

DISSERTATION

A CASE STUDY: ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE  
OF A DIVISION I INTERCOLLEGIATE ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT

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Shannon Powers

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Doctoral Committee:

Advisor: Carole Makela

Kellie Enns  
Jeffrey Foley  
Carolyn Shue

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## ABSTRACT

### A CASE STUDY: ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE OF A DIVISION I INTERCOLLEGIATE ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT

A major barrier to the reform of intercollegiate athletics is its cultural significance in higher education. Major culture change has not occurred and few studies have examined culture within Division I athletic departments (Schroeder, 2010). The specific aim of this study was to understand how the following elements of a collegiate athletic department interact with one another: institutional culture, leadership and power, internal and the external environments. Data collection included 42 interviews; an 8 day on-campus observation period by the researcher of the athletic department; events such as graduation and sporting events; archival data on alumni; the university website for media guides, financial and academic data; news and social media sites such as Twitter. Analysis of data entailed complete transcription of all interviews and notes, entry into the computer, followed by coding procedures outlined by Strauss and Corbin (1990) and LeCompte and Schensul (1999).

A strong partnership between institutional and internal athletic department was based upon mutual objective of student academic achievement. An antiquated mentality toward women in head coaching and leadership roles, a deficit mentality, and economic woes were evident in the culture. These findings may be prevalent in many DI universities attempting to keep up with the few independently funded intercollegiate programs. A multiple case study using Schroeder's (2010) framework across several DI institutions may support similar findings.

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## CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

With multifaceted goals, multitude offerings, and passionate stakeholders, American higher education is an environment unlike any in the world (Duderstadt, 2006). Society would like to believe that college presidents, vice presidents, provosts, and/or other executive leaders employ strong moral compasses to guide and protect their employees and departments through the challenges (e.g., economic, ethical) faced in education (Burton, 1986). The athletic departments in higher education institutions are no different. In fact, college sports are big business (Clotfelter, 2012). Since 2000, “changing the culture” has been a similar theme for intercollegiate athletic administrators and critics. The National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) President Myles Brand (2001) spoke of “change in the cultures of athletics and academics” as necessary for future progress between the organization and colleges and universities (p. 4).

Intercollegiate athletics are sometimes plagued by coaches and other people violating NCAA rules and regulations (NCAA, 2013). Not exclusive to athletic departments, sexual abuse, sexual harassment, and administrators’ failure to report abuses to the police at universities and colleges has dominated the news the last five years (2010-2015). Although uncommon, drug overdoses occurred as athletes are prescribed pain killers and expected to work through pain. The combination of heightened academic expectations and lowered admissions requirements put campus employees responsible for providing academic support to athletes in a difficult situation, as they are asked to help a growing number of marginal students maintain eligibility at some universities (Carter, 2010).

Gender equity lawsuits still permeate academic institutions albeit Title IX (the federal ban on unequal treatment of male and female athletes on college campuses) was enacted 43 years ago. There are several positive outcomes from the Title IX amendment. The increased access to higher education provided by Title IX has fueled progress. There has been real growth in the number of women who participate in sports, receive scholarships, and benefit from increased budgets (Women's Sports Foundation, 2004).

Compiled together, the failures, according to Beyer and Hannah (2000), are not due to the lack of administrative effort; instead they refer to the inability of leaders to appropriately deal with culture. Moreover, they hypothesize intercollegiate programs are strongly identified with fans, students, donors, and alumni who carry strong emotions. Leaders' passions transform into dominant ideologies and value systems that ultimately drive the economic, communication, and managerial operating systems of athletic departments (Beyer & Hannah, 2000). Until colleges and universities change "cultural ideologies" (Beyer & Hannah, p. 127; Frey, 1994; Putler & Wolfe, 1999; Southall & Nagel, 2008; Trail & Chelladurai, 2002) and the factors symbolizing them, leaders can only hope to create authentic reform.

Among the changes, which the NCAA approved in 2012, similar to the Rawlings Panel of Intercollegiate Athletics (2013) recommendations, were:

- Student-athletes--Toughening the academic standards that freshmen and transfer student-athletes must meet to be eligible to compete and raise the Academic Progress Rate (APR) that teams must reach to stay in good academic standing with the NCAA. Academic admissions officials should have final decision making for the admissions of student-athletes.

- Give the athletic conferences the flexibility to give multiyear athletic scholarships (as opposed to single year grants) and to award athletically related financial aid equal to the full cost of attendance at their institutions.
- Ensure that the quantitative academic performance of “special admits” in athletics is representative of the performance of “special admits” in other student admission categories.
- Qualitative assessment of “at-risk” prospective athletes should be conducted by admissions officials during the recruitment process.
- Reduce the number of hours student-athletes devote to sport activities, both locally and on conference/national levels.

Related to budgetary and finance issues:

- Revise the athletic department’s budget report to clearly delineate the spending that supports the student-athletes’ educational, professional, or career development (e.g., scholarship costs, summer school, career counseling, costs of attendance or other educational expenses not covered by a scholarship) as compared with other operating costs (staff salaries, recruiting, team travel).
- Make institutional financial data more transparent to the public by publishing NCAA financial reports; the athletics department budget, which may differ from the NCAA reports (because of the items listed in the previous recommendation); and additional financial data about long-term athletic department debt and revenue in athletics and academic spending.
- Commit to maintaining responsible spending patterns, regardless of whether a different national regulatory approach is adopted.

Focused on university administration and oversight:

- Develop roles and responsibilities for the Board of Trustees and how best they can work in concert with presidents and coaches.
- Consider taking a leadership position within the conference, a specially selected network of peers, and the NCAA to promote broader changes to the financial model for Division One (DI) college sports.

Related to external oversight:

- Prune the NCAA's rulebook to revamp the penalty structure in ways that both enforce the rules more consistently and harshly punish major rule breakers (Lederman, 2012).
- Develop mandatory education programs for coaches. To focus on how best to support student-athletes in a broad sense.

How an organization works to promote reform is the key to understanding college sports outcomes (Schroeder, 2010). In Clotfelter's (2011) book, *Big Time Sports in American Universities*, he poses the question, "Is there any reason to believe that the decisions made by intelligently run institutions like universities result in situations that are not in their best interest, or society's?" (p.16). The author suggests universities operate commercial sports programs while hardly acknowledging them. The form that college sports take follows the loose way universities are structured (Clotfelter, 2011). He purports there is a lot of slack in university oversight hierarchies, thus giving ADs similar leeway to that of deans of academic departments and sometimes presidents of institutions.

### **Role and Purpose of the National Collegiate Athletic Association**

According to the *Britannica Concise Encyclopedia* online (2014) and the NCAA website the role of the NCAA is:

A non-profit organization that administers U.S. intercollegiate athletics. It was formed in 1906 but did not acquire significant powers to enforce its rules until 1942. Headquartered in Indianapolis, Ind., it functions as a general legislative and administrative authority, formulating and enforcing rules of play for various sports and eligibility criteria for athletes. It has about 1,200 member schools and conducts about 80 national championships in a total of about 20 sports. (para. 1)

The National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) stated in the *2012-2015 Strategic Plan*, the purpose of the organization is to “govern competition in a fair, safe, equitable and sportsmanlike manner, and to integrate intercollegiate athletics into higher education so that the educational experience of the student-athlete is paramount” (p. 3). Therefore, any school that is a member of the NCAA belongs to one of these three groups, DI, Division 2 (D2), or Division 3 (D3).

Among the three NCAA divisions, DI schools generally have the largest student bodies, manage the largest athletic budgets, and offer the most scholarships (NCAA, 2013). Schools who are members of DI commit to maintaining high academic standards, which are designated by individual institutions. Approximately 350 colleges and universities are members, comprising more than 6,000 athletic teams and providing competitive sports opportunities for more than 170,000 student-athletes each year (NCAA, 2013). DI is divided into two groups based on football sponsorship and regulations. Schools that participate in bowl games belong to the Football Bowl Subdivision (FBS). These schools must offer 14 sports, athletic scholarships purely based on athletic performance. They must draw 15,000 fans for home games. In addition, FBS schools must schedule 60% of their football games against other FBS institutions. Those that participate in the NCAA-ran football championship belong to the Football Championship Subdivision (FCS). These institutions are not required to offer athletic performance scholarships. Moreover, the FCS schools are not restricted by minimum attendance for home

games or the number of FCS schools they play in non-conference games. The differences between FBS and FCS are more about the culture of athletics and spending at a given institution than it is about the level of competition. The subdivisions apply only to football; all other sports are considered DI.

According to the NCAA website (2014), DI student-athletes must complete 40% of the coursework required for a degree by the end of their second year, 60% by the end of their third year, and 80% by the end of their fourth year. Student-athletes are allowed five years to graduate while receiving athletically related financial aid. As mentioned above, student-athletes offer scholarships based on athletic performance yet to maintain good standing DI student-athletes must earn at least six credit hours each term to be eligible for the following term and must meet minimum grade-point average requirements based on the institution's own GPA standards for graduation (NCAA, 2013).

Comparatively, D2 institutions are required to make less of a financial commitment, operate under slightly less rigorous rules and regulations, while having fewer revenue opportunities from sports than members of DI institutions. Their competition is more regional in nature and rosters feature more local or in-state student-athletes (NCAA, 2003b). D3 institutions are required to have a minimum numbers of sports and do not offer student-athletes financial aid related to athletic ability. The emphasis in D3 is more on the student-athlete experiences as participants and less about the spectator aspect of the sports (NCAA, 2003b).

**Role of the College President per the NCAA.** NCAA's bylaw "The Principle of Institutional Control and Responsibility" indicates, "It is the responsibility of each member institution to control its intercollegiate athletics program in compliance with the rules and regulations of the Association. The institution's chief executive officer is responsible for the

administration of all aspects of the athletic program, including approval of the budget and audits of all expenditures” (NCAA, 2013a, p. 3). The NCAA requires presidents to be involved in their athletic programs but does not specify how active they should be or how best this should be accomplished. Another bylaw states, “A member institution’s chief executive officer has ultimate responsibility and final authority for the conduct of the intercollegiate athletics program and the actions of any board in control of that program” (NCAA, 2013a, p. 41). This is an enormous responsibility for college presidents considering their backgrounds and the broader interests of their institutions.

Moreover, college presidents often lack the time to devote the necessary effort to the athletic department. Others may simply want to distance themselves from potential scandals involving athletics programs (Duderstadt, 2006; Miller, 2014) and assign a vice president to oversee the athletic department or give ADs autonomy (Sanders, 2004). Regardless, the president mandates responsibility, thus those who give complete control of the department to the AD may find little resistance to this strategy (Hoffman, 2013). James Duderstadt, former President of the University of Michigan, has little faith in presidents to individually or collectively control (e.g., football) at their individual schools or alters the contemporary marketplace. He observed:

Most university presidents are usually trapped between a rock and a hard place: on the one hand is a public demanding high-quality entertainment from the commercial college sports industry they are paying for; on the other are governing boards that have the capacity (and all too frequently the inclination) to fire presidents who rock the university boat too strenuously. (2006, p. 325)

The Knight Commission on Intercollegiate Athletics (KCIA) is another non-profit organization whose primary goal is to ensure that collegiate athletic programs operate in concert with the



academic missions of their institutions. The 1991 KCIA Report, *A Call to Action: Reconnecting College Sports and Higher Education*, urged several DI reforms to bring athletics in closer alignment with educational values. Three aspects of presidential control over athletics were recommended. Among these was the respective institution's involvement with commercial television contracts, commitment to control conferences, and the NCAA. What was gleaned from this call to action was that presidents could not act alone. Instead, and as recommended by the Knight Commission, shared action should be delegated among presidents, trustees, conferences, faculty, and athletic departments' administration (KCIA, 1991).

### **Structures of Intercollegiate Athletic Departments**

In 2000, Hannah and Beyer claimed universities were generally described as “loosely coupled” organizations and distinguished by distributed goals, fragmented decision making, and an outward orientation to public service. The result of such a structure results in a weak connection of university partnerships, making it possible for the parts to operate independently (Jordan, Brown, Trevino, & Finkelstein, 2013). Before the recession of 2008, Waugh (2003) wrote in *The Annals of the American Society*, “the processes of institutionalization, bureaucratization, and professionalization are changing the culture of organizations” (p. 86). The author delineated that as each of these three processes permeate university culture, which becomes more differentiated, forming individual silos, thus the lines of authority more clearly defined and relationships formalized. However, the economic recession added financial pressures on institutions and their officials, which caused public universities to defend their hard fought state appropriation monies and reexamine how they operate (Zimmerman & Wickersham, 2013).

College and university administrators determine where their athletics programs reside within the context of the organizational structure. In *Games Colleges Play* (2011), James Thelin added there is little information currently available regarding the administrative positions to whom athletics directors report. Nor is there much information about the effectiveness of any given structure for the athletics director or the institution. It is assumed that neither senior-level university/college administrators nor athletics directors know if their structure is appropriate for their type of institution and level of competition. In addition, they may not readily have information available about organizational structures at other institutions.

Much like academic departments at universities, operations and governance are rooted in an independent structure, with each particular function and people reporting to the AD and the AD reporting to the university president. According to Wilson (2013) many college presidents desire a hands-on approach with athletics and assign the athletics director to a presidential cabinet or executive leadership title with direct reporting to the president. This structure would ideally ensure that the president is directly and regularly informed and provides the necessary guidance on the many issues that arise involving the athletics program (Duderstadt, 2006; Patberg, 2002; Suggs, 2001). However, this is assuming effective and transparent communication.

Over twenty years ago Frey concluded, “The athletic department is tied to the institution by virtue of tradition but its goals and activities have little to do with those of the school” (1994, p. 117). Researchers are continuing the same discussion regarding the place of intercollegiate athletics in institutions of higher learning. Unlike what may appear to be other peripheral units (e.g., media and information department), intercollegiate athletics may divert resources from the

academic side (e.g., potential benefactors) or in the case of athletic departments, the external marketplace (Hoffman, 2013).

Using data from the KCIA, National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) reports compiled by USA Today, and the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) database, the Delta Cost Project's (2013) brief features charts and tables on academic and athletic spending by type of DI schools and Football Bowl Subdivision (FBS) conference; distribution of athletic expenditures; source of athletic budget revenues; and ratio of athletic program generated revenue to athletic subsidy. One key finding of the report is that the average institution in the Football Bowl Subdivision category spent three to six times as much per athlete as they did on nonstudent-athletes in 2010 (Delta Cost Project, 2013). The report makes the case that between 2005 and 2010, despite substantial budgets for the athletic department, on average DI institutions increased their athletic budgets at a steeper rate than that of tuition and fee increases. In 2010, nearly 35% of the athletics budget at DI schools was spent on compensation, 20% on facilities and equipment, and 14% on scholarships and grants to student-athletes. Great variance in the sources of revenue and proportions from institutional subsidies for athletic programs was found among institutions in the FBS, FCS, and DI schools without a football program.

The Delta Project's *Report on Trends in College Spending* (2013) stated that on the whole, colleges and universities spent significantly more on academics than athletics; athletic budgets typically represented from 5 to 11% of total academic spending in each subdivision. When adjusted for the number of students and student-athletes, collegiate athletic programs clearly spend much more per capita than universities spend to educate each student on average. The difference between academic and athletic spending among DI colleges and universities is

striking (Desrochers, 2013). By 2010, many public institutions were contending with the after effects of the recession and where to cut spending.

Resources were strained on many campuses as enrollments ticked up sharply and state funding continued to erode (Kirshstein & Hurlburt, 2012). Growth in academic spending per student slowed considerably in 2009 and 2010 (and was steady or declining in inflation-adjusted dollars). However, a similar slowdown in athletic spending was evident only in the prosperous FBS subdivision, where spending per athlete was largely unchanged between 2009 and 2010. Spending continued to rise in the FCS and FBS subdivisions, although the 2010 increase was generally smaller than increases earlier in the decade. While it is understandable that larger programs--whose revenues are often driven by forces outside the university--would feel the pinch of the recession, the institutions themselves showed little restraint in their support of college athletics (Kirshstein & Hurlburt, 2012).

Sternberg (2011) found the athletics' business model is separate from that of the school—or no model even exists. The sports programs can become a drain on the business side of the overall operation (Sternberg, 2011). In some cases, they become a source of structural deficit in the university budget. In other circumstances, while there is money to be made, the programs and related revenues do not serve to enhance the functioning of the university as a whole (Kirshstein & Hurlburt, 2012). Athletics remain a mystery to most academic insiders, athletic coaches and administrators roles are not routine and not subject to usual controls, therefore their loyalty easily flows to outsiders, not the university (Duderstadt, 2006). For many though, the athletic department is tied to the university through tradition, but the goals and values are largely different than those of the school (Thelin, 2011).

**Culture.** Culture is incredibly difficult to define and evaluate because the concept results from several social processes among organization's members and units (Martin, 2002). The negotiation over what actions, ideas, and what artifacts mean within an organization are integral aspects of the collective process (Martin & Siehl, 1983; Schroeder, 2010). Once agreement on the meanings evolves, they are linked together to form ideologies (Trice & Beyer, 2003). Group members fulfill their roles in repetitive fashions, as ideologies become patterned and are ultimately driven into members' subconscious and become taken for granted as shared assumptions (Schein, 2010). Turnover of members alter the cultural assumptions and behavior of new and remaining group members. Thus, "organizational culture is viewed as an ever changing pattern of basic assumptions that guides organizational behavior" (Schroeder, 2010, p. 99).

An athletic department typically has more freedom to develop its own culture when structured as its own department (Schroeder, 2010), rather than under a branch of the organization. There are caveats for any culture that leaders and researchers must understand:

Every athletic culture is context bound. Each athletic department will maintain its own unique assumptions, and its leadership will materialize in different ways. Culture is an interconnected web of relationships. Alterations that arise in one segment (e.g., increase in admissions standards), are necessarily going to affect other parts of the organization (e.g., athlete recruitment). Finally, any cultural model should not expect to provide linear solutions for simple problems. (Schroeder, 2010, p. 115)

**Managing Culture.** Schein (2010) proposed managing culture means accepting a large degree of change, which in turn creates learning anxiety (leaving what we know to something we don't). Moreover, learning anxiety can be fueled by any of the following (valid) fears of (1) power/position, (2) temporary incompetence, (3) subsequent punishment, (4) personal identity,

and (5) loss of group membership. According to Conner (1993), the higher the learning anxiety, the stronger the resistance and the defensiveness people display.

Managers of cultures must draw on survival anxiety (what will happen if we don't do anything) to unfreeze the situation and make sure that survival anxiety is greater than learning anxiety (Kotter, 2008; Schein, 2010). To overcome resistance is to change the learning anxiety by making the learners feel "psychologically safe" (Kotter, 2008, p. 68).

In one of the seminal studies on culture and the workplace, Trice and Beyer (1993) explain that when managing culture, leaders may take one of four actions. In young organizations, leaders create organizational culture. As cultures mature, leaders must work to integrate subcultures. When organizational cultures or subcultures are maladaptive, leading cultural change is required. Once cultures become functional, leaders focus on cultural embodiment. As the organization and its environment evolve, leaders have a responsibility to alter their cultural actions (Morgan, 2006).

**Subcultures.** When examining a culture, an understanding of subcultures is critical (Morgan, 2006; Trice & Beyer, 1993). Subcultures naturally form when there is enough shared information within the organization to create "distinctive clusters of ideologies" (Trice & Beyer, p.175). Assumptions set in motion a subculture's adaption on the dominant organizational culture (Schein, 2010). Enhancing subcultures assume the "dominant culture would be more fervent than in the rest of the organization" (Martin, Frost, & O'Neill, 2006, p. 54). Inside organizations, there may be different ideological types of subcultures. Schein (2010) identified three:

- Operators (based on human interaction, high levels of communication, trust and teamwork),

- Engineers (elegant solution, abstract solutions to problems, automation and systems),  
and
- Executives (financial focus, lone hero, sense of rightness and omniscience).

Schein is adamant that in any large organization, the alignment between the three subcultures is critical. Many problems that are attributed to bureaucracy, environmental factors, or personality conflicts among managers are the result of the lack of alignment among subcultures.

**Leadership and Culture.** Culture is intimately linked with leadership--“the only thing of real importance that leaders do is create and manage culture” (Schein, 2010, p.11), which originate from three sources: (1) beliefs, values and assumptions of founders, (2) learning experiences of group members, and (3) new beliefs brought in by new members and leaders. Beliefs, values, and assumptions of founders are the most important aspect underpinning culture (Schein, 2010). Therefore, leadership is highly sought by group members to reduce group anxiety (Conner, 1993; Northouse, 2012).

If environment changes and assumptions become dysfunctional, the organization must find a way to change its culture (Schein, 2010). This is the role of the leader as John Kotter reported in his book *What Leaders Do*. A leader embeds mechanisms a leader outlines that ultimately define the culture. For example, leaders measure reactions to critical incidents, how to allocates resources, who is rewarded, how to recruit, and ultimately who to terminate from the organization (Kotter, 2008). Then there are the structural mechanisms (organization structure, procedures, rituals, physical spaces, stories, and statements. The way leaders communicate these mechanisms (embedded and structural) translate both explicitly on leader assumptions. If assumptions are conflicted, these conflicts become part of the culture (Conner, 1993).

Examining a culture begins with dealing with the values and the artifacts symbolizing its ideologies (Beyer & Hannah, 2000). The relationship between leadership and athletics in higher education is nothing new (Schroeder, 2010). Yet understanding (1) personnel relationships and conflict, (2) environmental factors of organizational culture, and (3) leadership are still relatively unknown in the sport administration literature and were addressed. Unfortunately, many people are afraid of workplace conflict. Left unresolved it can escalate into serious negative outcomes. The athletic department is not a “black box” where external environments regulate, control media, succumb to public pressure, and profit. Internal environments also guide decisions. These concerns are not limited to facilities, coaching staff, student-athletes, budgets, and management as leadership plays a role in conflict and organizational culture (Aviolo, Walumbwa, & Weber, 2009).

### **Purpose and Rationale of Study**

According to Schroeder (2010) we do not know much about the organizational culture of collegiate athletics and much less the complex problems that face the culture of an athletic department. Three characteristics are important in understanding the basis of problems in intercollegiate athletic departments, leadership, and subgroups face. The first is the strong emotions that athletics evoke. Fans, athletic department administrators, coaches, and players care a great deal about sports and about the many norms, values, and ideas represented (Beyer & Hannah, 2000). Second, university athletics conveys and celebrates many different ideologies. Considering most of the settings, participants, and patterned behaviors associated with sports function as cultural forms that have symbolic meanings, they cannot be changed without disturbing and perhaps drastically altering their meanings (Thelin, 2011). Third, both cultural



forms and their meanings are based in the cherished histories of institutions (Beyer & Hannah, 2000; Frey, 1994).

These three characteristics contribute to an opaque understanding of organizational culture of intercollegiate athletic departments. Even though leaders within the NCAA have acknowledged the need for culture change in DI intercollegiate athletics (Brand, 2001; Hoffman, 2013; Wilson, 2013), few studies have delved into cultural change. According to Schroeder (2010) this gap may be due to the lack of frameworks with which to analyze the organizational cultures of athletic departments.

This study focused on a DI program because of the high profile nature, complex NCAA compliance issues, extreme fan interest, and high financial stakes. The rationale for the study is to add to the body of research in intercollegiate athletics and organizational culture. Several frameworks have been used to assess college and university cultures, but intercollegiate athletics occupies a unique space between sport and education (Beyer & Hannah, 2000; Kuh & Whitt, 1988; Tierney, 2008). Over three-quarters of studies on organizational culture in scholarly journals consistently overlook the role of organizational environments and followers (Porter & McLaughlin, 2006), referring instead to leader traits and behaviors (Kaiser, Hogan, & Craig, 2008; Thoroughgood, Padilla, Hunter, & Tate, 2012). Achieving comprehensive athletic reform can bring meaningful change in culture (Beyer & Hannah, 2000; Zimmerman & Wickersham, 2013).

To really understand culture requires a deep understanding of assumptions and beliefs, values, behaviors, and artifacts (Schein, 2010; Trice & Beyer, 1984). It can be assumed through an understanding of the experience of coaches, associate ADs, and staff employees in an athletic department, a culture that protects employees from negative behaviors can be developed to

support a healthier work environment over the course of their employment. Moreover, an organization may have many different cultures or subcultures or no discernible dominant culture at the organizational level. Organizational cultures are created, maintained, or transformed by people. Schein (2010) contends if researchers understand more than AD leadership traits and behaviors, which are currently known from leadership research, culturally appropriate lessons can be gleaned that help employees at postsecondary institutions. To date, the research community knows little regarding organizational culture in athletics across leadership levels and across post-secondary institutions.

### **Significance of Study**

To better understand leadership roles in the culture, a more holistic approach that goes beyond leader-centrism is needed (Thoroughgood & Padilla, 2013). If focusing on actions of individuals, (e.g., the AD), an analysis falls short. By describing in rich detail the interactions of individuals will help understand the organizational culture of a single athletic department.

There are difficulties and sources of resistance facing those who would change university athletics (Beyer & Hannah, 2000; Southall & Nagel, 2008; Trail & Chelladurai, 2002). To outsiders, reforms may seem to be of minor significance and easy to resolve. Many environments are sensitive to the significance of values, artifacts, and traditions have in cultures at their respective colleges and universities and the prices members of those cultures are willing to pay to protect symbols and symbolism. An understanding of the cultural significance of athletics helps to support what seems to be minor changes to intercollegiate athletics.

## **Primary Research Question**

This study is guided by the following critical research question: What are the complex factors of the organizational culture of an athletic department? The specific aim is to understand the culture, leadership, and power of an athletic department. How do the following elements of a collegiate athletic department interact with one another: institutional culture, leadership and power, internal environment, and external environment? This research question served as the guide for addressing the strengths and problems in chapter four. The following research sub-questions guided the study:

- 1) How do institutional culture and leadership and power interact with one another?
- 2) How do institutional culture and athletic department internal environment interact with one another?
- 3) How do institutional culture and external environment interact with one another?
- 4) How do leadership and power and the internal environment interact with one another?
- 5) How do leadership and power and the external environment interact with one another?
- 6) How does the internal environment and external environment interact with one another?

## **Study Design**

Yin (2014) bases case study approaches to research on a constructivist paradigm. Constructivists deem “truth is relative and that it’s dependent on one’s perspective” (Baxter & Jack, 2008, p. 545). This model “recognizes the importance of the subjective human creation of

meaning, but does not reject outright some notion of objectivity. “Pluralism, not relativism, is stressed with focus on the circular dynamic tension of subject and object” (Miller, 1999, p.10).

One of the advantages of the case study method is the close collaboration between the researcher and the participants, while enabling participants to speak freely about their experiences (Miller, 1999). Through questioning and explaining their stories participants are able to describe their views of reality enabling the researcher to better understand the participants’ stories and actions (Baxter & Jack, 2008; Lather, 1992). This study assumes reality is intersubjective, that is socially constructed, such that it can be described and represented through diverse perspectives (Butin, 2010). The case study is grounded in an interpretivist perspective and assumes that truth is constructed. Case study design details are expounded in chapter three.

The essential components of Schroeder’s (2010) intercollegiate athletic (ICA) department model are outlined here. In this particular case, the key components (Institutional Culture, External and Internal Environments, and Leadership and Power), although not mutually exclusive, of the intercollegiate athletic department culture are analyzed for patterns of meaning (Butin, 2010). These components interact in unique ways to form a well-defined athletic department culture (Schroeder, 2010). Figure 1 defines the distinctive cultures specific to athletic departments and presents themes to understand their organizational cultures. For purposes of explanation, each element is presented in isolation, and an account of the components’ interactions is expounded in the review of literature.

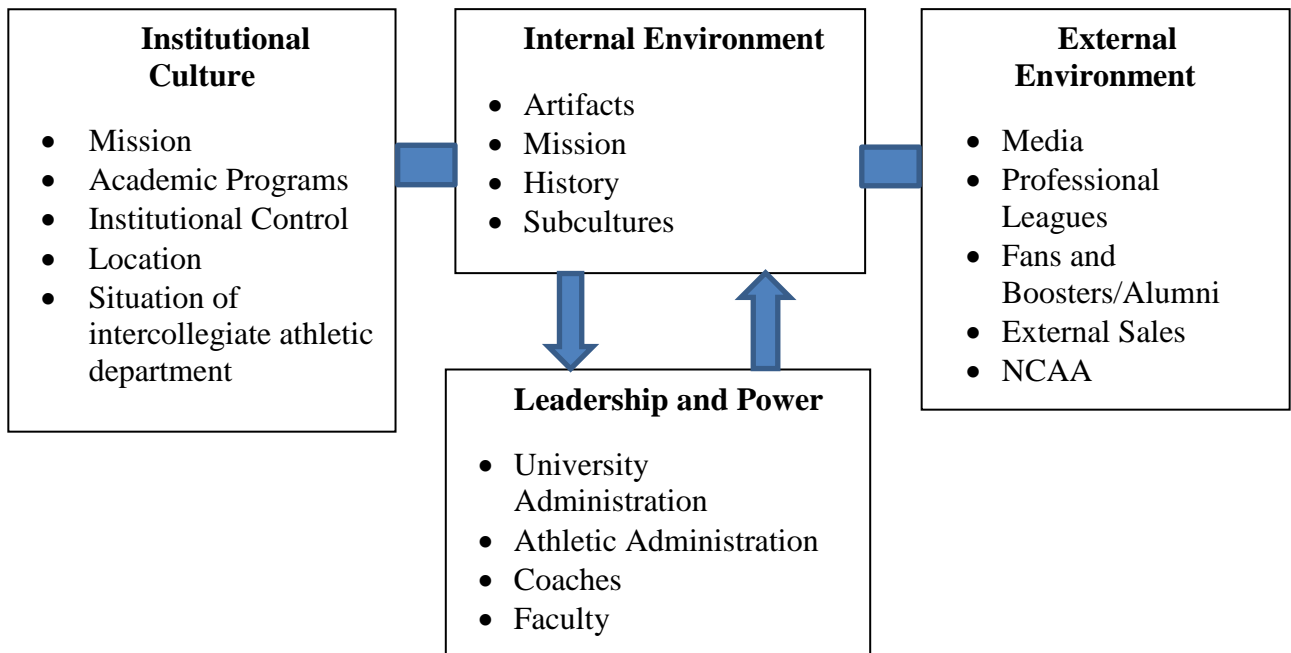


Figure 1: Interactions of the elements model of intercollegiate athletic department (ICA) cultures.

While these environments will be present at every college or university, they interact differently to create a unique culture at each institution. However, the interaction of these elements yields three main tensions that are likely to be similar at every institution. First, within the internal environment, tension undoubtedly arises among administrators, coaches, and athletes as they negotiate the department's values and assumptions. Numerous internal forces impact and constantly evolve internal values. The second major tension occurs when the institutional culture and external environment each attempt to draw the athletic department's values in their respective directions. The internal environment can certainly propel the department values in two directions. Yet cultural anchors can rapidly pull the values to either side if left unchecked or if inconsistent. Cultural anchors give strength to certain practical community values while at the same time opposing certain tempting kinds of cultural change. It is assumed the internal athletic department employees have an obligation to adhere to policies established by the university and

policies are reflective of values. Thus, the third major tension emerges when leaders attempt to move the identified, evolving athletic department culture along their cultural continuum.

### **Delimitations**

The following delimitations for this study were:

- This research site was chosen because it is a DI Football Bowl Subdivision institution. Second, this research site was chosen because participants were comfortable discussing the organizational culture with the researcher. Participants were employees of the University in their positions for over a two year period.
- This institution provided the researcher with multiple sources of evidence to conduct the case study. Time on campus allowed the researcher access to people to conduct interviews, attend sporting events and ceremonies, visit building and facilities to collect a wide variety of data.
- Data were collected over a nine month period during 2014 for a broad case study examining the university's culture, which contributes substantially to an understanding of the broad cultural processes linked to the athletic department. Eight days were spent on the campus.

### **Assumptions**

The assumptions for this study are as follows:

- The interpretation of the meaning of experiences is not necessarily accurate (Gadamer, 2000).
- People act based upon the meanings they gain from interaction within their environment and the derived meanings are processed over time (Blumer, 1969).
- There are cultural meanings associated with job titles and descriptions, which grant power to and influence over employees (Kelloway, Sivanathan, Francis, & Barling, 2005).

- The fear of failure and how it would be perceived determines the actual empowerment felt by employees.

### **Key Operational Definitions**

The following are generalized terms alphabetized and defined for the purpose of this study:

**Athletics Director**--Also referred to as AD or Director of Athletics. They provide leadership to plan, organize, direct, and control the programs and activities for all areas of Intercollegiate Athletics, including, but not necessarily limited to strategic planning, budgeting, and administrative activities (including public relations and fund-raising responsibilities) necessary to achieve a successful athletic program and student-athlete academic excellence, and ensure compliance with University policies and NCAA regulations. ADs are responsible for the leadership, development, and management of competitive and high quality Division I-A athletics programs. They ensure the department operates within the mission of the University and in compliance with NCAA, the conference and University rules and guidelines. Considering the environment, they will need to embrace and lead the changing nature of compliance in college athletics.

**Athletics/Intercollegiate Athletics**--A university or college program that oversees sports programs for students who compete against students from other universities or colleges (NCAA, 2013).

**Culture**--An inner-connected web of relationships that develop meanings (Geertz, 2000; Schultz, 2012). Culture is used to denote group memberships defined by the values of highly motivated people connected to the institution who are goal aligned and where informal control

mechanisms exist (= strength). The successful culture must “fit” its positive context, whether this means the industry condition, a segment, or the organizational strategy (= strategically appropriateness). Moreover, only cultures that can help organizations anticipate and adapt to environmental change will be associated with superior performance over long periods of time (= adaptability). Consequently, the survival of an organization can be strongly influenced by one or more of these relationships (Sporn, 1999).

**Followers**--Followership refers to a role held by certain individuals in an organization, team, or group. Specifically, it is the capacity of an individual to actively follow a leader. Followership is the reciprocal social process of leadership (Kellerman, 2004). Followers in this case refer to coaches, staff, and other people who work in the athletics department and have a high level of expectation to be productive as others have of them. At times, especially with coaches, they are leaders of teams.

**Governance**--The structure and process of decision making a college/university uses to address internal and external issues. Governance takes many forms and involves several constituent groups, including faculty, administrators, trustees, union representatives, and students (Amey, Jessup-Anger, & Jessup-Anger, 2008).

**Associate AD**--This position is responsible for assisting the AD in all game management, facilities maintenance, compliance, and concessions. Associate AD may be considered a rank by the type of institution and the specific job duties and pay grades.

**Sports Information Director**--A sports information director (SID) serves as a public relations specialist for a college or university's athletic department. SIDs promote student-athletes to the public, helping to attract notice for their play and other qualities through the media. SIDs are



typically assigned to a sports team or group of sports teams within an athletic department (NCAA, 2014).

**Executive Director of External Affairs**--This position is responsible for all external relations efforts in the department with a focus on revenue generation through sponsorship, advertising, merchandising, ticket sales, licensing, and special projects (NCAA, 2014).

