice president. In all but one instance, responsibility of the continuing education units was the sole duty of the staff member. In the instance that the staff member was both, half time continuing education director and half time associate vice chancellor, they noted their concern that being a half time continuing education administrator position was inadequate for the duties that it entailed. Steven explained, "I feel that the continuing education director does need to be a full-time position, certainly to initiate the public outreach and be actively involved in the community" (S062210). This statement identified that an important responsibility of the continuing education staff was the ability to connect with the various external and internal constituents and communicate what continuing education services were available for their use.

To ensure data were given freely without concern of risk associated with the sharing of information, steps to protect the identity of the participants and ensure confidentiality were included. Steps were taken to conceal each institutions identity from the other institutions being studied and any parties who may read this study. A systematic naming convention was used to identify each institution to include an interview number (corresponding to the date and time the interview took place) and list each staff member only by a pseudonym. A similar naming convention was used to identify the documentation provided or suggested by those interviewed or collected by myself deemed relevant and that supported the data. In addition to the pseudonym of the interviewees, a dash (-) and capital D was added. What follows is a summary of each case to provide improved clarity of the findings.

Tere

Tere served as the Executive Director of Continuing Education and had been employed in a higher education institution for over 18 years. She reported to the Dean of the College of Interdisciplinary Studies who reported directly to the Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs. Along with its main campus location, the institution she served at has two off-campus locations with 13 additional in-state locations, eight recognized distance learning programs and offered 30 certificate programs. The recorded population that Tere's institution served in April 2011 was as follows: Undergraduate–18,393 full time students and 2,593 part-time students; Graduate–1,072 full time students and 2,483 part time students. It conferred 78 Bachelorette degrees, 26 Masters degrees, a Leadership Specialist degree along with two Doctoral degrees limited to the Doctor of Physical Therapy and Doctor of Nursing Practice.

Upon review of Tere's continuing education division's mission, vision and values, they included: "Partnerships and collaboration, diversity, meeting specific needs, linking real world with academics, and fiscal responsibility" (T061614-D). As we see in the literature reviewed, meeting the specific needs and demands of society along with providing education to the masses is an important driver of continuing education divisions in higher education. Tere confirmed this value during the interview as she said, “You will see that on our mission and our vision for our unit it is really about meeting the needs of our communities and matching that with the resources of the University” (T061614). The final value listed for Tere’s continuing education division, fiscal responsibility, was similar to another driver listed in the literature review, revenue source. Thus, the need to provide a source of external funding was a priority within Tere’s continuing education division. But, they were cognizant of the need to provide a quality program to their constituents.

Quinn

Quinn served as the Assistant Vice President for Continuing Education and Academic Outreach. She reported directly to the Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs, and had been employed in a position within continuing education for over 25 years. The institution she served had one main campus location, five additional in-state locations, offered 13 certificate programs, and had a notable amount of distance learning programs with 28 programs recognized. As of April 2011, the population Quinn’s institution served was as follows: Undergraduate–9,198 full time students and 1,266 part time students; Graduate–1,048 full time students and 1,518 part time students. It conferred 40 Bachelorette degrees, 33 Masters Degrees, two Specialist degrees and 19 Doctoral degrees.

Upon review of Quinn's institutional documentation, there was the theme of life-long learning and on-going scholarship that weaves throughout its mission, vision and values. Specifically, Quinn's institution stated the following within its values:

> The [university] subscribe to a teacher/scholar model in which excellence in instruction is complemented by activities in scholarship and service. Support for the continuous improvement of teaching, learning, scholarship and service is provided through University programs, policies and practices. (Q062115-D)
>
> The [university] believes that its distinctive service to society can only be offered in a student-centered atmosphere of integrity that is grounded in honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility. (Q062115-D)

This focus of scholarship and life-long learning continued throughout the purposes and goals that follow and the desire to serve the needs of adult learners was further supported by Quinn in the following statement during her interview, "we are driven by the desire to serve the needs of adult learners who want to or have aspirations to complete a college degree and have family and work related responsibilities that make that difficult for them to do that in a traditional model" (Q062115).

Steven

Steven held a dual role as both half time Continuing Education Director and half time Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs. He reported directly to the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and had 44 years of higher education experience, which was the longest length of service in this study. The institution he served had one main campus location, four additional in-state locations, six recognized distance learning programs and 10 certificate programs. The population it served as of May 2011 was as follows: Undergraduate–9,458 full time students and 1,170 part time students; Graduate–619 full time students and 482 part time students. It conferred 79 Bachelors' degrees, 21 Masters Degrees, and a Doctorate of Education (Ed.D) degree in Teaching and Learning.

When reviewing the vision statement of the institution where Steven worked, he described "learning-centered student experiences, research, creative activities, and *public engagement*" (S062210-D). The expanded version of the vision statement also included the desire to be central to the cultural, economic and intellectual life of its community and surrounding communities. As we will see under results, the desire to be in and of the community they serve was identified as an important driver of higher education, continuing education divisions.

Nancy

Nancy's position was Vice President and Executive Director of Professional Education. At the time of the interview, Nancy was completing her 22 year in continuing education and she reported directly to the Executive Vice President and Provost for Academic Affairs. The institution she served had one main campus location, 17 additional in-state locations, and offered 23 certificate programs. Similar to Quinn's institution above, Nancy's institution showcased a large number of distance learning programs with 28 programs recognized by the North Central Association of the Higher Learning Commission. The student population Nancy's institution served as of April 2011 was as follows: Undergraduate–19,241 full time students and 2,392 part time students; Graduate–1,800 full time students and 4,859 part time students. It conferred 125 Bachelorette degrees, 52 Masters Degrees, two Specialist degrees and 12 Doctoral degrees that were limited to the main campus, except for the Doctor of Audiology degree, the Doctor in Health Administration, and the Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership.

The extensive number of out-of-state locations, totaling 31, made Nancy's institution unique. These locations include a large amount of United States military installations. Another unique aspect of Nancy's institutional information was it also acknowledged six out-of-U.S. locations in Canada and one out-of-U.S. location in Mexico. This reach in location was acknowledged in its mission statement, "We provide student-centered education and foster personal and intellectual growth to prepare students for productive careers, meaningful lives, and *responsible citizenship in a global society"* (N062709-D).

During her interview, Nancy acknowledged the need to overcome the distance between the main campus and these off-site locations and to work closely with her colleagues to provide for her constituents. Nancy supported this by the following statement, "It is working closely with the University colleges and departments on what our strengths are and matching that with student demand" (N062709).

Nancy also recognized that as each student is individual so is the communities they reside in. You cannot use a one size fits all or universal approach when implementing programs. This was shown by the following comment, "we really work hard to make our centers kind of in and of the community that they serve, so they are very involved in the chamber, workforce development on what the needs are of various communities where we have campuses” (N062709).

Xavier

Xavier served as the Dean of the School of Continuing Education Director. He reported directly to the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, and also had many years of experience in higher education. With 41 years of higher education experience, he possessed the second longest length of seniority in this study. Along with its main campuses’ location, the institution he served had 21 additional in-state locations, three recognized distance learning programs and seven certificate programs. The student population Xavier’s institution served as of April 2011 was as follows: Undergraduate–8,946 full time students and 1,024 part time students; Graduate–703 full time students and 957 part time students. It conferred 47 Bachelors’ degrees, 25 Masters Degrees, and two Specialist degrees.

Upon review of its mission statement, the continuing education division Xavier served strived to be recognized for its ability to “extend the academic resources and services of the University beyond campus boundaries in an affordable manner and provide” (X063009-D). It also noted that, along with the large number of additional physical locations, the School of Continuing Education was “greatly expanding our online class offerings” (X063009).

Cathy

Cathy's role was Dean of Extended Learning and had been with higher education institution for over 13 years. She reported to the Vice-President for Strategic Business, Education and Regional Partnerships located under Academic Affairs who reported directly to the University President. Along with its main campus location, the institution she served had four additional in-state locations, 20 recognized distance learning programs and offered 44 certificate programs. The student population Cathy's institution served as of April 2011 was as follows: Undergraduate–11,762 full time students and 1,633 part time students; Graduate–653 full time students and 1,387 part time students. It conferred one Associate degree, 134 Bachelorette degrees, 66 Masters Degrees, two Specialist degrees along with four Doctoral degrees limited to the Psy.D in School Psychology, the Ed.D in Counselor Education and Supervision, the Ed.D in Educational Leadership and the Doctor of Nursing Practice offered through a consortium between five public universities. As indicated by their vision statement, "connecting the University to the individual learner" (CK063010-D), the continuing education division that Cathy served focused on bringing education *to* the student.

Karen

Karen's position was Continuing Education Coordinator that reported to Cathy, the Dean of Extended Learning and she had also been with higher education for over 13 years. As she reported to Cathy, Karen also served under the academic affairs umbrella and her institutional information was the same as Cathy's institution. To further understand the institution that Karen and Cathy served, the vision, values and mission is reviewed. One core value that was mentioned specifically by Karen during our interview was the third core value: "Access to our programs and services that create opportunity for all to pursue their dreams" (CK063010-D). Karen supported this with the following statement, "it is this value that inspires us [continuing education professionals] to do what we do" (K063010).

Scott

Scott served as the Executive Director for the School of Distance Learning, International Studies and Outreach. He had been in higher education for 22 years and reported directly to the Provost and Academic Vice President. The institution he served had two main campus locations, 13 additional in-state locations, nine recognized distance learning programs and 17 certificate programs. The student population that Scott's institution served as of April 2011 was as follows: Undergraduate–9,496 full time students and 978 part time students; Graduate–896 full time students and 1,215 part time students. It conferred 66 Bachelorette degrees, 34 Masters Degrees, two Specialist degrees and a Doctoral degree (Ed.D) in Educational Leadership. Upon review of its documentation and website, the School of Distance Learning, International Studies and Outreach had a well thought out vision that simply stated that they will "provide high quality, life-long, and enriching learning opportunities" (S072109-D). As with many of the visions examined, this vision was simple to say but complex to implement.

Kevin

Kevin was of Dean of Continuing Education, had been in higher education for 31 years, and reported directly to the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs. The institution he served had one main campus location with six additional in-state locations, had eight recognized distance learning programs and 19 certificate programs. The student population Kevin's institution served as of April 2011 was as follows: Undergraduate–12,300 full time students and 4,113 part time students; Graduate–659 full time students and 1,247 part time students. It conferred two associate degrees, 121 Bachelor's degrees, 49 Masters Degrees, one Specialist degree and two Doctoral degrees that were limited to the Doctor of Education in Higher Education Administration, and the Doctor of Education in Educational Administration and Leadership. As the interview transcript and documentation were examined there was an apparent concern for those who were limited by distance or schedule to allow access to credit and non-credit programs.

Monica

The last participant, Monica, served as the Executive Director of Professional development and had been in higher education for over 22 years. She reported to the Dean of the School of Education and Human Services who reported to the Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs at her university. The institution she served had one main campus location with 17 additional in-state locations, 14 recognized distance learning programs and 52 certificate programs. The student population Monica's institution served as of April 2011 was as follows: Undergraduate–11,533 full time students and 3,997 part time students; Graduate–1,344 full time students and 2,179 part time students. It conferred 132 Bachelor's degrees, 53 Masters Degrees, one Specialist degree and 18 Doctoral degrees. By reviewing the interview transcript, documentation and website of Monica's division, it was clear that their mission was to reach a wide variety of learners. In particular, "professionals in varied work environments" (M112114-D), were specifically referred to in the continuing education division's mission. This group was specifically targeted in the work performed by Monica's division daily, "our focus is off campus programs and primarily we are working with counselors, educators and career changers" (M112114).

RESULTS

Within-Case and Cross-Case Analysis Strategies

Upon review of transcripts and relevant documentation, the information was analyzed using a within-case analysis and cross-case analysis strategies (Merriam, 2009). As Merriam explains, "for the within-case analysis, each case is treated as a comprehensive case in and of itself" (2009, p. 204). It is for this reason that I took it upon myself to transcribe the interviews. Through repeat exposure to the information contained within the interviews, the process of analysis began in a non-systematic fashion. This non-systematic approach is supported by Merriam, who describes the funnel process of data collection and analysis as “recursive and dynamic” (2009, p. 169).

Upon completion of the transcription process and review of the data for any potential transcription errors, an in depth comprehension of its contents was formed. It was my belief that by transcribing the interviews personally, I understood the content at a deeper level, at least in the case of a novice investigator. Along with the information derived from the interviewees, I included memos that captured ideas or thoughts that came to mind during the interviews in my transcription. This allowed an inclusive within-case analysis to take place. As indicated earlier, since each interview was a social construction of those who participate, it was important that other institutional documentation was collected. This documentation was provided or suggested by those interviewed. I also reviewed and collected additional documentation that was deemed relevant and that supported the data to validate what was said by those interviewed. This institutional documentation was included in the analysis of that case. During the cross-case analysis, I compared the cases with each other resulting in “a qualitative, inductive, multi-case study [that] seeks to build abstractions across cases” (Merriam, 2009, p. 204).

EMERGENT THEMES

Themes began to emerge from the analysis and further review of the transcripts. The themes that emerged were as follows:

1. Continuing Education Location [Within Institution]
2. Continuing Education Funding Sources
3. Continuing Education Programs
4. Continuing Education Drivers
5. Continuing Education Accountability
6. Continuing Education Opportunities and Challenges

The themes that emerged were refined and eventually transformed into codes to begin analysis. Coding is described as a systematic way of organizing the data into segments or categories that can lead to a common theme or thread (Creswell, 2009; Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009; Merriam, 2009). The steps to code the data began with the construction of categories. The categories were created based on what is found in the literature, interview transcripts, and other relevant documentation collected from the participants interviewed. Next, we will review in-depth the themes that resulted along with specific information gained as a result of the interviews and relevant documentation collected. These themes were transformed into codes to conduct analysis.

Continuing Education Location [Within Institution]

As noted in Appendix E, of the nine institutions interviewed, institutional size ranged from 8,946 students to 19, 241 students. Appendix E also indicates that in all instances the continuing education division reported to Academic Affairs and, in all but two instances, the continuing education division reported directly to the Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs. By locating their continuing education division within the academic side of the institution, the universities point toward the academic focus of their continuing education divisions.

Continuing Education Funding Sources

The next theme discovered was that of funding sources. As identified in Appendix F, two participants indicated that a small amount of dollars was accounted for from grants and foundation endeavors. But, the funding sources that were repeatedly identified were: 1) state allocation and 2) tuition revenue. State allocation was indicated in eight of the ten interviews held. But, within those conversations, participants indicated that they receive limited amount of funds and that many rules and expectations were associated with the allocations received. In all cases, tuition revenue and cost recovery were mentioned. The participants reported the ability to keep tuition and fees from various programs along with the expectation of paying for costs associated with those programs. As the interviews took place, there was a sense that the ability to keep fees and tuition was met with rather mixed feelings. As indicated by the following comment by Tere, there was concern about the ability of continuing education divisions to generate enough income to pay all the costs for their programs, "I am responsible to make sure that whatever money is taken in is properly invested and if I go into the hole on that … that is my problem… And I am responsible" (T061514). This statement was further supported by a value of Tere's continuing education division, "fiscal responsibility" (T061514-D). Detail of the various institutional missions, visions and other relevant information can be found in Appendix H.

Tere's comment indicated the anxiety that was associated with the responsibility to meet budgetary expectations. But along with that apprehension was the flexibility to be in charge of those dollars and potentially respond more rapidly to requests. Scott supported this statement, "as a school we seem to be the 'go to' place for a lot of things on campus because we can react a little quicker and respond and get things done for the University as needed" (S072109). As suggested by Scott, divisions of continuing education in some arenas had created an image of responsiveness in order to provide value within their institution. Quinn also referred to the need to be flexible to client requests but in a more proactive sense. She alluded to the need to predict the next request:

> We research the market to prompt inquiries and then we have a system that captures those inquiries, we respond pretty quickly to what people are wanting … I read an article recently which really resonates with me and that is that adult learners are ... this may not be quiet the right language ... Long-term impulse buyers. So they either buy from the first person they talk to or from the last person they talk to or maybe they have been thinking about it for the last two years and you just happen to reach out to them and they say alright sign me up. They take

> a long time but when they're ready they impulsively make the decision. That seems to ring true to me from what I've experienced. (Q062115)

This final comment by Quinn identified the need of continuing education divisions to be flexible and ready to respond to the request of their constituents with their programs. Next we examine what programs we may typically find within those continuing education divisions.

Continuing Education Programs

Three broad categories were identified by the participants interviewed as detailed in Appendix F. They were credit, non-credit and community engagement. Credit programs range from off-campus (face to face) to hybrid (combination of face to face and online format) to a completely online platform. Flexibility, access and meeting the needs of the student in nontraditional ways were the focus of this comment by Tere:

> Part of my responsibility is helping the academic world to recognize there are multiple ways to learn and their multiple avenues and it is not always, you know, 15 weeks and all that… You can do that in an academic program, and so really trying to present that and push the envelope within the institution. (T061514)

Along with foreseeing the need of flexibility of the nontraditional population, divisions of continuing education must be able to communicate those needs to others within their higher education institutions. Steven’s following observation points out that traditional students were also demanding flexibility and access similar to those of the nontraditional student:

> Continuing education in my mind as a society and a culture is really going to be something that's needed more and more, not less and less… Because not even traditional students are interested in being in the classroom face-to-face and in the ways we have in the past… Their trend is toward more 'let me know what I'm supposed to know, give me some resources that I can work with and test me to see if I know it. But, don't make me go to class every single day and don't waste my time! There are other things I can be doing'. And that applies to traditional students to say nothing about nontraditional students who have family and work that they are trying to balance out. (S062210)

Thus, the expectation of flexibility and access of the nontraditional student was now becoming the norm of traditional students as well. Scott's following remark stressed how as society changed and became more mobile, its population also changed and became more mobile. The expectation of taking classes whenever or wherever you are was becoming the norm.

