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MAKING MORE OF FACULTY CULTURE: AN EXPERIMENT IN BUILDING INTELLECTUAL COMMUNITY

ABSTRACT. With the increase in academic specialty, scholars and leaders have sought new ways to strengthen intellectual community. Their strategies include experimenting with organisational structures to bring about desired change. This qualitative case study examines the influences of such a structure. The Luce Seminars was a programme designed to support sustained faculty conversation across disciplines at Emory University, a research university located in the United States. The analysis found that key functional and symbolic aspects of the program contributed to intense participant involvement, resulting in broadened and deepened intellectual discourse, enhanced disciplinary orientation, and expanded possibilities for teaching and research. The authors conclude that structured faculty conversation across disciplines strengthened dimensions of faculty culture related to interaction and scholarship at the university and suggest some broad areas for future research.

INTRODUCTION

Despite a long-running international conversation about the importance of university guidance, planning institution-wide change remains a challenging task for higher education leaders. In recent years, scholars have suggested that understanding cultural forces can help leaders interpret stakeholders' visions of the future and shape some ways authentic change might occur (Argyris 1990; Beckhard & Pritchard 1992; Mintzberg 1987; Senge 1990). For universities, two groups are necessary participants in this process of change: the faculty, who both generate and depend on the substance of culture, and administrative leaders, who use culture to strengthen the organisation in their charge (Bess 1992; Clark 1983; Dill 1991; Gumport & Sporn 1999; Tierney 1999). Recent scholarship suggests that cultural knowledge has two distinct purposes. First, it contains the ideas and values that are the substance of an organisational community. Second, it illuminates the methods and tools that leaders can use to extend that substance. In this paper, we focus on the sustained efforts of one research university in the United States to use culture for both of these purposes.

For eight years, Emory University supported an intensive seminar series for faculty known as the Luce Seminars. Intended as an experiment, the programme aimed at deepening intellectual community as one dimension of faculty culture. Built on the beliefs that rich intellectual discourse marks an excellent academic community and unbalanced emphasis on disciplinary specialty can dilute the intensity of that discourse, the programme supported intellectual conversation across the disciplines over an eight-year period. Following the programme's completion, we began a comprehensive qualitative case study analysis to evaluate the influence of the programme related to faculty interaction and scholarship. This paper concerns one part of the comprehensive analysis. Here we investigate the programme's performance as a structural component in support of intellectual community. As background for the analysis, it is important to understand two forces at work in the contemporary university: the influence of disciplinary specialty on faculty interaction and the roles of culture and structure in managing academic organisations.

DISCIPLINARY SPECIALTY AND FACULTY INTERACTION

Many scholars have noted the proliferation of academic specialties, where the achievement of individual faculty and the prestige of star faculty and departments advance the reputation of the whole (Bender 1993, 1998; Damrosch 1995; Dill 1991; Geiger 1986, 1993). At the same time leaders reward stars for their individual achievements, they also worry about the intellectual isolation the system fosters in the local university community. At research universities in particular, academic specialisation seems to weaken the commitment of faculty to the shared beliefs of the whole, increasing intellectual distance between local scholars across fields.

Members of today's 'multiuniversity' identify less with a sense of shared purpose through 'familiar intercourse' described by John Henry Newman and more with the sub-cultures of disciplines, departments, and schools (Astin 1990; Becher 1987; Clark 1983; Damrosch 1995; Dill 1991; Kerr 1982; Newman 1996; Tierney & Rhoads 1994). Concerned about how the distinctions between academic sub-cultures have sharpened, scholars and leaders describe the need for some kind of culturally binding sense of community. In light of the decline of local academic community, Becher's (1987, 1994) observations about faculty interaction across disciplines seem particularly important. Such intellectual exchange is of real value only when it effectively encourages mutual respect and tolerance that overcomes negative biases toward faculty in different disciplines. As both external and internal pressures for cross-disciplinary scholarship and inte-

grated knowledge solutions increase, research into issues surrounding the quality and effectiveness of faculty interaction and intellectual exchange has moved from the fringes of interest to a more central role of informing planning for scholarly vitality.