**Director of Marketing**--This position provides direction, supervision, and day-to-day management for sports marketing, promotions, game entertainment, and graphic design/brand development for the athletics department. This position typically administers, supervises, and manages the department heads of each designated area and implement a plan that will incorporate these areas into one collective unit (NCAA, 2014).

**Institution**--An institution refers to a college or university that is a member of the NCAA (NCAA, 2013). Also, referred to as a member institution.

**Institutional Control**--The responsibility of each NCAA member institution is to control their own intercollegiate athletics program in compliance with the rules and regulations of the Association (NCAA, 2013).

**Institutional Culture**--The meanings, values, and assumptions of organizational culture work as a perpetual filter, prompting the interpretation and translation of higher education institutional requirements to inform local organizational practices (Schultz, 2012).

### **Researcher's Role**

I have conducted two previous qualitative research studies. Powers (2002) was an ethnographic inquiry of gender discrimination in South Korean K-12 physical education classes. The second study was a phenomenological inquiry of destructive leadership in a DI

intercollegiate athletic program (Powers, Judge, & Makela, 2015). The interest for this study originally stemmed from the desire to research destructive leadership in universities. This topic was difficult to pursue as a research study for several reasons. Identifying a cohort and securing participation was challenging. Volunteers demand a certain level of trust before they are willing to share their experiences, a reality of an employment context.

I had taken a strong interest in how university organizations develop their cultures while seeking distinction in a sea of externally standardized similarities among other institutions. Thereby, looking at academic institutional cultures from a dyadic and multiple perspectives (Moreland & Myaskovsky, 2000) allowed a wide variety of participants from different environments on campus to assess the “health” of the athletic department.

I had not been involved professionally in intercollegiate athletics, which enabled an objective role. However, I have professional knowledge and a decade of experience in physical education and fitness/wellness on the collegiate level. These experiences are, however, not close to the present study. Much of my professional life as revolved around the teaching of health and physical education pedagogy. Moreover, many students have been student-athletes and watching them navigate the college experience peaked intellectual questions related to the athletic department. On a personal level, I was married to a football coach for nine years while he coached at three DI universities. In truth, the role of “football wife” colored the view of intercollegiate athletics and influenced the way this dissertation was written. I knew that DI coaches put an enormous amount of time into building and maintaining relationships with current and prospective student-athletes and this takes a heavy toll on family life.

## CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

*According to legend, Haverford College's baseball team had just been clobbered by Villanova in the first game of a doubleheader. Prior to the second game, Haverford's coach gave the team a pep talk which provoked an animated exhortation from one of the Haverford players: "Let's take the field and do what we do best—study!" Not long into the second game, Villanova's shortstop hit a three-run homer, inducing Haverford students in the stands to chant: "That's all right, that's okay, you'll be working for us someday (Zimbalist, 1999, p. 1).*

The goal of this chapter was to shed light on the extant literature regarding organizational cultures of intercollegiate athletic departments. The first section provided an examination of cultures; namely organizational, in higher education and intercollegiate athletic departments. The first thread of research delineated and highlighted the core values and assumptions of institutions. Next, major leadership paradigms are presented followed by an in-depth look at the relationship with power, specifically in the empirical and expository intercollegiate athletic literature. Last, the intersection of external cultures and institutions with a spotlight on intercollegiate athletics was explored. The distinctions among cultural, leadership, and institutional approaches and their mutual interconnections are seen in the proceeding strands.

### **Perspectives of Organizational Culture**

Recent best-selling management and leadership books have found strong organizational cultures as crucial to durable corporate success (e.g., (1) *Leadership: Building highly effective teams how to transform teams into exceptionally cohesive professional networks - A practical guide* (Nir, 2014); (2) *Good to great: Why some companies make the leap...And others don't* (Collins, 2012; (3) *Corporate cultures: The rites and rituals of corporate life* (Deal & Kennedy, 2000); and (4) *Leading change* (Kotter, 2012). Although researchers debate the merits of the

cultural-performance link (Wilderom, Glunk, & Maslowski, 2000), thriving organizations invariably feature well-defined cultures. Yet culture is an exceedingly difficult concept to assess and define because it is a product of multiple social processes among organization members (Geertz, 2000; Martin, 2002). This united process includes negotiation over what actions, ideas, and items hold meaning within an organization. Edgar Schein, author of numerous books and articles of organizational culture stated, “Culture is an abstraction, yet the forces that are created in social and organizational situations that derive from culture are powerful. If we don’t understand the operation of these forces we become the victim of them” (2004, p. 8).

Traditionally, cultures have been studied by anthropologists. In general organizational researchers have conceptualized organizational culture as analogous to the general cultural concept (Rousseau, 1990). Culture is formed by a group of two or more people sharing basic assumptions and values (Van Muijen, 2013). When there is consensus on these meanings, they are linked together into what Trice and Beyer (1993) call ideologies. Ideologies are a powerful cultural base because they bind organizational members together to help fulfill their organizational roles (Martin, 2002). As group members pursue their roles in consistent fashion, these ideologies become replicated and are ultimately driven into members’ subconscious and become taken for granted as shared assumptions (Schein, 2010). Simply stated, organizational culture is viewed as a pattern of basic assumptions that guides individual/members and organizational behavior (Bolman & Deal, 2003).

Martin’s research (2002) defined and categorized three theoretical interpretations of the nature of organizational cultures: Integration, Differentiation, and Fragmentation. Although researchers agree that culture consists of subjective interpretations of a wide range of manifestations and in turn, interpretations motivate human action, there is divergence in the

degree of consensus on these interpretations to be reached by the members of a collective. To integrate these divergent conceptualizations of culture, Martin's (2002) meta-analysis stated that not one of the three single interpretations is sufficient to capture the complexity of a culture. The most dominate of the three interpretations used to describe most organizational culture research has been Integration.

Integration studies, according to Martin (2002) have been the most popular, yet, least supported empirically. "Integration studies of culture implicitly assume that a culture is characterized by consistency, organization-wide consensus, and clarity" (Martin, 2002, p. 4). The conclusion reached was that people in higher levels of an organization articulate a set of espoused values, sometimes in the form of a mission or vision statement; these values are then reinforced by a variety of cultural manifestations that supposedly generate organization-wide agreement on values.

In integration studies, the culture is top-down centric by management and socialized through selectively hiring people with similar priorities and "attempting to socialize new employees thoroughly" (Martin, 2002, p. 6). Integration refers to interpretations that lead to consensus across the whole collective (Martin 2002). No ambiguity exists in members' interpretations of the manifestations; interpretations are clear to all. Integration assumes that actors within a collective interpret the manifestations in the same way, and that those manifestations will be consistent with each other. There are many other variables, which affect what is considered strong performance (economics, marketing, and strategic agendas) and not included in integrative cultural studies. Many critics of integration research findings make a strong claim that it is highly unlikely that any organizational culture, studied in depth, would

exhibit consistency, organization-wide consensus, and clarity that integration studies have claimed to find (Alvesson, 2002; Martin, 2002).

Tierney (1988) attempted to establish key integrative cultural dimensions that could be used by administrators to change institutional elements identified as out of balance within the predominant culture. He argued that through specific characteristics of universities, a culture develops that can be managed effectively through organization-wide symbolic approaches. Integration studies offer managers and researchers a “seductive promise of harmony and value homogeneity that is empirically unmerited and unlikely to be fulfilled” (Martin, Frost, & O’Neill, 2006, p. 736).

The second interpretation Martin (2002) described from the meta-analyses was differentiation studies. Organizations arranged with overlapping, nested subcultures that coexist in relationships of intergroup harmony, conflict, or indifference embody differentiated cultures. Differentiation take a more critical approach than Fragmentation or Integration studies (Alvesson, 2002; Martin, Frost, & O’Neill, 2006; Willmott, 1993) conceptualizing culture as a partially successful attempt by management to exercise hegemonic control over lower ranking employees, eliciting a mix of compliance and resistance. Belcher (2006) argued that the rules imposed on others, for example, is the core dimension for differentiation and for the development of a specific set of values. The manifestations and/or their interpretations are inconsistent with other manifestations in the cultural collective and represent inconsistencies that delineate sub-cultural boundaries. These inconsistent interpretations are often the source of conflict, which define relationships among the groups. Under the differentiation perspective, ambiguous interpretations are not assumed away and are investigated as they reflect boundaries

among the sub-cultures. This is to say that ambiguous interpretations are acknowledged in descriptions of the differences among groups, but not on their own merit (Martin, 2002).

In Fragmentation studies of culture, claims of clarity, consistency, and consensus are shown to be idealized oversimplifications that fail to capture the complexity of organizational functioning. In this perspective, ambiguity is defined to include multiple meanings, “paradox, irony, and inescapable contradictions” (Martin, 2002, p. 10). Ambiguity is a defining feature of these cultures where different members of the organization attach meaning to particular manifestations are not clearly consistent nor clearly in conflict (Leidner & Kayworth, 2006). Ambiguous interpretations of manifestations, which are likely to result in paradoxical or ironic actions and reactions (Leidner & Kayworth, 2006). Such interpretations do not suggest any clear cultural or sub-cultural boundaries and produce a fragmented view of the manifestations. In essence, the members of an organization can and do interpret the manifestations in a number of different ways, thus not delineating islands of consensus, consistency, or clarity. Through this lens, consensus may exist, however it is “issue-specific and transient: problems or issues get activated, generate positive and negative reactions, and then fade from attention as other issues take center stage, creating temporary, issue-specific networks of connection that disappear and reconfigure themselves in a constant flux” (Martin, 2002, p.11).

While most studies utilize one of the three perspectives for interpretation, more recent research indicates that organizational culture contains elements congruent with all three interpretations (Martin, 2002). If any organization is studied in enough depth, some issues, values, and objectives will be seen to generate organization-wide consensus, consistency, and clarity (an Integration interpretation). At the same time, other aspects of an organization’s culture will coalesce into subcultures that hold differing opinions about what is important, what should

happen, and why (a Differentiation interpretation). Finally, some elements will be ambiguous, in a state of constant flux, generating multiple, plausible interpretations (a Fragmentation interpretation).

**Subcultures.** To examine subcultures within organizations in some depth, a few conceptual distinctions are needed. When examining any organizational culture, an accounting of subcultures is important (Martin & Siehl, 1983; Morgan, 2006). Subcultures are spawned when subgroups share enough experiences to create their own “distinctive clusters of ideologies” (Trice & Beyer, p.174) within an organization. While assumptions of subcultures develop around a variety of experiences (e.g., subcultures in athletics may be sports, coaches’ salaries, or gender based), the nature of the assumptions determines the subculture’s effect on the dominant organizational culture and vice versa (Schein, 2010).

Orthogonal subcultures operate simultaneously, but on their own assumptions sets, however, the subculture’s assumptions do not necessarily clash with those of the dominant culture. Martin and Siehl (1983) indicate “members of orthogonal subcultures also accept the norms of the overall culture and may be apparent throughout the entire organization” (p. 63). Subcultures could relate to a specific concern, (e.g., safety, quality, or service) and connect members voluntarily or involuntarily (Martin, Frost, & O’Neill, 2006). Table 1 identifies examples of subcultures within a university or college (Van Muijen, 2013).

When viewed from the differentiation perspective, the organization is no longer seen as a cultural monolith; instead, it is a collection of subcultures (Schein, 2010). Some subcultures enthusiastically reinforce the views of the power and leadership environment and operate cooperatively, which resembles an integration interpretation of culture (Martin, 2002; Schein,



2010). Martin maintained that culture develops around the power and leadership environment of an organization. There may be a for-public-consumption culture power and leadership

Table 1 Possible Subcultures within an Organization (Van Muijen, 2013)

Subcultures	Levels of the Organization with University and Athletic Department Examples
Elite culture	“For your eyes only” or “For public consumption” (e.g., president and AD)
Departmental culture	Horizontal slice, (e.g., admissions department)
Divisional culture	Vertical slice, (e.g., a school or college)
Local culture	Within a geographical location/unit (e.g., academic advisors for athletes and academic advisors for freshmen)
Issue-related culture	Metaphorical, related to an important issue throughout the organization, (e.g., safety on campus)
Professional culture	On basis of professional background and training (e.g., majors and degree programs)

Note: Adapted from “Organizational Culture,” by J.J. Van Muijen, in P.J. Drenth, H. Thierry, & C.J. Wolff, (Eds.), *A Handbook of Work and Organizational Psychology: Organizational Psychology (4<sup>th</sup> ed)*, (pp. 113-132), East Sussex, UK: Psychology Press.

environment, deliberately designed to be passed down through the organization to the outside world. Even with more horizontal organizations, an integration interpretation exists. Therefore, as soon as this type of culture spreads through the organization, a person can speak through the organization and can speak of its culture.

Subcultures may also develop in a vertical slice of the organization such as a division. Each division might distinguish itself through unique social interactions within their subculture, for example, the journalism department may create newspapers, journals, and books. Where, the

women studies department may have a lesbian parade and the military science department organizes a warfare demonstration to represent their specific culture to the larger inside/outside group. Each division may have its own culture.

A horizontal slice of an organization such as particular job or hierarchal level can be a potential locus of culture (Schein, 1992). For example, the admissions department is responsible for communication and cooperation across the school and makes connections where perhaps none previously existed. A subculture can refer to a distinctive local culture, local in geographical sense, which could be different from the dominant organizational culture (Van Muijen, 2013). Such cultural differences might be caused by differences in environmental conditions (e.g., athlete student advisors or academic advisor for freshmen), cultural context, what occurs among those in the same class or unit. Finally, subculture could refer to a specific issue, such as those of a particular orientation on campus. In this sense, one can speak about a culture of sexual discrimination within an organization (Van Muijen, 2013). This subculture based on an issue may exist throughout the entire organization (Schein, 1992).

Athletic department subcultures rise from a variety of sources (e.g., revenue/non-revenue, scholarships/non-scholarships, male/female sports) and each has the ability to accept, enhance, or challenge the assumptions of the entire athletic department (Southall, Wells, & Nagel, 2005). Most athletic departments operate like sports teams do, with military command-style approaches to control with the power at the top of the hierarchy, where coaches are accountable to and from the AD (Duderstadt, 2006). Coaches are authority figures to players as assistant coaches and ADs are to head coaches. Exploring the relationships of possible subcultures is invaluable as far as providing space for communication that would have a chance to connect them. Throughout

the institutions' strand, perspectives on subcultures in higher education and athletic departments will be examined.

**Functions of Organizational Culture in Higher Education.** Research on organizational culture has largely stemmed from the corporate arena, due to the relationship with production outcomes and financial performance. A fundamental difference comparing academic organizational cultures with the corporate sector is they do not operate in a sole profit-centered environment (Duderstadt, 2006). A major similarity academic cultures and the corporate world is they both share assessment and outcomes. All organizations rely on a central mission of authority to govern the relations among their members (Cuban, 2009). Traditional functions of universities have been teaching, research, and service. In their teaching activities, universities provide education for jobs, as well as preparation for lifelong learning (Nixon, 2014). University research increases the body of basic knowledge as well as its applications to practical problems (Duderstadt, 2006). The members consist of students, faculty, administration, staff and professional employees, and alumni.

Multiple frameworks have been developed from which five main features emerged as the cornerstones of investigating universities cultures (Bergquist, 1992; Kuh & Whitt, 1988; Rhoads & Tierney, 1992; Tierney, 2008). First, investigating university culture requires a full accounting of its institutional history. The reason for a university's founding, growth, and development underscores multiple values and assumptions (Schroeder, 2010). As college and universities in the United States are becoming more responsive to outside constituencies and less sensitive to faculty and other internal constituencies, academic culture is becoming more professional, and academic institutions are becoming more bureaucratic (Bowles, 2014; Martin & Christy, 2010; Sack, 2009; Waugh, 2003; Whitley & Gläser, 2014).

Second, the organization structure of a university is a major aspect of its culture. Its mission serves as espoused values by which its actions can be evaluated and the academic programs are often an outgrowth (Duderstadt, 2006). Most American universities are organized similarly from a top-down approach. The Board of Trustees is responsible for the oversight of the institution. The Board adopts rules, regulations, policies, and has authority over curricular development, use of property, development of facilities, and fiscal and human resources management. Presidents are being held more accountable to external constituencies, not faculty per se; particularly to public officials and business leaders involved in hiring them and the foundations and businesses that supplement their salaries and benefits (Waugh, 2003).

The 1991 on Intercollegiate Athletics (KCIA) *Report, A Call to Action: Reconnecting College Sports and Higher Education*, urged college and university presidents to lead through reforms by closely aligning athletics with educational values. The Commission recommended shared actions by presidents, trustees, conferences, faculty, and others to address disconnects among athletics and higher education. Instead, a transformation of intercollegiate athletics would require college presidents working in concert with other on-campus environments to affect necessary change (KCIA, 2009). Ninety-five FBS university presidents were phone interviewed in 2009 by a research committee affiliated with the KCIA. In sum the qualitative report supported that “presidents would seriously change athletics but don’t see themselves as the force for the changes needed nor have they identified an alternative force they believe could be effective” (p. 7).

A third aspect of university culture and the subcultures within are subcultures of students, faculty, and staff (Schroeder, 2010). Each subculture has the ability to strengthen, amend, or threaten the overall culture.

Fourth, the assessment of academic culture must account for numerous entities in the external environment with cultures of their own (Schroeder, 2010). Accreditation bodies, regulatory agencies, professional agencies, media outlets, alumni, grant sources, and the supply of prospective students are examples of externalities that have potential to alter a university's values and assumptions.

Fifth, leadership is the final component that must be considered when assessing university culture. It must account for all the preceding components and may emerge from any part of the culture (Schroeder, 2010). A 2013 report by the Rawlings Panel on Intercollegiate Athletics suggested an environment of ambiguity by leadership in higher education presents challenges that are deeply entrenched in the culture. The Panel's call for increased oversight for the intercollegiate athletic departments, including coaches, staff, managers, and interns could improve the quality of the academic and athletic experiences of the student-athlete.

Countercultures are vital facilitators of changing environments (Fugazzotto, 2012; Geiger, 2013). According to Schein (2006), leadership tools that "will maintain mutual respect and create coordinated action" (p. 289) throughout an organization may be considered for reform (Schroeder, 2010). An entire thread in this review of literature is dedicated to leadership theories and positions of power affiliated with intercollegiate athletics.

**Framework of Values and Assumptions.** Similar to Martin (2002), Schein explained culture as both a management tool and a context. As a tool, organizational cultures can be managed and changed, measured quantitatively and qualitatively, interpreted objectively, and tend to be the espoused values of executives who influence the group (Cameron & Quinn, 2011). Moreover, values are initially started by a founder of the culture and then assimilated as values

that become a shared assumption of the culture (Schein, 2010). Values and assumptions change and reprioritize over time.

Several approaches assess the health of organizational culture (Cooke & Rousseau, 1988; Scott, Mannion, Davies, & Marshall, 2003). Schein's (2010) integrative, leader-centered model is a "commonly accepted framework for uncovering the web of culture" (Schroeder, 2010, p. 99). This three-tiered paradigm of organizational culture is a basis of traditions. They include artifacts, basic assumptions, and adopted values (see Figure 2). Artifacts comprise the most transparent tier of Schein's model and represents cultural kinesthetic elements: seen, felt, or heard. Although artifacts like mascots, fight songs, and facilities are identifiable, there are deep meanings associated with artifacts (Schein, 2010; Schroeder, 2010) and play a significant role in intercollegiate athletic departments' organizational culture.

Schein argues that overt patterns of artifacts and human behavior are easy to observe, yet, sometimes hard to decipher (Schein, 1992). As a result artifacts may not tell the complete story about organizational culture (Schein, 2010). It is difficult to unravel the meaning of artifacts for a given group (e.g., *subgroup*, *orthogonal group*, and *counterculture*) (Martin & Siehl, 1982). Human behavior is influenced by environmental factors and cultural disposition. "Only after we have discovered the deeper layers ... of culture can we specify what is and what not an artifact that reflects culture is" (Schein, 1992, p. 14).

The next level according to Schein (2010), which constitutes the organization culture, is the values of the employees. The values of the individuals working in the organization play an important role in deciding the organization culture. The thought processes and attitudes of employees have deep impact on the culture of any particular organization. The mindset of the individual associated with any particular organization influences the culture of the workplace.

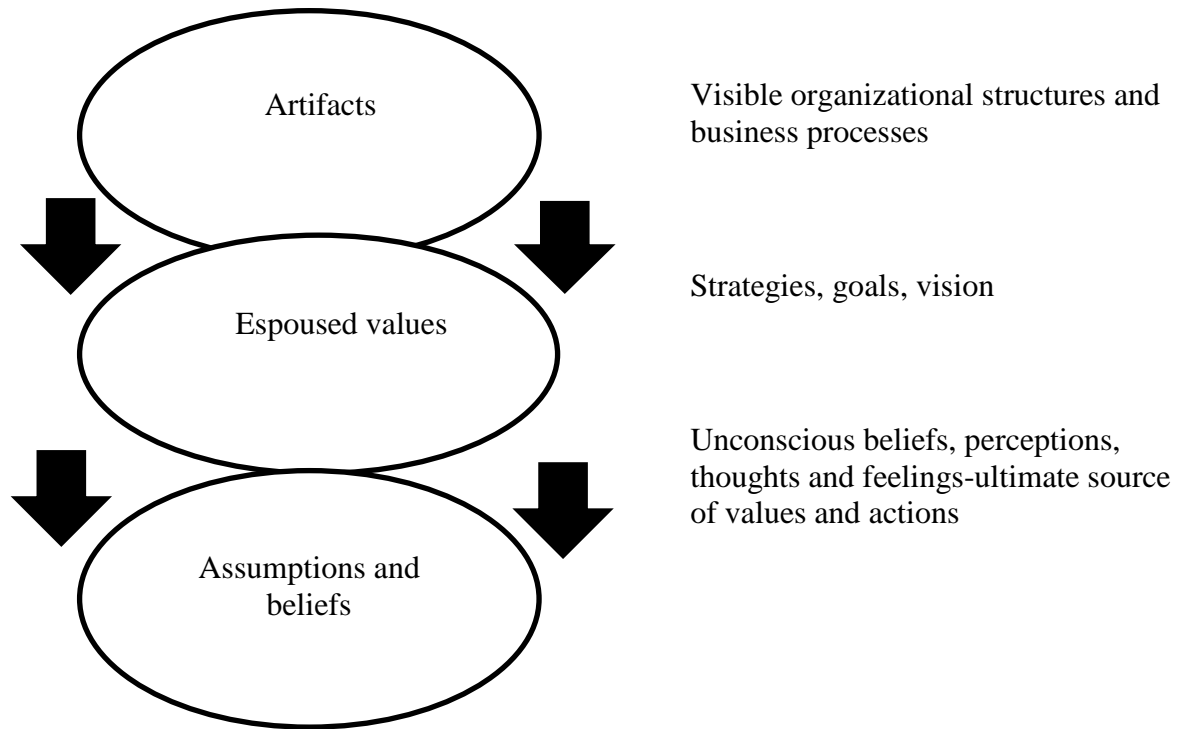


Figure 2. Schematic of the levels of culture. Adapted from Schein, E. (2010). *Organizational Culture and Leadership*, 4th ed. Jossey-Bass.

An individual might state that one of his/her important priorities is to be honest even with competitors. This may, however, contradict actual actions. In most societies lying is viewed as wrong; however, in some organizations this might be the norm (Van Muijen, 2013). People are dishonest enough to profit in some manner but honest enough to delude themselves of their own integrity. A little bit of dishonesty gives a taste of gain without spoiling a positive image (Mazar, Amir, & Ariely, 2008). Values may reflect assumptions about what behaviors may be right and wrong (Van Muijen, 2013).

Examples of assimilated values are embedded in departmental handbooks and mission statements denoting what an organization wants and providing an indication of the importance of those desires (Daft, 2009). Often coinciding, assimilated values and artifacts may inaccurately describe organizational culture both from internal and external perspectives. Therefore, it is

uncommon for an organization to act in complete contrast with its stated beliefs and values (Schein, 2010). Conscious values are often symbolic in official documents and take on the philosophy of the organization. If the values involved are not based upon prior learning, these values may contrast with the behaviors of employees (Van Muijen, 2013).

There is a distinction among values that are consciously shared and lived, and those that remain unconscious and undisclosed (Schroeder, 2010). Espoused values may be known, because they are posted on the walls of offices or the pages of a website, but they may not be shared, taken-for-granted, negotiated or even discussed, and most likely may not be remembered (Barrett, 1998). The espoused values of the culture would be well known and supported by underlying, taken-for-granted values (do they walk the talk?) created by an ethical leader as part of organizational culture (Schein, 2010).

To best access organizational culture, basic cultural assumptions must be uncovered (Schroeder, 2010). The third level of Schein's (1992) organizational culture model consists of basic assumptions, which may be unconscious and taken for granted by the group. Basic assumptions are the foundation from which to examine organizational behavior as they provide a subconscious, almost thoughtless guide for members to react to the environment (Daft, 2009; Schein, 2010). Mental maps that guide members of an organization with their feelings, perceptions, and actions within the culture are ultimately the basic assumptions (Schein, 2010; Schroeder, 2010).

Ostensibly, an athletic department's culture is a function of the institutional culture and the external environment, but the internal environment of the athletic department has many cultural elements as well (Schroeder, 2010). Athletic departments, not unlike units of other organizations express their values with artifacts like mascots, logos, slogans, cheers, rituals, and



ceremonies; however the meanings of such artifacts are often difficult to determine for outsiders (Beyer & Hannah, 2000). To interpret the real assumptions of a culture, shared meanings of such artifacts must be deciphered (Schroder, 2010). These meanings can be explained/interpreted by leaders and researchers along with the stated mission to assess the homogeneity of the culture. The mission, artifacts, subcultures, and history, which that emanate from within, moderate the manner in which the external forces are balanced against the institutional culture (Martin, 2002).

**Values and Assumptions of Culture in Intercollegiate Athletic Departments.** There is a significant body of research on values and assumptions in intercollegiate athletics. Intercollegiate athletics has not been viewed as a consistent gold standard for implementing established or promoted values of a university for a long time (Knorr, 2004). To understand the larger problem, Hoffman stated, “Nowhere are the frames of ambiguity in purpose, power, experience, and success more useful in the oversight and leadership of college sports” (2013, p. 12). As intercollegiate athletics have increased in popularity and media coverage, conflicting viewpoints regarding the positive or negative effects imparted to higher education values have been raised as often the comparison is to professional sports (Adler & Adler, 1991; Gerdy, 1997).

The discrepancy among academic and athletic values has been explored in research (Baxter, Margavio & Lambert, 1996; Trail & Chelladurai, 2002). William Bowen author of several books focused on collegiate sports and educational values claimed, “Sports are supposed to support education, not the other way around. This problem is far from confined to the highly publicized programs. As others and I have argued, a misplaced emphasis on new-style college sports is having harmful effects on the educational programs of institutions up and down the

competitive landscape” (2014, p. 34). The author declared “amateur” status of big-time college sports is a sham even for the Ivies and some D3 schools. This is not an example of values, however, an indication that winning is valued at any cost by coaches and student-athletes.

Cooper and Weight’s (2012) study suggests “to fully maximize the educational potential of intercollegiate athletics, further concentrated efforts need to be made to imbed values into the daily processes of academic culture” (p. 339). Surveys collected from 192 D3 head ADs [n = 75] and lower level (senior, associate, or assistant) ADs [n = 117] garnered responses of their perceptions of organizational values of the institution. They agreed “student-athlete experience” and “academic excellence” were top priorities and demonstrated support that the mission of D3 departments is to provide high-quality educational experiences in the classrooms and in athletic competitions.

There were significant differences between ADs and lower-level administrators regarding the lack of value-culturalization within the departments. What this study demonstrated was of 11 organizational core values, disparities among the two groups were revealed with six of the values: (1) student-athlete experience; (2) health and safety for individuals in the athletic department; (3) contribution to university mission; (4) fiscal responsibility; (5) growth opportunities for staff in the athletic department; and (6) relationship cultivation for staff in the athletic department.

Zimbalist (2001) wrote that the clear line of demarcation among intercollegiate athletics and professional sports is not the presence or absence of commercialism and corporate interests. Rather, two differences stand out. First, unlike their handsomely remunerated coaches and ADs (ADs), college athletes do not get paid (Benford, 2007; Duderstadt, 2006; Wilson, 2013). Second, the NCAA and its member schools, construed to be amateur organizations promoting

educational missions, do not pay taxes on their millions from TV deals, sponsorships, licensing, or Final Four tickets. In a fashion similar to other non-profit organizations, (e.g., churches and hospitals), the NCAA provides student-athlete led volunteer programs in the community.

University of Kentucky's basketball team was the runner-up in the 2014 NCAA national DI basketball tournament. Many of their star players opted for "one and done" (enrolled one year as a college student) and left college for the National Basketball Association. Bowen, a president of Princeton University for 16 years co-authored with Shulman in *The Game of Life: College Sports and Educational Values*, concluded:

In too many instances, the very term "student-athlete" has become nothing less than an oxymoron; a cynical attempt to put clothes on the emperor. Ostensibly, Bowen is purporting that some student-athletes use college sports as an entry way to professional sports with no intention of graduating. Many of us hate to have cherished memories of the joys of real college sports, played in the right way for the right reasons, tarnished in this way." (2011, p. 234)

Rightly so, some schools do worry, yet some NCAA schools find the temptations of success too alluring to worry about the rules. Zimbalist argued:

They cheat by arranging to help their prospective athletes pass standardized tests. They cheat by providing illegal payments to their recruits. They cheat by setting up special rinky-dink curricula so their athletes can stay qualified. And when one school cheats, others feel compelled to do the same. Then the NCAA passes new rules to curtail the cheating. Sometimes these rules are enforced, sometimes not, but rarely is the penalty harsh enough to be a serious deterrent. The solution, it turns out, is more rules. (2011, p.18)

"A common theme in contemporary scholarship, whether it is descriptive or predictive, is the reoccurrence of college sports leading a schizophrenic existence" (Zimbalist, 2001, p. 38).

The universities themselves cannot seem to manage intercollegiate athletics (Pope & Pope, 2009; Shulman & Bowen, 2002; Zimbalist, 2001). The NCAA claims that it manages college sports in a way that promotes both the goals of higher education and the financial condition of the

university. Critics say it does neither (Baxter, Margavio & Lambert, 1996; Hoffman, 2013; Knorr, 2004; Trail & Chelladurai, 2002).

When confronted by the challenges of Title IX and gender equity, the NCAA and its member schools want to be treated as a business to do as they please without regulatory oversight demanded of higher education institutions (Borland, Goff, & Pulsinelli, 1992; Lazaroff, 2014). Zimbalist (2001) explained why they want it both ways, “The NCAA and its member schools want their special tax exemptions as part of the nonprofit educational establishment and they have special amateur status in order to avoid paying their athletes” (p, 33). The NCAA and member institutions have educational status and declare exemption from regulatory oversight by the Department of Education and the Internal Revenue Service (Borland, Goff, & Pulsinelli, 1992; Lazaroff, 2014).

The NCAA and its member schools claim that athletics are good for everybody. According to the Delta Cost project (2013) between 2005 and 2010, on a per-capita basis, the report found, DI athletic costs increased at least twice as fast as academic spending at institutions with athletic programs. Most Division I athletic departments receive support from their institutions and students. In the Football Bowl Subdivision, the report found, student fees cover 7.6 % of athletic budgets, while 10.1 % comes from institution and state support. The rest comes from revenues generated through ticket sales, television agreements, and other sources. In the other subdivisions, more than 70 % of athletic budgets come from student fees and institutional and state support (Nixon, 2010). The belief that college sports are a financial boon is often misguided. More often than not, the colleges and universities are subsidizing athletics. Student fees and institutional subsidies (from tuition, state appropriations, endowments, or other revenue-generating activities on campus) often support college sports programs.

**Head Coach Salaries and Compensation Packages.** There are individuals in intercollegiate athletics with salaries and compensation packages similar to those in professional sports. Collegiate athletics can skew universities' priorities (Cohan, 2014) and the question, 'what is the money buying' never seems to be asked. Take Duke University in Durham, North Carolina, in 2004, Richard Brodhead arrived as Duke's president from Yale. When the University's celebrity basketball coach, Mike Krzyzewski, threatened to leave for the Los Angeles Lakers in 2004, it became clear the coach was more powerful than the president. President Brodhead, still in office, was paid nearly \$1,200,000. The following year basketball coach Krzyzewski took home almost \$9,700,000 in salary and compensation.

In 2010, the range of head football coaches salaries for the Top 25 ranked teams was from \$1,925,000 to 5,166,000, far exceeding, ADs and college presidents (Nixon, 2014). In 2011 men's basketball coaches earned from \$1,352,000 to \$6,100,000. According to Brady, Berkowitz, and Upton (2012) coaches' pay has outpaced the pay of corporate executives (CEO). Salaries and compensation packages of college coaches have drawn indignation of the U.S. Congress and the public. Among 2007 and 2011, CEO pay — including salary, stock, options, bonuses, and other pay — rose 23%. In that same period, coaches' pay increased 44%.

Another public employee salary, Arizona Governor Jan Brewer's 2013 salary was \$95,000. That same year at Arizona State University (ASU), the head football coach earned \$1,500,000. The head men's basketball coach annual salary was \$1,100,000 and the head coach for women's basketball earned \$477,000. The fourth highest paid public employee at ASU is the president, who earned \$475,000 in 2013.

Compensation and benefits for athletic department staff are the largest expense across all subdivisions and consume about one third of DI athletic budgets. At Rutgers University (NJ), in

2012 the university forgave \$100,000 of the football coach's interest-free home loan as a retention incentive. The women's basketball coach got monthly golf and car allowances. Both collected bonuses without winning a championship (Alex, 2011). Some institutions will do a lot to retain coaches.

**Assumptions: Returns on Investment.** Feelings toward intercollegiate athletics programs and their benefits to the university vary significantly among university environments and the general public (Nixon, 2014, Putler & Wolfe, 1999). It is obvious that institutional officials, trustees, athletics boosters, and donors at many of the top-rated, Division I, FBS institutions in the United States place a very high value on winning championships (Tsitsos & Nixon, 2012).

Secondly, winning, rankings, high profile television contracts, and improving the image of an institution are among some of the variables likely affecting the perceptions of successful athletic programs (Pope & Pope, 2009). Media outlets, conferences, the NCAA, and only a handful of universities earn profits through intercollegiate athletic competition (Noll, 2004; Southall & Nagel, 2008; Southall, Nagel, Amis, & Southall, 2008; Zimbalist, 1999). Chasing earnings potential, athletes, college coaches, and administrators devote an inordinate amount of energy, time, resources, and money to develop successful structures within their programs (Noll, 2004).

Higher education institutions traditionally have accepted academic and athletic institutional rankings as a method to gain prestige and to lure students to attend (Vanover & DeBowes, 2013). Moreover, ranking have never been more prominent (Fisher, 2009). When colleges win athletic championships more students may want to attend the university. However, there is no consistent evidence for this myth. Institutions have found they can influence their

place in the rankings (McDonough, Antonio, Walpole, & Perez, 2004). Fisher (2009) investigated the relationship among successful intercollegiate athletic programs and the U.S. News and World Report rankings of higher education institutions. He hypothesized the public may expect a positive correlation between high rankings and successful athletic programs. Toma (2003) found little statistical correlation among athletic program success and institutional rankings overall. However, private schools that dominate the upper rankings, did better over time, if the institution had maintained a Division I football program. Sperber (2000) suggested that athletic programs may be of more benefit to public institutions in the middle rankings to attract students (Fisher, 2009). College sports programs often seem as advertising vehicles, boosting exposure and prestige for universities that are successful, regardless of the consistent evidence indicating no real monetary or enrollment increases from athletics. Senior university administrators have yet to reexamine their game plans (Desrochers, 2013).