> There are some expectations and demands of the society that we have to respond to in many ways… With what we develop … And it [online education] has been growing… It has been a part of campus that has been growing very, very rapidly in the past years. (S072109)

Therefore, a common observation voiced by those interviewed was the ability to allow students to complete a degree. Whether it was an undergraduate or graduate degree or certificate program the focus was on access and scheduling flexibility. Non-credit programs may possess that flexibility in platform but could also include a face to face component.

Inclusion of professional associations and industries was also important. The following comment by Tere reflected the importance to include their feedback as well:

> The other category that I like to think of is our professional development which crosses the line between academic programming, for example for teacher certification. Teachers need to do additional

> academic credits, state board CEU's. We have a relatively strong program for social workers working for various agencies to provide their academic development. We do noncredit programming with professional organizations, industries, individuals. (T061514)

Feedback was a critical component of program development within higher education institutions. But along with including student requests and employment demands, the industries and associations that students were employed in, or would be part of, supplied important information during the various phases of program development. Thus, continuing education divisions' needed to focus on professionals, professional organizations and the demand for new skills to ensure they were offering the correct program when it was needed, at the correct time, and with the correct platform. Cathy's response supported the idea that business and workforce education was critical to the work her division performed:

> I think what we look for when we develop goals and mission is … what is happening with the workforce in our state… Where are the jobs, where are the education needs. So I guess it is really keeping track of what is going on regionally within the state and evaluate the education needs. (C063010)

In the area of non-credit, skill building was the priority. Because of this, along with meeting individual needs, other groups were also included in the creation and organization of non-credit programs.

The final category of community engagement typically fell to the continuing education division because of their presence outside of the institution. This was included in an account from Tere:

> Because we are out in those communities, we are talking with different people who are working on different community things trying to decide how we can support this… Then we come back to the

> institution and we say okay, then nudging that, so that the University is exposed to the possibility… And why we do that? (Pause) I imagine we do it because we are part of our communities and thinking about why … what is the point? We are a public university, public institution… We are also a regional Institution ... I think that the University's mission has … has been very community committed, very community focused and I think we are a product of that and we continue to carry that mandate. (T061514)

Community involvement was a way the continuing education divisions could demonstrate their higher education institution's value to the surrounding community and its inhabitants. Xavier also pointed to the external presence that continuing education divisions must maintain:

> To emphasize the quality of what we are doing but also that they have a stake in what happens beyond the campus here in our community … It is something that you cannot do just once, it has to be continuously done. (X063009)

Thus, the focus must be external and continuing education divisions need to constantly monitor the needs of their external constituents. Scott supported the need for community involvement and exposure with the following account:

> We are directly involved with what they call the ABC program… It is a community organization… More senior members of our community… A lot of retirees participate in it and we get no funds for it but we support it and supply the personnel who help manage the enrollment of the programs, the activities that they do, and a lot of the coordination of the events that they have… It started off a long time ago and it is one that has been supported by our organization for many, many years and it has grown quite a bit… I think they had close to 600 or 700 different participants at different events over the past year or so. (S072109)

The need to be in and connected to the community they serve was mentioned by those interviewed in all cases.

The information above focused on the similarities of the programs, but this was not to say that all continuing education divisions were similar. Monica confirmed this by the following, “I believe that how one institution defines continuing education may be different at another institution in a network” (M112114). Kevin also supported this comment by the following observation, “I think if you think of nontraditional education from a very broad perspective not just with students then that would constitute something that continuing education is involved with” (K101714).

This statement signified the broad range of programs that may be included under the umbrella of continuing education. Included within the institutions interviewed, there were several variations of the types of courses they offered. Again, Kevin talked about one of his credit programs that focused on concurrent enrollment where his division brought college level courses to the high schools:

> We manage senior to sophomore, also known as college in the high school or concurrent enrollment… Our programs in the high schools continued to do very well ... we experienced in those probably a 10 to 20% increases in the number of students served for say 10 years. (K101714)

Whereas, Monica indicated that her programs completely focused on the nontraditional adult population:

> Our focus is off campus programs and primarily we are working with counselors, educators and career changers. So we don’t have any undergraduate students … it would be all those individuals that would need to go back for some additional type of professional development or again they are changing careers and they are looking to do something generally in education. (M112114)

Tere also referred to serving nontraditional adults but with both undergraduate and graduate courses:

> We have our academic programming which are primarily degree completion and graduate programs. We have um, regional sites. One is a university owned and operated campus and we have two more locations that are education consortia members of community colleges and other members. We also offer a number of cohorts, academic programming throughout the state ... so that's our degree completion programming and academic programming for degree completion and advancement. (T061614)

Thus, continuing education credit programs varied in the platforms they were performed, audiences they focused on, and disciplines served. While the emphasis above was on credit programs, Steven referred to their need to develop non-credit programs:

> So our primary focus right now is really on the development of noncredit programming and especially noncredit programming that might lead into some sort of certificate recognition system. We would not necessarily be developing credit courses. (S062210)

So, even though the program offered may not lead to degree, by completing the certificate of study, it may provide the participant with an advantage within his or her current or future place of employment.

In the area of non-credit, the focus also ranged from the youth population with various camps to the elder population as the following account by Tere indicated:

> Our programming in there is that we have a program called grand form which is an elders program, 55+… it's not academic but very focused on faculty coming in and doing presentations. We have 200 members in that program. (T061614)

Kevin referred to another adult non-credit 55+ program which allowed participants a discount on insurance:

> Our driver improvement program which is a safe driving program for seniors, people 55 and over, which has an impact on our… That program has grown by 10 to 20% annually and continues to do so. (K101714)

But through all their differences, there was one distinct similarity. Their comments emphasized the need to allow flexibility in their programming in order to fulfill those needs of associations, industries, students and the community in nontraditional ways. When asked about the axiom for his division, Steven stated, “we provide nontraditional programs to nontraditional student in nontraditional ways” (S062210). This was a common thread amongst all those interviewed.

Continuing Education Drivers

Since this theme attempted to provide the basis of an answer to research question number two, it was important to focus on any subthemes with a critical lens. Thus, Appendix G details the continuing education drivers found within the context of the interviews and emerged from the analysis of the transcripts and relevant documentation. This information, combined with other data analyzed from the interviews, provided the analysis of current continuing education drivers in response to research question number two. Continuing education drivers were: provide nontraditional education (professional development, community engagement); respond to current events (growing nontraditional student population, changes in technology); alternative [non-government] revenue source (source of alternative funding; respond to for-profit and private competition). These drivers will be examined in greater detail under the findings of research questions one and two. But as continuing education was driven to meet the demands of their institutions, business and industry, and students, how were they held accountable by their institution, governing bodies and those students? This question led to the next theme, accountability.

Accountability

In the area of accountability, those interviewed were asked how they were held accountable by their different constituencies. Examples of constituencies were: their institution, their governing bodies, and their participant or client (businesses, industries or professional associations). Several of the documents collected mention the inclusion of evaluations and assessment which aligned with the data collected during the interviews. An example of such as declaration was found in a value supplied in the documentation Tere's provided, "we are committed and conscientious in our efforts to define and meet the educational needs and expectations of our constituents through dialogue, research, assessment, and evaluation" (T061614-D). To be accountable to their institutions and governing bodies, continuing education divisions within higher education were expected to provide quantitative information.

Thus, the reporting of figures was a key component of the accountability reporting that continuing education divisions provided their higher education institutions. Quinn supported the idea that institutions tend to use numbers to gauge success with the following statement, "Our accountability within the institution is very tied to enrollment targets and financial targets" (Q062115). Numbers were also the key indicator used by the institution that Steven was a member of as was apparent in the following account, "we have been mostly monitoring our numbers. Looking at enrollments, looking at participant levels, looking at trends in terms of which courses ran, which ones didn't" (S062210). This indicated the importance of an adequate system for tracking these figures. Having just experienced a retrenchment, Steven revealed this importance by the following comment, "I think one of the things that worked against us is that we did not have a clear accounting method" (S061614).

As we move into the last sub-driver, participant and client accountability, there was a need to provide quality instruction. This need was clearly stated in the goals of Quinn's continuing education division, "The goal of the Division of Continuing Education and Academic Outreach is to support the highest quality instruction for our students, no matter where they are located" (Q062115-D).

To continue to attract participants, continuing education programs must meet the expectations of the students and possess quality expected of a higher education institution. But along with numbers, participants interviewed did indicate they acquired and reported more qualitative, narrative information than quantitative information. As Tere stated, "the qualitative piece I include in order to send a message that there is a payoff here friends. We need to pay attention" (T061614). As this statement identified, continuing education divisions needed to chronicle the feedback and involvement of students and instructors alike. Though those interviewed were still interested in if the student was successful in completing the program, they were very interested in how satisfied the students were with the learning that took place, the location it was held in, and the scheduling that was used. While this information was used internally to adjust and improve future offerings, those interviewed also referred to how important it was to share the feedback with their institution and governing board. Many interviewed remarked on how it was the qualitative piece of their reporting that completed the picture.

Continuing Education Opportunities and Challenges

The final theme pointed toward the potential opportunities available to continuing education divisions and the challenges they needed to overcome to make those opportunities a reality. What was interesting was how the length of this portion of the conversation directly correlated to the years of service by the administrator in continuing education. As the years of service increased, so did the discussion of what opportunities and challenges continuing education divisions faced. Consistently, those interviewed referred to the rise in nontraditional student population as an opportunity. As indicated in Chapter 1, nontraditional students were typically over the age of 23 years, who may be looking to enter a new field or gain knowledge required to continue in their current field (Fenwick, 2009; Merriam & Brockett, 2007). This again pointed to the need for continuing education divisions to be innovative and flexible. This was because they were continually attending to the needs of the nontraditional student and pursuing areas that had not been tried before. Steven also explained that nontraditional students may or may not have the financial support to attend professional development classes:

> Right now our focus is on the nontraditional students who need to upgrade their professional skills. They may or may not have the business [financial] support to do that. So we have to be fairly economical and a cost effective way for them to get that experience. (S062210)

Thus, if businesses needed to cut costs, educational expenses were the one area that may be eliminated or delayed until the economy rebounded.

On a positive note, the increase of the nontraditional student did mean more students for continuing education divisions to serve. During the interviews, participants consistently referred to the opportunity to serve the growing nontraditional student populace, but, as we saw earlier, there were also challenges in serving this population.

The next opportunity specified the importance of partnering with other academic units in their higher education institution. Those interviewed consistently noted their involvement with other colleges, deans, departments, and faculty as indicated by this comment from Nancy, “So it is working closely with the University colleges and departments on what our strengths are and matching that with student demand (N062709). Because of their location within institutions of higher education, there were many instructors with knowledge and expertise that could be tapped into for their continuing education programs. Karen also referred to the benefit of working closely with faculty members:

> There is a lot of faculty on campus who are part of that community of practice and know who they might reach out to … to serve on an advisory board. So it is also getting the involvement of the academic side and they can put us in touch with that community of practice. (K063010)

Because continuing education divisions had the ability to call upon all the strengths of their institution, there was an opportunity to create programs and partnerships that would not have been possible. Additionally, the ability to tie the university's name onto a program attached a sense of credibility to the courses offered. As we will see, this opportunity also had challenges associated with it.

The challenge of reputation referred to two concerns of those interviewed, external reputation and internal reputation. The concern of external reputation was due to the notion that higher education institutions were slow to react and respond as compared to the expectation of society and the constituents it served. As Scott stated, "As the technology changes so have the demand from our society and students who want more flexibility in order to take courses at a distance" (S072109). Because of its traditional nature, institutions of higher education may seem to take longer in delivering a program as compared to the accelerated pace that continuing education's audience expected. This was reflected by Xavier in the following:

> Higher education is, as you well know, are very traditional institutions. Which is the strength because we are charged with maintaining the society's culture and values and literatures and all that. But, kind of the other side of that coin is that change comes slowly to higher education [institutions]. I am here speaking about four year institutions. (X063009)

The challenge above demonstrated how it was difficult to be a flexible, proactive division within a traditional institutional system which seemed slow to react. Higher education institutional systems needed to embrace a new level of flexibility and accessibility for nontraditional students (Harper & Quaye, 2009).

The second concern of those interviewed was the internal reputation of continuing education divisions. As indicated by the following account by Kevin, continuing education divisions worked at the fringe or margin of the higher education institution, "I think one of the challenges that we always face in continuing education, and I think it is a problem for some of the people that work for me, is we really work on the margins of higher education" (K101714).

Even though there were some advantages in not being the focal point of attention by the president or leaders of their higher education institution, it was also difficult for the continuing education division to become a priority to other constituents within their institutions such as marketing and the business office. Because they were involved in nontraditional instruction, their need for external communication and unique business office procedures were also at times nontraditional. Continuing education divisions must continually perform what Xavier called internal marketing as indicated by the following statement:

> I have told many people over the years I spent a third of my time on what I call internal marketing. Discussing, telling people what we are doing internally…Working with the college deans. Looking for win-win situations where the programs off campus can generate money for them within their departments and their colleges. (X063009)

Thus, to ensure that others within their institution understood what activities the continuing education division was involved in and what benefits they provided to internal and external constituents, those within continuing education must constantly be communicating with those they worked with. Constant communication could also help eliminate any error in assumptions made about the activities the continuing education division performed. To other academic units, there was a misconception that continuing education divisions were solely focused on making money, or as stated by Nancy, 'a buy-for-cation' division (N062709). The expectation of being an alternative revenue source sent mixed messages. On one hand, continuing education divisions were expected to provide quality programming indicative of the programming provided by the other academic units (see Appendix F). But on the other hand, continuing education divisions' primary funding source was tuition revenue. This may lead many in continuing education to a rather confused mission. Continuing education divisions could be torn between offering a quality program or make the most revenue. The challenge faced by these and other continuing education division was how to accomplish both.

The next challenge was that of performing the continuing education functions while being located in an institutional system that was bound by legislative and traditionalist limitations. Higher education has a long, rich history (Brubacher & Rudy, 1997; Thelin, 2004). The difficulty was that along with all this history, progress came slowly in the quagmire of traditional processes. Quinn acknowledged this as she stated:

> I think the biggest issues that we're facing right now are the rules and regulations that have come forth from the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act …And the interesting thing is that they [the rules and regulations] seem to be all a reaction to abuses that have happened in the for-profit private sector… This is a very, very serious business so I have suddenly become more engaged in policy… Federal and state policies, then I have had to in 25 years because normally I am totally market-driven… In our world, we are market-driven… And now suddenly I am being obstructed and driven to become inefficient because of federal and state policies. (Q062115)

Continuing education divisions needed to be quick to respond and be proactive while navigating in a highly traditional institutional system that was under the scrutiny of tax payers and legislators. The passing of each new bill or act may call for the need to implement new processes which add to the cost of doing instruction. In a higher education division that needs to "float on our own" (T061614), or better yet make a profit, each new cost must be compensated by matching revenue. Thus, it was important for them to maintain or grow their portion of the continuing education market. This realization brings us to our final challenge, competition and staffing.

The final challenge derived from a number of the interviews was that of competition and, in relationship to that, adequate staffing. The fact that higher education continuing education divisions were not the only vendor of continuing education led to a more business approach to education than other academic units. As Steven clarified:

> Continuing education used to be very much mission driven… We did not worry about the economics quiet so much. [But,] We are now making a full transition into being a business and we are really very carefully analyzing what our market is, what the potential income is, what our assumed expenses are going to be, is there any profit margin. (S062210)

The need to compete with for-profit, private education entities was very much in the forefront of challenges that continuing education divisions in public higher education institutions faced. Xavier reinforced this by the following observation, “State boundaries mean nothing anymore… And we are quickly getting to a place where national boundaries will not mean anything anymore… So competition from the for-profits is the number one driver I am confronted with” (X063009).

This challenge was at times complicated by inadequate continuing education division staffing. As Xavier stated, it required continuing education divisions to, “Use a lot of consultants, part-time folks, and work with senior staff and clerical folks and grow them so they can become more paraprofessionals in their actions” (X063009). Because the need for staff fluctuated dependent upon each program or contract that was acquired there was difficulty in acquiring permanent positions. Steven pointed to this challenge by the following:

> We are not at this point doing any contract instruction in businesses. That is another area we could get into but I don't have the personnel either with the skills or enough personnel to be able to move in that direction. (S062210)

But without the staff, development of programs was difficult unless extra hours were incurred by the permanent staff or nonpermanent staff members were acquired. Extra hours may lead to ineffective management of current programs and hiring of nonpermanent staff may require incurring costs for programs that may not come to fruition. Cathy related how inadequate staffing meant less opportunity to connect with the community:

> I would say for us, it [community engagement] has been a challenge because in our continuing education department we officially have only one employee… So it is a fine balance you know each month on how much time we can do the outreach and how much time we can spend actually doing the work… We wish we could do more outreach but whenever there is an opportunity we certainly try to get out there whenever we can. (C063010)

In an environment where positions were traditionally expected to meet current customer demands, the ability to hire staff in order to be proactive and create demand left the continuing education division inadequate justification to hire additional staff. So continuing education divisions needed to rely on others outside their division and, possibly, the institutors to provide assistance. To overcome these challenges continuing education divisions must continually confront campus politics and "think outside of the box" (T061614) in order to obtain the staffing that would allow progress and meet customers' current and future needs.

FINDINGS

The data were synthesized in order to identify what made these continuing education divisions similar or, in various situations, what made their units unique. Initially, the categories were broad and less distinct but relevant in regard to answering the research questions. Upon completion of the initial category creation or open coding process, categories were combined and refined. What was essential was that the codes created cut across the data collected. Upon completion of the coding and categorization, themes were identified. This information was then used to draw conclusion about the three research questions this study attempted to answer.

Research Question One and Two

What drivers have historically influenced and continue to influence the purpose, mission, and roles of continuing education divisions in comprehensive universities, and research universities in the United States?