SOME ROLES OF CULTURE AND STRUCTURE IN ACADEMIC MANAGEMENT

With the blurring of hierarchy in modern organisational life, understanding the different cultural dimensions of an organisation has become a requirement for effective management. Such a shift emphasizes culture along with structure, requiring members of an organisation to use boundary-spanning connections rather than systematic hierarchy to accomplish their objectives. Composed of deeply embedded and shared values, beliefs, and norms, organisational culture may play a more significant role in universities than in other types of institutions (Bess 1992; Clark 1983; Dill 1991; Peterson & Spencer 1990). Highly educated professionals tied to national and international disciplinary associations are prevalent at universities, making the cultural connections within them loose.

Thus, at the very time universities need shared values and norms, they may lack the structures to nurture these unifying aspects of culture (Bess 1992; Clark 1983; Dill 1991; Peterson and Spencer 1990; Tierney 1999). The use of appropriate structural strategies targeted at supporting culture represents a potentially powerful tool for managing desired change in academic organisations. For these reasons, Tierney (1999) recommends that universities conduct an audit to reveal important cultural insights in order to illuminate both the tensions and the bonds that exist within and across units. The study of the Luce Seminars as a formal structure designed to advance cultural change represents this type of audit, revealing the tensions and bonds that can guide useful change.

CASE STUDY BACKGROUND

Emory University is a Research I university in the United States consisting of an undergraduate college, a graduate school of arts and sciences, and professional programmes in business, law, theology, medicine, nursing, and public health. At the time of the programme's conception, Emory had entered an era of ambitious growth fueled by a large monetary gift in 1979 and the vision of its leaders. As one strategy for change, the university decided to increase both the intensity and quality of the scholarly work

of its faculty. From 1978 to 1993, the faculty increased 50%; support for research increased by over 450%.

Recognising that rapid growth might increase the intellectual distance among faculty, the university sought a way to strengthen intellectual connections across disciplines, and the Luce programme was formed. Funded in part by a grant from the Henry Luce Foundation, the programme was intended not as a permanent structure but as a timely experiment to sustain conversation across the boundaries of disciplines and schools and to enrich the breadth of scholarship. Eighty-five faculty members participated during the eight years of the seminars. Between nine and twelve faculty members met twice a week each spring semester from 1989 to 1996. The programme called for each participant to be released from teaching for the semester, and in most cases, departments or schools provided this release. Over 90% of the programme's participants remained at the university ten years after the programme's start.

The university invited theologian James M. Gustafson to lead the seminar. Gustafson had served on the faculties of both Yale University and the University of Chicago and had had extensive experience in inter-disciplinary dialogue with colleagues in a variety of fields. He structured each seminar around a theme such as 'nature' or 'responsibility.' Many months prior to the start of each seminar, he gathered suggestions for read-ings from each participant, selecting and sequencing the materials to bring disparate disciplinary bearings on the theme. Class discussions began with a presentation of an assigned reading by a faculty member outside of the field related to the reading, followed by a critical response from an expert in the field and general discussion.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Within the scope of our study, we explore the Luce programme's influence on intellectual community as represented by intellectual discourse, disci-plinary orientation, and the scholarly work of the participants. We focus on the programme as a structural component used by the university to advance development in these areas. We address the following questions:

— Did the seminar series influence *intellectual discourse* (formal and informal conversation among faculty on intellectual topics) among the participants? If so, what was the nature of the influence?
— Did the seminar series influence the *disciplinary orientation* (a scholar's alignment to the scholar's own discipline, to other disci-

plines, and to interaction across the disciplines) of the participants? If so, what was the nature of the influence?

— Did the seminar series influence the *scholarly work* (teaching, research and service) of the participants? If so, what was the nature of the influence?

— As a formal attempt to influence the *intellectual community* of faculty, how did the structure perform? In what ways does the programme serve as a model for future improvement?

RESEARCH DESIGN

Because the seminar series was embedded in the culture of one institution over a fixed period of time, we used a qualitative case study design to explore the programme's significance for and influences on the participants. Using a qualitative case study for evaluation is particularly appropriate when there are no previous or clear indicators of programmatic success or when a better understanding of the dynamics of a programme is sought (Merriam 1998; Patton 1990; Yin 1994).

We examined the influences of the Luce Seminars on the participants according to the disciplinary groups that coalesce around common knowledge paradigms, theories, methods, symbols, and vocabularies (Becher 1987; Clark 1983; Halpern 1987). Thus our typology includes the humanities, the social sciences, the natural sciences (located in the undergraduate college and the arts and sciences graduate school) and the professional schools (medicine, public health, nursing, law, theology and business). When appropriate, analyses of natural science participants delineate between those in the arts and sciences and the professional schools.

