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CORE TENSIONS: AN EXPLORATORY CASE STUDY OF FACULTY WORK AT A
STRIVING INSTITUTION

Submitted by Molly Ellis in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of
Philosophy in Education. Accepted on behalf of the Faculty of Annette Caldwell Simmons
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A Dissertation Presented to the Faculty of
Annette Caldwell Simmons School of Education & Human Development
Southern Methodist University

in

Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in Education

by

Molly Kathleen Ellis

2019

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Southern Methodist University has served as home to me for the last six years. The choice to further my education at this institution came at a pivotal time in my life when I was at a defining crossroads, and I can safely say it has been one the best decisions I have ever made. At every step, the SMU community has helped to develop my confidence, challenge my curiosity, and empower my growth as an scholar and a person.

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ABSTRACT

Drawing from the literature on faculty culture and striving institutions, my exploratory case study sheds light on the work tensions and experiences of faculty at a striving university. As the pursuit of prestige permeates the American higher education landscape, a greater understanding is needed on how institutional striving towards prestige influences faculty work. While variation exists in the work of professors across institutional types and disciplines, one constant holds true: too many responsibilities are competing for faculty members' time. Current research on faculty work posits that the modern professor encounters disparate demands that make achieving a balance challenging.

Using a conceptual framework of faculty culture, I present the tensions in faculty work at the institutional, disciplinary, and individual levels as well as at the overlapping components of each. With data from interviews with arts and science faculty, my findings suggest that faculty members at a striving institution find themselves situated at a university in the middle of an identity crisis which creates a series of frustrations for faculty. Further, faculty hold affiliation not only to their institutions, but they are simultaneously members of their respective disciplines. Thus, they are socialized to a set of norms and expectations from their fields while attempting to satisfy institutional expectations. Complexities emerge within and across the university and disciplines that faculty must navigate. My work adds to the empirical discussion concerning striving institutions and faculty work with implications for both practice and scholarship.

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CHAPTER 1: STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

Faculty are at the core of American higher education institutions, and are an institution's key source of knowledge production and dissemination, influential decisionmakers, and greatest resource. However, when not harnessed correctly, they have the potential to be an institution's weakest link. The role and work expectations of the professoriate have evolved over the last 50 years. For more than a century, the "traditional" faculty model, one made up of primarily full-time tenure track professors, focused on the three pillars of teaching, research, and service prevailed (Finkelstein and Schuster, 2006). However, under the pressure of an environment of constrained resources (Massy, 1996) and growing institutional pressures to advance and gain prestige (Blackmore & Kandiko, 2011; Brewer, Gates, & Goldman, 2002), institutional priorities shifted, impacting faculty work and behavior (O'Meara & Bloomgarden, 2011). Faculty are thus tasked to evolve accordingly to meet the needs of their institutions. However, faculty do not only hold allegiances to their institutions, but they are simultaneously members of their respective disciplines, thus they are socialized to a set of norms and expectations from their fields as well as institutions. Therefore, complexities emerge within and across institutions and disciplines that faculty must navigate. While the current literature on faculty acknowledges they are situated in multiple cultures (Austin, 1990), an empirical understanding of the implications this has on faculty work is missing.

Institutions actively seeking to improve their place in higher education rankings and markets in order to gain prestige are often referred to as "striving" institutions (O'Meara, 2007). The context of striving institutions presents faculty with a series of challenges inclusive of increased research expectations, increased accountability of their productivity, and pressure to create revenue for the institution or obtain external funding (Gardner & Veliz, 2014; Gonzales, Martinez, & Ordu, 2014; O'Meara & Bloomgarden, 2011). Therefore, striving institutions further

exacerbate the noted, growing complexities of evolving faculty work. Through a single-case design, this exploratory study examined the potential tensions and challenges faculty experience in deciding how to approach their work responsibilities amidst the at times complementary and competing cultures in which they are situated at a striving institution.

Striving Institutions and Prestige in American Higher Education

In its simplest terms, the definition of a striving institution is one which is on the “pursuit of prestige within the academic hierarchy” (O'Meara, 2007, p. 123). Research shows striving institutions exhibit behavior, such as adjusting rewards structures, increasing selectivity, and changes in resource allocations, typically towards research or other aspects deemed prestigious (Gardner, 2010; Gonzales et al., 2014; O'Meara & Bloomgarden, 2011). The notion of striving is rooted in institutional theory, building on concepts of academic ratcheting, academic drift, and institutional isomorphism (Harris, 2013; Massy & Zemsky, 1994; Morpew & Huisman, 2002). In other words, striving institutions look towards other institutions or characteristics of such institutions that are more prestigious, and change their own behavior in an attempt to become more like those institutions and gain prestige. The definition of prestige can take many forms, but one common, measurable means of prestige is “external national rankings of institutions. Institutions that are striving are making decisions and taking actions to move the institution toward better external rankings” (O'Meara & Bloomgarden, 2011, p. 40). Additional means of aspirations towards prestige include advancement towards a higher or “more prestigious” Carnegie Classification – acceptance and identification with “distinguished groups of institutions” (O'Meara, 2007, p. 125).

Other examples of pursuits of prestige include the U.S. News Rankings and other external rankings systems. Higher education as an organizational field recognizes prestige as “one of the most important factors in assessing organizational performance, and the U.S. News

rankings are the most prominent assessment of that performance” (Bastedo & Bowman, 2010, p. 164). Even when institutional leadership attempt to denounce the authority of college rankings, these rankings are becoming progressively more legitimate and thus difficult to ignore, particularly for striving institutions. College rankings are in essence a driving energy to organizational decision making and identity of institutions and ultimately the faculty work (Elsbach & Kramer, 1996; Sauder & Espeland, 2009).

The metrics of external measures, like rankings, typically include those that faculty work directly impact, such as faculty specific resources and output inclusive of external grants and publications (Morse, Brooks, & Mason, 2018). Therefore, administrative pressures to perform well in these rankings may influence how faculty approach their work. For example, the inclusion of research expenditures in these metrics provides institutions additional incentive to reward faculty for generating more external research; thus potentially diverting faculty members’ attention away from undergraduate teaching (Ehrenberg, 2005). In essence, the rankings and the pursuit of rankings creates tensions for faculty members, such as those who wish to focus on class instruction, to instead direct energy towards initiatives.

Additionally, the U.S. News rankings may impact faculty members’ employment choices from the beginning of their careers. New academics endeavor to find placements at the best universities possible in order to create their own personal prestige. Because of its status as a key representative of reputation, the U.S. News rankings serves as one source of information to aid in achieving the best placement goal. For instance, “if a university or college ranks highly in the annual U.S. News & World Report rankings, individuals can claim the prestige that accompanies this ranking and claim the positive attributes that lead to the ranking for themselves” (Toma, Dubrow, & Hartley, 2005). In other words, the higher the perceived value attributed to an institution the higher the perceived value of faculty members at the institution.

Additionally, research revealed key identifying characteristics of striving institutions. Pulling from prior research on isomorphism and striving institutions (i.e. Birnbaum, 1983; Brewer, Gates & Goldman, 2001; Ehrenberg, 2003; Massy & Zemsky, 1994; Meredith, 2004; Monks & Ehrenberg, 1999; Morphey & Baker, 2004; Morphey & Huisman, 2002), O'Meara (2007) developed a list of characteristics of striving environments replicated in Table 1.1 below. O'Meara (2007) explains that it is difficult to isolate characteristics of striving institutions due to the fact that the behaviors needed to advance prestige are unique to the specific institution or type of institution. For example, the actions taken by a private liberal arts institution seeking to advance its prestige potentially look very different than the actions taken by a four-year regional public institution due to striving decisions likely linked to “specific history, market, competitors, institutional identity, and leadership” (O'Meara, 2007, p. 129). O'Meara cautions that this list is not exhaustive and that other characteristics may emerge as identifying attributes of a striving institution. However, she posits that the list is sufficient for a scholarship, such as the present study, looking to identify striving institutions for further study. She further suggests that “researchers looking to identify an institution as striving might examine whether the institutions has exhibited an overall picture (or significant number) of these characteristics over the previous five years” (O'Meara, 2007, p. 130).

Table 1.1. Identifying Characteristics of Striving Institutions.

Areas of Institutional Operations	Operations Indicators of Striving
Student Recruitment and Admissions	Institution increases selectivity over recent years, including high school rank, SAT & GPA Increase in use of early decision in admissions Institution invites more National Merit Scholars and fewer Pell Grant Recipients

Faculty Recruitment, Roles, and Reward Systems	<p>Greater attempt to hire “faculty stars” with research emphasis, increase in faculty salaries and in start-up research packages</p> <p>Faculty teaching load decreasing; increase in discretionary time, loosening of institutional ties; increased emphasis on disciplinary ties</p> <p>Faculty report expectations for research in tenure and promotion have increased</p> <p>Rise in faculty grants, awards, prestigious fellowships</p>
Curriculum and Programs	<p>Shift of emphasis and funding away from remedial and developmental programs & towards honors and programs for academically talented students</p> <p>Institution is adding graduate programs, shift in emphasis from undergraduate to graduate programs</p> <p>Focus among faculty on making programs more rigorous and on preparing students for graduate school or prestigious career placements</p>
External Relations and Shaping of Institutional Identity	<p>Institutional actors use language, speeches, websites, and symbols to shape the external image of the institution as more prestigious or “on the move”</p> <p>Institutional actors also work to shape an internal, institutional narrative about striving and use the language and rhetoric of striving to frame major decisions, goals statements, and directives</p>
Resource Allocation	<p>Increased spending on infrastructure and administrative support</p> <p>Shift in resources from instruction to administrative support</p> <p>Investments made in competitive amenities</p>

Of particular interest to this study is how the behavior exhibited by striving institutions influences faculty work life and functions. Prior work sheds light on this impact. Dubrow, Moseley, and Dustin (2006) use a fictitious institution, Mission Creep University, to highlight

potential challenges presented to faculty at a striving institution. In their compelling example, Mission Creep University was previously an institution focused on teaching, service and programmatic growth. However, with increased competition in the market present, it chose to pivot focus away from its historic successes and toward research and external funding. In this fictitious context, Dubrow et al. (2006) proceeds to highlight challenges faced by faculty members such as increased teaching loads and more stringent expectations on research output for tenure and promotion. These findings also appeared in additional empirical research (Finnegan & Gamson, 1996; O'Meara & Bloomgarden, 2011; Wolf-Wendel & Ward, 2006). The environment described by these studies captures one of institutional challenges and changes in which faculty are embedded. The present study benefits from being situated in this context, not only due to the interesting nature of striving institutions, but because striving institutions are influx. These institutions create an environment for faculty to negotiate or renegotiate how they complete their work; thus creating an opportunity for the navigation of tensions of interest to emerge.

In a study of the faculty experience at a self-identified striving liberal college, O'Meara and Bloomgarden (2011) examine how “faculty perceive the origins of striving, and its influence on institutional identity and direction, their own work-lives, and reward systems” (p. 39). They posit that faculty at striving institutions experience such phenomena as increased competition between work peers, pressure to perform highly in multiple roles or at multiple tasks simultaneously, a less clear and more complex reward system, and an overall less compassionate environment towards balance of work and family.

Wolf-Wendel and Ward (2005) conducted a study of what they classified as “striving comprehensives,” and found that the upward mobility focus of these institutions is often at the expense of their faculty (p. 8). In particular, they identified that those on the tenure track as well as those with small children found achieving a balance between meeting the demands brought on

by their aspiring institutions and the demands of their home life much more difficult. Further, they found evidences of the pressures that manifest at a striving institution, finding that faculty “feel they had to excel simultaneously in their local roles (teaching, advising, governance) and cosmopolitan roles (research productivity, connection to disciplinary colleagues on other campuses)” (p. 202). Additionally, the authors discovered that a lack of clear communication and adequate resources designated in support of the institution’s striving goals left faculty feeling they lacked understanding where they should be focusing their time and energy. This finding was more prevalent in public state institutions, wherein teaching loads remain high, but research expectations increase.

Additionally, research finds that a shifting institutional focus, as exhibited by striving institutions, can lead to faculty dissatisfaction and turnover (Finnegan & Gamson, 1996; Henderson & Kane, 1991; O'Meara & Bloomgarden, 2011; Wolf-Wendel & Ward, 2006). Using institutional isomorphism as a frame, Finnegan and Gamson (1996) investigated the impact of the adaptation of a focus or culture of scholarship on four comprehensive institutions. The findings of their qualitative inquiry across institutional type as well as departmental contexts yield that, when a shift towards a research-dominant culture pervades an institution, faculty dissatisfaction is likely to occur. One potential explanation for the dissatisfaction, is the misalignment of resources towards the newly adapted research culture – i.e. an institution may shift rewards towards research, but not the resources to meet the demands set to receive the rewards.

With aspiration at the core of their behavior, striving institutions serve as an interesting context for a study of faculty tensions that emerge while balancing work responsibilities. The emphasis on growth suggests that faculty at striving institutions experience conflicting expectations and potentially challenging work environments – allowing for tensions to be more

readily uncovered. Additionally, in a climate where rankings matter and institutional isomorphism is unyielding, more institutions exhibit and will continue to exhibit characteristics of striving institutions. Therefore, a stronger understanding of the faculty experience at these institutions is necessary to ensure future institutional success.

Defining Faculty Work

Any conversation about faculty work balance necessarily begins with a discussion of faculty workload and the changing nature of academic work and appointments. For more than a century, the “traditional” faculty model, one made up of primarily full-time tenure track professors focused on the three pillars of teaching, research, and service prevailed (Finkelstein and Schuster, 2006). The teaching role encompasses all elements of the faculty job related to their time in the classroom and with students including course preparation and student meetings. Research responsibilities are those related to the functions of knowledge transfer such as through empirically published work. Traditionally an attribute of STEM fields, but one that is emerging relevant across disciplines is the expectation of faculty to seek external funds in the forms of grants to support their research endeavors. Committees, student advising, chairing of dissertations, and faculty senate appointments serve as examples of work that falls in the pillar of faculty service (Harris, 2019). Traditionally, faculty are expected to participate in service to both their institutions and their disciplines.

With regards the faculty composition, in recent years, various factors driving changes has led to the majority of faculty being off the tenure track as well as a distinct demographic shift in faculty representation. Faculty not in the pursuit of tenure are referred to as non-tenure track faculty (NTTF). More specifically, “today 70% of faculty are employed through part-time or full-time non-tenure-track appointments, therefore only 30% resembles the traditional faculty ideal or model” (Kezar, 2013, p. 2). It is important to note that this figure varies across institution

type (Gappa & Leslie, 1993a). Using data from the American Federation of Teachers, Kezar and Cecile (2010) found that from 1997 to 2007 the prevalence of part-time faculty increased all institution types; a push driven initially by community colleges. However, public comprehensive institutions and public research institutions saw a growth in part-time faculty from 34% to 44% and 14% to 16% respectively.

Scholars (Kezar & Cecile, 2010) attribute the shift in faculty make-up to three ongoing factors in American higher education: 1) the “massification” of higher education (Baldwin & Chronister, 2001) 2) the diminishing of resources (Baldwin & Chronister, 2001; Gappa, 2000), and 3) corporatization of American higher education (Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004). Two major historical policy documents made higher education more accessible to the masses: Servicemen’s Readjustment Act of 1944, often referred to as the “GI Bill”) issued after World War II and the 1947 President’s Commission on Higher Education. The former providing access to education to servicemen returning from the war and the latter access to two additional years of education after the completion of high school. The influx of student enrollments led to a need for a greater number of faculty to teach the increasing course offerings to meet the growing student demand. The unpredictable nature of this increase resulted in the hiring of part-time and faculty and full-time NTT faculty, the nature of such appointments both met the increased demand while simultaneously allowing institutions to remain flexible towards the potential volatility of the influx (Gappa & Leslie, 1993a). While the bulk of this demand was met by community colleges, the shift was ultimately felt across all institution types (Kezar & Cecile, 2010). Further, the recessions in the 1970s and 1980s followed by the decrease in state and federal funding of higher education in the later part of the 20th century strained institutional resources. Therefore, due to their aforementioned flexibility, the model of hiring NTT continued (Baldwin & Chronister, 2001; Gappa, 2000).

Scholars are in agreement that economic motivations are a key reason behind the growing demand of non-tenure-track faculty (Baldwin & Chronister, 2001; Gappa & Leslie, 1993b; Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004). For example, for the cost of *one* faculty member on the tenure track, an institution could hire multiple NTTF to serve in a broader teaching capacity, thus providing an avenue to meet the staffing stress brought on by growth among higher education enrollments (Cross & Goldenberg, 2011). Further, flexibility is a key factor in the demand for contingent faculty. With technological changes and changes in student enrollment and demographics, the demands of students vary more quickly than ever before in history. With non-tenure track roles, institutions can more readily adjust instructor teaching loads to remain within budget and meet changing curricular needs (Gappa & Leslie, 1993b; Tolbert, 1998) Additionally, departments and institutions as a whole are able to more readily respond to market fluctuations with non-tenure-track faculty than with traditional tenure track roles (Kezar & Cecile, 2010).

The increase in NTTF faculty potentially impacts the workload of faculty on the tenure track. With growth in faculty hired to fulfill certain needs of an institution, the responsibilities of other aspects of the workforce shift; therefore, influencing how full-time, tenure-track faculty approach their work and the expectations that surround their work. Further, demographic characteristics and lifestyle choices are more varied across faculty members than ever before. Gappa and Austin (2010a) posit that this increasing diversity “impacts their integration into their campuses, their ability to balance work and personal life obligations, and their satisfaction with their academic careers” (p. 27). Another significant demographic change in recent years is the increasing presence of females in the academy. From 1969 to 2003, the presence of new women scholars (within first 6 years of employment) grew from 20 percent to 44 percent of new faculty members, and from 15 percent to 34 percent of senior faculty (7 or more years of employment) (Gappa & Austin, 2010b; Schuster & Finkelstein, 2006). The increase in faculty diversity comes

with a change in how faculty approach their work. With more women in the academy, additional attention to work-life balance initiative may appear in the forefront. Additionally, faculty of color and women report being asked to spend time in service related elements of their job more frequently than their white and male counterparts (Hurtado, Eagan, Pryor, Whang, & Tran, 2012). Further, women feel a pull in the balance of professional and personal roles, a finding that holds true regardless of institutional prestige, discipline, family make-up, or time on the tenure-track (Ward & Wolf-Wendel, 2004). Therefore, the individual characteristics of a faculty member may hold an influence over how faculty process and approach their work responsibilities.

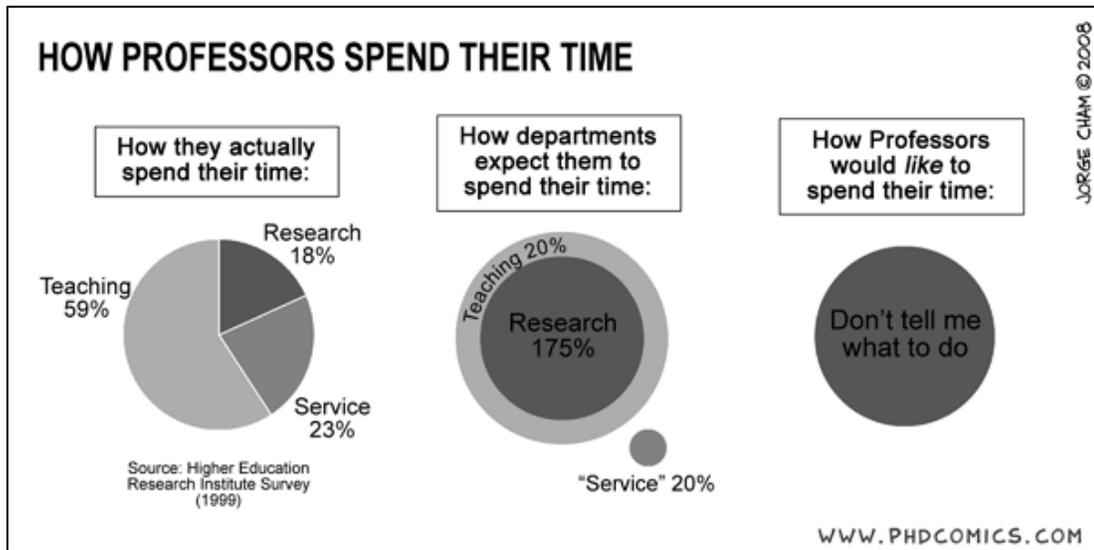
Importance of Understanding Faculty Work Balance

Today, individual faculty are expected to thoughtfully teach, maintain an active research agenda, and hold extensive involvement in service and administrative capacities (Blackburn & Lawrence, 1995; Boyer, 1990; Gappa, Austin, & Trice, 2007; Schuster & Finkelstein, 2006). While variation exists in faculty work and the evolution of faculty appointments across institutional types and disciplines, one constant holds true: too many responsibilities are competing for faculty members' time (Fairweather, 2005; Schuster & Finkelstein, 2006). Current research on faculty works posits that the modern professor encounters disparate demands that make achieving a balance of functions nearly impossible (Fairweather, 2005; Porter & Umbach, 2001; Toutkoushian & Bellas, 1999). Regardless of how many hours a faculty member works, striking an efficient balance with growth in the demands of their work proves difficult especially with the evolution in roles towards "more demanding in terms of effort as well as time" (Jacobs & Winslow, 2004, p. 106). However, the rhetoric surrounding faculty work is not necessarily in agreement with each of these claims.

In a news frenzy in 2011, faculty work and productivity emerged as topic of interest in

popular media. Early in the year, a report was released by *The Texas Tribune* that framed faculty work efforts and productivity at two major Texas flagships in an unfavorable light. The report stated “the data show in high relief what anecdotally many have long suspected, that the research university’s employment practices look remarkably like a Himalayan trek, where indigenous Sherpas carry the heavy loads so Western tourists can simply enjoy the view,” suggesting that faculty members can be defined by five categories: Dodgers, Coasters, Sherpas, Pioneers, or Stars – all of which took on a negative connotation in media and broader conversations by suggesting over all that faculty are lazy (O’Donnell, 2011, p. 1). However, in higher education scholarship circles, the findings presented in the report on faculty work at Texas institutions were widely criticized (Jaschik, 2011). Criticism resulted in the University of Texas conducting its own study on the productivity of faculty with contradictory claims to *The Texas Tribune* report, finding that faculty are not only productive but cost effective to tax payers (Jaschik, 2011).

As recently as spring of 2018, social media and higher education news outlets highlighted a debate on how professors manage their work and balance their time amid a myriad of obligations. The debate was instigated by a social media claim from a professor of psychology at NYU that stated “the average professor works over 60 hours a week (from one university) and 30% of their time is spent on emails or meetings” (McKenna, 2018, p. 2). The debate prompted the resurfacing of a pilot study from 2014 from Boise State. In that study, Ziker (2014) uncovered that faculty at his home institution worked 61 hours per week with more senior faculty working marginally longer hours than junior faculty. Further, faculty spent 30 percent of their time in meetings and siphoning email, and 40 percent on their teaching efforts. To solidify his point on the misconceptions of faculty, Ziker (2014) provides the image seen in Figure 2.1.



Reproduced with permission and "Piled Higher and Deeper" by Jorge Cham www.phdcomics.com

Figure 1.1 Comic of How Professors Spend Their Time

The present debate of faculty work and the notion that faculty are scrutinized through various different perspectives regarding their work further supports a need for increased understanding of how faculty approach their work. Further, the idea that faculty believe they do not have enough time to complete all that is expected of them parallels findings on faculty experiences at striving institutions. Additionally, the pull experienced by faculty lays the foundations of understanding faculty trade-offs in greater detail.

Faculty Trade-offs of Work

Regarding faculty work and balance it is essential to note that time is not a limitless commodity and that facets of faculty work may not overlap. Therefore, when a faculty member chooses to work on one facet of his or her professorial responsibilities, it means not spending time on something else. Research investigates the “trade-offs” faculty make across responsibilities (Fairweather, 1993c). Much of the earlier literature on how faculty members divide their focus on efforts manifested in time spent between teaching responsibilities and research activities (Braxton, 1996; Feldman, 1987). Many scholars believe that the successful completion of teaching and research goals can only be achieved if faculty treat these functions as

separate and distinct (Barnett, 1992; Colbeck, 1998). In other words, faculty teaching and research roles are never mutual beneficial; such that the time that faculty spend working towards research goals is time that faculty are not applying towards teaching goals (Massy & Zemsky, 1994).

In contrast, some scholars argue that the divide across these function does not always hold true. Braxton (1996) focuses his inquiry on understanding whether a relationship exists between the pillars and if so is it positive or negative. Furthermore, he found that results were confounded by institutional type. His results show that three perspectives in literature exists on the relationship of between teaching and research: null, conflict, and complementary, referring to no relationship, a conflicting relationship, or more of a symbiotic relationship respectively. However, he empirically investigated if support for these perspective varied, and found that “a systematic relationship between teaching and research role performance does not exist across different types of colleges and universities” (p. 8).

Further, the roles of faculty work are not exclusive to teaching and research. In a 2012 mixed methods study focused on understanding how faculty at a research intensive university allocate their time between teaching, research, and service as well as personal responsibilities of house work and familial care, Misra, Lundquist, and Templer (2012) found that faculty struggle to find a “work-work balance” rather than a “work-life balance.” Specifically, in a focus group, the authors found that “because teaching occurs at appointed times, with clear deadlines for grading and preparing for courses, and service also often comes with clear deadlines, faculty felt that they often ended up prioritizing this work, even if it was not valued by colleagues” (p. 313). The conflict of a work-work balance is reinforced by reward structures across levels of an organization, such as institutional and departmental, which emphasize the “discreteness, not the mutuality” (Fairweather, 1993c, p. 44) of faculty activity. A finding that they concluded suggests

that when faced with competing demands, faculty sacrificed research due to the nature of it being the only element of work that they completely control.

Within institutions, balancing growing work expectations remains problematic for faculty. For those on the tenure track, tenure expectations continue to grow more stringent, especially at striving institutions (Ross, 2015). This higher bar is motivated by the growing pressures of prestige as well as by internal or institutional needs and demands. For example, many faculty members, especially those at research universities or those striving towards external recognition, are facing pressure to not only produce scholarly work for publication, but to generate grant funding to increase institutional prestige and subsidize their salaries (Gallup & Svare, 2016). Grant funding is an expectation that many faculty must meet to be considered successful within their institution because “higher education institutions often compare themselves based on the aggregate value of their funded research projects and their endowments” (Gallup & Svare, 2016, p. 1). This comparison is an embodiment of the pursuit of prestige occurring in American higher education.

As previously mentioned, expectations of work by a faculty’s institution might be different than expectations of work by his or her discipline or the external perception of faculty. Therefore, for a faculty member to be balance work, they must navigate the expectations of their multiple layers. Altbach (2011) frames this concept, “academics are, at the same time, both professionals and employees of large bureaucratic organizations. Their self-image as independent scholars dominating their working environment is increasingly at odds with the realities of the modern American University” (p. 234). In other words, faculty priorities are at times in conflict with their home institution’s mission or goals. For example, a faculty member socialized in a graduate program or discipline that emphasizes the dissemination of knowledge through teaching as a priority may struggle to find a balance if they assume a position at an

institution that places a greater emphasis on research production over teaching. Additionally, if an institution where a faculty member resides has a system that rewards faculty who obtain grant funding, but a faculty member's specific research agenda is one with limited grant funding options, the faculty member may feel pulled to adjust their research agenda accordingly.

Conclusion and Present Study

As institutions continue to play into the arms race for prestige, a greater need exists to understand the impact such an environment has on institutions' key stakeholders, faculty. Faculty are pivotal to student success. According to the Education Advisory Board (2016), "the most important responsibility of individual faculty members is to enhance the student learning experience" (p. 22). However, many institutions are shifting further focus towards growth in research (Chen, 2015). This shift is largely due to a desire to advance an institution's position and prestige (Blackmore & Kandiko, 2011; Brewer et al., 2002; Eckel, 2008). Faculty research efforts are essential to the creation of new knowledge and innovation across disciplines as well as to the advancement of an institution. Further, faculty service stands central to the decisions that impact institutions and their respective disciplines. A greater understanding of the challenges faced by faculty and the barriers that impede their potential remains necessary. Improved scholarly understanding of faculty work balance is needed within the different contexts in which faculty operate and the tensions between the contexts faculty must navigate to be productive. To this end, the present study examines faculty work at a striving institution using the following guiding questions:

1. How does being situated in a striving institution influence how faculty approach their work?
2. What tensions do faculty encounter within their work at a striving institution?
3. How do the tensions faculty encounter influence how they approach their work?

CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Scholars agree that higher education institutions hold a unique set of expectations for faculty members relative to other types of institutions to their key employees. Faculty members are expected to provide knowledge transfer to students and impact society in a positive manner while spanning the three pillars of the professoriate: teaching, research, and service (Houston, et. al. 2006; Anderson & Slade, 2016). However, the expectations of faculty do not solely stem from institutions. Faculty are socialized within their disciplines to norms of work and the process for approaching that work (Becher, 1981; Becher & Trowler, 2001). Additionally, faculty are individual actors, each with a unique set of characteristics such as their demographic qualities as well as their motivations and satisfactions (Blackburn & Lawrence, 1995; Hardre, Beesley, Miller, & Pace, 2011). In other words, faculty are simultaneously situated in multiple cultural environments (i.e. institution and discipline) (Austin, 1990) and experience their environments with their individual attributes. With such variation in role responsibility nested in a set of complex cultural layers, it stands as no surprise that scholars of the past and present seek to understand faculty work. The present exploratory study adds to the literature on faculty by advancing understanding of how faculty navigate their work and tensions within their work amidst at times complementary and competing cultures.

Conceptual Framework

The synthesis of literature presented in the following chapter is built upon a conceptual framework which encompasses the elements of culture that the literature demonstrates faculty navigate (Bentley & Kyvik, 2013; Blackburn & Lawrence, 1995; Bozeman & Gaughan, 2011; Eagan & Garvey, 2015; Gappa & Austin, 2010b). Further, the literature on faculty work presents a multifaceted approach to understanding how faculty engage in their professional lives. The following framework encompasses elements presented in the scholarly literature and the

subsequent sections of this chapter provide greater empirical support for this framework and its application for understanding faculty approach to work and navigation of multiple cultures.

