

SOMETHING IS WRONG: WHERE IN THE WORLD ARE WE GOING WITH MARKETING EDUCATION!

Debra Haley, Southeastern Oklahoma State University
Dennis E. Clayson, University of Northern Iowa

Abstract

Marketing education has been caught up in a tidal wave of change. Rather than being the proactive drivers of change, faculty are more often than not caught *reacting* to that change.

These drivers can be categorically identified in five areas of modern education: 1) administrative demands on faculty with increased resources, 2) the explosion of bureaucracy, 3) demands of technology without adequate resources and research background, 4) increasing demands of conformity to “political correctness,” and the deteriorating perception of faculty and higher education by the public.

Do we want change foisted upon us or are we willing to ask ourselves if these changes are in the best interest of educating students, or in our nation’s best interest? Should faculty demand more control over the process?

Administrative Demands

Administrative demands on faculty have been increasing in recent years despite the growth in positions dedicated to our administrations. More, not less faculty time is devoted to tasks that are not research, teaching or service but must be dealt with forthwith. A select few include:

Accreditations (4)

- North Central
- Higher Education
- AACSB
- ACBSP

Dramatic Increase in Service over the Decades

State Regents

Shared Governance (Theory vs. Application)

Lack of Clerical Support

Explosion of Bureaucracy

Universities Controlled by Bureaucrats

Universities were once operated and administered largely by the faculty. During this period, higher education in America became the standard for the rest of the world. More and more, administrative functions are being assumed by full-time bureaucrats. It is not unusual to find that over two-thirds of all full-time employees do not teach. In some locations, administrators alone are getting close to outnumbering faculty. Much of the increase in tuition has gone to feed the ever increasing demand for bureaucratic functions.

Emphasis on Process vs. Outcomes

Bureaucrats are interested in process. That is what they do and that is the measure of their performance. Outcomes are many times forgotten. Much of the learning outcome demands of many universities, for example, are satisfied when the proper forms are completed, not because any student learning problems have been resolved. In many cases, a solution to a problem would make the bureaucratic job unnecessary and could be seen as a threat to the “problem solvers.”

One of our universities takes great pride in being a teaching university with an excellent reputation for teaching and student concerns, most of which is justified. Yet a look at the school's Organization Chart showed the following: There are 12 entities (on the chart, boxes) directly under the President, only one of these (Provost) leads to the faculty. The Provost has 16 entities that report to his office, only four of which lead to the faculty. Within each faculty entity are at least two administrators between a faculty member and the Provost.

One of us receives a bi-weekly notice of university announcements and events. As this is written, the current university-wide announcement contained 7 items, the first three start with acronyms as if everyone on campus was familiar with and could read bureaucratese, including the incomprehensible announcement that a CIEP was available for ESL students. The last announcement in the list referred to holiday hours for the library. No one seems to notice that on almost all university-wide communications, the faculty (those who actually teach) are hardly ever noted except in relationship to an acronym and the usual activities of a *university* such as library accessibility are hardly every addressed.

Acquisition of Knowledge vs. Tech Fun

Technology is increasingly seen as a "fun" way to learn but knowledge acquired is still in dispute. When students avoid a face to face class due to rigor and homework demands are students learning preferences driving knowledge acquisition? A few examples to consider:

- North Central
- Memos as diagnostic tools (1/3 to 1/2 students drop class)
- Extra Credit...14 out of 17 failed to take advantage of opportunity
- Group support norms lacking

Political Correctness

Some universities seem more concerned that everyone have the correct viewpoint than they are of demanding that students think and question. Gatherings calling for "solidarity" on popular issues are once again becoming common. The danger of this to education were spelled out in a recent article in the WSJ (Nov. 9, 2014). In some institutions, professors may be afraid to speak their minds for fear of reprisals or even dismissal.

Public Perception of a Good Retirement Job for Boomers

Outcomes Based

- University degree specified on transcript based on exit exams
- Marketing Degree " " " " " " " "

Charles Murray forecast this in *Real Education*. Firms will institute entrance exams prior to recruitment or as an initial step in the recruitment process...a screening out of those who do not possess the knowledge

Discussion

How much of this is being driven by money, either from private sources or state and federal demands?

Is customer driven, bottom line focus driving our institutions to the detriment of real education?

- July/August BizEd article
- UNM dorms privatized
- UNI dorms...excess allocated to support competition at the expense of faculty salaries driven by administration educators not those with financial or marketing knowledge
- Salary bases as indications of educational worth->Vo-Tech vs. Traditional College Education

- Texas (30 years ago) invested in faculty? Might this fact have anything to do with the explosive economic growth of the state?
- The more you teach, the less you are paid.

Finally...

To insure the future, do not invest in “stuff,” invest in *people*. Universities will invest in food services, climbing walls, and the latest politically correct movement but spend very little to hire and retain first rate scholars, or to measure what their students actually have learned. They make a show of measuring teaching, but will not define what it is they are attempting to measure, and will never seriously question what that evaluation has to do with student academic performance.

Neither technology nor bureaucracy should drive teaching/education. These should be tools, but increasingly, teaching, learning, and the faculty are secondary to bureaucracy and technology.