We invited 29 of the 85 who took part in the Luce Seminars to participate in the study; 25 accepted. We used purposive-based criteria to select a sample reflecting the various disciplines, ranks, and levels of experience at the time of participation across the eight-year span of the programme. To better explore the variation by gender and school, the percentage of males (68%) and the percentage of arts and sciences faculty (64%) were somewhat smaller in the sample compared to the study population. The nine (36%) professional school faculty in the sample represented the schools of theology, law, nursing, medicine, and public health.[1] At the time of participation, 84% of participants in the sample held tenure; 52% held the rank of professor; 40%, associate professor; 11%, assistant professor; and 1%, senior lecturer.

We conducted semi-structured individual interviews, asking open-ended questions based on the research questions.[2] We followed a pre-structured yet flexible coding scheme that allowed for new interpretations in the course of the data analysis (Miles & Huberman 1994; Merriam 1998; Patton 1990). The coding scheme was derived from the literature review, the nature of the research questions, and the data. The qualitative research software HyperRESEACH[TM] was used to help code the data and analyse the results.

Methods of triangulation supplemented participant interviews with archival records and interviews with both the programme's director and leaders involved in the programme's development. In qualitative research, multiple sources of evidence have been found to enhance validity and reliability (Pitman & Maxwell 1992; Miles & Huberman 1994; Patton 1990). Because the sample was generally representative of the programme's participants across its eight years and multiple evidence provided a basis for our conclusions, we made tentative generalisations about the influences of the programme.

FINDINGS

We have categorised the responses as general perceptions and the nature of involvement; seminar leadership, design, and discussion; disciplinary orientation and faculty interaction; and significant consequences for scholarship. When appropriate, we discuss variation according to seniority, disciplinary group, level of previous interdisciplinary orientation, and gender.

General perceptions and the nature of involvement. 88% of the participants characterized their experience as highly positive. These individuals reported high levels of intellectual or affective stimulation, experiencing a rekindling of intellectual curiosity that had 'atrophied' and the challenge of grasping the 'new vocabularies' or 'jargon' that scholars from other disciplines use. Some found it challenging to defend one's own discipline against colleagues from other disciplines. Other positive descriptions included 'incredible to relate to others,' 'best experience at Emory,' 'thrilling,' 'fascinating,' and 'wonderful' to experience intellectual exchange with new people.

Many participants experienced or observed 'intense' or 'highly motivated' involvement in activities and discussions. As one participant observed, "it was intense because everyone seemed to bring their whole being" to the seminar and "nobody blew it off or slacked off." Another

participant noted that the seminar was "highly effective in engaging the people" and that "everyone was prepared" for the class sessions. Several of the faculty felt that their participation represented a certain 'status' or 'honour,' while some indicated particular appreciation that the university would invest time, money, and effort into the programme.

Of the 25 faculty in the study, all but four were released from teaching responsibilities during the semester of participation. A number of participants remarked how difficult participation would have been without release from teaching, stating that this release was a 'critical' element. As one participant put it, the release allowed participants to 'step off our normal escalator,' creating 'space and incentive' and 'intellectual seriousness' for meaningful interdisciplinary conversation. As a natural scientist remarked,

because my department to some extent resisted the time, it was a big deal to me that I'd been given this release time to do it, so I took the reading and writing very, very seriously.

For many participants, the seminar made possible the pursuit of academic knowledge apart from the specific requirements of scholarly norms. As a natural scientist from a professional school noted, "ideas were important, like we always thought they should be, ideas for their own sake. . . . It was my idealised view of what university life was truly all about, but I'd never experienced." Similarly, a humanities participant found the seminar to be a place where "ideas are finally sought for their own sake,. . . which I'm old fashioned enough to think is still what the university is all about." One junior faculty member appreciated the opportunity to interact with colleagues across the disciplines 'purely for intellectual gratification' rather than through faculty meetings or committees 'charged' with meeting objectives.