The conceptual framework used for this study is the work of Austin (1990) on faculty cultures. Previous literature uses culture as center point for studying and understanding how higher education institutions function. Specifically, literature on organizations previously recognized “that there is more to organizations than formal structure” (Masland, 1985). Elements that define organizations such as organizational/hierarchical structure, employees, purpose, and specialization are important (Tosi, 1975); however, such elements alone do not fully explain organizational behavior. An organization “with a formal structure of rules and objectives can be transformed to an institution that is a responsive, adaptive organism under the right leadership” (Selznick, 1957, p. 5). Pettigrew (1979) adds to the study of organizations with the introduction of organizational culture. He defines organizational culture as “the amalgam of beliefs, ideology, language, ritual, and myth” (1979, p. 572). Pettigrew further argues that within an organization is the elements of culture employ a powerful control over the behavior of those within it, in the case of the present study, the behavior of faculty. According to Masland (1985), “organizational culture induces purpose, commitment, and order; provides meaning and social cohesion; and clarifies and explains behavioral expectations. Culture influences an organization through the people within it” (p. 158). The notion of organizational culture presented in these foundational works provides context for the use of a conceptual framework rooted in culture. Faculty are members of multiple cultures thus are influenced by multiple cultures.

Building on the foundational work of Clark (1985; 1987) and Kuh and Witt (1988), Austin (1990) synthesizes four primary cultures that influence faculty values and behaviors: the academic profession, the discipline, the academy as an organization within a national system, and institutional type. She suggests that these cultures serve as “interpretative frameworks ... and

affect how faculty interact with students, conceptualize and organize their work, participate in institutional decision making, and balance disciplinary and institutional responsibilities” (p. 61). In other words, these cultures independently and collectively impact all aspects of faculty work lives. However, scholarship on faculty work and differences due to individual characteristics (Blackburn & Lawrence, 1995; Bozeman & Gaughan, 2011; Buckholdt & Miller, 2013; Eagan & Garvey, 2015) suggests that a dimension or layer is missing to Austin’s framework, the notion of the individual. To understand and add to Austin’s conceptual framework, the present study includes a consideration of individual characteristics as a key element in which faculty work is situated.

Regarding the culture of the academic profession, Austin (1990) notes that five values emerge: 1) the purpose of higher education is to pursue, discover, produce and disseminate knowledge and understanding 2) autonomy and academic freedom are necessary to maintaining quality teaching and research, especially around controversial ideas 3) intellectual honesty and fairness is a core tenant to the academic profession 4) collegiality is the ideal framework for institutional decision making, and 5) the academic profession is rooted in a commitment to serve society. These values of the academic profession generate a “super ethos” (Clark, 1987 p.7 as seen in Austin, 1990). These values are overarching and “link faculty across the range of disciplines and institutions” (Austin, 1990, p. 62). In other words, the culture of the academic profession sets a tone for faculty work that extends beyond the boundaries of any other layer Austin considers. However, the cultures of disciplines and institutions determine how the values of the academic profession occur with regards to faculty behavior and work.

The culture of disciplines shapes the lives of faculty in significant ways (Austin, 1990). Becher (1981) describes that “disciplines are cultural phenomena: they are embodied in collections of like-minded people, each with their own codes of conduct, sets of values, and

distinctive intellectual tasks” (p.109). Thus, disciplines can be understood with an inquiry into their cultures and the perspectives of faculty within the cultures help to inform disciplines as cultures. Additionally, the cultures housed within disciplines greatly influence those that work in each discipline, most of all, faculty. Drawing from prior research (Austin, 2002; Becher, 1981; Becher & Trowler, 2001), Gardner (2009) posits that “disciplines have their own particular qualities, cultures, codes of conduct, values, and distinctive intellectual tasks that ultimately influence the experience of the faculty, staff, and students within their walls” (p. 386). This is a shared consensus among researchers. Massy and Zemsky (1994) work on the ‘academic ratchet’ provides the following anecdote, “a 12-student seminary may seem small to one department and large to another, depending on the discipline, school, student background, resource availability, and other circumstances” (p.8). In other words, what is considered a norm in one academic department or discipline is not necessarily a norm in another, therefore considerations of faculty behavior and faculty work would reasonably differ across different departments. To this end, “discipline” as a context or culture that surrounds faculty members emerges as an important element to this framework.

Disciplinary cultures provide shared values and behaviors; however, not all members of disciplines pursue the same career paths. The culture of an institution “affects the strength of the disciplinary culture in framing the faculty member’s behavior and work” (Austin, 1990, p. 65). From historical roots, the culture of academic institutions has two central tenets at its core: 1) belief that colleges and universities are involved in work for a greater good via the production of knowledge and development of students and 2) a commitment to collegiality and simultaneously autonomy as a context for faculty work (Austin, 1990). The understanding that shared value of “good work” is the linchpin to the culture of the academy as an organization defined by Austin. Colleges and universities form the academy with “the belief that the central goal is ‘good work’

and that the rewards are the collegiality, the autonomy, and the intellectual discovery and sharing” (Austin, 1990, p. 66). In addition to a shared culture across this academy of institutions, individual cultures develop within institutional types.

The culture of the institution in which a faculty member resides defines “the institutional career, strongly effecting the duties, opportunities, rewards, relationship to the discipline, and prestige of the faculty member experiences” (Austin, 1990, p. 66). Institutional mission, leadership, governance structures, academic standards, stakeholder characteristics, relationships among stakeholders, physical characteristics, and environment all contribute to the culture of an institution of higher education. These elements interact together to form a distinct institutional culture of an organization that serves as a critical element of the faculty experience (Austin, 1990). Understanding the culture of institutions and their influence on stakeholders like faculty, is a topic of interest among scholars. Tierney (1984) used prior research (Becker, 1963; Bushnell, 1960; B. R. Clark, 1963, 1970) as a foundation to build a framework for studying culture in higher education. Through an analysis of a single case study, Tierney identified key dimensions of culture necessary to the study of a college or university’s culture. His framework includes the following elements: environment, mission, socialization, information, strategy, and leadership, and he argues that all components are essential. By examining Tierney’s suggested elements, a researcher develops a clearer picture of an institution’s culture. Austin’s framework aligns with the elements noted by Tierney, both posit that aspects of a faculty member’s institution influence the faculty experience at that institution.

While institutional and departmental cultures are prominent in Austin’s framework, the present study assumes that an element or layer is missing from Austin’s four cultures that surround faculty: the importance of the faculty as an individual. Much of the previous research on faculty behavior takes into consideration the important influence individual characteristics

have on the outcomes of a faculty member (Bentley & Kyvik, 2013; Blackburn & Lawrence, 1995; Bland, Center, Finstad, Risbey, & Staples, 2006). To this end, individual characteristics routinely considered regarding individual faculty members include demographic variables (i.e. race, gender, rank of position, marital/parental status) and innate characteristics (i.e. motivations, self-efficacy, stress level, etc). The consideration of such characteristics acknowledges the fact that no two faculty members navigate the three pillars of work or the multiple layers of culture presented by Austin in the exact same manner and are to some extent limited and advanced based off of element unique to the individual. Additionally, faculty, as individuals do not exist in each of these cultural context independently, but rather simultaneously, it is at the intersection of these cultural contexts that I situated an aspect my inquiry and find faculty facing tensions amidst their work.

Austin (1990) provides a critical element to the focus of cultural tensions in this study. She importantly identifies that various issues and conflicts develop out of the aforementioned multiple and interacting cultures in which faculty members participate. In other words, faculty do not exist in each layer as a silo, but rather simultaneously. The values of some cultural layers align, but many do not and faculty must make inherit and explicit trade-offs between those values that do not align (Austin, 1990). For example, she uses the following anecdote. A faculty member during graduate school receives the socialized understanding of disciplinary values focused in the scholarship of discovery (i.e. research) with heavy values focused on publication may feel lost or unsuccessful when they find themselves in an institutional setting that requires they spend majority of their time teaching in an undergraduate classroom. On the flip side, if the same socialized graduate student finds employment at an institution with a high value on research, they may thrive within the alignment of their learned disciplinary priorities, but a student socialized to a focus on teaching would potentially feel undervalued. Further, competing

cultures can diminish the vitality and productivity of faculty members (S. Clark, 1986). In addition to influences on faculty, competing cultures can also create problems for institutions, especially institutions considered striving in nature. Within disciplinary and professional cultures present among institutions, campus reward systems are increasingly rewarding scholarly productivity of faculty such as the number of research products produced. However, while conforming to the push for a focus on research, institutions, including those striving, are simultaneously ignoring the realities of the other factors that impact faculty work such as heavy teaching loads and changing student demographics (Austin, 1990). Such a conflict can lead to trust and morale issues emerging at an institution (Bowen & Schuster, 1986; Rice, 1986). Additionally, attributes of a disciplinary culture may create conflicts between faculty of different ranks. For example, “junior faculty sometimes feel they must meet more stringent publication requirements to receive tenure than those faced by their senior colleagues” (Austin, 1990, p. 69). A sentiment that O’Meara (2007) acknowledges in an indicator of striving institutions, thus the striving context of my study aligns with notions presented by the conceptual framework.

The conceptual ideas presented by Austin have been applied and expanded upon in other research. In a book chapter, Umbach (2007) expands upon three of Austin’s four layers of culture: professional, disciplinary, and institutions and applied the frame to understand how these cultural layers impact college teaching efforts and output. Further, Umbach’s use of the framework illustrates its potential to function as an aid in understanding faculty behavior due to his application of the framework to shed light on faculty outputs.

The framework presented in this section helps provide shape to the inquiry at the heart of my study. The present study relies on the notion that faculty are situated in all four cultural contexts, but emphasizes gaining insight into the disciplinary and institutional cultures in which faculty are imbedded. At the creases of each culture faculty navigate a tricky world where they

function as an individual with a generous amount of autonomy regarding their job functions. However, they are also members of disciplines and institutions each with cultural norms. For example, at the intersection of discipline and institution exists the notions of resources. Organizations of higher education work within a field of finite resources and the division of those resources varies across disciplinary lines creating elements within an institution with varying degrees of high or low resources (Rosinger, Barrett, Coco, & Slaughter, 2016). Additionally, the respective norms of disciplines and institutions may be in opposition and disharmony. The interplay of the institution with the individual provides another piece to the frame. Formal institutional processes and rewards are at the heart of this intersection. Institutional policies such as tenure and promotion or hiring and evaluation are navigated differently by different individuals (Gardner & Veliz, 2014). Additionally, other reward structures such as pay and elements of prestige recognition within in an institution are experienced differently by individuals (Melguizo & Strober, 2007). Under the assumption that faculty have competing and complementary obligations based off of their individual characteristics, discipline in which they practice, and institution in which they reside, my study sought to understand the potential tensions that may arise as faculty navigate their complex environment and the implication for institutions.

Local and Cosmopolitan Typologies of Faculty

The academic role of the professoriate functions and works in multiple cultures simultaneously (Umbach, 2007). As presented in the conceptual framework for this study, Austin (1990) identifies multiple layers of culture in which faculty are situated, including disciplinary culture and institutional culture – center points to the present study. Previous scholars studied the implications and impact on an academic's development, work advances, and career choices these multiple cultures hold, as well as the impact on a scholar's identity resulting in the emergence of

typologies coined to aid in understanding (Baker & Zey-Ferrell, 1984; Glaser, 1963; Gonzales, 2012). Relevant to the present study are concepts that describe a faculty member's identity relative to their institution and external influences (i.e. discipline). One such typology is the idea of local or cosmopolitan faculty.

Robert Merton's (1968) analysis of influential people in a community serves as the seminal foundation of the concepts of cosmopolitan and local roles. Merton is first credited with defining a "localite" as someone who "largely confines his interests to [his] community. He is preoccupied with local problems, to the virtual exclusion of the national and international scene. He is strictly, parochial" (1968, p. 447). In contrast, Merton presents the notion of a cosmopolitan, or individual "oriented significantly to the world outside and regards himself as an integral part of that world" (1968, p. 447). His case study research focused on this line of inquiry in an effort to understand influential people in a small town; however, researchers latched on to his initial concepts and expanded their uses to other environments.

Alvin Gouldner, an apprentice to Merton, was the first to apply Merton's concepts to understanding the underlying social identities of faculty members in higher education. His seminal work studied faculty members at an institution he refers to as "Co-Op college" and through a series of interviews and surveys he discovered that the faculty members (N=125) at the institution embodied local and cosmopolitan roles and that those roles influenced their orientation towards their professional work. Specifically, he developed two typologies of academics: locals and cosmopolitans. Locals maintain a "high organizational loyalty, low commitment to specialized skills, and the use of an inner reference group orientation", while cosmopolitans exhibit "low organizational loyalty, higher commitment to specialized skills, and use of an outer reference group orientation" (1957, p. 293). In other words, according to Gouldner, those faculty who derive their identification and establish their primary relationships

within their university would be classified as locals and those professors whose primary identifications are with their academic disciplines and who build relationships mainly outside of their institution would be classified as cosmopolitans. This concept emerges as particularly pronounced in academic settings where faculty may hold simultaneous commitments to their institutions and disciplines resulting in potential conflicts and benefits to each, a fundamental underpinning to the present study.

While subsequent research finds that Gouldner's model of the concepts is overstated (Berger & Grimes, 1973; Grimes & Berger, 1970), due to crudeness of the extraction of his finding, he is credited with pointing "subsequent researchers in the right direction by delineating various dimensions that identify the faculty member's reference group orientation...inward...or outward" (Baker & Zey-Ferrell, 1984, p. 86). Further, Flango & Brumbaugh (1974) conducted a study to investigate Gouldner's definition of the local and cosmopolitan constructs. Using factor analysis and cumulative scaling of questionnaire data from 813 faculty from 14 state colleges and universities in Pennsylvania they attempted to validate his definitions. They found that Gouldner's general definitions held true, but may present themselves differently depending on measures and analysis. Their findings suggest that the method through which the concepts are studied impacts their definitions slightly, thus the validity of the definitions was challenged; therefore, opening the door for criticism and future research to further hone the definitions.

While the original concepts of "local" and "cosmopolitan" still hold true, research made strides in advancing the definitions. Glaser (1963) stands as the first to present research that demonstrates the notions of cosmopolitan and local are a dual orientation instead of two distinct groups. Building on the work of Glaser (1963), Goldberg, Baker, and Rubenstein (1965) challenge the bimodal nature of Gouldner's definitions. Using data from a previous study of the organizational roles and identity collected in a research and development laboratory context, they

conducted a factor analysis of questionnaire responses regarding factors related to daily work and motivations. In line with Gouldner, they yielded two distinct factors representing those of cosmopolitan and local. However, some elements that would traditionally be defined as local (i.e. interest in approval from colleagues), were more highly correlated with cosmopolitan and vice versus (i.e. new breakthrough in theory), thus suggesting the need for a third dimension. Their findings resulted in the development of a third typology of cosmo-local, representing employees that represent characteristics of both concepts (Goldberg et al., 1965).

More recent work expanded on the definitions of what it means to be “local” or “cosmopolitan.” The original definition suggest that faculty are either committed to their local organizations or they are cosmopolitan and seek value and guidance cues from outside influences such as their disciplines. In their narrative study, Rhoades, Kiyama, McCormick, and Quiroz (2008) present evidence that expands on the traditional notion of the definitions. They utilize the intricate details of the stories of three students’ career choices upon completing a doctoral degree in higher education. They uncovered that some students see themselves as “intermediates” between the extreme ends of cosmopolitans and locals and feel they are defined by some characteristics of both groups. This finding resulted in all three students calling themselves either “Cosmo-Local” or “Local-Cosmo” depending on which side they identified with stronger. Further, the three students adopted their own definitions of what it means to be local or cosmopolitan. For example, “their local loyalty is less to the employing organization than to the community-focused and community-based professional practice” (p.214). In other words, they are loyal to their communities with many students citing that they were place bound because they wanted to be close to their families or that they greatly valued the impact their work had on the surrounding locality. Gouldner’s locals did not include classification of external links to the surrounding community or individual relationships outside institutions; therefore the work of

Rhoades et al. (2008) expands the definitions to include individual interpretation of “local” work as well as “cosmopolitan.”

Additionally, the concepts of local and cosmopolitan are closely related to the concepts of bounded or boundaryless. According to Dowd and Kaplan (2005), “those who are bounded can be viewed as employer dependent, and those who are boundaryless can be viewed as independent” (p.702). Thus, they suggest that faculty members who are bounded (i.e. local) are mostly influenced by the work and expectations of their jobs as dictated by their institutions, while faculty members who are boundaryless (i.e. cosmopolitan) may look to their institutions for signals but are also influenced by the world outside their institutions such as their disciplines. For example, a tenure-track faculty member who derives his motivation and focus of work solely based on what is necessary to achieve tenure would be considered bounded. A similar faculty member who completes the work necessary for tenure, but also applies his specialization towards consulting on affairs outside of his institution with no reward for doing so from his institution, would be considered boundaryless.

Building off previous research (Arthur & Rousseau, 1996; Hall & Associates, 1996), Dowd and Kaplan (2005) developed a list of criteria used in their study to distinguish bounded and boundaryless faculty members. Table 2.1 below presents their criteria for defining a bounded versus boundaryless career. It is important to note how closely these criteria resemble the historical notions of “local” and “cosmopolitan.” They utilized this criteria to develop a typology of four academic career types that identifies what differentiates tenure-track individuals who perceive themselves as having either bounded or boundaryless careers in academia: Probationer, Maverick, Conservationist, and Connector.

Table 2.1 Criteria for Defining Boundaried Versus Boundaryless Careers

Boundaried	Boundaryless
Identity derived from employer	Identity not derived from any one employer (possibly from self and/or profession)
Views career as one-organization model	Views career as series of steps (multiple organizations)
Looks to employer to manage career	Manages own career
Does not demonstrate skill in learning to learn or self-awareness	Possesses/values skill of learning to learn and self-awareness
Loyal to employer	Not loyal to any one employer
Risk averse	Willing to take risks
Earning money is a high priority	Fulfillment and enjoyment are primary career choice drivers
Does not perceive self as mobile	Perceive self as mobile
Very concerned about succeeding with current employer	Not overly concerned about succeeding with current employer

Probationers are “tenure-track faculty who are in their initial academic positions and manage their career in ways that can be described as boundaried. Their primary identity is derived from the institution in which they are employed rather than their discipline” (p.708). In other words, these individuals are ones who focus their work efforts within their institutional community and closely embodied “localite” ideals. In contrast, Mavericks are “tenure-track faculty who are in their initial academic position and manage their careers in ways that can be characterized as boundaryless. They are independent and seemingly unconstrained by the structural limitations built into the tenure-system, interpreting their role in academe very broadly (e.g. consulting or other external activities” (p. 712), as such they are more cosmopolitan in nature. Conservationists are “boundaried faculty who...have a very strong, albeit narrow, definition of what constitutes life in academe. As the name implies they are keenly concerned

with anything that threatens this stability” (p.713). Lastly, Connectors are “boundaryless faculty who...perceive their roles as going beyond the traditional boundaries of teacher and researcher...view themselves as consultants, writers, trainers, and freelancers” (p.714). Dowd and Kaplan’s work advances understanding of different identities faculty members may assume relative to bounded or boundaryless careers, suggesting that differences do exist in faculty approaches to the same professorial role and work. Additional research, such as elements of the present study, on the implications of such identities on how faculty navigate the potential tensions that emerge within each provide additional understanding to their presented and understood typologies.

Further, the notions of local and cosmopolitan identities have been used in formal studies of higher education and faculty work (Baker & Zey-Ferrell, 1984; Bernstein, 2013). Table 2.2 provides a list of studies of the local and cosmopolitan ideals in higher education. The concepts of “cosmopolitan” and “local” faculty aid in understanding faculty allegiances to their institutions and their disciplines (Birnbaum, 1988). To this end, cosmopolitan faculty are not bound to their institutions, but rather conduct their scholarly efforts and look to the norms and rewards of their disciplines as their guidance for their pursuits. They treat their institutions as a home base for their outward activities. In the opposite fashion, locally oriented faculty uphold a stronger commitment to their institutions and campuses. Therefore, they are usually more active members of their campus communities and consider or identify themselves as members of their institutions (Birnbaum, 1988). Baker and Zey-Ferrell (1984) utilized local and cosmopolitan orientations to examine the implications of divergent role orientations on faculty commitments to teaching, research, and service. Through a series of 109 qualitative interviews they derive a heuristic scheme for understanding work commitments and the variation across local-cosmopolitan orientations. Bernstein (2013) embraces the cosmopolitan and local ideal in his

development of an institutional strategy for Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Faculty (SoTL). He argues that institutions value cosmopolitan faculty at higher rates than local due to the opportunities cosmopolitan faculty provide to elevate an institution's reputation, and in turn suggest that institutions make special accommodations for such faculty. He presents an argument that the nature of SoTL faculty work allows them to be cosmopolitan without special accommodations, and are thus deserving of greater valuation than currently afforded.

Table 2.2 Summary of Studies of Local & Cosmopolitan Faculty

Author(s), Year	Research Design	Case or Data Source	Key Findings
Baker & Zey-Ferrell, 1984	Case Study	Interviews & Survey Responses	Variations work commitment to teaching, research, and service across local & cosmopolitan
Berstein, 2013	Literature Synthesis	Previous Studies	Institutions value cosmopolitan faculty more than local
Gonzales, 2012	Case Study	Interviews	Striving institution context with evolving mission; many faculty adjusted behavior towards more cosmopolitan tendency; those that did not were typically tenured and worked at the institution for 20+ years
Gonzales, 2013	Case Study	Interviews	Pitfalls of increased orientation towards cosmopolitan; local needs not being met
Massy & Zemsky, 1994	Design Making Model	Survey Responses	As institutions strived for prestige, faculty loosened ties to institution and increased cosmopolitan activities

Additional research extrapolates on the notion that cosmopolitan faculty may be of higher value to institutions than their local counterparts. In her work on understanding mission creep, Leslie Gonzales (2012) utilizes the idea of cosmopolitan faculty in her efforts to understand faculty responses and agency amidst one university's transition in mission and focus. In the context of a regional comprehensive university striving for national research status, Gonzales (2012) found that in response to their university's shifting mission, faculty operationalized their agency and response by exhibiting characteristics similarly to Gouldner's (1957) "cosmopolitan." Specifically, 18 of 35 faculty adjusted their work time allocation in favor of the production of research and grant writing with decreased time for teaching and service and chose to do so not due to directive from university administration, but by implementing practices they believed to be legitimate of a research institution. Further, 14 out of 35 negotiated how they approached their work in the shifting mission. They did not implement institutionalized rules and slogans from administrators, but instead negotiated their approach to changes in work. For example, "they spent more time on research and publication, but they all worked to balance this change by ensuring that their work had relevant connections or by disseminating their work in ways that they felt was most relevant" (p.345). Gonzales found that a third response to the transition emerged that mirrored Gouldner's concept of "locals." This subset of faculty exhibiting what she defines as "strategic acquiescing," as such these professors, "went on to carry out their work in ways that upheld the student-centered and regional mission [of the institution]"(p.347). Further, it is important to note that the faculty that acquiesced were all tenured and had worked at the university for 20 or more years suggesting longevity at an institution or within a career may lead to more local tendencies of a faculty member.

In a similar context to the work of Gonzales, Massy and Zemsky (1994) seminal work on “academic ratcheting” found that at private liberal arts colleges and universities, faculty loosened their ties and responsibilities to the institution and increased their “cosmopolitan” or disciplinary activities as an institution strived for greater prestige. In the context of the present case study, situated in a striving institution, this idea emerges as particularly pertinent. Specifically, if faculty at striving institutions are transitioning towards more cosmopolitan roles, a greater opportunity exists to understand potential tensions faculty must navigate and how faculty approach such tensions.

These lines of research suggest that as an institution evolves or strives for more prestige, the presence of cosmopolitan faculty becomes more apparent. However, this transition toward a more cosmopolitan workforce in the name of legitimacy is not without pitfalls. Gonzales (2013) suggests that “if legitimacy maximization is the guiding prescription, and is one constructed from a more cosmopolitan perspective, then the interests, needs and assets of the regional population/community of practice could go untended or be undermined” (p.205). More specifically, if faculty members look to orient themselves outwards as they strive to win legitimacy, areas of study reliant on more local needs may falter. For example, if faculty at a regional institution, with a primary student body base that comes from the surrounding community, focuses more on national research than teaching or local needs, the needs of the community may no longer be met.

With this greater understanding, cosmopolitan and local constructs serve as a linchpin for investigating the potential problem of tensions that emerge as a result of faculty members existing in multiple cultures simultaneously. Prior research provides justification for the application of these concepts to the study of faculty (Gonzales, 2013; Gouldner, 1957) as well as support that shifts in faculty roles manifest in the striving institution environment of the present

study (Gonzales, 2012; O'Meara, 2002, 2007) which readily allows for potential tensions to become apparent.

Institutional Influences and Faculty Work

Before investigating the tensions faculty members experience by being situated in multiple cultures, an understanding of how institutional, disciplinary, and individual characteristics impact faculty work is important. Previous research provides additional insight into how many of the elements institutional culture influence faculty. Scholarship places a heavy emphasis on understanding how faculty members behave and approach their work in relation to institutional characteristics (Fairweather, 1993c; Jacobson, 1992; Tierney & Rhoads, 1994). Allen (2000) posits that “the organizational conditions associated with an institution’s mission or locations, not tenure, are the defining factors affecting how faculty pursue their work” (p. 75). This suggestion elevates the importance of an institutional mission, a noted element of institutional culture, in relation to other characteristics, such as tenure, in relation to how faculty allocate their time and work. Overall, institutional mission and reward structures emerge as important influencers on faculty behavior. One of the most prominently researched characteristics with a proven influence on faculty is the mission of an institution. In its simplest form, a “mission is the basic purpose of an organization, that is what it is trying to accomplish” (Kotler & Murphy, 1981, p. 478). Literature debates the clarity, value, influence of mission statements within the higher education field (Bastedo & Gumport, 2003; Morpew & Hartley, 2006). However, seminal works illustrate that institutional missions generate variations in faculty workload, motivations, and priorities (B. R. Clark, 1985, 1989). Specifically, B. R. Clark (1989) found that extensive variation exists in the faculty workload balance of two pillars of the academic profession (research and teaching) across different institutional types. Giving a nod to the fact that disciplinary differences have an impact on “dividing the professoriate,” Clark

acknowledges that the growing creation of “individual niches” within types of institutions have led to “the extensive differentiation [placing] most academics in places other than that of the research university” such as comprehensive colleges and community colleges (p. 5). Further, he notes that each of these locales has a different balance of effort between teaching and research due to the various expectations and cultures of each. The striving institution context of the present study creates a similar divide for faculty as the institution itself is amid a shift in mission and seeking to move from a comprehensive undergraduate institution towards a more research focused one.

Additional literature supports this claim by suggesting that faculty reward structures embedded within an institution influence how faculty balance demands between teaching and research. Reward systems shape faculty priorities and decisions with regard to behavior and workload (Fairweather, 1996b, 2005; O'Meara, 2010; O'Meara, 2005). Fairweather (1993b) found that regardless of stated institutional mission, research is rewarded more than teaching. He elaborates on this finding and posits that institutions are becoming more homogenous with their rewards structures and that this pull towards similarity suggests that an emergent overarching value with structural support on research exists. Fairweather (1993a) further investigates motivations behind this apparent homogenization of rewards structures, finding that while influential administrative positions, such as department chairs, place a higher value on teaching, formal reward structures in place such as pay or promotion and tenure value research above all other academic functions regardless of institutional type. Therefore, it is important to note that while an espoused mission may hold some influence over how faculty spend their time, the specific policy and practices of an institution may hold additional influence.

Using time allocation as a means to understand faculty behavior, Link, Swann, and Bozeman (2008) investigated the relationship between faculty time allocation and tenure and

promotion. They discovered that tenure and promotion expectations significantly influence faculty behavior. Utilizing data from the National Science foundation Survey of Academic Researchers, they analyzed the responses of over 1300 scientists and engineers from 150 different research institutions and found that rank or career paths impacted faculty trade-offs in time allocation. Unsurprisingly, assistant professors (tenure-track without tenure granted) work more hours than those awarded tenure or at the full professor rank. Further, assistant professors allocate the majority of their time to research, however once tenure is awarded the time on research decreases. With the fall in time spent of research after the awarding of tenure, the authors suggest that tenure was a motivator for faculty to conduct research. Given the sample of Link and Swann solely representing scientific disciplines at research institutions, the result of the influence tenure holds on faculty time might emerged differently when looked at across broader institutional types. Further, the quantitative approach of the study allowed the authors to draw conclusions on the variable of rank and how rank related to time spent on research; however, the study did not take into consideration the more nuanced elements of why the decrease in research happened, such as disciplinary or institutional context that influence the expectations different faculty ranks. For example, if upon receiving tenure, a norm of an institution is that the faculty member takes on more administrative or service responsibilities, this expectation might lead her to allocate time and effort away from research instead of the fact that she received tenure.

Interested in garnering additional understanding of the faculty balance between teaching and research, Fairweather (2002) created a decision model representing how a “hypothetical promotion and tenure committee might judge a faculty member’s teaching and research performance” (p. 28). The variables used to develop the distinctions of high performance in teaching and research were inclusive of faculty time exertion on these activities. Only 22 percent of faculty included in the study were able to achieve high performance across both teaching and

research, a finding that suggests the expectations of tenure may pull faculty in a direction that leads them to be unsuccessful. Fairweather (2002) asserts that “formal personnel policies for tenure track faculty that presume simultaneous productivity in research and teaching often do not adequately reflect the difficulty in achieving a mix” (p. 43). Further, citing his previous research, he acknowledges that faculty motivations and fit with institutional mission also influence faculty success in achieving tenure. However, his study does not take into consideration the disciplinary norms that might be at play in a faculty member’s ability to perform high across teaching and research functions.

Equally important to the formal structures and policies in place at institutions are the perceptions of faculty regarding the policies and procedures. Scholarly literature (Anderson & Slade, 2016; Hull, 2006; Paewai, Meyer, & Houston, 2007) documents the impact of administrative efforts to influence faculty behavior towards the completion of individual work functions (i.e. teaching vs. research vs. service/administrative responsibilities). Anderson and Slade (2016) found that administrative pressure perceived by faculty members influences how they behave. Despite finding a negative association with job satisfaction, they conclude that an increased pressure from university administrators on faculty to pursue grants increases the likelihood that faculty will in fact pursue grants. The influence of institutional leadership is an element of the institutional layer of culture in which faculty must navigate. The evidence that pressure from leadership can influence how faculty focus on completing an element of work suggests that the culture of an institution influence faculty behavior. In the case of striving institutions, institutional leadership, specifically, the messaging from leadership is a key indicator of striving efforts (O'Meara, 2007). The present study recognizes this indicator within the institutional context of the study and adds to the current literature a greater understanding of leadership pressure on faculty work.