For the purposes of reporting the findings of this research study, research questions one and two have been combined. As research question number one referred to the *historical* drivers and research questions number two referred to the *current* drivers that influenced the purpose, mission, and roles of continuing education divisions in the United States, the results were found to be similar. These drivers were summarized upon completion of the literature review conducted in Chapter 2 and as a result of the analysis of the interview transcripts and documents collected that were deemed relevant. In chronological order, the *historical* drivers that occurred within the literature are charted in Appendix A. Similarly the *current* drivers that occurred within the interviews and documentation collected were documented in Appendix G. The resulting drivers were combined as follows:

1) Provide Nontraditional Education to the Masses (Non-elites)
    a. Legislative Involvement
    b. Professional Development
    c. Community Engagement
2) Respond to Historical and Current Events
    a. Historical Events: Great Depression, Wars

   b. Current Events: Advent of Technology (Globalization), Growing Nontraditional Student Population
3) Alternative Source of Revenue
   a. Source of Non-government Funding
   b. For-profit and Private Competition
   c. Quality and Accountability

Based on the analysis of the literature, interviews, and documentation collected, each category above could be considered a "driver" of higher education continuing education divisions. What follows is a review of these drivers supported with excerpts from those interviewed and documentation collected.

Provide nontraditional education to the masses (non-elites). First, as with higher education in general, continuing education was driven to provide education to United States citizens. This education of the masses led higher education institutions to create and extend alternative educational avenues for nontraditional students. In response to the first subtheme, legislative involvement was influential in providing education to all United States citizens. As identified in the literature, many a law, policy and act have been created in order providing education to the public in support of this first driver (Rohfeld, 1990; Thelin, 2004; Watkins, 1991). Along with what was found in the literature, a number of those interviewed and documents collected identified the same focus within the mission of their divisions. Xavier voiced the following thought:

> This institution is put here 100 years ago because the institutions at that time are not training teachers ... they did not see that as their mission. So eastern university, western university, northern university, southern university are all established as normal schools to train teachers and people in technology because the institutions at that time are not doing it and so that should be part of our genetic makeup of change, in dealing with new constituencies, in providing services to the community of wide variety of ways. (X063009)

This comment identified how institutions of higher education historically were created to meet the societal need of educating teachers and people in technology. This common thread of meeting the needs of society and their communities was further corroborated by Tere:

> We are primarily demand driven and professional development mainly … you will see that on our mission and our vision for our unit it is really about meeting the needs of our communities and matching that with the resources of the University. So we really look at ourselves as the conduit. (T061614)

Acting as a pipeline connecting their higher education institutions with those who need education was a key focus of continuing education divisions. Tere's above reference to their unit's mission and vision was a common thread included in many of the interviews. Providing nontraditional learners access and opportunity was a motivator for those who work in continuing education. Documentation from Quinn's institution also confirmed the importance of educating the United States population as indicated by the following, "To prepare a well-educated citizenry whose understanding of issues enables them to be contributing members of a rapidly changing, technologically advance, diverse society" (Q0621115-D). The ability of the continuing education divisions to reach out and be the conduit to those outside of the institution and serve the needs of the nontraditional student population was in contrast to the other traditional, internal focused academic departments.

The next subtheme, professional development, identified the need of higher education institutions to gear their programs toward what was considered an educational priority in the business and industry setting. Steven explained,

> I think our primary drivers right now are focus on nontraditional students who need to upgrade their professional skills… we focus on business contacts … analyze what our market is. Develop courses in conjunction with professional organizations. (S062210)

Nancy's next comment also indicated that programs offered need to meet a need disclosed by students and employers alike:

> We are involved heavily with the chambers and talk with the local employers… So yes, we provided different programs based on where we are … we do a lot with education so we speak with the school districts. We do programming really at the local level depending upon what is needed in that area as opposed to just pushing out what we want. (N062700)

The ability to meet the changing needs of their constituents and their employers was considered an important responsibility of continuing education divisions in public higher education institutions. Staying in touch with those professional development needs and determining how best to meet those needs was a critical role of the continuing education division.

The final subtheme was community engagement. It was declared by many of those interviewed that it was necessary for higher education continuing education divisions to be outward looking and be the outreach or extension arm of their institutions. A response from Cathy reflected this when she stated, "I would say it varies from year to year depending upon what is going on in the university and what is going on with the state" (C063010). Community engagement was a key component of Tere's continuing education division's vision statement:

> Continuing Education is recognized as a valuable contributor to and resource for the university and communities. We are dedicated to providing access to educational opportunities that will shape individual lives, professions, and societies. (T061614-D)

The following comment expressed by Tere during her interview stressed the importance of this connection:

> Because we are out in those communities, we are talking with different people who are working on different community things trying to decide how we can support this. Then we come back to the institution and we say okay, then nudging that, so that the University is exposed to the possibility… And why we do that? (Pause) I imagine we do it because we are part of our communities and thinking about why … what is the point? We are a public university, public institution… We are also a regional Institution ... I think that the University's mission has for majority of its young life, we are only 50 years old, has been very community committed, very community focused and I think we are a product of that and we continue to carry that mandate. (T061614)

Because of this, it was important for continuing education divisions to connect with various community organizations, industries, and businesses. Motivated by the need to be in constant contact with their constituents, Monica's institution recently co-located her continuing education division office with the local school district office:

> So what we've done is we have expanded into the community. We have expanded our services into the community and we are actually being more engaged with teachers and administrators because now we touch and feel them. And it definitely showcases the products, the graduate program that we have to offer. (M112114)

Continuing education divisions needed to secure input from area chambers, industries and workforce development centers to ensure that their programs focused on the true needs of the communities and regions that they existed in. Because of the involvement of continuing education divisions within the industries and organizations outside of the higher education institution, it put the divisions in an opportune location to be able to connect with the community. In response to the area of community engagement, Quinn was able to provide the following example:

> We just launched a planning process that started out with a community-wide conference … it is a program targeting those in the community who work with the victims of family and intimate partner violence and those who work with the perpetrators of family and intimate partner violence. It is designed to be an action oriented conference so we had people from all the relevant agencies in the community… I think we had about 350 people come. An action oriented conference to try to bring those two groups together to have more effective interventions and prevention. (Q062115)

Scott continued this pattern by adding his own illustration of community involvement:

> We are directly involved with a program for the more senior members of our community… It started off a long time ago and it is one that has been supported by our organization for many, many years and it has grown quite a bit… I think they had close to 600 or 700 different participants at different events over the past year or so. (S072109)

Thus, while providing education to the nontraditional student may have funded their divisions, the final category of community engagement typically fell to the continuing education division because of their presence outside of the institution. The need to be in and connected to the communities they served was mentioned by those interviewed as an important duty for relationship building and keeping the lines of communication open. Further evidence of this commitment of community engagement was demonstrated in the vision of Tere's continuing education division:

> Continuing education is recognized as a valuable contributor to and resource for the university and communities. We are dedicated to providing access to educational opportunities that will shape individual lives, professions, and societies. (T061614-D)

This statement again pointed to the need to provide access and opportunity to the constituents that continuing education divisions served. Kevin's mission statement identified how his continuing education division recognized the need to engage both external and internal communities:

> The Continuing Education division is dedicated to meeting the needs of lifelong learners. We provide a rich variety of educational opportunities, innovative programs, and support services. We fulfill our commitment to outreach and engagement through collaboration with internal and external communities. (K101714-D)

Thus, it was not just about connecting with the external communities but also about connecting their higher education institutions and the disciplines within to the external community.

Respond to historical and current events. As historical and current events took place, higher education and its continuing education divisions responded. The literature detailed four key historical events that shaped continuing education's response as follows: the Great Depression; wars; advent of technology; and globalization (Altbach et al., 2001; Altbach et al., 2005; Kerr, 2001; Rohfeld, 1990; Thelin, 2004; Watkins, 1991). In alignment with the literature, many of the participants interviewed and relevant documentation collected acknowledged the importance to respond to these events. In particular, the advent of technology played a substantial role in what direction to move continuing education divisions within higher education institutions. Of the 10 participants interviewed, eight of the continuing education divisions noted direct oversight of the online education platform of their institution. Technology was mentioned specifically within Nancy's continuing education division's mission statement:

> To extend the University's reach through delivering educational and outreach opportunities to a diverse and global learning society; and to advance the university through building knowledge resources, innovations, and technology. (N062709-D)

Changing technology was also referenced by Scott:

> Obviously, the technology plays a serious role into the online aspects… As the technology changes so have the demand from our society and students who want more flexibility in order to take courses at a distance. Again, if they go home for the summer and are not on campus as much but want to continue their education, they take those courses from home. (S072109)

This concept of access and flexibility had existed since the University of Chicago under the leadership of William Rainey Harper opened and enrolled its first correspondence students in 1892 (Watkins, 1991, p. 6). With the advent of technology, institutions of higher education were able to provide nontraditional students access and opportunity to the education they require, but also offer the flexibility they need. Xavier showed pride as he provided this account of a previous HLC evaluation of his online degree programs:

> Last year we were evaluated by the Higher Learning Commission [HLC] related to the online degree programs that we offer and our off-campus sites which we were responsible for in the larger metropolitan area and other areas of the state and passed with flying colors. They cited two things: 1) we continuously do reviews, continuous program improvement, student surveys, degree program surveys, internal program evaluations and also always internal assessment. So they thought very positive about that. And #2 they really liked the concept that all the colleges are very much in the mix and involved with off-campus programs. (X063009)

Even though online programs were important in providing access to students, care must be taken to ensure that continual improvement was performed and input from the discipline providing the instruction was included. Scott described how online courses allow students to take classes from all over the world, "we have students all over the country who are taking online courses that plan to continue to take courses whether they're here on campus or not" (S072109).

Consequently, continuing education divisions in higher education were asked to ensure that their students' technology needs were considered. Kevin supported this statement with the following observation:

> I think in respect to technology we do try to stay in the forefront of technology as a means of delivering education or how it affects education or technology what can we do to increase our customer's ability to use the technology or identify the limitations they may face in the way of say access or bandwidth. (K101714)

As continuing education expanded to more remote and isolated areas, the opportunity to access bandwidth to utilize some online activities, such as video streaming, may be limited. The benefit of the flexibility that online courses offered attracted both traditional and nontraditional students. But, with lives that may have included work, family and education, nontraditional students saw online courses as a viable option that may have eliminated the time needed to drive to campus.

Globalization was another area confirmed by the exchanges held with those interviewed. Steven's institutional mission statement included preparing "globally engaged citizens" (S062210-D). Xavier's 2010-2011 Annual Report also included acknowledgement of being "in a lifelong learning global society" (X063009-D). Another statement included in the documentation provided on Monica's division supported this emphasis:

> Our faculty, students and alumni touch the lives of thousands of learners, from children in pre-schools to professionals in varied work environments and from teens in inner-city American schools to eager adult teachers in rural Chinese classrooms. The "division" has international programs in China and New Zealand. (M111414-D)

This premise was again corroborated by Scott, "Other parts of my job include all the international aspects … Including the recruiting, English as a second language, study abroad and those things" (S072109). As with many higher education offerings, continuing studies needed to be proactive and create flexible access for its constituents, especially nontraditional students.

As aforementioned, continuing education divisions had to respond to such events and societal advancements as technology and globalization. But, as students were the central customer of educational endeavors, a plausible driver of continuing education divisions was to meet the personal development needs and educational aspirations of the growing nontraditional student population. As the following report by Tere confirmed:

> There is more focus on nontraditional learner, which is not on the radar … more focus on transfer students, which is not on the radar. Things that we [continuing education] have been paying attention to all of our professional lives. (T062210)

The aging of the baby boomer population resulted in an increase of the nontraditional student that was typically older than the traditional 18 to 23 year old college student (Harper & Quaye, 2009; Schaefer, 2010). This call to serve the needs of nontraditional employees and employers was recognized by Quinn's continuing education division's mission statement, "Serving the talent needs of employers, professional development needs of individuals, economic development needs of communities and the health and wellbeing of society overall" (Q062115-D). Quinn's following quote acknowledged that their constituents typically have more commitments than education going on in their lives:

> We are driven by the desire to serve the needs of adult learners who want to or have aspirations to complete a college degree and have family and work related responsibilities that make that difficult for them to do that in a traditional model. (Q062115)

This statement signified the extra consideration that needed to be extended to nontraditional learners whose lives may be much more complex than that of the traditional student. As indicated earlier, education was many times associated with providing career advancement. To be considered for occupational promotion, the employee must acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to do the work. Two core values of Cathy and Karen's institution were, "access to our programs and services that create opportunity to all to pursue their dreams" and "responsibility to those we serve by providing education that inspires solutions to society's challenges" (CK063010-D). Cathy supported this by the following statement:

> Mainly we focus on working with nontraditional students. I think what we look for when we develop goals and mission is … what is happening with the workforce in our state. Where are the jobs, where are the [professional] education needs. (C063010)

The following comment by Xavier indicated how continuing education in higher education was expected to be the leaders of new initiatives because of their involvement with nontraditional students:

> Nontraditional programming, adult students are just now becoming more of what I call the coin of the realm… What I mean by that is the president about five years ago spoke to the council of deans and said that I am the ghost of the deans of the future… That all college deans will have to operate like the school of continuing education has historically operated… What he meant by that is to be open to change, dealing with new markets, being more of an advocate for your area, demonstrating to the community the services that you provide and how you're making the our state and our University Z a better place. (X063009)

Innovation was a key expectation of continuing education divisions within higher education institutions. Kevin expanded this point by indicating how continuing education was also seen as the risk takers and willing to try new ventures. "So often times I think we are leading the institution into the future because we are, to some degree, experimental in what we are willing to try" (K101714). Public higher education continuing education divisions recognized that the expectation of the traditional 18 to 23 year old student was different than that of a nontraditional learner who had life experience in their past (Knowles, Holton, & Swanson, 2005; Knowles & Shepherd, 1984). Without taking those expectations and the potential complex lives lead by the nontraditional student into consideration, higher education institutions may not implement procedures that provided access and opportunity to these students.

So whether it was providing credit, degree completion courses or non-credit skills instruction, continuing education divisions were the go-to place within the institution for professionals wishing to advance in their careers. For as the financial crisis deepened and demographic changes occurred, continuing education divisions needed to create proactive and flexible programs for nontraditional and traditional students. But along with this driver also came the increased expectations faced by those who were assigned to be innovative within the *traditional* environment of higher education.

<u>Alternative source of revenue</u>. The final driver of continuing education identified was that of providing their institution of higher education an alternative revenue stream. Tere verified this driver when she stated:

> Our model is to build that [social work program] into a completely sustainable model where it has its own [funding]. We are funding actually the time of the social work faculty, the time of the graduate assistant, the time of our director of our programming and we are moving that [initiative] along. (T061614)

A value of Tere's continuing education division, fiscal responsibility, further supported this driver:

> We understand the importance of fiscal responsibility and understand our role in contributing to the financial health of the university. We are conscientious in our efforts to provide quality programming in a manner that is fiscally effective and efficient. (T061614-D)

In addition, if you review the mixture of revenue sources in Appendix F, tuition revenue is a significant funding mechanism among the continuing education divisions involved. As confirmed by Scott:

> Distance learning has two sources. Obviously, it is appropriated and supported by the University because online education is really just a different modality for the courses the University already has. But at the same time we have some revenue that comes in from that through a student fee as part of their tuition, so that money comes in and that is what we use to make future developments … But for everything else I would say it would be tuition driven from the institution for at least that part of it. All self-funded so they generate their own dollars and pay for themselves … Hopefully with a profit. (S072109)

Thus, along with the complexity of providing programs to a nontraditional audience, there was often the complexity of dealing with various funding concepts. The need to provide an alternative revenue source and utilize more of a business model in deciding what courses to offer was highlighted in the following comments by Xavier:

> There is no question that the state, not just in this state, but in general, that the concept of the common good of public higher education and putting resources in it, have gone down. And the states are saying more and more to their citizens, if you want a degree from University Z, you are going to have to pay more and more for it. When I started at University X, 60% of its budget is paid by the state … now I think it is under 30%. The big challenge for public universities, and I am talking macro, is in many ways the basic business model, what you say, is under very severe stress. That what we operated on for the last say hundred years [is] more and more is going away. Because you see it gets back to that point that the *state commitment has been less and less.* So our tuition is just going up and up and up. And I don't see that changing either. (X063009)

As acknowledged by the literature in Chapter 2, with allocations steadily declining, public higher education institutions must rely on entrepreneurial effort to close the gap between revenue and expenses (Schuetze & Slowey; 2002). Steven identified how this need to be an alternative revenue source had changed the focus of his continuing education from mission driven to business driven:

> Our continuing education used to be very much mission driven… We did not worry about the economics quite so much. We are now making a full transition into being a business and we are really very carefully analyzing what our market is. What the potential income is. What our assumed expenses are going to be. Is there any profit margin? So we are making a major transition from vision driven to *business* driven. (S062210)

There was also the need to bring in additional revenue to their institutions that caused angst amongst those interviewed. As indicated in the following statement by Tere, "We are responsible for floating on our own" (T061614). The focus of making a profit had forced continuing education divisions to evolve from an academic model into a business model. A model that required making a profit to survive as indicated by further comments from Steven:

> We have to rethink everything that we have been doing because we are almost entirely focused on credit delivery prior to the retrenchment. And we've been told we still have to deliver credit coursework with the allocation that we get but we also have to support all our personnel by the income that we generate. So we have to generate income in order to stay alive. (S062210)

This final comment expressed the underlying tension of the need to be self-sustaining along with the need of providing quality programming expected by continuing education divisions located in higher education institutions. Thus, even though continuing education divisions were often considered a location within public higher education institutions that were highly entrepreneurial; a number of those interviewed refer to the difficulty of working within a restrictive government environment. But, unless continuing education divisions were entrepreneurial, revenue generation was difficult.