Three of the 25, one in the social sciences and two in the humanities, characterised their experiences as primarily negative. Using phrases such as 'a flat effect,' 'a blip on the screen,' and the lack of a connection to ideas that 'organically develop' from hands-on scholarly research, they wished for discussion that better connected to current affairs or specific research projects. Two were women who reported some discomfort with the 'intellectual posturing,' the lack of real "bonding," and the male-dominated discussions in their seminars.

Seminar leadership, design, and discussion. Many participants commented on how the programme's leadership and design influenced the nature of the discussions. Almost all were highly positive about the effort, leadership, and teaching of James Gustafson. By using timely, 'open-ended' questions, he guided discussions without 'foreclosing' them, creating the 'space' for 'teachable moments.' One natural scientist observed how the

leader represented 'an older scholarly ideal of what it means to be in a university.' Like several other participants, he attributed the success of the discussions to the air of respect and dignity resulting from a style that encouraged balanced contributions, thereby 'making the respect palpable.' This 'gentle guidance' helped participants 'look deeply' into the materials and experience a 'joining of the heart and mind.'

Regarding the design of the seminar and the materials used, 17 (68%) offered positive comments and seven (28%) noted some negative aspects. Seminar topics such as 'responsibility' or 'on being human' seemed to permit the discussions of materials from many fields, allowing new insights and understandings to emerge. Most participants offered positive comments about the course materials and their use. Many felt that the leader's careful pairing of a book with a participant outside the field of the book for classroom presentation stimulated serious exchange. However, a few wished to expand the repertoire of materials and include a variety of media. Some felt that the finely honed approach to readings and responses resulted in a lack of a clear purpose or theme beyond the general topic. Three commented negatively on the topics, criticizing them for being 'too broad,' 'artificial,' or disconnected from their research interests.

A large majority (92%) of the sample believed that the discussions contributed to fruitful interdisciplinary conversation. For most participants, the format and leadership seemed to encourage tolerance and 'comfortable' interplay that moved 'beyond disciplinary babble' while avoiding ideological and personal posturing. Many noted that the unique design of the seminar helped provide the basis for colleagues to engage in 'lively' and 'intense' exchange. Some related this aspect to the development of a 'mutually supporting' rather than an 'oppositional' intellectual ethos. For these participants, the seminar series provided a 'good model' for sustained conversation that breaks down the 'vertical walls' between the disciplines and encourages a 'sense of shared collaborative venture.' Many related the quality of the conversations to such factors as the 'luck of the draw' of the participant mix, the extent to which fellow participants displayed open instead of 'closed' or 'set' minds, or the occasional presence of 'irritating blowhards.'

Several participants observed some degree of contention or 'politicisation' of conversations that reflected clashes between different approaches to knowledge and evidence. In one seminar year, a gap emerged between some junior and senior faculty over the 'post-structuralist' critique of the 'Euro-centric nature of the academy's reference points' versus the 'bio-medical' or scientific perspective. In another seminar year, several participants desired a greater use of the feminist perspective to

provide a 'radical critique from a non-Western viewpoint' to counter scientific empiricism. Although most arts and sciences participants welcomed interaction with professional school colleagues, some expressed frustration with how professional school colleagues oriented their class discussions toward the professional education of their students, appearing to be concerned with merely 'churning out the next robot.' In contrast, several participants wished for greater representation from the natural scientists and the professional schools.

Disciplinary orientation and faculty interaction. Participants commented about how the seminars altered their attitudes related to their own disciplines and other disciplines and their interactions with faculty members across disciplines. Over half reported gaining new insights into the nature or foundations of their own disciplines, and over three-quarters developed a greater appreciation of their choice of disciplines. For example, one participant formed a greater sense of her 'field as a field, rather than simply a state of nature.' Several health scientists gained a renewed appreciation for the applied nature of their disciplines in solving problems in 'real time,' while also realising that the narrowness of their own disciplines could be mitigated by incorporating insights and findings from other disciplines.

Many participants reported developing greater insight or appreciation of disciplines outside of their own concerning method, epistemology, purpose, and style of discourse. For example, some humanities and natural sciences participants reported gaining new insights into the differences between the 'critical' or 'evocative' approach to knowledge and evidence of the humanities and the 'empiricism' of the natural sciences. In particular, natural scientists and professional school faculty seemed to enhance their understanding and appreciation of other disciplines.