Pay serves as another important formal structure to consider relevant in a study of faculty time (Kasten, 1984; Schulz & Tanguay, 2006). Prior research identifies a tight coupling between research and rewards. Utilizing data from the mid to late 1990s National Survey of Postsecondary Faculty (NSOPF), Fairweather (2005) explored the correlation between faculty pay across two snapshot years considering the value of teaching and research. He posits that if the rhetoric of an increase in the value of teaching between 1993 and 1999 is true, then that increase would be reflected in the relative value of teaching and research in faculty pay. Among the measures included to construct his definition of teaching related activities, Fairweather included “hours spent in the classroom per week.” Other measures included “type of student taught” and “instructional approach.” With regards to research activity, the “number of refereed publications” and if the respondent was a “principal or co-principal investigator on an externally funded project” served as indicators (p. 406). Base salary figures acted as the dependent variable for his inquiry. Controlling for institutional type, the results showed that regardless of espoused beliefs in an increased value of teaching “that spending more hours teaching in the classroom continue[d] to be related to a lower basic salary for faculty members” and that “using more effective but labor-intensive teaching techniques has little effect on pay” (p. 416). In contrast, publication productivity became a stronger positive predictor of pay. As a mainstay reward across institutions, salary and pay influence how faculty behave. With only certain aspects of faculty work rewarded monetarily and others seen as a negative influence on compensation, an imbalance in the rewarding of the workload of faculty emerges. As an element of institutional reward structures, additional understanding into how pay is or is not a consideration by faculty in approaching work would benefit this line of inquiry.

Additionally, the literature suggests that salary and other monetary rewards are higher for faculty activities that promote institutional prestige (Melguizo & Strober, 2007). A finding that is

especially pertinent to striving institutions. Garvin (1980) provides evidence that institutional prestige is simultaneously produced through efforts of faculty to maximize their individual prestige. A faculty member advances his own prestige through previously noted cosmopolitan in nature activities such publication productivity, procurement of grants, national recognition of service, and esteemed awards or prizes (Garvin, 1980; Melguizo & Strober, 2007; O'Meara & Bloomgarden, 2011). Equally important is the absence of aspects of the professorial workload missing from this list, specifically teaching or other student related responsibilities. The absence of teaching as an impact on individual or institutional prestige is potentially troublesome and further suggests that teaching is not rewarded in a monetary fashion. Melguizo and Strober (2007) found that “the rewards to faculty for articles in refereed journals are not that different across institutional types” and that “spending more time on teaching does not raise salaries, even in liberal art colleges with their traditional emphasis on teaching” (p. 664). If faculty are monetarily rewarded for research output, an element of work that increase their institutions’ prestige, but are not provided financial incentives or otherwise for their efforts towards teaching, an argument exists that many higher education reward systems are not in line with the espoused belief in both teaching and research of higher education institutions or that the espoused beliefs are not a true belief of the institution. The conflict between an espoused belief and the actual belief of an institution serves as an example of a potential tension faculty must navigate when approaching their work within an institution, especially an institution in pursuit of increased external prestige, and provides cause for additional understanding how a faculty member finds clarity in opposing aspects of an institutional culture.

O'Meara (2011) challenges the conventional view of faculty rewards systems as discussed in the literature to this point. She broadly defines an academic reward system as “a set of interconnected and interacting elements that work together (and against each other at times) to

regard, ignore, or disregard faculty and their contributions” (p. 162). Her definition opens up rewards systems to be greater than a simple exchange of one act for a favorable or unfavorable response, but acknowledges that faculty reward systems are elements of culture in addition to structural elements. In this vein, reward systems function as central motivating and cultural forces in the lives of faculty members, “socializing, penalizing, rewarding, and shaping faculty behavior” (p. 162). O’Meara’s expansion of reward systems amplifies the importance of rewards as an element of institutional culture and a consideration of the conceptual framework of my study, the immersion of faculty in multiple cultures.

In the context of institutional influences and faculty work, it is important to acknowledge that within an institution, the previously discussed elements of mission and formal structures such as tenure policies and pay may not be in alignment (Gonzales et al., 2014; Melguizo & Strober, 2007). For example, a striving institution may emerge as an institution which publicly define itself as focused on undergraduate education, but have policies in place that indicate the institution holds a greater emphasis on research productivity above all else. In this instance, the mission and reward structures would be out of alignment. Therefore, the institutional environment surrounding faculty may itself provide competing priorities for faculty members to navigate in addition to the disciplinary and individual differences of faculty. When present, such malalignment creates confusion and difficulty for faculty who use one or both mission and rewards as signals for how to approach their work.

Disciplinary Influences and Faculty Work

Any study of faculty would be remiss not to address the role of academic disciplines and their influence on faculty work. This is due to the known understanding that many members of the academy’s first allegiance is to their subjects or fields, with their identity as an employee of an institution secondary to this primary identity (Becher, 1994; Diamond & Adam, 1995) or vice

versa with the employing institution at the heart of their identities and external scholar secondary. The aforementioned concepts of “cosmopolitan” and “local” faculty aid in understanding faculty allegiances to their institutions and their disciplines (Birnbaum, 1988). As noted, cosmopolitan faculty are not bound to their institutions, but rather conduct their scholarly efforts and look to the norms and rewards of their disciplines as their guidance for their pursuits. They treat their institutions as a home base for their outward activities. In the opposite fashion, locally oriented faculty uphold a stronger commitment to their institutions and campus. Therefore, they are usually more active members of their campus communities and consider or identify themselves as members of their institutions.

Further, a shared perspective exists among scholars and practitioners that significant differences exist in the activities of faculty and the value of those activities across disciplines. Research supports this perception. For example, Moses (1990) found that faculty attitudes towards work related responsibilities such as teaching and research tasks manifest differently across disciplines. Furthermore, the formal structures in place at higher education institutions of university departments are established and divided relative to disciplinary characteristics (Biglan, 1973). In other words, departments at higher education institutions divide the organizations into subject area and faculty members are hired within those departments as subject matter experts of their disciplines. Given a disciplinary or departmental centric structure and purpose, it is reasonable to expect that faculty work and faculty behavior varies across academic fields or disciplines.

Research suggests that the work lives of faculty are defined in large part by the competing demands between their institution and their disciplines (Clark, 1997). Research suggests faculty approach their work differently depending on their disciplinary or departmental affiliation (Becher & Trowler, 2001; Biglan, 1973; Lodahl & Gordon, 1972). A department

with a central value of producing research that impacts the surrounding community may result in faculty allocating more time towards such research efforts than a department with a central value to develop future scholars. A faculty member in the latter example may be more inclined to focus work towards the development of future contributors to his field. Both of these examples represent different values present in a discipline that may influence how faculty approach their work responsibilities. Clark (1987) argues that an “epistemological determination of work” explains such differences (p. 89). In other words, at their core, disciplines vary in their approaches to expectations of faculty work. Using Clark (1987) as a foundation, Smeby (1996) sought to understand differences among faculty members within different fields of learning at four different Norwegian institutions and their efforts towards teaching and using time spent as a measure found that significant variation between disciplines emerge specifically related to faculty use of time for teaching and teaching preparation, as well as in the distribution of their time between different types of instruction and levels. The findings of this study suggest that faculty investment in teaching varies by departmental affiliation.

The discipline within which a faculty is affiliated also influences their balance between teaching and research responsibilities. Fox (1992) investigated social science departments to understand the impact that faculty interest in teaching and research, time, orientation, and their perception of their environment on the publication productivity of faculty. Across all her findings, she found that faculty with high research productivity have strong investments in research, but not in teaching. Of specific interest to the present study are her findings related to faculty work and how highest level of degree offered (Bachelor’s, Master’s, or Ph.D.) by department influenced how faculty focused their efforts. Faculty in departments with Bachelor’s degrees has their highest degree spent two to three times less time on research and professional activities than those in Ph.D. granting departments. Those faculty in Ph.D. granting departments

spend the majority of their time on research with Master's degree granting falling in the middle between the other respective categories. Fox's findings add an additional element to the conversation by suggesting that certain characteristics of departments influence behavior; therefore, it is important to acknowledge that disciplinary differences may occur not only due to the innate nature of a discipline or field, but also due to the structure of that department within a specific institution. The noted loyalty in identity of faculty members to their respective disciplines, as well as the characteristics of disciplines that manifest within institutions suggests that a variation in faculty work and thus how they approach their work emerges. The nested nature of faculty employment with dual loyalties, to disciplines and institutions, provides an opportunity for tensions to arise.

Individual Influences and Faculty Work

In addition to the important institutional and disciplinary factors resides the individual characteristics of faculty and how those characteristics influence faculty behavior. Drawing from data of over 14,000 full-time faculty members, Toutkoushian and Bellas (1999) examine faculty work load, research output, and time allocation differ across teaching, research, and service. They found that variation in faculty approaches to work is influenced by gender, race, marital status, and parental status. Earlier literature found that female faculty have heavier teaching and service loads relative to their male counterparts (Menges & Exum, 1983; Park, 1996). Similar findings exist in the research on racial minority faculty when compared to their white counterparts (Garza, 1993; Moses, 1989). Toutkoushian and Bellas (1999) add to these claims finding that, when controlling for other factors, not only do women spend more time on teaching than men but they spend less time on research. Further, when compared to their white counterparts, black faculty spend significantly less time teaching and more time on service. Race did not create significant variation in the amount of time spent on research with an exception of

Asian and “other” (race not specified) faculty spent more time (as a percentage) on research than white faculty. Another important element of their study is clarity around the definition of total hours worked. They test their results across three definitions: 1) hours spent on paid activities at their institution 2) hours spent in paid and unpaid activities 3) hours spent both paid and unpaid activities as well as unpaid professional service. Gender and race difference become apparent when looking across the definitions of work. Specifically, “whites spent more time in paid activities than other faculty, but faculty of color compensated either fully or partially by doing more unpaid activities at the institution and rendering more professional service” (Toutkoushian & Bellas, 1999, p. 377). The difference in willingness to spend effort on unpaid activity may prove troublesome if faculty reward structures narrowly emphasize paid work over unpaid. In other words, faculty who allocate less time to unpaid activities (minority faculty) specifically research efforts and more time on unpaid aspects of their jobs may fall short of institutional expectations while working the same number of hours as other faculty.

More recent research supports gender differences in faculty work. Female faculty report spending more time teaching and less time on research than men (Link et al., 2008; Schuster & Finkelstein, 2006; Winslow, 2010). Explanations for these differences include the fact that women often carry heavier teaching loads (Hart & Cress, 2008) as well as student advising roles (Bird, Litt, & Yong, 2004). Gender differences can also be understood when looking at work preferences across gender. Winslow (2010) found that female faculty prefer spending a greater percentage of their weekly work on teaching and a smaller percentage on research endeavors. Additionally, she found that institutional characteristics shape faculty approaches to work and suggests “that gender-differentiated preferences may in part reflect the constraints women face in obtaining positions to those of men” (p.787). Therefore, preference of women towards teaching may be more a result of their circumstances than their actual preference.

When considering individual characteristic of faculty, especially gender, it is important to acknowledge that faculty balance responsibilities not only related to work but personal responsibilities as well. As a whole, women feel more tension with work-life balance than men (Hurtado et al., 2012). Bounded in a single research intensive institution, Misra et al. (2012) explore faculty time allocation across professional measures (research, teaching, and service) as well as personal responsibilities (housework and care). Overall, their findings align with previous research (Hart & Cress, 2008; Link et al., 2008; Winslow, 2010) and add that regardless of rank, women spend more time on housework and care than their male counterparts. Women with the rank of associate professor report the longest work (paid and unpaid) day with 102 hour of work per week. Additionally, through a series of interviews, women report that to balance the intensive household responsibilities, they strategically sacrifice professional time to do so. Specifically, instead of impacting their students and colleagues by allocating less time to teaching or service, they sacrifice time spent on their individual research. With research being the most important factor in promotional considerations of faculty at research institution, this decision negatively impacts the likelihood of career advancement.

Formal position and rank of a faculty member is well documented as a factor that influences faculty behavior (Colbeck, 2002). Finkelstein and Schuster (2001) conducted a preliminary study of different full-time faculty appointment types throughout the field of higher education. The findings from their study provide insight into the workload differences between appointment types. Using data from the late 20th century, the authors reported that, compared to those faculty awarded tenure or in pursuit of it via the tenure-track, non-tenure-track faculty members were less productive with publications, worked 5 to 10 fewer hours per week (depending on institutional type), interacted with students less outside of the classroom, and were

overall viewed as having less dedication to their institutions. Non-tenure-track faculty, however, were more satisfied with their work than their tenured or tenure-track counterparts.

In a noted effort to build upon the findings of Finkelstein and Schuster (2001), Bland et al. (2006) utilized 1999 NCES National Study of Postsecondary Faculty (NSOPF) data to understand the impact of faculty appointment type on the productivity and commitment of full-time faculty at research and doctoral institutions. Controlling for institutional variables, the results of their MANOVA found that tenured faculty reported spending a higher percentage of their work day on research than non-tenure track faculty. Each spending 26.7% and 23% respectively. Additionally, tenured faculty also reported working more average hours each week (56 hours) than non-tenured faculty report (52 hours) resulting in a production of 2 to 3 times the number of scholarly products. With regards to teaching, they found that, “compared to non-tenured faculty, tenured faculty... allocate a higher percent of their time spent on teaching (45% vs. 40%) and more frequently identify their primary role as teaching (57% vs 41%)” (p. 111). The authors narrow their inquiry to focus on those faculty they identify as “new hires” or those with less than 6 years of work experience at their respective institutions. When comparing tenure and non-tenure track faculty in this subset, they found that a higher percentage of new hire tenure track faculty report their primary role is research (32% vs. 26%) and spend a higher percent of their time on research (31% vs. 26%). More pointedly, “newly hired tenure track faculty spend 5% more time on research than newly hired non-tenure track faculty spend, but they are 2.5 times more productive” (p. 115). The findings related to faculty appointment type suggest that the appointment type of a faculty member influences how they approach their work. Additional research into what elements of the specific appointment types, such as rewards systems, and how faculty consider those elements in their navigation between various work responsibilities, would provide another piece of understanding faculty work balance.

Career status or rank is another measure with proven influence on faculty behavior and approach to work. Much of the research measures career status by professional rank (Dundar & Lewis, 1998; Tien & Blackburn, 1996; Toutkoushian & Bellas, 1999). The typical classifications include: instructor/lecturer, assistant professor, associate professor and full professor (Porter & Umbach, 2001). Fairweather (1996a) found that time allocation varies by rank. Specifically, he found that:

Teaching is inversely related to rank: professors were less likely to spend time teaching than associate professors, and associate professors were less likely to spend time teaching than assistant professors. Professors were the most likely to spend time on research and administration; associate professors spent more time on administration than their junior colleagues. Time spent on service and consulting does not vary by academic rank (p.29). Additional research found that those faculty members with a higher rank are more productive in terms of outputs such as research publications (Dundar & Lewis, 1998; Tien & Blackburn, 1996; Toutkoushian & Bellas, 1999).

Another documented key individual characteristic of faculty regarding balance workload is faculty motivations. While extrinsic motivations surround the faculty member at the institutional or disciplinary level with reward structures, intrinsic motivation occurs within an individual. Motivation within a faculty member is impacted by such elements as job satisfaction, stress, sense of fit, self-perception, and sense of responsibility (Blackburn & Lawrence, 1995; Olsen, 1993; Olsen & Near, 1994). For example, Massy and Widgren (1995) found that a faculty member's self-perception correlated with research output. Additionally, self-efficacy, an individual's perception of herself as competent in her work (Major & Dolly, 2003), relates directly to how much effort the individual puts towards completing a task as well as the level of engagement with the task (Ryn & Deci, 2000). As a seminal scholar on self-efficacy, Bandura

(1997) suggests that task-specific self-efficacy predicts positive outcomes of persistence and performances. Using Bandura as a frame, Blackburn and Lawrence (1995) found that regardless of institutional type, the self-efficacy of higher education faculty accounted for a significant amount of variation in output productivity of research. Additional research found that a self-efficacy for research positively predicted that a faculty member's effort invested in research, which, in turn predicted success in producing research publications and presentations. In other words, faculty beliefs about their abilities relates to how much effort a faculty member may invest in a task (research, teaching, etc) that relies on that ability. The individual attributes of a faculty member, such as their demographic characteristics and their motivation, self-efficacy and beliefs about their work influence how they behave. In the context of this study, the individual characteristics of a faculty member in addition to discipline and institutional influences were considered to advance the understanding of how faculty navigate the tensions that emerge between multiple cultural contexts.

Conclusion

As is evident by previous research, faculty work across facets of responsibilities (i.e. teaching, research, and service) is impacted by the institution, discipline, and individual characteristics of faculty. However, a gap exists in understanding how the different cultures presented by an institution or discipline influence faculty behavior and how faculty navigate potential tensions that emerge between these cultures. Gaining a better understanding of how the multiple cultural layers in which faculty are situated impact faculty behavior would help shed light on these unknowns. With a greater understanding on how faculty navigate multiple cultures, faculty members and institutional leaders can better manage these contexts to accomplish institutional goals. The striving context amplifies institutional goals of growth and advancement. Identifying specific tensions that affect faculty work in this context help in

designing institutional policy to promote faculty productivity and influence how to facilitate faculty development. The empirical research, presented in this study, on how the complex environment of disciplinary and university characteristics and cultures influence faculty behavior helps academic administrators harness the potential of faculty. Using striving institutions as the context, the primary goal of this research is to fill this gap and advance our understanding of how faculty navigate tensions presented from the delicate balance of their responsibilities amidst these at times complementary and competing contexts.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODS

Through a single-case design, this exploratory case study examines potential tensions that faculty navigate in deciding how to approach work responsibilities at a striving institution. The nature of faculty work is unlike that of most other professions. As individuals, faculty are members of their disciplines and core community members of their institutions. While the current literature on faculty acknowledges that they are situated in multiple cultures, an empirical understanding of the implications of such is missing. Using striving institutions as the context, this study sought to fill this gap and advance understanding of how faculty navigate the tensions amidst these at times complementary and competing cultures.

Research Questions

In an effort to understand the tensions that arise for faculty at a striving institution, this study seeks to answer the following research questions:

1. How does being situated in a striving institution shape how faculty approach their work?
2. What tensions do faculty encounter within their work at a striving institution?
3. How do the tensions faculty encounter shape how they approach their work?

Methodology

Much of the current research on faculty work uses large scale data sets to analyze and predict faculty behavior (Lindholm & Szelenyi, 2008; Link et al., 2008; Toutkoushian & Bellas, 1999); however, limited research exists that endeavors to understand the faculty experiences and challenges that impact how faculty balance their work amid different cultures. This study seeks to fill that void with the primary goal of understanding contextual elements of the faculty experience that influence process and behavior. A qualitative case study approach served as the best method to inform this research because the focus of the research is on “process rather than

outcomes, in context rather than a specific variable, in discovery rather than confirmation” (Merriam, 2001, p. 23). This method allows insights on the “how” and “why” a phenomena occurs and uses guiding research questions accordingly. Questions of the “how” and “why” of a process are explanatory, and according to Yin (2003), “likely to lead to the use of case studies” (p. 6). Additionally, qualitative inquiry produces “thick” descriptions which provide significant details relating to subjects’ experiences and thus strengthen understanding of human behavior that would not be possible when employing quantitative methods.

Site Selection

With a desire to understand and inform potential tensions that faculty experience when managing their work activities, striving institutions serve as an interesting focus for this case study. A “striving institution” is defined broadly as an institution in the pursuit of prestige within an academic hierarchy (O'Meara, 2007). Characteristics of such include increasing selectivity over recent years as represented by SAT scores, the recruitment of “faculty stars” with emphasis on research, and growth in research expectations for tenure and promotion. Striving institutions create a complex environment for faculty work-life, careers, and productivity. Research suggests that faculty at striving institutions may also experience increased competition in their working environments and more complex rewards structures (Wolf-Wendel & Ward, 2006). Therefore, the nature of striving institutions provides an opportunity to understand complexities of the faculty the experience. For convenience, only institutions in the Dallas-Fort Worth (DFW) area were considered. Additionally, DFW represents a large metropolitan area without a flagship university; therefore no institution in the area is widely recognized as holding the most status or recognition. For this study, Southern Methodist University was identified as an interesting case of study as a striving institution.

Southern Methodist University

Southern Methodist University (SMU) represents a mid-sized, private, selective, comprehensive, research university. The Fall 2017 full-time faculty breakdown of the institution includes 381 tenured faculty, 99 tenure-track faculty and 278 non-tenure track faculty (Southern Methodist University, 2017). The University offers 123 undergraduate degrees and 127 graduate and professional degrees, including 23 doctoral degrees. During the 2016-2017 academic year, SMU awarded 1,778 bachelor’s degrees, 1,814 master’s degrees, 236 professional doctorates, and 89 research-focused doctoral degrees across seven degree granting schools (Southern Methodist University, 2017).

SMU also embodies characteristics of a striving institution. As previously discussed in Chapter 1, O’Meara (2007) developed a list of indicators of a striving institution. Table 3.1 provides a replication of those indicators inclusive of the measures seen at Southern Methodist University. Specifically, the institution has seen a steady increase in the SAT scores of enrolled applicants with the average SAT score of 1224 in 2007 and 1352 in 2017. Further, The Carnegie Foundation classifies SMU as an institution with “higher research activity.” During the 2015-2016 academic year SMU received \$28 million in external funding from the National Science Foundation, National Institute of Health, foundations, and private industry funds. The institution’s strategic plan sets forth a goal to actively advance this expenditure over the next ten years (Southern Methodist University, 2016).

Table 3.1 Identifying Characteristics of Striving Institutions at Southern Methodist University

Areas of Institutional Operations	Operational Indicators of Striving	Indicator at SMU¹
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¹ The information regarding indicators of SMU were found from institutional reports and websites.

<p>Student Recruitment and Admissions</p>	<p>Institution increases selectivity over recent years, including high school rank, SAT & GPA</p> <p>Increase in use of early decision in admissions</p> <p>Institution invites more National Merit Scholars and fewer Pell Grant Recipients</p>	<p>Increase in the SAT scores of enrolled applicants with the average SAT score of 1224 in 2007 and 1352 in 2017</p>
<p>Faculty Recruitment, Roles, and Reward Systems</p>	<p>Greater attempt to hire “faculty stars” with research emphasis, increase in faculty salaries and in start up research packages</p> <p>Faculty teaching load decreasing; increase in discretionary time, loosening of institutional ties; increased emphasis on disciplinary ties</p> <p>Faculty report expectations for research in tenure and promotion have increased</p> <p>Rise in faculty grants, awards, prestigious fellowships</p>	<p>During the 2015-2016 academic year SMU received \$28 million in external funding from the National Science Foundation, National Institute of Health, foundations, and private industry funds.</p> <p>The institution’s strategic plan sets forth a goal to actively advance this expenditure over the next ten years.</p>
<p>Curriculum and Programs</p>	<p>Shift of emphasis and funding away from remedial and developmental programs & towards honors and programs for academically talented students</p> <p>Institution is adding graduate programs, shift in emphasis from undergraduate to graduate programs</p> <p>Focus among faculty on making programs more rigorous and on preparing students for graduate school or prestigious career placements</p>	<p>In 2015, SMU launched a University Fellows program to provide additional funding and attract a stronger graduate student population.</p> <p>SMU is currently in conversations to create a formal graduate school.</p>
<p>External Relations and Shaping of Institutional Identity</p>	<p>Institutional actors use language, speeches, websites, and symbols to shape the external image of the institution as more prestigious or “on the move”</p> <p>Institutional actors also work to shape an internal, institutional narrative about striving and use the language and rhetoric of striving to frame major</p>	<p>In 2018, SMU released a report entitled, <i>Continuing the Ascent: Recommendations for Enhancing the Academic Quality and Stature of Southern Methodist University</i>.</p>

Resource Allocation	decisions, goals statements, and directives Increased spending on infrastructure and administrative support Shift in resources from instruction to administrative support Investments made in competitive amenities	Counterintuitive to this indicator, SMU has decreased administrative support in recent years. SMU broke ground on a new, stand-alone, interdisciplinary research facility in the Spring of 2019.
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SMU’s recent history emerged as pertinent to my study. In 2014, SMU launched what it coined as Operational Excellence for the Second Century (OE2C) campaign. The focus of that campaign was to “improve operations at SMU and, through its pursuit of organizational efficiency, to identify savings in administrative costs that could be reallocated to academic purposes” (Southern Methodist University, 2019c). One component of the campaign included the hiring of Bain & Company to evaluate areas of cost savings. Bain’s work concluded in September 2015 and among the many cost savings initiatives recommended, the consulting firm aided in decreasing administrative support staff at the institution. The following year, 2016, SMU named a new Provost who focused the reallocation of the resources from OE2C towards the development of 14 recommendations focused on elevating the institution’s stature and quality (Southern Methodist University, 2019b). The new Provost brought with him a shift in rhetoric on campus that was present in his speeches to campus stakeholders and faculty. An examination of his speeches at general faculty meetings yielded words like “auspicious” or “forging” and referenced SMU’s “ascent” upwards and forwards. His vision formalized in a report entitled, *Continuing The Ascent: Recommendations For Enhancing The Academic Quality and Stature of Southern Methodist University*. The document served as the culmination of campus-wide dialogue during 2017-2018 regarding how to advance SMU’s “overall academic excellence to the level of a premier research and teaching university with global impact” (Southern Methodist

University, 2019b, p. 3). The report provides a series of recommendations focused on “propel the University in this quest” (p. 3)

Departmental Selection

To understand the sampling strategy of my study, it is necessary to understand the role the department, as an organizational unit, plays within an institution. Previous studies often frame academic departments as the “building blocks” of universities (Rosinger et al., 2016). These units serve as key organizers of academic work (B. R. Clark, 1960, 1972; Mintzberg, 1973, 1979). Additionally, these departments serve as a link between universities and professions and/or disciplines (Becher & Trowler, 2001). In a more general sense, the academic profession is attached to the discipline as represented by a department rather than linked directly to the institution. Further, academic departments are an influential facet to academic careers and focus (Porter & Umbach, 2001). Therefore, given that departments are structural manifestations of disciplines, I utilized departments as my means for sampling and representing disciplinary nuances. Additionally, given my focus on obtaining an understanding of the faculty experience, I considered the faculty make-up of each department including the breakdown of gender, race, and rank. The ultimate goal of my sampling strategy was to yield a sample of faculty from departments at a striving institution with reasonably representative faculty compositions.

Because my underlying topic of interest is in the tensions that emerge between disciplinary and institutional cultural context, my sampling strategy centered on the selection of disciplines at my chosen institution most likely to exhibit and present tensions. To that end, I focused my inquiry specifically on traditional disciplines within a College of Arts & Science. Given their evolving nature and advancing inclination towards research, I believed disciplines in these fields provided an interesting context in which tensions among faculty cultures were likely to emerge. Further, SMU offered a wide range of academic units suitable for my study within its

College of Arts & Sciences. Structurally, the college considers three divisions of disciplines existing within its walls: Humanities, Social Sciences, and Natural and Mathematical Sciences (Southern Methodist University, 2019a). To ensure representation from all three divisions, attention was paid to the inclusion of departments from each into the present study. The departments within each disciplinary division of the College of Arts & Science are provided in Table 3.2 along with the number of faculty in each rank that make up the divisions and each respective department.

Table 3.2 Departments in Disciplinary Divisions & Faculty by Rank

Division in Arts & Sciences	Tenured	Tenure Track	Non-Tenure Track	Total
Humanities	67	6	74	147
English	19	3	18	40
History	18	2	2	22
Philosophy	9	1	3	13
Religious Studies	9	0	1	10
Women's Studies	0	0	1	1
World Languages	12	0	41	53
Social Sciences	46	17	16	79
Anthropology	9	5	1	15
Economics	15	5	3	23
Political Science	11	2	2	15
Psychology	9	4	4	17
Sociology	2	1	6	9
Natural Sciences	57	13	21	91
Biological Sciences	8	1	4	13
Chemistry	10	4	3	17
Earth Sciences	8	2	0	10
Mathematics	14	3	6	23
Physics	9	2	3	14
Statistical Science	8	1	5	14

Together, the three disciplinary divisions provided a comparative view of the faculty experience at striving institutions. While the focus of the study was to understand the overall experiences of faculty in the College of Arts & Sciences, I anticipate being able to compare the

overall faculty experience across these disciplinary divisions in the future. Specifically, I anticipate different departmental elements, such as informal or formal policies, to emerge in each context and influence faculty accordingly. Further, potential comparisons of how faculty navigate tensions is possible across departments in each disciplinary context.

Data Collection

My primary data source was 28 semi-structured interviews conducted with faculty members across my selected Arts & Sciences departments. Before conducting interviews, approval was obtained from the Institutional Review Board of SMU. Please see *Appendix A* for the semi-structured interview protocol that guided the interviews. Selected faculty participants from each department served as the unit of analysis, and the main source of data collection occurred through a series of interviews. Table 3.3 provides a list of participants ultimately included in this study by department.