Along with this need to generate an alternative revenue source and the tensions that came with this responsibility, competition of the continuing education market from for-profit, private institutions needed to be acknowledged. The following comment by Xavier illuminated this concern:

> Competition from the for-profits who cherry pick the high demand degrees like MBAs… I want to say on the aside here that I am not beating up necessarily on the University of "Profit" or whatever, because part of the reason they have been successful is that more traditional higher education has not met the needs of the adult, nontraditional student. If we had been meeting those needs in a strong dynamic way over the last 20 years there would not be need for the University of "Profit". (X063009)

In the paragraph above, Xavier highlighted how, if traditional higher education programming was able to meet the needs of those seeking degrees and professional development opportunities, private and for-profit institutions would not have had an opportunity within this market. Along with acknowledging this completion, public higher education continuing education division needed to demonstrate accountability and quality in order to compete. How continuing education divisions demonstrated accountability and assess quality was the focus of research question number three.

Research Question Three

What procedures do continuing education leaders employ to ensure that their programs meet the standards and quality acceptable to their higher education institutions and students?

The concern of accountability and quality was an ongoing challenge (Duning, 1985; Saba, 2003). Research question number three took into account specific responses of those participants interviewed and the documentation obtained. In particular, interview protocol questions number seven and eight directly asked those interviewed the following: *How is your continuing education division held accountable by its: institution, governing body, and customers*?; and *What assessment activities is your continuing education division involved with (assessment is the systematic collection of evidence about student learning in order to improve that learning): participant level, course or program level, institutional level?* The focus of these questions was the type of information continuing education divisions were expected to collect and report to demonstrate quality programming (quantitative, qualitative, or both). When asked how their continuing education divisions were held accountable, a number of those interviewed saw their divisions as no less accountable than any other department on campus. As noted by Xavier,

> We have no different standard then say the college of business for quality. [Like the college of business, we must] be able to demonstrate quality, commitment to the goals of the Provost, which we do, and economic viability. (X063009)

When asked to detail how continuing studies divisions were held accountable by their different constituents, the themes identified within the transcripts were:

1) Institution and Governing Body (Reporting)–Quantitative (numbers)
    a. Number of hours (credit & non-credit)
    b. Number of enrollments (students served)
    c. Number of contracts (businesses or associations served)
    d. Net Revenue (Income minus cost)
2) Participants and Clients (Collection)–Qualitative (detailed feedback, success stories)
    a. Individual satisfaction post-evaluation surveys (location, scheduling)
    b. Programmatic satisfaction post-evaluation surveys (content)
    c. Association and industry pre and post-evaluation surveys (identify education needs prior to program and if they are met after program)

<u>Institution and governing body (reporting)–quantitative</u>. As indicated in the information above, the reporting continuing education divisions provided to their institutions and governing bodies were based on numbers, highly quantitative. This was indicative of the statement from Tere:

> We do the usual reporting… Where you going, how many enrollments have you got… Also the number of inquiries we receive and touches for individuals who are coming to our door and our sites but for whatever reason are selecting the main campus as their choice meaning they are more residential students and that kind of thing and how do we develop that, there is that kind of umbrella as well. The

> number of relationships we have with our community college partners … That is another big piece. So it is very quantitative in many ways. (T061614)

This supported the idea that numbers offered a quick view of the health of the continuing education division. Numbers that reflected the programs and partnerships created and enrollments secured. Quinn also acknowledged the reporting to be very tied to enrollment and financial figures:

> Our accountability within the institution is very tied to enrollment targets and financial targets. So we are very active in defining what our targets are. We are not told what they are, we define those targets and then those targets are reported quarterly to the Board of Trustees. So enrollment targets, hitting those targets and the financial targets are our main form of accountability. (Q062115)

Since, in all cases, these continuing education divisions were located under academic affairs, review of enrollment numbers, fiscal viability and economic sustainability were central. Given that these divisions were just one of all other academic units, the ability to add much specific detail was limited. Understanding this goal and the need to capture a quick snapshot of the health of the unit, this quantitative reporting of figures seemed reasonable. But, as Steven pointed out, without an adequate accounting system, looking only at numbers could be a detriment:

> The primary thing I would like to emphasize during our conversation here is that we are really in the middle of a major, major transformation … What we have been doing in the past is not where we are going in the future. I would also say that what happened to us may be indicative to what will happen to other continuing ed[ucation] operations and that is unless there is value seen to it [continuing education] or unless they are clearly addressing a need they will not continue to exist. And frankly too, I think one of the things that worked against us is that we did not have a clear accounting method. We did not have accounting and numbers that are very easily

> understood by our administration as to what we contributed and what we cost. We had to really dig… And in order for me to make arguments, I had to go back and reconfigure budgets in order to have the make any sense so … as one fellow said at a conference some time ago … know your budget inside and backwards. (S062210)

Participants and clients (collection)–qualitative. A number of those interviewed referred to how it was significant to not just report numbers but it was also important to report the success stories or qualitative information connected to those figures. This was reflected by the following statement by Nancy:

> I report regularly to the board of trustees. I use a balance scorecard performance management system… And if you're familiar with that, I walk them through that the four components of that… Which ends in numbers but I talk about organizational growth, business process improvement, customers, and finance. So I talk across the quadrants. (N062709)

This statement highlighted the significance of including the details on what the numbers represented. Cathy indicated that her institution had started to realize that numbers only account for part of what needed to be gathered:

> They [my institution and governing body] do require us to put together some reports and it is quantitative in what they are asking for… We are trying to make that change a little bit because quantitative only tells part of the story … so we would like to see that changed. (C063010)

The difficulty with only examining numbers was they did not reflect relationships or community involvement unless you looked beyond registrations or fees taken in. Scott also pointed to how numbers may matter to the institution but students' satisfaction was what contributed to the on-going success of the continuing education division:

> Obviously, we are all evaluated on an annual basis, if not on an activity basis, that we will want to make sure that we are doing our jobs and represent the University very positively. When I do report back, I would say it is always a combination of both [quantitative or qualitative information] … People look at numbers, obviously, and numbers matter, but at the same time feedback matters a lot… Word-of-mouth travels a lot faster than anything else and that is what people remember. (S072109)

Thus, a large number of continuing education divisions did try to include a qualitative piece on their reports to their institutions and governing bodies. As stated by Xavier, continuing studies divisions needed to practice what he referred to as "internal marketing" or "telling people what we are doing internally" (X063009). Indicative of this practice was the statement by Scott, "We incorporated all the best strengths that the campus has, the technology, faculty development, representation from the colleges, and pull them together into a team approach" (S072109). By actively advocating a team approach and using internal marketing, it allowed continuing education divisions to accomplish much more than they would by themselves. As Nancy noted, "I think the long-term people tend to be on the same page … We share the same frustrations and see the same opportunities and have the same aspirations" (N062709). As we will see later in comments by Steven, by not using internal marketing or by not continually communicating how continuing education adds value to the institution could be a detriment to the division.

In examining what assessment practices they employed to collect the information, the continuing education divisions utilized a variety of means depending on what stage they were at in launching the program. Initially many of those interviewed talked about market research as in the following account by Tere:

> We have research and assessment area in my shop where we are continually digging and trying to discover more about what is going on nationally, regionally, and locally. We do the local thing because we have people who are in these communities, who are out participating on boards, participating in community things… The point being, what we are really going for is a real engagement. (T061614)

This statement pointed to the methodology used by continuing education divisions to decide what programming should be offered, what platform should the program be offered in, and what schedule met the needs of their participants. Quinn supported this concept of market research prior to the launch of a program with the following:

> What we try to do is invest up front in market research. In fact we just did a study looking at whether or not there is a place for an MBA in the northern part of the state offered by the flagship university at one of our centers and we did a very intensive study with our alumni and with the market in general to get a sense of what they'd be interested in… What kind of location would they be interested in… what kind of timing of the offering would they be interested in… what elements of that degree would they be interested in…We try to do that work up front and we design the program with those needs in mind. (Q062115)

Thus, by tapping into previous participants, programs could be developed to meet the specific needs of future participants. Nancy not only relied on research but by obtaining input from those constituents who may utilize their programs:

> We are involved heavily with the chambers and talk with the local employers… So, we provided different programs based on where we are … We do programming really at the local level depending upon what is needed in that area as opposed to just pushing out what we want. (T061614)

This once again placed an importance of the external involvement that continuing education divisions depended on to create programming that met a local need. Once a course or program was in place, continuing education divisions performed individual surveys and program reviews as indicated by the following comment by Xavier:

> We continuously do reviews, continuous program improvement, student surveys, degree program surveys, internal program evaluations and also always internal assessment. All the colleges are very much in the mix and involved with off-campus programs… So there's never any issue [or question of quality] … Matter of fact, we asked that survey question on our survey with our adult students off-campus… How do you assess the quality on and off campus of the courses and programs? We do a replication study every four years and have for 16 years and it always comes back from students' perspective that they see no difference in the quality… But it takes continual monitoring on our part to make that happen because our students by and large are out of sight from the on campus community. (X063009)

Quality was an important indicator of the success of a program. But, programs needed to be continually reviewed to ensure that what was successful previously was still effective. Quinn added a level of real world experience and advice to invest in systems that managed the client relationship:

> In terms of our audience they really walk with their feet… You know, if we do not provide them with the kind of program they want, or the format they want, with the type of support they want. We will lose them. Once we launch the program, we support academic coordinators to meet with the students because we have academic coordinators that oversee all the degree cohorts and we encouraged them to meet with the students and gain feedback and we adjust the program based on that and based on feedback from the students … You know, we try to be flexible and responsive to what their needs are… So I would say we are very customer driven for student driven. The other thing we're doing, that we implemented this last year, is a CRM system, a client relationship management system so once we have done this

> market research and built the programs and so on… Market to prompt inquiries and then we have a system that captures those inquiries so we respond pretty quickly to what people want to know before they make decision to purchase. (Q062115)

The observation above detailed the importance of a systematic initiative to obtain feedback from previous students and capture inquiries from potential participants. Systems such as those referred to above have become a necessity within continuing education divisions of higher education institutions.

Cathy identified the importance of surveying all who attended continuing education programs, "we do give evaluations to all students that are employed in our programs" (C063010). But, upon class or program conclusion, the assessment activity was not through. To ensure that future classes or programs included all potential improvements, continuing education divisions continued their assessment as indicated by the following remark by Karen:

> Along with assessing the marketplace, we also talk a lot to our advisory board for the program, to our faculty to really find out what is going on in the industry… We have a program director for that program who attends a lot of meetings… It is a financial planning program… So he attends meetings involving financial planning and finds out what is going on in the industry, what should be changed, what is coming out and what is coming down the pipe. (K063010)

This comment added advisory boards to the list of those involved in ensuring that programming met the needs of current and future industry initiatives. Tere also pointed to the need of continuing education divisions to be at the table when the institution was involved with their strategic planning process:

> University has a very robust strategic planning process and we are all responsible for making sure that we are connecting in with that and

> that goes through our whole assessment process… So what we do on a day-to-day basis ... how does that connect into and all the way through with the University goals are and mission and vision ... if we can connect that in, that is a big piece of how we are assessed and evaluated, why are you doing what you're doing and can you show us how that makes sense. (T061614)

Thus, if continuing education's focus was to be reflected in the goals, mission, and vision of the higher education institution, those in continuing education needed to be part of the planning and creation process. Nancy corroborated this need to be present with the following statement, "at my institution, we are very embedded throughout the University. I work very closely with my fellow VP's [vice presidents]. I'm on numerous campus committees including the strategic planning committee" (N062709). The ability of the continuing education division to tell their story and show their value was identified as a critical task as recognized by Xavier,

> To emphasize the quality of what we are doing but also that they have a stake in what happens beyond the campus here in our community … It is something that you cannot do just once, it has to be continuously done… Especially by the Dean … That is my role and my job … Is to continually work that, share that, deal with issues. I stress with our staff that we are an academic service unit… We are there to assist the colleges, we have four colleges… To assist them in their mission of providing high-quality education both on-campus and off-campus and now through distance learning. (X063009)

Without communicating the benefits of what continuing education brought to their higher education institution, other area of the institution would have been unaware of the expertise and services that the continuing education division provided. Whereas Xavier seemed to enjoy a positive relationship with his institution and governing board, Steven seemed very aware of the difficulty his unit faced because leadership was not interested in being informed:

> I think it's a result of the fact that we recently are moved onto campus rather than being an extension of the metropolitan area… It is also a function of the fact that our Vice Chancellor for academic administration and our Chancellor, neither one of them… Gave a rip about continuing education. So nobody is watching… Probably that is to our detriment… From the standpoint that I think that had a significant effect on the fact that we are retrenched as far as we are this time. As much as I tried to keep people informed as to what is going on and as to what we are doing and why we are doing it… Nobody is really interested. (S062210)

Since continuing education divisions needed to "push the envelope" and "think outside of the box" (T061614) in hope of making changes that will allowed growth, they needed specific information on the status of present offerings and potential for further offerings. To determine what changes were needed, for example, scheduling, instructor or location; a continuing education division needed to have concrete information to base those decisions on. Thus, they used course and program surveys and evaluations for individuals. For industry or association feedback, they used focus groups and advisory boards. It was this amount of detail that was necessary to ensure a quality program was delivered and continual improvement achieved. Having explained this, it was also found that a large number of continuing education divisions saw the importance of including this qualitative piece on their reports and communicating it to their institutions and governing bodies. As in a final comment by Xavier:

> A final piece of advice about higher education… It is a people business… I have seen a few people lose their jobs because they aren't

> smart enough… But very few … I have seen more people lose their jobs because they are lazy… They just didn't work… But not a lot… By far the biggest reason is lack of communication, collaboration, and people skills… I'm not saying that that is good but that has been my experience… I'd say 80-85% of people that got in trouble or quote lost their jobs… now that doesn't mean it isn’t necessarily their fault… But that is the reason… In higher education you need to go in there in person … you need to establish that personal relationship. (X063009)

So, along with collecting all the continuing education programming information described above, it needed to be communicated to the rest of the institution. By communicating and collaborating with the other departments within their higher education institutions, the continuing education divisions could again demonstrate their value.

SYNTHESIS

The purpose of this research was to examine, with members of continuing education divisions located within four-year post baccalaureate comprehensive higher education institution in the United States, what drivers were impacting the role, mission, and purposes of continuing education divisions and what assessments they used to ensure quality programs for their constituents. It was my hope that the findings from this study would illuminate areas in need of development and enhancement of continuing education units, support the creation of standards and policies for continuing education divisions in higher education and contribute to overcome the dearth of empirical and theoretical studies on the role and mission of continuing education units.

Data collection techniques of qualitative case study methodology were pursued while exploring the three guiding research questions:

Q1: What drivers have influenced the purpose, mission, and roles of continuing education divisions in comprehensive universities, and research universities in the United States' throughout history?

Q2: What are the current drivers that function as a catalyst of change for continuing education divisions within higher education institutions in the United States?

Q3: What procedures do continuing education leaders employ to ensure that their programs meet the standards and quality acceptable to their higher education institutions and students?

The three research questions were for the most part answered by the major findings offered in this chapter. The findings were organized following the analytic themes: What drivers have historically influenced and continue to influence the purpose, mission, and roles of continuing education divisions in comprehensive universities, and research universities in the United States?

1. Historical and current drivers that have influenced the purpose, mission, and roles of continuing education divisions within public, four year universities in the United States *(Research Question One and Two).*
2. Collection and reporting procedures employed by continuing education leaders to ensure that their programs meets the standards and quality

acceptable to their higher education institutions and students *(Research Question Three).*

Analytic Theme 1: Historical and Current Drivers that Influenced Continuing Education

An important finding of this research project was what historical and current drivers influence continuing education divisions within public, four year universities in the United States. A full literature review was performed and complimented by a multiple-case study that included interviews and document analysis. The literature and participating institutions identified several drivers that historically have influenced and continue to influence the purpose, mission, and roles of continuing education divisions in higher education institutions in the United States. The first driver was one that was common in the field of education in general; provide education to the masses (non-elites). As a societal benefit, education was considered a public right to the citizens of the United States. Thus, many a law, policy and principle had been created on providing education to the public with one of the earliest being the Morrill Land Grant Act of 1862 (Rohfeld, 1990; Thelin, 2004; Watkins, 1991). Once again the findings were supported by the documentation reviewed and interviews conducted.

A nuance recognized when continuing education divisions were compared to other divisions within higher education institutions was the need for this education to be nontraditional. There was some debate between institutions what was meant by nontraditional. To some, it referred to nontraditional students, students over the age of

23 years, who may be looking to enter a new field or gain knowledge required to continue in their current field (Merriam & Brockett, 2007). But to others interviewed, nontraditional was characterized by the different type of delivery platform, schedule, or location of the courses. This was illustrated in a comment from Steven on how traditional students also took advantage of the flexible schedule continuing education divisions' offer:

> Continuing education in my mind as a society and a culture is really going to be something that's needed more and more, not less and less… Because not even traditional students are interested in being in the classroom face-to-face and in the ways we have in the past. Their trend is toward more 'let me know what I'm supposed to know, give me some resources that I can work with and test me to see if I know it. But, don't make me go to class every single day and don't waste my time! There are other things I can be doing. (S062210)

Of course, defining whether nontraditional referred to the students or the course offered was not the point of this study. Determining the drivers of continuing education division was the purpose and had shown that providing nontraditional education was a driver. It was also discovered that two key constituents of the instruction that nontraditional education programs to offer were professionals looking to increase their skills and community organizations who worked with potential employers and employees. Cathy supported this statement by the following comment:

> Mainly we focus on working with nontraditional students … I think what we look for when we develop goals and mission is … what is happening with the workforce in our state… Where are the jobs, where are the [professional] education needs. (C063010)

Thus, within this driver nuances existed on how nontraditional was defined and, in a number of instances, as to whether the instruction offered was credit or non-credit and if the population served was youth, adult or elderly. As previously stated by Monica, “I believe that how one institution defines continuing education may be different at another institution in a network” (M112114), there was an inconsistency on how others defined continuing education. But as identified by Kevin, “I think if you think of nontraditional education from a very broad perspective not just with students then that would constitute something that continuing education is involved with” (101714), serving nontraditional requests for their institution was a primary responsibility of continuing education within higher education.