**The Case for Paying Student-Athletes.** Intellectual elitists and the general public view excessive expenditures, athletic scholarships, and lower academic admissions standards for athletics directly related to an emphasis on winning and revenue, ultimately detracting from academic achievement (Clotfelter, 2011). While recognizing the NCAA's cultural significance of big-time college sports, critics contend the current collegiate model (Brand, 2006a, 2006b) should more accurately be labeled "jock capitalism," a term coined by Southall and Nagel (2010), derived from what Sack (2009) identified as "academic capitalism" an approach to university faculty governance that emphasizes the importance of "the bottom line" (p. 78). Similar to Schein's (1992) paradigm on levels of organizational culture, which identify elements and the associated behaviors, Sack (2009) outlined three main assumptions: intellectual elitism,

academic capitalism, and athlete rights to interpret the reality of commercialized football and men's basketball.

Schein (2003) stated that for human beings basic assumptions are unconscious and taken for granted. Correspondingly, academic capitalism and intellectual elitism support the commercialization of college sports assuming it provides career preparation lessons for athletes and the revenue needed to expand access to higher education as well as to improve academic support for athletes (Nixon, 2014; Sack, 2009; Schroeder, 2010). However Henry Giroux placed athletic capitalism in a larger socioeconomic context, "collegiate sport is on trial here, not simply those who colluded to protect the reputation of a storied football program or the reputation of Penn State University, but a society governed by market-driven values, a survival of the fittest ethic, and an unregulated drive for profit-making regardless of the human and social costs" (as cited in Stannard, 2012, para. 3). Sack (2009) argued making money from commercialized sport and not paying athletes to play results from differences in core assumptions about higher education, commercialization, and athletic scholarships. However, only 17 colleges and universities made profits in 2012, thus figuring out a way to pay athletes beyond scholarships, living and food stipends will ultimately fall on individual institutions (Terlap & Cohen, 2014).

Sack (2009) identified student-athletes' rights as the third assumption. Sack (2009) has addressed the issue of colleges and universities treating athletes like employees. Under common law, an employee is a person who performs services for another under a contract of hire, subject to the other's control in return for payment (Sack, 2014). The current unionization of college athletes at Northwestern University is a natural outgrowth of the NCAA's 1973 decision to dump four-year scholarships, in favor of one-year renewable scholarships. If their performance in their sport is sub-par, get in trouble, or fail academically student-athletes see their scholarships



dissolve. Employees who perform services for another under a contract of hire, subject to the other's control in return for payment, can be fired (Sack, 2014). According to Worker's Compensation law, four factors must be present in a contract for hire. These factors include: the proposed employer's right to control the activities of the proposed employee, the proposed employer's right to discipline or fire the proposed employee, the payment of wages or other benefits for daily living expenses, and whether the task performed was an integral part of the employer's business.

Importantly from Brand's (2006a, 2006b) and the Internal Revenue Service's perspective, athletic scholarships do not constitute "pay for play." While the NCAA, university administrators, and college-sport consumers seem to see no contradiction among jock capitalism and espoused educational missions of higher-education institutions (Baxter & Lambert, 1991; Southall & Nagel, 2010). Historically, criticism of big-time college sport has focused on a conflict among emphasis on winning and generating revenue and higher education's expressed goal of educating students and searching for knowledge through research (Southall & Nagel, 2008). Sack's (2009) assumptions of athletes' rights are dismantling the current debate regarding the business and collegiate approaches to managing intercollegiate athletic departments.

In 2014, the NCAA's ban on paying college athletes for their likenesses on television and video games violate antitrust laws was overturned. Beginning in August of 2015, the O'Bannon case, representing 65 colleges and universities will likely raise the value of scholarships to cover the full cost of attendance, as well as paying players through trust funds that can be accessed after college. The federal judge who oversaw the case recommended capping the payments at \$5000 per players per year, and it would not violate antitrust laws (Strauss, 2014).

The current model of financial scholarship support that the NCAA uses is more than 40 years old and no longer fits with the expectations and demands placed on today's student-athletes (Benford, 2007; Shulman & Bowen, 2002; Southall & Nagel, 2010; Wilson, 2013). Defenders of the NCAA's collegiate sports policies do not deny the model's characterization as jock capitalism (Clotfelter, 2011; DeVenzio, 1986; Eitzen, 1988). Instead, they consistently argue the clear demarcation between big-time college and professional sport is not whether college sport is a business, but whether college athletes are unpaid amateurs (Clotfelter, 2011; DeBrock, Hendricks, & Koenker, 1996; Zimbalist, 2001).

Rights advocates view college sport as a business, but see athletes as being exploited because they are not treated as employees but provide much of the product (Bowen & Levin, 2011; Lapchick, 1986; Sperber, 1998). During the past four decades, the NCAA has crafted a payment system that provides a relatively cheap and steady supply of high school athletes for the burgeoning business of collegiate sports and gives coaches the kind of control over them that employers have over employees.

Consistent with this jock-capitalist (Sack, 2009) approach to managing collegiate athletics like corporate businesses, athletic departments utilize marketing practices to exploit the same revenue streams as professional leagues such as the National Basketball Association (NBA) and the National Football League (NFL) (Southall, Southall & Dwyer, 2009). The dilemma is that most colleges and universities cannot afford to pay student-athletes (Strauss, 2014). Secondly, the moral and practical implications involved in paying athletes changes the definition of amateurism (Strauss, 2014). Third, paying college athletes skews recruiting and creates an unfair advantage for the wealthiest of schools (Terlep & Cohen, 2014). The NCAA currently lists among its core values supporting "the collegiate model of athletics in which

students participate as an avocation, balancing their academic, social and athletics experiences” (National Collegiate Athletic Association, 2010a, para. 2).

According to the College Athletes Players Association (CAPA), under the technical definition of work, student-athletes do work for their respective institutions, as professional athletes (Merriam-Webster, 2015). With significant budgets in intercollegiate athletics, the amateurism and professionalism line is increasingly blurred. Initially supported by a majority of Northwestern University (Illinois) football players, CAPA is recruiting more student-athletes. Several active non-profit organizations campaign for student-athletes rights (Vanover & DeBowes, 2014). The Drake Group, The Student-Athletes Human Rights Project (SAHRP), and The National College Players Association (NCPA) recommend adequate compensation for student-athletes, equal to their academic counterparts (Edelman, 2012). The Drake Group proposal, called the College Athlete Protection Act (CAP Act, House of Representatives number 3545, see Appendix B) was introduced in November 2013 to the U.S. Congress, to fully cover scholarships until graduation regardless of eligibility standing with a \$3,600 stipend and sport-related health care (Sack, 2014).

In the collegiate model athletes are students, not employed to play sports, nor traded from school to school (Southall & Nagel, 2010). The O’Bannon case is currently being appealed by the NCAA. Universities and colleges grapple with the possible implications for their individual institutions and where money to pay athletes will come from. The 65 universities that were granted greater autonomy by the U.S. Congress may increase the value of scholarships. Many options of how athletic departments will operate are being discussed by colleges and universities. If the O’Bannon ruling takes effect and universities choose to establish trust funds, all institutions have to ultimately be compliant or change their intercollegiate programs.

**Higher Education Values and Assumptions.** The university's mission, academic programs, and admission standards all affect the values and assumptions about intercollegiate athletics (Trail & Chelladurai, 2002). A college's size and institutional control (i.e., private/public) can influence the number of fans an athletic department must deal with (Schroeder, 2010). Even the beauty of the campus and residency requirements for students can influence the value placed on an institution (Beyer & Hannah, 2000). "With the popularity of intercollegiate sports growing in the public eye, as well as the concern for college football integrity and safety, higher education administrators undertake to legitimize and codify college sports" (Vanover & DeBowes, 2013, p. 42). Duderstadt (2006) President Emeritus at the University of Michigan suggested that college sports provide athletes and spectators with important life skills such as teamwork, persistence, and discipline. They also provide a sense of unity and pride for the students, the university, and the community. The author delineated several areas of concern such as the quasi-professional nature of intercollegiate sports, exploitation of student-athletes, hindrances to the academic mission, tolerance of low graduation rates, and cheating and scandal (Brand, 2006a; Duderstadt, 2006; Vanover & DeBowes, 2013).

Frey's (1994) seminal study on values in higher education attributed value discrepancies in intercollegiate athletics to "the structural and organizational characteristics of colleges and universities" (p. 111). Universities as a whole tend to operate with a norm of departmental autonomy, thus athletic departments are able to develop independent values that nobody questions in the university (Baxter, Margovio, & Lambert, 1996). The institutional environment has a strong effect on a university's assumptions about athletics (Ridpath, 2008). Brand (2006a) recognized that not all faculty members opposed intercollegiate athletics, but the author suggested that faculty tended to regard intellectual capacity higher than athletic ability. However,

faculty perceived the opposite to be true of administrators citing discontent with the financial favor that athletic departments, especially football and men's basketball, receive over academics in the institution (Brand, 2006a; Vanover & DeBowles, 2013).

In universities with revenue generating sports programs, "many top-level administrators learn early on they have little authority over their celebrity coaches and players, and often less status" (Clotfelter, 2011, p. 11). Unfortunately, limited presidential and top-level administrator power does not necessarily imply a lack of perceived value of intercollegiate sports (Moltz, 2009). However, Cockley, Roswal and Norman (1995) found faculty at DI institutions less satisfied with intercollegiate athletics programs than faculty from Divisions II, III, or the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics.

In comparison, evidence has demonstrated that highly selective colleges (for admissions) and NCAA D3 members (Mahony, Hums, & Reimer, 2002) have different athletic values and assumptions than their DI counterparts. "Compared to faculty from D3 schools, those at DI are more likely to agree that faculty at their institutions resent athletics and believe that athletic department personnel engage in practices of questionable ethics and opposing values" (Lawrence, Hendricks, & Ott, 2009, p. 9). Clotfelter, (2011) noted that universities with large sports programs are less likely to mention athletics in their formal mission statements than they are to mention research endeavors, accomplishments of faculty and students, or professional schools. There is a paucity of research in the area of sports and its place in higher education (Brand 2006a; Duderstadt, 2006; Jaschik, 2012; Vanover & DeBowles, 2013).

**External Environments Values and Assumptions.** The concept of institutional memory has emerged as a pathway to understand the roots of deeply held values and assumptions (Scott, 2005). Southall, Nagel, Amis, and Southall (2008) have found external

environments reinforce many assumptions upon which intercollegiate athletics operate, similar to the concept of organizational culture (Scott, 2005). Fortunately for athletic programs, groups of fans have tended to congregate on the “university’s periphery to lend their support” (Clotfelter, 2011, p. 15).

The external environments discussed in this section include media and advertising companies, merchandisers, boosters, and donors. Another perspective regarding the assumptions of intercollegiate athletics are grounded in the values of its external environments (Beyer & Hannah, 2000; Trail & Chelladurai, 2002). Exerting sway are external coalitions who “provide resources necessary to maintain the athletic department’s operational livelihood and keep it from being lesser of a drain on the larger organization” (Frey, 1994, p. 115; Schroeder, 2010). Frey (1994) defined community representatives, alumni, and boosters as “a booster coalition” as Upton Sinclair labeled them “rah-rah boys” in his negative critique of universities in 1922. In *The Goose-Step*, Sinclair referred to uninhibited alumni supporters who backed college athletic programs. Boosters and alumni attempt to use their financial power to impart and influence a set of values upon employees in athletic departments (Withers, 2006). According to Frey (1994), they “are used to getting what they want” (p. 120). They put pressure on universities, in part by “their well-connected axis of power” (Clotfelter, 2011, p. 15) and to hire ADs whose ideologies align with their own (Frey, 1994). A fact readily consistent with this description is a survey of over a third of Fortune 500 companies whose CEOs played intercollegiate sports as undergraduates (Boone, 2001). Stretching their financial and political means, Frey states, the members of this coalition have the wherewithal to exert influence on trustees and regents (1994). Their efforts boost the athletic department autonomy, what it needs to do to win games, and

“occasionally deviate from traditional university values or even violate rules” (Clotfelter, 2011, p. 15).

The revenue gleaned from media, sponsors, boosters, and post-season appearances of teams can entice leaders into making changes that are inconsistent with athletic department assumptions (Yow, 2009). Together external environments ultimately influence the actions taken by administrators, coaches, and athletes that lead to athletic department values and assumptions (Schroeder, 2010; Wolfe & Pulter, 2002). Television networks and the NCAA make decisions that lead leadership & power, internal, and institutional environments to subconsciously accept and support commercialization in intercollegiate athletics (Hutchinson & Bennett, 2012). Using a professional model of broadcasting, paying exorbitant rights fees, and hiring professional sports TV executives, CBS and ESPN create values that strongly influences how the general public view intercollegiate athletics. The NCAA, moreover, is complicit in creating this logic by supporting commercial policies and ignoring its own rules for commercial gain (Southall & Nagel, 2008). These external environments provide a portion of the resources athletic departments need to operate and build bigger and better facilities (Case, Greer, & Brown, 1987). Ultimately these factors combine to create situations where athletic departments become “organizational mutations” (Frey, 1994, p. 120), or countercultures, with values conflicting with universities’ academic missions. Even with monies from external environments, most colleges and universities struggle to balance the costs and justify their missions in higher education.

## **Leadership**

Many authors agree culture is linked with leadership (Schein, 2010; Scott, 2014; Sporn, 1996). For over 150 years researchers from a variety of disciplines, including psychology,

military science, sociology, business, education, and educational leadership, have sought to identify leadership behaviors that contribute to (and contrarily inhibit) leadership (Lipman-Bluman, 2005). The types of leaders (Blake & Moulton, 1964; Katz, 1974; Mann, 1959; Stogdill, 1948), followers (Thoroughgood, Padilla, Hunter, & Tate, 2012), and organizational settings (Aviolo, 2007; Bass, 2008) have been examined by scholars across these disciplines. Leadership can be defined in many different ways (Northouse, 2013). Theorists and researchers each have definitions of leadership; focusing on somewhat different aspects of the requirements of a leader as an individual or leadership as a process. This research strand addresses a wide range of leadership theory, research, and practical applications. Each theory is presented to include the theory first followed by a discussion of its strengths and criticisms.

In higher education, occupying a position in an institution, such as administrator, provost, and vice president, are examples of assigned leadership roles. Literature increasingly identifies leadership as a complex relationship among leaders, followers, and contexts (Osborn, Hunt, & Jauch, 2002; Shamir & Howell, 1999; Thoroughgood et al., 2012). Leadership “is a process of social influence, which maximizes the efforts of talented employees, towards the achievement of a goal” (Kruse, 2012, p. 6). Table 2 illustrates the philosophical differences of leadership philosophies and models and their applications. Kruse points out key elements of this definition. For example, leadership stems from engaging employees, not authority or power. Leadership requires others and implies they do not need to be “direct reports.” There is no mention of personality traits, attributes, or even one’s title; there are many styles, many paths, to effective leadership. It includes a goal, not influence with no intended outcome (Kruse, 2012).

There are three main conceptual viewpoints used to explore leadership. Table 3 explains leadership terminology differences--models, styles, and philosophies. It serves as an overview



of the models, styles and philosophies of leadership, which serve to identify leadership theories themselves. Many different models have been proposed, which has created confusion-- especially for students seeking to learn and for new leaders seeking to lead effectively.

Table 2 Conceptual Viewpoints Exploring Leadership

	Summary	More Detail	Symbolically
Leadership models	Aim to teach and demonstrate how to be successful or effective as leaders. Models often contain different leadership styles and enable 'switching' among them.	Tend to contain or enable processes and measurable standards, and a 'switching' capability in response to different. Models may be supported by diagrams and graphs. A model may be influenced by or underpinned by a philosophy.	Like a toolbox or a kit of parts.
Leadership philosophies	Examine sources of a leader's power, and offer a value-laden view of the aims leaders should pursue and how they should go about them. Focuses on what kind of leadership one should offer. Usually more difficult to learn and apply than a model as it is depends on values, not techniques.	Tend to be based on a life code or moral position. Expressed mainly through ideas and words, rather than processes and structured elements. Usually difficult (than a model) to explain, transfer, teach, apply, or to develop into a measurable set of rules or instructions. Involves far more and deeper references to society, politics, civilization, etc., than models or styles.	Like a compass or code-underpinned by a set of beliefs.

This section aims to summarize the main types of leadership models in a way that can more easily be understood and applied. As with any collection of complex ideas, it is helpful to categorize and create sub-categories, which is the approach in Table 3 as each category represents viewpoints of leadership. Categorizing the different models into sub-groups makes them easier to absorb, compare, and understand.

Table 3 A Leadership Overview

Leadership Models	Leadership Philosophies	Leadership Styles
Trait-Approach	Servant Leadership	Transformational Leadership
Skills Approach	Ethical Leadership	Transactional Leadership
Style Approach		
Path-Goal Theory		
LMX Theory		

*Note:* Adapted from “Leadership: Theory and Practice”, by P.G. Northouse. Copyright 2013 by SAGE Publications, Los Angeles.

**Trait Approach.** A large body of research focused on determining innate traits of people (Bass, 2008; Jago, 1982). Personality traits have been associated with individual’s self and others perceptions of leadership (Bryman, 2011; Lord DeVader & Alliger, 1986). The Trait approach was the first systematic way to study leadership in the 20th century. It focused on what made people "great leaders" and qualities that differentiate them from non-leaders (Northouse, 2013). Human beings possess many personality traits in infinite combinations. A trait is a characteristic or quality of human behavior and may be considered an aspect of attitude or personality.

Trait approach attempts to analyze effective combinations of personality traits, suggesting or identifying a set of traits that enables a person to effectively lead others. Given that personality traits tend to be quite fixed and unchanging, trait-based theory has definitely helped to encourage the perception that leadership ability is innate in leaders--good leaders are born, not made'. Stodgill (1948) stated that leaders cannot be developed or taught to be effective. This implies that if a person does not possess the 'right' traits, then he or she will not be able to lead effectively, or certainly, will not lead as well as a natural-born leader.

Stodgill’s 1948 survey research among followers and leaders demonstrated that the average individual in a leadership role is different from an average group member with regard to

eight personality traits: (1) intelligence, (2) alertness, (3) insight, (4) responsibility, (5) initiative, (6) persistence, (7) self-confidence, and (8) sociability. The traits were relevant to the situation in which the leader functioned. The traits were listed for participants to select characteristics that represented themselves and their leaders. Early works identified innate characteristics of "the Great Man" to individuals, such as President Abraham Lincoln, spiritual and political leader Mahatma Gandhi, civil rights activist Emmeline Pankhurst, and Saint Joan of Arc.

In a similar 1959 study, Mann examined 1,400 personality traits. He identified leaders as having strength in five categorized personality traits: (1) intelligence, (2) self-confidence, (3) determination, (4) integrity, and (5) sociability shown in Table 4. The Trait approach focuses exclusively on the leader and not followers. Mann (1959) suggests that organizations will work better if people in managerial positions have designated leadership profiles. The strengths of the Trait approach is intuitively appealing, because the approach builds upon some deeper understanding on how a leader's personality is related to the leadership process (Northouse, 2013).

Similar to Stodgill's works, Kirkpatrick and Locke claimed effective leaders are actually distinct types of people in several key respects. In their 1991 study, Kirkpatrick and Locke, contended "Leaders are not like other people". They postulated that leaders differ from non-leaders in seven traits including: (1) drive, (2) desire to lead, (3) honesty, (4) integrity, (5) self-confidence, (6) cognitive ability, and (7) knowledge of the business. In essence, the trait approach offered a set of traits would-be leaders could develop from within, considering they were innate (Bryman, 2011). The following differentiated a leader from other members of a working group. The list included the following 10 characteristics which are extensions of Stodgill's seminal list: (1) drive for responsibility and task completion; (2) vigor and persistent

pursuit of goals; (3) risk taking and originality in problem solving; (4) drive to exercise initiative in social situations; (5) self-confidence and sense of personal identity; (6) willingness to accept consequences of decision and action; (7) readiness to absorb interpersonal stress; (8) willingness to tolerate frustration and delay; (9) ability to influence other persons' behavior; and (10) capacity to structure social interactions systems to the purpose at hand.

The failure to delimit a definitive list of leadership traits is an inherent weakness of the trait approach, as is the inability to take contexts into account. The approach has resulted in highly subjective determinations of the "most important" leadership traits and is criticized for failing to look at traits in relationship to outcomes. For leadership training and development the approach is not considered useful (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003).

Trait-based approach, by implication, asserts that the best leaders are born to lead. From a training and development standpoint, this implies that if a person does not possess the 'right' leadership traits, then he or she will not be able to lead effectively, or certainly, will not lead as well as a natural-born leader. Training and development can foster leadership abilities to a degree, but what really matters is possessing the appropriate traits or personality profile.

The ideas and implications of trait-based leadership theory (i.e., effective leadership and potential leaders are determined by a largely pre-destined and unchanging set of character traits-- that 'good leaders are born not made') dominated leadership thinking until the mid-20th century. The research on traits spanned the entire 20<sup>th</sup> century and marked the beginning of a new approach to leadership research that focused on leader behaviors.

**Skills Model.** Overlapping with the Trait approach, the Skills model takes a leader-centered focus on skills and abilities instead of "Personality" traits, which are usually innate

(Northouse, 2013). In essence, “what leaders really do is prepare organizations for change and help them cope as they struggle through it” (Kotter, 2001, p.1).

Table 4 Categorized Behavior Traits from Mann’s (1959) Trait Approach to Leadership

Trait	Characteristics
Intelligence	Strong verbal ability, perceptual ability, and reasoning
Self-confidence	Ability to be certain about one's competencies and skills Belief that one can make a difference
Determination	Desire to get the job done Initiative, persistence, dominance, and drive Persevere against obstacles
Integrity	Principled and take responsibility Inspire confidence in others Dependable Not deceptive
Sociability	Seek out pleasant social relationships Friendly, outgoing, courteous, diplomatic Respectful

*Note:* Adapted from “Leadership: Theory and Practice”, by P.G. Northouse. Copyright 2013 by SAGE Publications, Los Angeles.

The Skills model is "What leaders can accomplish" as opposed to the Trait approach which emphasized "Who leaders are". The skills approach provides structure for effective leadership and a map of how to reach it in organizations (Northouse, 2013). Unlike the trait approach, a leader can be developed and trained (Katz, 1974). The components are (1) technical, (2) human, and (3) conceptual skills, which are the pinnacle to those at the top management level who have the ability to work with ideas and concepts (Northouse, 2103).

Technical Skills

Technical skill is proficiency, based on specific knowledge, in a particular area of work to perform a specific job or task. To have technical skills means that a person is competent and knowledgeable with respect to the activities specific to an organization’s rule and standard operating procedures, and the organization’s products and services

(Katz, 1974; Yukl, 2006). Technical skill is most important for managers, yet least important for senior management. (Northouse, 2013, p. 82)

### Human Skills

In contrast to technical skills, human (interpersonal) skills are proficiency in working with people based on person's knowledge about people and how they behave, how they operate in groups, how they communicate effectively with them, and their motives, attitudes, and feelings. They are the skills required to effectively influence superiors, peers, and subordinates in the achievement of organizational goals. Human skill proficiency means that leaders know their thoughts on different issues and, simultaneously, become cognizant of the thoughts of others. Consequently, leaders with higher levels of interpersonal skills are better able to adapt their own ideas to other people's ideas, especially when this will aid in achieving organizational goals more quickly and efficiently. Interpersonal skills are required at all three levels of management. (Northouse, 2013, p. 82)

### Conceptual Skills

Conceptual skills allow you to think through and work with ideas. Conceptual skills help express ideas in verbal and written forms, understanding and expressing the economic principles underlying their organization's effectiveness. These leaders are comfortable with asking "what if" or hypothetical questions. The skill is most important for top managers, less important for middle managers, and least important for supervisory managers. While conceptual skills are less important at lower levels of management, to be promoted to higher levels of management, it is important to develop and demonstrate this skill at all levels of management. It is a skill that can be learned. (Northouse, 2013, p. 88)

The strengths of the conceptual skill model are that leaders work easily with abstractions, hypothetical situations, and can create visions and have a keen understanding of strategic plans. Conceptualizing is considered the pinnacle for the top management level. The three skills approach (Katz, 1974) suggests the importance of certain leadership skills depending on the leader's position in the hierarchy in Figure 3.

When leaders exhibit technical, human, and conceptualizing skills competencies, they increase the chance of problem solving and overall performance. Applying effective problem solving is the keystone in the Skills approach. Creating solutions that are logical, effective, and unique may maintain an organization's health and staying power. In the skills model leadership

outcomes and individual outcomes are affected by environmental influences (Zaccaro, Mumford, Connelly, Marks, & Gilbert, 2000). It conceptualizes and creates a structure of the process intuitively appealing for everyone and incorporates an expansive view of leadership with a wide variety of components such as problem solving, knowledge, and social skills (Northouse, 2013). The skills approach captures the intricacies involved in leadership because of multiple variables, which provides a map for understanding the nature of effective leadership.

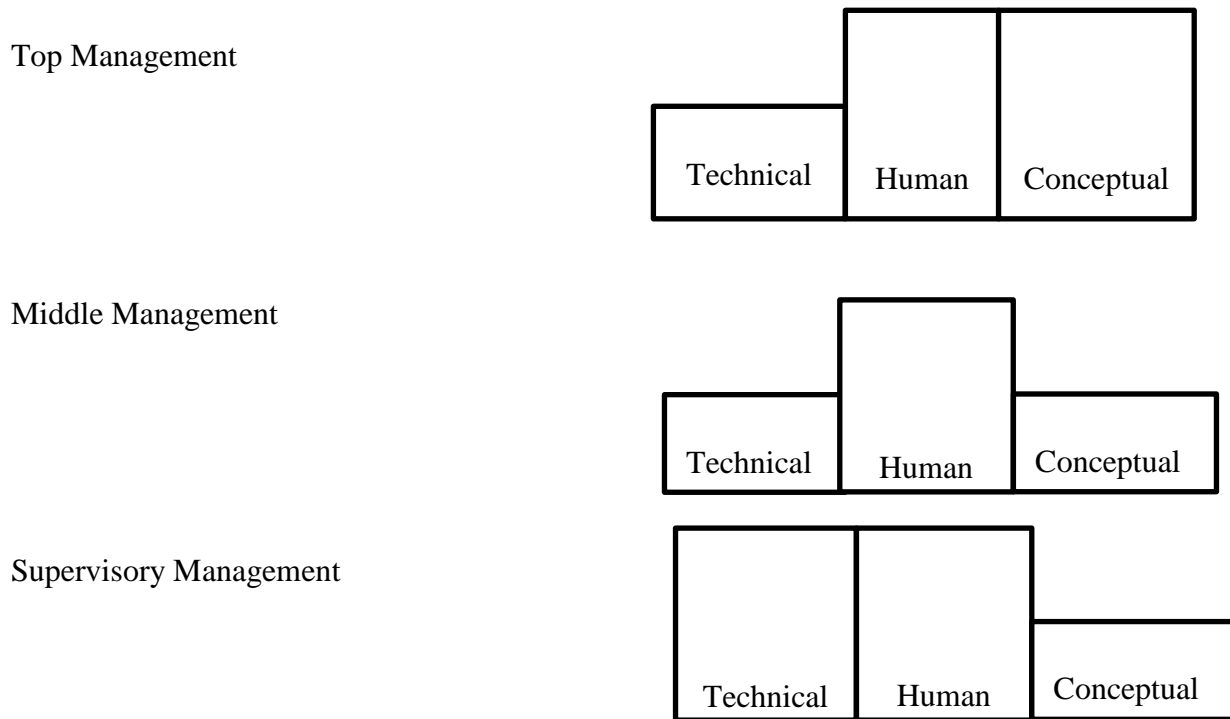


Figure 3. Katz Skills Model Comparing Three Levels of Management. The relative importance of these skills varies with different levels of managerial responsibility. Adapted from “Skills of an Effective Administrator,” by L.R. Katz, 1974, Cambridge, MA: Harvard Business Press.

As a negative, the breadth of the skills approach extends beyond the boundaries of leadership traits (such as involving motivation, personality, critical thinking, etc.) This makes the analysis more generalizable and less precise. According to Avoilo (2007) the skills model does not explain how variations can affect leader performance and may not be suitably or

appropriately applied to other work environments, such as education or with highly educated employees. The model was constructed by using a large sample from military leaders' performances.

**The Style Approach.** The style approach, also called Situational Theory, emphasizes the behavior of leaders and focuses on what leaders do and how they act. Several studies were conducted in the 1940s at The Ohio State University based on Stogdill's (1948) trait approach findings and at the University of Michigan to understand how leadership functioned in small groups (Blake & Moulton, 1964). The central purpose was to explain how leaders combined two kinds of behaviors to influence subordinates to reach a goal (Northouse, 2013). Researchers determined there are two types of leadership behaviors. Task behavior facilitates goal accomplishment, and relationship behavior helps subordinates feel comfortable with themselves, others, and the situation.

The Ohio State University studies (1940 to 1970) supported certain behaviors as typical of leaders. Two behaviors were distinct, independent, and on a different continuum. The two types of behavior identified were (1) initiating structure, essentially task behavior such as organizing work, giving structure, defining roles, scheduling, and (2) considering structure, essentially relationship behaviors such as building camaraderie, respect, and trust. These two behaviors support what is central to what leaders do: provide support for subordinates and nurture them (Northouse, 2013). A leader can be high or low on either and the degree with which a leader exhibited a certain behavior was not related to the other.

At the University of Michigan, researchers studied the impact of leaders' behavior on the performance of small groups (Bowers & Seashore, 1966; Cartwright & Zander, 1960; Likert, 1961). The two types of leadership behaviors identified: Employee orientation and production



orientation as key components of how an effective leader acts in a leadership role. Leaders with an employee view subordinates as human beings, individuals with personal needs. This is quite similar to Ohio State's behavioral findings and evolutions of initiating structure.

Developed originally by Blake and McCanse (1964), the Blake and Mouton Managerial/Leadership Grid explained how managers/leaders strive to reach their purposes through concern for people and production in organizations. The optimal leadership style in this model is based on Theory Y (Blake & Mouton, 1964) with managers assuming people will perform well if treated positively, and that higher order needs dominate most individuals. People are viewed as "assets" that should be valued and developed. It is based on six basic assumptions: (1) the physical and mental effort of work is as natural as play, so the average person does not inherently dislike work; (2) people will exercise self-direction and self-control in order to achieve objectives; (3) rewards of satisfaction and self-actualization come from the effort to achieve objectives; (4) the average person learns not only to accept but to seek responsibility; (5) most people have a capacity for imagination, ingenuity and creativity; and (6) the intellectual potential of most people is only partially realized.

In practice, Theory Y managers tend to be participative when making decisions and value both results and relationships. These managers tend to delegate and empower people because they trust them and feel they will do good work (i.e., managers are "coaches"). Priorities will be given to developing positive work environments and expressing regular recognition and appreciation as people are important and worth developing. People working for these managers tend to feel appreciated and dignified and will generally have good morale and feel motivated.

The style approach provides a framework for assessing effective leadership and functions by describing the major components of leader behaviors, not by telling them how to behave. In a

professional development setting, this approach is useful for several reasons. It reminds leaders their actions toward others are both at the task and relationship levels. In some situations, task behavior is more appropriate; in others relationship is more suitable. Similarly, some subordinates need leaders who provide direction; others need support and nurturance. A strength of the style approach is it can easily be applied in organizations and provide a mirror for practitioners understanding personal performance in a managerial role (Northouse, 2013). The Managerial/Leadership grid is used in consulting for organizational development throughout the world and has been assessed extensively in organizational training and development. It widened the scope of leadership research to include the behaviors of leaders and what they do in situational and in multiple contexts (Yukl & Van Fleet, 1992).

As with every leadership model there are weaknesses with the style approach. Although commonly seen as an old-fashioned approach by management development professionals, the leadership grid is widely used in leadership education and in practice (Northouse, 2013). Researchers state it does not adequately, nor empirically, support how leaders' styles are associated with performance outcomes (Bryman, 2011; Yukl, 2006).

The style model implies the most effective leadership style is high task and high relationship (Yukl, 2006). This is still found to be relevant in corporate leadership research evaluating financial performance (Jordan, Brown, Trevino, & Finkelstein, 2013). Successful leaders can inform or reward employees to enhance goal attainment (Indvik, 1986). Finally, selecting the proper style removing obstacles, and providing coaching increase subordinates' success, satisfaction, and buy-in which are ultimately what a leader is hired to accomplish (Yukl, 2006).

**Path-Goal Theory.** The central tenant of path-goal theory is that leaders motivate subordinates to accomplish goals (Evans, 1970). Unlike other leadership models, the leader is not identified with a specific style and the behavior of followers is combined into the theory (Northouse, 2013). Drawing heavily from motivational research in the 1970s (e.g., Evans, 1970; House, 1971; House & Dessler, 1974), the path-goal theory emphasized the relationships among the leader's style, characteristics of the subordinates, and the work setting. House and Mitchell (1974) were some of the first scholars to suggest that leaders may exhibit any of these behaviors with various subordinates and in different situations. There are four leader behaviors identified in this model--directive, achievement-oriented, participative, and supportive:

***Directive path-goal clarifying leader behavior*** --leaders let followers know what is expected of them and tell them how to perform their tasks. The theory argues that this behavior has the most positive effect when the subordinates' role and task demands are ambiguous and intrinsically satisfying (House, 1996). The theory predicts that subordinates who are dogmatic and authoritarian prefer a directive style from their leader. This provides psychological structure and task clarity (House & Mitchell, 1974) to management.

**Achievement-oriented leader behavior**--leaders set challenging goals for followers, expect them to perform at their highest level, and show confidence in their ability to meet this expectation (House & Mitchell, 1974). Occupations in which the achievement motives were most predominant were technical jobs, sales, scientists, engineers, and entrepreneurs (House & Mitchell, 1974).

**Participative leader behavior**--leaders consult with followers and ask for their suggestions before making decisions. This behavior is predominant when subordinates are highly personally involved in their work (House, 1996). The research found leaders who utilize a participative style are most satisfying to followers. This approach allows subordinates to feel in charge and be a part of the decision making (House, 1996).

**Supportive leader behavior**--leaders show concern for the followers' psychological well-being and behavior (House & Mitchell, 1974). Behavior directed toward the satisfaction of

subordinates' needs and preferences. This behavior is especially needed in situations in which tasks or relationships are psychologically or physically distressing (House & Mitchell, 1974).