92% of the participants extended their intellectual and social interaction with one or more of their fellow participants outside of seminar sessions. Outside of class and after their seminar courses ended, many participants continued their interaction through lunches, informal conversations, interdisciplinary seminars and summer institutes, and phone calls for help with scholarly references or understanding ideas outside of their field. In a few cases, some worked together more formally in research projects or team teaching. Some reported developing more confidence for contacting not only fellow participants but also colleagues across the university for intellectual conversation and scholarly resources.

A majority of participants reported experiencing enhanced integration into university life. Feelings of integration with the university community seemed particularly salient for junior faculty members and for those who

felt intellectually or physically isolated from the rest of the university. For example, several natural scientists commented that the seminar seemed to foster strong feelings of connection with the 'life of the university' that helped them overcome a 'kind of insulation.' Some senior faculty with a past history of interaction across disciplines experienced little or no influence on their feelings of integration or attachment.

Although the program was not intended as a permanent structure, 40% of the participants criticised the programme for the lack of an appropriate follow-up mechanism. These participants reported that the intellectual community the seminar generated needed university support to be sustained. As one participant noted, there was a 'missed opportunity' to build upon the distinct intellectual 'ethos' that marked the programme.

Significant consequences for scholarship. Finally, 23 of 25 participants commented about the most significant consequences of the programme for both their professional lives and for the milieu for scholarship at the university.[3] Participants frequently described a profound expansion of their own intellectual and social horizons as the programme's most significant consequence on their professional lives. Examples of these influences included developing a 'renewed sense of enthusiasm' for enhancing approaches to research and teaching, broadened intellectual and research interests, a more 'concrete' appreciation of the contributions of other disciplines, and an expanding circle of 'intellectual friendships.' Several participants, particularly in the health sciences, cited gaining an enhanced 'sense of academic responsibility.' Several others experienced a reaffirmation of the value or "legitimacy" of their own interdisciplinary approaches to teaching and research, while one credited the seminar for helping to stimulate and reaffirm a whole new career direction. A large majority experienced additional motivation for teaching, learned new teaching or course-design techniques, or increased their involvement in interdisciplinary teaching.

Significant consequences related to intellectual community at the university included enhancing 'collegiality' across schools and departments, building 'respect' and 'appreciation' for colleagues in other disciplines, and developing a 'grass roots' foundation for personal and intellectual interaction among faculty. Participants across disciplinary groups judged that these enhancements ultimately improve teaching and research, create new interdisciplinary ways to solve problems in the wider community, and contribute to a more concrete awareness of the diversity and resources of intellectual seriousness across the campus. For example, one humanities faculty member remarked that the seminars "set forth a

model by which faculty could come together rationally and have a dialogue about issues that were critical to all of us. It laid the foundation for inter-disciplinary dialogue, community, and collaboration across the university that had not been present before." In the words of a health scientist, the programme "contributed to the university making an explicit commitment to . . . the value of interdisciplinary study and scholarship."

DISCUSSION

The Luce seminars can best be understood as an attempt to reveal and influence intellectual community through a sustained and serious programmatic effort. As a cultural audit, this analysis enabled us to gain significant insight about the effects of the programme as a structure to support intellectual discourse, disciplinary orientation, and scholarly work.

Did the seminar series influence intellectual discourse among the participants? If so, what was the nature of the influence? We found that the seminar supported high-quality intellectual discourse that had positive repercussions for their subsequent views of the value of such discourse. Most found value in broad, wide-ranging, and inclusive discussion and expressed appreciation for its support. They distinguished between this type of discourse and the more focused and particular discourse some linked to typical interaction within a discipline. Some participants valued the opportunity to bring together seemingly disparate ideas; others valued support for collaboration across traditional boundaries. The highly positive responses to the programme among the professional school participants indicates their desire to reach beyond vocational and functional approaches to learning and join a wider discourse centered on knowledge 'for its own sake'. The responses of a small number of participants who found a lack of connection with active research projects or important current affairs may indicate the need to design different types of interdisciplinary seminars that incorporate a wide range of faculty learning styles and disciplinary orientations.

