

METHOD

Research Questions

1. Are physical education department chairpersons employing **progressive methods** or models of managerial control?
2. What managerial control **concepts and techniques** are commonly used in physical education departments?
3. What **performance measurements** are commonly used by physical education department chairpersons?
4. How are **outcomes** measured and **feedback** provided for faculty and staff in physical education departments?

Procedures

- Designed open-ended interview question instrument.
- Collected qualitative data from department chair, tenure-track faculty member, tenured faculty member, and administrative assistant at 5 major universities.
- Data recorded on digital recorder and transcribed.

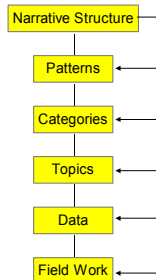
School	# of Full-time Dept Faculty/Staff	# of Students in Dept Undergrad/Grad	Total Univ. Graduate Students FT/PT	Total Univ. Enrollment
University A	21/1	644/64	1,163/1,240	12,067
University B	30/2	1,082/56	1,872/982	32,771
University C	13/1	360/43	2,543/936	18,013
University D	17/3.5	700/70	3,981/1,443	27,668
University E	9/2	300/45	3,398/1,028	18,956

Topics

- Strategic planning process
- Goals and objectives
- Outcome measures and indicators
- Feedback
- Budgetary controls
- Inventory
- Discretionary money
- Performance measurement: Faculty, staff
- Evaluations: Student, peer, supervisor
- Differences between faculty and staff
- Changing faculty/staff behavior

Categories

- Strategic Planning
- Outcomes
- Budget Controls
- Performance Measurement
- Control Techniques



Managerial Control of Faculty by Physical Education Department Chairpersons

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study was to analyze and explain the current managerial control practices of chairpersons in university physical education departments and to determine the perceived outcomes of these practices. To accomplish this, the researcher collected qualitative data at five universities in the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities that offer doctoral degrees in physical education. Six major themes that emerged from the analysis are presented. Based on the analysis of results, department chairpersons initiated very few innovative control techniques and most controls were mandated by upper administration. The researcher concluded that the departments were successful despite these shortcomings; however, chairpersons should improve managerial control methods to increase quality.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Managerial control at the academic level becomes problematic because university professors are professional employees (Abbott, 1988). Defining professional employees remains somewhat difficult (Abbott, 1988; Alvesson, 1993; Freidson, 1996), but the key concepts that identify professionals are advanced training and specialized knowledge in a given area. Because of their unique status, professional employees require special management considerations. Raelin (1991) identified six specific problems inherent in managing professionals:

1. Overspecialization: Professionals are required to perform fixed and standardized tasks apart from other professionals or managers because of the compartmentalization of the organization.
2. Autonomy: They demand autonomy over the ends as well as means. Many scholars and professionals agree this is the most critical issue.
3. Distaste for close supervision: Professionals see supervision is a nuisance that impedes progress.
4. Formalization: They exhibit a tendency to resist formal rules and regulations.
5. Real-world practice: Professional employees' emphasis on individual initiative and commitment to high quality of life leads to little regard for real-world managerial practice.
6. Ethical responsibility: There is a conflict between professionals who maintain overriding interest in ethical responsibility and managers who strive for corporate efficiency.

Key References

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CONCLUSION

Although the chairpersons in the current study demonstrated successful departments could be maintained without instituting progressive managerial models, there should still be a continual effort to improve the performance of the department based on sound managerial theory and practices. Ironically, many university managers in academic departments ignore progressive managerial models and thus fail to practice what they espouse as professionals—change through the use of scientifically proven methods. Today's climate in higher education emphasizes doing more with less (Glassick et al., 1997). Both faculty and staff would benefit from a more faculty-inclusive approach to management, particularly with departmental planning. Furthermore, efforts should also be made to diminish the separating effects of subdisciplines. Chairpersons of physical education departments should make an effort to improve their managerial control techniques to accommodate the current atmosphere in higher education.

RESULTS

THEME 1 CHAIRPERSONS INITIATED VERY FEW INNOVATIVE CONTROLS

Department chairpersons relied on existing controls in higher education and initiated very few innovative or unique managerial control techniques. The main controls included budgetary controls, minimizing discretionary money for faculty, organizing strategic planning sessions when required by the institution, and periodic evaluations of faculty.

THEME 2 CONTROL FROM ABOVE

Formal control procedures were mandated by administrators above the department chairperson level and were seen as a required formality by both faculty and chairpersons. These mandated initiatives were often driven by state education boards, new presidents, and new deans that seemed to follow a cyclical pattern, prompted by changes in upper administrators. Faculty, and to a greater degree chairpersons, appeared to be more reactionary to these changes rather than initiating departmental control techniques. In essence, "chairpersons were the ones being controlled, rather than the ones doing the controlling."

THEME 3 DEPARTMENTS FLOURISHED WITH A FEW FACULTY CONCERNS

The departments continued to operate and flourish under the current paradigm of management control in higher education although faculty voiced some concerns about management processes. The researcher observed departments that were "running fairly smoothly." Furthermore, the researcher noted that the departments involved in the study were reputable leaders in the field of physical education.

THEME 4 FACULTY PREFER CHAIRPERSONS WHO ARE FACILITATORS

Faculty admired chairpersons who exhibited characteristics of a facilitator rather than a controller. Many participants favorably described their chairperson's philosophy of control as "non-control."

THEME 5 LACK OF DEPARTMENT COHESION

Faculty and chairpersons failed to work as a cohesive group toward development and accomplishment of departmental mission and goals. Instead, goals and planning individually served the welfare of each specific faculty member. Many participants indicated the influence of subdisciplines in physical education contributed to a lack of cohesion. Participants at two departments clearly indicated that planning as an entire department was abandoned due to the diverse nature, agendas, and clientele of the subdisciplines. Many of the departments rarely met as a group.

THEME 6 A VARIETY OF MEASUREMENT AND FEEDBACK

Measuring department progress and outcomes along with providing feedback varied greatly between and among the institutions studied. Two departments utilized exit surveys of their senior and graduate students to illicit feedback in evaluating their programs. These were paper instruments that included numerical ratings and open-ended questions. Faculty and chairpersons in three departments indicated their institutions closely examined student credit hour generation for their departmental classes. Most chairpersons also examined departmental averages from student evaluation scores.

BEST PRACTICES PRESENTED

Strategic Planning

Budgeting

Resource Allocation

Individual Performance Evaluation, Feedback, and Reward

Departmental Performance Evaluation, Feedback, and Reward

Example

Chairpersons in the study utilized some common departmental performance evaluation measures and techniques. These included monitoring student credit hour generation along with credit hour generation in upper division classes. Other evaluation measures included student focus groups and graduation surveys, which chairpersons indicated helped with curriculum decisions. One department in particular engaged in additional performance measurement efforts. These included feedback from internship supervisors, alumni surveys, and performance of undergraduates on certifying exams and program entrance exams.

The most quantitative performance outcome measurement system utilized up-to-date online data to help the chairperson track performance. The outcomes included number of students, length of attendance before graduation, overall grade point average, total number of student credit hour production, and efficiency ratio for student credit hour generated per full-time equivalent (FTE). These outcomes were compared with numbers generated from past performance to examine trends. In addition, the numbers were also compared to other departments on campus, particularly those of similar size.