Table 3.3 Number of Participants by Department & Discipline

Division in Arts & Sciences	Number of Participants
Humanities	8
English	2
History	2
Religious Studies	2
World Languages	2
Social Sciences	12
Anthropology	3
Economics	3
Political Science	4
Psychology	2
Natural Sciences	8
Earth Sciences	2
Physics	4
Statistical Science	2

Purposeful sampling, a form of non-probability sampling, guided my selection of interview participants. Merriam (2009) notes that “purposeful sampling is based on the

assumption that the investigator wants to discover, understand, and gain insight and therefore must select a sample from which the most can be learned” (p. 88). To that end, I purposefully sought to interview full-time tenured and tenure-track faculty as well as department chairs to provide an understanding of the potential tensions that exist among faculty cultures. I excluded part-time and full-time contingent faculty from my sample due to the nature of their work. Contingent faculty are typically hired with the intention of conducting or focusing on one element of faculty work, such as teaching or research rather than all three pillars. Therefore, I expected that their work processes and the potential tensions that they navigate greatly differed from full-time tenured or tenure track faculty to such an extent that warrant exclusion from this study. With a focus on capturing the faculty experience in navigating emergent tensions in balancing work responsibilities in traditional arts and sciences discipline, participants selected were only those affiliated in a department associated as such. Additionally, these departments are anticipated to be representative of the noted three divisions of the College of Arts & Sciences. Ultimately, participant selection considered demographic characteristics (inclusive of gender, race, length at institution, and faculty rank) and departmental affiliation. The small nature of departments at SMU prevents the disclosure of this information by department in an effort to protect participant anonymity. However, to illustrate the representation of the sample and perspectives that comprise this inquiry, Table 3.4 describes the number of participants by division and faculty ranks. In addition to the 28 participants in my study, I received responses to recruitment from another eight faculty members who expressed interest in participation. However, those faculty cited reasons such as not having enough time, too busy, or on leave that prevented them from participating.

Table 3.4 Number of Participants by Rank & Discipline

Division in Arts & Sciences	Number of Participants
Humanities	8
Assistant Professor	1
Associate Professor	2
Professor	5
Social Science	12
Assistant Professor	2
Associate Professor	4
Professor	6
Natural & Math Science	8
Assistant Professor	2
Associate Professor	5
Professor	1

Interviews

Interviews served as my primary source of data collection. Interviewing is coined as an essential means for gathering multiple perspectives on a phenomenon (Marshall & Rossman, 2010). Semi-structured interviews focused on various aspects of how faculty choose to navigate cultural tensions, focus of their work (teaching, research, or service), view their institution as striving, and the existence and perception of tensions that arise when considering work. The semi-structured format allows the researcher to follow a prescribed set of open-ended questions and the opportunity to ask germane follow-up questions (Warren, 2002). This format permits a participant to answer each question with limited presuppositions. Specifically, semi-structured interviews “allow the respondents the chance to be the experts and to inform the research” (Leech, 2002, p. 668). Therefore, I used an interview protocol to guide each interview. The protocol included a combination of main questions, follow-up questions, and probes designed with the goal of eliciting “depth, detail, vivid and nuanced answers, rich with thematic material”

(Rubin & Rubin, 2005). With this protocol and intention, interviews ranged from 38 to 76 minutes in length.

Faculty ultimately selected for this study met the specified criteria of being representative of and affiliated with the departments/disciplines included. Interviews continued until saturation was achieved. Data saturation occurs when enough information is obtained to replicate the study (O'Reilly & Parker, 2012) and when no new information can be attained (Guest et al., 2006). With my main focus being on understanding faculty perceptions and experiences navigating tensions between disciplines and institutional contexts, interviews continued until achieving saturation within each disciplinary division, thus allowing for future comparison of how these tensions potentially manifest across different disciplines as well as across three divisions. Saturation was considered achieved when a reasonably representative sample was interviewed and limited new information was yielded from interview. To ensure accurate data collection, interviews were audio recorded (Rubin & Rubin, 2005). Each interview recording was transcribed and each transcription reviewed and checked for accuracy. Additionally, notes were taken during and immediately after interviews on observations of body language and verbal tone fluctuation to obtain information on potentially more nuanced elements than those stated verbally. Of the 28 interviews conducted, two encountered exceptions with regards to recording. One participant requested not to be recorded, and another participant's interview occurred over the phone and the intended recording malfunctioned. To include these interviews in my study and analysis, detailed notes were taken immediately following the completion of interviews as well as the development of notations on the similarity of comments to other interviews in the same disciplines.

Document Analysis

Data from multiple sources can increase the trustworthiness of qualitative research (Merriam, 2001). Institutional documents were examined to understand how the views expressed from interview participants align with additional documentation. However, limited documents came to light. Tenure policies at the college and university levels, the institution's website, and an institutional report regarding future strategic plans surfaced as warranting inclusion. These documents were utilized to corroborate faculty views on their reward expectations and the institution's goals and expectations.

Data Analysis

All interviews were transcribed by a third-party and checked for accuracy. Data coding was completed in Atlas.ti, a qualitative coding software. Keeping to the exploratory nature of my case study, I began my data analysis with an open coding process. For example, because a focus of my inquiry was on the tensions of faculty work, open coding resulted in the development codes that shed light on such tensions within the striving institution context. Additionally, to keep with the underpinning principles of qualitative research, I revised and expanded these codes iteratively throughout my data analysis process (Creswell, 2007; Merriam, 2001).

My data analysis resulted in the identification and presentation of findings in the form of themes relevant to the various layers through which faculty navigate their work (discipline, institutional, and individual). Additionally, themes emerged on the faculty perception of SMU as a striving institution were included. In developing my themes, I employed a constant comparative method. This method involves breaking down the data into discrete "incidents" (Glaser and Strauss, 1967) or "units" (Lincoln and Guba, 1985) and coding them to categories. As part of an iterative process, categories underwent content and definition changes as more units or incidents were compared and categorized. The understanding of the categories and the

relationships between categories were developed and refined throughout the entire analytical process. Further, all data from each discipline was analyzed together with goal of providing a description of the faculty experience at the institution; however, I anticipate future comparisons will be drawn across disciplines to shed light on the similarities and differences that present within each division.

Trustworthiness

Merriam (2001) recommends six strategies to enhance trustworthiness or validity of qualitative research. Scholarship (Bryman, 2015; Creswell, 2007; Merriam, 2001) suggests employing at least two of these strategies to ensure trustworthiness. I implemented three of these techniques throughout my study: triangulation, rich descriptions, and acknowledging the role of the researcher.

Multiple participants from each department allowed for triangulation of my interview data (Rubin & Rubin, 2005). Individual interviews with multiple faculty members reflect each faculty's reality, while simultaneously reinforcing a shared experience and view of the challenges faculty face when approaching and executing their work amid different areas of culture. Additionally, where available, documents (i.e. tenure policies, websites, and reports) provided at the departmental and university level corroborated interview data. Through my multiple interviews and document analysis, my study sought "convergent lines of inquiry" (Yin, 2003, p. 98) to understand faculty perceptions of tensions present when completing work responsibilities from both a departmental and institutional perspective of the study's participants. Additionally, multiple interviews kept the notion of distortion or exaggerated responses in check (Merriam, 2001).

Further, I provide rich descriptions gathered and synthesized from my data collection. According the Merriam (2009), "rich, thick description refers to a description of the setting and

participants of the study, as well as a detailed description of the findings with adequate evidence presented in the form of quotes from participant interviews, field notes, and documents” (p. 227). The goal of such was to provide enough description that my audience is able to understand how closely their situation may match my research study, and hence whether my findings are applicable to their situation (Merriam, 2001). To ensure this level of detail was collected, main questions, probes, and follow-up questions were utilized during interviews.

Finally, I acknowledge my role as a researcher in the research process. Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggest thinking of dependability as a “researcher providing adequate information so that outsiders concur that, given the collected data, the results make sense, and the results are consistent and dependable” (p. 288). To ensure that my results are dependable and make sense I clearly explain my position as a researcher in the next section and how my positions informed my study design and subsequent interpretations. Dependability and the consistency of my data are also reinforced by the previously mentioned triangulation technique.

Role of the Researcher

As with all qualitative work, the researcher is the lens through which all data is processed (Merriam, 2001). Therefore, it is vital that an understanding of my background is disclosed. I am white female in my early thirties and a PhD candidate. My background includes six years working and studying at Southern Methodist University. Allowing me convenient access to participants of this study. During my time at SMU, I have served as a teaching assistant to two courses and an instructor of record on one course in the Simmons School of Education. All courses I taught were methods-based and at a graduate student level. My experience in the classroom provides me a level of insight into aspect of faculty work at SMU. However, with my experience being in a professional school and at the graduate level, I maintain a level of distance

from the experiences of study participants from the College of Arts & Sciences who primarily teach at the undergraduate level.

Further, I worked for three years in the Center for Teaching Excellence, which provided me an opportunity to formally familiarize myself to faculty life and processes at my home institution. Specifically, I organized, facilitated, and executed the course evaluation system at SMU for two years, which allowed me access to information regarding faculty perspectives on the system both positive and negative. During that time, I routinely interacted with faculty across colleges to troubleshoot and answer any questions they may have had.

I am a scholar of higher education with plans to work in the field upon graduation. Additionally, I have conducted prior research on other aspects of the faculty experience including the impact of stress on faculty and the use of non-tenure track faculty at SMU. With regards to SMU as a site, choosing departments with which I have limited prior knowledge or access mitigated my potential personal bias as an insider to the study institution. Additionally, any personal bias as an insider to the study was counterbalanced by the advantage of prior knowledge of institutional history and processes. Further, steps to limit personal bias included triangulating any of my perceived understanding and knowledge with existing research and documentation from the institution.

Limitations

This project is subject to several limitations. The first of which is that the study relies on the assumption that the faculty members have choices in their work and behavior. Such capacity is necessary for different experiences among faculty members and departments to emerge and the potential influences to become apparent. Additionally, the use of departments as the context in which I selected participants may not capture the entire picture of the tension faculty members navigate between different cultures. Differences in behavior and the navigation of these tensions

may differ across levels not included in this study, such as school or program type (undergraduate, graduate, etc).

Further, during recruitment, multiple faculty expressed an interest in participating, but chose not to participate due to time constraints or lack of availability. Therefore, the perspective of participants is limited to those available during the time of recruitment; and, in a study of faculty work, the faculty who expressed being “too busy” to participate voice is not represented. Further, with the emphasis of this inquiry on the *processes* of how faculty choose to approach their work rather than their actual work completion, interviews served the most effective vehicle for data collection. However, additional research should consider the inclusion of time journals or a similar method to capture greater detail on the faculty balance of work.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

The research of this study addressed three core questions in the understanding of faculty work at striving institutions. Through the examination of the faculty view on their institution as striving, the balance of their work responsibilities, and the tensions or problems that arise when navigating the cultural layers in which faculty are situated, the present study advances current understanding of the life of an academic.

The findings of this study are drawn from the perspective of those directly engaging in the work, faculty members of all ranks and yield two general threads of information. The first is the faculty view on their institution as “striving” such as the expectations they hold of the institution and the potential challenges and advantages they see. The second is tensions faculty experience with their work responsibilities while being situated in a “striving” context, such as the tensions between their expected work functions (i.e. teaching, research, service) as well as the tensions that emerge from divergent values of their institution, department, or personal interests.

Part I: Striving Context

The institution chosen for this case study, SMU, was identified as a striving institution prior to collecting data. However, during data collection the faculty perspective on SMU as a striving institution emerged as interesting and relevant to the findings regarding faculty work. The first part of findings is dedicated to displaying these perspectives.

Expectations of Striving

The faculty of SMU are acutely aware of the institution’s efforts as a “striving” institution. In recent years, institutional leadership has outlined initiatives to elevate the campus’ profile and grow in national reputation. With goals including increasing focus on research, strengthening admissions standards, and hiring faculty stars, SMU’s aspirations align with that of

a striving institution. Serving as the key to the attainment of these initiative, the faculty have developed a level of expectation as to what they expect and see as necessary to elevate the institution.

Stronger Faculty Recruitment

Overall, the faculty believe that striving and efforts of advancement are good for the institution. Specifically, faculty noted that they believe that the striving nature of SMU will lead to stronger faculty recruitment. A social science professor provided a general impression of advancement efforts, noting that an increase in the university's reputation would lead to a strong intellectual environment: "If you're not improving, you're falling behind. So it's good for the university. It's... And again, it's good for recruiting faculty members, so which makes nice, good, intellectual environment." The idea of recruiting better faculty is an ideal agreed upon by professors across disciplines. A professor in the humanities agreed in the positive benefit an increased institutional reputation to bringing a stronger faculty to campus:

I think it's good, because it attracts good junior faculty. Well, and senior faculty. It attracts... It helps with recruitment. The better we are, the better people we can bring in, I guess, and I think there's something to be said for that. That's good.

Further, faculty recognize that stronger faculty recruitment may be tied to the recruitment of additional and stronger students into their departments. An assistant professor in a science field noted, "recruiting high quality students and recruiting more high quality students so that the department can grow, and about at what rate does the size of the faculty need to grow if we were able to get more students." Her sentiments are shared with colleagues and tie closely to another theme that emerged regarding the expectation for stronger students on campus.

Better Students and Better Student Support

Another outcome of striving efforts faculty anticipate or already believing they experience is a strengthening in the student body. By increasing the selectivity of the institution

through an elevated profile, the level of student ability grows. An associate professor from humanities explained that “to be admitted at SMU is getting harder. And as a result, we, I think we have better students than we used to.” The present growth in the study body may result in notable changes to faculty work. Another faculty member in the sciences noted that the growth in the ability of students on campus will influence how she approaches her work in the classroom:

I see that it's already influenced my work because I was actually talking about this this morning with someone who's unrelated to SMU, but this idea that... Our students are supposedly getting better, at least the SAT score, the average SAT score at SMU for undergraduates has been increasing it and it's over 1300 now. So, for me as an instructor, that means I can push 'em harder.

The recruitment towards creating a stronger student body extends into the graduate student population. An element necessary for growth in PhD program performance is the resources to support graduate students in research and teaching assistantships while they complete their studies. Therefore, faculty express that better students should come coupled with additional funding to support graduate students. An associate professor of social sciences anticipating that striving efforts will include these resources, noted a current limitation of the institution of not having adequate summer support for students:

I feel like that should mean more research money for bigger PhD programs, funding for our students, for the summers for example, all our students have to disappear in the summer. And if students are not around in the summer, then they cannot advance their thesis, which means they cannot work with us.

A current lack of adequate funding for graduate students is explained by the non-existence of structure in graduate training at the institution. However, a faculty member in the humanities expected that present efforts towards advance with bring with it more institutionalized support and processes for graduate students:

The good part, I see coming out [of striving efforts] is graduate students will fare much, much better. We may stand up as an actual graduate school for them and get them recognition and support, and actual rules on campus. Because currently it's the complete wild west.

In general, faculty view the strengthening of the study body as an expected result of the striving efforts at SMU. However, other anticipated results may involve decreased interactions with these students in the classroom.

Decreased Teaching Expectations

Changes to teaching loads and general teaching expectations serve as another anticipated modification to current faculty work as the institution pursues advancement towards more national prestige. Faculty are aware that advancement of the institution centers on the elevation of their research, and expect it means taking them out of the classroom as exchange. As an associate professor of social sciences explained:

Reducing teaching loads enables faculty to invest in their research. It also allows faculty to invest further in their graduates, who help do a lot of our research. So it's not that we actually spend less time with students...we just spend it differently...less with teaching, more with research.

His view of decreased teaching loads is already realized at some ranks. More recently hired faculty note they are already experiencing different teaching loads than their peers. An assistant professor of humanities suggested that if he was hired during the time of many of his more senior colleagues, he would not have been granted the same resources or course load he presently holds.

He described:

Well, I gather that if I'd been here 20 years ago, I would be teaching a higher course load and would have less money available for conferences and research funds, and I would be able to get tenure without... 20 years ago, I think they were still requiring a book, but 30 years ago they weren't. So, they certainly made the resources available to be able to hire people and give them the support and teaching load that allows them to write top academic books.

However, the anticipation of decreased teaching loads, though noted as valuable, is met with skepticism in actionability. A more senior faculty member in the same department is skeptical of the ability of the institution to pull faculty away from teaching, noting that the institution has

made a reputation for itself of excellence in teaching that is imbedded in the institutional culture.

He noted:

The only way that [an increase in institutional prestige] can happen is that faculty have to take some time away from teaching and devote it to their research. And I think that that's the one piece that's really missing from SMU rising in the ranks overall is that, the culture from years past where it's... SMU has a fully deserved reputation for excellent teaching.

The struggle of SMU to pull faculty from classrooms to focus on their research is an indication that faculty anticipate increased research expectations as the institution looks towards external advancement.

Increased Research Expectations & Resources

With the decreased teaching loads, faculty anticipate that they will be held to a higher standard of achievement with regards to their research and that they will be expected to attain the resources necessary to maintain a high-level of research. Faculty experience mixed feelings about the potential of increased research pressures. One faculty member in humanities expressed the expectation that greater efforts towards outside funding and her feelings of uncertainty for what it will mean for her discipline. She explained:

I think there will be more pressure on us to get outside funding. Which will be tough – as not much of that is available in my field. [Her Discipline] holds such a strange place in that whole matrix that it's hard to know what that is going to mean for us.

A faculty member from the same department sees the increase in focus on outside funding as a positive outcome for his career. He noted that the university is making strides in the provision of support for faculty to be successful with securing expected outside funds. He described:

The university has put an increasing emphasis on these big fellowships that I mentioned that get you time off, and that's something the university has done well, in that they created an office for that and hired somebody to do it, and she's very good, and they are more intentional in seeking out people to apply for these fellowships, and the university, and myself have enjoyed some success in that.

In addition to the potential for increased support for research services, faculty anticipate institutional rewards, such as tenure expectations, to shift reflecting the increasing expectations

for research. A long time social scientist with over 30 years of experience at the institution described her view, “I think the expectations for getting tenure and for being promoted have altered as the university develops greater and greater ambitions.” However, the same faculty member believes that the newer generation of scholars coming into the institution are better equipped to meet the higher standards and obtain the necessary resources for success. She stated:

Twenty or so years ago, there was nobody applying for NIH Fellowships within the humanities disciplines. In this department, people were getting NSF money, but there was just sort of, "Oh well, it was a little icing on the cake, but it wasn't central." That's changed significantly. So I think a lot of younger faculty also come in with much more powerful research agendas to meet this demand.

Her assertion of stronger research portfolios of incoming faculty is promising towards the previously noted expectation by faculty of growth in the strength of their future colleagues.

However, a faculty member in a social science field, hired at the beginning of the present academic year expressed views on the expectation of her job compared to her more senior peers that agrees with the notion the expectations are increasing. She expressed:

I think if I had gotten this job 10 years ago, I wouldn't be thinking about applying to grants right now, that would maybe be something I'd do in my third or fourth year or something like that if at all, I know lots of people here who don't, and so I think that really has changed.

While some of the evolving changes to SMU's support of academic work anticipated by faculty have begun to come to fruition, many aspects have yet to be seen. Therefore, a level of uncertainty among faculty emerges regarding the institution's goals towards advancement and its ability to shift focus.

Identity Crisis

Institutions who are striving are often times shifting from their current missions, which are often focused more on teaching, towards one with a greater emphasis on research. During this time of transition the institution experiences “growing pains” and a crisis of identity emerges. The faculty at SMU take specific note that the institution is presently in the midst of an

identity crisis. A faculty member in the humanities described SMU's state of transition with a reflection on her first year at the institution. She reflected:

SMU has an unusual positioning. We are a mid-sized university. And so I was here about six months and I realized that I was supposed to be teaching like I was at a small liberal arts college, and researching, like I was at an R1 and that I had no support really for either and that was just gonna take a lot of time.

Now having been at SMU for over a decade, the same professor acknowledges that the institution is still not settled on its identity, but acknowledges that it benefits her because she enjoys both the teaching and research aspects of her work. She continued:

SMU has yet to form an identity around one or the other, and in some ways there are a great advantages to that. I'm allowed to teach how I wanna teach, I get to know my students really well, that's really rewarding, and I can take off with these big research projects. And I'm reasonably well supported in that in some ways, but in terms of time management and conflicting desires to be good at both, it can be difficult.

Faculty also fear that the split focus of the institution staying true to its "liberal arts" or teaching roots while advancing in research will come at a cost to them. The notion that the institution cannot maintain both its traditional focus with its new ambitions is noted by faculty across disciplines. In describing a story how he was forced fight for in-house resources (books from the library) necessary to complete his research, a professor in the humanities realized, "There were oddities that made it clear that even though SMU was talking about how it wanted to be a big research university, the different pieces did not know how to get there."

Faculty also recognized that there a benefits to the desire to grow, but that there is also a level of danger in it. A professor in a science field expressed a concern about the institution straying too far away from its original purpose:

It's always good to push yourself, it's always good to wanna be better, but you can't push yourself so hard that you forget who you are, and I think that's a danger. And I think it kind of as... And I know we discuss that every now and then it's like how far can we go up in the ranks before we become, I don't know, I don't wanna mention any names, but a place where research is so highly valued that we don't have faculty at all doing teaching.

Additionally, faculty express concern about the institution losing sight of that which it is best served to advance itself in reputation. A humanities professor explained his concern, “We’re letting some of these other expectations guide us rather than figuring out how we can be the best that we can be with our distinctive gifts and offering and context and location.”

The noted *identity crisis* by faculty is also reflected in present institutional priorities. As the institution shifts its focus from teaching more towards research, institutional priority must shift with it. However, while in the midst of transition, such priorities are often viewed as misguided by faculty.

Misguided Institutional Priorities

An additional layer to the identity crisis is a lack of clear institutional priorities. Specifically, faculty express that they are not seeing the resources or incentives they believe to be essential to their work in helping the institution advance forward. A faculty member in the humanities explained that a recent cut in administrative support staff contradicts their current espoused desires for growth. She explained:

SMU actually has a really odd problem in that what they say they wanna do, they don't actually line up the incentives for. And they pretend they want many flowers to bloom and that they support things, but then they undercut that.

Faculty note other ways in which they see institutional actions or investment not aligning with its ambitions. A tenured professor in social sciences believed that SMU focuses monetary resources in misguided directions. He noted:

But it seems like there are a few misplaced priorities. I understand some of the rationale about investing in amenities that our price point is one that requires amenities for our students. But it undermines the ability to invest in the other parts of the mission that they supposedly care about. But we have a lot of fountains.

His mention of fountains is a reference to SMU’s investment in superficial elements of the institution. A sentiment shared with similar sarcasm by many of his colleagues across disciplines

with reference to other campus elements like “new stadium,” “lawns,” “outrageous celebrations,” and “student laundry services.”

Unclear Incentives

The lack of clarity in institutional priorities and shifting institutional identity is further expressed in institutional rewards and incentives of faculty. For example, as faculty attested SMU leadership espouses that they want faculty to focus on research; however, they provide opportunities for faculty to earn additional money if they take on additional teaching responsibilities. The incentive of additional finances is one that faculty in the humanities find rewarding and confusing. One professor in humanities expressed her concerns on the conflicting incentives:

Something that SMU does that's just bonkers is they say they want to be more productive in terms of research, but SMU pays a tenth of your salary for summer teaching, for like a J-term or a summer course load, which is just if you want people to be doing research, you can't do that.

She offered the suggestion that SMU hire adequate lecturers to cover courses as additional need arises. That same faculty member noted a lack of financial incentives tied to research and suggested that misalignment of incentives with institutional goals exists She stated:

Our raises are not consistently connected to our research. I'm glad SMU doesn't have that perspective because teaching is an important part of what we do, but I think that they are not incentivizing us. If what they really care about is research, they could incentivize us in those directions.

Faculty explained that the unclear priorities make it difficult to interpret where their work efforts should lie in order to be successful in measurable aspects of faculty work, like obtaining tenure. Being presently focused on her development as a strong teacher and academic citizen in her department, a faculty member in a social science discipline explained her frustration with lack of clarity:

I am unable to accurately detect where the priorities really are. I just don't know, and it would be really helpful to know. I'd like to get tenure. I'd like to get promoted, but I

honestly do not know, and I would very much like to know, it would be incredibly helpful. *But I don't actually think they know, either.* I think it's all a little bit ad hoc.

The lack of clarity for tenure is acknowledged by senior faculty at the institution. A tenured professor in a science field noted that the institution is unclear on teaching expectations and offered the following advice to faculty on the tenure-track:

Technically for tenure, you should be outstanding in teaching or in research, but that's just not the reality. No one knows what outstanding teaching is, and so the best use of your time is to reach outstanding research. And outstanding research is bringing in research grants and publishing papers.

Unclear incentives create an obstacle for faculty to navigate when trying to complete their work responsibilities. However, the institution's lack of clarity is deeper engrained within the institution, as the faculty described receiving the same lack of clarity from messaging from institutional leadership.

Mixed Messages from Administration

The identity crisis felt at SMU is also embodied in mixed messages from administrative leaders on campus. When asked how she believed the dean of the Arts & Sciences would like to see her balance her work responsibilities (teaching, research, and service), a humanities professor explained, "You know, the dean comes at us with really contradictory messages about that. So while they technically value teaching. I don't think there's much actual valuation of that."

The mixed messages from administration are not unique to the role of teaching. Faculty expressed receiving unclear messages regarding research outputs. After a recent encounter with the Board of Trustees, a professor in the social sciences was led to believe the following about the Board of Trustees' understanding of faculty work, "If you ask me what I think, say, the Board of Trustees would prefer, they don't even understand that we do research."

Further, a newly hired assistant professor in social sciences provided another perspective on the mixed messages regarding research. She expressed her concern about how much research

she is expected to do and the noted decline in available resources to complete research in her field.

I think the higher-ups still have this expectation that you should be publishing a lot and I don't know what's gonna end up happening with that. So I like that they are pushing for more research, but I think there needs to be maybe some conversations between these people about what is actually realistic in this market of the grant dollars going down, more people doing research for less money. And a change really in how research is being conducted.

Her feelings suggest that the mixed messages from administration lead faculty to feel less supported. However, faculty suggest that a possible reason for the mixed messages and unclear incentives presented by institutional leadership may stem from limited research experience of high-level administration, not from lack of support. A faculty member in the humanities asserted the following explanation for the confusion:

I think that there are, and have been, senior leaders who themselves are not sufficiently familiar with top-tier research universities. There are some that are, I don't wanna stereotype all, but I think there are others who say they want to take us in a certain direction, but don't themselves have the values or experience to know how to do it. That's a strong statement; I believe it.

The potentially limited understanding of research and the unclear incentives are further exaggerated by the lack of resources faculty see being put behind the espoused institutional goals. A humanities faculty member noted the contradiction between messaging and resources.

She believed:

I don't know if the word agitated or nervous about the possible contradiction of all this pressure. "Yeah, we wanna move up in the ranks, but then what are we getting? Are we getting leaves? Are we getting support to be able to do the research?" I think some people need travel funds and the other disciplines that need like lab money and all that kind of thing.

A professor of social sciences agreed with the noted contradiction. He stated:

At SMU they [the administration] don't quite get it. They talk about the game, and they wanna play in the big leagues and desire to be more successful, but they really don't put a lot of funds behind it.

The confusion and lack of support behind stated initiatives has led some faculty to believe that the institution is not serious with its ambition, and thus they are not expecting much in the way of concrete changes to occur. A tenured professor with over 15 years of experience at SMU explained his frustration:

I've heard a lot said about, "We're gonna do this, we're gonna do this, we're gonna do this." And early on, actually, I asked fairly pointedly to the provost at the time, "Okay, what are you actually gonna do that will do this? What programs are you gonna put it place? What initiatives are you gonna put in place that enable faculty to focus on research? You say this is a priority. Where's the beef?" And there was no beef, and it didn't happen. And so it would be great to see this happen, but I suspect that my life is gonna be the same now until 2029 and so on and so forth.

His noted discrepancy of the institution to put resources behind its stated goals is a shared view among faculty across disciplines. A discrepancy that has led many faculty to believe the institution is not serious about its striving goals.

“Money Where Your Mouth is”

The expressed of lack of resources or evidence of support behind the institutional goals of advancement in reputation was widely felt among faculty in the study. Phrases such as “lip service” or “money where your mouth is” were frequently used in discussion of efforts or lack of such in supporting striving initiatives at SMU. A faculty member of social sciences noted that stated initiatives come with expectations:

I don't know if there's a saying in English like this, but, "I wanna see them put their money where their mouth is." In that sense, that's kind of what... It creates that expectation, in a sense.

In line with the “money where your mouth is” sentiment, a professor on the tenure-track expressed she is excited about the institution’s goals, but has yet to see any evidence of a plan to achieve the goals. She touted:

If the institution really wants to become a research force to be reckoned with, that doesn't come free. And there's no amount of pep talks to the faculty that changes the underlying reality that research costs money. So, I endorse it as a plan. Well, I endorse it as a goal, I

have yet to see much of a plan. Yeah, it's a good plan, it's a good goal. I like the goal, the goal is fantastic. It just doesn't come free.

A newly hired assistant professor in the social sciences added that the expectations need to include not just dollars, but facilities:

Yeah. I mean I think it's great. The SMU is really pushing for research, 'cause I think we can do really good research here, but there also there needs to be money put into facilities and those kinds of things as well.

Additionally, faculty expressed that the lack of awareness of administration noted previously might be a reason for the limited provision of resources towards the espoused research goals. A faculty member in social sciences explained how she has heard other faculty express the need for additional support because they are already hitting capacity in their workloads. She quoted another faculty member:

And one of the things I've heard faculty members say is, "That sounds great. Now how are you gonna support us in doing that because we're already overburdened." You forget how much time it takes to teach and pursue those more research oriented goals.

Another avenue of support that faculty would like to see from the institution is an effort to provide substance to claims of progress is additional support for graduate students. However, faculty note that their departments lack the resources to sustain their current level of support for graduate students, and hope that changes with current efforts. A social sciences professor noted that graduate student funding is among the biggest problems his department faces,

A huge problem facing our department right now is dollars for [graduate] students. I don't know how they let this happen...but.. across the school, we lack enough funding for our students. So, get this, our total annual budget for stipends has not changed since 1992, yes that's over 30 years ago, I think.

The faculty express that the lack of support research and graduate students, suggests that they are being asked to do more with the same or less resources. A science professor with over 15 years of experience at SMU noted the irony:

We've been asked to do things like take on more undergraduate researchers, because undergraduate research is one of the things that helps to rise you up in the research

institution ranking. That's fine. But we're being asked to do that with the same number of resources for say, paying them that we had yesterday, so we're being asked to do more with the same amount or sometimes even less as they cut operations funding. So it's funny, right..

Striving Context Conclusion

The first part of the findings presented provides a picture of the faculty view of SMU as a striving institution. An understanding of the this context is necessary for further understanding of how a striving environment impacts faculty individually and faculty work in general. Faculty note the expectations that come along with striving goals, and ultimately describe an institution that is in the midst of a transition or “identity crisis” that presents challenges. The tensions that faculty encounter and navigate while being situated at a striving institution are presented in Part II of findings.