A special focus of the path-goal theory is for leaders to help remove obstacles. The revised theory asserts that effective leaders need to help subordinates by giving them what is missing in their environment and by helping them compensate for deficiencies in their abilities. However, it has received only partial support from empirical studies (Bass, 2008; Northouse, 2013). The theorist behind this model, Robert House explained inherent flaws due to failure to adequately explain the relationship among leaders' behaviors and workers' motivation (1996). Moreover, a great deal of responsibility is placed on the leader, which can make subordinates too dependent on one person (Northouse, 2013).

**Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) Theory.** The Trait, Skills, and Path-Goal leadership theories emphasize the point of view of the leader. However, Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) theory conceptualizes leadership as a process centered on the interaction among leaders and followers (Brown, 1996). "What began as an alternative to average leadership style has progressed to a prescription for generating more effective leadership through the development and maintenance of mature leadership relationships" (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995, p. 220). LMX theory makes a dyadic relationship among leaders and followers as the focal point of the process (Allen & Meyer, 1993). Dansereau, Graen, and Haga's (1975) LMX theory has been evaluated from several levels of analysis: differences within groups (group-level effect), dyads regardless of groups (dyad-level effect) and, most recently, a combination of dyads into groups and networks (dyads within group effect).

There are two dyads: in-groups (extra roles) and out-groups (defined roles). The early LMX studies focused on in-groups and out-groups (Dansereau et al., 1975). Subordinates

become either part of the in-group or the out-group based on how well they work with the leader and how the leader works with them (Brown, 1996). Personality and other characteristics are related to this process (Dansereau et al., 1975). Later longitudinal studies shifted toward the theory relating to organizational effectiveness (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1991). Research by Graen and Uhl-Bien (1995) determined that high-quality leader-member exchanges produced less employee turnover and more positive performance evaluations. Higher frequency of promotions, greater organizational commitment, and more desirable work assignments were shown as outcomes. Moreover, better job attitudes and faster career progress over 25 years of both leaders and followers, more attention and support from leaders, and organizational prosperity from high quality leader-member exchanges were empirically supported in the extant literature (Allen & Meyer, 1993; Northouse, 2013).

In-group members go beyond what their job descriptions require and strive for innovative ways to advance the group. In response, leaders give them more responsibilities, opportunities, time, and support (Allen & Meyer, 1993; Dansereau et al., 1975). Becoming part of the in-groups involves subordinates negotiating with the leader about what they are willing to do to become part of the group. The activities involve going beyond their formal job descriptions and the leader in turn does more for these subordinates (Brown, 1996). Followers in the in-group receive information, influence, confidence, and concern from the leaders. They are more dependable, highly involved, and more communicative. Out-group members operate strictly within their prescribed organizational roles (Brown, 1996). Leaders treat them fairly and according to the formal contract, but do not give them added attention (Dansereau et al., 1975). Subordinates not interested in taking different job responsibilities become part of the out-group are less involved and receive less attention and perks from the leader. They come to work, do

their job, and go home (Brown, 1996). The focus is on each of the vertical dyad linkages formed among the leader and each of the followers.

LMX theory offers the concept of the dyadic relationship as the center of the leadership process (Northouse, 2013) and directs attention to the importance of communication in leadership. According to Dansereau et al. (1975), this approach relates to performance, organizational commitment, job climate, innovation, organizational citizenship behavior, empowerment, procedural, distributive justice, and career progress (Allen & Meyer, 1993; Brown, 1996).

**Servant Leadership.** Servant leadership is synonymous with ethical and moral leadership. In an ideal world leaders and workers would have high moral standards (Greenleaf, 1977; Trevino, Brown, & Pincus, 2003). Moral leadership is determined by what comes from within a person: what a person adheres to as a set of behavioral standards (Pojman, 1995). With this belief, people can be trained to apply policy and behavior to their work environment (Pojman, 1995). This however is only half of the equation. The moral leader is more than a person who is conditioned to follow rules or policies. Moral leadership, as defined by Greenleaf's seminal work (1977), *Servant Leadership*, is what one is as opposed to what one does (Trevino et al., 2003). He elaborates that moral leadership flows directly from the values the leader possesses. Servant Leadership is different from other theories as the emphasis is explicitly on the needs of followers (Burton & Peachy, 2013).

Burton and Peachey's theoretical paper on ADs (2013) suggested servant leaders are ultimately responsible to (1) create and institutionalize values, (2) stick to principles and standards, (3) be uncompromising in the practice of value-based management, (4) not tolerate

ethical lapses, (5) use rewards and punishment to hold people accountable to standards, and (6) be concerned about serving the greater good (Trevino et al., 2003).

**Transformational and Transactional Leadership Paradigms.** James MacGregor Burns (1978), a scholar of leadership and Franklin Roosevelt and John Kennedy presidencies, conceptualized leadership as either transactional or transformational. As Burns (1978) states, politicians, for example, lead by “exchanging one thing for another: jobs for votes, or subsidies for campaign contributions” (p. 4). Researchers critically assess leadership theories to test their validity as the role and demands of leadership changes. On that end, Warrilow’s (2012) study identified four components of Burn’s transformational leadership style (p. 56):

**Charisma or idealized influence**--leaders behave in admirable ways, display convictions, and take stands that cause followers to identify with the leader who has a clear set of values and acts as a role model for the followers.

**Inspirational motivation**--leaders articulate a vision that appeals to and inspires followers with optimism about future goals and offers meaning for current tasks.

**Intellectual stimulation**--leaders challenge assumptions, stimulate and encourage creativity by providing a framework for followers to see how they connect [to the leader, the organization, each other, and goals] and can creatively overcome obstacles of the mission.

**Personal and individual attention**--leaders attend to each follower's needs and act as a mentor or coach and give respect to and appreciation to individual's contributions to the team. This fulfills and enhances each team members’ needs for self-fulfillment and self-worth and inspires followers to further achievement and growth.

Transactional leaders are concerned with processes rather than forward-thinking ideas (Bass & Avolio, 1994) and focus on contingent reward (positive reinforcement) or contingent penalization (negative reinforcement). Contingent rewards (such as praise) are given when the set goals are accomplished on time, ahead of time, and/or to keep subordinates working at a good pace at different times throughout completion (Odumeru & Ifeanyi, 2013). Contingent

punishments (such as suspensions) are given when performance quality or quantity falls below standards or goals and tasks are not met.

Often, contingent punishments are on a management-by-exception basis, in which the exception is something going wrong. Within management-by-exception, there are active and passive routes (Bass & Avolio, 1994). Active management-by-exception means the leader continually looks at each subordinate's performance and makes changes to the subordinate's work to make corrections throughout the process. Passive management-by-exception waits for issues to come up before fixing the problems (Odumeru & Ifeanyi, 2013). With transactional leadership being applied to the lower-level needs and being more managerial in style, it is a foundation for transformational leadership which applies to higher-level needs (Bass, 1985).

In Yukl's (2004) book, *Flexible Leadership*, two weaknesses of the transformational paradigm were identified. First is the ambiguity underlying its influences and processes (Odumeru & Ifeanyi, 2013). The theory fails to explain the interaction of variables among transformational leadership and positive outcomes. If the essential influence processes were identified more clearly and used to explain how each type of behavior affects each mediating variable and outcome, the model would be stronger (Yukl, 2004). Second, the foci explain the leader's direct influence over individual followers, not leader influence on group or organizational processes (Burns, 1978).

“Transformational leaders, on the other hand, are those who stimulate and inspire followers to both achieve extraordinary outcomes and, in the process, develop their own leadership capacity” (Burns & Riggio, 2010, p. 3). Although most authors agree that transactional and transformational leadership are different in concept and in practice, many authors believe that transformational leadership significantly augments transactional leadership,



resulting in higher levels of individual, group, and organizational performance, as evidenced in the comparisons in Table 6 (Bass & Avolio, 1994; Howell & Avolio, 1993; Lowe, Kroeck, & Sivasubramaniam, 1996). Others believe that transactional leadership is a subset of transformational leadership (Odumeru & Ifeanyi, 2013; Wehrich, Cannice, & Koontz, 2008).

Transactional leadership, also known as managerial leadership, focuses on the role of supervision, organization, and group performance--a style of leadership in which the leader promotes compliance of followers through rewards and punishments (Burns & Riggio, 2010). Unlike transformational leadership, leaders using a transactional approach are not looking to change the future, they are looking to maintain status quo (Bass, 1985). These leaders pay attention to followers' work to find faults and deviations. This type of leadership is effective in crisis and emergency situations, as well as when projects need to be carried out in a specific fashion (Lowe et al, 1996).

How leaders influence group processes is not explained very well by the transformational leadership theories (Warrilow, 2012). Since leadership is viewed as a key determinant of organizational effectiveness (Burns, 1978), the causal effects of leader behavior on the organizational processes are seldom described in transformational leadership studies (Yukl, 2004). The interest in controlling subordinates confounds followers (Warrilow, 2012). However, dynamic relationships view variables mutually determined and mutually interdependent (Lowe, 2013).

Transformational leadership's weakness centers on objectives of the organization as the critical motive for leading, with emphasis on "getting followers to engage in and support organizational objectives" (Stone, Russell, & Patterson, 2004, p. 354) as illustrated in Table 5. With a singular objective on organizational outcomes, leaders may lose sight of the needs of

those they are leading (Burton & Peachey, 2013). When there is a bias of organizational objectives that motivate the behavior of the leader, a routine can be established where decisions are created and perceived to be the best course of action, yet ultimately fails individuals within the organization (e.g., AD choosing not to conduct meetings with coaches and personnel (Burton & Peachey, 2013).

Traditionally, the main goal of leaders has been to increase production and profits (Kruse, 2013; Mumford, Zaccaro, Harding, Jacobs, & Fleishman, 2000). The traditional view of leadership is slowly diminishing, as more theorists in the 21<sup>st</sup> century are asserting that leaders have responsibility for ensuring standards of moral and ethical conduct (Brown, Trevino, & Harrison, 2005; Collins, 2001; Despain & Converse, 2003).

Table 5 Comparisons of Transformational and Transactional Leadership

Variable	Transformational	Transactional
Leadership	Responsive	Proactive
Work	Within organizational culture	Change organizational culture by implementing new ideas
Employees	Achieve objectives through rewards/ set by leader punishments	Achieve objectives through higher ideals and moral values
Motivation	Appeal to followers own self-interest	Encourage followers to put group interests first
Managing	By-exception: maintain the status quo; correct actions to improve performance	Individualized considerations: Each behavior directed to each individual to express consideration and support
Intellectual Stimulation	None	Promote creative and innovative ideas to solve problems

*Note.* Adapted from “Transformational vs. transactional leadership theories: Evidence in literature,” by J.A. Odumeru & O.G. Ifeanyi, in 2013, *International Review of Management and Business Research*, 2(2), 335-361.

Leadership theories can be compared for strengths, weaknesses, and their implications to teams, organizations, and culture as evidenced in Table 6. In sum, regardless of what leadership theory, philosophy, or style-- leadership has a responsibility for positive organizational outcomes, specifically extra effort and job satisfaction among followers, which are key to developing strong cultures (Trice & Beyer, 1993).

Table 6 Leadership Theory Strengths and Weaknesses for Team, Organizations, and Culture Matrix

Leadership Theory	Strengths	Weaknesses	Implications for Team	Implications for Organization	Implications for Organizational Culture
Trait Approach	Gives the ability to understand traits of leaders, inherent qualities, (i.e., intelligence, self-confidence, determination, integrity, sociability).  Focuses more on leaders than followers.	Understanding the negatives of a person’s qualities, (i.e., intelligence, self-confidence, determination, integrity, and sociability).  No research done on outcomes.	Team members have opportunities if they have the traits and skills to become a higher level ranked leader.	Hiring and assigning the right leader for a certain position are important to accomplishing organizational goals.	Culture of the organization suggests looking for the right person to get the job done.
Style	Helps leaders distinguish when to be task oriented (what needs to be done and how to approach it) and when relationship oriented. (What is the task and who is the best fit to complete it).	Rejected by scholars that most effective leadership styles.	Team members will gradually understand when different styles of leadership are applied and what they mean.  Applied in most settings.	Organizational goals can be accomplished because matching unique approach to goals.	Culture of the organization depends on the leader’s concern for people or concern for production.
Path-Goal Theory	Attempts to incorporate motivation principles of the expectancy theory, easy to use.	Fails to explain different roles of the leaders and managers.  Time constraints to effectively deploy.	Teams are strong because goal is a clear roadmap to accomplish the mission.	Teams become departmental goals, which become organizational goals; Helps push organizational initiatives.	Culture of the organization suggests motivation of employees is a strategic direction and used as a method for production.
Leadership	Strengths	Weaknesses	Implications for Team	Implications for	Implications for

Theory				Organization	Organizational Culture
LMX Theory	<p>Leaders nurture high quality communication exchanges with subordinates.</p> <p>Leaders cautious of personal biases.</p>	<p>Does not address perceptions of subordinates.</p> <p>Divides the work unit into 2 groups. In-group receives more attention, it may give appearance of discrimination against out-group.</p>	<p>Leaders offer each subordinate new opportunities and roles.</p> <p>Dyadic-centered approach.</p>	<p>Directly related to performance, organizational commitment, job climate, innovation, citizenship behavior, empowerment, distributive justice.</p>	<p>Supports the development of privileged groups in the workplace.</p> <p>Existence of two groups; have undesirable effects on the organization.</p>
Servant Leadership	<p>Manifests harmony, shows justice, and serves respect to others, community building.</p>	<p>Lacks a body of substantiated research.</p> <p>Relies on texts of too few people.</p>	<p>New programs help managers become more effective at work and life in general.</p>	<p>Leadership involves organization values, one cannot be a leader without being aware of and concerned about organizational values.</p>	<p>Not a process without showing values. When leaders influence, they affect others, which ideally permeates the culture.</p>
Trans-formational	<p>Provides a broader view of leadership, places a strong, inseparable emphasis on followers' needs, values, and morals.</p>	<p>Some suggest this treats leadership as a personality trait rather than a behavior. It is unclear whether or not leader is visionary.</p>	<p>Open communication among leaders, team members, and staff are utilized.</p>	<p>Teams, team members, departments, and all staff feel as they are a part of decision making during change.</p>	<p>Is led by someone who is trusted, has buy-in from people.</p>

*Note.* Adapted from “*Organizational Culture and Leadership*,” by E.H. Schein in 2003, (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.), San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

## **Power**

“Power is a ubiquitous and pervasive phenomenon that penetrates social relations, to organizational life, to government policy, and almost everywhere in among” (Blickle et al., 2013, p. 3). The relationship of power and institutions is an intimate one. Institutions “exist to the extent that they are powerful—to the extent they affect beliefs and opportunities of individuals, groups, organizations and societies” (Lawrence, 2008, p. 170). The purpose of leadership is not to shine the spotlight on oneself, but to unlock the potential of others so they can in turn shine the spotlight on countless more (Kruse, 2013). Control is about power--not leadership, control and power are not synonymous with one another (Yukl, 2006).

The relationship of power and institutions is bi-directional (Lawrence, 2008). “Institutional control involves the effects of institutions on actors’ beliefs and behavior; institutional agency describes the work of actors to create, transform and disrupt institutions; and institutional resistance represents the attempts of actors to impose limits on institutional agency” (Lawrence, 2008, p. 171). The following subsections define and expound upon the actors who guide and shape the power of intercollegiate athletic departments, yet little is known how institutional, internal and external components collaborate in higher education (Clotfelter, 2011).

**Institutional Components.** Institutional culture is the starting point for understanding the culture of an athletic department. Because it establishes cultural parameters, the university’s mission, academic programs and admissions standards all influence its values and assumptions about intercollegiate athletics. Externally, these parameters will first influence the national organization (e.g., NCAA) of which the athletic department will be a member as well as the level at which its teams compete (Robles, 2002; Ward & Hux, 2008). Secondly, these parameters likely influence an institution’s conference affiliation, defining the peer schools against which it

competes. Internally, these parameters may determine the manner in which the athletic department is situated within the university structure. An athletic department has more freedom to develop its own culture when structured as its own department (Shulman & Bowen, 2002). Departments housed within student life or linked with an academic department have less room to develop disparate values (Nixon, 2014).

**Governing Boards.** The president is the visible face of university governance, but the trustees hold the ultimate authority (Nixon, 2014). The research regarding university governing boards and intercollegiate athletics is scant. Most literature regarding the role they play in athletics comes from college presidents. The Association of Governing Boards (AGB) has collaborated with the KCIA and the Coalition on Intercollegiate Athletics to better serve presidents and governing boards on issues concerning responsibilities for intercollegiate athletics. In 2012, they released three critical guidelines in a statement that included eight areas regarding board engagement in college sports: (1) policy articulation and general oversight, (2) presidential leadership, (3) athletics-department mission, (4) fiscal integrity, (5) academics and student-athlete welfare, (6) compliance with the NCAA and other regulations, (7) personnel, and (8) communications.

Along with KCIA, the AGB funded a qualitative study regarding fiscal knowledge of 143 presidents at public DI institutions. The survey reported one-third of the presidents assessed their institution's board of trustees' preparation to oversee compliance with NCAA rules as neutral, somewhat poor, or poor (AGB, 2012). Moreover, one-fourth of all respondents (n = 143) stated their institutions had no board policy on intercollegiate athletics and their board is not well-informed about financial information concerning the athletics department, whether it is supported by student fees, state appropriations, tuitions, or other revenues (AGB, 2012).



According to Duderstadt (2006) university governing board members typically “lack the level of understanding, experience, and accountability” for college sports (p.106). Training has rarely been mandatory for board members who need to know and follow rules that are ultimately not greatly different from the rules that govern sound director conduct within corporations. The AGB (2012) suggested formal training should generally be mandatory. To that end, the AGB (2012, p. 3) acknowledged three responsibilities of the Board:

**Ultimately accountable for athletics policy and oversight and should fulfill this fiduciary responsibility**--establish high standards for transparency and ethical behavior--hold itself and the institution’s chief executive accountable--inform itself about the athletics program—including the risks and challenges--engage in policy questions that address issues.

**Act decisively to uphold the integrity of the athletics program and its alignment with the academic mission of the institution**--have protocols in place to review contracts for highly compensated personnel and indicators that their institution’s athletics programs contribute to the education and well-being of student-athletes--ensure their members and everyone else at their institution behave lawfully and ethically--be informed of and consulted on issues related to conference membership--have final review of data ascertaining compliance with the NCAA and conference regulations.

**Increase its span of knowledge by educating itself about its policy roles and oversight of intercollegiate athletics**--be informed about the business and challenges of intercollegiate sports, risk assessments, Title IX and other federal regulations, and other key issues on a continuing basis.

**University Presidents.** While ADs are usually the designated formal leaders, they typically report directly to university presidents. As president of the University of Michigan (1988-1996), Duderstadt wrote that in the past ADs “attempted to rule their departments as a feudal empire, separate from the university, subject to its own laws and practices, with little need or desire to consult others” (2006, p.105). This dictatorial style of leadership contrasts with the collegial university governing culture of the academic service committees of a university (Duderstadt, 2006).

The organizational structure of an athletic department is significant in terms of institutional control (Schroeder, 2010). From the NCAA perspective, the college president is ultimately responsible for the athletic department. The president's involvement and knowledge of activities of the intercollegiate program are necessary with NCAA compliance rules and regulations. The 2009 KCIA on Intercollegiate Athletics Report, *A Call to Action: Reconnecting College Sports and Higher Education*, urged several reforms and set an agenda for DI college and university presidents to lead through these reforms in ways that would bring athletics in closer alignment with educational values. The KCIA suggested three aspects of presidential control over athletics. Among these were obligations to control (1) conferences, (2) the NCAA, and (3) their respective institutions' involvement with commercial television (KCIA, 2009).

The transformation of intercollegiate athletics would require presidents working in concert with other environments to effect necessary changes (Tazzi, 2011). In Hoffman's study (2013) on the perils of presidential control and athletics, she emphasizes the environment of administrative ambiguity presents challenges deeply entrenched cultures of sports. Who becomes president, how long her or her term may be, and the circumstances for departure vary greatly (ACE, 2013), similarly for the AD. Frequent turnover in leadership can leave an institution and athletic department adrift. Short terms of administrators may detract from strategic planning and ultimately implementing change.

In contrast, long leadership terms may promote unchecked power and institutional complacency (Hoffman, 2013). Therefore, the length of a president's tenure, does not necessarily correlate with success of a sports program. The conditions that fuel expectations of intercollegiate sports programs acted upon by presidents contribute to overall reform (Hoffman, 2013). A survey of 122 presidents from NCAA DI institutions found that 26 % agree or strongly

agree that presidents are in control of their athletic programs (Green, Jaschik, & Lederman, 2013, p. 18). However, 87 % of DI presidents, surveyed by Inside Higher Ed, agreed or strongly agreed that the institution's board would "back me if I had a major conflict with top coaches or ADs" (Green et al., 2013, p. 18). This juxtaposition supports Hoffman's (2013) findings-- presidents have little control of athletics. A majority of those surveyed believe support from their governing boards regarding 'athletic department matters' is where they become vulnerable (Hoffman, 2013; Jaschik, 2012).

**Faculty Members.** Consistent with research, professors' beliefs about athletics are shaped by their various domains of campus life (Cockley & Roswal, 1994; Lawrence et al., 2009). Even though, athletes are students and a primary concern to faculty (AAUP, 2002; Vanover & DeBowes, 2013), faculty have very little clout in the athletic governance processes (Ehrenberg, Patterson, & Key, 2013). They too are lured into the spectacle that comes with the media attention drawn into the athletic department (Jaschik, 2012). The level of understanding the business operations, wide-ranging regulations and policies, and relationships with particular teams is beyond the scope of most faculty members (Lawrence et al., 2009).

**Faculty Reform Efforts.** Since 1991, KCIA advocated more faculty involvement in reforming intercollegiate athletics and promoting an effective balance among academics and athletics, faculty have assumed a more prominent role in governing intercollegiate athletics (KCIA on Intercollegiate Athletics, 2002; Lawrence, Mullin, & Horton, 2009; Trail & Chelladurai, 2000). Faculty Athletics Representatives (FAR) were mandated at every NCAA DI institution in 1987 (NCAA, 2014). FARs are members of an institution's faculty who do not hold an administrative or coaching position in the athletics department. The main duties are to serve as a liaison between the athletics department and the institution, provide advice and

oversight. FARs help prepare an institution's self-study report every ten years and assist the NCAA external peer-review team during its on-site evaluation visit (NCAA, 2014).

**Faculty Governance.** Many faculty members believe control of intercollegiate athletics should reside within general faculty governance (Duderstadt, 2006). Moreover, the provenance of intercollegiate athletics reform efforts stem from faculty governance (AAUP, 2002; Nixon, 2014). According to Nixon, "faculty members are not likely to have a prominent role in athletic reform" (2014, p. 138). The American Association of University Professors (1991) specifically endorsed proposed reforms and asked faculty, administrators, and athletic department staff throughout the country to implement them on their campuses, in their athletic conferences, through the NCAA, and nationally (See Appendix B). The AAUP report (1991) signified the first faculty report addressing major issues surrounding college sports that had an impact on academic quality and standards. The four overarching areas were: academic integrity and quality; student-athlete welfare; campus governance of intercollegiate athletics; and fiscal responsibility.

Lawrence, Ott, and Hendricks (2009) reported the majority of faculty in DI universities felt separated from intercollegiate athletics reform and assessment. The academic mission of their institutions was perceived by faculty as a separate enterprise from traditional athletic department goals of conference and national championships, and victories over traditional rivals (Vanover & DeBowes, 2013). Faculty stated athletics provide a forum for community and campus entertainment that lack importance in higher education (Engstrand, 1995; Jaschik, 2012; KCIA, 2003; Trail & Chelladurai, 2000). In a similar investigation The KCIA's 2007 Faculty Summit on Intercollegiate Athletics report analyzed responses from over 2,000 tenure or tenure track members at 23 of the 119 institutions in the NAAC's Football Bowl Subdivision. The

purpose of the study was to measure the role of faculty engagement in athletics issues, faculty governance, and academic integrity. The survey revolved around governance, finance, and academic issues. Participants were asked to use their campus as a frame of reference.

The survey instrument included both open-ended and Likert-type items distributed across five sections: perceptions and beliefs; satisfaction; campus priorities; major concerns; and demographics. The institutional response rates ranged from 12 to 34%, three private and 20 public, throughout the United States. Sixty-two percent of all participants indicated they are “disconnected” from and do not know about many athletics program policies and practices, including the financial underpinnings. More than a third had no opinion about concerns raised by national faculty athletics reform groups. The largest portion of faculty (41%) believe faculty governance roles on campus associated with the oversight of intercollegiate athletics are ill defined, and most believe the roles are not particularly meaningful. Interestingly, 50% reported that decisions about sports on their campuses were driven by the needs of the entertainment industry with minimal regard for the institutions’ academic missions.

**Faculty Perceptions of Intercollegiate Athletics.** Lawrence et al’s (2009) study found 50% of faculty noted that academic standards did not need to be lowered to achieve success in athletics, although 23% indicated some compromises in academic standards were necessary to succeed in football and basketball. Seventy-five percent of respondents thought the salaries paid to head football and basketball coaches were excessive, though half of these reported that their institution’s success in athletics spurred alumni giving to campus programs other than athletics. Compounding the literature surrounding faculty perceptions of intercollegiate athletics, academic faculty are skeptical they are going to be much help in the governance and reform process (Brand, 2006a; Clotfelter; 2011; Nixon, 2014). Faculty members have been criticized for doing

more to help the athletic department do what it wants, than to help assure its compliance with the rules (Wolverton, 2012). Faculty have criticized the NCAA that it is impossible to maintain a large, successful, intercollegiate athletics program while staying true to the mission, purpose, and function of higher education (Ehrenberg, Patterson, & Key, 2012; Martin & Christy, 2010; Nixon, 2014; Ridpath, 2008; Trail & Chelladurai, 2000). The Coalition on Intercollegiate Athletics, a coalition of faculty senates at 63 major colleges, fears the actions and priorities of athletic administrators setting NCAA policy reflective of sports management (Wolverton, 2014).

### **Leadership and Power Components**

This section is a compilation of job roles at the apex of an organizational chart. They do differ and yet they share mutual responsibility for student athletes.

**Athletic Directors.** Like the president, the director is typically a very public figure representing the university or college. Today, many DI ADs have an executive leadership title and report directly to the president of the university or college and are typically considered a part of the president's executive cabinet (Duderstadt, 2006). Up until the 1990s, ADs were selected primarily for their playing or coaching skills in recognized careers as players and/or coaches in college and professional sports (Martin, 2013). These skills and experiences were assumed to provide the requisite knowledge and skills to perform as AD in largely public relations capacities, employing personnel, and managing athletic departments (Masteralexis, Barr, & Humms, 2008).

Contemporary ADs view their roles as chief executive officers of entertainment businesses, loosely affiliated with their universities (Duderstadt, 2006). The management of departments involves a wide range of skills and involvement: leadership, fiscal management, personnel relations, public relations, compliance, and acceptance of the institution's values

(Duderstadt, 2006; Southall, Wells & Nagel, 2005). Today, ADs hire and fire coaches (with multimillion dollar salaries), oversee personnel of the athletic department, manage budgets and athletic facilities, and interface with organizations such as the athletic conference and the NCAA. ADs spend a lot of their time fundraising (Clotfelter, 2012) and appeasing boosters.

ADs are known for outgoing and sometimes overbearing personalities (Jowett, & Chaundy, 2004). DI ADs place significant emphasis on achieving their program goals and use a directive leadership approach based upon the competitive nature of their NCAA membership level (Ryska, 2002). Reorganization of the DI 2014 governance structure allows for 90% of seats in the NCAA's main legislature to go to ADs, conference commissioners, and other athletics administrators (NCAA, 2014). An analysis of AD positions conducted by Burton, Barr, Fink, and Bruening (2009) outlined perceived personal qualities and professional competencies desirable for ADs. They examined the gender typing of managerial sub-roles for AD, compliance coordinator, and life skills coordinator. Participants were upper-level sport management students at two universities (N=248). Fifty-nine women and 189 men completed a survey identifying professional competencies desired for an AD as ability to (1) allocate resources, (2) delegate responsibility, (3) discipline personnel and athletes, (4) make strategic decisions, and (5) problem solve. While the purpose of the study was to examine gender typing of managerial roles in intercollegiate athletics, ADs were perceived to need characteristics most often associated with the traditional roles of men (Burton et al., 2009; Schein, 2007).

Unlike the university, decisions in intercollegiate athletics are seldom deliberate, committee-driven, or open public processes (Lawrence, 2009). "Athletic administrators often huddle with other administrators to try to identify new commercial ventures and possible revenue streams" (Nixon, 2014, p. 57). They decide which sports may have to be cut because they no

longer attract students who pull their weight financially. ADs and typically conference executives orchestrate game schedules (years in advance) and contractual agreements for TV exposure. The internal environment requires leaders to make rapid decisions (e.g., hiring coaches) without all desired background information (Schroeder, 2010). Other decisions include suspensions of players and salaries of head and assistant coaches (Benford, 2007). While it is commonplace for leaders in other types of organizations to make decision independent of committees, whether the procedures and protocols of the decisions are communicated is far from the norm (Brown, 2007). Athletic departments and programs are guided more by the principles of business administration than academic values (Covell, 2001; Nixon, 2014) and are structurally and culturally managed by a CEO with a hierarchical system of authority according to Clotfelter (2011). Decision-making is often top-down in the department (Nixon, 2014).

When ADs oppose boosters or presidents their jobs are in jeopardy (Nixon, 2014). When the University of Oregon became involved in an anti-sweatshop consortium it made Nike one of its prime targets. Knight was unhappy that the AD failed to take his side. Phil Knight, Nike CEO, withdrew his donation for the renovation of the football stadium, cut his ties to the university, and invested his money elsewhere for 17 months. He reconciled with the university and reinstated his pledge when the university withdrew from the consortium and got rid of its AD. A revealing part of this story is that the AD's contract was bought out with the help of another big booster, who was then hired as the new AD. Nixon observed "conflict of interest appears in a variety of ways in this case and seems to be part of the quid pro quo for ADs" (2014, p. 66).

**Coaches.** Coaches serve a different role than the AD and their actions are frequently at odds, if not blind to the values and objectives of the university (Bowen & Levin, 2011). They



are supposed to be both motivated to win and intensely loyal to their players (Schroeder, 2010). Winning is more important than anything else (Bowen & Levin, 2011). Livelihood and career success are deeply rooted in the number of wins versus losses. More often, head coaches handle the administration of the sport, hiring and firing assistant coaches, publicity, and media appearances (Schroeder, 2010). Practices, recruiting, discipline and conduct with players, and most routine details are handled by assistant coaches.

In some intercollegiate athletic department cultures, “power coaches” (Sperber, 2000b, p. 22) exert influence over a department’s values, and in some cases their personas come to embody the entire department or university culture (Jones, 2009). Those with celebrity status may be surrounded by powerful and persuasive boosters who challenge ADs and even presidents (Duderstadt, 2006).

### **External Components**

Another component seeking a voice within athletic department cultures come from the external environment (Schroeder, 2010). Athletic programs with historical relationships to the external environment or the institutional culture may influence culture in positive and/or negative directions (Schroeder, 2010). However, historical power can be overthrown by the subcultures within the department (Martin, 2002). Examples are supporting companies that buy advertising or attending fundraisers that directly support athletic departments. These programs are embedded in a network of relationships and may stem from an individual or as Frey (1994) coined “booster coalition.” A booster coalition is mainly composed of external components: athletic foundations, corporate sponsors, the NCAA, conferences, media, serious fans and boosters, and corporate sponsors “who exchange resources in the form of money, materials, and political influence for the right to associate with coaches and athletes, for the status or prestige this association brings,

and for the access to other persons like themselves and may possess political and economic resources that the coalition need or want” (Frey, 1994, p. 116).

The established distribution of power by means of coalitions is an accepted way of doing business; they have internal support, and some legitimation and adoption within the larger organization (Frey, 1994; Martin, 2002). In some athletic department cultures, external components undermine the course of formal leadership (Benford, 2007; Kovell, 2001; Schroeder, 2010). Allowing external components to influence normal governance processes undermines and can result in significant breaches of institutional integrity (Nixon, 2014). Coalition patterns are labeled traditions and eventually institutionalized (Schein, 2010). For example, in 1961, the University of Southern California’s (USC) football team began the ‘Traveler’ tradition of a noble Trojan riding a beautiful white horse at their home opening game against Georgia Tech University. From that game, all USC touchdowns at home are celebrated by a rousing rendition of "Conquest" and a lap around the Coliseum. The horse breed is always pure Arabian.

Coalitions plant roots for rights of involvement with their respective sports teams’ over many years through ritual participation (Nixon, 2014). Administrators prefer to rely on their coalitions for funding special needs. However, with this deference means giving up some control. The levels of involvement were identified by Duderstadt (2009) to group the myriad of external environments vying for their voice in intercollegiate athletic programs. Duderstadt (2009) went beyond the concept of relinquishing control and explained the process, by which external forces challenge and sometimes subvert institutional control of college athletics.

**Low-level involved external components.** The least organized level of involvement is the alumni and sports fans who seek to link themselves to athletic programs. Their involvement

typically happens through volunteering with recruitment efforts, attending fan events, and hiring student-athletes for summer jobs (Nixon, 2014).

**Mid-level involved external components.** A mid-level of influence “if not control, clearly comes from the media because they publish the newspapers or media broadcasts that most influences circulation” (Duderstadt, 2009, p. 106). A mid-level of power from boosters and athletic foundations may directly influence the recruitment and admission of athletic prospects, the selection of coaches and ADs, and the amount spent in athletic programs and facilities (Nixon, 2014). “There is often an implicit or explicit quid pro quo” (Nixon, 2014, p. 65). Many donors and particularly those making big gifts expect something tangible in return (Benford, 2007), which may mean better seats at the most prominent athletic events. Rewards have ranged from dinners with star players to access to practices usually closed to the public and chances to travel with the teams and be on the sidelines during games (Benford, 2007).

**High-level involved external components.** Universities must contend with the entertainment industry more broadly, which views college spectator sports as highly lucrative commercialized entertainment (Benford, 2007; Clotfelter, 2011; Kovell, 2010). Contractual agreements with outside environments, such as sports apparel companies which base much of their success on advertising and marketing endorsements of coaches, players, and programs can be defined as high-level external environments. The reason schools court corporate dollars are understandable, with revenues and related increases in exposure and promotional support coming from corporations (Benford, 2007), they may offset costs for the institution. Corporations are eager to write these checks and engage in these agreements because “college sponsorships allow them to reach highly vested fans for increased sales, brand image enhancement, and awareness” (Kovell, 2001, p. 245).

For example, Chevrolet, The University of Texas Athletics program, and the Ex-Students Association of the University of Texas (the Texas Exes) signed a multi-year sponsorship agreement in 2013, designating Silverado as the Official Truck of the Texas Longhorns, the Texas Exes, and Bevo, the Texas Longhorns mascot. Chris Perry, vice president of Chevrolet Marketing (an NCAA corporate sponsor):

There is no more appropriate place to showcase the stronger, smarter, more capable 2014 Silverado than in the heart of truck country at Texas Longhorn sporting events,” said Chris Perry, vice president of Chevrolet Marketing. This partnership complements the Silverado’s overall marketing campaign, with its strong focus on Texas, where a Longhorn fan lives in one out of every three households and is almost twice as likely to buy a truck as the average consumer.