Did the seminar series influence the disciplinary orientation of the participants? If so, what was the nature of the influence? We judged that for many of the participants, disciplinary orientation was influenced by their seminar experiences. A large majority developed increased insights into disciplinary differences and greater respect or appreciation for the approaches to knowledge and truths exemplified by disciplines outside their own. Exposure to other assumptions, methods, styles of argument,

and epistemologies influenced many participants profoundly. For some, enhanced knowledge of other disciplines translated into increased comfort levels for interacting with other faculty beyond the seminars. For others, this exposure helped them gain new insights into the foundations of their own disciplines. However, that some participants with high levels of previous interdisciplinary work or faculty contact were less stimulated suggests that variations in previous levels of interdisciplinary exposure may dampen or heighten influences on disciplinary orientation and faculty interaction.

Did the seminar series influence the scholarly work of the participants? If so, what was the nature of the influence? Our findings suggest that the seminar did influence scholarly work, especially interest in new ways to address research questions, collaborate with others, or teach. For some, the experience of intense intellectual discussion with colleagues from other disciplines seemed to bring their scholarly work into bold relief, reconfirming their affinities for their chosen career path. The seminars appeared to have provided a gateway for participating in the 'community of scholars,' a seemingly unattainable abstract ideal of professional academic culture in the everyday life of faculty at research universities. New intellectual friendships, collaborations, or enhanced feelings of attachment to the university strengthened ties to the culture of the institution as the location for scholarship. This effect was particularly salient for junior faculty and for many of those faculty members who felt physically or intellectually isolated from the rest of the university, such as professional school and natural sciences faculty.

As a formal attempt to influence the intellectual community of faculty, how did the structure perform? In what ways does the program serve as a model for future improvement? As a formal structure, the programme seems to have made three distinct contributions to the university over the eight years of its existence. The programme accomplished intense and sustained faculty involvement, created broad and at times deep intellectual interaction across disciplines, and tapped into notions of membership in a community that both revealed and extended participant ideals of desired intellectual ethos. As a unique programme of faculty learning that traversed disciplinary perspectives, the Luce Seminars encouraged a deep level of intellectual community across disciplines and sent a signal of the university's support for intellectual growth among faculty.

First, the programme created an atmosphere that encouraged intense and sustained involvement among faculty members. For most of the

participants in our sample, the symbolic significance of Emory's invest-ment in the programme tapped into powerful elements of faculty culture which, in turn, helped stimulate maximum faculty investment of time and energy. Both the provision of release-time and the recruitment of a programme leader with a high scholarly reputation signified the univer-sity's commitment to creating a sanctuary for faculty to engage in discus-sions and to providing activities that were intellectually stimulating and challenging. The leader's reading of the numerous books suggested by the participants and his careful ordering of the discussion sequence signaled both the intellectual seriousness of the discussions and the importance of faculty input. Thus, participant buy-in seemed to require both symbolic and functional programmatic dimensions that created the time and 'intellectual space' for intense involvement as well as the belief in its value.

Second, the programme stimulated broad and profound intellectual interaction among faculty members across schools and disciplines. For most of the participants in our sample, the teaching skills of the leader along with the design of the courses provided a foundation for mean-ingful interdisciplinary conversation. The subtle guidance of the discus-sions diminished ego conflict, permitting learning of significant depth to occur. In addition, beginning class sessions with presentations and comments on readings from participants outside of the relevant fields of expertise helped overcome barriers that might have intimidated some participants and limited discussion. For the most part, the formal setting required participants to work through intolerance that might have served as powerful barriers in a less formal setting, helping them break through the 'vertical walls' of disciplinary styles and jargon (Becher 1987, 1994; Clark 1983). Despite occasional moments of contention, the seminar structure allowed for participation that was sufficiently broad to diminish domin-ation from particular methodological and ideological camps. Thus, both the leadership and the course design were crucial factors that enabled the emergence of the mutual respect, understanding, and appreciation across disciplines that Becher (1987, 1994) asserted were necessary for creating interdisciplinary conversation of value.

Despite the intentions of the programme to enhance communication across disciplines, it occasionally achieved the opposite effect. As several participants suggested, the seminars might have found better ways to incorporate multiple voices and new approaches to scholarship into their conversations by adjusting strategies along the way. Ironically, while some faculty members in the humanities and social sciences wished to exclude professional school faculty, professional school participants seemed to gain substantial enjoyment and appreciation for interdisciplinary conversa-

tion. While the practical and vocational mission of the professional schools may be somewhat off-putting to some arts and sciences faculty, the opportunity to explore ideas in a non-instrumental setting remains distinctively appealing to professional school faculty.