Part II: Tensions in Faculty Work

The second part of the present findings describes themes that emerged during conversations with faculty at SMU regarding their specific work expectations and the challenges and values they noted they experience. Faculty balancing of aspects of work elements are discussed first followed by themes that emerged presented by the layer in which they fall: departmental, institutional, or individual.

Institutional Level

Faculty are members of their institutions, and as such are influenced by the priorities, climate, and values of their institutions. As a striving institution, it is anticipated that SMU values and prioritizes elements of faculty work that lead to an increase in institutional reputation. However, as an institution also devoted to its historical mission of undergraduate education, conflict within the institutional culture emerges. Faculty provided insight into what they believe to be the values of the institution, conflicts they see, and how those values and conflicts influence their work.

Economic

While SMU expresses a desire to grow as a research institution, faculty recognized that the institution understands where its “bread and butter” lies – in undergraduate education. Therefore, while faculty know that they are expected to produce a high-level of research, they recognize that undergraduate education holds an economic value to the institution, and thus cannot be ignored. A professor in social sciences explained this value, saying, “The undergraduates are the bread and butter of this university. And so you have to spend some time doing quality classroom work.” A professor in the humanities expanded upon this notion with greater detail. He explained his view on the beliefs of university leadership, he noted: “They are aware of the need for tuition dollars and people coming through particular units or different schools.” He goes on to explain how the economic value of undergraduate education impacts how faculty should approach their work, he continued:

They want our teaching to be good enough to keep bodies in seats and have people constantly coming through so that the dollars are coming through, so it's not that teaching is unimportant, but I think they would always love for us to be publishing more, and in better places.

However, certain disciplines are insulated from pressure to perform well in teaching. More specifically, faculty in departments with large student enrollments feel like they have the luxury of not worrying about their teaching because students will fill their departments regardless. An social science faculty member in department with high enrollment explained his lack of concern with teaching.

We don't have to worry about trying to attract students; we get too many as it is, so there's not a lot of pressure to be nice to them, there's not a lot of pressure to coddle them and make them happy. If there's any pressure, it's teach them something, but mostly spend your time on your research.

Therefore, the balance of faculty work between teaching and research regarding institutional values may differ depending on departmental enrollment abilities. Another example of this

difference emerges in conversations with faculty in departments who do not have a lot of majors, and therefore teach what they refer to as “service” courses to non-majors to hit enrollment needs.

A professor in a science discipline with few majors taking courses explained his view:

The undergraduate dollars are what keeps these things really running right now... the problem I have with my view of education these days is, it's everybody's getting an undergraduates degree, they all come in, they want their grades. The vast majority of students that are taking my classes are not science majors. We have a huge amount of service classes we must teach. We teach those service classes for a host of different reasons. Many of them are political, and many of them are educational.

He goes on to express frustration with economic value of undergraduate education to the institution. He grumbled:

I have been told many times it's about butts and seats. If I'm not getting over the course of a year, 100 students overall in all my classes, the argument is, "I'm not paying for myself." Or at least that's the argument that's made. So as soon as you get above the learning aspect, it goes into the economics very quickly. And that's where the tension lies for a host of different reasons.

Another faculty member described how she strategically utilized the emphasis on filling classes and enrollments in the creation of a class that met a curricular need that was hard to obtain for students at SMU. She explained her motivation, saying:

And we were constantly being told in faculty meetings that the thing of value to the deans and the provost and people in suits was butts in seats. We need more enrollments, lots of enrollments, particularly for a department which has very few majors.

She continued with an explanation for her creation of a class, she bragged:

We looked around and went, ‘Okay, that's a niche we could fill...alright, we can be strategic about this." So we took an existing class that had 40 students enrolled in it and it was offered every other semester. We re-jigged it, turned it into a class that met this curricular need, and now it's got 180 students in it, and it's offered every semester. So we were feeling virtuous.

While beaming with pride during her explanation her creative class creation, she hesitated when describing if she thought he efforts would be recognized or rewarded. She is unsure what the institution thinks of her efforts. In anticipation of her upcoming third year review, she stated:

“I'm gonna be super interested to see the third year review, because I am unable to accurately

detect where the priorities really are here.” Her hesitation is warranted due to the expressed uncertainty of institutional priorities and rewards noted in Part I of findings. While she is appealing to the economic value of the institution, the research value of the institution presents as what is primarily rewarded at SMU.

Research

Given its striving nature, it is no surprise that faculty see research as an institutional value of SMU. However, it is one that faculty recognize stands in a current state of growth. For context, the institution recently expanded offices to support research work of faculty including additional resources into the institution’s Institutional Review Board and Grants Offices. An assistant professor in a social sciences field explained her perspective on SMU’s growth in resources towards research, she noted, “They [SMU] are putting a lot more effort into [research] in terms of getting the grants office more people who are helping you with... Submit your grants. A few years ago there wasn't even an IRB here.” Further support that research is an institutional value emerges from faculty when asked about what it takes to be successful at SMU. A professor in the humanities explained that success at SMU is tied to research and echoed the advice he received from a mentor:

If people wanna be successful, understand that your research is the reason why you're here. One of my mentors said to me, he says "Do the work because they can't take that away from you." And that was his way of saying do your research because, again, in the end, you can be a great teacher and you'll still not get tenure and you're out. You're done. But if you have your research and you don't get tenure, at least you can go some place else.

The notion that research is valued highly in tenure is embraced across other disciplines at SMU. A science faculty member, acknowledges that the mantra of “publish or perish” is still relevant on SMU’s campuses. He explained, “Sadly, it really boils down to is your publication record. People usually say it's publish or perish. People say that’s dying, but I see no proof at this institution of that.” His notation that people on campus say that the “publish or perish” mantra is

dying may be representative of competing or unclear institutional values due to the striving nature of SMU.

External Funding

Closely coupled with the value of research is the value of external funding. External funding serves as another focus anticipated of SMU as a striving institution. External funding, typically in the form of grants, stands as a necessary component to increase institution prestige across multiple measures. However, similar to research evolving in recent years as a stronger institutional value, the push towards external funding parallels in emphasis at SMU. A social science professor described how his perspective on grants and obtaining grants evolved during his more than a decade at the institution. When asked about how often he works on grants, he responded:

All the time. So that's changed. And I spend a lot more time doing grant-supported research. When I first started there weren't a lot of grants, and so... I didn't have any grants. [chuckle].. My focus within the research has changed a lot to be more grant-supported research, as opposed to just individual or personal interest research. There is more value in doing research supported by grants.

However, the institutional rewards tied to grants, such as tenure, appear to vary by department at SMU. For example, a faculty member in the sciences explained that a grant “is highly favored. It’s not something you have to do in order get promoted,” she continued explaining how the value to her of grants contributes less to the prestige of the institution, but rather to her ability to add resources to her research. She discussed her reasons for currently searching for another grant.

It helps if you have a grant for being able to buy yourself out of coursework and also, being able to fund the graduate students, so... And if I have money to fund a graduate student then that helps me be a little more productive.

A colleague of hers in the sciences, but in a different department, emphasized that grants are a non-negotiable regarding tenure. Her colleague asserted “if you don’t bring in a research grant,

you're out of here. And you would be out of any major university if you don't bring in research money." An assistant professor of sciences recognized that an expectation exists for him to bring in research grants. After explaining that the institution provided him a start-up package to help him get his research in motion, he talks about the long-term expectations of receiving grants. He explained:

So long-term is that I need to bring in grant funding. So in my field, the dominant granting agencies, funding agencies are the Department of Energy and NASA. It's not just that I need to churn out publications, but I need to put out publications that are impactful enough that I'm recognized with grant funding.

However, he continued explaining how the expectations to bring in grants influence his workload as a faculty member:

In the amount of time that I spent, grant applications took up a lot of time for weeks of last semester and this semester, but it goes in cycles. And so right now, I'm not thinking about it because I'm just waiting to hear back on these things, but that's another significant chunk of my time.

In the humanities, a professor explained that "limited grants are available in his field...but fortunately I do not need them write my books." Other professors in humanities share his view of limited grants in their respective field, but expressed that they understand an increasing value of grants to the institution. One professor, who has received a grants previously explained, "At the end of the day and what I've noticed now that I've had a couple of grants, which is unusual in my particular field. They really like it when we bring in outside money."

Value of Teaching Confusion

As a striving institution, SMU places heavy emphasis on research and limited outward emphasis on its more traditional focus of teaching. In turn, faculty expressed a level of uncertainty or confusion around the value of teaching at SMU. Many faculty recognized that teaching is valuable due to the aforementioned economic benefit of "butts in seats," but, there exists a confusion on the value of it as a stand-alone service or mission of the institution. For

instance, a professor in a humanities field illuminated the contradictory messages expressed regarding the value of teaching. She explained:

We're told that teaching matters and SMU's actually pretty good at rewarding teaching. But at the end of the day I've noticed that grants matter. I was at a meeting where it was very clear that that was how research was construed, it was external funding. And when I look at what gets held up and rewarded, they prefer us to be doing that... Because I think it's an easier sell to the Board of Trustees and other people who might donate money. So while they technically value teaching. I don't think there's much actual valuation of that. So but again, we get very contradictory messages.

She continued with a comparison of how teaching does not receive the same outward-facing recognition as research by the institution. She noted:

I've won several teaching awards here. It occurred to me that we don't reward it, as well in our tenure process. We don't really know what to do with it. It's certainly important. If you're a terrible teacher, you'll not get tenure at the university. But we also... I know people who have won national teaching awards and I'm one of them, and those don't get advertised particularly well, unlike major research accomplishments where you find people's faces flashed all over.

The idea that teaching is not important for tenure is cautiously shared perspective in other disciplines. When asked about what advice he would give to a new professor about being successful at SMU, a social science faculty member shared the following:

Don't neglect your teaching because teaching will matter here, but my sense is that, increasingly in the tenure review process, teaching can only hurt you in the sense that it can hurt you if it's bad, but it is less and less able to be helpful if it's really good... Because like I say, while being an excellent teacher can't get you tenure here, being a problematic teacher can prevent you from getting tenure here. So that's something that they will need to attend to.

He illustrates that while teaching is not a critical value of the institution in the sense that a focus on that work product would get a faculty member tenure, it is valued enough that the neglect of teaching could lead to your demise on the tenure-track. His sentiments are in line with what many faculty termed “teach good, not great” in relation to career advancement.

The confusion around teaching and its value is represented in tenure policies. The general University Tenure Policy states that tenure will be awarded to faculty “who are outstanding in

either teaching or research (or equivalent activity) and whose performance in the other is of high quality.” However, a professor in a social science discipline explained, “Teaching is difficult to measure. What is outstanding teaching? Research is quantifiable. Research should be the focus. Research will get you tenure. Outstanding teaching, whatever that looks like, won’t.” The perspective that SMU tenure policies inaccurately depict the value of teaching relatively to research is shared across disciplines. A professor from a science department posited:

Theoretically, SMU in, for example, the tenure process values teaching and researching equally. That is not true. [chuckle] As a practical matter... No, we value teaching more than most research universities do. That's for sure. But to say that these are two equally weighted criteria, as the policy suggests, doesn't reflect the reality of how people are reviewed. I'd be a little bit cautious about drawing too much from documents about this.

The presented confusion around the value of teaching reflects SMU’s present transition towards a stronger focus on research, while keeping true to its undergraduate teaching.

Conclusion

Faculty at SMU express both confusion and clarity regarding the institution’s values. Research surfaces as a clear direction the institution is headed; however teaching presents with less clarity. The fact the teaching is closely coupled with the apparent economic value that exists at SMU creates an additional layer faculty must grapple when deciding how to approach their work expectations.

Departmental Level

As outlined in the framework presented in Chapter 2, faculty are simultaneously situated in multiple cultures that create complimentary and competing contexts through which faculty work. One such layer of culture is their disciplinary culture, which for the purposes of this study is represented by their department. Therefore, a potential key influence on how faculty balance and navigate the pillars of their work is the department in which they reside. Elements of a faculty’s department that emerged as consideration impacting their workload included:

composition, collegiality, aspirations/growth, and resources. Participants in this study provided insight into these elements in the following section.

Composition

The composition of a department in which a faculty resides holds an influence on their work expectations and how they potentially balance their workload. Key elements of composition that emerged through interviews with faculty include: age of faculty, number of faculty, and ranks of faculty (lectures vs. tenure track). An assistant professor in humanities expressed his frustration with the “old school” ways of his department, but expressed optimism for a change in the coming years. He noted:

Our department is quite old in age and five years from now, it's gonna look very different. So part of what I'm feeling is sort of like, I'm itching for some new blood of people who are young and enthusiastic and energetic. I feel like we have a bunch of people who are kind of coasting at the end of their careers.

He continues expressing that he feels like he has to carry extra engagement with students because his more senior colleagues do not “carry their weight” in that area. He complained:

If I did not leave my door open to students, all the doors in the office would be slammed shut. The students see me as someone they can come to, so they come to me. I just wish my colleagues would carry some of that weight. I enjoy supporting students, but I don't have time to meet all of their demands...even if I wanted to.

A senior colleague in the same department acknowledged that the “graying” of the department is causing problems for his younger colleagues.

I'll quote a colleague who said this and he said it in I think a realpolitik way, which is he said, "We kind of need a new department." Which is his way of saying our department's graying and there are a lot of people of course who are set in their ways including him. And we need a lot of newer, younger faculty who are more flexible, who have new ways of doing things and that might help us solve a lot of our problems.

The aging of departments is something felt in other disciplines at SMU. A social science professor believed when he first came to SMU over 20 years ago his department was going

through a similar need. He acknowledged the benefit of hiring a younger work force. He described the developing change in composition of his department:

And so we had really developed a great young faculty, people in their early 30s, so there was a real energy. I came over here, it was like walking into a ward. [chuckle] Lots of really old people who'd been here for a long time and kind of at the end of their rope. And so most of what we did the first 10 years or so was hire junior faculty, replace people who were either retiring or dying. The addition of the new blood really added a new life to the department. Less conflict. More optimism.

Another element of composition that participants noted was an increasing number of lecturers or contingent faculty within their departments. A professor in humanities reflected on the presence of more lecturers in her department:

I think a thing that's hard in this department that I think affects all of us, is just the composition of the department. The fact that we're like... I've heard different numbers, but 70-80% lecturers. And so there aren't other departments like that on campus. I mean, the English department is split, so you have the discernment in this course group and their lecturers.

She goes on to explain the workload and stakes differ too much between those on the tenure-track and those off of it (lecturers) and that tensions and resentment emerge. She continued:

The lecturers are overworked and underappreciated. While many are just happy for the work, most are resentful of how small their voice is considered. If I could change one thing in this department, I would give all the qualified lecturers a tenure-track position. That would level out tension and – I'd feel better about how our department allocates work.

The lecturers to whom she is referring were part of a hiring effort by her department to help professors on the tenure-track teach higher level courses more related to their research efforts. Therefore, the hiring of these lectures impacts how faculty balance their work in the department.

Additionally, the size of departments at SMU influence faculty work. Faculty often described their department at SMU with “small,” “tiny,” “limited in size,” or similar language when comparing SMU to the institutions where they received training. A professor in a science department noted that his department is relatively small when compared to other institutions. He explained:

We're a small department, so we've typically been around 10 faculty for a long time. It's fluctuated up and down, a little bit here and there, but typically we're about a faculty of 10, most departments with major research agendas, like ours, have 40 to 60 faculty members and post-docs.

A professor in the humanities noted that his department is also smaller by comparison. He reflected. "When I think about my time [in Graduate school]...I first recall how vibrant my conversations were with my budding colleagues. It felt like new ideas were everywhere. Here we are stifled, primarily due to our size." The size of a department also impacts faculty service loads. For example, a humanities faculty member described how his department handles service expectations:

In a small department, we don't have any choice but to all do the things that the department has to do. So in a bigger department, people can slough off committee work and here things happen and somebody's gotta do it and I think people are good about accepting things as they come that way.

In other words, regardless of the size of a department, certain elements of work must be completed. The overall composition of a faculty member's department provides a contextual element that impacts their work. Faculty with departments dominated by faculty nearing retirement feel like they need to pick up the slack of their less invested colleagues. The size of departments impacts the intellectual environment as well as the sheer number of people able to complete shared work.

Growth

Faculty suggested that while many of their departments are limited by size, SMU is currently in a process of expanding departments and further developing programs. Evidence of this is brought to light by professors who express that they were hired in an effort to expand and grow their respective department. However, many are the first or only hire in their specific subfield. An assistant professor in a science department explained how he was the first hired in his sub-field. He rationalized:

I was the first hire in an effort to expand the department toward a different area of research. So in particular, there is an effort to expand toward my area... So the ongoing faculty search in the department is related to this expansion into my area also. And so the longer term vision is to have, in addition to this course I'm teaching, more course offerings for the graduate students to be able to pursue a different research sub-field within the department.

He goes on to describe how being the only hire in his field influences his work as a new professor. He clarified that he is in the process of prepping two new courses, which is unique for assistant professors, especially those in their first year. He continued:

So it's somewhat unique in that I'm teaching a new course this semester, not only is it a new course that I'm... The first time I'm prepping it, which is obvious because it's the first time I'm teaching here. But it's a new course for the department, it's the first time the course has been taught.

The efforts towards expansion and growth are prominent in the social science fields as well. A similar experience with course preparation is describe by an assistant professor of social science. She discussed how she is in the process of developing four new courses for her department. She stated, "I'm basically program building, I'm the only member of my discipline. I'm doing all these new classes. This will be seven new preps I've done since I got here." She continued by expressing her curiosity as to how the institution will reward her for the additional efforts she is putting forth for her department regarding teaching. She posited:

I am going to be very interested to see if there is actually any reward for that, or if we just pretend there's a reward for that. And really, the only thing that matters is how many papers did you put out last year. We'll see. I don't know yet.

Her lack of clarity in rewards may be due to the lack of clarity or mixed messages faculty perceive of SMU during the institution's striving transition.

Further, similar growth is occurring in the humanities disciplines. However, not as quickly as its science or social science counterparts. An associate professor in the uumanities reflected on how he was the first hired with the intention of expanding the faculty in his sub-specialty further, but that those efforts stalled out. He expressed, " I was hired as an assistant

professor for my specialty and I came originally to develop the offering of my specialty. I'm still the only professor in my field here. He continues with a reflection on how being the only professor in his subfield is isolating, "In graduate school there were many scholars working in the same discipline, but here – just me. I feel a bit isolated here."

The loneliness expressed by this faculty member is shared sentiment of many faculty who were hired as the only person in their field or in an effort to expand their program. The assistant professor in science who was the first hired in his subfield discussed his feelings as the only scholar in his field. He acknowledged:

The biggest change has been I, at the moment, don't have strong research connections with my colleagues. We have things that we can talk about in [my department] in general, but I don't collaborate with my colleagues here...

The lack of ability to relate to colleagues on research due to being the only person in their specific field is felt by other faculty members. The transition from graduate school to SMU created feelings of isolation for faculty in the humanities as well. An assistant professor in a humanities field expressed how he was hired to fill a void in offerings of the department, and noted the following in his transition to SMU:

What I noticed... A thing that I noticed right away was that in graduate school, I felt like there were a bunch of people who all worked in my field who I saw at events and talked to all the time. And then I got here and like, "I am the Junior [Professor's Field]". There is a Senior [Professor's Field], but we are the only people in our field together. And there's a couple of other people whose fields I overlap, but... it mostly feels like everybody works on something different, and there isn't a whole group of us.

While growth is traditionally a positive attribution of a department, the noted isolation of many faculty during growth suggests that it may be a detriment as well as a benefit to faculty work and experience.

Environment

In addition to composition and aspects of growth present within departments at SMU, the collegiality and less concrete elements of departmental culture influence how faculty manage

balancing their work responsibilities. Faculty described that many departments on campus lack a level of cultural support for their faculty and graduate students. For example, in the expression of a different explanation for a feeling of isolation, an associate professor of social sciences reflected:

Starting here was pretty isolating, actually. Not that people were closed-doored necessarily, but something about both the geography of the campus and surrounding area and the geography of Dallas, made that type of socializing a lot more difficult. There wasn't a culture of socializing in a general sense here.

Another trend that emerged from descriptions of collegiality in departments was the idea of interruptions. The interruptions described appear to potentially stem from the immediacy that dictates much of faculty work. A professor of humanities described his policy relating to keeping his door open, "If my door is cracked open there are interruptions. Colleagues will poke their head in to ask questions or to have spontaneous meetings about one subject or another, which could last from a few minutes to half an hour." The culture of interruptions and immediacy is present in other disciplines. A science professor begrudgingly described the culture in his department compared to his previous institutions. He stated:

I've just decided, "Okay, well, the culture's not quite as respectful in my department here as it was in other places where I was a scientist." So I've actually taken now to hiding in other places on campus to get work done, so that I can get closer to my ideal day. Because what I found is that, as much as it's flattering, people come to me in the department to help solve problems.

A science colleague in a different department described how she had a similar experience in her department. She bragged on her development of a clever solution in an effort to keep interruptions at bay: "I have a little sign behind you, it says "Writing day. Knock at your own risk." [chuckle] I put that on my door. It's on my door. I put that on my door. I have all my little signs." The other signs she reference include, "Meeting with a Student", "On a conference call",

“Reading”, “In Class”, and “Go – Away”. She noted that it is not a perfect system, but it has limited interruptions comparatively.

As present as a culture of interruptions is at SMU, there also exists a level of collegiality within departments. When asked about how they would handle taking an additional element of work, such as teaching an overload course, many sentiments like “if the department needed me to” or “if it was best for the department” surfaced. For example, a social science professor, explained how he would respond to taking on extra work saying, “I would always do it if the department needed me to. If department was in a crunch, I would definitely help out.”

Faculty expressed wanting to extend the same courtesy to members of their department regarding service work. A social science professor explained why she agreed to take on serving as Chair for another term:

The only reason I agreed to be the chair again, because I didn't see an alternative. And if you've been part of building something, which I had a decade ago, you wanna make sure that it continues.

Her loyalty in wanting to see the department success continue is one she shares with faculty across disciplines. In describing the climate of his department, a science faculty member described his willingness to pitch-in:

Usually, it doesn't take much for me to say, "Sure." I do it because I've got a good department. People are friendly. When something is wrong, people help out. And when people need help, it's provided. It sounds cheesy, but it's true, it's really kind of well-thought of as a department, and knowing that when my time comes and I need help, they give it to me.

Another element of departmental culture that emerged during interviews is a growing emphasis on research. This push exists across disciplines; however it is most forcefully and outright acknowledged by those in science fields. An associate professor of science acknowledged that an emphasis on research exists in his department, “There has been a big push within the [XXX] Department to increase the department's profile and the university's profile in terms of research.”

To describe the balance of work in her department, a professor in another science department expressed her expectation of her colleagues regarding how she and they should balance their work.

There is no excuse, as a scientist at any university that is R-1 or our department essentially works like an R-1. So we are an R-1 level research department inside a university that hasn't quite reached that status. So in a situation like that, you should always be balanced with research as a bigger piece of the pie.

Overall, aspects of the departmental environment such as a culture of collegiality or interruptions may influence faculty work. A faculty member housed in a more collegial department may feel greater assurance to take on the aforementioned cosmopolitan work with the noted support from his colleagues. A faculty member who is consistently interrupted may find a struggle with balancing her pillars of work.

Resources

The final element of departmental context that emerged in interviews with faculty about their work was that of resources. As presented in Chapter 3, in 2015, three years prior to data collection for this study, SMU went through an institutional wide resource reallocation. One major initiative from this initiative was to trim and consolidate administrative support staffing roles within departments. Given the multiple layers through which resources are thread (Institution, Department, Personal Needs, etc.) findings regarding the impact of resources are grouped as separate section in findings. A small sample of findings is provided here to acknowledge that departmental level resources are influential in faculty work, but they are hard to discern from institutional level resources in this study.

Many of the sentiments expressed by faculty regarding administrative burden due to limited resource stem from previously noted. A long-standing professor in the social sciences explained the repercussions of decreased staff in her department. She stated:

I mean, there are just limited resources, right? We were “Bained,” to use the verb, and we went down to one departmental staff person, as did most of the departments across Dedman College...so now we [the faculty] all have more work.

A professor in the humanities reflected on a time when she was able to hire a graduate assistant to help her with work for a semester through an external grant, “I was actually free, to do the actual work on the grant, and then could still be teaching and all the other things I need to do. So it really would be tremendously helpful if we had a full time administrative person.”

Another aspect of departmental resources that potentially influence faculty work is start-up packages or initially funding provided upon hire. However, limited information regarding those resources did not prominently surface during this study. The absence of the mention of such sources is noted. However, an assistant professor of science readily disclosed how his start-up package was enough to enable him to do his work. He explained:

In the near term, I have a startup package which is fairly robust that allows me to do... Will easily cover the travel that I need to do. It turns out that I haven't had a lot of international trips lately, and that's due mostly to the fact that the collaborations I'm involved in hold the workshops and meetings, collaboration meetings in the US that are at places that are fairly cheap to travel to.

Conclusion

The department in which a faculty member is associated has the potential to influence how faculty manage their work responsibilities. Key elements like composition, environment, and resources emerge as characteristics of departments that faculty note as impacting the management of their work.

Individual Level

Another distinct layer that influences faculty work resides in the personal values they hold towards the work. Faculty, as a whole, value elements of each aspect of their work responsibilities: teaching, research, service. However, the extent to which they value each differs by individual. Additionally, the intrinsic motivations of a faculty member as well as their unique

desires and limitations towards their work influence their approaches and successes. While many of the personal values mirror that of institutional or departmental values previously discussed, they offer a different angle, one that focuses on the individual more than institutional.

Personal Prestige

An element that emerges essential to academics is their personal prestige or reputation. However, their motivations and avenues towards garnering prestige varies. Faculty consistently spoke about the value of networking both in and out of the institution as well as the need for people to “know your name” internally for institutional recognition and externally for recognition as contributors to their disciplines. As such, faculty expressed the need to harvest personal prestige. A professor in humanities offers the following advice for success:

Early in your career definitely talk to other people. Make sure you network with other people. Don't lose track of contacts that you had from graduate school or from previous jobs, or anybody. Make sure you network out in the profession, because working in communities is more and more important all the time...and people recognizing your name.

A colleague in a different humanities department shared a similar perspective on the value of personal prestige. However she suggested that faculty need to not only keep up with connections at their previous institutions and their professional circles, but they need to develop a network within their institutions. She expressed the importance of institutional service as an avenue for internal recognition with the following:

So I think to be successful at the university one has to be on those university committees. Most people at this university know who I am, vaguely at least. And it's because I took some time when I was on the faculty senate. I've been in charge of a few committees around that had a lot of press. And that will help when it comes to things like tenure because somebody's reading my tenure portfolio could probably put my face with the portfolio, and that's something my department made sure happened.

In addition to networking for advancement in personal prestige and recognition, faculty also suggested that research, specifically the production of “high-quality” and “respectable” research serves as a strong avenue and self-perpetuating in nature. An associate professor of the social

sciences believed that research is the key to prestige and integral in developing a network and future research opportunities. He advised:

If you're trying to build your academic career, people are looking at your output in terms of publications, where you're papers are getting published. So in that sense, I mean it's important to develop your personal reputation as a scholar... And in the end, of course, that impacts if you wanna get a grant, it impacts whether you get other job offers. It also impacts if you can travel to conferences, or not. So that also impacts your networking.

Faculty also tie personal prestige with the opportunity to advance to a different institution in the future. Suggesting that they may use their time at SMU to grow professionally to a point that they can advance to a better institution or leverage an external offer for a financial promotion. A social science faculty member noted the importance of research to prestige by stating:

Research is far, in a way, the primary vehicle by which you achieve financially and you're your reputation. That is if you want to get external offers, those are going to be driven primarily by your research track record and visibility.

Another social science professor from a different department added that the production of research output is only one element of research work necessary to the development of an external reputation:

Also producing good PhD students, going to conferences, things like that, that's what gets you good reputation, that's what increases your marketability, and if I decide I wanna leave here, that's what will get me a job somewhere else.

Both professors believed that an external reputation is what will lead them to have a stronger career either at SMU or another institution. Whether or not a faculty member values personal prestige and the avenue through which a faculty member chooses to pursue prestige influences how they approach their work.

The Practice of Self-Restraint

Another important element to the personal layer of influence on faculty work that emerges in conversations with faculty at SMU is the ability and the willingness to practice self-restraint and impose limitations on aspects of faculty work. These limitations merged necessary

to success because many faculty expressed that “self-restraint” was needed towards aspects of work they enjoy over other facets of their job. For example, an professor in the sciences explained how much she enjoys her work on the institutional curriculum committee. She expressed that she has to be intentional and said “I keep myself in from doing too much work on that because I know that I could easily spend an entire day doing something like that.” She goes on to explain certain management practices in which she has engaged in to keep herself from spending too much time on service.

A common theme regarding the need to create limitations on time spent on work centers around teaching. A science faculty member shed light as to why such practices are regularly occurring by faculty, he explained:

I find that teaching, if allowed, will fill any volume you give it, because you can always do more. I could always prep more problems, I could always make more resources for my students to try to study. I can always do more, and I always want to do more, which means I need to rein myself in.

His experience with teaching limits is a shared sentiment with his colleagues in different disciplines. An assistant professor in the humanities explains realized the value in limiting his time on teaching, and recognized that his students will not suffer if he regulates the time he spends; however he finds the limitation less satisfying. He added:

The students really will be fine. They'll have just as good an experience, and it's okay. And I actually agree with that, but I find it more satisfying to not abbreviate the teaching work that I do. I can grade three papers an hour, but I hate it. I would rather spend an hour grading each paper, which is kind of unrealistic, timewise time-wise. But I have more fun if I can really sit there and think about it.

As important as it is to acknowledge that faculty expressed a need to limit their time on teaching and service is the fact that research is never mentioned as needing limitation. Rather research emerged as being embraced at all cost as described in a previous section discussing the value of faculty time and making time for research.

Personal Value of a Pillar of Work

Faculty expressed elevating different aspects of their work higher than others with regards to their personal interests. Some faculty are strongly convicted in their value as researchers, and other found surprise in how much they enjoyed the teaching expectations of their work. Additionally, faculty recognized that service is a necessary function of their role and to the success of their own careers, institution, and disciplines. The value faculty place on a specific pillar of work directly influences their work in that pillar as well as indirectly impacts the work of the other pillars.