The relationship connects the Silverado with UT’s passionate fans and alumni via multiple opportunities throughout the academic year. These include activities at home athletics and alumni events, print and digital promotional opportunities, promotions, event signage, presence on the Longhorns’ statewide radio network and coaches’ endorsements. It also includes a presence on the Longhorn Network, the 24-hour channel dedicated to programming associated with Texas Athletics and the University of Texas. (Chevrolet Silverado Signs with University of Texas Longhorns, 2013, para. 2)

Sports events draw audiences that major corporate sponsors gravitate toward. As Clotfelter (2011) has argued with his data, commercialized sports are a fabric of the United States and critics are not likely to dissuade the public to relinquish a long running tradition.

DI ADs typically leave the marketing and promotions of the athletic events to external companies (Nixon, 2014), examples of other high-level external components. IMG College is the largest collegiate multimedia, marketing, and licensing/brand management company, while Learfield Sports has almost 100 universities and colleges. IMG College is a division of IMG Worldwide, a global sports, fashion and media business. IMG’s exclusive rights include intellectual property, experiential and promotional assets, event signage, tickets, hospitality, live

event radio, and coaches' TV shows. IMG represents more than 100 of the nation's top collegiate properties, including the NCAA and its 89 championships and NCAA Football ("Chevrolet Silverado Signs with University of Texas Longhorns," 2013). IMG produced approximately 31,000 hours of radio programming and owns the largest sports network, IMG College. They manage 5,000 hours of local television programming and publish college sports publications. Additionally, IMG manages university athletic websites for all contracted universities, which they call properties. The relationship among athletic departments and multimedia proprietors are typically based upon a multi-year contract.

The NCAA mandates the rules protecting student-athletes, yet benefits financially from corporate sponsorships. According to the NCAA (2014) website, "NCAA Corporate Champions and Corporate Partners support all 89 NCAA Championships and are granted a wide variety of benefits, including certain category exclusivity around use of NCAA logos, marks, designations and championship tickets" (para 5) to earn revenue. However, the NCAA, a non-profit organization, does not disclose the monetary value of the contracts with these corporate sponsors on their website.

It is difficult to determine exactly how much revenue the NCAA derives from specific tournament sponsorships because the marketing arrangements are tied to the NCAA's broadcast agreements (Eder, 2014). In 2010, the NCAA announced a 14-year, \$10.8 billion agreement with CBS Sports and Turner Broadcasting for the rights to men's basketball tournaments. As mentioned in chapter one, the NCAA distributes hundreds of millions of dollars to universities, for scholarships and other expenses related to sports (Eder, 2014).

**Reform Efforts.** Beyer and Hannah (2000) recommended "a central challenge for those who would reform intercollegiate athletics is to recognize and deal with these cultural

characteristics” (p. 127). Athletics in higher education is seen as culturally misaligned with institutions (Rawlings Panel, 2013). The Rawlings Panel on Intercollegiate Athletics offers 5 pillars of misalignments with the academic institution, (UNC-Chapel Hill). The first issue includes the athletics program fitting into the context of core missions of the university and in no way violating them. A second issue, “student/athletes” are students first, athletes second. The report warns “given the serious risks to their integrity and reputation posed by big-time college athletics, universities must maintain close oversight over their intercollegiate athletics programs” (Rawlings Panel, 2013, p. 3).

The third recommendation was aimed at administrators and coaches as they should have clear lines of responsibility and authority in the conduct of their programs. Universities’ audits should include regular monitoring athletic programs and the performance of each person who is engaged in their administration. The fourth cultural misalignment recognized by the Rawlings Panel is the financial policies of the athletic department and how these are the interest of the entire university. No institution can avoid the expense margin and/or profit potential intercollegiate sport brings to academia (Clotfelter, 2011).

The final pillar is reform itself. Reform is stifled on campuses across the country by fear of incurring competitive disadvantage in athletics. The Panel recommended institutional financial data became more transparent with athletic department budget reports that clearly delineate the spending that supports student/athletes’ educational, professional, or career development to the public: Commitments were called to maintain responsible spending patterns, regardless of whether or not a different national regulatory approach is adopted. Lastly, university leaders should consider taking a leadership position within the athletic conference and in the NCAA to promote broader changes to the financial models of DI college sports.

A backlash led by academics, university and college presidents, faculty, athletic representatives, and internal components are redefining a model for intercollegiate sports. The Rawlings Panel (2013) was charged with making recommendations on steps UNC-Chapel Hill could “take to improve the complex maze of athletics and to provide ideas to other universities who are willing to tackle, what most agree is a challenging issue for all in higher education” (Rawlings Panel Report, 2013, p. 6). The report centered on the intercollegiate athletic programs operating within the educational mission of the UNC Chapel Hill:

Institutions of higher learning exist primarily to discover and to disseminate knowledge; winning sporting events is peripheral to those basic missions. As a result, a university’s athletics program must fit within the context of its core missions, and in no way violate them. Herein lies the principal challenge of intercollegiate athletics, since an institution’s desire to win must always be balanced against the core interests of the institution as a whole. Maintain the integrity of the fundamental missions, and the model works. Fail to maintain integrity and the potential exists for the model to fail, and to cause serious damage to the institution. (p. 6)

Aspirations from the panel to challenge assumptions within universities (organizations) stimulate innovation and opportunity to rethink intercollegiate athletic departments. In fact, the history of college athletics has continually focused on reform efforts. Institutional and external components work both separately and jointly, but overall the efforts have failed to make substantial changes to curb the myriad of problems faced every day in college sports (Ridpath, 2008). Intertwined with power comes the strength of values and symbols often planted in an organization’s history (Schein, 2010). Still, there is optimism that true reform may actually happen and intercollegiate athletics and academia can co-exist (Gerdy, 2002).

Given entrenched leadership behaviors, philosophies, and operating principles in intercollegiate athletics, athletic departments can glean much from assessing their organizational cultures (Schroeder, 2010; Southall, Wells, & Nagel, 2005). Organizational culture is a social

process, where relationships are embedded in a social setting, fall into place, and ultimately change from the decisions made by subcultures and countercultures (Tierney, 2008). Some people will resist change because reform is typically transformational in nature, large in scope, and revolutionary (Jick & Pipersal, 2003).

Finally, culture is linked with leadership (Schroeder, 2010). Schein (2006) contends “the only thing of real importance that leaders do is create and manage culture” (p. 11). However leadership can be considered one aspect of an interdependent perspective (Schultz, 2012). Leadership, organizational culture of higher education, and the external and internal components comprise the intercollegiate athletic department. Intercollegiate athletics are rife with problems that stem from cultural misalignment (Schroeder, 2010). “Central challenge for those who would reform intercollegiate athletics is to recognize and deal with these cultural characteristics” (Hannah & Beyer, 2000, p. 127). Having a process perspective framework to assess cultural components provides leaders the best opportunity to uphold that responsibility (Schroeder, 2010).



## CHAPTER THREE: METHOD

The purpose of the study was to do a case study of the organizational culture of a Division I intercollegiate athletic department. This chapter outlines the methods used to explore the relationships among the internal, institutional, and external components of the athletic department and its culture. The chapter is divided into the following sections: Research Design, Data Collection, Data Analysis, and Trustworthiness.

### **Research Design**

Culture, rooted in anthropology, is typically studied through hermeneutical research methods. To describe “basic assumptions and values, to decipher symbols and to unfold meaning into a richer, more complete and valid picture (or painting), one needs qualitative approaches” (Van Muijen, 2013, p. 125). The underlying thesis of this perspective parallels the interest in organizational culture in higher education (Tiernery, 2008). To illustrate the use of Schroeder’s model of organizational culture, which described an intercollegiate athletic department (2010), this chapter presents a qualitative case study paradigm. The purpose was to assess the organizational culture of a Division I intercollegiate athletic department.

Qualitative research is grounded in an interpretivist perspective and assumes that truth is constructed. In this particular case, the key components of an intercollegiate athletic department were analyzed individually for patterns of meaning: Institutional Culture, External and Internal Components, and Power and Leadership, although not mutually exclusive (Butin, 2010). Secondly, the component’s interactions were presented as unique ways to form a holistic picture of an athletic department culture (Schroeder, 2010). Accountings of the interactions are expounded upon in the review of literature. Assessment involves the interaction of the elements:

internal components of the athletic department, the institutional culture, and the external components.

Characteristically, qualitative case study investigates a phenomenon “within its real-life context especially when the boundaries between the phenomenon and context are not clearly defined” (Klenke, 2008, p. 59). In the constructionist tradition, this study incorporated the paradigm assumptions of an emerging design, a context-dependent inquiry, and an inductive data analysis. I had not met any of the participants, nor visited the campus prior to data collection. Some assumptions about data collection methods were to collect as much data as possible. In essence, interview many voluntary participants, take photographs to document the setting, and collect reports, news, and archival data.

Here, the case was used to understand and reveal more than what is obvious to the observer. The phenomenon, or the case, is the essence of the study, and often impossible to separate from their contexts (Merriam, 1998). Therefore, as presented in chapter four, the contextual boundaries (e.g., time, place, or definition) of the case are crucial because they define or “fence in” what is examined (Tierney, 2000). Unlike other qualitative descriptive investigations, case studies are effective because they enable as many details as possible to emerge in relation to the case and its boundaries (Schroeder, 2010). This thoroughness equips the interactions of the case’s variables to be understood (Baxter & Jack, 2008).

A qualitative case study is well suited for the examination of organizational cultures for three major reasons. In evaluation language (Baxter & Jack, 2008), an explanatory case study is used to describe and explain phenomenon like organizational culture (Schroeder, 2010). Qualitative advocates such as Guba and Lincoln (1986) and Eisner and Peshkin (1990) place a high priority on direct interpretation of events and lower priority on the interpretation of

measurement data. Perceptions of key episodes or testimonies, represent happenings with participants or direct interpretation or stories by answering “how and “why” research questions (i.e., narratives) (Stake, 1995; Yin, 2011), as well as to gain access to the subjective elements of a setting (Schroeder, 2010; Stake, 1995; Yin, 2011).

Second, this design approach is appropriate for the study of process. When the researcher has little control over events and when the focus is on a current phenomenon in a real-life context, a case study paradigm is intentionally useful (Klenke, 2008). This study took a constructivist perspective. This view is a common accompanist to an expectation that phenomena are intricately related through many coincidental actions and that understanding requires looking at a wide sweep of contexts: temporal and spatial, historical, political, economic, cultural, social, and personal (Schroeder, 2010; Stake, 1995). The case study’s process is to understand the social interactions that lead to a picture of the culture (Merriam, 1998). In addition to the description, the final distinguishing feature of case study research is heuristic in nature. Simply put, case studies can lead to an instrumental discovery of new meaning, to understand more than what is obvious to the observer or to confirm what is known (Merriam, 1998; Stake, 1995). Each organizational culture is unique and requires a design that can account for specificity (Schein, 2008).

### **Setting**

This study took place at New State University (NSU), which was selected because its location, had been identified as a member of the Football Bowl Subdivision, and athletic administration permitted access (Merriam, 1998). NSU is a pseudonym for a public land-grant university in the western region of the United States. All other institutions and nicknames were given pseudonyms.

The university is located in a city of 25,000–45,000 people. It has an enrollment of 15,000 undergraduates and 3,500 graduate and professional degree students from 50 states and 90 countries. NSU offers undergraduates 190 areas of study in seven colleges and schools. The average undergraduate class size is 29 students. The university offers 200+ student clubs and organizations for extra-curricular student participation (Princeton Review, 2014).

On a national scale, NSU ranked in the top 200 colleges and universities (Adams, 2014; Princeton Review, 2014; US News and World Report, 2014). According to the school's website, the undergraduate Honor's Program has been named one of the best among public universities, however, by whom was not identified. *Outside* magazine recognized the University as one of the top "adventure colleges in 2012" (Andrews, 2012).

Since 2005, the university has been busy with capital facilities projects. Private donations and legislative appropriations have fueled a building boom, including several new facilities with state-of-the-art classrooms and research areas. More than one million square feet of space has been added. New capital construction included a 79,000 square-foot visual arts studio, a 30,000 square-foot facility for the School of Energy Resources, a townhome-style student housing complex, a STEM undergraduate laboratory facility, and a 60,000 square-foot building which serves admissions as well as alumni services. The state invested \$325 million in the last decade to meet the needs of the university. The University spent an additional \$27 million toward a student health and wellness facility in 2014. Athletic department 2014 renovations and facility projects included a two phase, \$30 million basketball arena, a new locker room for soccer and wrestling, a \$1.5 million indoor training facility for golf. A new aquatic facility is earmarked for 2017.

Fifteen athletic teams compete in the Division I National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) and the University belongs to a conference established in 1999 with 8 original members. Conference realignment welcomed 4 institutions since 2011. Its 12 members are located in seven states. Three of the original members have been conference rivals since the 1960s. The conference is currently in a 7 year contract with ESPN, which allows exclusive national television rights to football and men's basketball. In 2013, the conference had seven football bowl game contracted affiliations.

### **Participant Selection**

To assure valid and credible information, purposeful criteria sampling (Patton, 2005) were used in this study. The mode of sampling was based on selecting universities identified as DI and participating in the FBS. I sent participation request emails to 10 DI universities (see Appendix C). ADs and faculty liaisons to all 10 athletic departments were contacted initially. Three universities responded to the request email. The NSU athletic administrator responsible for external affairs replied and offered participation. He informed employees of the athletic department of the study. A letter of intent (see Appendix D) was sent to the senior AD for his approval. The AD of external affairs mailed a letter of research participation to Colorado State University's Institutional Review Board (see Appendix E and F). This identified NSU as the case study institution.

**Identification and Selection Plan of Participating Individuals.** In March 2014, after the AD for external affairs emailed employees of the athletic department of the data collection dates and study's purpose, I sent the same AD a list of potential participants by job/employment position/title. If participants volunteered, consent to contact was permitted and I was given a list

of email addresses to send the study invitation. Individual interviews were scheduled via email with the individuals listed in Table 7.

The inclusion criteria for this study identified potential participants who in each group: (1) worked at the university for a minimum of two years in administration, athletics, or as faculty, (2) were members of the athletic department booster club; (3) were affiliated partners of the athletic department on contract as an out sourcing advertising firm, or lastly, (4) a current student-athlete. To participate, volunteers had to qualify under one of the four criteria. Potential internal participants were employees in the athletic department. Four participants were not employees of the university. One employee of a multimedia firm associated with the athletic department, one male and one female booster offered external views of the athletic department.

The faculty athletic representative provided broad institutional perspectives of the university. Information concerning academic life was garnered from an athletic-admissions representative, alumni director for university fundraising, two department chairs, and two faculty leaders. Snowball sampling approach was used only in the athletic department and when employees recommended another employee in the department, who recommended another person in the department, and so on.

I detailed my experience with interview training in the Role of Researcher section in chapter one. I was responsible for contacting and selecting external and institutional participants. The associate AD of media relations introduced me to student-athletes. In the process, each participant was assigned a pseudonym to improve honesty, depth of responses, and confidentiality (Stake, 2013). Once on site and after initial consultation with the AD, athletic department employees who were not on the initial list of participants were interviewed.

Table 7 Interview Schedule

Interviewee	Appointment Time	Location
Department Chair of Health Science	Monday 12:30 p.m.	Individual academic office
Athletic Department Equipment Room Manager	Monday 2:30 p.m.	Common space of an the athletic department equipment room
Associate Director of Facilities	Monday 3:15 p.m.	Individual athletic department office
Head Swimming and Diving Coach	Monday 4:35 p.m.	Individual athletic department office
Head Women's Soccer Coach	Tuesday 8:30 a.m.	Individual athletic department office
Head Women's Golf Coach	Tuesday 10:30 a.m.	Individual athletic department office
Associate AD, External Affairs	Tuesday 1:30 p.m.	Individual athletic department office
Deputy Director of Athletics	Tuesday 3:00 p.m.	Individual athletic department office
Assistant Professor of Sports Psychology	Tuesday 4:30 p.m.	Individual academic department office
Director of Marketing and Branding	Tuesday 6:00 p.m.	Individual athletic department office
Assistant Women's Volleyball Coach	Wednesday 8:00 a.m.	Individual athletic department office
Booster Club Member	Wednesday 9:00 a.m.	Common space in library
Table 7 continued		
Interviewee	Appointment Time	Location
Chair of the Business School, Marketing Program	Wednesday 11:00 a.m.	Individual academic office
Associate AD of Internal Relations	Wednesday 2:00 p.m.	Individual athletic department office

Associate AD of Development and Revenue Enhancement	Wednesday 3:00 p.m.	Individual athletic department office
Associate Director of Business Operations	Wednesday 4:15 p.m.	Individual athletic department office
Assistant Men's Basketball Coach	Wednesday 5:30 p.m.	Individual athletic department office
Head Tennis Coach	Thursday 9:00 a.m.	Individual athletic department office
Alumni Director	Thursday 1:00 p.m.	Alumni house
AD	Thursday 3:00 p.m.	Individual athletic department office
Compliance Director	Thursday 4:00 p.m.	Individual athletic department office
Assistant Professor of Sports Psychology	Thursday 5:30 p.m.	Individual academic office
Individual Student-Athlete (3)	Thursday 5:30 p.m.	Private football stadium suite
Professor of Higher Education and Leadership	Friday 9:00 a.m.	Individual academic office
Athletic Department Faculty Representative	Friday 10:30 a.m.	Individual academic office
Coordinator of Student Admissions	Friday 12:00 p.m.	Individual academic office

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An external sports marketing arm for the athletic department was contacted about participation while I was on-site. The head football coach and the director of football operations did not respond to three invitation emails. Due to scheduling, the wrestling coach could not be interviewed. Saturation of data within internal, external, and institutional components, and leadership and power sub-units was sought (Josselson & Lieblich, 2003).



To determine if sampling procedures were sufficient, both the *appropriateness* and *adequateness* of the volunteers to participate were assessed (Morse, 2000). *Appropriateness* refers to the degree to which the volunteers and method “fit” the purpose of the study as determined by the research questions and stage of the research. The fit of any volunteer to participate was determined by meeting the criteria or willingness to share opinions about the organizational culture of the NSU athletic department.

*Adequacy* refers to the sufficiency and quality of the data. To ensure adequacy, one assesses the relevance, completeness, and amount of information obtained (Morse, 2000) post transcription. If the data are adequate, there are no “thin” areas and the resulting explanation nears complete (i.e., saturation of data). Saturation is the guiding principle of qualitative studies (Mason, 2010). The skills of the interviewer have an effect on the quality of data collected and sample size is less relevant toward achieving saturation (Mason, 2010; Morse, 2008). There could be an argument, for example that ten interviews, conducted by an experienced interviewer will elicit richer data than 50 interviews by an inexperienced or novice interviewer (Guest, Bunce, & Johnson, 2006).

In total, the interviewees (n = 41) were 37 men and 4 women with a range 2-40 years of employment. Age range was from 21 to 73 years. Tables 8 and 9 detail the job title and gender of the interview participants. Participants were selected and grouped into the four environments of intercollegiate athletic organizational culture (Schroeder, 2010).

Table 8 Participants-Internal Athletic Department

Position	Gender
Marketing and branding director	Male
Business manager	Male
Financial aid coordinator for student-athletes	Female
Associate director-facilities and event management	Male
Equipment room manager	Male

Compliance director	Male
Head women's soccer coach	Male
Head volleyball coach	Male
Head women's tennis coach	Male
Head swimming and diving coach	Male
Head women's golf coach	Female
Head cheer coach	Male
Assistant volleyball coach	Female
Assistant men's basketball coach	Male
Assistant cheer coach	Female
Individual student-athlete	Male
Individual student-athlete	Female
Individual student-athlete	Female
AD	Male
Senior associate director-internal affairs	Male
Associate director-development and revenue enhancement	Male
Associate director-media relations	Male
Associate director-business operation	Male
Senior associate director-external relations	Male

*Note:* This list included power and leadership and internal athletic department environment interview participants.

Table 9 Institutional Participants

Interviewee	Gender
Alumni director for university fundraising	Male
Chair of health sciences	Male
Chair of the business school, marketing program	Male
Table 9 continued	
Assistant professor of sports psychology	Male
Professor of higher education and leadership	Female
Athletic department faculty representative	Female
Coordinator of student admissions	Female

*Note:* These were the position titles of the interview participants.

### Data Collection

Case studies, capitalize on ordinary ways of getting acquainted with the surroundings and participants (Stake, 2013). There are many parts to data gathering which are guided by the research questions (see Table 10): protection of the participants, the sources of information, and

the researcher's privilege and obligation to the process. The study's application was approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at Colorado State University, Fort Collins.

Table 10 Guided Questions for Investigating Culture of an Athletic Department

Elements of Culture	Questions
Institutional	<p>What are the strengths and weaknesses of the athletic department?</p> <p>How does the athletic department interact with other departments?</p> <p>Are the AD administrators qualified to lead a DI athletic department?</p> <p>How is the athletic department perceived by you?</p>
Leadership and Power	<p>How are decisions made in the department?</p> <p>Describe how the athletic department is managed.</p> <p>What is the leadership style of the AD?</p> <p>What are the main sources of power?</p>
Internal Culture	<p>How are decisions made in the department?</p> <p>Describe how the athletic department is managed.</p> <p>What are the strengths and weaknesses?</p>
External Culture	<p>Describe how the athletic department is managed.</p> <p>What are the strengths and weaknesses overall?</p> <p>How does the athletic department interact with other departments on campus?</p> <p>What externalities influence the athletic department?</p> <p>What does the athletic department gain or contribute to the environment?</p>

*Note.* These questions were used as a starting point in the investigation.

### Data Sources and Protocols

Multiple data collection sources were utilized:

- Individual interviews
- Archival newsletters
- Athletic department media guides
- University website

- Photos taken by researcher of sports facilities and buildings on campus
- Artifacts as cultural objects of the institution
- Observations of practices, games, meets, and tournaments
- Social Media: Twitter, Gametracker, and YouTube
- Athletic Department Budget Reports: FY 2011, FY 2012, FY 2013

**Interviews.** Interviews are a preferred means for the purpose of gaining the trust of participants so they will engage in open discussion (Cohen, Kahn, & Steeves, 2000).

Retrospective information and current perceptions of the organizational culture were solicited during face-to-face interviews, which allowed for free-flowing conversation (talking and listening). Interviews lasted 60-120 minutes and were designed to solicit description, stories, and perceptions of professional and relational experiences of the athletic department. Integrated with the guided research questions, participants were encouraged to narrate “stories.” Participants based stories around photos (Emmerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 1995). This approach was based on recent research emphasizing the importance of narrative in how employees interpret themselves and the organizations they work in (Sonenshein, Dutton, Grant, Spreitzer, & Sutcliffe, 2013).

Digital recordings were utilized with each individual participant. Each interview was transcribed verbatim. Each participant was given a copy of their interview transcript, asked to read, make revisions of their statements if required of the written text, and sign the consent form. Transcripts averaged 15 pages of text and were finalized and approved by participants.

**Field Notes, Institutional Research Reports, and Program Documents.** Limited field notes were made to enhance the quality of obtained data (Kahn, 2000). Information such as dress, body language, and environmental details, as well as observations and documentation of

the interviews were handwritten in a pocket-sized notebook. These field notes were written soon after interviews and observations to reflect upon the data or to remember a piece of information.

University census data, specifically enrollment and demographic were collected. The university website was utilized to obtain demographic data, employment statistics for students, faculty, professional staff, coaches, and other university employees.

Minutes from five athletic department meetings from May 10, 2014 to May 28, 2014; department annual budgets for 2012-2013FY and 2013-2014FY; athletic department architectural projects 2010-15; the 2015-2020 strategic planning report, and longitudinal statistics from 2003-2014 on student-athletes grade point averages, majors, and graduation rates provided in-depth sources of data.

**Photographs and Other Visual Images.** Another major source of information is through referencing visual accounts (see Table 11)—pictures from campus buildings and athletic facilities, program activities collected from publications (i.e., graduation, football games, track meets, 2 soccer games, 1 basketball game, 1 golf tournament, and 1 swim meet) and field notes (e.g., graduation party for senior student-athletes, all face to face interviews, a campus tour, and an athletic facility tour). Permission to photograph was approved through the Colorado State University IRB and participants consent (See Appendix F).

Table 11 Visual Data Sources for Data Collection

Element	Quantity Estimations
Photographs campus buildings	200
Athletic events	100
Ceremonies	25
Images from university website	40
University orientation and admissions publications-photographs and drawings	50
University alumni publications	15
Local newspaper articles	50
Architectural blueprints of natatorium	1
Photographs of art work	10
	108

Mascot, artifacts, and logos (archival)	75
People on and near campus (archival)	35

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*Note.* Photographs of campus buildings and art work for referencing campus.

Pictorial records were produced to document tournaments and games, a graduation ceremony, mascots, facilities were additions to the data collection. These photos were in concert with the above said events. Before-and-after photographs of renovated athletic facilities artwork which illustrated an aspect of athletic culture were utilized to paint a picture of the culture. These images were collected from the university website or from participant's offices. Drawings, renditions, and architectural blueprints of slated building projects were shared by administrators. Documents of people and artwork inside the athletic buildings were other sources of information utilized in the study. These documents were used for reference, recollection, and in the case of publications, used as a direct data source.

**Artifacts.** Participants in this study were asked to provide cultural artifacts in offices during face to face interviews. These included items such as memorabilia, scrapbooks, photographs, toys and trinkets, and team merchandise. Actually, Emmerson, Fretz, and Shaw, (1995) explored the meaning of photo albums and scrapbooks as an artifact of life narration. Rafaeli and Pratt (2013) paid special attention to artifacts, as the authors supported the theory that in organizations are highly visible but overlooked.

**Observations.** The use of direct observations has been an important research tool for centuries, an opportunity to witness the complexities of social interaction. Prior to formal event observations I familiarized myself with the layout of the meeting spaces or game/tournament locations. Seating locations with clear views, but not obtrusive were selected. Five continuous days (approximately 45 hours) in the athletic department office allowed for observable interactions informally during working hours. Repeat observations of participants in the athletic

department and power and leadership components were observed in 2-4 different settings (e.g., group meetings, sporting events, or senior graduation ceremony for student-athletes). Each observation spanned 20-30 minutes. Participants displayed on-task behaviors during across different settings. They were actively engaged and added to conversations. Formal observations were conducted:

- Five athletic administrative meetings in the athletic department offices (3-8 people present).
- One team practice for women's soccer (20 people present) and volleyball (15 people present).
- One track and field all-conference championship meet (12 universities participated).
- Two football team strength and conditioning sessions (35 players, 3 strength and conditioning coaches, and 2 athletic trainers present).
- An official campus tour led by a student orientation leader (non-athletic tour).
- An official athletic facilities tour led by the assistant AD of facilities management.
- A dinner for approximately 50 matriculating senior student-athletes.
- Spring graduation commencement for the School of Arts and Sciences (undergraduate, masters and doctoral degrees).
- One non-conference football game in September 2014 (at an opposing team's institution).

Informal observations were documented in field notes and included the numbers in attendance at the above events, which were either tallied by the ticket office or myself. Verbal and nonverbal behaviors of participants were added to the field notes, as well as people reacting to the home team winning at the football game, the track meet, or athletic administrators working as a team in a senior staff meeting.

I adhered to the fieldwork guidelines suggested by Glaser and Strauss (1967), Taylor and Bogdan (1984) and Strauss and Corbin (1990). Sometimes I observed from a sofa in the department lounge or a corner of an office, for example, participating in one-on-one lunch conversation or went on an errand with a participant. I watched participants during phone calls and working in their individual offices. During these observational periods, I documented the symbolic exchange (verbal and nonverbal) in interactions of a participant commenting on themselves in connection to or apart from the organizational culture. The reality of this type of observation was that many of the rich data points were obtained during informal gatherings at which participants were active and I the observer was not noticed. Using the conceptual boundaries of the study, I sought to understand participants by soliciting and observing their everyday talk, actions, interactions, and recollections at work.

**School Website.** The university website was utilized as a source of data to gather the university's history multiple times throughout the process of data collection. I searched for artifacts and symbolic traditions; as well as university archived newsletters and alumni magazines were used. In addition, the school's website provided information regarding archival data; 2012-2014 schedules of sports teams and rosters of sports teams; scores and performance statistics; contact information; coaches' and administrators' biographies; team travel information; annual athletics media guide; and campus maps.

Data collection was designed to avoid preconceived views and include individuals' concerns and interests (Godwin & Chamber, 2009). The following section explained the techniques to analyze the data.



## Data Management

Qualitative research often appears to require a mix of different skills: efficient management of data combined with detailed knowledge and sensitive exploration, as well as the ability to create abstractions, identify patterns, and probe emerging patterns. Huberman, Miles, and Saldana (2013) emphasized, “A good storage and retrieval system is critical for keeping track of what data are available” (p. 38). Therefore NVivo 10, qualitative data analysis software, was used to manage and analyze data documents such as interview transcripts, field notes, research reports, as well as nontextual records such as photographs. This management and analysis program served as an essential tool in the data analysis. Over the course of 5 months, the amount of data was voluminous. Table 12 delineates the data collection timeline. A common drawback for neophyte researchers is that they fail to analyze at the individual subunit level and fail to return to the global they initially set out to address (Yin, 2014). To avoid this common mistake, each environment-- the internal athletic department, institutional, and external environments were described separately, after which an interaction of the environments was ascertained.

Table 12 Timeline of Data Collection

Month/Year	Activity
December 2013	Sent out initial email invitation to participate in study.
January 2014	NSU accepted invitation.
February 2014	NSU AD sent participation documentation to CSU IRB.
April 2014	IRB approves study.
May 2014	On campus visit.
June–September 2014	Transcribed digitally recorded data.

*Note.* The precise day of stated months were not recorded.

Case studies often are descriptive because they involve examining events or phenomena not fully studied. Using multiple data sources provides for cross-checks and increases validity

through linking patterns and themes (Godwin & Chamber, 2009). Analysis organizes raw accumulated data into smaller piles of summarized data (LeCompte & Schensul, 1999). As in chapter four, the analysis will reduce data to themes that can be told comprehensively; chapter five is an interpretation which tells the reader what the themes mean (Locke, 1996). Themes are defined as “recurrent ideas” and /or “a unifying idea that is a recurrent element in a text” (Locke, 1996, p. 240). In this study, a theme was determined by the presence of one or more of the following: (1) *recurrence* of behavior or an expressed thought (e.g., if two different statements made a similar reference or suggested shared meaning); (2) *repetition* of key words or phrases; (3) heightened *consensus* or agreement; and (4) considerable *intensity* suggested an important conviction. Thus, I began with an inductive approach to analysis--less with a search for answers than an attempt to frame initial perceptions (Locke, 1996). This description reorganizes data collection, coding, and interpretation often overlap. These overlapping processes allowed for a richer understanding of the data and identifying the need for additional data collection.

The recursive nature of analyses required one to sort, analyze, interpret, make claims, and then verify, refine, or disconfirm these claims (Yin, 2014). Fundamentally, I interacted with an analytic process: made observations; asked questions of initial participants; got answers; then asked more refined questions to other participants; received more complete answers; compared and contrasted the answers; summarized and ordered data to establish patterns and linkages; noted instances that clarified, modified, or negated what I perceived was “going on” in these groups; and then ultimately modified and limited speculation (adapted from LeCompte & Schensul, 1999). Strauss and Corbin’s (1990) analysis process used in this study could be replicated by other researchers.

Some participants' stories of their fondest memories and accomplishments while working in the athletic department were used as a starting point in the analysis. Others participants were asked the strengths and weaknesses of the athletic department. These narratives provided a basis structure from which to organize and synthesize relational events and ask more specific questions from Table 10. The following general procedures were utilized in this study.

**Data Sorting and Analysis.** Data sources for this study were interview data (ID), observational data (OD), personal memos (PM), field notes, and analytical memos (which were added to field notes during analysis), and visual data (VD). During the first few months, analysis was focused on primarily the 42 transcripts, observations, and newspaper articles regarding the athletic department's coaching changes and leadership changes on the university level (see Figure 5 below).

**Open Coding and Assignment of Codes.** Open coding involved "naming and categorizing of phenomena through close examination of data" (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, p. 62) (see Figure 5). Open coding began by a careful reading of each environment (internal athletic department, leadership and power, institutional, and external) using conceptual labels in NVivo 10 as nodes. The following unit of data, for example, sometimes referred to as a *data bite*, was assigned to a conceptual label of *recognition of achievements*: "the women's basketball team conference championship was a shining moment in my career" (Bill, OD-4, 13). By situating this particular piece of information data in the surrounding context of the statement, I noted Bill was basking in the glow of the women's basketball team's achievement. Later in the analysis, Bill's pride quote was central for the same internal-external-institutional-leadership and power cultures. This suggested recognition of achievement, a similar code across components, was a

reoccurring data bite. However, at this stage in the analysis, the researcher coded data bites to be compared for the second stage of analysis.

**Comparing and Contrasting.** The second step in the analysis included the constant-comparison method (Glaser & Strauss, 1967), which required that each data bite be compared to previous data bites (see Figure 5). If any given data bites were determined to be conceptually similar to an existing data bite, they were then labeled with a category code. If different, a new conceptual category was identified and the data unit was labeled with a new category code. Additionally, efforts were made to code categories to ensure that data remained as close as possible to participants' own words or quotes, and to use their own terms because they capture a key element of what is being described (Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

**Axial Coding and Ordering.** This third stage marked a move toward data reduction. To help determine the relationship among the environments and identify categories, Spradley's (1979) semantic relationship questions were used (e.g., why have you spent your entire career here? What makes NSU different from other institutions?). Central categories that organized and represented key concepts were assembled. The aforementioned example in stage one, 'a shining moment in my career' transformed from 'recognition of achievement' into a broader categories across (internal athletic department, leadership and power, institutional, and external) environments of 'reasons involved with NSU intercollegiate athletics'. This was done by linking codes to contexts, to consequences, to patterns of interactions, and to causes (Strauss & Corbin, 2008).

**Aggregation and Identification of General Themes.** The next step in the process involved another level of abstraction where categories (and subcategories within each category) are collapsed into parsimonious groupings of broader, more inclusive themes shared among the

four environments being investigated (see Figure 5). As a brief review, up to this point data bites were identified and defined. Categories similar to one another were clustered together into themes. In this phase of the analysis I examined the themes for strong commonalities. These commonalities are defined as themes. These themes, although no longer specific to any one relationship or group, are derived from comparing data from each environment and should, in a general sense, have relevance for and be applicable to the internal, external, and institutional environments in the study (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). “A theme is any cognitive principle, tacit or explicit, recurrent in a number of categories that consists of multiple concepts linked into meaningful relationships” (Miller-Day, 2004, p. 41). The stage of aggregating and identifying themes ultimately generates groupings of meaning based on my interpretation of data, and represents a second-order analysis (Van Mannen, 2002). Additionally, throughout the analytic process, I maintained ongoing documentation of coding decisions and thoughts about given codes and categories for an audit trail (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss & Corbin, 2008).