Third, the programme seemed to tap into notions of membership in a scholarly community that both revealed and extended some particulars of desired intellectual ethos. The ideal of a sanctuary to explore 'knowledge for its own sake' across disciplines perhaps functions as a nostalgic touchstone. By calling forth this ideal, the Luce Seminars seemed to provide a sense of shared coherent purpose and genuine community that remains a powerful component and symbol of academic culture (Clark 1983; Damrosch 1995; Dill 1991; Tierney & Rhoads 1994). The particularly salient desire among professional school participants to reach beyond the functional and vocational nature of their work indicates that these ideals have contemporary currency. The Luce Seminars connected with deeply embedded cultural symbols in both academic and institutional spheres to effectively stimulate faculty. By laying a 'foundation for interdisciplinary dialogue', the seminars extended notions of what can be accomplished within the scope of similar programmes.

That almost half of the participants desired some kind of mechanism to help sustain the interaction suggests both the importance of intellectual community in the academic life of the participants and the importance of continuing formal support. Most participants recognised that faculty need help to convert membership in intellectual community into real scholarly work and wished for a way to sustain their progress. Perhaps the constraints of time and physical and disciplinary isolation that are facts of modern academic life create the need for structural support for intellectual community at the deepest of levels. This may be particularly true at a research university, where the achievements of the individual scholar remain essential to institutional success (Bender 1993, 1998; Damrosch 1995; Geiger 1986, 1993).

CONCLUSION

The unique design, leadership, and symbolic aspects of the Luce Seminars provided a powerful structure for sustaining meaningful discourse across disciplines for its participants. Although the programme was administratively conceived, its top-down origin was balanced with a bottom-up, collaborative approach to shaping its content. Together, these factors served to diminish the usual faculty skepticism for a university-contrived structure. Although the programme exposed tensions between disciplines

and occasionally achieved the opposite of its intent, it also revealed a way to use those tensions to bring about a shared sense of intellectual purpose at the university.

This analysis suggests that strengthening intellectual community through structured faculty learning may help enhance intellectual development and interaction, scholarship, and institutional attachment. An in-depth knowledge of faculty culture can provide both substantive insights about an important constituency of a university and a powerful tool to advance broad goals or anticipate potential roadblocks to change. However, that a few participants experienced little influence on their scholarship or interaction or noted some difficulties in achieving common understandings suggests reason for caution. Many who were profoundly affected by their participation in the Luce Seminars may have entered the programme with affinity for issues of intellectual community and interdisciplinary conversation. That others might not share such an affinity should temper expectations for future programs.

Although the Luce Seminars supported connections among faculty during a period of rapid university growth, the university now views this experimental program as a pilot for similar programs. For example, some lessons of our analysis have shaped a new faculty programme created after the completion of the Luce Seminars. This programme consists of a small group of faculty members from across the university that gathers at regular intervals during each spring semester in order to explore key intellectual issues or problems. Topics and formats are subject to change as the programme evolves. Other similar programmes are likely to follow.

Further research into the nature of the interplay between structure and culture in building intellectual community can enhance institutional capacity for authentic change not only for this research university, but more broadly. Our study of a unique programme of conversation across disciplines at one university raises two broad questions concerning academic culture. The first question concerns what seems to be a conflict between the ideal of a local community and established requirements of national norms. How can universities build and maintain a sense of shared intellectual purpose at the local level while also conforming to the national model of individual academic specialty that institutional excellence demands? Are these aspects of higher education necessarily in conflict? What alternatives might one sustain? Second, many Luce participants recognised the power of the programme as a model that minimized intellectual conflict with nurtured guidance. To what extent is this model desirable? Were the achievements of the programme more similar to the advantages of a

social island, limited to a particular time and context in one university's development, or a model for a potential future reality?

NOTES

1. Due to the lack of a complete response rate, the School of Business was not represented in the sample.
2. To ensure confidentiality, we referred to respondents according to the disciplinary groups of humanities, social sciences, natural sciences, and professional schools. We assigned gender randomly when describing the results, only commenting in general on unique gender-related factors.
3. Further analysis of the data yielded a number of positive influences on individual scholarly activities, intellectual development, and career orientation subsequent to seminar participation (Frost & Jean 1999). These influences often varied according to such factors as level of seniority and disciplinary group.

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