Research presents as an element of work that most faculty interviewed hold personal value. Faculty expressed notions such as “I would just like to focus on research 5 days a week” and “I got into this line of work because I like doing research.” A social science professor joked, “On a Saturday afternoon, if I don't have to mow the lawn or whatever, I want to do my research stuff. Rather do that than watch TV.” A humanities faculty member, who values research, explained that she enjoys teaching as well, but her joy of teaching stems from her love of her for he subject matter. She expressed, “My real passion is in the research. I enjoy the teaching, but it's because I love my subject matter that I enjoy talking about it with other adults who are interested in it, but it's not teaching, per se.” She added that the balancing of her work is impacted by how much she enjoys or values the work in which she is engaging. She shared her frustrations regarding a current administrative role that she feels was “dumped in her lap,” and thus she dislikes doing. She explained how her service work pulls on the other aspects of the work she loves, like research:

The thing that's most frustrating about this whole issue is that it pulls... I love my work. I get up in the morning, I get excited about it, it's joyful. The problem with the work-work balance is that it... the work, the different aspects of the work, is that it's moving between work that's joyful and work that's hateful, right?

The pull she feels is shared with other faculty at SMU. When asked how he would construct his ideal work day between his various responsibilities, a humanities professor, not presently teaching a course expressed the following:

If I had my druthers, I would spend half the day reading, doing what it is that I love to do, which is to read and to read literature, and to explore it and write about it. And then the rest of the time, taking care of whatever administrative tasks there that might be piling up during the day.

He concluded noting “that would be the most ideal, but it's very difficult to make it work out that way.” His expression of difficulty adds to the understanding that personal value or preference is only one piece that influence faculty work and that institutional or departmental elements interplay in how work is ultimately completed.

As noted in the *Service Burden* section of findings related to balancing the pillars of faculty work, faculty view service as a burden and time consuming function. However, when considering the value of service, faculty express that they realize the reasons behind service and recognize the necessary role it plays. Further, some faculty take strides to be intentional with their research activities by focusing such efforts on aspects of the work they view as “shaping the institution” or “having an impact on the future” or “leaving their mark.” A professor of social sciences explained he participates in institutional service because “it has to be done” he continued:

And I understand... And so especially in terms of departmental, but also college service commitments that... Right, somebody has gotta do it. And I have to kinda carry my weight here but if I had my choice in how all this worked, then somebody else would be doing it.

While his “carrying my weight” perspective is shared by many of his colleagues, many faculty conveyed the value they see in their service work. When asked about how, in an ideal world, he would balance his current workload, an assistant professor in the sciences noted that he would still want to stay involved in his present service work.

The committees I'm on right now, the faculty search committee is something that I would have wanted to maintain even if I could pick how much time I devote to anything. I wouldn't want to eliminate that because having a say in the next faculty hire is so important for developing the department, especially as we push to this new direction, that the amount of time spent on it has not been a burden.

In a similar vein, a professor in the humanities articulated that he participated in service early on in his career because he “was interested in gaining all sorts of experience in the spirit of cross-training, so that I could understand this institution, and academia in general, better,” and continued noting that he has transitioned his service outward to community and explained his motivations for doing so, saying:

I am passionately interested in helping, so it's an opportunity to help shape the guild and the public understanding of my field through service. So I do a lot of work on [my field] and K through 12 education, and so that's an area where there's always much to talk about and work on, and I think that has civic importance as well.

In general, the service element of faculty work is recognized by faculty as either a burden disguised as an opportunity or an opportunity disguised as a burden. However, faculty across disciplines expressed that, regardless of this, service work is an essential function.

As noted in previous sections of the findings to this study, teaching emerges as a point of confusion and conflict in terms of faculty work balance. Faculty describe levels of uncertainty in terms of how they see teaching rewarded by the institution and explain how they structure their days and schedules to limit the amount of time they devote to teaching, so as to not impair productivity with research. However, faculty also discussed the personal value they see in teaching with many faculty using words like “rewarding” and “enjoy” to describe their feelings their time in front of the classroom. A social science professor described his feelings towards teaching and student learning:

And it's always nice, I felt like there's nothing cooler than actually seeing when a student suddenly grasps something and they're like, "Oh, wow. I had never thought about or I had never understood something." And I think that's really great. So I think in that sense, it's really important.

A professor in the humanities expressed a similar sentiment towards teaching, saying “I love teaching. Right after I get out of my classes, I will feel like on a high, on a teaching high. [chuckle] So yeah, I enjoy teaching and dealing with students.” Some faculty find the joy they experience with teaching surprising, with many airing that they did not anticipate to like teaching when they began their careers. An assistant professor in the humanities confessed:

I didn't expect to enjoy teaching as much as I do, and I just didn't expect it to be as much a part of my life as it is, but I think about teaching all the time. It's a more rewarding part of the job than I expected.

Not all faculty share the same sense of reward with teaching. Some faculty clarified that they value instruction, but they are motivated by a sense of obligation rather than personal reward. In describing how he incorporates teaching into his balance of work, a professor in the sciences explained why he works to keep students engaged in the classroom:

I need to get ready for them [students] because, one, I have to find the energy, review the notes and say, "Okay, what is it about this class or this lecture, that's gonna make me motivated and keep the students hopefully somewhat engaged?" And then the second thing is just they need to... That's what they're paying for, they need to have quality material presented.

Whether out of a sense of obligation or reward, faculty at SMU expressed some level of personal value regarding their teaching responsibilities.

Conclusion

The personal values expressed by faculty illustrates that varied personal values exist regarding the different pillars of work faculty are expected to complete. While most faculty value research relatively consistently, divergent perspectives of the value of teaching and service are present at SMU. The variation of personal values may influence how faculty balance and approach their work respective to institutional and departmental elements.

Balancing Pillars of Work (Teaching, Research, Service)

Faculty carry tremendous workloads within their respective institutions and fields, with SMU being no exception. Typical work expectations of faculty included a combination of teaching, research, and service activities. Faculty are thus tasked with engaging in a balancing act across these function to complete their work, at times with a high level of expectation from institutional stakeholders.

High/Impossible Expectations

Faculty at SMU expressed that they are in an environment comprised of high expectations with leadership and peers that “expects them to do everything” and “be good at everything.” The context of striving places pressure on faculty to meet the presented research goals while still staying true to the teaching mission of the institution. When asked about how she believes leadership would like to see her balance her work between teaching, research, and service, an assistant professor nearing her third year review joked: “Oh, heavens, 100-100-100. I mean, who are we kidding?”

Though said in a cheeky tone, her feelings were shared by professors from other disciplines and ranks. A tenured social sciences faculty member expressed how when she first came to SMU over 10 years ago, she realized to succeed she needed to be good at both teaching and research:

I was like, "Wow this is gonna have to... I'm really gonna have to be careful about how I plan my day and figure out how to really run that gauntlet between the two and present as somebody who's really good at both." And that was a difficult thing. Still is honestly.

As noted by the above professor, she felt a need to “present” herself as excelling at both aspects of her job, and noted the difficulty in that expectation. An assistant professor in the sciences explained that she is expected to spend time on research and be a good teacher “effortlessly.”

She described:

They want us to spend the time on research. They want us to be good teachers, but they want us to be good teachers effortlessly, ideally, I think. You know? So that everything

would go smoothly and we would teach students and they would understand everything perfectly and then we could spend a bunch of our time on research.

A senior colleague in the same department supports his junior colleagues expression of a need to be good at teaching, while still being a strong researcher. The associate professor noted:

And at SMU I would say, you need to be good at everything. Because whether I agree... I have a perspective and our department has a perspective. The university puts a huge amount of weight on teaching and teaching evaluations. And if those are mediocre, they get hit. So, you have to be good, in terms of the university level, you have to be good at everything.

The idea of being good at everything is a notion that professors acknowledged they grow to manage better with time, but that they, at times, still find it to be a challenge. A social sciences faculty member acknowledged his struggle with balancing his multiple responsibilities. He explained:

It's an issue of too many different responsibilities all at once. I've gotten a little bit better with it over the years, but it's still tough. When I'm revising on my classes, I think 'I need to be doing research' ...and when I'm working on my research, I think 'I need to be spending more time when my students. Service is just sprinkled in and fills the cracks where it can. But, I should probably take my service work more seriously. I need 30 hours in a day.

His noted struggle of “too many responsibilities” brings forward a key tension faculty must navigate, the ‘simple’ balance of the aspects of work expectation of them – in a traditional sense that refers to balancing the three pillars of teaching, research, and service.

Balancing Elements of Work

Amidst the “do everything well” ideal, faculty at SMU expressed the need to strike a balance between their responsibilities. The primary need for balance expressed by faculty exists between teaching and research. A mid-career social science professor explained the need for such a balance, and how the need for prioritization emerges:

Because there's a time trade-off between [teaching and research], and they both have their rewards and they're different kinds of rewards. I think that is a key work balance question that people will face, particularly during the tenure process, it's pretty clear which one of those you gotta do. But teaching is important too. You've got to prioritize.

However such a balance comes with challenges, aspects of both teaching and research have draws to pull attention away from the other. Specifically, professors from across ranks and disciplines acknowledge that the “immediate feedback” and “seductiveness” of teaching make it easy to create an imbalance of efforts towards teaching. A professor of a social science department expressed his concern regarding keeping the balance between teaching and research about a newly hired professor in his department. He described:

Maintaining the balance between the teaching and the research. We hired a young woman, she's real bright, real energetic, I think she's got a fantastic future. She's got lots and lots of energy, and so the only thing that she has to worry about... Because students are naturally attracted to that kind of thing, is keeping them away. [chuckle] You gotta give them some time, but you can't start gearing your days and your career toward students that you're teaching. If you do that you might as well just kiss it off.

A member of the humanities faculty shared a similar concern about faculty in his department. Regarding them as excellent teachers who have a tendency to be “out of balance” regarding their work efforts, he noted:

I try to get people to understand how to create that real balance because I think things are, they're out of balance. We have some of the best teachers in the university and people will devote an awful lot of time to their teaching to the detriment of their research in some cases.

Teaching being a draw on time and efforts is something that assistant professors acknowledge and try and adjust accordingly. An assistant professor in a science discipline spoke about advice she was given regarding teaching and research:

I was told that a balance would be tough, but teaching takes more time than I anticipated. I think that's fair because it's my first semester and that that'll start to equalize soon. And I was warned that there was going to be a lot less time for research as a professor than there is as a post-doc.

An assistant professor of humanities explained that when he devoted what he believed might be considered too much time on teaching by his colleagues feelings of guilt surfaced:

I was never incentivized to do any of my teaching work. So I always felt a little bit guilty when I was doing... Like being a good teacher was sort of like a luxury. But I did it, but I

often felt like, I'm not really supposed to be working on this, I should just be sort of putting in the, a basic, you know whatever like a sort of minimum teaching hours and then spend the rest of time working on my book.

Faculty reveal different strategies they attempt to employ to keep the balance. Multiple time management techniques surface, but a clear theme emerged of the need to keep teaching at bay and make time for research. A full professor in a science field explained he usually strikes a good balance, but sometimes the balance is off-kilter due to unforeseen reasons.

So I usually have two semesters out of three that are very student-heavy, where I'm preparing classes, evaluating classes and evaluating students and then interacting with students most of the day. And then a third semester I would say, which is much more research-focused. That's me, other people try and balance it differently. Everything gets done moderately well but not to what I like.

In his case, his high class load and externally funded research all “hit” within the same semester, thus requiring him to strike a balance that led him to do things “only moderately” well compared to how he would like to do them. Compromising on the quality of work to create a balance is a sentiment shared among faculty at SMU. Another faculty member in the sciences discussed a time when she had to deliver less in the classroom because of a demand of her research. She was working with external collaborators who had to fly up a week early for a meeting due to unforeseen circumstances. In that instance, she explained:

I had to give a bad class lecture. I mean a really bad lecture in preparing to do really well with my collaborators who had flown up from Austin, that was the trade-off, though I rarely give a bad lecture. But in this case it was really bad. But I had to let something give, and I wasn't going to embarrass myself to my collaborators.

Her decision to prioritize her research over teaching when forced to make the choice brings forward a noted theme across many faculty descriptions of their teaching and research balance. Research surfaced as the top priority of this balance among faculty, citing “guilt” and a need to “reign in” efforts on teaching to keep it from interfering with research. The absence of the existence of the choice of teaching over research in similar scenarios is notable.

Service Perceptions

The traditional third pillar of faculty work responsibility centers on service. Service is an element faculty note that they received limited incentives to complete. The faculty at SMU share this perspective on service. A science professor acknowledged the influence rewards hold on his devotion to service, expressing:

We have to have some service in order for the university to run but I also feel like it's not as important to people who are on promotion in tenure committees as you're teaching and your research. Therefore, I shouldn't spend as much time on it.

The service burden is felt differently across ranks. In a subsequent section, the findings of this study discuss a culture of protecting junior professors' time, and one element of that protection is keeping them from being overly burdened with service. Therefore, tenured professors explain how once they attained tenure, the expectations for service dramatically increased. A professor in humanities reflected on comments from his previous senior colleagues about the evolution of service after tenure:

Professors always used to say, "You'll never believe how much time you spend doing service," and I never knew what they meant, but once I got tenure, the flood gates of service opened and there was a lot of service work.

A science faculty member shared an anecdote about having to take her service expectation concerns directly to the Provost after she received tenure. Acknowledging that being a female and in a science discipline left her as "prey" to be an addition to many committees, but explained it was too much to handle:

So the summer after I got tenure, I got five letters for five different committees and they were all pretty high profile. And one of them was this University Curriculum Committee, and I wanted to do that. But the other four, I was like, "I can't do all these." And so I actually made an appointment with the provost. I sat down with him, I spread out all my letters. And I said, "I wanna do this one. Tell me which of the other four that I cannot say no to and I'll do that one. And then, I don't know that I'm gonna do any of the other three." And he said, "Okay. Well, you can't say no to this one." I said, "Okay. So I'll do these two and I'm saying no to the other three."

The feelings of high service expectations post-tenure, can be to the detriment of other work.

Another professor in the sciences explained that she holds under-utilized resources for her research that she cannot gain momentum on due to her current service loads. She explained her current balance:

I am too heavily loaded into service to the point where I have research money that fully supports myself and my students, but I haven't been finding the time to actively write new grant proposals, which for a scientist is really not ideal.

While her situation is specific to her, it provides just one example of how service for faculty, like teaching, creates an imbalance in workload and takes away time faculty feel should be spent on research.

Time is Sacred

In discussing their work responsibilities and how they balance work expectations, faculty frequently discuss how time is a commodity to be traded. They present scenarios in which if an increase in a work responsibility were to occur – i.e. teach an additional class – that they would expect a course relief in the future or permission to take time away from service. Many times faculty cited wanting the time back over additional compensation. A faculty member in the sciences explained:

Pay, for me, I don't care about. Extra pay would not sway me. I'm comfortable where I am and I do not feel like the extra pay that they could give me to teach an extra course would be worth it in terms of time. *I value time much more than money.* So that would be it, if I could get a course reduction somewhere else then that's about the only way I would ever teach an overload.

Her feelings that a financial incentive would not suffice to take time away from her research are shared by a colleague. A professor in a humanities discipline discussed her feelings on additional money to teach in the summer:

And I feel like my summer is my time that I really have to work hard in terms of reading and research. And so if I give up some of that to teach, I don't know, somehow I don't feel like that makes sense on some level, even if I could make a little extra money. I feel

like it's just, it's not how things are supposed to work... any reasonable amount that they would pay me to teach, of course, it wouldn't be worth it to give up the research time.

The sentiment that money would not incentivize a faculty member away from their research is reiterated by a professor in the social sciences. He explained how giving more time to teaching would hurt his research, so he would want to get his “time back,” he described:

I would almost be like, "Okay, give me this course, this semester, let me take off a course this semester, afterwards. But this is just reallocation of the total effort that you have to do – money would do nothing for me. I can't give more time to teaching without hurting my research.

When asked about what her Department Chair could do or say to get her to engage in additional research, time emerged as the biggest resource to a faculty member in humanities. She explained:

Time, right? I mean, they should... The best thing they could do for the humanities would be to have fellowships that would... Or ways that you could earn sabbatical or ways that you could... It's, again, for us, it's... The money is important, especially for non-US historians who have to travel farther or junior faculty who don't make enough to support that and... So, for me, personally, it's less than money. It's the time, a course release.

An assistant professor in the sciences, who received what he believed is a “generous start-up package” from his department to set up his research agenda, shared the feelings of time needed to engage in research. When asked the same question regarding his chair, he laughed:

I really don't know how I could engage in more research than I am already. I'm at capacity. I don't have more time to give. They'd have to give me an additional course release...which they would never do because I already have a low teaching load.

When asked about what advice they give to newly hired professors in their respective departments many faculty mention they advise new professors “protect their time.” A humanities professor offered the following advice, “Be devoted to your students, but also be very protective of your time... We all need to do to be part of a larger community, but also stand up for your own boundaries.” A social science faculty member offered similar advice to new professors, and cautioned about the possibility of teaching creating an imbalance in work. He shared the following advice:

Be really careful about the time commitment to teaching, 'cause it will take as much time as you allow it to take. If you are willing to give yourself the entire day just to teaching, it will take you the entire day to do whatever it is that you're trying to do.

Faculty described time almost as if it is sacred and how time stands as something they desired over financial incentives in many cases. This understanding of faculty views on time provides context for understanding how faculty process and think through their work responsibilities.

Protecting Junior Professors' Time

Professors across SMU recognized that time is a commodity or luxury to be protected, specifically time related to assistant professors on the tenure-track. Overall, a culture exists across disciplines regarding the protection of junior faculty members' time. Specifically, faculty members recognized that the priority of those on the tenure-track should be a focus on their research above all else. A professor in the social sciences remarked:

At this university especially pre-tenure, we protect you and your people and you just kind of show up and go to your office and keep your head down and do your own work and try and publish and everybody leaves you alone and no one's gonna ask you to do anything else.

A humanities faculty member shared the same belief, but acknowledged that the protection is lifted once you receive tenure. In reflecting on her own experience, she shared:

This school really is good about protecting the tenure track faculty... Pre-tenure faculty from administrative responsibilities. So, you don't have really that much at all, until you get tenure.

She goes on to explain that once she received tenure, she knew that there would emerge an expectation that she take on additional service work from which she was previously protected, she shared:

But it [the department] had prepared me as well. They had protected me from committee work pre-tenure and then said, "Okay now is your chance and your time, you need to be doing this".

The motivations for this protection center around a desire for junior professors to succeed in their roles, and thus the department provides this protection to help enable success both to the benefit of the individual and the department as a whole. A science professor noted:

We're really good in this department about sheltering our assistant professors from committee work, which I think is one of the reasons that the rest of us feel so overwhelmed 'cause we're trying to, you know we want them... It's so much easier to have an assistant professor get tenure than it is to have to search for another professor because the person didn't get tenure.

The protection of junior faculty members' time further reflects faculty work balance expectations. First, it provides another perspective on the value of research at SMU and among faculty. Specifically, efforts to protect time are more clearly defined as protecting time *for research*. Additionally, this protection, to some extent, creates a challenge for more senior faculty at the institution who are expected to "carry the weight" specifically in service and teaching pillars.

Immediacy is Priority

When striking a balance in their work responsibilities, faculty acknowledged that the teaching and service aspects are dictated by immediate deadlines, while research is more fluid. Therefore, the immediacy in the needs of teaching and service present a challenge to completing, notably more important work of research. A social science professor acknowledged this immediacy in teaching and service and how this difficulty presents in balancing research with the immediate needs. He explained:

So teaching and service get front-loaded because those have immediate returns, right. I have to... Have to have something for that by this, right? I have to have something by 1 o'clock if I'm teaching at 1 o'clock. And so, those get pushed to the front, always, and that includes the emails. And... Which is why it's only today that I'm really getting a chance to sit down with some of my research stuff, which I was doing this morning.

A colleague of his in a different social science department acknowledged that the fixed deadlines of teaching and service dictate how he prioritizes his time. He expressed:

Usually service has fixed deadlines. Research is just always there and typically doesn't have a fixed deadline except if it's a grant. So very few of the other research activities, besides the grants, have deadlines, so usually... Hard deadlines, right? So when these other things do have hard deadlines, the teaching... You gotta be ready for class. You gotta grade the exams, you gotta make the exam, you gotta do all that kind of stuff. So those have pretty hard deadlines. And so, whatever the hard deadline is takes priority.

Assistant professors, whose time is noted as actively protected for research, still have to balance the pressures of immediacy related to teaching with completing research. An assistant professor in shared how teaching deadlines shaped how she managed her work and are non-negotiable. She explained:

It's very much deadline-driven. I have a class tomorrow at 9:30, so top priority today is I need to work through my problems for my lecture to make sure that I have all of the steps written down because it's just not fun doing that on the fly. And I have to assign them a homework tomorrow, so that's top priority. So that's gonna go over research just because it has to get done before tomorrow.

The immediacy or deadlines of work responsibilities are not always planned, and at times a sense of urgency disrupts a planned day. A science faculty member shared how her plans to complete research were disrupted by an immediate teaching need:

Sometimes it's a matter of urgency, [chuckle] what has to be done now. Like this morning I had planned to do research and I got in and I said, "Oh my gosh, I forgot to give my students their weekly homework assignment yesterday." I do that every Tuesday and I completely forgot. So I had to make up... Get the homework assignment ready and then send it to the students. So, okay well, so much for research. [laughter]

The standard, planned deadlines associated with teaching appear to encroach on faculty balance of work. A professor in the humanities explained how even when he tried to intentionally design his schedule to devote less time to teaching, deadlines emerged that pulled him back towards teaching. He noted:

The teaching deadlines, even if one tries to arrange the schedule to make time for other things, and devote less time to the teaching to do other things, those deadlines still come around. So that's definitely a big deal. What do I have to get done to keep from getting buried in work for the teaching.

With the immediacy of teaching and research pulling on research time, many faculty express how they feel inclined to make-up the research work at other times than the work day (i.e after hours, summer/breaks, etc.) that cannot be disrupted by other deadlines. A professor of social sciences shared his view on how he is expected to make-up time for research. He shared:

Inevitably teaching and service leapfrog any research activities. Which is what basically puts us in the position of having to spend our summer time, our break time, catching up on the things that they were... We're expected to do. But we just don't have the time to do.

The immediacy presented by teaching and service aspects of faculty work have many faculty decidedly feeling a need to “make time” for their more highly valued research work.

Making Time for Research

With the stricter deadlines present in the pillars of service and teaching, faculty use phrases like “making time,” “fitting in time,” or “finding time” when discussing how they complete their research responsibilities. Faculty acknowledged the fluidity of research that allow it be more flexible in completion than the other two pillars of work. A social science assistant professor recognized that lack of immediacy in her research. When discussing the pressure in teaching deadlines, she described:

And so there is a little bit more pressure there [in teaching] than something like writing a paper which has no deadline ever, really. So it's a little bit harder to make that your priority unless you make a point of it.

A tenured professor in the social sciences recognized a similar fluidity in his own research, and noted his struggle with keeping research a priority. He shared, “The research, obviously, is more fluid. I finish when I finish, right? That's both a blessing and a curse because the challenge is to make sure that that doesn't continually get pushed aside by these other fixed time commitments.”

Faculty realize that research is important to their success at SMU. An associate professor of humanities hoping to go up for promotion to Full Professor in the next year explained how,

while she enjoys her work with students, she pushes to make time for research due to the importance of research to her career. She expressed:

I really like helping students. It's such a small part of my job right now. And I have to claw back time. I have to claw time away from my children to write my book so that I can get promoted.

One way faculty explained they fit in their research is to do it “after hours.” A science professor explained that he fits in the hours missed during the day of his research during nights and weekends. He reflected:

When I think about what I do late at night, or on my weekends, it's mostly research. Because it's when I can fit the time in. It's just not easy during the middle of a day with a lot of students.

Working after hours emerged as a common practice among faculty participants. When asked about his typical work week, he explained his devotion to completing his research. He noted:

I probably spend 70 hours a week working. I mean, I work on Saturday, I work on Sunday, I work on... All day and all night during the week...mostly on my research, when I'm not in the classroom or grading.

The natural structure of faculty work at SMU revolves around a teaching schedule; however faculty recognized that teaching is only one component of their work and acknowledge the importance of research to the institution. Therefore, in addition to working after hours, faculty try and build in dedicated research days into their workweek to allow for research progress on days they are not teaching. Faculty who were able to devote dedicated days expressed finding success with keeping their research moving forward amidst the pulls of research and service. A faculty member in the social sciences expressed how he structures his schedule, he described, “I try to have my other days where I'm not teaching, almost 100% dedicated to research, that way you become productive because otherwise you don't end up doing your research at all.” In a similar fashion, a professor in a science field expressed the success she found with her research productivity after carving out a specific day each week to work on it.

I've taken to setting aside Thursdays in full, or this semester with my two courses, in the afternoon, for my own research or writing or reading my student's writing, which I'm co-author on, in a confined large block of time. So, that's setting aside Thursdays, which I've only been doing for the last year and a half or two years, has made a huge difference in my productivity for research purposes, actually. And hasn't come at the expense of my service load or even my teaching, I've noticed that.

The need for uninterrupted time for research is something that many professors expressed as necessary for success. Therefore, it is no surprise that given the pull of deadlines from teaching and service, that many faculty members resort to utilizing their breaks (Fall, Holiday, and Spring) as well as summer time, when they are less likely to be teaching or engaging in service to “catch-up” on their research. When asked about his work balance over breaks, a professor of humanities jokingly said:

Research. Research, yeah. Did I say research? I have time to do my readings without being interrupted and without having to think of my students. I never assign anything to my students during spring break. I tell them, "It's a break, it's a break. Go enjoy." But that also applies to me so I try not to have anything to grade, nothing to work on for my classes so that I can focus on my own [research] stuff.

The lack of interruptions he mentions is recognized as a benefit to completing research by his colleague. When discussing her work over the summer, a humanities professor acknowledged that she is able to work more in the summer due to the limited interruptions. She explained, “I probably work maybe possibly more hours in the summer, but I just like it that way. There's just a different pace to it.”

The use of breaks to advance research efforts is not unique to those in the humanities. A professor of social sciences shared how she uses her breaks to advance her research and catch-up on work. An action, she generalized most faculty take and need. She shared:

I think most faculty, me included, and when your final exams are graded in December, you take that month and you try and make some headway on whatever writing project it is that you have. The same thing with spring break. I think faculty need fall break. It's two days to just sort of catch up on stuff.

A faculty member in the sciences expressed that he uses his summer for break research due to the large blocks of time that his research takes, but that at times he will have to teach a class during the summer that “could not fit” during the semester.” He described that during the summer:

I'm usually, oftentimes I will either be teaching class that I couldn't fit in during the semester, so I've done that almost every summer I've been here. Either a June class or a May class or even a July, class. Just because it was information my students or my graduate students needed that just we hadn't yet covered. And then a lot of the time, I mean, it's a chance to do field work and get stuff that we couldn't get over the course of the semester, because of time constraints.

When asked why the course could not fit in the regular semester, he explained that due to the size of his department and research agendas of his colleagues, some classes are forced to the summer to accommodate more immediate needs.

The espoused faculty desire to “make time” for their research supports research as a value to the institution. Further, the fact that faculty feel the need to work after hours and over the breaks between semesters on their research may be a result of being at an institution in the midst of a transition. In other words, SMU desires to keep its historical mission of teaching a priority while gaining external prestige with research may be creating a tension that does not exist for faculty at institutions primarily focused on research. An understanding of how faculty view their work in comparison to colleagues at different institutions helps shed light on this ideal.

Comparison to External Peers

As a striving institution, SMU looks to external peer and aspirational institutions to help guide initiatives. Similarly, faculty are aware of the work of their colleagues at other institutions. Faculty at SMU explain that the balance of their work responsibilities, specifically between teaching and research, is different due to institutional policies and expectations. As noted in Part I of the findings, faculty perceived SMU as an institution that wants to stay true to its historical mission of teaching while advancing its research efforts. Therefore, many faculty expressed that

they carry heavier teaching loads than their peers at other research institutions. At SMU, the typically noted teaching load for a professor on the tenure track is two courses a semester, commonly referred to as a 2-2 load. A newly hired assistant professor believed his peers at other institutions received more teaching relief than he did, "I think they were given more teaching relief after their... I got teaching relief during my first semester. I know of some colleagues who had more semesters off basically."

The acknowledgement that he holds a higher teaching load than his peers at other institutions is shared among faculty in the social sciences. When asked about the work of his peers at other institutions, An associate professor in social sciences retorted:

Well, given my friends in other places, they usually have a third of the load of teaching, for example. Same administrative responsibilities. So in the end the main difference is usually about the teaching load. If I think about my friends in places that are better ranked than SMU, usually they have half the teaching load or a quarter of the teaching load.

The high teaching load creates an additional tension in the balance for faculty to complete their research compared to their peers. Additionally, faculty recognized that the teaching load may be creating problems for faculty recruitment. A professor in the sciences shared:

The teaching load is the big thing I think that is an issue at SMU. And it's also become an issue for our candidates for assistant or for tenure track positions because if they are getting offered a position at SMU where they're expected to do 2:2, and another institution is offering them comparable pay for 2:1 load, what are you gonna do? So it's actually become a recruiting issue for us too.

However, the faculty in the humanities feel appreciative about their teaching load compared to their peers. A tenured professor of humanities suggested that the low teaching load of SMU is unheard of at similar institutions.

Although we're [SMU] working to advance, this is still in our own institution, we have a 2-2 load. The vast majority of professional historians are not in institutions where they have a 2-2 load, most have a 3-3 or even a 4-4.

The external comparison of teaching loads describe by faculty at SMU suggests that the institution may expect faculty to spend more time in the classroom than their peers at other institutions. This creates a tension on faculty regarding balancing their work. As SMU increases pressure on research to advance, it may not be alleviating the expectations regarding teaching, thus in essence tasking faculty to do more with the same resources and time.

Conclusion

In an effort to understand the tensions that faculty navigate in completing their work responsibilities at a striving institution, this section describes how faculty strike a balance between the pillars of their work. Faculty described time as a necessary element for creating and understanding value in their work. They acknowledged that the nature of some of their work around deadlines (teaching and service) pulls away from their more fluid work (research), and the importance for making time to complete their research regardless of these deadlines. Additionally, faculty recognized that their environment may differ from their colleagues, specifically regarding teaching expectations.