## Details of Data Analysis Process

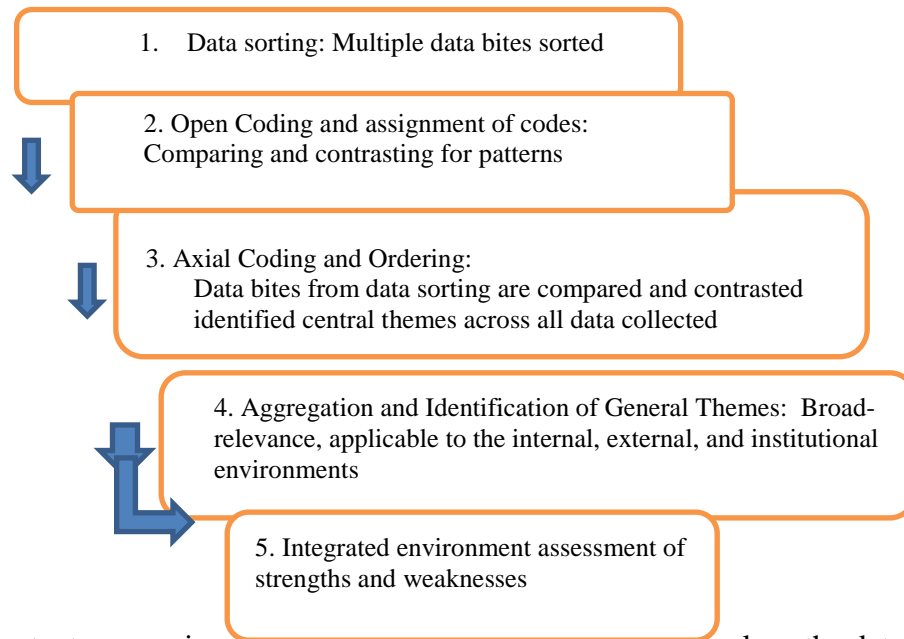


Figure 4. The constant-comparison method demonstrates steps used to analyze the data. Adapted from Corbin, J., & Strauss, A. (Eds.). (2008). *Basics of qualitative research: Techniques and procedures for developing grounded theory*. Sage: Thousand Oaks, CA:

### Trustworthiness

Considerations of qualitative research inspire discussions of trustworthiness. Several authors have broached the issue of trustworthiness (Creswell, 2014). What is important to articulate, is that certain criteria used to judge merit of any mode of discovery are made explicit. As shown in Table 13, this research uses four trustworthiness criteria: (1) credibility, (2) transferability, (3) dependability, and (4) confirmability to evaluate the scientific merit of this research. Credibility refers to the accuracy of the information obtained; that is, should we believe this information to be trustworthy. Certain provisions were made to enhance credibility, such as using multiple methods and multiple sources of data rather than a single method, extending conversations for clarification and when new information changed meanings. Data were triangulated among the multiple sources to increase trustworthiness. The transferability of this research refers to the extent to which the findings may be transferable to other settings.

Purposive sampling across internal, external, institutional, and leadership components, my self-reflection, and accurate records (to record the stages of the research process) help ensure dependable and trustworthy findings. By observing behavior in natural settings, providing detailed and nuanced descriptions of interactions, and articulating patterns within relationships and across relationships, this case study may provide a foundation to extrapolate themes for this particular Division I intercollegiate athletics department.

In this study, I made certain I functioned more as a participant than as an observer during the period of time I was earning the trust of the participants. For example, when asked a question in a leadership meeting about handling the athletic department's public response to an article in the local newspaper, I suggested, "Perhaps no response at all. Why bring more attention to a subject that is exploratory in nature?" Additionally, when taking notes during meetings and tours, I reduced the inherent obtrusive nature of the process by carrying a mini digital audio recorder and later jotted observations while in the bathroom of the athletic department's office. The duration of my stay at the athletic department office contributed to decreasing reactivity and increasing the trust and comfort levels between me and participants over five, 10 hour days. In the evenings during and for the two weeks after my visit, I evaluated the experience.

The last criterion of trustworthiness--confirmability--refers to the clear exposition of how an investigator conducted the study so others might confirm the findings. This was accomplished through meticulous data management and maintenance of accurate records. Interviews were member checked and transcribed verbatim, field notes were documented systematically, accurate coding and interpretation records were maintained on each observation and interview, and decisions were documented and organized chronologically. These steps were taken to ensure I and others could confirm the findings.

Table 13 Techniques to Ensure Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness Criteria	Criteria Addressed in This Study Through
Credibility	<p><b><i>Engagement in the field</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Persistent observation (careful observation of situations to determine salient factors and characteristics)</li> </ul> <p><b><i>Triangulation of data types</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Interviews, media guides, archival data, alumni magazines</li> <li>● Discussion of artifacts, photographs, university website, social media,</li> <li>● Field notes of observations</li> </ul> <p><b><i>Respondent validation</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Formal and informal discussions of emergent findings with participants, verification and adjustment of coding and interpretations</li> </ul>
Transferability (extent to which findings are transferable to other settings)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Data grounded in natural settings</li> <li>● Delimited claims to sample characteristics</li> <li>● Data and analysis are overlaid</li> <li>● Informed by organizational culture literature</li> </ul> <p><b><i>Detailed (thick) description of</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Focus on observations and interview questions</li> <li>● Concepts and categories</li> </ul>
Dependability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Purposive sampling of participants (across environments)</li> <li>● Accurate records maintained as an audit trail (to accurately trace the stages of research process)</li> <li>● Self-reflection illustrated through researcher disclosing biases</li> <li>● Protection of informants' anonymity</li> </ul>
Conformability (clear exposition of methods of data collection analysis for auditor confirmation)	<p><b><i>Meticulous Data Management and Recording</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Verbatim transcription of interviews</li> <li>● Careful notes of observations</li> <li>● Clear memos on theoretical, methodological, and personal decisions while writing study</li> <li>● Accurate records of contacts, interviews, and observations</li> </ul>



## CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS

New State University's character proved to be unique. This was truly a college town. The terrain of Waterford is alpine desert and was in full bloom in May. The landscape billowed in the mighty wind. There was no snow on the ground, but the wind promised a chilly stay for the week. The town of 45,000 and 18,000 college students claimed a vibrant downtown business and restaurant district. The sky was bright blue and smog-free. The campus streets cleaned and well-kept. Trees were sparse, except close to older campus buildings and in the national forest outside of town. A previous university president spearheaded the commercial growth north of the main campus. The remainder of the north side was populated with franchise eateries and grocery stores. The only hospital in the city was nestled across the street from a university parking lot and adjacent to the 18 hole public golf course on the northwest corner of campus. The University campus sprawled across the alpine prairie landscape.

The athletic facilities were located on the north side of campus. The 87,000 square foot indoor training facility for football and soccer houses a full-size 100 yard by 50 yard football field. It is also large enough for a regulation soccer field. The basketball arena is 200,000 square feet and seats over 11,000. The university website stated both men and women basketball teams have collectively won 74% of their games between 1939 and 2010. The men's basketball team hosted 10 postseason tournament games. The women's basketball team hosted 15 Women's National Invitation Tournament games since 2000. The football stadium seats approximately 30,000 people and installed 15 indoor suites in 2011. The university website claimed the football team has won 70% of their home games since the stadium opened in 1955.

Volleyball and wrestling shared a sports complex with seating for 1,200. The indoor track had more than 25,000 square feet and holds a multi-lane track that was renovated since

2010, and seats over 1,500 people. The area also included a throwing cage, long jump pit and pole vault pit, while the building houses coaches' offices for the golf, swimming and track programs and locker rooms and a team room specifically for track. The track and field programs have access to their own weight room and sports medicine room.

A 50,000 square foot facility to accommodate several areas utilized by all the sports teams was next to the football stadium. The ground level housed an 8,000 square-foot strength and conditioning area that contains over 7,500 pounds of free weights molded with the custom logo, including 18 Power Racks and 15 Olympic Lifting Platforms. On the ground level was a sports medicine area, with ten full-time, certified athletic trainers and a dietitian. The 5,000 square-foot space provided student-athletes treatment, examination/diagnosis, rehabilitation and hydrotherapy. The football locker room was on the ground level of multi-purpose facility. At more than 5,600 square feet, the room contained over 100 individual lockers and a team lounge area.

The second story was predominantly occupied by the Athletic Academic Support Services, a 5,000 square-foot facility devoted entirely to academics for student-athletes. Divided into a computer lab, desks, tutoring and meeting rooms, and counselors' offices, the academic area provides student-athletes with access to more than 40 computers and six full-time academic counselors. The staff works daily with student-athletes to monitor their academic progress. The football offices were also on the second floor and house 10 full-time coaches each in individual offices and individual position meeting rooms. A display of several sport artifacts, historic rivalries, and a display of players in the NFL are prominent on the second floor in the foyer of the building.

The tennis team has access to eight outdoor and four indoor courts. The tennis facility is open to the public when not in use by the university team. Finally, the 30 year old aquatic facility is a 25 yard long pool. Men's and women's divers have access to an indoor diving pit that includes two dry boards, a spotting harness, and trampoline.

### **Interactions of the Environments**

What emerged out of the interactions of the institutional, external, internal and power and leadership environments were three basic assumptions that formed the foundation for NSU's athletic department culture; student athlete academic success. Three of these athletic culture assumptions have clear links to the university's institutional environment. The fourth assumption is connected to the external environment and the fifth, to power and leadership. Although this culture was not without tensions, they were effectively managed through the leadership of coaches and administrators.

**Academic Success.** The foundational assumption of the athletic culture at NSU was the relationship between academic and athletic abilities. Athletes were described as "remarkable, specialized, exceptional, extraordinary, and talented by participants in the internal athletic environment. As such they are monitored academically. This team is led by the deputy director of internal relations. Answering the deputy director is a compliance director, who collects required data on student-athletes' well-being. They must complete 40% of the coursework required for a degree by the end of their second year, 60% by the end of their third year, and 80% by the end of their fourth year. Student-athletes are allowed five years to graduate while receiving athletically related financial aid. All Division I student-athletes must earn at least six credit hours each term to be eligible for the following term and must meet minimum grade point average (GPA) requirements based on the institution's academic standards for graduation.

A secondary annual assessment, the Academic Success Rate (APR) is a rolling, four-year figure, entire team measurement tool. A perfect score is 1000, meaning everyone on the team remained eligible and or was not retained. A score of 925 is equivalent to a 50% graduation rate and may penalize the team's opportunity to practice in the post season or restrict available scholarships. It is a term-by-term calculation of the eligibility and retention of all student-athletes. Points are lost for students who are not eligible and/or are not retained. APR is calculated by compliance directors and submitted to the NCAA annually. Thus, each student-athlete receiving financial aid accrues points for staying in school and maintaining academic eligibility contributes to the University's points.

Table 14 NSU Grade Point Averages, 2009-2013

Sport	2009/2010	2010/2011	2011/ 2012	2012/2013	2013/2014
All Students	3.02	2.89	2.91	3.04	2.94
All					
Student-Athletes	2.90	2.88	3.04	3.00	2.95
Football	2.54	2.51	2.58	2.62	2.58
Men's basketball	2.45	2.19	2.51	2.66	2.81
Women's basketball	3.26	3.06	3.01	3.14	2.95
Volleyball	3.42	3.34	3.61	3.55	3.49
Soccer	3.00	2.93	2.98	3.04	3.06
Wrestling	2.63	2.81	2.74	2.85	2.84
Women's swimming	3.18	3.10	3.03	2.89	2.80
Men's swimming	3.02	3.04	2.95	3.08	3.11
Men's Golf	3.16	3.29	3.35	3.16	3.16
Women's Golf	3.12	3.08	3.02	3.18	3.08
Tennis	3.09	3.38	3.11	3.23	3.36
Men's Cross					
Country	3.36	3.24	3.33	3.49	3.45
Women's Cross					
Country	3.27	3.20	3.19	3.34	3.32
Men's Track	2.89	2.96	3.07	3.25	3.25
Women's Track	3.19	3.21	3.15	3.26	3.21

Even if students choose to leave NSU, school administrators want them to use academic tutoring services to keep their grades up. Until a semester ends student-athletes are considered a part of the team regardless if they play or not. Tables 14 and 15 illustrated GPA and APR scores for all NSU sport teams between years 2002-2014. The misnomer of student-athletes being at universities to “just play sports” is not the case at NSU. For the academic years 2010-2014, student-athletes and their non-athlete undergraduate students accrued the same average GPA, 2.95. The men's cross country team has the highest GPAs all four years with a mean of 3.45 for 2010-2014, where, the football team's average was 2.58, the lowest. However, men's cross country had 12 student-athletes and football 120 to control for, thus, an unfair comparison. The NCAA dictates a minimum 2.30 in core courses required to continue eligibility for competition and financial aid.

APR scores account for retention and academic eligibility of individual athletes and add to the team's annual score. Individuals are affected differently by coaching changes and or wins and losses. It is not uncommon for student athletes to quit the team and abruptly leave a university when leadership changes or scandals affect their lives. The volleyball team is one example of this scenario as the APR scores may be skewed by events off the court. In this case, their head coach was charged with NCAA violations and the team relinquished conference victories. The men's basketball team's average APR score for 2010-2014 was 923, football 938. In contrast, men's golf accrued 972 for the same four years. The men's basketball APR scores were 905, 938, 940, and 941. In 2010, the year the men's basketball team scored 905, the same year the head coach was fired. Several men's basketball players quit the team before the end of the semester which hurt the APR scores dramatically. The NCAA penalized the men's basketball team with a loss of two scholarships for the 2011-12 season. In 2011 a men's

Table 15 NSU Academic Progress Rate (APR) 2009-2014 Scores

Year	2009/ 2010	2010/ 2011	2011/ 2012	2012/ 2013	2013/ 2014	5 year average
Football	928	933	936	938	955	938
Men's Basketball	892	905	938	940	941	923
Women's Basketball	985	985	979	977	972	980
Volleyball	941	957	984	995	990	973
Soccer	963	963	963	979	981	970
Wrestling	935	941	957	962	968	953
Women's Swimming	978	980	974	981	980	979
Men's Swimming	942	963	956	967	959	957
Men's Golf	943	951	969	1000	1000	973
Women's Golf	993	986	993	986	964	984
Tennis	984	977	977	976	985	980
Men's Cross Country	962	978	980	969	977	973

Women's Cross						
Country	931	940	957	970	983	956
Men's Track	926	938	955	970	969	952
Women's Track	932	933	950	962	969	949

basketball coach was hired and the team's APR scores have been consistent and steadily increasing. The sports teams with the biggest ranges of points from 2009-2010 to 2013-2014 seasons were the women's cross country team with a 52 point differences and the men's golf team with a 57 point difference. The fluctuating trends of GPAs and APRs represent the culture of the sports team in much as the stability of the coaches and their interactions with student athletes.

Another aspect of perceived student-athletes academic success had been from those in the institutional environment, who are in the classroom with them. Faculty perceptions of the athletic department were geared toward wins and losses of only football and men's and women's basketball teams. Business, education, and kinesiology professors offered little knowledge about the internal culture of the athletic department, yet they viewed students as representatives of the athletic department who had "comparable or better grades to the general student population." A kinesiology professor commented on students in his department, "They will go onto to physical therapy school, graduate school. When I look at many of the teams, and of course there are some outliers to this, they are generally very high ranking grade wise. That stems not only from the organization but from the coaches. They're pushing academics."

Student-athletes were reported positive role models for their peers in the classroom. A department head commented:

The relationships student-athletes built in their degree programs have helped some obtain careers at the university. The chair of the business school stated fondly, "we have a former football lineman—he's our major gifts officer at the college of business. So those connections he made as a student has paid off. Actually, he has really been become an integral part of the fundraising efforts in the college. He has done an outstanding job.

To offset some of the burden of travel, practice, and competition, student-athletes stated the registrar's office made special accommodations to balance sports and academic schedules. A football player explained how priority registration helped him enroll in core courses:

We get to sign-up for our classes before most other students. That allows me to secure classes that I absolutely need on Tuesdays and Thursdays rather than Monday, Wednesday, and Fridays, as we leave town on Fridays typically. It also gives me the flexibility to have practice time in the afternoons, without having to miss practice and tell coach that I'm sorry I won't be at practice this semester. The compliance department within intercollegiate athletics has preferential course

registration, a specialized tutoring center, six full time academic advisors, and a financial aid director who monitors enrollment in classes every semester.

*Campus partnerships.* The core assumption of academic success of student athletes enabled the athletic culture to be what Martin and Siehl (1983) would call an enhancing subculture of the institution. Although the athletic department was not housed under a division or department on campus, it was apparent the department valued strong partnerships with the numerous departments and personnel who make up the university. In one manner or another, the athletic department, student athletes, and employees have interactions with every aspect of university. This included all areas of academic departments, administration, financial aid, payroll, human resources, university accounting, purchasing, housing, food services, campus transportation, the student union, the library, campus recreation, etc. Positive relationships, built on mutual respect have been established between the athletic department and these campus departments.

According to the AD, at one time or another, each of the departments on campus assisted the athletic department overcoming some challenge or obstacle. In return internal athletic department employees reciprocate. For example, the chief financial officer spoke to an



accounting class when a scheduled speaker canceled. An academic advisor shared student athletes actively seek internships and summer employment. In addition, a continuing goal in the 2014-2019 strategic plan was for intercollegiate athletics to continue to seek ways to enhance campus relationships and develop new partnerships. To successfully achieve both the University's mission and that of athletics, teamwork of the entire university was necessary as leadership realized. Spearheading these campus relationships were multiple directors of the subcultures and the leadership and power environment of the athletic department.

### **Stable leadership.**

Like many university organizational hierarchies, the AD reported directly to the university president. However, there were no other entities to which the athletic department was held directly accountable. Athletic leadership lacked faculty academic representation both institutionally (faculty senate) or externally (COIA, NCAA) until 2012. This is a contemporary implementation program the NCAA recommended for institutions, especially DI, and the lack of academic representation did not surprise me. The faculty position was voluntary and unpaid and requires attendance at external conference meetings. The current faculty academic representative (FAR) was highly involved in the program. Her disciplinary background was in humanities and she had recently been appointed to a provost position at NSU. While I was on campus she spoke at a graduation ceremony for senior student-athletes. Her presence and assistance with the NCAA recertification 2012 visit helped NSU pass with positive results and no need for follow-ups. I did recommend that she be listed on the athletic department staff directory as many institutions demonstrate their relationships across departments and divisions with this listing.

Stability refers to maintaining constancy or familiar patterns, where change refers to variation and unfamiliar patterns. Indeed, as coaches and staff move through their professional

careers experiencing periods of stability and change, others may exhibit constancy. Considering the AD and six executive administrators had been in their roles for a decade or longer, stability within the administration of the athletic department was ongoing and valued. Points of change occurring within the department had been the advent of new facilities and renovation of others, budget reductions from the economic downturn during 2008-2013, and major sports coaching changes. Intercollegiate athletics is considered a transitory profession (Nixon, 2014). One long term coach reminisced about the long term relationship he built with senior administrators at NSU:

The leadership, at least retrospectively, has been supportive of my program the last seventeen seasons. What I believe is of significance are the types of turning points we have had together and how my program has evolved. I still gripe for more money, because I coach an Olympic sport and am successful, but we've literally gone through a huge chunk of adulthood together. Our proximity to one another [in the office] and long working history forces us to stay connected. I respect them and know the AD and deputy AD (internal relations) support my program. Don't know if you can find this environment at many schools anymore," a coach remarked.

### **Athletic Director.**

The AD was respected by athletic department employees. He had been a student-athlete and was a graduate of NSU 30 years ago. In the athletic department, his fundraising capacity led to an assistant AD position at another DI institution before coming back to NSU as the senior ranking AD years ago. His main responsibilities are fundraising and lobbying for the department externally. The business manager shared:

We have certain people on the state legislative staff that cares about athletics. But honestly it's one of the biggest objectives the AD is doing with our new president. We're getting support from across the university, but it's something new too.

The state legislature isn't used to seeing the president of the university and the AD in the same room trying to get the same thing done. But it's those 2 guys out there. He probably spends, I swear, 15 minutes in the office a week. He's constantly fundraising in the

corporate arena, traveling to games and tournaments, conference meetings, representing us at NCAA events, serving on external committees.

When the director is in his office--the door stays open. The AD's open door policy has concerned some staff about his safety. Direct access of the director at sporting events and in the general public could cause negative ramifications from a disgruntled fan, student, or opposing team fan. A volleyball coach reminded me of the harsh realities of external perceptions of the

AD:

There are no split loyalties in terms of naysayers here. I'm sure if you went on a message board, you can find somebody grumbling about something. Everybody wants to be the AD, which has to be the worst job. I used to think I wanted to do that, and I couldn't imagine doing it now after being involved in this profession.

The director of media relations repeated what many shared with me:

He is so open. He'll be the most open AD I think you'll ever run into. He doesn't have a meeting policy. The door is open. If you need something you walk in and talk to him.

In 2013, NSU's president and AD contracted with an external consulting firm to conduct a review of the revenue producing football and men's basketball programs with the overall goal of improving program competitive and operational effectiveness. The consulting team visited campus for two days and evaluated the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats report for the public at a cost of \$40,000. They toured the facilities and interviewed over 40 individuals either in one-on-one sessions or in small groups. The external review committee praised the AD as: "a highly competitive veteran that knows and understands his job, have the experience and expertise to carry it out, and is passionate about the intercollegiate programs." His transformational leadership style was enforced and fulfilled by his the deputy AD, associate AD of external affairs, senior women's AD, associate AD of compliance, and senior business director. Even though he was not physically in his office daily, to stay connected with the internal department members, his vision was shared, carried across and among layers of

administrators, staff, and seasoned coaches with whom he had built relationships over several decades.

### **Management style and communication.**

Leadership was identified as four senior associate athletics directors, four associate athletics directors, and three assistant ADs. The management style was informal in the office and group oriented. Employees described administrators as accessible: “I am an assistant volleyball coach and I can talk to any of them and not feel uncomfortable about it. I know I’d never go to them without talking to the head volleyball coach, unless it’s something that I know I can. Their doors are open. It helps that we’re located on the other side of the wall” (from the AD).

Various inter-athletic departmental committees organized their own meetings on a regular basis. All head coaches met with senior leadership monthly and the AD held departmental meetings annually. The assistant director of compliance met four times a year with all coaches “to cover different topics recruiting, playing and practice seasons, hot topics, NCAA and things like that. Interestingly though we have the coaches run the meetings. We’re just there in case anybody asks questions but the coaches run the meetings. This helps us verify they grasp the wide breadth of compliance issues. We don’t expect them to know this stuff like the back of their hand and that’s why we’re there.”

I was privy to observing patterns regarding how input was valued in the decision-making process within and across individuals and sub-groups. As I quickly learned, proximity to senior leadership’s offices played a factor in a sense of belonging and communication. The assistant compliance director pointed out “If want to pursue something beyond my daily duties, I’ll go across the hallway directly to the deputy director of internal relations, who is right below the AD,

and if he's not busy we'll have a conversation right then. This is how we get stuff accomplished." This sentiment resonated with an assistant volleyball coach, "Our deputy director is here six days a week. I think all our administrators are on it. I appreciate, I don't know how to say this, but they aren't overbearing or micromanaging. They let us do our jobs; they're there for you when you need them to be." The associate AD for compliance attributed the small number of administrators as a benefit to communication and productivity:

I think our administration is a little bit smaller for Division I athletics. But I think that's good, because now the administration has multiple experiences in multiple positions. So, for instance at the previous university I worked, when I had a conversation with the sports supervisor for basketball, he had no idea about academic compliance, no clue.

Here, I can go to talk to the deputy AD who oversees the internal management--he knows compliance, because he came from that background. Because of our smaller size, we're sort of forced in multiple roles. That's a double-edged sword, right, because it also overworks some people, and it becomes overwhelming, because you're overseeing multiple things at once.

But what's positive about it is, I can pretty much go to anyone else in the department, and they're going to have a general idea of where I'm coming from, from my area, and how it relates to their area. So, that to me brings effective communication and it also makes it easier for us to do our jobs with each other internally.

Accessibility to administrators and staff and the regularity of meetings were considered strengths of the department by the media relations director:

On senior leaders--We communicate. Different groups meet regularly; we pop in and out in of everybody's office. We're talking, we walk across the hall. In terms of the entire department, I think our staff and regular coaches meetings are helpful. It's a pain when sports are in season, but that's also the most critical. To be honest with you, if we need something from a team, where we're trying to coordinate schedules or whatever, it's nice to be able to walk down the wall, and have a face to face conversation with somebody as opposed to shooting them an email or calling them.

Along with accessibility to individuals, transparency was valued at NSU. In contrast, the chief financial director explained how secretive communication has evolved with peer institutions:

We get along with fine with our counterparts at other schools. But you can see my counterpart at Green State is a little less revealing of what their stuff is every time a new

AD comes in. I go the other way. I mean I'm on this national database of all businesspeople around the country. They send out questions all the time. Is there anybody out there that is doing such and such, or has a way to do this or any ideas that we might be able to use?

I'm always jumping on there saying, well, I don't know if this will help you. But here at NSU we do it this way. We've done this, and it seems to have worked and sharing ideas like that. I mean anybody especially if you're a public institution, all you have to do is have someone put a public record request in, and you're going to have to respond to the question anyway so why not just be transparent?

One of the things we've put into our strategic plan--in our mission statement is to manage in an approachable, transparent manner; so that no one has a reason to think we're hiding anything, that we are being upfront with everything.

The mission and vision statements were transparent and published on an interior hallway of the athletic department as well as on the website's homepage. The university foundation director explained 'who we are' was not always a priority for the athletic department or the university. Historically, part of the land-grant mission was about training students who would stay locally and contribute to economic development. The cost of an education was to be near to free as possible. The university foundation director elaborated:

I think our previous president was right on target with resurrecting the land grant mission. Thus, paying attention to *US News and World Reports* may not truly describe about how good of a school we are. It doesn't describe how we're meeting our land-grant mission. So, creating a new metric our previous president envisioned was on target.

Producing evidence of strong partnerships with external environments was integral to the communication goals of the leadership and power environment. The outsourced advertiser explained how the athletic department's strengthened communication with local companies:

This is an energy market. It's a huge market that frankly wasn't tapped into as much as it should've been. We're young in that for some reason. For example, last year we had our first ever, 'Celebrate Energy Day'. We picked a football game and had 15 companies come out. They all paid a certain amount. But that's something that should've been happening for the last 30 years. I don't know why it just started last year.

Just in this year, we've had more companies come on board. What we always look at, is how to strengthen the relationship with companies. There are new companies, new goals, things have changed and that's the part we need to get creative and decided what are some new marketing assets for us to come up with and make more revenue. The key is communication. That's what our fans, donors, and corporate sponsors demand.

### **Deficit Ideology.**

It was famed football coach Lou Holtz who in his autobiography said, "Ability is what you're capable of doing. Motivation determines what you do. Attitude determines how well you do it" (2006, p. 291). The third assumption is deeply embedded in the culture of the athletic department. The function of deficit ideology, as I will describe in greater detail later, is to justify existing conditions by identifying problems of inequality as located within, rather than as pressing upon, disenfranchised communities so that efforts to redress inequalities focus on "fixing" disenfranchised people rather than the conditions which disenfranchise them (Gorski, 2010).

The following section highlighted demonstrated attitude and emotion associated with the athletic programs. An external advertiser exposed:

Sometimes I hear, 'Oh, we're not a Texas, we can't beat so and so.' That bugs the crap out of me. There's no reason we can't. They may have some better resources than here. I've heard that from people from time to time from people who've been here forever. Now, I'm the rookie here, but I believe we shouldn't approach things like that. So I can see some attitudes that wear people down, bother me and others.

We had an ex-coach football coach; who I heard on the radio say, 'this is a horrible location, bad weather' we're not that. We've got an airport. We're not that remote. My last property, I was really remote. So I don't buy that. As for the weather, own it. I don't buy that either. Having excuses bug me.

Note in this example how the external advertiser stated he was new working with the athletic department and he identified the negative attitude of some long term employees. A student-athlete with high-status among his peers demonstrated a negative attitude about the success of his

team: “I think our successes are short lived. I think we strive for average-just not the bottom of the pack. But when you pose a question could we be an Alabama? I’m going to say no we will never be Alabama.”

A senior leader indicated “I think there’s a stigma associated with NSU. Nobody gets a letter from us, and says, ‘oh my, NSU just contacted me’. We have to kind of try to find a way to bridge that barrier as we’re not in the middle of nowhere. The perception of being inferior was compared to peer institutions by the chief business director, “even in our conference, I think our teams are often looked down upon. We go into it thinking we are the underdog. I think they look at us as being from a small community. I don’t think people look down on us in our conference from the standpoint of leadership. I think they believe that we have quality people.” The external cultural assessment claimed, “There is a pervading opinion that “good enough is good enough” in football and basketball. Thus, there is not a sense of urgency and accountability that accompanies programs with high expectations for competitive success. The current “culture of acceptance and validation” has a major influence on the bloodline of football and men’s basketball. Recruiting to NSU can be challenging, due to unique factors; however, this is exacerbated if those involved choose to focus on this daily.”

Many coaches and critical staff who come to NSU from other athletics departments constantly hear from peers at other institutions about the challenges that working and living in Waterford may bring. This consistent external messaging is obviously counterproductive to building and maintaining morale, which may lead to high rates of turnover adversely impacting the athletic teams. There were several ruminating tensions spoken of--across all environments--that at the core describe inequalities resulting from moral, cultural, and behavioral deficiencies assumed to be inherent in disenfranchised individuals and communities.



**Population.** The majority of participants viewed the small population in the state and city as having an overarching, detrimental effect on the athletic program. A sports psychologist explained the lack of population shared by other states as well:

It's not just Waterford, it is North Dakota, it is South Dakota. Idaho might be a little bit there, Montana, right? You just have this geographical region where there is nobody. I don't mean to say that in a negative way it's just people-wise there is nobody. This is an isolated state geographically and with that comes structural constraints.

The relationship between population density and competition in the highest level of intercollegiate sports is a constant struggle for the athletic department. A kinesiology professor explained, "Looking at it from a sporting perspective, the recruitment side of things, they struggle to recruit. Especially D1, particularly with football and men's basketball there's an expectation to achieve perhaps more than it can. That's an issue they have. Particularly, what they're bringing in are very expensive coaches, to compensate for this lack of population, for a team, which in reality is at the bottom of the D1 tier."

There are athletes in the state, however, not a lot of top tier D1 athletes. For example, the department's media relations director admitted "There are some really good athletes here. They're just raw. They don't know how to play the game". The assistant volleyball coach reiterated, "Athletes in this state need to be tapped into. It's kind of a raw place. We're not going to get the well refined athletic kid. They're just not coming here. We have to find our niche. We can either find a lesser athlete that's a great volleyball player, or we can find a better athlete, and try to teach him how to be a better volleyball player--if we want to recruit players from this state."

At times, the population was described as a 'unique trait' rather than a challenge, especially by administrators who had spent several years working in the athletic department. During the time I spent talking with the AD of external affairs, he spun a different angle on the

sparsely populated state, “Every time you talk about Waterford, you’re going to talk of what makes us unique. We’re unique. We are in one of the least populated states. There is no a place like this. But it’s also tough when there are more people in a three-square mile New York City block than we have in our entire state.” NSU athletics unique position within the state and the community gives it a powerful platform that must not be taken for granted. There no other competing universities. The deputy AD added that parents of NSU students appreciate the lack of population as a reason for fewer opportunities to find trouble and more time to study.

The university has been perceived as a liberal institution by institutional and internal athletic environment participants where the town and the state are conservative. The relationship the town has with the university has been stated as:

Honestly the town is in more of a battle with the university, and they’re part of this together. They don’t like just how big the university is getting. Every year we get a little bit bigger. The city itself and most of the people within the city aren’t exactly excited about that.

The following illustrates the politics described by a state native and member of the athletic department business office:

We have a city council that is extremely conservative, and basically prohibits growth. Have you’ve ever been to Smithville in North Carolina, a tiny little town with just a D2 College? They have so many more shops, and so much more stuff to do. Compared to here, city council wouldn’t allow most of those companies in here.

We try to make sure that the hometown person that has their shop on the corner of Third Street will always at least stand a chance to be able to make it. I wouldn’t necessarily say that it is all that of a good thing.

Do I ever want to see my state with more people? I don’t know if I would say that, but I don’t know if we should necessarily try to stop it so much, as much as we do here. It’s our city council. So, there is a part of us deep down inside that never want to allow mass migration.

**Geography.** The external review committee reported “Geography presents some unique challenges not faced by peer institutions within the athletic conference. Travel costs are high,

travel logistics difficult, non-conference scheduling extremely challenging...all in a very small (yet loyal) market” (2014, p. 11). This impacts almost every area of the athletics program operation from student-athlete recruitment, to academic performance, staff recruitment and retention, alumni support, ticket sales, and game attendance. The city has a total area of 20 square miles. Located between two mountain ranges, it is on a high plain. The closest big city is 100 miles away. Due to the high elevation, winters are long, and summers are short and relatively cool. Driving across the state depends on the weather because of the drastic fluctuations. A booster club member shared, “you can come on a beautiful morning then you have to drive home in a snowstorm and risk the possibility of getting stuck.” She admitted they travel great distances, “thousands of miles a year, to get here, turnaround and come back just to watch games and support the alma mater. An assistant basketball coach pointed out:

A place like Waterford is not Miami, Florida, and it’s not really a destination that you would want to go to. I think there is no way you can get around it. I think coaches would either see this as a stepping stone to keep moving forward, unless you grew up here. Frankly, you just get tired of the cold weather and the blowing wind, and the isolation. There is really no way around that.

Even though many coaches and administrators stated there is a stigma associated with NSU being in the middle of nowhere, there is a lot of state pride. The women’s golf coach described the state as being one really big town with a lot of long streets. People hunt and fish regularly and those activities attract tourists to the state. However recreation activities can take precedence over intercollegiate sporting events. Mining, farming, and government professions dominate the state. As one can expect, “When folks are running their ranches things do not stop just because we’re playing football on Saturday,” as the associate AD of external affairs explained, “We can’t control the roads, and various other things. But when you do get here, we try to treat you, in a professional way, with as much class as we possibly can. We do extra

things, for example, for officials, we have snacks, food, and ice cream. We give them ice cream after the game.”

**Impact on recruiting student-athletes.** Recruiting and retaining Division I/FBS caliber student-athletes and staff are major challenges. These are major issues for many universities vying for the same recruits and staff. These are the two most critical priorities in improving the competitiveness of the athletic programs. The location, low population density, and proximity to a major metropolitan pose a dilemma on enticing competitive athletes to play at NSU. The head women’s soccer coach commented, “Considering the closest metropolitan city is two hours away --an athlete drives by several universities to get here--makes it difficult to sign them.” Student-athletes want activities to do in their free time. A professor in the business school declared, “Waterford--there are no upscale shopping centers, Starbucks is in a grocery store, not a lot of the amenities that might attract some athletes who might be more skilled coming out of high school.” The women’s golf coach exclaimed: “I’ve tried to get kids to visit. If they have tournaments close to here I say, ‘Hey come on up its only 2 hours.’ It’s difficult to get them to go out of their way. Peer institutions use our location as a sore spot with recruiting kids!” The deputy AD declared: “we’re recruiting against Green State and they make it sound like we’re in the boonies. But I think the hard thing is to actually just get them here.”