A second driver found to influence continuing education divisions was historical and current events. The literature detailed four key historical events that shaped continuing education’s response as follows: the Great Depression; wars; advent of technology; and globalization (Thelin, 2004). In agreement with the literature, those interviewed acknowledged the need to respond to those and other current events, especially in the area of technology. As indicated by Gumport and Chun, “The influence of technology on the everyday life of higher education can hardly be overestimated” (Altbach et al., 2005, p. 393). In addition, of the 10 individuals who participated in the interviews, eight identified direct oversight of the online education platform of their institution. A high percentage of these participants also acknowledged technology in their vision statements as identified in Appendix H.

Online courses allowed students to take classes from all over the world, as Scott stated, “We have students all over the country who are taking online courses that plan to continue to take courses whether they're here on campus or not” (S072109).

Thus, as this driver influenced the need to stay aware of technology needs, it also expanded the ability to serve an increased number of students. Attending various classes was no longer limited by the distance between the student's location and the class's location. But, there was a challenge of reaching all students, as indicated by Kevin:

> I think in respect to technology we do try to stay in the forefront of technology as a means of delivering education or how it affects education or technology what can we do to increase our customer's ability to use the technology or identify the limitations they may face in the way of say access or bandwidth. (K101714)

With the opportunities created by the use of technology, the challenge had changed to ensuring that students in remote locations had as much access as those in metropolitan areas.

These participants also recognized the need to provide instruction to a growing nontraditional student population. As indicated earlier, the increase of the nontraditional student could be directly correlated with the aging of the baby boomer population (Schaefer, 2010). For those working in continuing education, this meant a potential increase to the number of students or participants for their offerings. The difficulty was ensuring that you were offering what was needed at the time it was needed. As indicated in the literature and the interviews, higher education had a reputation for being slow to react. Xavier alluded to higher education's long history and reputation in the following comment:

> Higher education is, as you well know, are very traditional institutions. Which is the strength because we are charged with maintaining the society's culture and values and literatures and all that

> … But, kind of the other side of that coin is that change comes slowly to higher education [institutions]. I am here speaking about four year institutions. (X063009)

The third and final driver was that of providing an alternative (non-government) source of revenue. This third driver highlighted the need for continuing education division within public higher education to provide revenue that was not tied to an allocation and, thus, could be used to fund innovative initiatives or, during difficult economic times, everyday operational activities. Found in the literature was the desire of higher education divisions to pursue revenue streams that were not at the discretion of the state legislature and would provide a diversified funding arrangement (Gellman-Danley & Fetzner, 1998; Schuetze & Slowey, 2002). To some interviewed, the ability to develop programs that brought in alternative sources of revenue was an opportunity, and to others, a challenge. The need to provide an alternative revenue source and utilize more of a business model had changed the focus of some continuing education divisions as identified by Steven:

> We are now making a full transition into being a business and we are really very carefully analyzing what our market is, what the potential income is, what our assumed expenses are going to be, is there any profit margin. So we are making a major transition from vision driven to *business* driven. (S062210)

Steven also acknowledged the tension associated with a model that required making a profit in order to survive, “we have to generate income in order to stay alive” (S062210). But others indicated they enjoyed the ability to be more innovative and looked at the ability innovate as an opportunity as indicated by this comment by Kevin, “I really like to take risks and look forward to taking risks, and I like to try new things" (K101714). It was statements like these that showed that being responsible for the alternative revenue funds could be both positive and negative. In addition, the ability to generate an alternative revenue source could attract competition from for-profit, private institutions. The following comment by Xavier illuminated this concern:

> State boundaries mean nothing anymore… And we are quickly getting to a place where national boundaries will not mean anything anymore. So competition from the for-profits who cherry pick the high demand degrees like MBAs. (X063009)

Xavier comment underscored how continuing education needed to focus on promoting themselves not only internally but externally as well. The need to increase external marketing and communication was highlighted by the following statement by Monica, "our enrollment revenue continues to be good but we have to really work hard at it" (M112114). Thus, continuing education within public higher education institutions needed to operate like a business with all the concerns of self-support and be continually cognizant of their income and expense in hopes of returning a revenue stream to their institutions. This was truly complicated by being located within a policy driven, traditionalist system.

Analytic Theme 2: Collection and Reporting Procedures Employed to Ensure Quality

The second analytic theme was that of assessment and accountability. As indicated above, when asked how they were held accountable by their different constituents, the central themes the continuing studies divisions identified were:

1) Institution and Governing Body (Reporting)–Quantitative (numbers)
2) Participants and Clients (Collection)–Qualitative (detailed feedback, success stories)

Quinn supported the idea that institutions tend to use numbers to gage success with the following, “our accountability within the institution is very tied to enrollment targets and financial targets” (Q062115). Steven also said that numbers were the key indicator used by his institution, “we have been mostly monitoring our numbers. Looking at enrollments, looking at participant levels, looking at trends in terms of which courses ran, which ones didn't” (S062210). This indicated the importance of an adequate system for tracking these figures and the need for the ability to share the information. Having just experienced a retrenchment, Steven indicated this importance with the following observation:

> I think one of the things that worked against us is that we did not have a clear accounting method. We did not have accounting and numbers that are very easily understood by our administration as to what we contributed and what we cost. (S061614)

In relation to being accountability to participants and clients, those participants interviewed indicated they provide more qualitative, narrative information than quantitative information. Information was gathered at end of each program or course through evaluations and surveys. This information was used internally to adjust and improve future offerings. But it was also a common recommendation of those interviewed to share it with their institutions and governing boards. There was a concern that governing bodies and institutional leadership would make decisions and determine the future of continuing education divisions based solely on numbers. The problem was that numbers do not tell the narratives that identified the importance of the many relationship or community building programs that added the greater public awareness value that could be just as important as an additional revenue stream. Thus, many interviewed commented on how it was the qualitative piece of their reporting that completed the picture.

REVISITING PRIOR INFORMATION

Chapter 1 stated the following, that *continuing education divisions at the start of the 21st century face new challenges and redefine their roles under the influence of different drivers such as, but not limited to, policy changes, the need for financial sustainability, the introduction of new technology, globalization, and competition from private and for-profit agencies*. As a result of the analysis, the continuing education drivers found within the context of the interviews and emerged from the transcripts and documentation were: provide nontraditional education (professional development, community engagement); respond to current events (growing nontraditional student population, changes in technology); and revenue source (source of alternative funding; respond to for-profit and private competition).

In comparison to those stated in Chapter 1, each area was represented with the exception of policy changes. This was not to say this was not a concern of continuing education divisions within higher education institutions, but that it was not considered as strong a driver as those listed. As highlighted by Quinn in the following account, federal overreach was considered a concern by her:

> I think the biggest issues that we're facing right now are the rules and regulations that have come forth from the reauthorization of the higher education act …And the interesting thing is that they [the rules and regulations] seem to be all a reaction to abuses that have happened in the for-profit private sector… And the for-profit private sector has all the legal and lobbying power at their disposal… Millions and millions of dollars to lobby their case… We have nothing but cost, limited staff, limited financial resources… so the result of this might be reducing access to programs. It might be, in fact, giving the for-profit, privates more of the market because they can afford the battle. And who will be left standing will be probably some the bigger publics and the little guy or the medium folks will be out of the distance learning market. This is a very, very serious business so I have suddenly become more engaged in policy… Federal and state policies, then I have had to in 25 years because normally I am totally market-driven… In our world, we are market-driven… And now suddenly I am being obstructed and driven to become inefficient because of federal and state policies. (Q062115)

This comment pointed to that fact that policy change was connected to one of the other drivers; respond to for-profit and private competition. Without the need to guard against the potential abuses of the private or for-profit sector, the tightening of policies and regulations may not have been required. Thus, the need for continuing education to be involved in policy making was a result of the various drivers, not as a driver itself.

The next driver pointed to in chapter 1 was the need for financial sustainability. This driver was confirmed by those interviewed under the driver alternative (non-government) source of revenue. As referenced in Tere's documentation, a value of her division included fiscal responsibility, "We understand the importance of fiscal responsibility and understand our role in contributing to the financial health of the university" (T061614-D). A quote from Tere further supported this driver:

> I am responsible to make sure that whatever money is taken in is properly invested and if I go into the hole on that … that is my problem… And I am responsible. We are responsible for floating on our own. (T061614)

As acknowledged in the literature review, with allocations steadily declining, public higher education institutions needed to rely on entrepreneurial effort to close the gap between revenue and expenses (Schuetze & Slowey; 2002). This driver indicated how continuing education division within public higher education were asked to provide revenue that was not tied to an allocation and, thus, could be used to fund innovative initiatives or, during complex economic times, the everyday operational activities. The interview above discovered that the ability to develop programs and bring in alternative sources of revenue could be both an opportunity and a challenge.

The following two drivers mentioned in chapter 1 were introduction of new technology and globalization. I opted to examine these together because they were related in many ways. First, the introduction of new technology was found to be a driver upon analysis of the transcripts and documentation, specifically referred to as changes in technology. As previously stated, eight of the ten continuing education individuals interviewed indicated direct or indirect oversight of the online education platform of their institution. Online courses allow students in Scott's continuing education division to take classes from all over the world as indicated by the following, “we have students all over the country who are taking online courses that plan to continue to take courses whether they're here on campus or not” (S072109). Thus, the driver of changes in technology could serve for continuing education divisions as an entry to globalization. Attending the various United State higher education classes no longer needed be limited by the distance between the student’s location and the class’s location.

Finally, by examining the transcripts and documentation provided competition from private and for-profit agencies was distinctly sited as a driver for the continuing education divisions by those institutions interviewed. Along with the need to generate an alternative revenue source, public higher education continuing education divisions ability to create this alternative revenue source could attract competition from for-profit, private institutions. The following comment by Xavier illuminated this concern, “I see competition as a driving force and I'm always reminded that we are in a time of tight budgets in public higher education” (X063009). This comment underscored the need for continuing education to constantly promote themselves to both internal and external constituents.

By shedding light on the information above, it was not to say that the phenomenon needed no further investigation. Because the processes and trends that had influenced the growth of continuing education divisions were complex and contradictory further investigation could illuminate further detail on the drivers of continuing education divisions. As indicated above, an investigation identifying what programs are typically housed under continuing studies could be a full study of its own. Research on if the traditional policies of the higher education institution are best suited to continuing education divisions or if there is a need to create new standards and policy for these divisions that are centered around a business model. We had already heard the difficulties those participants interviewed experience as they were expected to provide instruction that allowed for flexibility, and ease of access, while existing in institutions of higher education that valued convention and tradition. These future studies and other implications of this research will be discussed further in the final chapter.

SUMMARY

As indicated above qualitative, multiple-case study methodology was used to examine the drivers that were impacting the role, mission, and purposes of continuing education divisions in the summer of 2011. This chapter included the results and findings in an effort to bring clarity to what purpose, mission and roles continuing education divisions find themselves in public four-year post baccalaureate comprehensive higher education institution in the United States, what had influenced that direction and what assessment they used to ensure quality programs for their constituents. This section described in detail the bounded system that was examined, restated the research questions and presented the data relevant for each question. The focus was on how the information acquired by interview was organized by themes and what outcomes resulted to answer the three research questions. The third section synthesized the results of the study. The synthesis provided the reader a fuller understanding of the context studied, revisited previous information and briefly commented on potential future research.

Chapter 5 will summarize the preceding four chapters, restate the purpose and findings of the study in order to bring clarity to what purpose, mission and roles continuing education divisions find themselves in public four-year post baccalaureate comprehensive higher education institution in the United States and what assessment they use to ensure quality programs for their constituents. Chapter 5 will continue with an overall conclusion reached from the study, limitations that were encountered, implications for theory and practice, potential future research and conclude with a brief summary.

Chapter 5

DISCUSSION

INTRODUCTION

Purpose of Study

The purpose of this qualitative, multiple-case study was to analyze and compare the purpose, mission and roles of continuing education divisions at public, 4-year, post baccalaureate, comprehensive higher education institutions of the early 21st century that are accredited by the United States' North Central Association of the Higher Learning Commission and members of the University Continuing Education Association. The purpose, mission and roles were examined from a historical standpoint and the drivers currently affecting these continuing education divisions will be identified. The study also detailed accountability procedures and reporting used by continuing education divisions to ensure that their programs meets the standards and quality acceptable to their constituents and institutions. This information provided further evidence that continuing education divisions can share with their higher education institutions to be used in strategic planning and future decision making.

Continuing education has seen extensive growth in course offerings and student numbers that should demand a more in-depth examination of its purpose and mission. As it has grown, various associations have been created by their membership and legislature (AAACE, 2007; Rohfeld, 1990; Thelin, 2004). The creation of these associations demonstrated the desire of continuing education professionals to institutionalize their field. It was this desire to professionalize the field of continuing education that demanded a more in-depth review of where continuing education came from, where it is going, and how it needed to be structured. In an overview, the current body of research about continuing education showed a deficiency in breadth and depth about the topic. This absence of evidence needed to be acknowledged and additional information needed to be obtained.

The findings from my study illuminated areas in need of development and enhancement of continuing education units. By performing a more in-depth analysis of continuing education divisions within higher education, higher education institutions have the information needed to guide future creation of policies and procedures. By articulating continuing education's purposes from a historical standpoint, roles and drivers of change and future purposes, roles and drivers, continuing education divisions could secure further support from their institutions and justify their existence. Support was essential for them to have the ability to create those policies and procedures necessary for their continuing education divisions to prosper and ensure quality programs.

FINDINGS

Research Question One and Two

What drivers have historically influenced and continue to influence the purpose, mission, and roles of continuing education divisions in comprehensive universities, and research universities in the United States?

For the purposes of reporting the findings of this research study, research questions one and two have been combined. As research question number one referred to the *historical* drivers and research questions number two referred to the *current* drivers that influenced the purpose, mission, and roles of continuing education divisions in the United States, the results were found to be similar. To determine the drivers that have influenced continuing education divisions in public universities in the United States, a full literature review was performed along with carrying out a multiple-case study that included interviews and relevant document analysis. The analysis resulted in the identification of several drivers that have historically influenced continuing education divisions in higher education institutions. Those drivers were as follows: provide nontraditional education to the masses (non-elites); respond to historical and current events; and provide an alternative source of revenue for higher education institutions.

As identified in the literature, many a law, policy and act have been created in order providing education to the public in support of the first driver (Rohfeld, 1990; Thelin, 200; Watkins, 1991). The term nontraditional was common in describing both programs and population. As Kevin clarified, I think if you think of nontraditional education from a very broad perspective not just with students then that would constitute something that continuing education is involved with (K101714). As identified by this statement, it was apparent that serving nontraditional requests for their institution was a primary responsibility of continuing education divisions within higher education. But, along with the focus on programs and student population, divisions of continuing education were also responsible for connecting the community with their intuitions. The need to be connected to the communities they served was seen as an important duty for relationship building and keeping the lines of communication open.

The second driver referred to four key historical events that influence continuing education divisions: the Great Depression; wars; and the advent of technology and globalization (Thelin, 2004). These events were not only cited in the literature, but participants interviewed and relevant documentation collected acknowledged the need to respond to similar events. The increased nontraditional student population and the effect of changing technology were two historical events that distinctly effect how students pursued their educational goals. The aging baby boomer population could be linked with the increase of nontraditional students (Schaefer, 2010) and, as society and the people within it changed and innovated, continuing education divisions needed to create proactive and flexible programs to respond to this change.

The third drive that had affected the direction of continuing education divisions was their ability to provide an alternative source of revenue. As found in the literature, higher education divisions had to pursue revenue streams that were not at the discretion of the state legislature and allowed a diversified funding arrangement (Gellman-Danley & Fetzner, 1998; Schuetze & Slowey; 2002). This statement was further supported by a value of Tere's continuing education division, fiscal responsibility. Detail of this value was as follows,

> We understand the importance of fiscal responsibility and understand our role in contributing to the financial health of the university. We are conscientious in our efforts to provide quality programming in a manner that is fiscally effective and efficient. (T061614-D)

For this reason, continuing education divisions within higher education institutions must be continually cognizant of their income and expense in hopes of returning a revenue stream to their institutions. With allocations steadily declining, public higher education institutions needed to rely on entrepreneurial effort to close the gap between revenue and expenses (Schuetze & Slowey; 2002). But, along with the need to generate an alternative revenue source, competition of the continuing education market from for-profit, private institutions was seen as a cause of tension and resulted in a model based on business rather than mission. Thus, being responsible for alternative revenue funds provided flexibility but also induced stress.

Research Question Three

What procedures do continuing education leaders employ to ensure that their programs meet the standards and quality acceptable to their higher education institutions and students?

Demonstrating accountability and quality was an ongoing challenge in continuing education (Duning, 1985; Saba, 2003). To aid in answering question number three, the results of the analysis on the interview transcripts and relevant documentation collected was again examined to determine central themes. Those central themes detailing how continuing studies divisions were held accountable were: institution and governing body (information reporting)–primarily quantitative (amount of hours, enrollments, contracts, net revenue); and participants and clients (information collection)–and qualitative (satisfaction of logistics and content and needs assessments).

The reporting required from continuing education divisions by their higher education institutions and governing bodies was primarily numbers, highly quantitative. Examples provided by those interviewed on figures reported included enrollment numbers and fiscal viability (income versus expenses). Continued revenue growth and economic sustainability was recognized as central. Nevertheless, a number of participants commented on how only looking at numbers could be a detriment to the continuing education programs they conduct since numbers only tell part of how well they were performing. It was also important to report the success stories or qualitative information connected to those figures. Numbers may matter to the institution, but students' satisfaction and maintaining a positive connection to the community was what contributed to the on-going success of the continuing education division. As indicated above, because continuing education divisions were connected to the communities they served, relationship building and maintaining outreach to those communities was seen as an important duty. Due to this outreach, continuing education divisions appeared to have some goals that were different than the overarching goals of the institutions. By taking this into consideration, assessment practices within the analysis were relevant.