Local and Cosmopolitan Tensions

The balancing of work across pillars (teaching, research, and service) is one area where tensions emerged that faculty at SMU navigate. However, additional tensions emerged between less concrete elements of faculty work. One such area is previously discussed in Chapter 2 about cosmopolitan and local ideals. One feature of striving institutions is that these institutions may push faculty to engage in more cosmopolitan work because of the benefits such work may have on advancing institutional reputation and prestige. At SMU, faculty expressed engaging in cosmopolitan activities such as conference attendance, external and international collaborations, and community-based research, among others. Further, faculty noted feeling increased expectations and incentives to engage in cosmopolitan work, and are motivated to do so for

multiple reasons. However, faculty also acknowledged that the current local needs of the institution (teaching, institutional service, etc.) keep them from full engagement in cosmopolitan activities.

Cosmopolitan Activities

Faculty discussed their involvement in activities external to the institution. Specifically, they described their involvement in external service work, field specific conferences, and collaborations with partners outside of SMU. A long-time professor in a social science discipline discussed how she and many of her colleagues engage in a lot of work outside of the walls of SMU:

Those of us who also have a life way beyond the walls of SMU, I mean we are national. A lot of us have these responsibilities. So it's flying to Washington three times a year...but my work here does not stop during that time.

Faculty work external to the institution includes work with graduate students and fellow faculty both domestically and internationally, an assistant professor in the sciences discussed an international supervisory expectations of his internationally based work-group. He explained how this responsibility came about with the following:

I'm supervising one graduate student who happens to be in the United Kingdom, and so I talk with him quite a bit, and then some of my collaborators who I overlapped with at various times have moved to the UK and into the Netherlands and things like that. So it's a pretty diverse group, and yeah pretty international at the end of the day.

When asked about how this supervisory role counted towards his work with students at SMU, he explained that it did not and that he considered his work with this student strictly research.

Working with students beyond the walls of SMU is not uncommon in his field. Another professor in the same department discussed how he supervises one student out of state and one student internationally for his work. He suggested it is a common practice of his discipline.

External collaboration exists in social science disciplines at SMU as well. A social science faculty member reflected on when he first met one of his current external collaborators, a professional relationship he has held for over 15 years. He reflected:

One of my most successful co-author relationships, it was my first ever conference and she was presenting a paper, and I was the discussant on her paper, and I told her, "Hey, this was really nice, but you really should have done this." And she comes up to me afterwards and says, "Okay, when do we write that paper?"

The engagement in cosmopolitan activities is less prevalent among faculty in the humanities than in the sciences and social sciences. A professor in the humanities believed the following about her field:

Traditionally, I think, humanities people may have done that less than say, people in science, but we really need to collaborate. I see more faculty going to conferences. Developing a number of interests and different sorts of projects than staying in their little circles here – but we do not do it enough. I don't think.

Additionally, faculty are motivated to engage in cosmopolitan activities for reasons besides the greater good. The assistant professor of science who supervises a graduate student in the UK recognized the importance of external collaborations relative to the limitations present at SMU.

He explained:

Maintaining connections and collaborations outside the university and outside the department is very important key to success because there is not a sufficient number of faculty, of researchers more broadly speaking, locally to necessarily be successful in every research area, my research area specifically.

The need to create relationships external to the institution due to local limitations in research or personnel capacity in order to be successful or supported is a shared feeling across disciplines.

After explaining that he was the only person in his specific research field in his department, an assistant professor in humanities explained the following regarding his engagement with people external to SMU:

I get that [support] through conferences and social media and people who I know outside the university rather than here in my department. So, if I want somebody to read a piece of writing that I'm working on, it's almost never somebody here...And I'm not sure why I

expected that to be different, but I sort of missed... When I eventually figured out like, "Oh, that's what conferences are for," it was a huge relief to feel I had a peer group within my discipline.

A social science faculty member noted the benefit to his research created by working with external institutions:

That was probably among the biggest things, was that change that I felt a little bit more on my own. I'm also an [professor's discipline], and there's not an [field specific] department on campus really.. So it felt kind of intellectually isolating. I was doing a lot of work, but I was doing it mostly with an intellectual network that was at other places.

The motivations to engage in external work to be successful extended to faculty desires to raise their personal prestige as well as the prestige of SMU. In explaining his reasons for involvement in service for his discipline, specifically serving on an editorial board, a faculty member in the humanities described the following, "So some of the benefit is the stature, personal scholarly stature and stature of the institution, so it makes me and SMU visibly active in carrying the workload of my field, so that is important."

When asked the same question about his motivations for involvement in external service (journal reviews, association memberships/committees, invited lectures, etc.), a professor in the social sciences noted how such activities not only increase his reputation, but also his potential future earnings. He explained:

It is the most rewarded externally, in the profession as a whole, just as a whole because it's the most visible externally, and also internally in terms of promotion, tenure. Yeah, in sense of visibility in the profession, and realistically, if you look at an academic career, there are really, really only two ways in the course of your career to significantly bump up your salary. One is by generating external offers, either taking them or not, but at least generating them.

Many departments at SMU expect their faculty to maintain a local presence, even if it is at the cost cosmopolitan efforts.

Pull towards Local

While faculty at SMU engage in cosmopolitan activities, incentives and expectations exist that pull them towards local activities. One such element is the aforementioned immediacy and deadlines prevalent in the teaching and service pillars of work. Another pull towards local activities faculty must navigate are certain rewards and familiarities such as tenure and promotion. In reflecting on his pursuit of full professor, an associate professor in a social science field discussed a challenge in balancing his work the way he did on tenure or branching out in his interests. He explained:

I think one of the biggest choices, one of the biggest trade-offs, and I'm certainly not saying that I've always handled this in the best way 'cause I think it's challenging for everybody, is the trade-off between the range of interesting opportunities that are presented either on campus or off campus to kind of broaden the impact of the work that you do versus the narrower track of continued research writing output and building disciplinary visibility in the same vein that got you tenure.

Similarly, a professor in the humanities spoke about his approach to service later in his career. He discussed how he took time in his early career to learn everything he could about SMU and how it functioned through service, but that his goals have changed. He described:

I'm doing... Right now, my workload, my service workload is more for the guild than for the institution, but I've certainly had many years where it was all about the institution, when the institution wants you here, it's hard to get away.

Another pull towards local activities that faculty experience is in the overwhelming demand of local service set forth by SMU. A science faculty member reflected on his difficulty staying involved with external service due to his service load to SMU.

It's been harder to stay involved. Actually this is kind of a surprising result. It's been harder to stay, as a smaller private school, it's been a little bit harder to stay involved in kind of external service. The internal service here is pretty... There's a lot. When you really think about it. Involving students, student organizations, departmental issues, university. And what I'm learning is, really to make a program great, you don't wanna lose federal service.

Faculty also expressed a sense of being restrained or limited by their local activities. In thinking about what motivates him as an academic, a faculty member in the sciences discussed how his energy was “bound up” in local activity. He complained:

What I would describe as part of the intellectual life that drove me, was bound up in research and how much it was bound up in teaching initially and then teaching and service. I think that was something I had to come to terms with over time. That what the actual balance of energy expenditures was gonna be and how to make the most of it for myself.

He continued with an explanation of how engaging in cosmopolitan activities helped alleviate his stress and motivated to complete is more local expectations, “I take advantage of trips that I might have to Tucson or to England or to Australia to really engage with my colleagues. And then when I come back and I feel satisfied and taken to my teaching and service stuff.” Another pull towards local stems from institutional bureaucracy and lack of understanding of the benefits associated with cosmopolitan activities. A professor in a science field described that internal service to the institution should give-way to external activities, but that he has received pushback in the past. He shared:

If it means giving up service, a little bit of service at SMU to do those [external service], it should be a no brainer. And I've had... It's always... I bring this up because I've had pushback at times.

Ultimately he was able to engage in cosmopolitan activities, but he was left with a level of confusion as to why he received such push back on an activity that benefited himself as well as the university.

Conclusion

The balance between local and cosmopolitan activities emerges as an important theme regarding faculty work balance. Faculty at SMU engage in cosmopolitan activities regularly, and they believe the institution values these efforts. However, they also experience a pull towards their local responsibilities almost to the detriment of their external initiatives. Therefore, a

tension exists between faculty work within and outside the institution that faculty must navigate when completing their work responsibilities.

Limited Resources

The notion of limited resources emerged during interviews with faculty. Given the nature of resources at SMU, and at higher education institutions in general, it is difficult to isolate where (institutional, departmental, personal, etc) resource limitations most clearly aligns. Therefore, the present section presents a general sense of faculty views on resources at SMU. While most faculty jokingly or seriously mention the need for more money as a resource, more granular uses of additional money are noted in this section including administrative support, facilities, and people as limited to the point of obstructing faculty work at SMU.

Administrative Burden

As noted in the section presenting *Departmental Values*, in 2015 SMU underwent a strategic scale back of administrative personnel on campus. The effects of which left faculty feeling obligated to fold in more administrative work into their already taxed work responsibilities. A humanities professor discussed how the lack of administrative support impacted her work:

When they downsized many departments, including mine in terms of the staff, that meant that faculty find themselves doing more and more shadow work, which is administrative work that normally would have been left to staff to do and that is encroaching upon faculty time.

Many faculty expressed frustration with the amount of administrative work demanding their time. An assistant professor of social sciences angrily noted:

I did not go to graduate school to run Eventbrite and MailChimp and this is, I'm in this job, because I'm a competent woman who can be... Who they can shove crap at. None of that is about my academic chops. So I'm bitter. I didn't use to be bitter about this stuff. I was really, really good at not getting bitter, but now I'm bitter.

Faculty recognized that this is not a problem necessarily unique to SMU, but a phenomena occurring throughout the higher education landscape. A science faculty member explained her awareness:

So last week, I read this article in The Chronicle of Higher Ed about how the faculty positions have changed and it talked about how faculty are now expected to do more admin things because you have access to... It's supposed to be easy, right?...

However, she continued and shared a similar frustration to her colleagues in the social sciences about her beliefs that the administrative work she is tasked with doing is not in line with what she believes are her responsibilities as an academic. She continued:

...It's all on a website, and you can just... So like every time I travel I usually spend half a day putting in all my stuff on the Concord website... Well, I think that [additional administrative support] would definitely make my work better because I'm not being paid to enter my expenses into a website. I'm being paid to do research.

The administrative burden, brought on by limited resources to support administrative functions at SMU, creates tensions among faculty expressed as frustrations with the toll it takes on completing other aspects of their work.

Facilities

Faculty, specifically those in the sciences and fields that require extensive labs, etc. to conduct their research, cite that the facilities at SMU are becoming a problematic resource. In explaining what he believed the institution could do to enable him to be a better faculty member, a science professor criticized:

We cannot compete right now with the top-tier programs in terms of facilities. At least in the sciences. Here, for us it's a killer... We just have constant problems with leaks, and things breaking, and the infrastructure's kind of crumbling. And it's, I mean it looks fine probably when you walk around, but what you don't realize is when you go to, if I go to Rice or I go to Penn State, or I go to Colorado School of Mines, it's night and day.

As previously noted, many faculty across departments at SMU noted expectations and actions towards growth and expansions. A science professor explained his concerns regarding facilities being a limiting factor to such growth. He expressed:

We are space-constrained in our department, we share our building with chemistry, and chemistry and physics are constantly being compressed into the same amount of space as each are given the chance to grow. That means we're growing into nothing, we're just getting more and more dense, without expanding and that puts pressure on everybody and everyone gets very hot under the pressure.

He continued citing the solution needed is, “getting the university to actually spend money to build more spaces, or enhance existing spaces for growth.” His perspective is shared by many of his science colleagues. In an effort to provide more space to departments, SMU utilizes facilities away from its main campus, specifically a building that is still walkable from campus – but it is located across a major highway. Faculty housed in that facility, share a set of concerns with their location. An assistant professor of social sciences in a department not located on SMU’s main campus explained:

It feels like we are not on-campus. Like it definitely feels that way, it feels like we're in an office building. And students pretty much avoid coming over here. So it's difficult to, even though I've lab space here, to actually run a study with undergrads here because they really don't wanna come over here.

Whether it be lack of facilities or improper facilities, limitations regarding capacity at SMU creates problems for faculty with regards to completing their work.

Graduate Students

A third resource that faculty expressed concerns towards is people, specifically graduate students. Many faculty touted that graduate students are helpful in terms of their productivity across all aspects of their work, citing that they serve functions such as Teaching Assistants and Research Assistants. However, they are considered scarce at SMU, with faculty believing “limited” or “inadequate” funding exists to support graduate students in these roles.

Faculty note that this is an evolving problem at the institutions. A social science professor explained, “the biggest problem facing our department right now is graduate students stipends. University-wide there's just not nearly enough funding for graduate students stipend.” He stated that this was not always the case at SMU:

So our total annual budget for stipends has not changed in 30 years, I think. The actual budget is the exact same... [in the past] it would be anywhere from 10 to 14 students and now it's five students because we have the same budget to split.

He explained that the lack of students is problem for his own work as well as the work of his colleagues because “TAs to help out with teaching, grading, and all sorts of stuff...so we can focus more on our research.” Faculty from other disciplines hold a similar perspective. A professor in another social science field believed, “graduate students are the key to advancement of my work passed this point. When I’m able to fund a student, I’m twice...No...three times as productive in publishing.” In other words, faculty view graduate students a necessary resource to their productivity. Further, the notion of funding for graduate students as a scarce resource is further described by a science professor who explained:

I've had some graduate students who became my graduate student just because I had money. [laughter] And it meant they could do research and not have to worry about their teaching assistantship or tutoring or whatever they wanted to. So, oh well...I benefited from it [laughter].

The notion that a student’s willingness to work with a faculty member could solely be tied to the fact that the faculty member has available funding, provides another layer of support that funding for graduate students is a limited resource.

Conclusion

As the findings reflect, the striving institution context of SMU presents challenges to the work of faculty. While the institution’s aspirational goals are viewed as ultimately beneficial and supportive of faculty work, the “identity crisis” present at the institution is disheartening for many faculty members. To this end, faculty feel the institution is not “putting money where its mouth is” in terms of actually investing in advancement. Further, the “identity crisis” creates uncertainty in the institutional and departmental values faculty see, and thus creates a level of confusion that faculty must interpret and navigate as they endeavor to complete their various work responsibilities.

Further, faculty expressed experience tensions and challenges across various aspects of their work. Faculty noted confusion and competing expectations within and across institutional, disciplinary, and personal aspects. In completing their work, faculty cite considerations from each of these levels as influential to their balance and success.

CHAPTER 5: IMPLICATIONS & CONCLUSIONS

As the core of American higher education institutions, faculty serve vital functions with regards to an institution's success (Blackburn & Lawrence, 1995; Boice, 2000; B. R. Clark, 1963) The evolution of the professoriate over the last 50 years has seen the work expectations of faculty shift from a "traditional" model with a balance of work across teaching, research, and service towards one under pressure to balance work to meet the needs and aspirations of their institutions (Schuster & Finkelstein, 2006). Further, faculty do not operate in a silo within their institutions, they are also members of their disciplines. They are socialized to a set of norms and expectations from their respective fields as well as institutions. While the current literature on faculty acknowledges that they are situated in multiple cultures (Austin, 1990; Gappa, Austin, & Trice, 2007) the findings of the present study provide understanding for the influence of such on faculty work and behavior.

The context of striving institutions presents faculty with a number of additional challenges including increased research expectations, increased accountability of their productivity, and pressure to create revenue for the institution or obtain external funding (Gonzales et al., 2014; O'Meara & Bloomgarden, 2011). Therefore, striving institutions exacerbate the complexities of evolving faculty work. The implications of this single-case exploratory study present the faculty perspective of a striving institution and the tensions that arise in a striving context that faculty navigate in deciding how to approach their work responsibilities.

Answering the Research Questions

How does being situated in a striving institution shape how faculty approach their work?

Interviews with faculty at SMU show that campus constituents are aware of SMU efforts as a striving institution. Participants actively praise such efforts in the abstract asserting their

beliefs that advancement and growth are preferable to stagnation as an institution. However, faculty are cautious in their beliefs that the institution is in fact serious in its efforts. More specifically, faculty stated a series of expectations they feel are associated and necessary for the institution to achieve advancement. Those expectations included additional resources (money, students, facilities, staff, etc.) that enable faculty to focus on work that aligns with the institution's pursuit for prestige and advancement (i.e. research).

Mixed responses emerged about how the efforts towards striving influence how faculty approach their work, largely across a single divide. On one side, faculty feel increased pressure to perform on research and an increased emphasis on securing external funding. They make conscious efforts towards focusing their energies toward work in those directions and away from other aspects of their work. Evidence of this shift is expressed in terms of advice provided to new hires citing a need for greater emphasis on research compared to previous years, as well as faculty discussing how they have shifted their work and at times research agendas to align with opportunities to seek outside funding. On the other side, many faculty believe that the striving context of the institution may have little to no bearing on their work. This is in part due to a low level of confidence among faculty that SMU is actually serious about growing as a research university and is just "paying lip-service" to the idea of growth. Therefore, these faculty do not see their work evolving, unless they see a more concrete commitment from the institution towards gaining prestige. Primarily, they want to see a serious investment of resources before they will believe real changes will occur.

What tensions do faculty encounter within their work at a striving institution?

The context of SMU as a striving institution both amplifies existing work tensions of faculty and creates added tensions through which faculty must navigate. An agreed upon tension or challenge faculty face is the sheer amount of work they are expected to complete and the

limited resources they have to complete it. Faculty often note that feel they are “expected to do everything” an expression that suggests an unreasonable expectation of faculty work from the institution. Additionally, faculty face different tensions given the discipline or department in which they are situated and their personal values and motivations towards their work. For example, the composition of a faculty member’s department appears to influence an individual faculty member’s view on their service and teaching obligations, with smaller departments feeling an increased service burden comparatively. Additional tensions for faculty members appear to emerge if their personal values towards an aspect of work are not aligned with the values of their department or institution, thus creating a competing pull on their work.

Further, the institutional values of SMU present as being in transition; therefore, cause confusion for faculty. More specifically, faculty believe that SMU espouses belief in actively advancing as a research university, but simultaneously desires to keep true to its historical mission as an undergraduate teaching institution. Importantly, this is a commonly occurring transition exhibited at striving institutions (Gonzales et al., 2014). One faculty member captures this shared belief with the following perspective on her realization of her work expectations, “I was supposed to be teaching like I was at a small liberal arts college, and researching, like I was at an R-1 and that I had no support really for either.” With these somewhat competing missions in place, faculty note that they receive contradictory messages from the administration and that a series of unclear rewards and incentives are currently present at SMU. As a result, a tension exists within the institutional values of SMU which faculty must balance. Further, the desire to advance as a research university, while still maintaining a focus on teaching, creates a pull on faculty who desire to be more cosmopolitan with their work towards more local institutional needs, largely due to high local expectations (i.e. service and teaching obligations) created by the

resources faculty view as missing from SMU's striving goals. This tension in faculty work is confounded by the perceived departmental and personal values present among faculty.

How do the tensions faculty encounter shape how they approach their work?

The emergence of tensions stemming partly from the nature of faculty work and additionally from the evidence of confusion or an "identity crisis" present at SMU bears on how faculty perform their work responsibilities. The traditional work expectations of faculty participants in this study include teaching, research, and service obligations. Faculty share a perspective that an increased pressure on research exists and is growing at SMU. Therefore, faculty take strides to adjust their work accordingly. For example, in an effort to meet these expectations, faculty discuss shifting their work and, at times, research agendas to align with more prestigious research opportunities such as external funding.

Additionally, the confusion presented in contradictory messages from administration and institutional reward incentives creates a pull or stagnation in faculty towards their pursuits of research. For example, throughout the interviews, many faculty expressed a troubled view of tenure and promotion policies at the institution. Faculty cite that the stated policy suggests the institution equally considers teaching and researching in tenure; however, many say this is a fallacy and that research carries more weight. This confusion creates divergent actions between faculty with some choosing to fervently focus their efforts on research even at the expense of teaching, and others believing more cautiously in keeping a higher level of focus on teaching at times to the detriment of their research.

Analysis of Results

The Striving Context

The faculty interviewed for this study share a view of SMU as a striving institution working towards growth in national reputation and prestige. Consistent with current literature on

striving institutions (O'Meara, 2007; O'Meara & Bloomgarden, 2011), faculty described SMU as an institution in the midst of an “identity crisis” brought on by its competing desires to keep rooted in its core teaching value while growing towards a distinguished research university. The implications of this reality creates a complex work environment for faculty (O'Meara, 2007). Faculty believe that the present identity crisis is reflected in misguided institutional priorities, mixed messages from the administration, and a lack sufficient institutional resources expected to achieve outlined goals.

Misguided Institutional Priorities

Interviews with faculty revealed that certain institutional priorities emerge as misguided or unclear. Specifically, many faculty allude to or directly speak of the institution’s recent decision to cut down on administrative staff and suggest that this measure negatively impacts their ability to complete their work. Further, they suggest the staff cuts are a direct contradiction to the institution’s striving efforts. The implications of the staff cuts have a clear negative impact on faculty work. The added level of administrative work on faculty gets in the way of what they believe are more core tenets of their role as professors such as teaching and research. Further, the decreased spending in administrative support is a direct contradiction to noted characteristics of striving institutions. In her synthesis of identifying characteristics of a striving institutions (see Table 1.1 in Chapter 1), O'Meara (2007) posits that one of the areas of institutional operations that serves as an indicator of striving is resource allocation, specifically resource allocation towards administrative support. Therefore, the confusion and frustration from faculty appears warranted. Further, with research as a value faculty see of SMU, the added administrative work creates challenges for faculty desiring to help achieve their perceived goals of the institution.

Further, previous literature (Gardner & Veliz, 2014) notes that striving institutions have a tendency to incentivize and promote their faculty towards more cosmopolitan aspects of work

(i.e. outward from the institution) such as research and external efforts which bring greater prestige to the faculty member and institution. The expectation for faculty to contribute to an increased amount of local efforts (i.e. directly within the institution), specifically more administrative functions, differs from common striving practices. Therefore, it is important to consider that SMU does not observe all characteristics of a striving institution, and that their divergence creates complications for faculty. The dual pull on faculty ultimately hinders their ability to complete cosmopolitan work; therefore, the departure away from normal striving practices may hamper SMU's aspirations.

The misguided institutional priorities are further evidence of confusion surrounding incentives and rewards for faculty and their work. As commonly found in the literature (Gonzales, 2012; O'Meara & Bloomgarden, 2011), SMU faculty find disagreement between current institutional policies and practices (i.e. tenure policies and financial incentives) and espoused striving efforts (i.e. increased focus on research and grants). Discussions with faculty reveal that, in policy, SMU states that they value teaching and research equally. This is supported by an examination of the formal written tenure and promotion policy governing the institution which states the following:

While each faculty member should be judged individually on the basis of his/her particular ability to contribute to the educational, intellectual and creative life of the University, generally tenure should be awarded only to those who are outstanding in either teaching or research (or equivalent activity) and whose performance in the other is of high quality.

However, in reality, many faculty believe that tenure cannot be attained through outstanding teaching and sufficient research, but rather only through high performance in research endeavors. If the current faculty perception is accurate, the institutional policies in place are in essence outdated. Regardless, a thoughtful discussion of faculty policies, specifically tenure and promotion, has not occurred at SMU. The present contradiction in tenure policies with striving

efforts is supported by Gonzales et al. (2014) who found that a lag exists in the institutionalization of practices to align with shifting institutional goals.

Adding to this line of discovery, the present study uncovers that other institutional reward practices also present as contradictions to espoused goals. Specifically, faculty note that incentives are in place for additional teaching responsibilities (i.e. paid to teach an overload course), but limited incentives exist to engage in additional research efforts. For example, faculty express how SMU lacks a practice they see as common at other “research focused” universities, which explicitly tie merit pay increases to research productivity. The misguided institutional priorities, and overall lack of congruency in policy and practice, with espoused striving goals at SMU conforms with current literature and add to present understanding by illustrating how such discrepancies create tensions and challenges to faculty work. Instead of just working to complete their job duties, faculty have to actively interpret the institutional policies and priorities around them.

Mixed Messages

The “identity crisis” presented by faculty at SMU is further elevated by the presence of mixed messages from administration. Faculty noted that leadership at the institution often pays “lip-service” to the value of undergraduate teaching. However, faculty also explained that very few institutional rewards are in place that support these claims, creating another contradiction that faculty are forced to interpret to complete their workload. Limited research currently exists on the role internal communication and messaging plays with regards to faculty work at striving institutions. In their case study at a striving institution, O'Meara and Bloomgarden (2011) found that a lack of communication existed between institutional leadership and campus stakeholders. The present study adds to their findings suggesting that communication may exist, but mixed messaging creates confusion for faculty and ultimately creates challenges to faculty work.

Further, the mixed messages experienced by faculty at SMU may also be a result of a changing campus conversation in its beginning stages. Regardless, the development of clear messaging around the goals of the institution should be a consideration.

Lack of Sufficient Resources

The contradictions present at SMU are not solely around teaching, but around research expectations as well. The mixed messaging around research emerges as an issue regarding sufficient resources. Faculty note that SMU “talks a big game” but does not “Put its Money Where its Mouth is” supporting the identity crisis ideal discussed by faculty. The lack of resources behind SMU’s pursuits signal to faculty a lack of seriousness towards the institution’s expressed values of advancement. Further, those faculty that do desire to engage in work that aligns with the institutional goal of increased reputation cited not having the necessary resources to do so. Examples of resources faculty believe are necessary and absent from SMU include limited funding of graduate students, inadequate facilities, and lack of support staff. Without the necessary resources, faculty feel throttled in their ability to complete their work.

Key Faculty Work Tensions

Throughout the interviews, faculty brought forth various influences on their work and their approaches to it. Austin (1990) asserts that faculty are simultaneously situated within multiple cultures. The themes that surfaced from conversations with faculty are presented in the levels of cultures relevant to this study: departmental, institutional, and individual. The following sections discuss the different aspects of these layers that faculty believe are influential towards their work. The section concludes with an explanation of the potential and apparent tensions that emerge across and between levels which are then further dissected in the following section relating the results of this study more directly to the guiding framework.

Departmental Level

At the departmental level, the following three important concepts emerged regarding how the department in which a faculty member is situated influences how they approach their work: composition of department, climate or tone of the department, and aspirations of the department. A fourth concept, regarding limited resources, emerges as well; however due to the lack of clarity of the source of issue with resources (departmental or institutional), resources are discussed separately from any layer.

Composition. The composition of a department emerged as an influence on faculty work and their balance of it. Faculty at SMU discuss how “greying” departments, those with a large contingency of faculty with longer tenures at the institution, create added work for newer faculty. Bruiniks, Keeney, and Thorp (2010) called the noted greying of the professoriate a part of the “new normal” in American higher education, and further posited that this shift is increasingly perceived as shaping the administrative and budgetary policy of academic institutions. Further, the experience of faculty at SMU may shed light on the work issues presented by the aging of a department. More recent hires in “greying” departments expressed feeling they are expected to carry more of the workload, and that is a notion that parallels senior faculty members’ expectations for them to “bring new life” to their departments. Therefore, “greying” departments present as a pull on faculty work for pre-tenure faculty. Another aspect of departments that faculty readily mention is the use of lecturers and other contingent faculty in their departments. Consistent with previous understanding (Gappa & Austin, 2010b), many faculty across disciplines see an influx in the use of lecturers in their departments. Tenure-track faculty also discuss that they believe that the increase in lecturers coincides with an increase in their research expectations. In other words, lecturers are hired to take on teaching loads and courses less relevant to faculty research, allowing those on the tenure track to focus more specifically on their

research activities. O'Meara (2007) suggests that a shift in faculty roles away from teaching and towards research is an indicator of a striving institution. While this ideal is represented by the increasing presence of lecturers at SMU, many faculty still believe they hold higher teaching loads and are expected to teach more “service courses” than their colleagues at other research universities.

The hiring of “faculty stars” bringing in newer ideas and stronger research agendas and the presence of shifting faculty roles and increased lecturers on campus are departmental composition elements consistent with a striving institution (O'Meara, 2007). The present study's findings suggest that such striving efforts create additional work tensions for faculty. New faculty carry additional departmental weight and teaching loads, though in the process of shifting in many departments, still remain high when compared to other institutions.

Climate. With regards to the climate of departments at SMU, faculty discuss two departmental climate variations that influence their balance of work. The first centers on the concept of collegiality. Many faculty, from across disciplines, want to do what is in their department's best interest, and use phrases such as “team player” and “take one for the team.” Faculty note a willingness to rebalance or shift their work to meet departmental demands or needs. Faculty members within this climate also cover internally for faculty within their departments to conduct work external to the institution (i.e. covering an additional class while a colleague takes a leave for research). Therefore, the collegiality experienced by these faculty aligns with the focus on advancement of a striving institution, but may be a result of the size of departments at SMU rather than the focus. However, the second emergent climate is of one centered on the concept of “interruptions” brought on by the immediacy of local faculty work. Faculty discuss how time in their offices is consistently interrupted by an immediate need of a colleague which creates frustration for faculty and their balance of work. The two environmental

characteristics expressed by faculty, one aligning with striving efforts and the other a pull in the opposing directions, supports the striving – yet transitionally so – nature of SMU. Further, these environments provide additional understanding to departmental level cultures in which faculty are situated and the ways in which the environment of a department can impact faculty work.

Aspiration/Growth. In line with the ideals of growth expected from a striving institution (O'Meara, 2007), many faculty at SMU note that programmatic expansion as well as general growth are occurring within their departments. Multiple faculty, including three of the four newly hired assistant professors, mentioned being hired specifically with the intention of their department's expanding course offerings and research breadth. An unintended implication of this growth emerges in the loneliness and isolation sentiments noted by these faculty. Isolation is linked to hindering workplace productivity (Eagan & Garvey, 2015; Townsend & Rosser, 2007) and satisfaction (Bozeman & Gaughan, 2011; Trower, 2012), and ultimately leads to faculty turnover (Padilla-Gonzalez & Galaz-Fontes, 2015). Faculty of all ranks that were hired as the only person in their specific sub-field mentioned some element of loneliness related to their work, expressing limited ability to relate to their colleagues' work. One solution to their isolation is to look outward from SMU for support and comradery from their disciplines through conferences and external collaborations. This motivation towards external work aligns with the cosmopolitan behavior expected of faculty at a striving institution (Gonzales, 2012); however, coupled with this isolation faculty express a unique pull towards local institutional needs. For example, two of the four assistant professor participants from different disciplines, explained that they were currently prepping new courses for their departments – a practice relatively uncommon with the ideal of protecting pre-tenure faculty time at the forefront of many of the professors' observations of their departments. Thus, faculty whom were hired as a lone member of their department desire to engage in cosmopolitan work somewhat out of necessity. Therefore,

the cosmopolitan behavior exhibited may not be attributed to the striving focus of SMU, but rather to filling a void created by departmental composition. Further, the isolated faculty are simultaneously tasked with additional teaching expectations creating a unique balance in their work. Aspects of a faculty member's department influence faculty work. Some of the aspects regarding departments at SMU are a result of striving efforts of the institution. Specifically, the growth exhibited and the hiring of faculty with heavier research focuses. Both aspects of which are indicators of striving, but also influential on faculty work.