Several coaches schedule on campus visits for certain months to downplay the long, harsh winters. The head tennis coach stated, “I estimate I sign 80% - 90% of the kids I can get on campus in the fall semester for an official visit. I rarely have any that sign if they haven’t come here.” A female student-athlete on the track team commented on recruits perceptions of NSU:

I think they are shocked when they actually get here. So I guess their perception is small college town in the middle of nowhere. Once they get here, and I think they see how beautiful the area is and how nice the campus is...

There's so much new construction going on. You can just see the campus is expanding. We are trying to improve. Once a recruit meets the coaches and fellow players they're sold. Everyone just makes you feel so welcome here. That's not just within this department but within town too.

Other comments regarding the location and the impact on recruiting included the expense and time of driving two hours to the closest hub airport. The head soccer coach explained, "We can't simply drive a lot of places. Then on top of that, the hardest thing is how do you retain those student-athletes once they are here? The culture shock sets in. I think we have to figure it out. I mean we've definitely recruited a ton of international athletes because they're just happy to be in the States. Last year we had five Australians and six Canadians on the roster." The external review committee recommended: "Transporting recruits in limousines, entertaining recruits with video games to divert athlete's attention so the trip didn't seem so long." This was "so they don't sit in a car and stare out the window all the way from the airport and back to the airport," according to the chief financial officer.

**Travel impact on student-athletes.** Many participants voiced concern over student-athlete's academic performance and how it may be negatively impacted by missed classes due to extensive in-season travel. However, other teams have similar rigorous travel schedules. The external review committee they asserted, "NSU's conference and non-conference schedule is not constructed so that it minimizes travel time and expenses." NSU is not impacted more than any other conference team as other schools must travel to NSU as well. Table 16 displays a comparison on mileage, commercial flight and ground transportation times between NSU and a peer-conference institution for the 2014-15 women's basketball schedule and shows the only difference for travel time and distance is four hours round trip to the airport. This potentially

impacts negatively academic performance of student-athletes (too much missed class time); overall costs of team travel, and competitive ability of the team (wear and tear as a result of difficult travel to and from games within the conference). Chartering air transportation is possible. The AD explained travel logistics and future plans:

We select games that we think will give us a better advantage to charter to. We do occasionally charter flights for men’s and women’s basketball teams 5 times a year--on top of championship tournaments. All of our sports, soccer, volleyball, golf, wrestling, ought to be able to charter flights. Unfortunately the money is not there for such expenditures.

One advantage peer institutions have over NSU is proximity to major airports when flying commercially to away games. NSU adds four hours round-trip to travel time for flying commercially. Moreover, the effect on student-athletes is also impacted by the weather at the closest airport.

Table 16 Distance Comparisons Between NSU Women’s Basketball vs Conference Institutions (To Away Games)

Institution	Miles Between Institutions	Drive-Time Between Institutions	Commercial Flight-Time Between Institutions	Other U Miles Between Institutions	Other U Drive-Time Between Institutions	Other U Commercial Flight-Time Between Institutions
To: University 1	791	11 h 27 m	3 h 35 m	921	12h 51m	3h 30m
University 2	686	9h 45 m	3 h 35 m	510	7h 12m	2 h 55m
University 3	1,111	16 h 5 m	3 h 45 m	388	5h 16m	2h 55m
University 4	592	8h 16 m	2h 55m	935	14h 2m	3h 40m
University 5	907	12h 44m	4h 55 m	1, 046	14h 54m	3 h 25 m
University 6	67	1h 12 m	n/a	682	10h 46m	4 h 55m
University 7	1,156	16h 45m	4 h 5 m	766	11h 4m	1 h 40m
University 8	1,184	17 h 2m	4 h 25m	574	7h 58m	1 h 20m
University 9	384	6 h 5 m	1 h 30 m	592	8 h 16 m	2 h 55m

Source: Google Maps (2015)

“It’s known to get snowed in, and we can’t get back. So the students miss another day of class.

Wear and tear physically and mentally of doing that versus being able to fly right back in here,

and being home in a few minutes, over the span of a season negatively affects the teams,” added the AD.

The senior women’s AD stated, “Student-athletes must have understanding professors, because if we fly commercially they may miss three consecutive days of school. Let’s say you have a game on Wednesday, fly out commercially the day before the game, and lose Tuesday. You’re going to play on Wednesday night, so you lose a class day on Wednesday. Then, most of your day is getting back on Thursday. The women’s golf coach appreciated the chartered flights for the sake of her players, however admitted that chartering flights does not correlate into winning, “academically and wear and tear-wise I think it’s better for our players. Now, if you take a look at the tourneys that we win when we charter versus don’t charter, I’m not sure you would say that the money is helping obtain ‘W’s’ (wins). The wins and losses probably won’t tell you that.”

**Impact recruiting coaches and mid-level administrators.** Tom Crowley (2014) wrote on SBNation.com:

The hours are long, tiring, and often filled with soul-numbing boredom as they ravel from one town to another. Every single coach is always working for his/her next job, and that next job will be dependent upon who they can sign. They are always recruiting. Always.

The average tenure for men’s basketball and football coaching jobs is 4.76 years, with a median of 4 years (Styczynski, 2009). Combine the short tenure with limited or no access to private aircraft for coaches’ recruiting efforts, and the outcome can have a drastic impact on the effectiveness of coaches throughout the season. Coaching and recruiting both suffer as the unique travel demands throughout the season wear heavily on the football and basketball coaching staffs, both of whom recruit primarily out-of-state. Coaches consider these as deficits

when they weigh the pros and cons of working at NSU. Table 17 displays the number how many players are “In State” and “Out of State” and well as “International” for every sport at NSU.

It was reported that NSU was perceived a stepping stone institution for coaches who experience success. Several participants voiced the university’s difficulty maintaining successful coaching staffs. The external advertising firm manager noted: “coaches seem to move on to one of those Power 5 Conferences if they are successful.” Coaching can be a transitory profession. “I mean if you get somewhere that does really well, gets a better offer at a school with more exposure for his program, also doubling their salary, how do you compete with that if you’re NSU?”



Table 17 NSU Student-Athletes Home of Origin Per Sport

Sport	In-State Hometown	Out of State Hometown	International	Total
Football	8	91	9	108
Men's Basketball	1	11	1	13
Women's Basketball	3	8	1	12
Tennis	0	1	7	8
Volleyball	2	15	0	17
Wrestling	5	21	0	26
Men's Golf	3	5	0	8
Women's Golf	2	6	1	9
Women's Swimming	2	31	4	37
Men's Swimming	4	20	2	26
Men's Track and Field	14	20	3	37
Women's Track and Field	23	22	3	48
Men's Cross Country	10	4	3	17
Women's Cross Country	14	9	1	24
Soccer	3	14	7	24
Total	94	280	42	414

Source: University Website (2015).

The media relations director explained, “There aren’t a lot of people that desire to live in Waterford; unless they are from Waterford. I don’t know many coaches from anywhere in the state, much less who do well at this level that are in the coaching profession. I was surprised the sports psychologist added:

Athletic administration recruiting is a challenge as well. I think one thing you see across universities. NSU is a great place to begin a career but you don’t want to see people stay particularly long. So when you have this consistent turnover of people that can create a real challenge as well. So I think people can see this spot as an opportunity to prepare for the next step, rather than being the next step itself and that mindset absolutely creates some real challenges.

Considering seven members of senior leadership had a combined 70 plus years of working in the athletic department this comment seemed an outlier. However, athletic department middle management “has been far more nomadic than senior leadership. I can rattle off ten schools our staff has jumped ship for last couple of years; Arizona State, Oklahoma State, Southern Miss,

Iowa State according the senior AD for external affairs. He took a deep breath and said, “When I started, people wanted to get a job, establish yourself, you want to be there. Now it’s three or four years. They tell themselves ‘I’ve got to go I can’t be here any longer than that.’ I felt hurt. I thought Waterford wasn’t a good enough place.” Capitalizing on successful coaches “at a school like NSU” moves in cycles according to the sports psychologist professor:

I think men’s basketball right now is at a peak of a relatively successful cycle and maybe football is at the opposite end of that. I don’t know I mean it’s tough to balance 3 and 9 then 8 and 4 then 4 and 8 and then 5 and 7 (win-loss records).

Other sports are the same way. I think what happens so with the university like ours is that our cycle of not performing as well as longer in a cycle performing well is can be shorter. It takes a special group of student-athletes and coach to come through and you got that 2 year, 3 year window maybe to really take advantage of those people.

Someone like “Current Star Player, Jr.,” he could have gone to a number of different schools but we have a coach here that has got a history with his father, senior. He committed. Now all of a sudden we can recruit and throw out ‘you can play with “Current Star Player, Jr.” and you get this bubble for four years around this one player and one coach. That coach brought that here and allowed for that to happen.

**Game attendance.** As mentioned previously, geography presents some unique challenges not faced by peer institutions within the Conference. Travel costs are high, travel logistics difficult, non-conference scheduling extremely challenging...all in a very small (yet loyal) market. This impacts almost every area of the athletics program operations from student-athlete recruitment, to academic performance, staff recruitment and retention, alumni support, ticket sales, game attendance. Lack of attendance was described as a ‘worry’ and a ‘source of contention’ for senior leadership. The business manager explained: “Do people go to games? Yeah, but the number one cause of attendance decline here is when hunting seasons opens. So it’s just a complex web of things that happen in the state. That’s a higher priority in the state.

The cost associated with attending a basketball game for a family of four averages \$50 with drinks and snacks. Include the gas and time to and from home and for some people the experience may be easier to stream online or listen to on the radio. Poor attendance disturbs coaches as they expect a strong home presence at games. The tennis coach expressed: "I think it's disappointing. I know that in the '80s and even in the '90s people came from afar. It's disappointing if fans consider themselves passionate which I think they are but don't support us by attending events". Poor student attendance baffles the associate director of external affairs, "We have tried so many things with the students. So, why don't they walk 50 yards from the dorms to the games?" Already on the radar, the athletic department has begun addressing low attendance:

We are a small populous state--trying to figure out how to get the stadium full, or the arena full is really challenging. That's something that we need to be successful at. We've hired some guys who are pretty young, aggressive kind of guys to essentially sell seats.

At times we questions if discounting prices will sell tickets. Will that get more people here? Maybe a few more, but what you also do is piss off season ticket holders, who are willing to pay a certain amount of money, and you get a certain amount of dollars, certain revenue from those folks every year.

You take the risk of reducing the ticket prices and those people who were going to buy anyway are just paying less. So, you're getting less revenue. Are you really sort of shooting yourself in the foot by trying to do that? You're going to get the same people but they're just going to pay less.

Versus, do we think that we would still fill the stadium? Most of the times I think studies would tell you historically at various times, that he would sell a certain amount of ticket at that but you're still not going to fill your stadium even if the tickets were \$10. We're just not.

To date, the university's response to dwindling attendance has included reducing venue seating capacity with renovation projects. The senior associate AD of business operations shared one such facility project:

We obviously count on students to fill in the gaps (seats). That's hard to do in a football stadium. With the basketball arena, we've actually reduced the capacity from over 11,660 to 15,000 seats.

Not only will it create a more intimate environment, we hope it creates more demand. Right now people come to our games, and they go, "I don't have to buy my tickets in advance. I can walk up on game day, always get a ticket. Now I won't always sit right where I want to but I'll always be able to get in. If we can get people concerned about demand then people start valuing our product better.

Then they start buying tickets earlier. If they buy pre-season packages, we have an idea of revenue and budget a lot earlier rather than having to just count on walk up people single game sales. That's a really unpredictable thing. That's hard.

**Public access to facilities.** The director of academic compliance, the senior associate AD of development, and the assistant AD of facility operations had serious concern for the football turf and basketball arena court. All three participants used the word, 'acceptance' to explain public access policy. The cost of the football turf was approximately \$500,000 and the newly, updated basketball court nearing \$1,000,000. Fans have been allowed full access to the sports fields, and volleyball and basketball courts after sporting events and during daylight hours: "We're very open. So if we wanted to walk out there right now we could. After volleyball games kids are running around and throwing volleyballs. People are on the court after. We have autograph sessions and things like that, so people are around" explained the assistant AD of facility operations. The director of academic compliance perceives the public access as a lack of professionalism:

The football game ends and all of a sudden, all these people come on the field all the while, the players are trying to exit and they're throwing footballs with their kids and stuff. I get it, it's cool. Stuff like that should not be happening in intercollegiate athletics.

It's a small town, traditional pastime; it's been this way forever. In my mind though, after a volleyball game, there should not be college kids playing 3 on 3 volleyball while girls are doing interviews and things like that. Get them off the court. This was a college match. It's done. This isn't high school you do allow spectators to ruin the court with their street shoes!

So, I think it's just kind of the mindset but it's difficult because our fans think that they own us. We want them to be part of it but we have fans call in and say, 'I sat in the parking lot for 10 minutes after the game'. Sorry dude.

My family has season tickets at Lambeau Field (Green Bay, WI); it takes an hour to leave the game. That's part of the experience. Fans here expect access to the facilities after the game. They expect swift exits. Then complain there's traffic. There's no traffic! Don't get me wrong, we want our fans to feel connected to our athletes and to NSU. However, in this day in age we need to protect our expensive facilities and players.

## **Economics.**

Revenue increases were reported as a serious concern to support growing expectations for NSU intercollegiate athletic teams. The athletic department took in \$29 million in revenue in 2013. According to the *Delta Cost Project* (2013), NSU has the lowest student fees revenues in the conference (\$1,300,000 vs. an average of \$3,500,000), which is offset by state appropriations. However, the argument can be made that NSU athletics already receive significantly more direct institutional support than any other department in the conference (\$12,000,000 vs. an average of \$5,000,000). From a budget perspective, the NSU athletics program (\$30 million) remains at or near the bottom (8th or 9th ...of nine schools) in the conference. The NSU athletic budget is made up of approximately 40% Section I (State) funding and 60% external funding. With the \$30 million budget, 17 sport programs (8 men's sports and 9 women's sports) and a cheer squad are funded. The athletic operating budget is in Table 18.

***Budget Concerns.*** Budget funding had NSU near the bottom of the conference in total funding. Spending per student athlete in the conference was \$74,264, six times the per-student academic expense (Desrochers, 2013). The business manager shared, "To be able stay within the middle of the rest of the average with the conference schools we need, \$7 million more of operating funds. Funding provides the following assets to be competitive with in-conference teams:

- Top level facilities
- Salary/incentive compensation to attract and retain highly qualified coaches and staff
- Travel/recruiting budgets to overcome the limitations of the remote geographic location
- Funds to keep academic/compliance services, strength and conditioning, sports medicine, equipment room, and athletic facilities support operating at the highest level of support possible

There was no denying administrators' disdain for frivolous spending. The AD told me, "One of our previous football coach insisted on cheeseburgers and ice cream bars on every chartered flight back from an away football game. This was after we fed them a post-game meal in the locker room of either pizza or chicken, as well as breakfast in the hotel and the pre-game meal." The director compared the extra food to:

Whether we won or lost. It wasn't a treat for a big win. It was every away-trip. Did that really make us better? Did that really help us win? Was that money well spent?

Table 18 NSU Athletic Department Operating Budget 2013-2014

Categories	Percent of Budget	Money Allocated (\$)
Salaries and Payroll (125 Employees)	36	9,000,000
Scholarships (approx. 400 athletes)	20	5,500,000
Team Travel	8	2,000,000
Obligation to the General Fund	8	1,850,000
Operating Expenses	5	1,341,500
Game Guarantees	5	1,042,000
Recruiting Travel	3	561,000
Medical Insurance	2	470,000
Conference Fees	2	400,000
Consignment Ticket Expenses	2	402,000
Equipment and Supplies	2	407,596
Special Projects Equip/ Facility Improvements Equipment	1	293,337
Facility Maintenance	1	261,200
Game Operations	1	220,000
Video Scoreboard Loan	1	215, 47
Athletic Concessions	1	300,000
Officiating Fees/Travel Costs	1	265,000
Basketball Tournament Expenses	1	180,000
Total	100	29,000,000

*Note.* Some categories include other expenses not listed.

As an AD or as an administrator, you want to give your coaches some freedom to make decisions about how they run their programs, what happens within their program. Would it be better to put that into your recruiting budget, instead of buying cheeseburgers and ice cream?

The bigger the ego of the coach, the more they want to be in total control of the program, and all the budgetary decisions. At times, you can't sit down and have that conversation.

Ideally, spending on unnecessary items could be used in other areas of a team's budget. The chief financial officer allowed for extraneous spending to avoid confrontations with some head coaches even when teams lost games. In addition, when weather interfered with games, money was lost. For example, thunderstorms delayed two home football games in 2013. Since the delay occurred after half time, fans left the stadium for the day. The chief financial officer told

me, “They just go to their cars and not come back. Fans decide, ‘I am going to listen on the radio... on the way home.’ So, we lost revenue at those two games. Believe it or not, you make most of your revenue on concessions... off of beverages. When we budget for example, obviously you don’t know what the weather is going to be on any of those situations.” Safety was a priority for event coordinators however the athletic department relies on event revenue to support the annual operating budget.

**Resources.** The chief financial officer frequently questioned: “How are we going to pay for that? First we need to do is obtain the resources, find a way, whether it’s through fundraising, or through legislative help, or university help, or a combination of all those things. Our first objective is to get better on the field-on the court, and to do that is to get our budget where we can consistently be competitive.” The associate AD of external affairs perceived, “Our appropriation from the legislature literally improves if the football team does really well. They are more apt to send more to the university, not just athletics, but to the university.”

The external assessment report observed the football and men’s basketball programs to be under-funded considering the geographic location and the unique inherent costs of travel for competition and recruiting. However, simply raising expectations is not enough to produce championships. While more money is not the solution to every problem, basic financial needs must be met to compete with peers within the conference, regionally and nationally. Released in Oct. 2013, the Athletics & Academic Spending Database for NCAA Division I (produced by the Knight Commission) reveals NSU has been ahead of other universities in regard to growing academic spending. From 2005-2011, NSU academic spending was up 28% while the conference average was up 22% and the FBS average was 24%. However, athletics spending paints a



different picture over that same time period. Below are a few of the key spending increases comparing NSU, conference institutions, and other DI institutions.

There are many variables related to the numbers –university support, TV contracts, donor support, etc. – but whatever the factors and the initial base, the above numbers tell the story that NSU Athletics has fallen further behind the competition, including in the Conference, in recent years in regard to spending for athletics. Ultimately, revenue increases will be needed to support growing expectations for all sports.

Table 19 Spending Increases Comparison NSU, Conference, and FBS 2012 to 2014

Spending	NSU	Conference	FBS
Average athletics spending increases (%)	22	51	58
Institutional increased spending on athletics (per athlete) (%)	21	84	73
Average football expenditure increases (%)	37	48	75
Average football coaching salaries (per football player) (%)	20	50	74

*Note.* Adapted from the NSU Budget reports for FY 12-14, the conference (2015) website, and the NCAA (2015) website.

**Giving and Donors.** Private contributions generated less than \$3 million in 2013. The state legislature currently matches up to \$2 million in private donations until 2016. Some of the limitations with fundraising are attributed to the 120,000 alumni base. The foundation director acknowledged their target market: “We need access to alumni connected to major markets that can fuel giving. If we were winning championships would help increase funding too.” Big donors have power to affect change at NSU. A professor of education shared an example on campus: “There was a sculpture outside of a horse, in the quad, and the mining companies were

so mad. Donors were calling, and withdrawing their pledged money. That sculpture was quickly removed.” The miners desired an artifact representing the mining industry. Retaining alumni is not a problem for the Foundation. The new challenge is recruiting recent alumni and student athletes. The Foundation director pointed out:

The first thing our baby boomer generation thought of at graduation was, ‘I’ll join the Alumni Association as a lifetime member.’ Asking today’s group to join for \$25 is much harder than securing alum in their 40s for \$1,000. Case in point, 160 student-athletes received \$6,000 scholarships (each) from the Alumni Association over the last 10 or 15 years.

We sent a letter asking them to become members of the Alumni Association. We asked them to join for \$50, only 1 student-athlete out of 160 joined and they received \$6,000 of scholarship aid from the alumni association when they were here. One out of 160 joined the Alumni Association.

The athletic booster club affiliated with the department is run by five full-time employees.

Various projects designate monies toward specific goals. Its main focus is to provide more than 350 student-athletes with academic scholarships and educational support.

**Salary Concerns.** Several participants across the institution voiced salary concerns. Faculty and staff salary budget freezes occurred over four consecutive years (2010-2014) yet athletic department employees received raises. The graduate coordinator of health sciences program explained the salary dilemma:

It’s been 4 years without a raise. We’ll get a raise in this next biennium. That’s created interesting issues particularly as they build large amounts of infrastructure in the athletic department. You have to say to yourself the majority of that money comes from donors. So it’s not necessarily coming from the state budget.

It’s always caused a bit of friction with the faculty in that the amount coaches are paid. Paid more than the president? Even as a non-American, that seems so bizarre to me. This is the farm system for the top players. The rest of the world does not go to colleges to play sports. Therefore, college sport is not a big revenue generator. They don’t pay the athletes but overpay coaches. So that has been a budgetary sacrifice for universities.

The chair of the business school summarized NSU faculty concerns: (1) the challenge of attracting and maintaining top-tier faculty, and (2) coach salaries when the university cannot

pay top notch faculty. As a result, NSU faculty salaries have slipped when compared to peer institutions. For example, NSU's salaries in 2009 were seven % below the average of universities included in a nationwide salary study conducted annually by Oklahoma State University; by 2012, that gap had grown to 11 %. In a separate comparison with 50 public research universities across the country-including states suffering more economic distress-NSU's salaries were 14% lower than the average in 2012. *The Chronicle of Higher Education* characterizes NSU's average faculty salaries as "far below median" (2014, para 8). At the same time, NSU has seen a steady increase in faculty members leaving for other institutions, as the annual number of departures has more than doubled from 2009 to 2013.

It is uncommon to hear internal employees' voice salary concerns as a few key players in the athletic department can polarize the salary scale. An assistant coach shared:

I know people (administrative assistants, financial aid coordinator, and academic advisors) around here that work very, very hard here and don't make a whole lot. Honestly there are people here, I mean I graduated from college almost eight years ago now, and they're not even making what I made when I first started. I would never consider doing what they do, for what they get paid.

I wish I could give them better rewards for it. I wish I could do more than just the words 'Thank you'. I know I'd hate to hear thank you--instead pay me more money to show you value you me.'

Coaching salaries are market driven. While the head football and basketball coaches are compensated near the top level in the university and conference, the critical assistant coach positions, starting below coordinator positions, are all compensated below average in the conference, sometimes drastically below (Based on Conference Budget & Salary Surveys, July 2011-June 2012). Compensation levels for assistant coaches in football may lead to a higher rate of turnover and/or compromise the ability to attract quality candidates. Since 2009, there have been 21 coaches in ten coaching positions per season, thus, 11 staff changes. By comparison,

another conference football program, with the same number of coaching positions as NSU, with more success on the field, has had four staff changes during that same time.

Except for the football, men's and women's basketball head coaches, other sports' head coaches are compensated below average of the conference, sometimes at the bottom. Consistent turnover of a large number of assistant coaches and mid-level administrative staff members is a competitive disadvantage (Turner, 2013). In addition, because of the unique recruiting challenges facing all NSU athletic sports teams, attracting and retaining talented assistant coaches is crucial to sustainable championships. Recruiting success is often driven by strong assistant coaches. Top-flight recruiters can attract and retain top-tier assistant coaches but demand higher compensation opportunities (Turner, 2013).

### **Antiquated Mentality**

For the employees and staff in the athletic department, social patterns reflected what the culture's values and assumptions. The social interactions between relational members express a unique relational culture (Schein, 2008). Reciprocally, relational cultures, "create, express, and sustain personal relationships, identities of individuals and groups" (Wood, 2000, p. 77). The last assumption of the athletic department culture was reminiscent of an older era in American corporate culture. With this come values that deter the athletic department from growing and attaining the social status relevant to today's world.

**Coaching and Administration Equity.** The athletic department has 128 professional staff employees or coaches. The employees were primarily Caucasian and male. There was one female head coach of eight women's teams coaches (including the cheerleading squad) and only one senior AD, who served as the senior woman administrator. The first day of my visit, I attended Monday morning leadership meetings. It was immediately obvious there were no

females or minorities in the room. When I brought up the lack of female administrators and coaches in the department with the women's golf coach she responded:

I personally don't know how that's even shaped over there. Our administrators do a great job. I don't really know in what positions if any females have even really applied--in the past.

I probed deeper, "so it's not a big deal?"

No, I don't think so. I know I'm the only head women's coach on staff but I don't think anything of it I guess.

The sports psychology professor pointed out, "our women's golf coach is the only head women's coach. Then you look at staffs where for example swimming is co-ed, but they have no female assistants." Women's soccer has no female assistants--they have a female GA (graduate assistant) but no female assistants. When I broached the subject with the soccer coach he answered with another equity concern, "One of the people that I tried to hire when I first got here had been my assistant for five years but she told me, 'I'm a lesbian. I'm not going go with you to NSU.' I'm like, 'I don't blame you. I wouldn't either. She wanted to live in a town that will be more accepting of that lifestyle.'" Also a perspective in education, students want to see someone who looks like themselves as leaders. However, nobody was talking about the issue or seemed the slightest concerned in the athletic department. I wondered why there was no public discussion.

A female professor of education blamed the AD for the lack of women in leadership and head coaching roles: "I did not know there weren't many women in leadership roles. Let's get rid of him, the other flunkies that he has hired, and his little cronies. If I'm a female student-athlete I think it's valuable to see female administrators, female coaches because that might be me someday. Get some women in there, and let's get back on track." This response may have been

sparked when I intentionally shared that the athletic department had so few females in leadership positions.

**Marketing Programs and People.** The external review committee recommended the AD and head coaches should be more visible within the University and local culture:

Leadership should shift more consistent effort toward networking with external constituents (donors, sponsors, media, etc...). Many schools tend to have a primary focus with their marketing efforts on tradition and history (i.e., 100 years) or using literal references and imagery (i.e., "School Mascot" themed music in videos). This does not always talk to our primary audience of potential student-athletes or to whom we want to attend the games. Speaking to the university's students is crucial on game day because the student section sets the tone for the environment.

Music, lights, lasers, and entertainment programs boost excitement at games and tournaments. Players thrive on large crowds. The associate director of marketing explained a correlation between winning and marketing a sport as, "when marketed well--we have great crowds show up; I think you'll hear from the coaches and from players that it does help create an atmosphere. It fires them up, and it helps them dig deeper. So I would like to think the crowds help them win games." The assistant basketball coach shared that his players perform better with good attendance at games and surprisingly:

They enjoy playing on the road in some areas more than they do at home. So we know that when we go to other schools, it's going to be loud and our players like that. They have fun, I don't think that they enjoy when it's not packed. They like playing at home and I think it's a great advantage. The other teams get tired and the players like that but I wish we had better entertainment and music before, during, and after our games. It's kind of flat and duddy.

The associate director of marketing may not have been aware of the basketball coach's sentiment. He reported they (basketball team) wished that they could get 10,000 fans consistently because they see those numbers at other schools: "So yeah, they (basketball team) definitely gets a little jealous when it comes to attendance at home games, but I think that's

normal.” NSU marketing focuses on big name competitors to draw people to sporting events.

The assistant director of marketing commented:

People aren't coming just to see NSU play. So if we are playing a bigger school it's a bigger game. People are going to come and we'll spend the money to advertise it. If we are playing a less known school, they are not showing up for us. Unlike at Delphian it doesn't matter if they're playing the Smurfs or they are playing an NBA team it's going to be packed.

**Culture of Recruiting Student Athletes.** Creating communication standards and guidelines that remain consistent is the key to establishing a strong identity and brand. The athletics' marketing department oversaw all merchandising and branding aspects of team's images and communication messaging. From coaches to external environment participants, a major weakness is “selling the school” to the public and to potential student-athletes. The external consultants noted in their report: “The current branding and messaging used for marketing efforts of current NSU football and men's basketball was very traditional for the college athletics industry. While the efforts are respectable and projects are done with quality, the approach should be updated and refined to enhance the “culture of winning” and re-energize the brand” (Turner, 2013, p.10). Uniforms have become a major recruiting tool for football and men's basketball programs. Professionals in the industry have begun to understand more the power of uniforms on the University's brand and a program's attractiveness to recruits (Lee, Judge, & Powers, 2015). While NSU's color scheme could be seen by some as a hindrance, it offers a unique opportunity to make a statement nationally and be distinctive.

In this same report it was stated NSU's advertising efforts and messaging must be current: “NSU tended to overuse words in marketing like “Integrity, Honor, Loyalty, Dedication, etc. While these words may be important when truly valued, they should be saved to be used in real conversations with recruits, not as part of branding. These words do not separate the brand

from any other program in the nation as nearly all programs claim the same thing and athletes are aware of the difference” (p. 17). The report repeated the buzz phrase “a culture of recruiting” as the reviewers viewed recruiting student-athletes as the biggest challenge to the football and men’s basketball teams. They stated that recruiting did not appear to be a major component in the marketing and branding efforts: “Recruiting materials and messaging is sport specific and lacks consistency in appearance and frequency. Communication within the department must be enhanced to successfully launch a new branding and messaging campaign and, more importantly, move to a culture valuing progress and urgency” (p. 18).

In sum, there is a wealth of evidence that supports the athletics culture at NSU as influenced by internal, external, institutional, and the power and leadership environments. The strengths of the department were embedded in assumptions that student success was paramount to everything else; stable leadership was respected and appreciated across environments; the persistent challenges surrounding geography and location are driven by a deficit ideology; and lastly, a throwback mentality regarding gender inequities and branding sports programs hinder the department’s ability to connect with potential student athletes.



## CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION

In chapter one, I stated “changing the culture” had been a similar theme for intercollegiate athletic administrators and critics. Beyer and Hannah (2000) suggested a “central challenge for those who would reform intercollegiate athletics is to recognize and deal with these cultural characteristics” (p. 127). The purpose of this study was to accurately and thoroughly describe and report a case study (Butin, 2010) of a DI athletic department’s culture and its myriad complexities through the interaction of leadership and power, internal, institutional, and external environments (Schroeder, 2010). The major themes descriptive of the case were streamlined into categories based upon assumptions surrounding the NSU athletic department. The interactions among the internal, external, institutional, power and leadership environments yielded three main tensions that are likely to be similar at every other institution.

First, within the internal environment, tension undoubtedly arose among administrators, coaches, and athletes as they negotiated the department’s values and assumptions. There are numerous internal forces that impact internal values, but these forces are constantly evolving (Schein, 2010). The second major tension occurred when each environment attempted to draw the athletic department’s values in their respective directions. While the internal environment can certainly propel the department values in either direction, each cultural anchor can rapidly pull the values to either side if left unchecked or if not somewhat consistent. It is assumed the internal athletic environment has an obligation to adhere to policies established by the university and policies are reflective of values (Schein, 2010).

Thus, the third major tension emerged when leaders attempted to move the athletic department culture along the institutional cultural continuum rather than the external pressures of perennial winning records. This study’s cultural framework can be used by ADs and scholars,

with access to the variety of environments contributing to athletic department values and, to improve leadership and research efforts.

In this section, I discuss the findings relevant to literature from chapter two for similarities and differences. I identified the themes' importance based on application to leadership and offer reasons why we should care about the findings/outcomes. Lastly, future research directions are proposed.

### **Assumptions**

What emerged from the interaction of the internal, external, power and leadership, and institutional environments were five basic assumptions that formed the foundation for NSU's athletic department culture. Each of these assumptions enabled the department to have clear links to the university's institutional culture. The first assumption was that academics are as important as winning. The foundational value of academic success via campus partnerships reinforces the commitment to academic success. The second assumption was athletic leadership and power was important to the institution, as well as external and internal environments. Identifying a familiar face to the athletic director and campus partnerships was highly valued. These assumptions are conveyed by the leaders of the institution (Martin, 2006).

The third assumption was a deeply embedded deficit ideology. Due to geography and low population density tensions, personnel issues took the brunt of excuse-making. The impact: on travel for potential student-athletes recruits, current student-athletes, and coaches; on away game travel, on game attendance, and the access to facilities were outcomes related to the deficit paradigm. The fourth assumption relates to economics. The cost to run a competitive DI intercollegiate athletic program continues to increase and there is no end in sight. The final

assumption is that NSU operates with an antiquated mentality regarding coaching and administrative equity, in how it markets and brands its programs.

**Integration of the elements.** Competitive success starts at the apex of an institution (Duderstadt, 2006). The university president, supported by the Board of Trustees, placed a high value on athletics and recognized the impact that strong competitive teams can contribute towards the goal of being a top land-grant institution. Hence, the university's key leaders have aspirations for athletes to be successful in the dual responsibilities, in the classroom and on the field, as well as visible representatives of the university's overall commitment to excellence.

At the conclusion of the 2013-14 academic year, NSU student-athletes had achieved a combined GPA of over 3.00. NSU's 400 student-athletes continue to set records in the NCAA academic progress rate (APR). During the 2013-2014, 156 NSU student-athletes earned conference academic honors. These data counter negative assumptions and stereotypes that student-athletes are not as successful as non-student-athletes. Moreover in 2013-2014, on a national scale, the majority of DI sports teams posted top GPAs (NCAA, 2015). "This demonstrates student-athletes can meet their dual responsibilities," exclaimed NCAA President Mark Emmert (NCAA, 2014). NSU's high profile sports (football and men's basketball) had the largest increases in APRs compared to other sport teams nationally. As an incentive for universities and athletic departments, the NCAA has built-in extra APR points for student-athlete dropouts who reenroll and graduate. Nearly, 10,000 former student-athletes have returned to their respective campuses and graduated in the past eight years (NCAA, 2014).

Another clear link of strength was stable leadership. Today the constancy of a respected and successful AD staying at one institution is becoming rarer in intercollegiate sports (Nixon, 2014). According to Wong (2014) current D1 ADs have held their positions for an average of 5

years. About five percent have been in the position for at least 20 years, while nearly half (48%) have fewer than five years on the job. The ADs transformational leadership style allowed subordinates to do their job without feeling micro-managed. A clear hierarchy was evident. A few executive athletic administrators worked six days a week to accomplish their work. In this case leadership of the athletic department came from two places: institutional and the athletic administrations.

It helped in NSU's case that the highly, competitive veteran AD was an alumni and respected by individuals in all environments. The AD's active involvement was best demonstrated by his accompanying the university president with a visit to a state legislature meeting of state representatives and the governor. Moreover, the AD adhered to the Rawlings Panel recommendations by serving in a leadership role within the conference, as well as on NCAA academic group to promote broader changes to the financial model for DI college sports.

Institutional administrators regularly communicated with athletic administrators and made decisions that influenced the athletic culture. The president, provost, and alumni foundation director had very high aspirations for and were personally committed to the intercollegiate programs. The creation of a strategic plan established quantifiable benchmarks to hold key leaders in the athletic department accountable to higher standards of performance. The past president recognized that all of the tools for competitive success were not in place and actively engaged in trying to assist the athletics department in managing its financial, operational, and competitive challenges.