Upon examining the assessment practices the continuing education divisions employed to collect the information, they utilized a variety of means depending on what stage they were at in launching a program. These ranged from market research to decide if a new program was viable to conducting individual surveys and program reviews upon completion of a course or program. The ability of the continuing education divisions to tell their story and show their value was a critical task as recognized by Xavier,

> I have told many people over the years I spent a third of my time on what I call internal marketing… Discussing, telling people what we are doing internally… Working with the college deans… Looking for win-win situations where the programs off campus can generate money for them within their departments and their colleges. To emphasize the quality of what we are doing but also that they have a stake in what happens beyond the campus here in our community … It is something that you cannot do just once, it has to be continuously done… Especially by the Dean … That is my role and my job … Is to continually work that, share that, deal with issues. I stress with our staff that we are an academic service unit… We are there to assist the colleges, we have four colleges… To assist them in their mission of providing high-quality education both on-

campus and off-campus and now through distance learning.
(X063009)

Without communicating the benefits of what continuing education brought to their higher education institution, other areas of the institution could be unaware of the expertise and services that the continuing education division provided.

Chapter 5 Description

Chapter 5 continues with a discussion of the results and conclusions reached from the analysis. It also includes a description of the specific limitations encountered and how they may be overcome. Implications for theory will reveal both relevance and need of adjustment in the use of the qualitative conceptual model. As this was the first study that focused on divisions of continuing education within higher education institutions of the United States, it was my hope that others would continue this pioneering work and improve upon it. Implications for practice and research will illuminate how practitioners may use the results and what potential future research may be performed. Finally, the chapter will conclude with a brief summary.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Comparison of Historical Drivers and Current Drivers

In comparison to the historical drivers found in the literature review conducted in Chapter 2, similar drivers were identified by current continuing education divisions of higher education institutions included in the interviews conducted as part of this research study. This is indicated by the Figure 1 below:

Historical Drivers	Historical Sub-Drivers	Chapter 2 Page numbers	Current Drivers	Sub-Drivers	Participant Pseudonyms
Provide education To the masses (non-elites)	Offer nontraditional programs	22, 23, 25, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 34	Provide nontraditional education	Professional development	T061614, Q062115, S062210, N062709, X063009, C063010, K063010, S072109, K101714, M112114
	Legislative involvement	23, 24, 26, 28, 29, 31		Community engagement	
Response to historical events	Great Depression	27	Respond to current events	Growing nontraditional student population	T061614, Q062115, S062210, N062709, X063009, C063010, K063010, S072109, K101714, M112114
	Wars	26, 27, 28			
	Advent of technology and globalization	31, 32, 33, 34		Changes in technology	
Alternative (non-government) revenue source	Source of external funding	27, 32, 33, 34	Alternative (non-government) source of revenue.	Source of alternative funding	T061614, Q062115, S062210, N062709, X063009, C063010, K063010, S072109, K101714, M112114
	For-profit and private competition	32, 33, 34		Respond to for-profit & private competition	
	Quality and accountability	33, 34			

Figure 1: Comparison of Historical Drivers and Current Drivers

The first historical driver, provide education to the masses, focused on offering educational opportunities to those not able to continue their education pursuits in the traditional manner. As identified in the literature review, characteristics of the nontraditional student may include various factors that complicate their ability to attend traditional educational events, work and family obligations, and logistical issues. Nontraditional students are also typically more mature than students entering from high school (Harper & Quaye, 2009). Thus, in an effort to provide educational opportunity to this population, alternative nontraditional programs were needed.

Examples included online and off campus courses created with a flexible schedule that allowed the nontraditional students to pursue their education while meeting other obligations that demanded their time. As stated in Chapter 2, the credit side of the house was to focus on the traditional student population, while the university extension, or continuing education division, was called upon to meet the needs of the nontraditional, adult learner (Rohfeld, 1990; Watkins, 1991). This first driver was similar to the driver identified by the continuing education professionals interviewed and the documentation collected as part of this qualitative study which was, provide nontraditional education. Because of the complicating factors that nontraditional students faced, continuing education divisions within higher education embraced and developed programs with a new level of flexibility and accessibility for nontraditional students (Harper & Quaye, 2009). This was further clarified by one of the continuing education professionals interviewed. To quote Kevin directly, I think if you think of nontraditional education from a very broad perspective not just with students then that would constitute something that continuing education is involved with (K101714). This was also indicated in a core value of the continuing education division within Cathy and Karen's institution, "access to our programs and services that create opportunity to all to pursue their dreams" and "responsibility to those we serve by providing education that inspires solutions to society's challenges (CK063010-D).

Thus, serving nontraditional programmatic requests for their institution was a primary responsibility of continuing education within higher education. The need to address the unique situation of the nontraditional student required a division willing to create programs different than the traditional models. It required a division that employed a combination of research, market analysis and risk taking. It was a common comment made by a number of those interviewed. Specifically, this passion for innovation and the ability to view innovation as an opportunity was indicated in this comment by Kevin, “I really like to take risks and look forward to taking risks, and I like to try new things” (K101714). Along with this ability to try new things was the need to bring the rest of the institution along, as seen in the following comment by Tere, “and I think the role ... Which is at times really squishy… a role of ours is to help people to be looking forward” (T061614). To some in higher education, this role was difficult to accept and embrace. But, for those like Kevin above, it must be embraced in order to be successful in the field of continuing education. As indicated by the following comment by Xavier, higher education needed their leaders to be open to new initiatives:

> Nontraditional programming, adult students are just now becoming more of what I call the coin of the realm… What I mean by that is the president about five years ago spoke to the council of deans and said that I am the ghost of the deans of the future… That all college deans will have to operate like the school of continuing education has historically operated… What he meant by that is to be open to change, dealing with new markets. (X063009)

The second historical driver identified by the literature review was to respond to historical events. Similarly, responding to current events was a theme that resulted from the various interviews that were held with the continuing education professionals. A key concern of the literature was the focus on significant events, such as the World Wars I and II, and the Great Depression. While the World Wars cause a spike in both the traditional and nontraditional enrollment, the Great Depression primarily affected the nontraditional educational avenues (Rohfeld, 1990; Thelin, 2004). This focus on events was also contained within the transcripts and documentation obtained from current continuing education divisions within higher education. A specific current event referenced by all interviewed was the increase in the nontraditional student population. This increase of the nontraditional student population could be directly correlated with the aging of the baby boomer population (Schaefer, 2010). As a result of this growth, the following comment from Quinn spoke directly to the need to address requests related to the swell of the nontraditional student population, “we are driven by the desire to serve the needs of adult learners who want to or have aspirations to complete a college degree and have family and work related responsibilities that make that difficult for them to do that in a traditional model” (Q062115).

Another event that was referred to in both the literature and the transcripts and documentation obtained from current continuing education divisions within higher education was changes in technology. Because of its nontraditional platform to deliver education, as compared to face to face, technology as an educational tool was historically assigned to continuing education division in higher education. This statement was supported by the transcripts and documentation gathered as part of this qualitative study. A high percentage of the institutions interviewed acknowledged technology in their vision statements as identified in Appendix H. An example of this was found within Nancy’s continuing education division’s mission statement, “To extend the University's reach through delivering educational and outreach opportunities to a diverse and global learning society; and to advance the university through building knowledge resources, innovations, and technology (N062709-D). Eight of the ten continuing education participants interviewed, had oversight of the online education platform of their institution, as we saw in this statement by Steven:

> So we are looking at online delivery as one of those things that will overcome the scheduling issues that we have seen in the past as well as allow us to reach out to others in a broader area. So teacher licensure is one of those that I say had been and has potential for success. The summer program, as we looked at the data, probably 90% of the enrollments in our summer courses are our regular students. Again in the past this had been face-to-face but now we're the ones ahead of the game in terms of offering our classes in an online format. (S062210)

Scott described how online courses allowed students to take classes from all over the world and supported the driver found in the literature, globalization, "we have students all over the country who are taking online courses" (S072109). Thus, even though those interviewed indicated interest in reaching a global audience, globalization was more of a sub-driver of the driver of change in technology.

The third driver, alternative (non-government) source of revenue, was found in both the literature review and the transcripts and other documentation obtained from current continuing education divisions within higher education. As early as the 1950's, conference events held by continuing education divisions in higher education became an alternative source of revenue for their institutions. Conference events combined all the skills continuing education had in the area of organizing educational experiences (Rohfeld, 1990). Another catalyst or driver for continuing education divisions to provide their institutions an alternative revenue source was the decrease in tax payer dollars allocated for education. As state and public higher education institutions were striving to stay afloat there were less tax payer dollars to fund education (Boyd, 2005). As costs of providing college increased, the percentage of state subsidies decreased on a per capita basis between 2000 and 2005 (Ebersole, 2004; SHEEO, 2006; Spellings, 2006; Thelin, 2004). Thus, it was the desire of higher education administrators to pursue revenue streams that were not at the discretion of the state allocations and provide a diversified funding arrangement (Gellman-Danley & Fetzner, 1998; Schuetze & Slowey; 2002). Those continuing education professionals interviewed supported these statements. The following assertion from Tere confirmed this, "if I go into the hole on that … that is my problem… And I am responsible" (T061614). The following comment by Steven indicated the tension associated with this responsibility, "we have to generate income in order to stay alive" (S062210).

Along with that tension and responsibility was the opportunity to be in charge of those dollars and possibly respond more rapidly to requests. The following response from Tere supported this thought, "the timing is right and we are ready to respond and that is something that continuing education, extension or whatever you want to call us, has the unique ability to be able to do what we need to do" (T061614). Scott supported Tere by the following statement, "as a school we seem to be the 'go to' place for a lot of things on campus because we can react a little quicker" (S072109).

Similar to the driver of continuing education identified in the literature review of Chapter 2, continuing education provided their institutions of higher education an alternative revenue stream (Schuetze & Slowey; 2002). As the need for bringing in alternative revenue increased so did the competition that could accompany it. For Xavier, competition was a key consideration and driver for all he did:

> I see competition as a driving force and I'm always reminded that we are in a time of tight budgets in public higher education… So that is something that I demonstrate about how we are building the base in this institution. (X063009)

But, as continuing education was driven to meet the demands of their institutions, business and industry, and students, they were also held accountable by their institution, governing bodies and those students. This statement led to another concern of continuing education divisions in higher education, which was accountability.

Continuing Education Divisions and Their Accountability Practices

By maintaining a strong quality, continually assessing and improving course offerings, and providing ongoing faculty support, continuing education divisions could fend off the competition from private, and non-profit entities such as the University of Phoenix (Crow, 2007; Ebersole, 2005; Fish & Wickersham, 2009; McNabb et al., 2005). As found in Chapter 2, even when continuing education courses were carried out by very reputable faculty and included extensive review processes, they did not share the same level of respect as the courses conducted within traditional departments

(Watkins, 1991, p. 112). Continuing education courses do not develop parity of esteem with the so-called ‘traditional’ form of teaching and learning and are portrayed as a step-child of a higher education (Duning, 1985; Saba, 2003). Thus, to gain respect and dispel this image, continuing education divisions employed various assessment processes. They also saw that their divisions were no less accountable than any other department on campus. As we heard from Xavier,

> We have no different standard then say the college of business for quality. [Like the college of business, we must] be able to demonstrate quality, commitment to the goals of the Provost, which we do, and economic viability. (X063009)

When asked to detail how continuing studies divisions were held accountable by their different constituents, the reporting continuing education divisions provided to their institutions and governing bodies was based primarily on numbers, highly quantitative. This was indicative of the statement from Tere:

> We do the usual reporting… Where you going, how many enrollments have you got… Also the number of inquiries we receive and touches for individuals who are coming to our door and our sites but for whatever reason are selecting the main campus as their choice meaning they are more residential students and that kind of thing and how do we develop that, there is that kind of umbrella as well. The number of relationships we have with our community college partners … That is another big piece. So it is very quantitative in many ways. (T061614)

Since, in all cases, the continuing education divisions interviewed reported to academic affairs, the review of enrollment numbers, fiscal viability and economic sustainability was central. This quantitative reporting of figures seemed reasonable since the main goal was to capture a quick snapshot of the health of the unit.

Conversely, a concern of those continuing education professionals interviewed was that their institutions and governing bodies would only use numbers to identify policies and procedures concerning continuing education division's strategic planning, programmatic accountability, and future decision making. As indicated by the following observation by Cathy, while numbers were asked for, it was important to also include the narrative, "it is quantitative in what they are asking for… We are trying to make that change a little bit because quantitative only tells part of the story … so we would like to see that changed" (C063010).

Many continuing education professionals' interviewed included how it was the qualitative piece of their reporting that completed the picture of their programmatic health. Overall, those interviewed displayed an optimistic view of the current and future viability of their programs. Interestingly, those like Xavier who indicated a strong connection to the leadership of their college and the ability to add the narrative to the numbers displayed the most optimism on the continuation of their divisions.

LIMITATIONS

A limitation of qualitative case study research was that by its nature, generalization was not a goal of this type of study (Merriam, 2009; Patton, 2002). Nevertheless, a case study allowed for an in-depth analysis of specific issues and problems as the data collection and analysis were performed which potentially can shed light onto similar situations. In this case study, I had identified mini-cases within the broader one. By limiting the mini-case studies to 10, I admit generalization could still be an issue but with an adequate amount of rigor, in depth analysis, concerns of validity and reliability were minimized and the insights from each case allowed for an in-depth understanding of the issues considered. By following the various steps, a systematic and rigorous approach was followed. First, I reviewed each recorded transcription several times to ensure they were free of obvious errors. Along with memoing I performed, this allowed an in-depth comprehension of the themes included in the transcripts. To add to the information collected during the interviews, any documentation provided or suggested by those interviewed and collected by myself that was deemed relevant and that supported the data was also collected. Compared to the concerns of reliability, validity is the strength of qualitative research (Cresswell, 2009; Merriam, 2009). Qualitative case study research resulted in an accurate and trustworthy account of the interviewees' reality. To quote Wolcott (2005), "validity has taken on wider meaning; today it is associated more closely with truth value–the correspondence between research and the real world" (p. 160). I incorporated various strategies to ensure the credibility of the findings. As indicated above, other relevant institutional documentation was obtained to validate and triangulate what was said by those interviewed.

Also, as a member of a continuing education division, interpretation of the findings might be affected by my membership. Thus the results could include potential biases that I bring to the study. To ensure uniformity, I used an interview protocol to guide the questions asked and information covered with each interview. By using multiple sources of evidence, data can be triangulated or cross-checked (Yin, 2003). The resulting themes from the various interviews and documents collected validated the results. Lastly, providing a thick, rich description of the findings allowed further validation of the results (Cresswell, 2009; Merriam, 2009).

Along with the limitations to generalization and potential biases, this study also limited the participants to only those continuing education divisions at public, four-year, post baccalaureate, comprehensive higher education institutions of the early 21st century that are accredited by the United States' North Central Association of the Higher Learning Commission and members of the University Continuing Education Association. By examining different types of institutions, such as public community colleges, private universities or for-profit institutions, the conclusions could vary. Additionally, along with these limiting institutional characteristics, those individuals interviewed had all been actively serving higher education within a continuing education division for ten years or more. Thus, the responses may be different if participants had less than 10 or 5 years' experience. By making various changes, such as institutional type or length of continuing education involvement of those interviewed, we would create an opportunity for additional results and findings.

Finally, there is also the dilemma that no standard definition of continuing education programs existed which could create difficulty when developing processes and standards by which to manage or evaluate these programs. As we indicated earlier, the ways in which one institution defines continuing education may be different at another institution in terms of what programs were included within the continuing education division and mission. This lends itself to a more extensive study to clarify institutional definitions of what programs were typically included in continuing education divisions of higher education institutions. Even though there was a difference of programming within those institutions interviewed, common themes did emerged. Thus, in the upcoming section on Implications for Research, recommendations were made that addressed these issues.

IMPLICATIONS FOR THEORY

As highlighted throughout this study, few previous works had focused on continuing education divisions at public, 4-year, post baccalaureate, comprehensive higher education institutions within the United States. Because of the lack of research literature available, this study illuminated areas in need of development and enhancement of continuing education units, supported the creation of standards and policies for continuing education divisions in higher education and contributed to overcome the dearth of empirical and theoretical studies on the role and mission of continuing education units.

As detailed within Chapter 2, this would be one of the first studies that had examined from a historical standpoint the drivers that function as a catalyst of change and influenced the purpose, mission, and roles of continuing education divisions in comprehensive universities, and within research universities in the United States. The need to provide nontraditional programs to nontraditional students was important along with responding to the businesses, industries and organizations these students were associated with. Responding to current events was also a consistent driver of continuing education divisions. Even though these events may have changed from the effects of a Great Depression to change in technology, continuing education divisions sought to meet the needs of the students that used their services.

Finally, as allocation funds decreased and the cost of providing education increased, public higher education institutions needed to look toward alternative sources of revenue. As a division able to provide alternative sources of funds, continuing education divisions were driven to create the programs that would provide those alternative sources of revenue. Continued longitudinal research could aid in developing a method of prediction for continuing education division within public higher education institutions in the United States. This model could help alleviate the increase in competition from the private and for-profit institutions and provide a competitive advantage for these continuing education divisions.

In the context of research studies, this study was also one of the first to examine procedures continuing education divisions employed to ensure that their programs meets the standards and quality acceptable to their higher education institutions and students. The study identified a variety of procedures used by continuing education divisions at public, four-year, post baccalaureate, comprehensive higher education institutions within the United States. Collection of numbers was required but the need to report qualitative information was also stressed. Further research would be helpful if it entailed a more detailed review of specific reports collected, an in-depth analysis of best practices used, and research literature developed for those new continuing education divisions to use as a guide for development of accountability procedures. A continued in-depth study of the drivers of continuing education divisions within higher education institutions allows the identification and examination of specific problems related to these divisions in the context of higher education administration.