Institutional Level

At the institutional level, the following three concepts emerged regarding how the institution in which a faculty member is situated influences how they approach their work: the value of research and external funding, economics motivations, and confusion around the value of teaching. The emergent institutional value of research and external funding viewed by the faculty is consistent with indicators of a striving institution (O'Meara, 2007). However, the economic motivation, largely tied to teaching and the confusion among faculty regarding the value of teaching at SMU create added tensions for faculty work.

Value of Research and External Funding. Given the noted striving nature of the institution, it is unsurprising that faculty express funding as a value of the institution and institutional leadership. Consistent with current research, faculty explain that the tenure and promotion expectations are growing more stringent over time (Gardner & Veliz, 2014; McClure & Titus, 2018; O'Meara, 2007). This notion in and of itself creates an added tension for faculty currently on the tenure-track towards both associate and full ranks. Further, faculty across ranks and disciplines agree that SMU's expectation of them to obtain external funding is becoming more normative than exceptional as it was previously considered. The growth in external funding expectations presents as an additional added tension for those in fields, like the humanities, that

do not traditionally secure grants for their research (Benneworth & Jobbloed, 2010). Other faculty, specifically an associate professor in the social sciences, chose to shift his research agenda to align more with the ability to obtain large scale grants. While only select participants outwardly exhibit this behavioral change, many alluded to feeling pressure to follow suit. The implications of this change are not only on the obvious tensions in faculty, but also on the scope of future research produced by SMU. As faculty continue to shift their focus to meet the demands for external funding needed for prestige, the breadth of the research produced by the institution may narrow (Jacob & Lefgren, 2011). Further, the steering of focus by external funding illustrates that faculty work at striving institution may be susceptible to market like behaviors as presented by the notion of academic capitalism (Gonzales et al., 2014; Slaughter & Leslie, 1997).

Economics Motivations. While SMU faculty believe the institution holds research as a priority, the economic motivations of the institution appear to pull against that value. Faculty express awareness that the institution views undergraduate education as the “bread and butter” of the institution. While large research universities have the resources in place for research and external funding to serve as a prominent revenue stream for the institution, striving institutions like SMU still heavily rely on tuition dollars as a main revenue stream, a common aspect of resource dependence (Fowles, 2014). As a result faculty express that undergraduate education and teaching are valued from an economic perspective by the institution with a push for faculty to keep “butts in seats.” This value is at times in direct contradiction to the pressures and expectations of research with faculty, even faculty in heavily grant-focused fields (i.e. sciences), for instance, express a common expectation for faculty to teach “service courses” for non-majors. SMU’s striving desires and tuition dependency present an additional tension on faculty work.

Confusion on the Value of Teaching. Confusion around the value of teaching presents as closely related to the economic motivations at SMU. Faculty simultaneously recognize that research is an emphasis of the institution and, for current economic reasons, undergraduate education remains a priority of SMU. Thus, a confusion surfaces on the value of teaching and faculty work around teaching. This puzzlement is further confounded by faculty views of reward systems (i.e. tenure policies and awards) in place on campus. With the current tenure policies stating equal value of teaching and research and faculty believing that it is a fallacy, a tension emerges for faculty to navigate regarding their work at the institution. The impetus behind this confusion is understood as a possible implication of SMU being a striving institution (O'Meara, 2007). An unintended consequence of striving behavior is a noted lag in policies to reflect new institutional ambitions (Gonzales et al., 2014). However, the present study adds to this understanding by bringing to light situations where such inconsistency creates implications for faculty work and tensions they must navigate. For the most part, faculty rely on the interpreted understanding of the rewards at SMU, not the written policy leading to a greater focus on research over teaching. However, assistant professors or those new to the institution must learn this interpretation from their peers due to a perceived lack of value reflection in policy.

Institutional elements influence faculty work. SMU's simultaneous desire to hold true to its historical teaching mission while advancing as a research institution create added tension for faculty. Further, the lack of adequate resources present to support research, without a potential detriment to teaching suggest that the two focuses are mutually exclusive. As it stands, SMU lacks the ability to concurrently support the faculty work of both. Therefore, faculty are placed in a challenging position to complete their work.

Individual Level

At the individual level, faculty motivations towards personal prestige, their ability to limit aspects of their work, and their personal values of their work functions emerge as elements relevant to faculty balance of professional work expectations.

Personal Prestige. Amidst working at an institution pursuing its own prestige advancement, faculty express a motivation to cultivate their individual reputations within SMU and their respective disciplines. These effort present as more focused on the research and service pillars than teaching. Faculty view internal and external service as a way of creating name recognition for themselves. Further, they express the added value of networking to their potential career opportunities. Research serves as another avenue to garner personal prestige (Blackmore, 2015). Faculty across disciplines believe that their external reputation is closely tied to their research efforts as well as their opportunities for promotion within the institution. The absence of teaching as an avenue for personal prestige holds implication for faculty work, specifically at SMU with the aforementioned confusion around the value of teaching and the economic value of teaching.

Practice of Self-Restraint. Many faculty at SMU express a necessity to exhibit self-restraint towards an aspect of their faculty work. Citing a need to limit elements in which they hold greater interest (i.e. teaching or intriguing service) to give-way for the more important institutional and personal prestige efforts of research. The desire to practice self-restraint suggests an inherent tension for faculty work within itself. More specifically, the need for faculty to withhold working on a specific task to accommodate another suggests a given tension within their balance of work. More interestingly, would be a greater understanding of how the institutional and departmental values exacerbate or alleviate this practice need of faculty at SMU.

Personal Value of a Pillar. Interviews with faculty at SMU illustrate different perspectives regarding the value of the pillars of the professoriate: teaching, research and service.

Service emerges as a necessary burden, while teaching is viewed as rewarding which was a surprise for many faculty. Research serves as a key motivation for faculty as to why they chose their profession and where they would like to focus the majority of their efforts. Within a striving institution context presented at SMU, faculty face the aforementioned pressures on research and confusion around teaching. A faculty member's personal values and motivations influence his or her work (Matusovich, Paretto, McNair, & Hixson, 2014). When a faculty member's personal values do not align with the values of their institution or department, an opportunity for tension within a faculty member's work comes forth. For example, the surprise rewarding nature of teaching may be related to the aforementioned need to limit or restrict the amount of time faculty spend on it. Faculty cite the need for limitations in an effort to "make time for research." Therefore, depending on a faculty member's views and desires around teaching, the institutional emphasis on research may create a need for the limitation of rewarding aspects of work. The individual characteristics, motivations, and beliefs of individual faculty shape how they navigate the world (Hurtado et al., 2012). As noted, these individual elements may or may not align with the values of a faculty member's discipline or institution, thus creating a tensions among faculty work balance and a potentially problematic environment faculty leading to faculty turnover or dissatisfaction (Blackburn & Lawrence, 1995).

Tensions Across Layers

The previous three sections outline implications related specifically to departmental, institutional, and individual layers in which faculty are situated. Further, tensions are alluded to that exists across these layers, not only within each layer. Austin (1990) contends that faculty are situated in multiple layers simultaneously. The next section of this chapter illustrates and describes the tensions that arise across these layers and the implications of those tensions to faculty work.

Relationship of Results to Theory

Austin (1990) synthesizes four primary cultures that influence faculty values and behaviors: the academic profession, the discipline, the academy as an organization within a national system, and institutional type. Specifically, this study focuses on understanding faculty work and the tensions of faculty work relative to two of these layers: discipline and institution. Further, this study also considers that the individual characteristics and values of faculty influence how they navigate their experience within these cultural layers. Austin (1990) importantly identifies that various issues and conflicts may develop out of the aforementioned multiple and interacting cultures in which faculty members participate. The values of some cultures align, but many do not and faculty must make inherent and explicit trade-offs between those values that do not align. While conceptually the notion of faculty being situated in multiple cultural contexts has been accepted, little prior empirical work exists on understanding the implications of it for faculty as well as theory and practice. Within the context of SMU as a striving institution, this section brings to light empirical evidence of potential areas of tensions across the disciplinary, institutional, and individual components presented. Figure 5.1 provides an illustration of the potential tensions seen at SMU.

The larger intersecting circles of the presented Venn Diagram, illustrate elements faculty participants noted about each respective layer. For example, with regards to *Institution*, faculty participants discuss that the culture of SMU is one inclusive of values centering on economic motivations, an increasing research focus, and confusion around the value of teaching. At the overlap and intersection of each circle are tensions that arose between the different layers. For example, between *Institution* and *Discipline*, high teaching loads and conflicting research expectations surface as tensions faculty encounter between these two layers in the striving context of SMU.

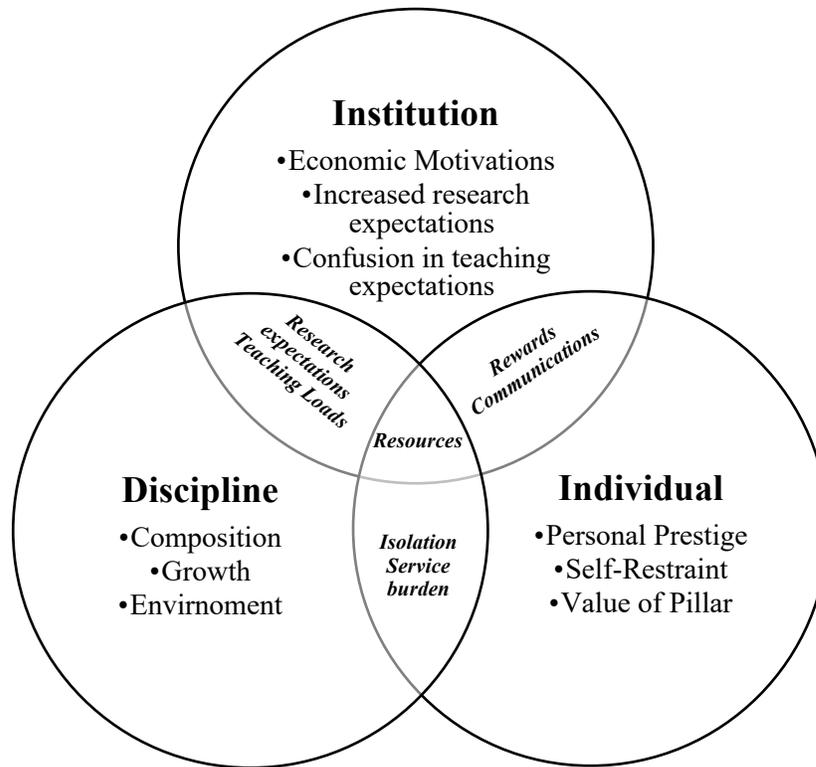


Figure 5.1 Tensions in Faculty Work Across Layers

Specifically, conflicting research expectations exist between disciplines or departments and the institution along the lines of the disciplinary emphasis of research as well as the expected resources necessary to complete work. A consensus is present among faculty at SMU that the institution is focusing heavily on research and external funding aspects of faculty work. Many faculty, especially those in the social sciences and humanities, explained that while they understand that external funding is a growing value of the institution, only limited external funding exists within their respective disciplines. Thus, faculty are caught between the disciplinary norms of publishing without external funding and the institutional expectations of producing research supported by such funding. As noted previously, and in line with prior research (Gonzales et al., 2014; Jacob & Lefgren, 2011; Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004), many faculty acknowledge that they have taken strides to shift their research agendas towards areas greater supported by research grants. However, some faculty are unable to do so or decidedly

refuse to do so and express a desire for the institution to more readily recognize the limited external resources available to their fields.

Regarding the tension of teaching loads, faculty at SMU express that the institution holds an unclear value regarding teaching. Participants suggest that the confusion around teaching presents because SMU values teaching higher than other research focused universities. The dual emphasis of keeping true to the institution's undergraduate teaching roots coupled with the increased research expectations creates a situation where tenure-track faculty believe they are held to higher teaching load standards than their peers at other comparable institutions. Faculty explain that the higher teaching loads create a tension for them because they are expected to perform at the same or higher level as their disciplinary peers, but with a greater strain on their time and energy due to teaching. As such, faculty at SMU feel like lose some of their competitiveness within their disciplinary markets and are not able to produce as highly as their peers; a notion supported by literature. Fox (1992) found that the more time and energy faculty spent on teaching the less productive they are with their research.

The tensions that emerge between the institution and the individual closely relate to the confusion around teaching and the increased research expectations of the institution. Specifically, tensions between these two levels are embodied by rewards and communications from the institution to the individual. For example, central to rewards are tenure and promotion policies. Faculty members express a myriad of confusion regarding their expectations of tenure, with many citing the lack of clarity around the value of teaching as the main source. As noted, SMU's written policy dictates that an equal value exists between teaching and research in reference to tenure; however, faculty explain that is not their reality, but rather research reigns superior to teaching. Further, a faculty member's individual value regarding a pillar of work does not always align with the rewards, thus creating situations in which faculty must exhibit self-

restraint regarding an aspect of work they may feel more inclined towards (Fairweather, 1993a, 1993b). For example, many faculty discuss throttling their time preparing for class as a trade-off to engage in more research. However, faculty also explain that SMU holds economic value towards undergraduate education – a value less seen in formal institutional rewards, like tenure, and more so in communications from institutional leadership who espouse the importance of teaching. Thus, institutional values emerge as directly in conflict with each other creating a tension faculty must navigate.

Between the *Disciplinary* and *Individual* components at SMU, tensions take the form of isolation and service burdens for faculty members. Faculty at SMU perceive that many of their departments are making strides to grow and expand. As such, on many occasions, faculty are hired as the only person in their subfield within their disciplines, creating a sense of isolation and potential value misalignment for these faculty. The higher or lower resourced a department is within its institutional context may influence the likelihood or presence of this tension at an institution (Rosinger et al., 2016). However, fs faculty express a desire for personal prestige, the isolation presented by the growth mindset among many disciplines creates a hinderance in the development and advance of prestige.

The service burden of faculty is influenced by both the individual faculty member's value of service and their ability to create limitations on it and the composition and environment of the department in which a faculty member is housed. For example, faculty in smaller departments express carrying higher service loads, unsurprisingly, because less faculty are present to share the departmental service needs. Additionally, the environment of the department plays a role. Many faculty at SMU express that their departments have a collegial environment where everyone contributes and covers for each other where needed. Thus creating added emphasis on sharing service loads. Further, the notion of service burden as a tension, while likely present at

other institutional context, might manifest differently depending on the size and composition of the institution.

At the epicenter of all three layers lies resources. Higher education institutions exist within a field of finite resources (Massy, 1996; Tolbert, 1985), therefore, it is not surprising that resources are a central tenant to many tensions expressed or alluded to by faculty at SMU. However, SMU is considered a wealthy, private institution; therefore the fact that resources emerged as an issue at this institution is intriguing when considering how resources might present as a tension at an institution with a different financial makeup. It is also important to note that while SMU as a whole is financially healthy, the wealth is not felt or distributed evenly across disciplines and high and low resourced departments emerge (Rosinger et al., 2016).

Interestingly, resources exist as an issue faculty view with the espoused striving nature of SMU. O'Meara (2007) notes that a key indicator of a striving institution is the allocation of resources towards functions that produce external prestige and increase institutional reputation. Specifically related to faculty work, striving institutions funnel additional resources into research, administrative support, and hiring faculty “stars,” and divert resources away from teaching by decreasing faculty teaching loads and increasing their discretionary time (O'Meara, 2007). However, faculty express that SMU’s allocation of resources does not align with their expressed desire to shape its identity towards an institution “on the move,” another indicator of striving. SMU’s aforementioned lack of “putting its money where its mouth is” creates tensions at all levels for faculty work.

Recommendations for Practice

The expectations of academics on the tenure track have grown more stringent and challenging overtime (Youn & Price, 2009). This phenomena can be seen across a variety of institutional types (Jackson, Latimer, & Stoiko, 2017); however, striving institutions, like SMU,

create an environment that further brings forth many of the tensions present in faculty work. Many of these tensions create impediments to faculty productivity and therefore, ultimately to an institution's pursuit of increased prestige. The practice of a striving institution holds influence on the success of the institution in its goals towards advancement. A key element to this success remains faculty work and productivity (Blackburn & Bently, 1993; Jacobson, 1992; Middaugh, 2001). While institutional leadership and specific striving goals dictate different pulls on faculty work, leadership at striving institutions must consider the following recommendations for practice with regards to tensions of faculty work.

Table 5.1 Summary of Recommendations for Practice

Major Findings	Recommendations
Misaligned resource allocation with espoused institutional priorities (research)	<p>Before endeavoring to advance an institutional reputation, ensure that adequate resources for research are in place to advance towards goals</p> <p>Secure additional revenue streams to provide necessary resources for faculty to complete the work expected of them</p>
Institutional policies and rewards are unclear and/or do not align with institutional expectations	<p>Rewrite institutional policies (i.e. Tenure & Promotion) to align with actual institutional expectations</p> <p>Create a financial incentive for faculty to engage in the work that aligns with striving ambitions (i.e. merit based raise tied to publication)</p> <p>Remove incentives that pull faculty away from work that aligns with striving ambitions (i.e. pay to teach and overload class)</p>
Mixed messages from institutional leadership regarding institutional priorities are present	<p>Institutional leadership constituents should be aligned on the values of the institution</p> <p>Present increased and consistent messaging to faculty regarding institutional priorities</p>

Faculty express not having enough time or administrative support to completely everything expected of them	Hire additional instructional faculty to more adequately align teaching loads with peer institutions
	Hire necessary administrative staff to alleviate the administrative burden felt by faculty
	Provide additional faculty training to enable them with opportunities to grow more efficient with work

The overarching lesson for striving institutions is that alignment of resources and messaging to faculty remains necessary to the advancement of institutional prestige. Striving institutions are noted as having consistent messaging across stakeholders that exemplifies the institution as one “on the move” (O'Meara, 2007). Coupled with this messaging comes the resources necessary to enable stakeholders to act on the projected image in an effort to attain institutional advancement. However, the faculty of SMU consistently noted that the resources of the institution do not align with their messaging of growth or “ascent,” thus creating confusion and lack of faith in the institution among faculty. Further, this confusion creates challenges for faculty balance of work. Therefore, an institution positioned as striving must align resources appropriately. In other words, align resources to meet striving pursuits. SMU, notably an undergraduate education institution, has resources tied to its historical teaching mission that may prohibit resource allocation towards striving oriented elements, such as research. Specifically, as reflected by the economic value of “butts in seats,” tuition is an economic lifeline for the institution. In order to aid in shifting faculty focus away from teaching and towards research, an institution in SMU’s position must consider other revenue streams that more closely align with institutional ambitions, such as increased infrastructures to support external funding, private donations, and adequate faculty staffing to cover teaching.

Additionally, another indicator of a striving institution is the alignment of rewards towards more research focus (O'Meara, 2007). While the messaging at SMU and general beliefs of faculty around institutional reward systems, like tenure and promotion, recognize the growing value and reward of research and external funding, a lag exists with formalized policies. As noted, the formal tenure and promotion policy at SMU suggests an equal value of teaching and research in tenure and promotion reviews. While faculty recognize the need for review of present policy, a confusion or hesitation emerges among faculty creating an additional challenge to completing their work. Many striving institutions are in a similar position to SMU in the sense that they are shifting mission and focus away from a historical internal priority (teaching) and towards more externally valued efforts (research) (Gardner & Veliz, 2014; Gonzales et al., 2014). It is not enough for institutions endeavoring such a shift to create campus conversations and beliefs around it, they must revisit and align existing policies with new ambitions to limit added challenges to faculty. To achieve this, institutional leadership can create a taskforce or committee charged with reviewing current school policies and making recommendations for alignment and updates.

With regards to messaging, inarguably, SMU faculty recognize that the conversation on campus is one towards research and advancement of reputation. However, this messaging is not iron-clad or entirely consistent. As noted, SMU holds an economic value to its historical focus of teaching and as such leadership at various levels present messages that faculty view as contrary to the institution's growing value of research. The present mixed messages have faculty believing that they must do it all, and do it all well. Additionally, the mixed messaging creates problems similar to contradictions in policy, leading to faculty confusion. Therefore, it is imperative that messaging, in addition to formal policies, are consistent with an institution's

aspirational goals. Institutional leadership across all levels should be informed on the strategic focus of SMU and tasked with delivering messaging accordingly

Time is a great value and commodity to faculty (Link et al., 2008; Plater, 1995). However, faculty at SMU feel that a pull exists on their time for two main reasons. The first, emerges as a symptom of the aforementioned misalignment of resources, rewards, and messaging present on campus. The second, is a notable decreasing in administrative support across campus. The elimination of administrative support is in direct contradiction to expected behavior of a striving institution (O'Meara, 2007). However, SMU still represents a striving institution due to its increased emphasis on research and other indicators noted; therefore, this contradiction creates an added burden for faculty that may not be present at other striving institutions. If faculty are tasked with increasing efforts towards an aspect of their work, it is imperative that the institution provide necessary support to relieve them of other responsibilities (i.e. administrative work) to allow them to do so. Adequate administrative support stands as one avenue to alleviate the time restraint felt by faculty. Further, the current faculty view of teaching loads and expectations also represent a pull on faculty's limited time. Therefore, as an institution shifts focus away from teaching and towards research, a consideration must be made with regards to expected teaching loads of research faculty. The hiring of clinical faculty, such as lecturers, to take on additional teaching is one solution to the time restraint on research faculty. Faculty at SMU also noted that the increased presence of lecturers in their departments negatively impacted their working environment with an imbalance of power and representation. Therefore, another approach to the balance of teaching is increased faculty development around teaching practices to help them become more efficient and effective with their instruction to free up time for research.

Recommendations for Research

As striving institutions represent a growing subset of institutions in the American higher education landscape, understanding the implications of them becomes increasingly important for institutional leadership and researchers alike. Striving institutions represent a shift in the general focus and mission of American higher education (O'Meara, 2007). Therefore, they serve as an interesting and relevant context to the study of faculty work. The present study adds to the research of faculty work at striving institutions through the advancement of understanding of the faculty perception of an institution's striving efforts. Additionally, under the framework that faculty are simultaneously existing in multiple cultures with congruent and conflicting values and expectations, this study provides the beginning of the necessary understanding of how a striving context creates added tension on faculty work. However, there exists a need for additional research on faculty work at striving institutions specifically related to the transition of an institution towards striving, demographic differences in the faculty experience, and additional theoretical perspectives and research methods.

O'Meara (2007) provides the foundation for identifying indicators of a striving institution. Indicators (as presented in Table 1.1 in Chapter 1) include key elements such as more stringent admissions criteria, the recruitment of faculty stars, expansion of programs and curriculum towards graduate studies, shaping institutional identity towards increasing prestige, and resource allocation that includes increased administrative support and improved institutional amenities. An institution does not need to present all of these indicators to be considered striving (O'Meara, 2007), however, the absence or contradiction of an indicator appears to create challenges to faculty work. For example, SMU's recent decrease in administrative support directly contradicts a noted indicator of striving, an incongruence that surfaces as creating problems for faculty. Additional research is needed into the specific implications to faculty of a

striving institution diverging from the perceived or expected striving behavior. Research in this vein should consider the inclusion of large scale data sets with enough power to isolate the influence that individual deviations from striving behavior may have on aspects of faculty work.

Along the same lines, the striving institution in this case study, emerges as being in a state of “identity crisis” that is consistent with present research (Gonzales et al., 2014; O'Meara, 2007; O'Meara & Bloomgarden, 2011). However, the present identity crisis suggests that while the institution intends to be striving, it may not be solidified in this effort, but rather in a state of transition towards striving. Presently, research on striving institutions, inclusive of this case study, relies on the notion that an institution is defined as striving (Gardner & Veliz, 2014; Gonzales et al., 2014; McClure & Titus, 2018; O'Meara & Bloomgarden, 2011). However, as a striving mindset permeates more institutions, research is warranted into advancing understanding of the degrees to which an institution is working towards striving. This additional research should include the intention of understanding the faculty experience and work throughout an institutional transition towards striving. More specifically, future research should include longitudinal data on one or more striving institutions to capture the evolution of an institution's striving efforts and the impact those efforts have on faculty over time.

Using Austin (1990) as a framework for how faculty are simultaneously in multiple cultural layers, the present study begins to shed light on the possible tensions that surface across the layers of institution, discipline, and individual facets relative to faculty work. Future research should more deeply investigate the faculty experience at these creases and the impacts of those tensions on faculty work and productivity. Further, the present study speaks to the general faculty experience and perception at one striving institution. Future research should endeavor to understand how these experiences and workload tensions differ across key characteristics. For example, evidence from this present study suggests that the faculty experience at striving

institutions may be mitigated by their department or rank at the institution. Another recurring theme that emerged in interviews with faculty was that of gender differences and bias present at the institution. Such findings were not central to the focus of the present, therefore not presented in Chapter 4. However, the level of reoccurrence of this belief among faculty merits additional research into understanding how gender bias or other bias related to demographic characteristics plays out in a striving institution context and how it influences faculty work.

Much of the present research on faculty work and striving institutions follows a qualitative approach (Gardner, 2010; Gardner & Veliz, 2014; Gonzales et al., 2014; O'Meara & Bloomgarden, 2011). The present single case study is effective for capturing the experience of faculty; however, future research should consider the inclusion of additional cases to garner an expand understanding of faculty work. Additionally, other methodological approaches would add to this line of inquiry. For example, phenomenological research, which focuses on “grasp[ing] of the very nature of a thing” (Vagle, 2016, p. 177) could add to the present inquiry. To obtain this understanding, the researcher documents people’s experiences in common to better understand the essence of a phenomenon (Giorgi, 1997; Vagle, 2016). In the case of faculty work, the phenomenon of study could be experiencing the inconsistencies at a striving institution. Further, quantitative approaches may shed light on aspects of faculty work at striving institutions that qualitative research cannot captures. For example, research should consider more directly the relationship of indicators of a striving institution with influences on faculty productivity, stress, and turnover, etc. Further, the present study was limited by the toll it took on faculty time to participate, therefore certain faculty voices who desired to participant were excluded due to lack of availability. Survey research of faculty would allow for faculty perspectives to be captured with more flexibility, thus should be considered by additional inquiry. Future research should also seek the use of other theoretical perspectives regarding striving institutions. For example,

resource allocation emerges as central source of tension for faculty at SMU, therefore understanding striving institutions through a lens a resource dependency may shed light on the underlying issues creating resource allocation issues.

Additionally, the present study focuses only on one facet of striving institutions and faculty work, specifically how faculty view a striving institution and how aspects of that institution influence faculty views and behaviors towards work. However, prior research would suggest that a more symbiotic role of faculty towards their institution exists (Gonzales, 2015). Therefore, additional research into understanding the role faculty themselves play in shaping the identity of a striving institution and thus their experience is needed.

Conclusion

The faculty interviewed for this study were acutely aware of SMU's striving nature and desire to advance external prestige and national reputation. However, they were also notably skeptical of SMU's ability to achieve such goals due to an apparent lack of alignment of resources and messaging present at the institution. Conversation with these faculty revealed that the striving context coupled with the misalignment creates challenges for faculty work. The tensions and challenges of faculty work occur within institutional, disciplinary, and individual context of faculty experience as well as across these layers.

Faculty work is notably increasing in complexity, a complexity that is further magnified at striving institutions. This study examined the experiences of faculty in the context of striving institutions. Through a single-case design, this exploratory study uncovered that faculty at SMU face challenges, many of which are mirrored across disciplines. Faculty believe challenges hinge on a lack of adequate resources to complete work, unclear rewards and policies, misguided messaging, and a notion that expectations of them are unattainable. The present study offers recommendations for practice to address aspects of the challenges, but also identifies the need

for further research to get at the heart of challenges faculty face at striving institutions. Overall, the present study adds to the current literature on faculty work and striving institutions. As a desire for prestige continues to permeate the American higher education landscape, it remains vital to understand how institutional actions regarding prestige influence faculty and faculty work.

APPENDIX A: INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

1. How long have you worked at SMU?
2. What does a typical workday for you look like? In a semester? And on break/over the summer?
3. When you think about your typical workday or week, how do you prioritize between teaching, research, and service?
 - a. If you had complete control over how you split your work between teaching, research, and service, how would it differ from how you currently split it?
 - b. What about if your chair/dean were deciding for you? How would he/she want to see you splitting your work?
 - c. Looking at the differences between those – [for example, you said you'd be spending more time on research than you currently do] – what keeps you from being able to do that?
4. Now think about a colleague at a similar career point as you who is at a different institution, how do you think he/she approaches his/her work? How does that differ from how you approach your work? What do you think is the biggest influence?
5. Think about this scenario, if your department chair [wanted you to teach an overload class next semester] or [wanted you to focus more of your time on research/publication next year], what types of things could they say/do to encourage you to engage in this type of work?
 - a. Are there any [policies] [financial incentives] [colleagues opinions] you'd consider in your decision process?
6. If you had a magic wand and you could fix or change your department in such a way to help you be a better faculty member – in whatever way you would define that- how would you change it?
7. Think back to when you started at SMU, how did it differ from where you went to graduate school or previously worked (depending on career stage)? How did the job differ from what thought you'd be doing? Has that evolved?
8. There is a lot of talk on campus about wanting to move up in the rankings and improving the university's academic reputation, how do you see that influencing your work as a faculty member? Is that a good or bad thing for the institution?
9. If someone were just coming into this department, what would tell them it takes to be successful at SMU?

10. [Only to faculty who have been in the department for an extended amount of time] When you think about faculty that have not been successful here, what were the problems that arose? How do you think that differs from other departments in Dedman?
11. Lastly, are there policies or documents you can think of that might be helpful to my understanding of faculty work in your department or at SMU?

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