According to the external reviewer "He was willing to assist in building a campus culture that fully embraced and supported the athletics department" (2013, p.14). Duderstadt (2006) espoused that presidents are commonly being held more accountable to external constituencies,

not faculty per se; particularly to public officials and business leaders involved in hiring them and the foundations and businesses that supplement president salaries and benefits. This would be evident by NSU's president actions with his financial and public declarations of support of the athletic department. Contradictory to Nixon's (2014) findings that presidents in general are aloof and prefer to distance themselves from intercollegiate athletics, NSU's president embraced the athletic administration and acknowledged their value to the university.

Campus partners were actively engaged in trying to assist the athletics department in managing its financial, operational, and competitive challenges. The key leaders of the athletic department prided themselves on their transparent communication. They have asked university leadership to assist in building a campus culture that fully embraces and supports the athletic department. The administration's active involvement was best demonstrated by a provost who serves as the faculty academic representative and attends annual NCAA conferences on behalf of the athletic department; and a former ex-president who provided financial support for an external review of the athletic department's implementation of recommendations and collaborating on university initiatives.

The deputy AD of internal affairs had regular contact with the provost. The provost dealt with all personnel matters involving coaches and their contracts. An assistant professor of sports psychology was often included in search committees hiring coaches as well voluntarily working with student-athletes' on the field performance. The athletic department financial aid coordinator was in daily communication with her university counterpart regarding student-athletes course loads, loans, and scholarship requirements. The admissions office had a designated athletic liaison in regular communication with the coaches regarding recruiting and admissions. The assistant AD of facility operations and event management worked in concert

with the university facilities planning department on a daily basis. All these examples represent the internal athletic department interacting with institutional environments.

Contradictory to Sack's (2009) jock-capitalist theory managing collegiate athletics like corporate businesses in hopes of winning championships, NSU's reliance on university resources was deeply entrenched in the university's approach to campus partnerships. Though the AD directly reported to the university president, there was a plethora of committees athletic department employees served on at the university level. Specifically, coaches were serving on the Technology Planning Council, Faculty Senate, and the Presidential Search Committee to name a few committees. I found it intriguing coaching job descriptions listed university service as a requirement for bonuses. Maintaining partnerships across campus increases accountability and transparency in the athletic department. This was a departmental value voiced by several participants. As many universities adopt a corporate and separate athletic department model, NSU's leadership and power environment expressed the core of their identity was founded in their relationships with other departments and entities committed to educating students.

These core assumptions of the athletic culture: academics are equally important as winning championships and athletic administrators are stable, coupled with the value-laden bond with multiple connections and interactions between the athletic department and the institution were strong. The strong bond and interactions within the athletic department and stable leadership demonstrate the athletic department's fervent support of the university's commitment to a multi-pronged approach to leadership.

These were assumptions the internal athletic department employees and administrators readily acted upon. Even among campus skeptics, NSU's athletic administrators gained respect and garnered support for their abilities to build cohesion among many individuals across the

university. The foundation director indicated, “I think the model of athletics embodies, the values of the athletic culture, are good for the community.” Athletic success was highly valued because it helped the university move toward its goal of national distinction. NSU teams marketed the university, attracted active boosters and alumni donations, and improved community relations. The admissions director of the university indicated that academic and athletic success communicated in a manner consistent with its desired image of becoming the “Harvard over here.”

Deeply embedded in the fabric of educational institutions, the deficit perspective is often disseminated through educational research (González, 2005; Trueba 1988; Valencia, 1997). For example, Payne's (2001) *Framework for Understanding Poverty*, a widely disseminated text with significant popularity within compulsory education, has been critiqued for promoting classist, deficit-centered theories to explain the underachievement of youth in poverty (Gorski, 2010). A deficit perspective can be devastating and is manifested in multiple forms, making an academic institution a “subtractive” experience for many members (Valenzuela, 2002). One of the most deleterious impacts supported by research suggests that students of color continue to be overrepresented in the less academically rigorous, non-college prep tracks of their schools (Conchas, 2006; Oakes, 2008). In sum, negative beliefs may result in depressed performance and victim mentality (Steele, 1997).

Like Payne's (2001) research on academics and negative beliefs, I argue NSU internal athletic environments' negative beliefs about location and budget concerns fostered mediocrity. The biggest challenges NSU faced were out of their control with no quick fixes. Geography was perceived to present some unique challenges, yet are presumably faced by other peer institutions within the conference. Travel costs are high, logistics difficult, non-conference scheduling

extremely challenging...all in a very small (yet loyal) market. This impacted almost every area of the athletics program operation from student-athlete recruitment, to class attendance, staff recruitment and retention, alumni support, ticket sales, and game attendance.

Coaching, playing, and recruiting are challenged? The unique travel demands throughout the season wear heavily on the coaching staffs, many of whom primarily recruit out-of-state. How the university and athletic department address the limitations connected to geography will continue to be its biggest challenges. The financial costs to charter flights are currently unaffordable although many environments claim they would ameliorate many challenges. Tierney (1988) stated any attempt to establish long term change would take an integrative approach that would require effective organization-wide symbolic approaches for buy-in. In support of Tierney's statement, the concept of purchasing an airplane is not new and would require the commitment of deep pocketed donors to annually pay for maintenance and operation costs. Something most donors are not interested in supporting. Financial partnerships with external donors are being explored for sharing an airplane and splitting costs. Feasibility studies by the university, not just the athletic department, were being conducted.

Clearly troublesome for me was the lack of conversation circling the paucity of women in head coaching and athletic administrative ranks. For gender diversity, one female head coach in eight women's sports and only one female administrator in nine senior executive positions suggest a lack of balance. Nationally, in 2013-14, 39.6% of D1 women head coaches were female (LaVoi, 2014). Secondly, why nobody spoke of this issue in the internal athletic department was disconcerting. NSU athletic department leaders seemed to represent Burton, Barr, Fink, and Bruening's (2009) findings, which supported the notion external and internal, institutional environments want characteristics most often associated with the traditional roles of



men in their ADs and people in athletic power positions. Surprisingly, the few women willing to discuss the enigmatic paucity of females in leadership roles either did not acknowledge the fact or concluded it was not an issue of concern. However, if coaches with invitations to work at NSU chose not to come based upon reputation, there must be a known misalignment within the larger culture of athletics.

The Rawlings Panel offered pillars of alignment to evaluate an athletic department culture. The overarching question for their evaluation of UNC Chapel Hill: does the athletic program fit the core context of the university's reputation? In the NSU context there are entities which are excluded. Students, coaches, or employees who are female, racially diverse, or non-majority sexual orientation are not represented proportionally or at all in the athletic department. How does this impact recruiting? Considering the few female administrators or head coaches this supports a misalignment. According to a 2009 internet blog regarding gay and lesbian-friendly towns in the state, a blogger posted, "The town may be more liberal or accepting of differences than other cities in the state, but there is a lack of support systems such as gay/lesbian community centers, teen groups, support groups that would make it difficult for such individuals to prosper." Yet, there is a support office providing lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered resources for the students, faculty, and staff. Apart from the mission, strategic planning, and vision, the university's core culture is thought to be diverse by insiders.

Another challenge at NSU was "the lack of a recruiting culture" as coined by an external review committee. Ambiguity may have been to blame (Martin, 2008) as athletic leadership allowed coaches to spearhead recruiting efforts. Several participants expressed dissatisfaction with entertainment during games and tournaments, marketing the teams and events, and the branding of its athletic programs—all key parts of recruiting--yet the director of marketing

seemed unaware of these issues. This is a communication issue. According to Leidner and Kayworth (2006), a lack of commitment is a defining feature either of cultures where different members of the organization attach varied meanings to particular manifestations, which are not clearly consistent or are clearly in conflict. Coaches left the consumer oriented marketing of team artifacts and advertising campaigns to the marketing and media departments and did not share concerns. The director of marketing seemed unaware how the products were perceived by players, alumni, non-student athletes, or coaches because he and his team had total creative control.

Lack of communication regarding the marketing and branding of teams conflicted with the strength of good communication expressed by many participants and evident in written documents I reviewed about the management style of the athletic department. The external review consultants, coaches, and players mentioned their perceptions of antiquated branding, yet there was no comments directed toward the marketing director for change in status quo.

Due to the longevity of core athletic administrators in influential decision-making positions, altering recruiting efforts may be difficult. Recruiting materials must speak directly to the target audiences, who are 15-20 year old men and women, current student-athletes, recruits, on campus walk-ons, and the general student body. Invariably, conversations with many participants came back to the school mascots and icons perceived as representing an historical era one hundred years removed. Selling a past era mascot takes creative marketing. The external review committee commented traditional marketing materials, uniforms, and branding must speak to these audiences, not just to alumni fond of yesteryear. Many schools focus their marketing efforts primarily on history and tradition (Schroeder, 2010). However, these messages

are overlooked by potential recruits make the programs seem old and unattractive. People want mascots and artifacts representing who they are in the present (Turner, 2013).

Media coverage of NSU athletic teams was perhaps the most significant external influence on the department culture. It is the number one tool to increase recruiting, ticket sales, and exposure—all the athletic department strives for (Burton & Howard, 2013). The newspaper (most readership in the state) provided significant amounts of coverage to NSU men's and women's teams. Minimally, the results of every sporting event were listed each morning, and the paper frequently ran articles chronicling the games or matches with quotes from players and coaches. When NSU's teams played especially well, the paper placed a headline above its front-page logo.

The local radio/TV market highlighted live shows with head coaches of football, men's and women's basketball, and women's volleyball broadcast every week in season. The following sports had live television coverage for the 2014-2015 year: men and women swimming had one invitational aired locally; men's basketball team had ten games aired on cable ESPN; and football had all 12 games aired on ESPN Ticket. Team sports programs gained national media attention when they did well or upset a larger school. Inevitably television networks and the NCAA make decisions that inevitably lead individuals to subconsciously accept and support commercialization in intercollegiate athletics (Hutchinson & Bennett, 2012).

Many of NSU's newly renovated athletic facilities were intended to represent a cultural shift in increasing spectatorship. General seating has been reduced yet more was spent on premium seating areas. Amenities for players and donors, similar to professional caliber facilities were upgraded. Increasing attendance numbers is a main revenue stream for the athletic department as are media contracts. A 2013 press memo regarding the basketball arena claimed,

“Fewer seats increase demand. State-of-the-art facilities attract better players --these changes we hope lead to growing attendance” from the athletic department business office. As of 2015, the renovations stopped due to lack of money. Phase two was set to renovate the bathrooms and concessions along the concourse, add a club area, and create a grand entryway. According to the university website, the renovations will be completed at a later date.

Another perspective regarding the assumptions of intercollegiate athletics are grounded in the values of its non-institutional environments (Beyer & Hannah, 2000; Trail and Chelladurai, 2002). Exerting sway are external coalitions, with certain purposes, who “provide resources necessary to maintain the athletic department’s operational livelihood and keep it from being lesser of a drain on the larger organization” (Frey, 1994, p. 115; Schroeder, 2010). Those are the diehard fans who are long term season ticket holders on one side of the pendulum and on the other major benefactors. Traditionally, NSU fans swarm the football turf, volleyball and basketball courts, and wrestling mats after events. This tradition was a large concern for some mid-level administrators and some coaches.

Restricting access to facilities was perceived as a taboo by boosters because “that’s what we do to show our excitement.” At this time limiting access does not seem to hold importance by enough supporters for reform. The tradition of the public rushing the field is representation of tradition leadership is not willing to relinquish. The school logo is an antiquated, white male icon and may detract minorities and women. Until this is addressed the logo will continue to identify the University and sports programs as status quo and continue to attract the same type of student-athletes with those likenesses. Redesigning the school logo requires cultural change and a strong vision of leadership and power environment.

Managers of cultures must draw on survival anxiety (what will happen if we don't do anything) to unfreeze the situation and make sure that survival anxiety is greater than learning anxiety (Kotter, 2008; Schein, 2010). To achieve this, it is strongly recommended to lower learning anxiety to create psychological safety, by doing the following with others: (1) communicating a compelling vision, (2) providing formal training involving the learner, informal training of groups, (3) utilizing coaches and feedback, (4) presenting positive role models, (5) support groups in which learning problems are discussed, and (6) developing consistent systems and structures with positive thinking and working structures (Conner, 1993).

Finally, the case illustrates value conflicts apparent at the NCAA DI level. However, the sources of value conflicts vary. While most research has highlighted external explanations for these conflicts (Shulman & Bowen, 2011; Nixon, 2014), this case discovered a perennial deficit ideology and vintage mentality as sources of deep tensions. In particular, institutional culture emerged as a determinant of the athletic department in this case. Duderstadt (2009) suggested the "athletic department is a peripheral subunit of the university" operating on its own independent values (p. 63). Yet this case seems to reflect the findings of those who contend that athletic department assumptions may be heavily dependent on values of the institutional culture (Baxter et al., 1996; Mahoney et al., 2002; Shulman & Bowen, 2011).

This case study offers clear evidence of leadership roles in determining athletic department cultures. At the NCAA DI level, external leaders (i.e., NCAA president, television executives) often establish the parameters in which individual athletic departments operate (Southall et al., 2008; Southall & Nagel, 2008). While some external coalitions were certainly powerful, this case demonstrates that internal leaders do create consistent assumptions between their university's and athletic departments by regularly collaborating. The leaders in this study,

the AD, athletic administrative cabinet, dean of the business school, foundation director, admissions director, and coaches--were able to keep the athletic and university cultures consistent by resolutely embodying the academic assumptions of student academic success is paramount to all other reasons why students go to school at NSU.

### **Suggestions for Research and Practice**

Certain language is permitted in the sports world. Yet expletives and gendered language may be common place in a locker room—an example, the banal use of 'he/guys/males' words when coaches communicate with student-athletes even among women's sport teams. There were indications of gender bias in interviews—which may relate to the few women coaches, little recognition of cheer squads, band members, fans, donors, etc. Language that is not inclusive may be common place, yet, if inclusiveness is to occur, people must begin to recognize that language is one component of the culture that enables more inclusiveness. It became clear that language was not inclusive and was evident in each of the four environments. Using data from this study may shed some light on gendered language in DI intercollegiate athletic department culture.

Frank (2004) suggests winning programs do not increase general student enrollment at schools. Yet, “schools that support DI athletic programs either at the FBS or FCS level often justify their expenditures by pointing out that high-profile winning programs generate volumes of publicity for the university, contribute to school spirit among students, and increase donations from alumni and other prominent supporters” (Woods, 2011, p. 17). Whether a trend or a blip, some schools claim that based on wins, more prospective students apply for admission, allowing them to select the very best of prospective applicants. In other words, successful sport teams are perceived to improve the academic level of the school. These claims should be studied and may

be resourceful for marketing purposes. However, tying back into recruiting culture and enrollment, no studies have explored winning programs and their influence recruiting student-athlete of different sports. For example, Boise State University's football team has a tradition of winning. Does this help their other sports recruit players?

Using the data from this study through a Deficit framework may explain core aspects of the culture more deeply. I question if geography is a main factor why NSU does not win championships on a consistent basis? The reality is most universities do not win consistent championships (Duderstadt, 2006). Underlying these reasons may determine why they feel inferior to conference schools. Hence, these data may resolve some of the embedded negative ideology.

The length of relationships in the internal athletic department developed a unique relational culture (Martin, 2008). Relational culture is produced and reproduced through the communicative content practices of its members, and intersubjectivity leads to shared understandings. Therefore, utilizing these same data through a cultural deficit model might provide a useful lens through which to view communicative practices and intersubjectivity in enmeshed internal athletic department cultures. Perhaps, the messages sent from athletic department leaders speak a code which establishes a culture of mediocrity.

It would be beneficial to examine student athletes and non-student athletes' perspectives on organizational culture of intercollegiate athletic departments. Assuming student athletes are the priority stakeholders in college athletics, institutions may glean a lot about the culture of their departments. In NSU's case, reflection on event attendance, best practices marketing and branding the target audience, and increasing diversity in leadership should include student-athlete feedback. I was able to interview only three student athletes; however their responses

generated many themes for this study. Another thought provoking question from student athlete interviews was if non-student athlete students are aware of how their student activity fees subsidize a large chunk of their school's intercollegiate athletics. These questions are worthy of investigating.

## **Conclusion**

Even though NSU has lower general student enrollment than some DI intercollegiate programs, its case clearly illustrates the university's need for a cultural framework specific to intercollegiate athletic departments. Only through a holistic view, can department assumptions be uncovered. In this case, the assumptions guiding the athletic department were centered on valuing student success in academics, its long term leadership, and its strong bond to the institution. But NSU arrived at those assumptions because its leaders understood external pressures, the institutional culture, and the internal environment of the athletic department and were able to find similar values and communicate directly or indirectly linking them together.

Many individuals in the athletic department spent significant time and energy embodying those central values in the athletic department through communication, upgrading facilities, and looking for ways to support individuals. Finding new strategies to increase females in leadership roles will benefit the department in numerous ways. For example, it may help initially attracting and recruiting student-athletes, as well as challenge the deficit thinking permeating the athletic department culture. This framework permitted a holistic cultural examination. Without this, leaders may "only treat symptoms of the dysfunctions...rather than...its underlying ideologies" (Beyer & Hannah, 2000, pp. 124-125).

It seems a lot of research does not depict intercollegiate athletics in a positive light from an outsider's perspective. Some readers may have assumed the findings from this study would



have the same interpretation. Instead I found honest accounts about one athletic department. We are humans, subject to weaknesses, but capable of extraordinary connections and respect for one another. The NSU athletic department's interactions among people were enmeshed in its culture and other interactions were untangled and perhaps less complicated. Every athletic department must contend with economic issues on an annual basis. Considering that only 17 DI athletic departments are financially autonomous baffles hundreds of institutions who ascribe to the same celebrity status of teams outside their conference (Nixon, 2014). Four months after I completed my visit on campus, the AD announced plans for a "world class high altitude sports performance training center." This has been described with the potential to draw elite Olympic caliber athletes to the University and city to train year around. This action reveals the potentiality of a budding niche as well as profiting from external sources in intercollegiate athletics.

There are caveats for any cultural model that leaders and scholars must acknowledge (Schroeder, 2010). First, every athletic culture is context bound. Each department will maintain some of its own unique assumptions (Schein, 2008). Clearly loyalty to the institution and athletic leadership, assumptions upon which NSU built their culture would not readily apply to every school. Second, the elements of the model are neither static nor mutually exclusive. Culture, as Geertz (2000) indicates, is an interconnected web of relationships. Alterations that arise in one segment (e.g., updating branding efforts) may not necessarily affect other parts of the organization (e.g., gender equity). Third, the cultural model's purpose is to arm leaders and researchers with a practical framework.

The data in this report can be used by institutions and athletic associations to advocate for women coaches and hold institutions and decision makers accountable in creating a gender-balanced workforce—especially for women's teams (Thelin, 2011). It can also be used to for

people to recruit, hire, and retain women coaches. Policy creation is one strategy that often leads to change (Northouse, 2013). Title IX is an exemplar federal civil rights law that increased opportunities for females to play sports in schools receiving federal funding (LaVoi, 2014). However, only 20% of all collegiate teams (men's and women's) are coached by women (Acosta & Carpenter, 2012). The NFL's Rooney Rule—created in 2003 to help increase the number of minority head coaches by requiring that at least one minority male be given the opportunity to interview for every vacant head coach position—has increased the number of minority head coaches. I advocate a gender based policy similar to the Rooney Rule be embraced by all colleges and universities. As a starting point, collegiate athletics departments should commit to interviewing more females for all head coach vacancies for women's teams (Burton, 2009). Instead of interviewing one candidate increase the number to three. Such a policy, if enacted, could potentially have a significant impact on stopping the decline of women coaches by guaranteeing females to be included in the interview pool. Ultimately, it does not make sense half the student athletes are female yet with eighty percent of head coaches of women's intercollegiate sports programs are men (LaVoi, 2014).

The preceding descriptions in no way represent the institution or these participants in their totality. The purpose was to introduce them, giving voice in painting their own picture. I entered their world to understand the culture. What I did not expect at the beginning of fieldwork was the university employees, booster-club members, internal athletic department, and student-athletes, who volunteered to participate in this study, would be so fascinatingly complex and captivating. Nor did I anticipate that the responsibilities and loyalties (e.g., working 18 hour days, 11 months a year, coaches recruiting athletes weeks on end away from their families,

academic advisors shoveling snow in the football stadium) of the participants would be so evident.

According to Geertz (1973), humans create complex realities within their unique cultures. He argued convincingly that to understand realities scholars need to document cultures in detail, capturing behaviors, and life as it is lived and experienced. This collective process was surprisingly important for understanding the implications of perceptions and communication processes and going beyond NCAA statistics. Other studies have pointed toward frameworks for looking at the internal, external, institutional, and power and leadership environments (Beyer & Hannah, 2000; Schroeder, 2010), but none have truly studied a DI intercollegiate athletic department. For this opportunity, I felt truly grateful.

Findings should be interpreted with caution, primarily because it is one institution and because the participants generalized their experiences, and I responded with my interpretations. I admit I am hopeful that the findings of this study will provide university leaders, ADs, internal and external organization leaders, student-athletes, and perhaps fans with fresh insights into the nature of this DI athletic department and potential transferability to other departments. Moreover, I feel confident that individual readers may grow from the experiences represented in this case.

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## APPENDIX A:

### College Protection Act

#### **College Protection Act Summary**

**Section 1-3. Short Title; Findings; Definitions; Sense of Congress.** To amend section 487(a) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 to ensure that higher education institutions receiving federal funds provide students participating in commercialized athletic programs with academic support and with health, medical, and due process protections necessary to prevent their academic or financial exploitation. The unprecedented commercialization of these intercollegiate athletics programs at present threatens the academic success of college athletes and the integrity of higher education institutions, and creates excessive institutional expenditures and burdensome student fees. The Act (1) provides remedies addressing these issues, including increased scholarship support and injury and medical benefits to college athletes, (2) enables national governance associations to combat commercial excesses and maintain a clear line of demarcation between collegiate and professional sport, and (3) assists institutions to comply with the athletics provisions of Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972.

**Section 4. Program Participation Agreements.** A four-year institution of higher education having an intercollegiate athletic program with total generated revenues in excess of \$1 million annually, cannot be a member of a national nonprofit college athletic association (“Association”) unless the Association conforms to the following minimum standards, which shall apply to all members:

**Limited Antitrust Exemption.** Conditioned on enforcement of all standards specified in this Act, the exemption is available only to Associations with membership of at least forty percent of all institutions of higher education in the U.S. and with at least one third of all members generating revenues in excess of \$1 million. Provides Association with antitrust exemption limited to any rule adopted whose primary purpose is to enhance educational opportunities or make athletic programs compatible with the educational missions of member institutions (e.g., a rule prohibiting athletic contests on Monday through Thursday evenings).

**Independent Governance.** Requires Association to be governed by a board comprised of “independent directors” not currently employed by any member institution and reflecting the interests of all athletics program stakeholders (presidents, trustees, ADs, tenured faculty, and college athletes) plus diversity of gender, race, and ethnicity.

**Due Process Protections.** Requires specific due process protections (e.g., independent judges, right of confrontation, etc.) before suspending a coach, athlete, or other athletics personnel from participation or suspending institution’s telecommunications privileges except for ineligibility based on properly determined graduation, normal academic progress, or other academic requirements.



### **Revenues from Collegiate Athletic Events.**

I. Allows institutions, conferences, national governance association, and third party event hosts to sell media rights, event tickets, and event sponsorships, and to retain these and other event-related revenues conditioned on Association having sole authority to offer national championship or play-off events. Requires Association to use highest football division championship revenues to fund: (aa) cost of additional due process protections; (bb) a basic national athletics injury insurance and medical cost program that removes current reliance on student- and parent-provided insurance and expense coverage; (cc) basic and annual enhancements to catastrophic athletics insurance; and (dd) subsidies to institutional members of highest competitive division, enabling them to provide athletic scholarships covering the full cost of attendance under federal definitions.

II. Requires the Association, conferences, and member institutions to retain five percent of gross annual media rights fees to establish an Academic Trust Fund to be used for disbursing education-based grants enabling college athletes to complete baccalaureate or advanced degrees following completion of athletic eligibility and for providing financial aid for nonathletes, too.

**Commercial Use of Names, Likenesses, and Images of College Athletes.** Other than to promote current athletics events, Associations, conferences, and member institutions may not sell these rights for any commercial purpose (e.g., video games, apparel, etc.). Athletes may sell their own rights during their collegiate eligibility as long as neither the athlete's collegiate sport nor institution is identified.

### **Minimum Legislative Conditions of Educational Athletic Program.**

(i) Maximum full athletic scholarships to athletes in highest competitive division set at full cost of attendance under federal definitions.

(ii) "Whistle blower" protections to college athletes, faculty, and other institutional employees who disclose unethical behavior or rules violations.

(iii) Required institutional participation in Association "certification" program.

(iv) Athlete academic counseling and support program must be under direct control of institution's academic authority.

(v) No coach's or AD's salary may exceed two times the national average of compensation of full professors at doctoral institutions being paid at 95th percentile based on AAUP annual report. Additionally, a limit on outside income, namely twenty percent of annual salary or \$100,000, whichever is greater, will apply.

(vi) Athletes must have cumulative GPA of 2.0 to participate. Athletes with lower GPA's are restricted to a maximum of 10 practice hours per week.

(vii) In addition to the NCAA's initial eligibility "qualifier" requirements, one year residency shall be required prior to eligibility for athletic competition for all freshmen whose high school grade point average or standardized test scores are below one standard deviation from the mean academic profile of their entering class. These "restricted competition" admits shall be eligible for athletic related aid and four years of eligibility.

(viii) Institutions not in compliance with Title IX shall not be eligible for Association post-

season competition unless deficiencies are remedied within one year.

(ix) Institutions must adopt policies approved by their respective faculty senates to minimize regular season athletic contest schedule conflicts with class attendance and must prohibit athletic contests during final exams.

(x) All athletics-related financial aid extends to graduation or a maximum of five years and cannot be reduced or cancelled based on athletics performance, physical condition or injury.

(xi) Construction and exclusive use of “athletics only” practice, competition, conditioning, academic support, housing, dining, and other facilities is prohibited.

(xii) Institutions must have faculty-only Committee on Academic Oversight annually reporting to its faculty senate.

(xiii) Institution may not use mandatory student fee revenues to support athletics without vote and consent of student government (at least once every four years).

**Annual Report to Congress.** Via Association online reporting system, each institution provides specified publicly accessible data on certification status, audited financials, and academic performance of student-athletes, and Association provides data on distribution of funds to member institutions.

**Institutions without National Governance Affiliation.** Institutions must provide minimum student protections equal to Sections (B) through (G) but shall not enjoy revenue-protection benefits of membership in a national association as specified in (D).

**Implementation.** Requirements shall be met within one year of enactment.

**Secretary of Education Oversight Responsibility.** Secretary authorized to approve timetable exceptions, promulgate regulations clarifying Act requirements, and exempt certain institutions.

## APPENDIX B:

### American Association of University Professors Guidelines for Athletics (1991)

**Admissions and Academic Progress:** Institutions should not use admissions standards for athletes that are not comparable to those for other students. A committee elected by the faculty should monitor the compliance with policies relating to admissions, the progress toward graduation, and the integrity of the course of study of students who engage in intercollegiate athletics (para 5).

**Avoidance of Exploitation:** Students who are athletes need time for their academic work. Participation in intercollegiate athletics in the first year of college is ill-advised. Athletes should have at least one day a week without athletic obligations. Overnight absences on weekday evenings should be kept to a maximum of one per week, with rare exceptions. The number of events per season should be periodically reviewed by the faculty. Student-athletes should be integrated with other students in housing, food service, tutoring, and other areas of campus life (para, 6).

**Financial Aid:** Financial-aid standards for athletes should be comparable to those for other students. The aid should be administered by the financial-aid office of the institution. The assessment of financial need may take account of time demands on athletes which preclude or limit employment during the academic year (para, 7).

**Financing Athletics:** Governance: Financial operations of the department of athletics, including all revenues received from outside groups, should be under the full and direct control of the central administration of the campus. Complete budgets of the athletic department for the coming year and actual expenditures and revenues for the past year should be published in full detail. Particular scrutiny should be given to use of the institution's general operating funds to support the athletic department. Elected faculty representatives should comprise a majority of the campus committee that formulates campus athletic policy, and such a committee should be chaired by an elected faculty member (para, 8).

**Conflicts of Interest:** Paid-for trips to games, and other special benefits for faculty, administrators, or members of governing boards involved in the oversight of athletics, whether offered by the university or by outside groups, create conflicts of interest and should be eliminated (para, 9).

**Implementation:** In order to avoid the obstacles to unilateral reform efforts, the university's chief administrative officer should join with counterparts in other institutions to pursue these reforms and report annually to the academic community on the progress of such efforts. Beginning five years from adoption of these principles at an institution, athletic events should be scheduled only with institutions, and within conferences and associations, that commit themselves to the implementation of these principles (para,

APPENDIX C:

Email Invitation to Universities

Greetings PARTICIPANTS NAME,

My name is Shannon Powers. I am a doctoral student at Colorado State University in Educational Leadership and Human Resource Studies. I am currently assembling a small participant pool of people for my dissertation project. The study looks at the organizational culture of the intercollegiate athletics program at your institution. You have been identified through the University website as a stakeholder in the university and the athletics program. I am contacting you to ask if you would be interested in participating in this research. I am studying *the culture of the athletic department, both internally and externally, the culture of the university, leadership of the department and how these four elements interact with one another.*

Your commitment to participate in this research would only require one 30 minute interview. The session will take place at the student center during the week of May 4<sup>th</sup>- 10<sup>th</sup> at a time that is convenient for you. I would like to discuss the study in more detail with you. If you would like to participate, please email or call me at [REDACTED].

Thank you kindly,

Shannon Powers

[REDACTED]  
Co-Principal Investigator

Carole Makela, Ph.D.  
Professor and Principal Investigator  
School of Education  
[REDACTED]

APPENDIX D: Letter of Intent

January 8, 2014

Shannon Powers, Doctoral Student  
Colorado State University at Fort Collins  
Email- [REDACTED]

**“An Examination of Organizational Culture in a Division I Intercollegiate Athletic Department”**

Various studies have examined culture within intercollegiate athletic departments. The purpose of this dissertation study is to utilize Schroeder’s (2010) framework for assessing the culture of a Division I athletic department. The four elements of the model-institutional culture, external environment, internal environment, and leadership/power will be evaluated and followed up with an explanation of their interaction.

**Research Methodology**-Qualitative case study

**Participants-**

**External Environment:** Booster club president, 1-3 fans, and a local sports writer

**Athletic Department:** 3-4 head coaches, 2 assistants, and 1 facility manager, 2-4 student athletes, 1-2 ADs, the sports information director, and director of compliance.

**University Leadership:** Interim President, VP academic life, a department chair, and 2 informal faculty leaders—information concerning academic life.

- Each participant will be assigned a pseudonym
- Data will be collected primarily through semi-structured interviews with participants. There may be follow-up emails.
- Recorded interviews will not last more than 45 minutes.

Practices, meetings, and ceremonies will be observed and field notes from each event will be recorded. Internal documents, such as admissions brochures, game programs, will be collected throughout the study. Books and articles will also be examined to gain historical information on the college. Lastly, cultural information will be gleaned from community newspaper articles, student newspaper articles, media guides and the website.

**Time Frame**-I would like to be on campus and conduct interviews April 25-May 2 and attend Track and Tennis meets.

APPENDIX E: Letter of Research Participation

January 21, 2014

Colorado State University  
Institutional Review Board  
321 General Services Building  
Campus Delivery 2011  
Fort Collins, Colorado 80523-2011

Attention: Janell Barker, Senior IRB Coordinator

Dear Ms. Barker;

I am aware that Shannon Powers, a graduate student in the School of Education at Colorado State University, is conducting a research study entitled: "A Case Study Assessment of Organizational Culture in a Division I Intercollegiate Athletic Department," as she has shared with me the details of the study. The University [REDACTED], the Department of Intercollegiate Athletics, and I feel comfortable that the participants in this study will be adequately protected. I give Shannon Powers permission to conduct this study in the athletic department at the University [REDACTED].

I will provide Shannon Powers a listing of our employees she is interested in interviewing in order to send them an email invitation. We understand those interviewed will be done so anonymously.

The University [REDACTED] requests that Colorado State University not name or include any identifier of its employees and the institution be kept confidential in the research results. Shannon Powers has agreed to provide my office a copy of the CSU IRB approval document before beginning data collection.

If there are any questions, please contact my office at (555) 555-5555 or email XXXX.

[REDACTED],  
Sr. Associate AD/External Relations

## APPENDIX F: Letter of IRB Approval

### NOTICE OF APPROVAL FOR HUMAN RESEARCH

**DATE:** April 09, 2014

**TO:** Makela, Carole, 1588 School of Education  
Clark, Kelli, School of Education,  
Kuk, Linda, 1588 School of Education, Powers, Shannon, 1588 School of Education

**FROM:** Barker, Janell, Coordinator, CSU IRB 2

**PROTOCOL TITLE:** A Case Study Evaluation of the Organizational Culture of a Division I Intercollegiate Athletic Department.

**FUNDING SOURCE:** NONE      **PROTOCOL NUMBER:** 14-4822H

**APPROVAL PERIOD:** Approval Date: April 09, 2014      Expiration Date: March 31, 2015

The CSU Institutional Review Board (IRB) for the protection of human subjects has reviewed the protocol entitled: A Case Study Evaluation of the Organizational Culture of a Division I Intercollegiate Athletic Department.. The project has been approved for the procedures and subjects described in the protocol. This protocol must be reviewed for renewal on a yearly basis for as long as the research remains active. Should the protocol not be renewed before expiration, all activities must cease until the protocol has been re-reviewed.

If approval did not accompany a proposal when it was submitted to a sponsor, it is the PI's responsibility to provide the sponsor with the approval notice. This approval is issued under Colorado State University's Federal Wide Assurance 00000647 with the Office for Human Research Protections (OHRP). If you have any questions regarding your obligations under CSU's Assurance, please do not hesitate to contact us. Please direct any questions about the IRB's actions on this project to:

Janell Barker, Senior IRB Coordinator - (970) 491-1655 [Janell.Barker@Colostate.edu](mailto:Janell.Barker@Colostate.edu)

Evelyn Swiss, IRB Coordinator - (970) 491-1381 [Evelyn.Swiss@Colostate.edu](mailto:Evelyn.Swiss@Colostate.edu)



Barker, Janell

Approval is to recruit up to 42 participants: athletic department administrators (n = 3), head coaches (n = 6), athletic department staff (n = 10), booster club members (n=5), university administrators (n=5), college deans (n=3), faculty members (n=3), student-athletes (n=5), newspaper reporters (n=2) with the approved cover letter and consent. The above-referenced project was approved by the Institutional Review Board with the condition that the approved consent form is signed by the subjects and each subject is given a copy of the form. NO changes may be made to this document without first obtaining the approval of the IRB.

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**Approval Period:** April 09, 2014 through March 31, 2015

**Review Type:** EXPEDITED

**IRB Number:** 00000202