IMPLICATIONS OF PRACTICE (RECOMMENDATIONS)

There was a scarcity of literature available pertaining to continuing education divisions at public, four-year, post baccalaureate, comprehensive higher education institutions within the United States. The findings from this study illuminated areas in need of development and enhancement of continuing education units, supported the creation of standards and policies for continuing education divisions in higher education, and contributed to overcome the dearth of empirical and theoretical studies on the role and mission of continuing education units. By performing a more in-depth analysis of continuing education divisions, higher education units have the information needed to determine what documentation is lacking and guide creation of future policies and procedures. By articulating continuing education's previous and current purposes, roles and drivers of change, continuing education divisions could secure further support from their institutions that was essential for them to have the ability to create policies and procedures necessary for their continuing education divisions to prosper and provide quality programs. This study expanded the knowledge base regarding the process by which continuing education divisions at public, 4-year, post baccalaureate, comprehensive higher education institutions within the United States approach decision making and assess programs under their direction. A concern voiced by many study participants was that many decisions are made based solely on quantitative information that did not provide a comprehensive picture of the health of their continuing education division. This study provided important information to institutions of higher education in the area of academic affairs, continuing education and potentially marketing to promote the value added in providing not only those programs traditionally associated with higher education institutions in the United States, but also those nontraditional programs overseen by continuing education divisions. This information could be of great value to external industries and associations along with internal institutional departments. It could illuminate an area of expertise in program development and conference coordination that could assist these constituents in future endeavors and support.

IMPLICATIONS OF FUTURE RESEARCH

As referred to in the limitation section above, future research could be useful in identifying what programs are typically included within continuing education divisions at public, 4-year, post baccalaureate, comprehensive higher education institutions within the United States. As indicated in the literature review, these continuing education divisions have a long history, but a study that identify programs typically found within these divisions had yet to be performed. This study has identified a number of programs typically found within continuing education divisions within a specific region of the United States, accredited by a specific accreditation body. A future study that would expand on this population and specifically focus solely on what programs are included within a continuing education division might be of value. The results could be of use to higher education institutions considering a restructuring or the creation of a continuing education unit within the institutions themselves.

A future study could also expand on the type of continuing education divisions included. This research restricted itself to only those continuing education divisions at public, 4-year, post baccalaureate, comprehensive higher education institutions of the early 21st century that are accredited by the United States' North Central Association of the Higher Learning Commission and members of the University Continuing Education Association. By examining or expanding to different types of institutions, such as public community colleges, private universities or for-profit institutions, the results may vary.

In addition, other participants could be interviewed. This study only included continuing education professionals actively serving higher education institutions within a continuing education division for ten years or more. By changing the length of service in a continuing education division within a higher education institution to less than ten or five years, we may have an opportunity for additional findings or results. We could also consider changing other characteristics such as age of those interviewed so see if there is generational differences in their responses.

Finally, an in-depth examination of all existing policies and accreditation procedures that pertain specifically to continuing education divisions within higher education would be of great value. The results of this new study could be combined with the results of this study and further enhance the area of quality assessment and assurance of continuing education programs.

SUMMARY

As indicated above, a qualitative, multiple-case study methodology was used to examine the historical purpose, mission and roles and determine current drivers affecting continuing education divisions at public, 4-year, post baccalaureate, comprehensive higher education institutions of the early 21^{st} century that are accredited by the United States' North Central Association of the Higher Learning Commission and members of the University Continuing Education Association. The study explored accountability procedures and reporting used by these continuing education divisions to ensure that their programs met the standards and quality acceptable to their constituents and institutions. The results and findings provide evidence and information that continuing education divisions can share with their higher education institutions to be used in strategic planning and future decision making.

This chapter also reviewed potential limitations and recommendations for future research. Understanding what information these continuing education units used to make decisions and what reporting system was used to demonstrate quality programming and accountability added greatly to the limited literature available. This information provided evidence and information that continuing education divisions could share with their higher education institutions to be used in strategic planning and future decision making. It provided valuable information to institutions of higher education and could be especially useful to the academic affairs office, continuing education division and, potentially, the marketing department to promote those nontraditional programs overseen by continuing education. The findings also suggested that additional research is needed on what model best suits the continuing education divisions located within higher education institutions. These continuing education divisions were expected to manage their programs according to the traditional policies and procedures of the higher education institution. A future study could examine if there is a need for a highbred business model that allows for flexibility and entrepreneurial action, while existing in institutions of higher education that values tradition. These future studies, along with the results and findings of this study, are a first step toward responding to the dearth of scholarly literature available regarding continuing education divisions at public, 4-year, post baccalaureate, comprehensive higher education institutions within the United States.

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w=c&_acct=C000054574&_version=1&_urlVersion=0&_userid=1822408&md5=8d05a7b91ca2dccbd10fd45589704324&searchtype=a.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Literature Review Matrix–Themes Founds in Literature

Literature Review Matrix–Themes Founds in Literature

1) Providing education to the masses (non-elites)	p. 22	p. 23	p. 25	p. 27	p. 28	p. 29	p. 30	p. 31	p. 32	p. 34
2) Legislative involvement	p. 23	p. 24	p. 26	p. 28	p. 29	p. 31				
3) Historical events (i.e. Great Depression, Wars)	p. 25	p. 26								
4) Source of external (non-government) funding	p. 27	p. 32	p. 13	p. 34						
5) Influence of technology and globalization	p. 31	p. 32	p. 33	p. 34						
6) For-profit and private Competition	p. 32	p. 33	p. 34							
7) Quality and accountability	p. 33	p. 34								

APPENDIX B

The IRB Approval Letter

The IRB Approval Letter

St. Cloud State University Institutional Review Board (IRB)

Office of Sponsored Programs Administrative Services 210
Website: stcloudstate.edu/osp Email: osp@stcloudstate.edu Phone: 320-308-4932

Name: Gail Ruhland
Address: 18034 State Hwy 22
Richmond, MN 56368
Email: gmruhland@stcloudstate.edu

IRB APPLICATION DETERMINATION: APPROVED

Co-Investigator:
Project Title: Past, Present, Future: Times of Change for Continuing Education Units in Higher Education Institutions
Advisor: Dr. Gabriela Silvestre

The Institutional Review Board has reviewed your application to conduct research involving human subjects. Your project has been: **APPROVED**

--IRB approval of a project expires upon the date shown at the bottom of this letter. The researcher must submit a Continuing Review/Final Report form in advance of the expiration date to report conclusion of the research or to request an extension.

--Informed consent documents must display the IRB's official stamp which shows approval and expiration dates. A stamped copy of the informed consent documents will be provided to the researcher upon IRB approval of the study.

--The researcher must seek approval for any changes in the study (its design, the consent process, funding sources, etc.).

--Adverse events (research related injuries or other harmful outcomes) must be reported to the IRB as soon as possible.

--The IRB reserves the right to review the research while it is in progress or when it is completed.

Good luck on your research. If we can be of further assistance, please contact the Office of Sponsored Programs at 320-308-4932 or email jlkuznia@stcloudstate.edu. Please use the SCSU IRB number listed on any of the forms submitted which relate to this project, or on any correspondence with the IRB.

For the Institutional Review Board:

Jodi Kuznia
IRB Administrator
Office of Sponsored Programs

For St. Cloud State University:

Dan Gregory
Interim Dean, Graduate Studies

OFFICE USE ONLY

SCSUIRB# 858 - 1059
Type of Review: Expedited

Today's Date: 5/23/2011
APPROVED: 5/20/2011
Expiration Date: 5/20/2012

APPENDIX C

The Consent Form

The Consent Form

Past, Present, Future: Times of Change for Continuing Education Units in Higher Education Institutions
Informed Consent Form

You are invited to participate in a research study titled *Past, Present, Future: Times of Change for Continuing Education Units in Higher Education Institutions*. You were selected as a possible participant because the focus of the study is Continuing Education Units within four-year, post baccalaureate, comprehensive higher education institutions located in the United States.

This research project is being conducted by Gail Ruhland to satisfy the requirements of a Doctoral Degree in Higher Education Administration at St. Cloud State University

Background Information and Purpose

Continuing education has a long, rich history with a number of success stories to accompany it. When one reviews the small amount of research based literature available on the study of continuing education, leadership would have little to base this support and recognition on.

The purpose of this study is to answer the following research questions:

- What current drivers function as a catalyst of change for continuing education divisions within higher education institutions in the United States?
- What procedures do continuing education leaders employ to assure that their programs meets the standards and quality acceptable to their higher education institutions and students?

Procedures

If you decide to contribute, I will work closely with you and other key Continuing Education individuals that you could help me identify to participant in an interview that will last approximately 60-90 minutes. I will also work closely with you to determine the best method to conduct the interviews (in cases where distance is a concern, I will evaluate what technology is available to conduct the interviews and assure a quality result). Interviews will be conducted individually with you and others you have identified. The interviews will be recorded (in all cases via audio and in others audio and video). The information obtained in the interviews is absolutely confidential.

Risks

This study will ***not*** place any subjects/ participants at risk. I will try to minimize any scheduling issues by allowing subjects to withdraw at any time if they experience difficulty of any type.

Benefits

The benefit to subjects is the understanding that they are part of one of the few research studies that focuses solely on Continuing Education units within four-year, post baccalaureate, comprehensive higher education institutions located in the United States. There is no compensation involved with participating in this study.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality will be maintained as follows:
• Information obtained in connection with this study is confidential and participants at each institution will not be identified by name only by interview number, and their role at the institution. No individual results or any information that can be identified with you will be revealed. All raw data and any identifying information will be stored in a secure location and will be destroyed within three years of the interview.
• Although the names of individual subjects will be kept confidential, there is a possibility that you may be identifiable by your comments in the published research. You will have an opportunity to review the text and withdraw comments prior to publication.

Research Results

At your request, I am happy to provide a summary of the research results when the study is completed.

Contact Information

If you have any further question, now or at a later date, I encourage you to contact me, Gail Ruhland, at 320-308-5759 or gmruhland@stcloudstate.edu. You may also contact my research advisor, Dr. Gabriela Silvestre at 320-308-4147 or gjsilvestre@stcloudstate.edu. You will be given a copy of this form for your records.

Voluntary Participation/Withdrawal

As noted above, participation is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with St. Cloud State University or the researcher. If you decide to participate, you are free to withdraw at any time without penalty.

Acceptance to Participate

Your signature indicates that you have read the information provided above and have decided to participate. You may withdraw from the study at any time without penalty after signing this form.

Acknowledgement of informed consent

I have read all of the information on this consent form and received satisfactory answers to my questions. I willingly give my consent to participate in this study.

Subject Name (Printed)____

Subject Signature____

Date__________________________

St. Cloud State University
Institutional Review Board
Approval date: 5-20-11
Expiration date: 5-20-12

APPENDIX D

The Interview Protocol

Interview Protocol

Past, Present, Future: Times of Change for Continuing Education

1. Describe your current role with the Continuing Education division of your institution.
   Probes: Do you hold a leadership position? What do you do?

2. Explain in detail about the structure and goals of your Continuing Education division.
   Probes: 1) What does the organizational chart look like? Under what area does your unit reside within the institution (Academic Affairs; Graduate Studies; Extension Services)?
   2) How long has the CE division been in existence? How many subunits & employees do you have in your Continuing Education division?
   3) What is the mission and vision of your Continuing Education division?

3. Identify the sources of revenue and what percentage does each contribute?
   Probes: From state allocation, open enrollment (non-credit) registration fees; credit offerings; conferencing fees; room rental; customized training contract; grants (state or federal); other?

4. What do you identify as the "drivers" or motivations and changes that effect how your CE division focuses efforts?
   Probes: 1) Requests from participants (individual), clients (business, associations, other (explain)?);
   2) New legislation that requires acquisition of new knowledge or focus on specific population;
   3) Impact of current events (example: overseas war activities, new immigrant populations requires the need to understand new cultures);
   4) Technology constantly changing … need new skills to keep up;

5. Please describe your most impactful relationship or project with a client—one that you feel highlights or exemplifies your success in working with clients.

6. a) Approximately how many hours does your staff spend each month on non-contracted, community-based work (includes serving on boards, workforce development activities, free coaching, consulting, advice, speaking engagements, and other activities where no money is exchanged)

   b) Describe your most impactful community-based activity or role—one you feel highlights or exemplifies your community involvement and/or dedication to outreach.

7. How is your CE Division held accountable by it's:
   a. Institution
   b. Governing body
   c. Customers

Probes: What reporting is required; is it primarily quantitative or qualitative data that is collected. Can you share any of the reports that you must produce?

8. What Assessment activities is your CE Division involved with (Assessment is the systematic collection of evidence about student learning in order to improve that learning):
   a. Participant level
   b. Course and Program level
   c. Institutional level

Probes: Is there any reports produced; is it primarily quantitative or qualitative data that is collected. Can you share any of the reports that you must produce?

9. Any additional information you would like to add?

APPENDIX E

Participant Profiles

Participant Profiles

Participant Ppseudonym/ Longevity	Role / Reports to*	Enrollment Headcount**	Full time	Part time	Locations: Campuses	Locations: Add'l Loc.	Distance Learning	Certifi-cates	Degrees*** (# of Programs)
Tere (T061614) 18 Years	Ex. Director of CE / Dean of College of Iner-disciplinary Studies (Academic Affairs)	Undergraduate	18,383	2,593	1 Main + 2 Other C's	13 add'l sites	8	30	B (78), M (26), S (1), D (2)
		Graduate	1,072	2483 ↑					
Quinn (Q062115) 25 years	Asst. V.P. for CE & Academic Outreach / Provost & Sr. V. P.of Academic Affairs	Undergraduate	9,198	1,266	1 Main	5 add'l sites	28	13	B (40), M (33), S (2), D (19)
		Graduate	1,048	1518 ↑					
Steven (S062210) 44 years	1/2 CE Director-1/2 Associate Vice Chancellor for AA / Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs	Undergraduate	9,458	1,170	1 Main	4 add'l sites	6	10	B (79), M (21), D (1)
		Graduate	619	482 ↓					
Nancy (N062709) 22 years	V. P. & Ex.Director of Professional Education / Ex. V.P. & Provost for Academic Affairs	Undergraduate	19,241	2,392	1 Main	17 add'l sites(+Intl)	28	23	B (125), M (52), S (2), D (12)
		Graduate	1,800	4859 ↑					
Xavier (X063009) 41 years	Dean of School of Continuing Education / Provost & V. P. for Academic Affairs	Undergraduate	8,946	1,024	1 Main	21 add'l sites	3	7	B (47), M (25), S (2)
		Graduate	703	957 ↑					
Cathy (C063010) 13 years	Dean of Extended Learning / V.P. for Strategic Business, Education & Regional Partnership (AA)	Undergraduate	11,762	1,633	1 Main	4 add'l sites	20	44	A (1), B (134), M (66), S (2), D (4)
		Graduate	653	1387 ↑					
Karen (K063010) 13 years	CE Coordinator / Dean of Extended Learning (AA)	Undergraduate	11,762	1,633	1 Main	4 add'l sites	20	44	A (1), B (134), M (66), S (2), D (4)
		Graduate	653	1387 ↑					
Scott (S072109) 22 years	Ex. Director of School of Distributed learning, International Studies & Outreach / Provost & Academic V.P. (AA)	Undergraduate	9,496	978	1 Main + 1 Other C	13 add'l sites	9	17	B (66), M (34), S (2), D (1)
		Graduate	896	1215 ↑					
Kevin (K101714) 31 years	Dean of Continuging Studies / Provost & V.P. for Academic Affairs	Undergraduate	12,300	4,113	1 Main	6 add'l sites	8	19	A (2), B (121), M (49), S (1), D (2)
		Graduate	659	1247 ↑					
Monica (M112114) 22 years	Ex. Director of Professional Development / Dean of School of Education and Human Services (AA)	Undergraduate	11,533	3,997	1 Main	17 add'l sites	14	52	B (132), M (53), S (1), D (18)
		Graduate	1,344	2179 ↑					

* Abbreviations: AA=Academic Affairs; CE=Continuing Education; Ex.=Executive; V.P.=Vice President
** ↑=Increase in # of Graduate Part time versus Graduate Full time. ↓=Decrease in # of Graduate Part time versus Graduate Full time.
*** A=Associate Degrees; B=Bachelors Degrees; D=Doctoral degrees; M-Masters Degrees; S=Specialist Degrees

Appendix E, F, G, I.xlsx - Appendix E

APPENDIX F

Funding Sources, Programs, Drivers, Accountability, Opportunities and Challenges

Funding Sources, Programs, Drivers, Accountability, Opportunities and Challenges

Participant Ppseudonym & Length of service	Funding Sources	Programs*	Drivers**	Accountability*	Opportunities & Challenges
Tere (T061614)	Grants and foundations (10%)	Credit programs - Degree Completion, PD	Provide nontraditional education	Institution-# inquiries, # enrolled, partnerships, # faculty involved, internships	O-Increase in nontraditional students, partnerships with other academic units
18 Years	State allocation	Non-credit programs	Respond to current events	GB-# cr. enrolled, cr,hrs, # in PD	C-External reputation; legislative & traditionalist limitations
	Tuition revenue-self sustain	Community engagement	External source of funds	P/C=#served; %completion, Program satisfaction	
Quinn (Q062115)	State allocation - 1 unit of 6	Credit programs - Degree Completion	Provide nontraditional education	Institution-# inquiries, # enrolled, $ revenue	O-Increase in nontraditional students, partnerships with other academic units
25 years	Tuition revenue - Completely self sustaining	Non-credit programs	Respond to current events	GB-# cr. enrolled, $ revenue	C-External reputation; legislative (federal overreach) limitations; staffing & competition
		Community engagement	External source of funds	P/C=#served; Program satisfaction (location, schedule, met objectives)	
Steven (S062210)	State allocation (35%)	Credit (Online) programs	Provide nontraditional education	Institution-Credit=# enrolled, % courses held; Non-credit=#enrolled; satisfaction	O-Increase in nontraditional population; partnerships with traditional faculty
44 years	Tuition revenue - Completely self sustaining	Non-credit programs	Respond to current events	GB-# enrolled, course level, % courses held	C-Internal reputation; traditionalist & legislation limitations; staffing, competition, need to make profit
		Community engagement	External source of funds	P/C=#served; Program satisfaction	
Nancy (N062709)	100% Tuition revenue - Completely self sustaining	Credit programs - Degree Completion, PD	Provide nontraditional education	Institution-Balanced Scorecard - #'s & org. growth, improvements; customers & Finance.	O-Increase in nontraditional population; partnerships with other academic units
22 years			Respond to current events	GB-Ask for #'s but try include narrative	C-External reputation; legislative & traditionalist limitations
		Community engagement	External source of funds	P/C=#served; Program satisfaction	
Xavier (X063009)	State allocation (unchanged since 1993)	Credit - Degree Completion & PD	Provide nontraditional education	Institution-Same as other academic units: # enrolled, partnerships, # faculty involved, internships	O-Increase in nontraditional (PD) population; partnerships with other academic units
41 years	Continuing education fee revenue ($45/credit)	Non-credit programs	Respond to current events	GB-from Provost as institutional report	C-Internal (buy-for-cation) reputation; traditionalist limitations; competition
		Community engagement	External source of funds	P/C=#served; Program satisfaction	
Cathy (C063010)	Grants and foundations (20%)	Credit - Degree Completion & PD	Provide nontraditional education	Institution-Reports to Provost monthly=Ask for #'s but also include narrative	O-Increase in nontraditional population; partnerships with other academic units & faculty
13 years	State allocation (15%)	Non-credit programs	Respond to current events	GB-# enroll, cr.hrs, # business, # contract, revenue	C-Internal reputation; legislative policies & traditionalist limitations; staffing & competition
	Tuition revenue	Community engagement	External source of funds	P/C=#served; Program satisfaction	
Karen (K063010)	Grants and foundations (20%)	Credit - Degree Completion & PD	Provide nontraditional education	Institution-Reports to Provost monthly=Ask for #'s but also include narrative	O-Increase in nontraditional population; partnerships with other academic units & faculty
13 years	State allocation (15%)	Non-credit programs	Respond to current events	GB-# enroll, cr.hrs, # business, # contract, revenue	C-Internal reputation; legislative policies & traditionalist limitations; staffing & competition
	Tuition revenue	Community engagement	External source of funds	P/C=#served; Program satisfaction	
Scott (S072109)	State allocation (credit,online)	Credit-Online, Internatinal, Degree Completion	Provide nontraditional education	Institution-Reports to Provost monthly & annually=Ask for #'s but also include narrative	O-Increase in nontraditional population; partnerships with other academic units & faculty, university name
22 years	Tuition revenue - Non-credit is completely self sustaining	Non-credit programs	Respond to current events	GB-from Provost as institutional report	C-External reputation; legislative & traditionalist limitations; staffing and competition
		Community engagement	External source of funds	P/C=#served; Program satisfaction	
Kevin (K101714)	Grants and foundations (10%)	Credit-Online, department approved	Provide nontraditional education	Institution-Reports to Provost bi-weekly & annually=Ask for #'s but also include narrative	O-Increase in nontraditional population; partnerships with other academic units & faculty, university name
31 years	State allocation (return $62 per $1 received)	Non-credit programs	Respond to current events	GB-# enroll, # business, # contract, $ revenue	C-External & internal reputation; legislative & traditionalist limitations; competition, need to make profit
	Tuition revenue-self sustain	Community engagement	External source of funds	P/C=#served; Program / course satisfaction	
Monica (M112114)	100% Tuition revenue - Completely self sustaining	Credit-PD	Provide nontraditional education	Institution-# enrolled, $ revenue, locations held	O-Increase in nontraditional population; academic partnership; colocate with K-12
22 years		Non-credit - PD & certificate programs	Respond to current events	GB-from Institution as institutional report	C-legislative limitations, competition, need to make profit
		Community engagement	External source of funds	P/C=#served; Program satisfaction	

* Abbreviations: CE=Continuing Education; C=Challenges; Cr.=Credit; Hrs=hours; GB=Governing Body; O=Opportunities; P/C= Participants & Clients; PD=Professional Development
** Detail located in Appendix G

Appendix E, F, G, I.xlsx - Appendix F

APPENDIX G

Participant Drivers and Sub-drivers

Participant Drivers and Sub-drivers

Participant Ppseudonym/ Longevity	Drivers	Sub-Drivers	Comments
Tere (T061614)	Provide nontraditional education	Professional Development	Meet needs of employees and employers
		Community Engagement	Higher Education traditionally internally focused but must look outward. CE asked to meet needs of community and match those needs with resources of university
	Respond to current events	Growing nontraditional student population	Population needs college access along with flexible platform, scheduling, location
		Changes in technology	Help the academic world to recognize there are multiple ways to learn and there are multiple avenues
18 Years	Alternative (non-government) source of revenue.	Source of alternative funding	Money taken in is properly invested and must be self-sustaining. Value: We are conscientious in our efforts to provide quality programming in a manner that is fiscally effective and efficient
		Respond to for-profit & private competition	If we do not act fast, someone else out there will
Quinn (Q062115)	Provide nontraditional education	Professional Development	Market, customer, and industry driven. Utilize a client relationship management (CRM) system to recognize the next professional development need
		Community Engagement	Respond to a regional need
	Respond to current events	Growing nontraditional student population	Driven by needs of adult learners who, because of family & work obligations, find it difficult to complete a degree ... Uplift audiences that otherwise might not have access
		Changes in technology	Launched an online criminal justice Masters program
25 years	Alternative (non-government) source of revenue.	Source of alternative funding	As public university, we are all under economic and financial stress
		Respond to for-profit & private competition	The for-profit private sector has all the legal and lobbying power at their disposal
Steven (S062210)	Provide nontraditional education	Professional Development	Focus on business contacts ... analyze what our market is. Develop courses in conjunction with professional organizations;
		Community Engagement	We initiate the public outreach and be actively involved in the community
	Respond to current events	Growing nontraditional student population	Focus on students who need to upgrade their professional skills. Focus on nontraditional students
		Changes in technology	We must be ahead of the game in terms of offering our classes in an online format
44 years	Alternative (non-government) source of revenue.	Source of alternative funding	Unless continuing education brings back to the institution, they will not continue to exist
		Respond to for-profit & private competition	What we have been doing in the past is not where we are going in the future
Nancy (N062709)	Provide nontraditional education	Professional Development	We work closely with workforce on needs ... 'where are the jobs, what are the educational needs?
		Community Engagement	We really work hard to make our centers kind of in and of the community that they serve
	Respond to current events	Growing nontraditional student population	Students must grow their careers ... mid level professionals looking to fill in leadership skills & strengths
		Changes in technology	We are in charge of all of our online programs ... we see the [online] opportunities
22 years	Alternative (non-government) source of revenue.	Source of alternative funding	Looked toward as revenue stream during these difficult economic times
		Respond to for-profit & private competition	You have [competition from] the for-profits institutions which are geared entirely toward the nontraditional continuing education role
Xavier (X063009)	Provide nontraditional education	Professional Development	Because of our long history, people [business and employees] come to us with requests for programs
		Community Engagement	Demonstrate to community the services you provide and how you are making our state and this university a better place
	Respond to current events	Growing nontraditional student population	Nontraditional programming, adult students are just now becoming more of what I call the coin of the realm
		Changes in technology	The largest degree program on campus is our bachelors of general studies program that is offered via hybrid classes and also totally online
41 years	Alternative (non-government) source of revenue.	Source of alternative funding	Because of tight budgets in public higher education ... we are the ones building the base to grow
		Respond to for-profit & private competition	Because of competition, we must be open to change; keep sight of new or growing market in industry. Perform continuous market analysis
Cathy (C063010)	Provide nontraditional education	Professional Development	Where are the jobs and what are the educational needs?
		Community Engagement	There is a lot of faculty on campus who are part of that community of practice and know who they might reach out to
	Respond to current events	Growing nontraditional student population	It is part of what we do in extended learning, but mainly we focus on working with nontraditional students
		Changes in technology	I also oversee online program development
13 years	Alternative (non-government) source of revenue.	Source of alternative funding	We are expected to return a minimum of a dollar for every dollar of allocation
		Respond to for-profit & private competition	Because of competition, we are getting more involvement from the academic side to remain competitive

Appendix E, F, G, I.xlsx - Appendix G

Karen (K063010)	Provide nontraditional education	Professional Development	We talk a lot to our advisory board for the program, to our faculty to really find out what is going on in the industry
		Community Engagement	We wish we could do more outreach but whenever there is an opportunity we certainly try to get out there whenever we can
	Respond to current events	Growing nontraditional student population	Because we focus on working with nontraditional students ... we assess the marketplace and survey participants for training needs
		Changes in technology	We take every opportunity to partner with online vendors
13 years	Alternative (non-government) source of revenue.	Source of alternative funding	We get an allocation from our governing body... But I would say a majority of our revenue comes from registrations ... and grants, contracts
		Respond to for-profit & private competition	Some of the challenges are like staffing and trying to get the word out and the competition that might exist between schools and offering continuing education programs
Scott (S072109)	Provide nontraditional education	Professional Development	New programs result either directly from employer / employee or through a university contact
		Community Engagement	We respond to community needs to promote institution strength and outreach.
	Respond to current events	Growing nontraditional student population	New programs result through nontraditional student population requests
		Changes in technology	We have students all over the country who are taking online courses that plan to continue to take courses whether they're here on campus or not... So there are some expectations and demands of the society that we have to respond to
22 years	Alternative (non-government) source of revenue.	Source of alternative funding	The dollars that the University provides us that are appropriated... We make sure they are invested in an efficient manner that represents their intentions and returns a profit
		Respond to for-profit & private competition	Word-of-mouth travels a lot faster than anything else and that is what people remember and why they return
Kevin (K101714)	Provide nontraditional education	Professional Development	For business or industry, we strive to assure the clients that we work with getting what they want and what they need
		Community Engagement	Our list of partnerships is just huge and that is something that did not exist here even ten years ago
	Respond to current events	Growing nontraditional student population	We do everything for the university that happens outside of the hours of 8 & 4:30 ... so if it is a course that is offered somewhere off-campus or online or outside of those hours or noncredit ... It is CE
		Changes in technology	In 14 years that I have been here, our online education has grown from about 600 enrollments per year to over 16,000 this year
31 years	Alternative (non-government) source of revenue.	Source of alternative funding	Accountability to the University and system office that is primarily a financial accountability... In that we have financial expectations to return $2 for every $1 recevied ... We return $62 for every $1
		Respond to for-profit & private competition	The competition in continuing education is very very stiff
Monica (M112114)	Provide nontraditional education	Professional Development	We focus on all those individuals that would need to go back for some additional type of professional development or they are changing careers
		Community Engagement	We are now co-located in an school district ... we partnered with them in regards that we are now tenants in their building ... so now being a part of this building will give us access to the community
	Respond to current events	Growing nontraditional student population	the focus for ua is the non-traditional students who have other things going on in their lives but still want to achieve the education that we offer
		Changes in technology	We deliver it in such a way where it is convenient for them ... not your traditional once a week ... we are actually doing it as a hi-bred ... so the face to face and on line sessions
22 years	Alternative (non-government) source of revenue.	Source of alternative funding	So we have a significant amount of revenue that we are actually generating for the school of education
		Respond to for-profit & private competition	We must get the word out ... we must offer a quality program

* Abbreviations: CE=Continuing Education; CRM=Client relationship management; PD=Professinal Development

APPENDIX H

Participant Mission, Vision and Other Relevant Information

Participant Mission, Vision and Other Relevant Information

Within documentation of those interviewed. Documents may have been amended to maintain institutional confidentiality.

Tere (T061614-D)

Mission:

Continuing Education provides exceptional educational programs and services that link the needs of lifelong learners with the resources of the university.

Vision:

Continuing Education is recognized as a valuable contributor to and resource for the university and communities. We are dedicated to providing access to educational opportunities that will shape individual lives, professions, and societies.

We Value:

***Partnerships and Collaboration* -** We are receptive to all, specifically academic units, businesses, community organizations, and individuals. We are dedicated to honest and open dialogue, the development of solid relationships, and meaningful educational programming efforts and projects.

***Diversity* -** We are conscientious in our efforts to include differing perspectives and individuals in dialogue. Differences in social, economic, and academic backgrounds enrich our own views and broaden our opportunity to meet the programming needs of our constituents. We encourage participation from those who are often absent from discussions.

***Meeting specific needs* -** We are committed and conscientious in our efforts to define and meet the educational needs and expectations of our constituents through dialogue, research, assessment, and evaluation.

***Linking real world with academics* -** We recognize the world is in constant change and individuals and organizations seek educational opportunities to expand their understanding of themselves, their world, and their professions. We seek to connect the larger community with the academic environment to engage in the creation of a shared and mutual understanding through various programming efforts.

***Fiscal Responsibility* -** We understand the importance of fiscal responsibility and understand our role in contributing to the financial health of the university. We are conscientious in our efforts to provide quality programming in a manner that is fiscally effective and efficient.

Quinn (Q062115-D)

Mission Statement

Serving the talent needs of employers, professional development needs of individuals, economic development needs of communities and the health and well being of society overall.

Goals

The goal of the Division of Continuing Education and Academic Outreach is to support the highest quality instruction for our students, no matter where they are located. We do this through specialized units that:

1. support our faculty in adopting new pedagogies to enhance teaching effectiveness (CETL – Center for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning);

2. support faculty in designing and developing online courses (IDD – Instructional Design and Development; and
3. extend our educational opportunities to students at a variety of locations and to students around the world via online delivery (Extended Studies).

Steven (S0622105-D)

Mission Statement

The mission of Continuing Education is to innovate and create opportunities for continuous learning through the resources of the University.

Other relevant information

Continuing Education (CE) offers a wide range of courses. Most are taught traditionally during the evening in campus classrooms, but some courses are also available at off-campus locations using interactive television. Other courses are offered in a self-paced, Individualized Instruction format and are either supported by materials on reserve in the library, or are available online. The Individualized Instruction courses provide maximum flexibility because there are no regularly scheduled classes--work is done independently.

CE functions as a "bridge" to for the nontraditional student with higher education needs. We provide you with opportunities to take advantage of certificate and selected degree programs, professional development, and a wide range of activities and services.

Continuing Education is committed to making higher education at the University available, accessible, and convenient for nontraditional students. To achieve this commitment, we extend a full complement of student services for you. These services include face-to-face, telephone and fax registration; two counselors who specialize in off-campus, nontraditional and adult student needs and a series of course schedules and publications that describe the wide range of programs the University has available for you through Continuing Education.

Nancy (N062709-D)

Mission Statement

To extend the University's reach through delivering educational and outreach opportunities to a diverse and global learning society; and to advance the university through building knowledge resources, innovations, and technology.

Vision Statement

To be an innovative learning organization dedicated to supporting and enhancing the University's ability to achieve a national and international prominence in support of the University's mission.

Xavier (X063009-D)

About the School of Continuing Education

The School of Continuing Education creates and delivers excellent student/consumer-sensitive programs through a wide variety of educational delivery systems. These outreach programs in a cost effective manner enhance opportunities for economic, educational, and professional development for individuals seeking to continue their education. Recognizing the rapidly changing educational needs of a global/lifelong learning society, the unit extends the academic resources and services of the University beyond campus boundaries in an affordable manner and provides access to on- and off-campus higher education programs for the nontraditional students

Cathy and Karen (CK063010-D)

Mission Statement

We offer workshops; seminars and short courses to help working professionals better serve customers and clients.

Other relevant information

We develop courses and partner with academic departments to offer opportunities designed to fit the needs and goals of businesses or organizations and benefit various types of learners.

<u>Scott (S072109-D)</u>

Mission Statement

The School of Distance Learning, International Studies and Outreach will advance the mission of the University and have a profound impact on our changing and diverse world through the use of technology in the instructional process, commitment to public service and outreach, acknowledgment that learning is a life-long pursuit, and provision of high quality programs impacting the lives of youth and adults.

Vision Statement

The University's School of Distance Learning, International Studies and Outreach will provide high quality, life-long, and enriching learning opportunities.

Other relevant information

The School of Distance Learning, International Studies and Outreach, at the University, provide educational opportunities to diverse groups on and off campus. We extend opportunities to educationally underserved areas and provide programs and courses at locations throughout our state using innovative technology. In other words, we come to YOUR place.

We offer online, face-to-face, and hybrid courses. Face-to face courses are conveniently offered off-campus during evenings and weekends. Our online courses are particularly well suited for adult students with other responsibilities and for traditional students interested in pursuing an affordable and challenging undergraduate degree program.

<u>Kevin (K101714-D)</u>

Mission Statement

The School for Continuing Education is dedicated to meeting the needs of lifelong learners. We provide a rich variety of educational opportunities, innovative programs, and support services. We fulfill our commitment to outreach and engagement through collaboration with internal and external communities.

Vision

Innovative leadership for lifelong learning.

<u>Monica (M112114-D)</u>

Mission Statement

The School of Continuing Education integrates human resource development with counseling and education to prepare collaborative leaders, capable of, and committed to, empowering others and promoting an inclusive society.

Other relevant information

The School of Continuing Education has a strong commitment to preparing culturally responsive and compassionate leaders who enhance their communities and shape the future of their professions. The school has been recognized for its successful recruiting of diverse faculty and students and its extraordinarily strong partnerships with school districts and community agencies. Our faculty, students and alumni touch the lives of thousands of learners, from children in pre-schools to professionals in varied work environments and from teens in inner-city American schools to eager adult teachers in rural Chinese classrooms. SCE has international programs in China and New Zealand.

Whether bringing the gift of literacy to the countryside of Jamaica, demystifying mathematics for under privileged local elementary students, creating new ways to train and support employees of Fortune 500 companies, or guiding students and adults toward more productive futures, the impact of our graduates is real and enduring.